



BRITISH LONG DISTANCE SWIMMING ASSOCIATION
www.blds.org.uk

Constitutional Rules

CONTENTS

- 1 Name
- 2 Objectives
- 3 Composition
- 4 Membership
- 5 Subscriptions
- 6 Funds
- 7 Annual General Meeting
- 8 Special General Meeting
- 9 Notice of Meetings
- 10 Composition of Executive
- 11 Executive Committee
- 12 Expenses of Executive Committee
- 13 Emergency Committee
- 14 Sub Committees
- 15 Ex-Officio Members
- 16 Hon. Vice Presents
- 17 Alterations to Rules
- 18 Affiliated Organisation Championships
- 19 Annual Report
- 20 Annual Dinner
- 21 Discipline
- 22 Appeals
- 23 The Rules

1. **NAME** The Association shall be called the British Long Distance Swimming Association

2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1. To promote the art and sport of swimming and particularly long distance swimming.
- 2.2. To ensure adequate safety standards and the promotion of a Pilot Life-Saver scheme.
- 2.3. To draw up and publish uniform laws and rules for the control and regulation of the Association's events and of individual swims by its members who seek recognition by the Association.
- 2.4. To establish liaison where ever possible with all similar organisations with a view to international standardisation of long distance laws and rules.

3. COMPOSITION

- 3.1. The Association may be affiliated to the Amateur Swimming Association.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 Each application for membership shall be made on the official form which, accompanied by the subscription, must be forwarded to the Honorary Membership Secretary.
- 4.2 The Association reserves the right to refuse membership and in the event of an application being rejected the subscription shall be refunded to the applicant. The applicant has the right of appeal against this decision. The appeal would be considered by the appeals Panel whose membership would be as in 22.2
- 4.3 The Association, through the Executive Committee, reserves the right to suspend or expel any member by a majority of two-thirds of those attending the meeting provided notice and reasons of such proposed expulsion is given on the notice calling the meeting and the member concerned has been notified beforehand in writing. The applicant has the right of appeal against this decision. The appeal would be considered by the appeals Panel whose membership would be as in 22.2



BRITISH LONG DISTANCE SWIMMING ASSOCIATION
www.blds.org.uk

Constitutional Rules

- 4.4 Any member who does not wish their name and address divulged to any other member or prospective member should contact the Hon. General Secretary or the Hon. Membership Secretary in writing to that effect.

5. SUBSCRIPTIONS

- 5.1 The annual membership subscription shall be due on the 1st January each year.
- 5.2 The annual membership subscription shall be forwarded to the Honorary Membership Secretary each year.
- 5.3 The subscription fees for junior, senior and non swimming membership shall be published in the Annual Report each year.
- 5.4 Junior membership shall be under 16 years of age. In the year of a junior becoming a senior member the junior subscription shall be payable.
- 5.5 Subscriptions shall be reviewed at the Annual General Meeting but change will only become effective from the 1st January of the following year.
- 5.6 Life membership shall be ten times the Senior subscription.
- 5.7 Any kindred organisation (approved by the Association) shall be eligible to affiliate to the Association by payment of a fee which will set at the Annual General Meeting
- 5.8 Any person in arrears with their subscription at the Annual General Meeting shall be deemed to be no longer a member.
- 5.9 Any person in arrears with their subscription at the relevant closing date shall not compete in any Association competition.
- 5.10 All Executive Committee members and Hon. Championship Secretaries shall be paid up members of the Association before and during their term of office.

6. FUNDS

- 6.1 The Association's financial year shall end on the 31st October. At least two internal examiners (independent of the Treasurer's office) elected in the Annual General Meeting, shall examine the accounts which will be published in the Annual Report.
- 6.2 All funds or other property of the Association shall be applied to the furtherance of the objects of the Association and shall not be paid to, or distributed amongst the members of the Association.
- 6.3 In the event of dissolution, the funds remaining shall be devoted to objects similar to those of the Association or to other purposes approved by H. M. Commissioners of Customs and Excise.

7. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- 7.1 The Annual General Meeting shall be held on a Sunday no later than mid March.
- 7.2 The Annual General Meeting shall be held in each year for the election of Officers and Executive Committee and for general business.
- 7.3 The Annual General Meeting shall elect the Hon. Secretaries of such annual or other championships as the Annual General meeting or Executive Committee may have resolved to conduct.
- 7.4 Nominations for Hon. Championship Secretaries and Executive appointments must be received by the Hon. General Secretary two weeks before the Annual General Meeting and must bear the name of the proposer and seconder. The consent of the person nominated must have first been obtained. A new nominee must provide a short pen picture of themselves illustrating their interest in and suitability for the position. Pen pictures should not exceed 100 words in length. Only senior members shall be allowed to make nominations.



BRITISH LONG DISTANCE SWIMMING ASSOCIATION
www.blds.org.uk

Constitutional Rules

7.5 Fifteen senior members shall form a quorum.

7.6 Only senior members shall be allowed to vote at an Annual General Meeting.

8. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

8.1 The Honorary General Secretary shall convene a Special General Meeting at the written request of not less than 6 senior members.

