

September 19, 2017

USAS Convention

Dallas, Texas

Sept. 12 – 16, 2017

RE: Notes from the Convention

Classes attended:

Wednesday: Safe Sport at Meets, Rules and Regulations Committee

Thursday: Official's Committee Workshop, Rules and Regulations Committee, Navigating the Coach/Official Relationship, Western Zone Meeting

Friday: Burning Issues for Officials, Laying Foundations and Building Bridges, Western Zone Meeting, House of Delegates.

Saturday: House of Delegates, Aquatics Awards Banquet.

Safe Sport at Meets:

Discussion was centered around Meet Directors, Meet Referees and Facility Management. The emphasis was that Meet Managers, Meet personnel, Facilities (Life Guards), Officials and Coaches working together provides a higher level of Safety at a Swim Meet. Also, the host Team providing a "Safety Plan" to the various groups running the Meet insures correct information being followed. Topics included Safety areas, people taking pictures, campus security if available, lifeguards where provided. In regards to photographers, questions to ask of the Meet Host. Will there be a Meet Photographer? If so, have them where credentials. Regarding parents, make it clear where there is no photography allowed. Although this is noted in the Meet Sheet, have it announced prior to the start of the Meet and during the Meet. Be vigilant, but do not "over react". Meet Referees should follow up on all potential "concerns". Materials were passed out that I will provide to our Pacific Swimming Zone Official's Chairs and Meet Referees.

Rules and Regulations:

Certainly interesting this year as the main items included restructuring the USAS Board, changing from a Management / Operations Board to a Governance Board. The short version is that the Board would become smaller and more "lean" in order to act quicker to various events. Also, the Board of Directors would be looking forward while Staff would handle the "operations" side of USAS. The elected Board would then select the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, etc. On the Saturday BOD meeting most all of the 'Governance' items were approved as proposed.

The Board items were not the only items to be discussed though. There were some rules revised, wording clarified, additional rules for Open Water Swimming, etc. The rule that is effective immediately is the wording for the Individual Medley. Regarding turns (and the clarification of the "Lochete Rule"), the revision to the wording is "except that in the freestyle turn, **the swimmer must return to the breast**

before any kick or stroke". This rule becomes effective September 21, 2017. I will be sending this out to all of the Zone Official's Chairs as well as the Coaches.

Thursday – Official's Committee Workshop

This is a class where the National Official's Committee discusses what has happened in the past year, including FINA, National Meets, OTS (Official's Tracking System), Open Water, etc. The format after the reports is an open forum with a question and answer session with the audience.

Rules and Regulations:

A continuance of the discussions that started on Wednesday. Again, there were many different points of view in regards to the "Governance" part of the R&R's.

Navigating the Coach/Official Relationship:

The panel included Jim Holcomb, David Coddington and Bob Menck representing the Officials, with Marci Callen, Todd Schmitz and Matt Webber as the Coaches. The moderator gave scenarios to the Coaches and Officials for responses as to how each would handle the situation as well as how the "other side" would expect the situation to be resolved. There was questions and answers from the audience. In my view, it is always a good practice to listen to the Coaches' concerns and follow up with the Coach with answers. There is a "respect" formed when both parties understand that the other has a job to do.

Western Zone Meeting:

Financials were discussed regarding the two Zone Championship meets. There was also the introduction of the 3 candidates for the Non-Coach Director as David Coddington was at the end of his Term. These included Jim Patterson, Dale Ammon, and Deanna Culpepper. The Friday meeting was for the election. As requested and granted, there was a question and answer with the candidates. Our Athlete Representatives had some excellent questions to ask the candidates and were able to form their opinions and vote on whom they felt the most comfortable with. One of the concerns for the Athlete Rep's was the candidates' opinions on the Diversity and Inclusion programs. Both Athlete Reps chose Dale Ammon for his forward thinking, his thoughts on D & I, and his energy moving the Zone Forward. I was also named the Co-Meet Referee for the Western Senior Zone Meet in Clovis in August. I will be sure to promote the new Mentor / Mentee program that is offered at this Meet as there are reimbursements for the Official's that are involved.

Friday – Burning Issues for Officials:

An open session format with the audience asking questions of Jim Holcomb and Jay regarding all topics in the Officiating world. Interesting to hear some of the questions and concerns from the various LSC's. My take-aways are that we do a lot of things right!

Laying Foundations and Building Bridges: Making your LSC more Effective:

I have a free time where I sat in on this class. I was interested in the workings of the Board as my position is more as an "Associate" to the Board. Again, as with the "Burning Issues" class, Pacific Swimming does a lot of things very well. There are other LSC's that struggle with various situations where as Pacific Swimming's Staff is a "well-oiled Machine" :o).

As noted above, there was the Western Zone Meeting for the elections Friday evening.

HOD meeting:

The Friday HOD meeting includes the Memorials for the Members of USAS that have passed away in the previous year. Unfortunately, Pacific Swimming has lost three of our Officiating Family. George Cleveland, Peggy Ramirez, and Joyce Lamphere passed away this year. They all will be missed as they were all Loved. After the memorial, the meeting went to the more enjoyable with awards being given.

For Pacific Swimming, Veronica Hernandez was honored with the Volunteer of the Year award! Congratulations Veronica! Other Swimming Awards were also given.

Saturday – HOD meeting:

As noted, this was to be a meeting filled with different viewpoints. Pools were taken as to when the meeting would end (it ended just before 1:00PM). As the end of the Day, we will have a new type of Board for USAS going forward. Most all of the Governance items were approved with very little change.

A Board of Directors will be elected, and in turn, they will select the President, Vice-President, and other Officers. Yet to be determined is how and how much each of the 4 Zones will have a say in the direction of USASwimming.

As I had noted last year, what an Outstanding opportunity to meet with Officials from all across the United States. To reconnect with Officials that I have worked with in the past from various LSC's, and meet new Swimming Friends that I look forward to working with in the future.

Wrapping up, I truly had an outstanding experience to be around like minded people, Volunteers, that do what we do out of the Love of the Sport and the people we work with. I must say that I got the most enjoyment, other than learning new ideas, was meeting the people that I have had the pleasure to work with over my Officiating Career. The Convention was enjoyable, inspirational, informative and a whole lot of fun! I look forward to my next opportunity to attend. **Respectfully Submitted, Michael Davis**