

## Professional Swimmers May Be Eligible for Money Damages From a Class Action Settlement

DECEMBER 15, 2025

Winston & Strawn LLP, representing Thomas A. Shields, Katinka Hosszú, and plaintiff classes of professional swimmers, is pleased to announce that it has reached a settlement with World Aquatics to resolve the claims on behalf of professional swimmers in the case *Shields et al. v. Federation Internationale De Natation*, pending in the Northern District of California.

This settlement resolves claims brought on behalf of classes of professional swimmers alleging that World Aquatics violated federal antitrust law when it organized a group boycott against the International Swimming League (“ISL”) and preventing top-tier swimmers from participating in professional swimming competitions and earning appearances fees and prize money from those competitions. World Aquatics denies these allegations. The settlement has been submitted to the District Court in the Northern District of California for approval.

If approved, World Aquatics will pay over USD \$4.6 million that will be distributed to eligible swimmers who signed contracts to compete at the canceled ISL “Energy for Swim 2018” competition scheduled to be held in Turin, Italy in 2018 (“2018 Damages Settlement Class”), and those who had contracts for the 2019 ISL season (“2019 Damages Settlement Class”). Of the total USD \$4.6 million settlement fund, World Aquatics has agreed to pay USD \$1,127,084.00 to resolve the claims of 2018 Damages Settlement Class (“2018 Damages Settlement Amount”) and USD \$3,500,000.00 to resolve the claims of the 2019 Damages Settlement Class (“2019 Damages Settlement Amount”). After final approval of the settlement, and after deduction of certain costs and awards that the Court may order, the 2018 and 2019 Damages Settlement Amounts will be distributed to class members in accordance with a court-approved distribution plan. If you are a member of the Damages Settlement Classes, you may be eligible, but are not guaranteed, to receive a proportional share of the Damages Settlement Amounts based on the Plaintiffs’ economic expert’s damages calculations and your class membership.

The settlement also settles claims for injunctive relief on behalf of a class of top-tier professional swimmers who signed contracts to participate in the ISL from January 1, 2018 through August 29, 2025 (“Injunctive Relief Class”). As a term of the settlement, World Aquatics will ensure that its rules are not used to restrict or penalize a swimmer’s participation in any World Aquatics-sanctioned or unsanctioned professional swimming events, or to restrict the organization of swimming events independent from World Aquatics. An additional term of the settlement requires World Aquatics to recognize results achieved by swimmers at unsanctioned professional swimming events that are independent from World Aquatics, and such results will be part of World Aquatics’ official results so long as the

unsanctioned event complies with the eligibility, doping, facility requirements, and any other competition regulations (including World Aquatics Competition Regulations) set forth by World Aquatics that World Aquatics applies to its own events. Notwithstanding participation in any unsanctioned professional swimming event, a swimmer must still satisfy World Aquatics' qualification criteria and rules for participation in World Aquatics' World Championship and Olympic Games events. The settlement will ensure that swimmers have full access to professional competitive swimming events in the future. The full terms of the injunctive relief are available on the settlement website at SwimmerSettlement.com and will be posted on World Aquatics's website [www.worldaquatics.com](http://www.worldaquatics.com) as a condition of settlement.

"This settlement is a win for professional swimmers and the sport. We are pleased with this settlement and the groundbreaking relief for swimmers," said Jeffrey Kessler, class counsel for the swimmers and the class representatives. "Thanks to the perseverance of Thomas Shields and Katinka Hosszú, and the new leadership of World Aquatics, swimmers will now have the ability to compete in future events without fear of penalty and hundreds of swimmers who contracted with ISL in 2018 and 2019 are eligible to receive compensation."

**How do I determine if I am eligible to receive money?** If the settlement is approved and becomes final, payments will be sent to Damages Settlement Classes Members who are entitled to damages as calculated by the Plaintiffs' economic expert in this case and who have completed the necessary steps to receive payment. To receive your payment, first visit SwimmerSettlement.com and complete the identity verification process. After your identity is verified, login to SwimmerSettlement.com to verify your contact information and select your preferred payment method. You can review your estimated payment amount beginning **November 14, 2025**.

**What are my rights?** If you are a member of the injunctive relief settlement class or the damages settlement classes, you have two options: do nothing or object to the settlement. If you do nothing you will be entitled to the benefits conferred by the settlement. If you wish to object to the settlement, you must submit a written statement explaining why you object to the settlement. All written objections and supporting papers must be submitted to the court by filing them electronically or in person at any location of the United States District Court for the Northern District of California or by mailing them to the Class Action Clerk, United States District Court for the Northern District of California, Philip Burton Federal Building & United States Courthouse, 450 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102.

All objections must be filed or postmarked on or before **December 30, 2025**. For further instructions regarding how to object to the settlement and the information you must include in your objection, visit SwimmerSettlement.com and read the long form notice.

**Want more information?** For more information, including instructions on how to review and receive your payment, visit SwimmerSettlement.com, email [info@SwimmerSettlement.com](mailto:info@SwimmerSettlement.com), or write to *Shields et al. v. Federation Internationale De Natation* Settlement Administrator, [PO Box 301132, Los Angeles CA, 90030-1132].

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Jeffrey L. Kessler