8.2 Only senior members shall be allowed to vote at an Annual General Meeting.

9. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

9.1 At least four weeks notice of every General Meeting shall be given to every member.

9.2 At least fourteen days notice of every Executive Committee meeting shall be given to all those entitled to attend.

9.3 The Honorary Administrative Secretary shall notify all those entitled to attend an Executive Committee Meetings stating when and where it is to be held.

9.4 The Honorary Administrative Secretary shall send a copy of the previous meeting's minutes with the notification. Copies of the minutes shall also be sent to Hon. Championship Secretaries.

10. COMPOSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The management of the Association shall be vested in an Executive Committee consisting of the Officers and sixteen other members elected at the Annual General Meeting. The Officers shall be:

10.1 The President

10.2 The President Elect

10.3 Honorary General Secretary

10.4 Honorary Administrative Secretary

10.5 Honorary Treasurer

10.6 Honorary Publicity Officer

10.7 Honorary Membership Secretary

10.8 Honorary Safety Officer

10.9 Honorary Records Secretary

10.10 Honorary Trophies Secretary

10.11 Honorary Sport and Recreation Alliance Liaison Officer

10.12 Honorary Insignia Officer

10.13 Honorary Rescue Boat Co-ordinator

10.14 Assistant Rescue Boat Co-ordinator

10.15 Honorary Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer

10.16 Such other officers as may be deemed necessary for the conduct of the Association's affairs.

10.17 The Executive Committee shall have the power, which need not be exercised to co-opt up to 4 additional persons annually whose qualifications abilities or standing will be helpful to the Committee's work.

10.18 The minimum age for an Executive Committee member and an Hon. Championship Secretary shall be eighteen.

10.19 Past Presidents shall be automatically appointed to the committee for 2 years and shall not be subject to rule 11.3

11. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

11.1 Any decisions made by the Committee shall be final and binding.

11.2 Ten members of the committee shall form a quorum.

11.3 Any committee member absent for two successive meetings without adequate reason may be deemed to be no longer a member of the committee.



BRITISH LONG DISTANCE SWIMMING ASSOCIATION
www.bldsa.org.uk

Constitutional Rules

12. EXPENSES OF THE COMMITTEE

- 12.1 The reasonable expenses of the committee in carrying out the Association's business shall be borne by the Membership.
- 12.2 The reasonable travelling expenses of the committee in carrying out the Association's business shall be borne by the Membership.

13. EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

- 13.1 The Emergency Committee shall consist of the President, President Elect, Honorary General Secretary, Honorary Treasurer and the Immediate Past President.
- 13.2 The Emergency Committee shall have the full powers of the Executive Committee in respect of all matters deemed to be urgent and shall report fully on its meetings at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.
- 13.3 A quorum for the Emergency Committee shall be three.
- 13.4 On the request of two members of the Emergency Committee the Honorary General Secretary shall convene a meeting of the Emergency Committee.
- 13.5 The Emergency Committee should discuss with any relevant member in their deliberation if it is at all possible.
- 13.6 When the Emergency Committee have reached a decision, that decision shall be considered final and binding and can only be reconsidered once, if there is fresh evidence available.

14. SUB-COMMITTEES

- 14.1 The Emergency Committee shall elect such sub-committees and secretaries as it may deem necessary to transact particular aspects of the Association's affairs.
- 14.2 Sub-committees as the Executive Committee elects may be granted authority to deal with any particular matter delegated to them subject to terms of reference determined by the Executive Committee.
- 14.3 Each sub-committee secretary shall report on its decisions, actions and plans to the subsequent meeting of the Executive Committee.
- 14.4 A quorum for each sub-committee shall be three.

15. EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

- 15.1 The President, President Elect, Hon. General Secretary and Hon. Treasurer shall be ex-officio members of all committees.

16. HON. VICE PRESIDENTS

- 16.1 Hon. Vice Presidents may be elected by the Annual General Meeting on the recommendation of the Executive Committee.
- 16.2 Hon. Vice Presidents are elected for Life

17. ALTERATION TO RULES

- 17.1 Alteration to Constitutional rules may only be made at a General Meeting.
- 17.2 Proposed alterations to Constitutional rules must be in the hands of the Hon. General Secretary not less than six weeks before a General Meeting and must bear the names of the proposer and seconder.
- 17.3 A proposition for an alteration to Constitutional rules shall be carried only if at least two-thirds of those voting, vote in favour of the proposition.
- 17.4 Only Senior members shall be allowed to propose and second any change of rule.

18. AFFILIATED ORGANISATION CHAMPIONSHIPS

- 18.1 All affiliated organisation Championships shall clearly state the organising body and shall be administered under B.L.D.S.A. or A.S.A. Rules but not both.



