

## SWIMMING WAIKATO BANNING TECHNICAL / PERFORMANCE RACE SUITS

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### OBJECTIVE –

A number of swimming regions, both internationally (states in Australia and the US) and throughout New Zealand (Swimming Otago, Canterbury West Coast and Swimming Auckland) have banned the use of **Technical / Performance Race Suits** for their junior swimmers (swimmers age 12 years and under).

As a result of those decisions, the Board of Swimming Waikato has looked into whether banning these suits was also the right decision for the Waikato region.

After researching this issue, and after having discussions with a number of our Coaches and with Club representatives at our 2018 Annual General meeting, the Board of Swimming Waikato will introduce a ban on these suits, for swimmers aged 12/U, at all swim meets hosted in the Waikato. Please note that this ban does not include knee length swim suits/togs (“Jammers”).

This ban will come into effect from 15 December 2018 (our Waikato Christmas Meet).

### WHAT IS A TECHNICAL / PERFORMANCE RACE SUIT ?

A technical / performance race suit is a specialized swimsuit designed with bonded/meshed seams or kinetic tape. In simpler terms, tech suits don't even appear to have seams. These suits have water-repellent properties that add little textile weight and help mature swimmers cut through the water. The conforming carbon fiber cage (and other approved textiles) give the biggest performance benefit: compression. Extreme muscle compression streamlines the body in order to reduce drag, thus leading to greater improvements in performance.

### OUR RATIONALE –

- Very good research suggests that there is no determinable speed advantage for a young person 12 years old and under.
- These race suits are expensive and have a short life span. Whilst we recognise that this may not be an issue for everyone, we want to encourage participation in our sport and the cost is likely to be a barrier for some. Swimming Waikato does not wish to place unnecessary financial pressure on parents or create an environment where it is thought to achieve at this level, a technical race suit is required.
- At the junior level, refining technique and skills is more likely to contribute to improved race performance, rather than the swimwear the young person is wearing.

### POLICY -

1. In the interests of athlete development and retention, the Board of Swimming Waikato is banning the use of Technical / Performance Race Suits for swimmers aged 12 years and under.
2. This ban will be effective at all swim meets hosted by Swimming Waikato or a Swimming Waikato member club.
3. This policy will come into effect on 15 December 2018.

4. For an initial period of three months (through until 14 March 2019), swimmers aged 12 years and under who inadvertently wear a Technical / Performance Race Suit will be reminded (by Coaches, Team Managers and Technical Officials) that these suits are no longer allowed to be worn.
5. From 15 March 2019, swimmers aged 12 years and under, who are wearing a Technical / Performance Race Suit, will be disqualified from that event.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION –**

Examples of swim suits that ARE permitted – note that the stitching is raised on the outside of the fabric.



Examples of swim suits that ARE NOT permitted – Note the bonded/sealed seams and use of kinetic tape.



PLEASE NOTE- THE ABOVE PICTURES ARE EXAMPLES OF SEAMING ONLY. THE BRANDS AND STYLES DEPICTED ARE **NOT** THE ONLY BRANDS OR STYLES TO WHICH THE NEW POLICY WILL APPLY.

If you are unsure whether the suit you currently have, or are considering purchasing, will be permitted, please check with the retailer or your swim coach.