

## **Rocket City Swim League**

### **Proposed Amendment to Article IV, Section 4 Competitor Age**

Submitted to: Rocket City Swim League Executive Board & Council

#### **Current Rule (Article IV, Section 4):**

“The eligibility of a swimmer in a particular age group will be determined by his date of birth. A swimmer will be placed in the appropriate age group on the anniversary of his date of birth. In instances such as the City Championship Meet when competition extends over two or more days, a swimmer's age shall be fixed by his age on the day the meet begins.”

#### **Proposed Revision:**

“A swimmer’s age group for the Rocket City Swim League (RCSL) season shall be determined by their age on the day of the first official dual meet of the season, as designated by the League. This age shall remain fixed for all Dual Meets and the City Championship Meet, regardless of any subsequent birthdays.

This policy shall apply uniformly across all age groups and divisions.

This structure ensures that each swimmer remains in a consistent age group for the entirety of the season.”

#### **Rationale for the Change:**

1. **Consistency:** One fixed cutoff means swimmers compete with the same teammates all season.
2. **Two Full Years in Each Group:** Swimmers get equal developmental time at each level before aging up.
3. **Fairness & Morale:** Seniors who age out just days before City lose the opportunity to finish with their team. This change allows them to complete their last summer which is something they’ve earned.
4. **Administrative Simplicity:** Coaches, parents, and record keepers can plan relays, rosters, and entries without mid-season re-categorization.
5. **Alignment with Common Practice:** Leagues in Atlanta, Nashville, Chattanooga, and across Alabama and Georgia already use this standard.
6. **Supported by USA Swimming Policy:** USA Swimming allows local “seasonal closed competitions” to set independent age-group rules (Rule 304.1.1A).

7. **Perspective:** The RCSL season lasts only 6–8 weeks, no one is becoming Michael Phelps overnight. This is about consistency and fun, not gaining a competitive edge.

#### **Addressing Record Concerns:**

- Implementation details for recordkeeping under the new age determination policy will be coordinated with the League's records administrator to ensure accuracy and continuity.
- This approach preserves historical integrity while adapting to updated policy

#### **Supporting Examples and References:**

Numerous summer leagues follow similar rules:

- Greater Forsyth Swim League (GA): Age as of May 31.
- Blue Springs Sharks (MO): Age as of May 31.
- Greatwood Geysers (TX): Age as of May 31.
- Chattanooga Area Swim League (TN): Age as of June 1.
- Central Alabama Summer Swim League (AL): Age as of May 31.
- Nashville Summer Swim League (TN): Age as of May 31.
- Tar Heel Swim Association (NC): Age as of June 1.
- Greater Pensacola Aquatic League (FL): Age as of June 1.
- Atlanta Swim Association (GA): Age as of June 1.

**USA Swimming Rule 205.2.2:** 'Age on the first day of the meet shall determine the swimmer's age for the entire meet.'

**USA Swimming Rule 304.1.1A:** 'USA Swimming Group Members may establish their own age-group eligibility requirements for seasonal closed competition.'

#### **Proposed Effective Date:**

This rule shall take effect beginning with the **2026 RCSL summer season** to allow adequate communication and recordkeeping updates.