BRITISH LONG DISTANCE SWIMMING ASSOCIATION
www.bldsa.org.uk

Constitutional Rules

19 ANNUAL REPORT

- 19.1 The Associations Year shall end on 31st December.
- 19.2 The Annual Report shall be forwarded to all members, Hon. Vice Presidents, affiliated organisations and other 'interested' organisations recognised by the Association.
- 19.3 The Annual Report shall contain reports from each appointed secretary, a balance sheet, notification of the Annual Dinner and Annual General Meeting, minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting and other relevant information considered noteworthy by the Hon. General Secretary.

20 ANNUAL DINNER

- 20.1 The Annual Dinner shall be held on the Saturday prior to the Annual General Meeting.
- 20.2 The venue of the 'next but one' Annual Dinner shall be decided at each Annual General Meeting.
- 20.3 Guests for the Annual Dinner shall be decided by the Executive Committee.

21 DISCIPLINE

- 21.1 Every member of the Association is expected at all times to exercise maximum self discipline and uphold the good name of the BLDSA.
- 21.2 Due respect should be accorded at all times, but especially before, during and after championships or events, to all championship officials and voluntary helpers.

21.3 Disciplinary Panel

Any breaches of discipline shall be dealt with by a panel made up of the immediate Past-President of the association (Chairman) and four members of the Executive Committee nominated by the immediate Past-President.

No person shall be permitted to serve on the disciplinary Panel if:

1. They are subject of the complaint or breach of discipline.
2. They are the person responsible for raising the issue.
3. They have been invited to give an independent witness account of the issue.
4. They have family connection with either side involved in the issue.

The panel shall examine the evidence submitted by all parties together with that of any independent witnesses which may be available. A full record of the panel's meeting shall be maintained and the panel shall have the power to make a judgement.

21.4 Complaints

A complaint regarding a breach of discipline is a formal expression of dissatisfaction with the actions or behaviour of an individual or individuals in connection with the sport to which the rules of the Association apply.

A complaint regarding a breach of discipline may be made by any member or by the parent or guardian of a member under the age of eighteen (18) years on their behalf or by the Hon. Secretary of an affiliated club, or by any appointed official at a championship or event run by the Association or by an affiliated club.

Such a complaint is made by sending to the Hon. Gen. Secretary of the Association a detailed written statement regarding the specific breach of discipline with which the complainant is dissatisfied.

The complaint must reach the Hon. Gen. Secretary not later than twenty eight (28) days after the incident that gave rise to it.

21.5 Procedure

Immediately upon receipt of a complaint regarding a breach of discipline the Hon. Gen. Secretary of the Association shall send a copy of the complaint to the chairman of the disciplinary panel who will then select the panel, give them copies of the complaint and arrange the date and venue of the hearing.

Such date should be within sixty (60) days of the receipt of the complaint and at least fourteen (14) days notice of the arrangements for the hearing shall be given to the parties involved.

The procedure at the hearing shall be flexible under the discretion of the Chairman. The purpose of the proceedings is to secure a just outcome in an expeditious manner. At the hearing each party has the right to state their case, call witnesses, give evidence personally, cross examine witnesses called by any other party and finally to summarise their case.



BRITISH LONG DISTANCE SWIMMING ASSOCIATION
www.blds.org.uk

Constitutional Rules

A party may present their case through a representative but professional representation shall be permitted only when at least seven (7) days notice of such representation has been given to the Chairman of the panel.

The normal rules of evidence shall apply except that the Chairman may at their discretion admit evidence which would not be permitted in a court of law.

The disciplinary panel may make whatever order it considers just – including a period of suspension from the Association or from a specific event or events or expulsion from the Association. Both parties have the right of appeal to the Appeals Panel.

22 APPEALS

22.1 Appeals Panel

The Appeals Panel shall be convened following a request being made in writing to the Honorary General Secretary of the Association within twenty eight (28) days after the formal notification of the outcome of:

22.1.1 A Disciplinary Panel hearing at the request of either party.

22.1.2 A Rejection of Membership.

22.2 Appointment and Composition

The membership of the Appeals Panel shall be:

1. The President of the Association.

2. The President Elect of the Association.

3. One other member of the Executive Committee nominated by the President.

No person shall be permitted to serve on the Appeals Panel if they were directly involved in the original disciplinary hearing or membership rejection.

22.3 Function

The function of the panel shall be to hear and decide appeals following disciplinary hearings.

22.4 Procedure

The procedure shall be as that detailed under section 21.5.

22.5 Final Decision

The decision of the Appeals Panel shall be final and binding on all parties. The Hon. Gen. Secretary of the Association shall notify all members of the Executive Committee of the outcome of the hearing within seven (7) days of notifying the parties involved in the hearings.

23 THE RULES

23.1 Any dispute which may arise concerning the Constitutional Rules shall be decided by the Executive Committee whose decision shall be final and binding.

23.2 Any matter not dealt with by these rules shall be decided by the Executive Committee whose decision shall be final and binding.

23.3 Alterations to these rules shall only be made by a two-thirds majority decision of any General Meeting provided that intention of such proposed alteration be given notice calling the meeting.