

2017 USAS Convention, Dallas, TX

Wednesday, September 13, 2017

Senior Development Committee Meeting

Reported Meets

11/29-12/2/17	Winter Nationals	Columbus, OH
12/6-9/17	Winter Speedo Junior	Knoxville, TN & Iowa City, IA
7/25-29/18	Phillips 66 National Championships	Irvine, CA
7/31-8/4/18	Speedo Junior National Championships	Irvine, CA
8/2-5/18	Futures	VA, NC, MN & Santa Clara, CA
11/28-12/1/18	Winter Nationals	Greensboro, NC
12/5-8/18	Winter Speedo Juniors	Greensboro, NC & Austin, TX
7/31-8/4/19	Phillips 66 National Championships	Stanford, CA
8/6-10/19	Junior National Championships	Stanford, CA
8/1-8/4/19	Futures	Sites TBA

A lot of talk centered on whether there should be an 18&U "C" Final at Nationals and US Open Meets. Some coaches wanted there to be ABC & possibly D finals that were open so that more athletes regardless of age get the second swim. Others wanted to showcase the 18&U even though it meant that sometimes there were open lanes. There were also concerns about how having these extra C and D finals would affect TV coverage. No change was made.

Time standards have been proposed and there is approximately a 0.1 sec/50 meters reduction in time cuts for the Juniors Meet. These time standards will be on the website in a week (they are currently there now).

Other concerns regarding Junior Nationals (all discussed but no changes were made):

- Junior Finals Start Time
- Changing the Summer Jr. bonus time to match the Winter Jr. bonus time
- D heat at Jr. Nationals
- Anything to increase relay participation
- 3 time trials allowed instead of 2

A protocol was set to clarify distance events swims in either the AM or PM. Effective November 2017, swimmers must positively check in for distance events. Some swimmers were not checking in so that they could swim in the AM session instead of the PM session. Swimmers could still enter a slower qualifying time to take them out of the PM session so that they can swim in the AM session.

Other topics that had been brought to the Senior Committee beforehand, had to be tabled due to time. Many of the topics were general questions – Meets, Pools, Education, Definition of "Senior" and "Development"

First Rodeo? ConvEd First Timers Corral

This was a fun workshop on how to get the most out of the convention. I was at a table of five people and our table name was CONDINY, which stood for California, Oklahoma, North Dakota, Iowa and New York, the states we were all from. We played a number of team games and our team came in second, winning us all Speedo lanyards. We also received our Lingo Bingo cards for us to play during the House of Delegates meeting on Friday and Saturday. It was fun meeting people from different states with various positions within USA Swimming.

Awards Committee (Open portion)

This was a small committee meeting with only 8 of us attending. Ellaine Cox was the chairperson and Mike Unger was the staff liaison. Of the awards submitted in 2016, Ron Van Pool won the Paragon Award. All other nominations were unsuccessful in swimmers winning. For 2017 the nominations for awards were:

Paragon Award – Frank Busch

Olympic Torch – Rowdy Gains

Rings of Gold – Jimi Flowers

There was discussion about whether USA Swimmers of the Year should receive physical awards for multiple wins, due to the sheer size of the awards and where they end up. They have very few Philadelphia Bowls (Bailey Banks & Biddle) left, but they are available for purchase on the secondary market if that is the award they would like to stick with.

World Record rings will be award this year to: Lilly King, Caeleb Dressel, Simone Manuel, Mallory Comerford, Kathleen Baker, Kelsi Worrell and Kevin Cordes. Athletes only are awarded a World Record ring on their first record breaking swim.

Ellaine received a couple of standard awards to use for Photo Ops. This gives a standardized look and prevents accidental breakage at the awards ceremony. The true award (usually crystal or glass) will be mailed to the recipient's home.

Thursday, September 14, 2017

#SwimBiz: Oh Snap! Tips, Trick and Trends in Social Media

This meeting was to talk about the “business side of swimming”. First, Kara Raney talked about Snap Chat. 60% of 13-24 years olds use Snapchat and 63% of 18-34 year olds. It is a social media tool that is best used by the swimmers. You can set up a GeoFilter which produces a photo border for pictures taken at a location/event (i.e. Far Western Championships). As athletes add photos for their stories, your event receives publicity. GeoFilters cost \$5/day/20,000 sq. ft. – so a 4 day meet could cost about \$100 depending on the facility footage. SnapMap keeps track of where the most photo/posts are made and allows other users to see who else is in that area.

