

October 4, 2018

USAS Convention

Jacksonville, Florida

Sept. 26 – 29, 2018

RE: Notes from the Convention

**Wednesday, Sept. 26**

**Official's Committee Workshop:** Jim Holcomb went over the upcoming Meets for the new swim season. The important note is that we will have both the Senior Nationals and Jr. Nationals in our own LSC, at Stanford! The 2019 Winter Jr. Nationals will be at Federal Way in Washington. Jim also went over Fina updates, and the upcoming rules updates (the biggest one being the ban of tech. suits for 12U swimmers.

Bill Rose went over the On-Line Testing for Officials. Admittedly, not much of interest to report on.

Melissa Hellervik-Bing went over National Evaluations. This included the difference in the requirements of an N2 evaluation vs. an N3 evaluation. Melissa also discussed the tremendous feedback received from the Evaluators Clinic in Minneapolis, Minnesota. We sent Leo Lin and Gary Arita to the Clinic and they came back with a lot of information. She also discussed the upcoming Zone Clinics and the "New Referee" workshops. The Officials Chair's quarterly calls were also mentioned.

Jamie Cahn discussed working towards a "Uniformity of Officiating" throughout the LSC's to create more consistency. There was also discussion regarding the upcoming "Share-Site" where LSC Official's Chairs will send in our training power point presentations, videos, etc. so that all Officials will get the benefit of being able to access the shared files.

Sandy Drake went over the National Open Water Meet held in Tempe this year describing the "un-clear" water. She discussed the (3) regional open water clinics that will be held in 2019. (I would like to send our 3 interested Official's to one of these). Sandy also discussed the future N2 and N3 Open Water certifications.

The Athlete's Report was giving by Patrick Hunter. He went over the Monthly Newsletter from the Official's Chair, the "Situations & Resolutions" section on the website to be updated and the vision of having an Athlete centric thought process regarding Official's decisions.

Another comment from Jim Holcomb was that the Applications for Officiating at National type meets will be up on the website 180 days before the meet and remain open for at least 60 days.

Bob Griffiths went over OTS, and it's new features, but admittedly he was very confusing with his accent and information.....

Mary Jo Swalley discussed concussion training requirements and stated that the number one time for potential concussions at a swim meet are during warm-ups.. Some states have a requirement of Officials to take an on-line class and get a certificate in order to officiate. Officials officiating in other states will

Wednesday (cont.)

need to meet the requirements of that state. If an athlete is removed from a meet due to a concussion, a release letter / note from a Doctor would be required.

**Western Zone General Chairs Meeting:** Athletes registered in the Western Zone is approx.. 96,000. Western Zone Open Water Championships will be in the summer. The Western Senior Zone and AG Zone Championship Mentor / Mentee program has been combined into one program with the reimbursement fund. A much simpler system! The Western Senior Zone Championship Meet will add a third pool on the first day, enabling all of the 1500 meter events to be swam on the first day, all of the 800 meter events to be swam on the last day. Also discussed was a fee for late entries. The final outcome was similar to what we use in Pacific Swimming, a onetime fee along with a fee for the individual events.

**Rules and Regulations:** Lots of verbiage “clean-up” stuff. The biggy was the ban on tech. suits being used by 12U athletes after Sept. 2020. This was later passed at the HOD meeting on Saturday. Another rule update was that if backstroke ledges are used, they shall all match and be available for each lane of competition. One upcoming item will be the need for a “Meet Safety Director” and it will be noted on the Meet Sheet / Announcement. I am of the mind that this can be in place of the Meet Marshall. All HK (housekeeping) items moved through to the HOD meeting.

**Thursday, Sept. 27**

**Looking out for our Athletes:** Discussion was around seeing Healthy / Unhealthy relationships, looking at body language, listening to phrases, focusing on behaviors. Emotional abuse usually preceeds physical abuse. Important to realize the signs / signals and notify someone. This is an extension of Safe Sport.

**Advocacy & Understanding; Coaches and Officials:** The Officials were represented by Jackie Allendar and Cecil Gordon. The relationships between Athletes and Coaches and Athletes and Officials were discussed. A Coach will always be an advocate for their Athlete. A question was posed to the Coaches, “I wish all Officials would...”, and a question to the Officials was “I wish all Coaches would..”. Our Officials noted that they would like the Coaches to “know the rules” and “read the Meet Announcement” :o)! Coaches and Officials are all “Athlete Centric”. Although how to get more parents involved in Officiating was discussed, no earth shattering ideas were presented :o).

**Rules and Regulations:**

A continuance of the discussions that started on Wednesday. Everything was approved and sent through to the HOD! A short meeting compared to past years!

**Western Zone Business Meeting:**

There was a vote for the Western Zone Chair and as Sean was unopposed, he won! LOL. All Western Zone Board Members gave their reports. Nothing too exciting. Further discussion regarding an addition of a late entry option for Western Senior Zones. Lot’s of discussion about the amount that a late entry would cost. A \$500.00 late fee was discussed. The Pacific Swimming delegates to Western Zones supported the late Entry option, but at a fee that was more in line with what we do for the Far Western meets. I am impressed with our Athlete reps. They ask good questions and take notes in meetings. They represent Pacific Swimming well. Finished the meeting with comments from the athletes running for the Western Zone Athlete reps positions.

**Friday, Sept. 28**

**Playing by Robert's Rules:** Admittedly, I did not know all of the "rules" in "Robert's Rules" and thought that this would be important for me to sit in on. Dan McAllen was the presenter, and he made it interesting! I now understand various motions, "calls to order", "call the question" and other "proceedures". One thing I learned is that the Chair may anticipate a motion that may create a lot of discussion that may prolong conversation, but not in a helpful way, circling around numerous times. The Chair may have a "plant" in the room who will "call the Question" when given a "sign" from the Chair that the conversations/discussions are not moving forward. (I was asked to be this "plant" at the Western Zone meeting later that afternoon).

**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. Some of the discussion was the same as last year. A topic that created conversation was social media and the use of it in the Officiating world. Posting of pictures showing Officials having fun at meets, and get-togethers in the evenings show others how much fun officiating can be. This is something that I will work with staff and the Official's Committee to extend our social media platform.

**Meet the Candidates:** This was an opportunity to meet the Candidates running for the new Board positions. I did not get a feel for any of the Candidates as they were asked a few "canned" questions that really did not give us much information. Their Bios were more informative for me. They did not take any questions from the audience but were available to walk up to them after the Q&A. I suggested to the athlete reps to go and meet with them to get an "up close" impression.

**Western Zone Business Meeting:** The Athlete rep was voted upon. Then the conversation / vote came up for the location of the 2020 AG Zone meet. Hawaii was originally the only entry, but Mt. Hood, Oregon put in a bid at the last minute. Mt. Hood ended up being awarded the Meet. In regards to the late entry option, it was approved with a lower than \$500.00 penalty, and also with the Meet Referee having the option of enforcing the fee.

**HOD meeting:**

The Friday HOD meeting includes the Memorials for the Members of USAS that have passed away in the previous 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.

**Saturday – HOD meeting:**

Although I did not attend the meeting, the notes of importance: Tech suits will not be allowed for 12U after September 2020 except at USA Swimming Championship Meets. The new Board of Directors will now have Jay Thomas, Tom Ugast, Robert Vincent, Jeanette Skow, Dr. Cecil Gordon, and Chris Brearton. The Athlete nominees elected are Natalie Coughlin Hall, Maya DiRado and Davis Tarwater.

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**