

To: Minnesota Swimming, Inc. Board of Directors
From: John Witzel
Re: 2012 United States Aquatic Sports Convention

Thank you for sending me to the 2012 United States Aquatic Sports Convention at Greensboro, NC. My attendance was required as Chair of the USA Swimming Championship Evaluation Committee. This year, I was also appointed as a Presidential At-Large Member of the USA Swimming House of Delegates.

Championship Evaluation Committee: The Committee held a Business Meeting on September 13. By way of background, the Committee completes evaluation surveys of National Championship meets (National Championships, Junior National Championships, the US Open Championships). The survey reports are used to give feedback to USA Swimming and meet hosts and to improve future meets. In the past year, the Committee has been trying new techniques and has had its mission expanded by the USA Swimming Board of Directors. At the Business Meeting, we reviewed the past year and planned for the future. One of our projects this past year was to survey LSCs regarding their methods of meet evaluations with the idea that our Committee might learn some techniques from them. We found that most LSCs do not have a formal or defined evaluation process. Most were interested in knowing what others were doing and having resources or templates available to use.

Workshops and Presentations:

1. Officials Committee: The members of the committee reported on their areas of responsibility.
Bob Griffiths reported on the Officials Tracking System. There are currently 11,488 registered officials in USA Swimming. About 60% of those are Male and 40% Female. At the National levels (N2 and N3), there are 1738 certified as Stroke and Turn Judges, 764 certified as Chief Judges, 832 certified as Starters, 625 certified as Deck Referees, and 262 certified as Administrative Referees. Bob described changes and additions to the tracking system.
Amy Hoppenroth and Jamie Cahn reported on Communications: Among the projects is a Newsletter to Officials which has been in place since April 2012. LSCs are encouraged to nominate officials from their membership for the Maxwell Award.
Lucy Duncan reported on Education and Training. A set of guidelines for officials, "The Professional Official" was posted on the website in June. Next will be an update of the Officiating Manual.
Melissa Hellervig-Bing reported on Mentoring and Evaluations. There are presently 112 National Evaluators at the N3 level. This does not include those officials who evaluate at the N2 level or N3 Stroke and Turn Judge.

The emphasis is upon mentoring N3 and N2 officials and evaluators have been required to participate in a webinar on mentoring.

The athlete members of the Officials Committee reviewed official coverage at National Championships and Olympic Trials from the athlete perspective. They emphasized the importance of getting more officials for developmental meets. Swimmers need to get coverage to judge them adequately so that they get called for rules violations while developing rather than at important meets.

Carol Zaleski reported on developments at FINA.

Jim Sheehan reported on the experience of officiating at the Olympics.

Dan McAllen reported on rules updates.

Joel Black reported on initiative between the YMCA and USA Swimming.

2. Burning Issues for Officials This presentation affords officials the opportunity to ask questions of the Official Committee Members.
3. Open Water Swimming Seminar. This presentation was led by John Kinney. It had a very interesting presentation on safety and open water medical issues.
4. N3 Officiating Clinics. A series of Clinics on Mentoring N3 Officials was presented. Because of conflicts with the Championship Evaluation Committee Business Meeting, I was only able to attend the one for Administrative Referees, which was presented by Lucy Duncan. An outline of what was presented is contained in the "Professional Official" series on the USA Swimming website.

Central Zone Meetings: Paul Thompson is retiring as Non-Coach Zone Director. Steve Potter for Michigan was elected to that position.

House of Delegates: Most of the legislation which came to the HOD was non-controversial and went quickly. There were several Athlete Protection rules proposals that took a lot of time and discussion.

Respectfully submitted
John Witzel