Nailah Ellis Timberlake then spoke on engaging social media to the fullest. The three B's are Bold, Behind the Scenes and Built on Trends. Bold utilizes photos and videos to grab people's attention. Using techniques such as Slo-Mo and Time Lapse also make people want to see what you're posting and share them. Other photo manipulation apps you can use are PicStitch, Flipagram, and ClipStitch. Behind the Scenes is about using contests, holidays and live events to promote your site. Built on Trends was about using what's currently popular. Nailah used an example of posting a photo of a swimming dog to get others talking about National Pet Day. It was a top trending item. There is a media release on the USA website under Resources, Communication Toolkit. For anyone in the background, you don't need a media release.

An Open Forum on Technical Suits in Age Group Swimming

USA Swimming created this forum to allow its members to air the pros and cons of allowing younger swimmers to wear tech suits. They have already hired a consultant, Stuart Isaac to gather information from coaches and LSCs. He will present his findings at the November Board Meeting. Stu background includes athlete, coach, Speedo employee.

Topics that people shared about and had concerns about with include: what age group(s) should be restricted, which suits constitute being a "tech" suit, team vs. LSC vs. USA standards, is this subject based on money and/or demographics, effect this will have on NAG records.

It seemed like most people were okay with 10&Unders being restricted from using tech suits. But no one could decide on what the upper age should be – 11/12 or 13/14 or puberty onset (!) They also couldn't decide about whether tech suits were okay for championship meets, which would give an unfair advantage to the swimmer that is aging up right before a championship meet vs. the swimmer that ages up before the championship meet.

Most people would like to have a decision, or at least a recommendation from USA Swimming. When LSCs make the decision, families might choose to swim in a nearby LSC that does allow tech suits. Similarly when teams have written policies or recommendations, there are repercussions from families leaving to swim with a team that does allow tech suits. Which rules govern when travelling outside your LSC? It was determined that the sanctioning LSC's rules govern.

There was discussion regarding whether the usage of tech suits was based on money and demographics. With the decrease in numbers of 10 & Unders registering with USA Swimming, it would behoove us to make the sport as accessible as possible. If that means relieving families of having to purchase \$300-500 suits, that can only help the sport. Others asked up the question why suit manufacturers were even making suits in sizes 16 & 18.

The Southern CA LSC has already passed legislation on this topic. Southern CA made the decision based on education, not monetary reasons. They want to teach athletes to focus on their stroke and not on a tech suit getting you to the next level. The first two months were rough, but now they have no issues. No tech suits for 10 & Unders; 11 & 12 are allowed tech suits at Age Group Champs, maximum of 3 times per year; tech suits allowed at all Senior Meets. Penalty of wearing a tech suit is a DQ for that swim. Definition of a tech suit is bonded and/or welded seams. Suits that do not fall under the tech suit classification include Aquablade.

Everyone would like there will be a unilateral decision coming from USA Swimming coming from Stu's report. It will make things even across the board and give LSCs and clubs the clout with which to enforce these rules.

Robert's Rules of Order

Although I knew the basics of Robert's Rules from attending our BOD and HOD meetings, I thought it would be good to go for an actual talk about this topic. The meeting was held in the Athlete area, which provided me with a good view of how many Athlete Reps were actually attending the conference. I was impressed with the facilities and programs provided for the athletes. This seminar was run by Sam Hansen, Chief Parliamentarian for the House of Delegates Meeting. Sam was attending his 10th convention and was recently named to Parliamentarian. Sam talked about the order of how a meeting is generally run and other terms that they athletes might hear. He showed an original video that he and his friends made enacting an actual meeting including motions for amendments, calling the question, and point of order. This was an informative way to learn about Robert's Rules. It was fun to be sitting behind Sam at the House of Delegates and to be able to ask him questions such as whether there were time limits on speaker's comments or they weren't speaking to the topic, as they went on and on with their filibustering.

Western Zone Meeting

The officers were introduced and reports were presented. 2016 Convention minutes were passed, as well as the minutes from the business meeting in Roseville. Denna Culpepper presented information on the Age Group Champs in Roseville, CA, and Senior Champs in Fresno, CA. The 2017-18 budget was presented and passed. Kent Yoshiwara from Pacific Swimming was invited to present what was happening within Disability and Inclusion, as Pacific Swimming has far surpassed other LSCs in this program. This year, they would like to take an all-star team to the Washington DC Black History Meet. The 2018 Diversity and Inclusion Meet will be held in San Diego, CA, June 14-17, 2018. Other items were tabled until the next day so that the delegates could meet the candidates up for election the next day. Running for Zone Director were Dale Ammon (CO), Denna Culpepper (SN) and Jim Patterson (CC). Debbie Baldwin (SDI) was the sole candidate for Secretary/Treasurer. Cathy Vaughn (UT) and Linda Seckinger (CO) were the two candidates for Championship Meet Coordinator.

Friday, September 15, 2017

Club Development Committee Business Meeting

Tom Avischious presented membership numbers from 2001-2017. There has been an increase in the number of officials memberships and coach memberships. While there has been an overall increase in athlete membership from last year, numbers for 12 & Unders aren't keeping up. While the overall retention rate hovers around 74% overall, 12 & Unders are only at about 60% and have traditionally been lower than the overall number. This is part of the reason behind the motion for a new type of membership call the Flex Membership. Pat Hogan presented this new 2-year project. The cost of the Flex Membership for athletes would be \$20 (any more and it isn't appealing to families anymore). The proposed rollout date would be September 1, 2018 pending IT updating SWIMS in time. Athletes would

be limited to swimming in two meets, which again would need IT development to screen when the limit has been reached. The athletes would not be allowed to swim in any LSC Championship Meets but have the possibility to upgrade to regular membership at which point they could swim in the championship meets. Pat said that this Flex Membership was optional on a club to club basis. This was important information, as I brought this up in our Pacific Swimming pre-HOD meeting and Clint was able to use this to question the wording in the HOD Motion which made it a mandatory offering by each LSC.

There have been yearly Best Practices Round Table Meetings for clubs that have 500+ swimmers, usually multi-site clubs. They will also be hosting the 4th Club President Summit with about 27 Club Presidents. The clubs were chosen based on Virtual Club Championship Improvement, Club Excellence, and other parameters.

Athletes Committee: Engaging and Empowering LSC Athlete Leadership

Ceallach Gibbons presented the Athlete Leadership Panel that included Grace Edwards (VA), Maria Davila (SDI), Tony Young (IL), Joe Gazzarato (MI), JP Greener (AZ), Annie Norris (GU) and Darcey Barron (GU). The panel presented practical ideas and experiences they had for the athletes to build up their own LSCs athlete rep base. Some LSCs planned retreats or had day-long meetings. Both are challenging to find an available date for athletes, as they are very busy. The challenge for Pacific Swimming is the vast geographical area that our LSC covers. Getting all the athlete reps together in person would entail needing a budget for travel costs from the far reaches of our LSC. Ideas that Pacific could put on the new athlete website would be: 1) PDF of the Rule Book; 2) meeting dates; 3) Robert's Rules Video. The goal would be to have an athlete rep from each team, which is a huge number of athletes in Pacific.

Times and Recognition Committee Business Meeting

During the 2016-17 season, there were 81 NAG records broken (27 LC, 55 SC), 2 World Records, 51 American Records, 33 US Open Records and 8 World Junior Records set. Although there were complaints of difficulty navigating the new USA Swimming website, there were 1158 successful SAA applicants for the season. Many LSCs complained that the word is not getting out to the athletes to apply for SAA. But USA Swimming and individual LSCs can only do so much to advertise; the athletes still need to apply.

There is difficulty in the recording of Mixed Relays, when going from Hy-tek to SWIMS. The way Hy-tek classifies "mixed" is different from what SWIM considers "mixed". It takes a lot of manual work for computer operators to determine which relays are truly "mixed" – 2 males & 2 females. Hopefully IT can fix this by September 1, 2018. The SAA committee reported that they will again use the Winter Jr. Nationals times from 2017 as the qualifying time for SAA. They also voted and passed allowing 9th graders with the cut time to apply for SAA status. NCAA meets will no longer be "observed" meets. All times from NCAA meets will be eligible for use in USA Swimming.

Western Zone Meeting

Unfinished business from the previous meeting include the Senior Zone Meet in Clovis will be July 31 – August 4 and the Age Group Zone meet will be August 8 – 11 in 2018. Bid for meets in 2019 were: Age

Group Zone – Oregon Swimming, Sr. Zone Meet – Clovis Swim Club and Open Water Zone – So. Cal Swimming at Lake Castaic. All bids were approved.

Delegates were allowed to ask questions of the Director candidates. Brandon Shi, our Athlete Rep from Pacific, very eloquently asked the candidates their stance on diversity, as we are a very diverse LSC. His question was instrumental in weeding out the candidate that previously had indicated he did not support Diversity and Inclusion. Elections were held and Dale Ammon (CO) was elected the new Zone Director, Debbie Baldwin stays on as Secretary/Treasurer and Kathy Vaughn (UT) is the Championship Meet Coordinator.

Motions voted on included: scoring relays at the AG Meet to 16th place (passed), removing the skits at the AG Meet (failed), allowing flexibility on dates for AG Meet (passed). Allowing a range of dates available for the AG Meet gives the host team flexibility based on when athletes have to return back to school.

House of Delegates Meeting, Part I

The meeting started off with the Memorium slide show which included 69 honorees. Of note were: Adolf Kiefer, Chuck Wiegus and from Pacific Swimming George Cleveland, Joyce Lanphere and Peggy Ramirez. Following his Chair Report, Jim Sheehan presented the Life Memberships and presentations to Past Board Members. Receiving the Life Membership from Pacific Swimming was Volunteer of the Year Veronica Hernandez. Next the LEAP Awards were handed out to LSC ranging from \$1000 to \$5000. Many other awards were handed out, including the Athlete's Appreciation Award to Chuck Wiegus and the Performance of the Year Award to Lilly King.

Saturday, September 16, 2017

House of Delegates Meeting, Part II

After a Call to Order by Jim Sheehan, the Membership Report was presented, much of what I heard at the Club Development Meeting. There were presentations by the Foundation and a very short Credential report from Pacific's Laurie Benton (thanks Laurie!). We then were introduced to Tim Hinchey, the new CEO. Tim gave a shout out to Pacific Swimming telling everyone he grew up swimming at the Walnut Creek Swim Club and then did some fall training at San Ramon Valley Aquatics with Richard Thornton. When he wanted to go back to swim with his friends, he credits Richard with still allowing him to train Unattached with SRVA while swimming rec. Tim was thrilled to be able to travel to Budapest to see USA swim and to see the amazing attitude of our swimmers and coaches. The budget was presented and passed and zone elections were announced to the general delegation.

One of the main Rules and Regulations motions was to transition from an operations-based Board to a governance-focused Board. This move would allow the board to focus on strategic planning, while allowing staff to work on the execution of these ideas. After many concerned comments, the motion passed beyond the 2/3 margin. The second big motion was the adoption of the new Flex Membership. Clint Benton (PC) moved for an amendment to change the wording from "LSCs are required to offer this membership" to "offered at the option of LSC". This allows all LSCs to decide if it is advantageous for them to offer this. The delegation also approved to amend the motion reducing the USA cut of the Flex

Membership from \$15 to \$10. Now, of the \$20 Flex Membership fee, \$10 goes to the LSC and \$10 goes to USA Swimming. There were also motions passed legislating the use of wedges in relay takeoffs and to grant exception to the 120 day rule for athletes displaced by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma.

On Saturday night, I had the opportunity to speak with Tim Hinchey about his history within Pacific Swimming and how nice it was to have someone who understood the challenges Pacific faces with rec swimmers and the whole Contra Costa County system.

Also, I had the pleasure of meeting the widow and daughter of Chuck Wiegus. I was able to tell them how much it meant to our family that Chuck took the time during his own fight with cancer to write words of encouragement to Matt when he heard of Matt's cancer diagnosis.