

UANA TSSC
2014 UANA Pan American Championships
Meetings

MINUTES

August 10

In attendance: Rose, Brian, Heather, Victoria, Patricia, Barbara, Charlotte, Leslie, Laura, Sue N, Sue J, Jackie McDaniel (assistant to the Chief Recorder). Ana Maria absent

1. Briefing on Competition: from Organizing Committee, Chief Referee, Chief Recorder

- TSSC toured the pool facility

- Practice: figures only during figures events, routine practice in Cutter Pools; Team warm ups will be posted on wall at Technical Meeting; Laura will control the warmups

- Judges- no dedicated interior space allocated, area cordoned off outside near scoring room, chits are numbered for figures, judges will have to number for routines

- Figures: TSSC assignments and location of panels reviewed for each age group, Brian will be Assistant Referee on one panel, clerk of course is desirable to check credentials if 4 volunteers are available to do this, Barracuda panels will start later than the other 3 given it is very fast. 3 pre swimmers available to each panel; judges to discuss scores after each, judges to be reminded to write their score clearly, cross out and write it again if a change is needed

On the morning of August 10th, Barbara, Sue N and Heather drew the option groups for Figures as follows- 12 & Under and 13-15 – Group 3, Junior - Group 2; the Groups were posted at the pool as well as posted to the UANA website

- Routines: Chief Recorder will be on deck for routines by announcer, TSSC will be by the Last Call area, 2-3 chairs to be provided at the start and the score announcement area; Barbara will video the Technical Duets

- Timers – TSSC to back up if needed, Chief Referee designated Laura to ensure they understand their duties and how to operate the stop watch

- Technical Meeting: Power Point will be adjusted to include Optional Figures and other changes, Passport Check – Barbara, Laura and Victoria will check the passport photocopies submitted against the entry list as soon as possible – follow up if needed can happen at the Technical Meeting

- Opening Ceremonies agenda reviewed- N Vega and R Warren will present the Athletes Oath in Spanish and English respectively, G Viglino and J McLaughlin will present the Officials Oath. Barb will send the Spanish translation to Heather for our records.

- Entries: Sue confirmed the entries from the 13 participating federations as follows:
12 & Under Figures 60, Solo 16, Duet 13, Team 6
13-15 Figures 88, Solo 17, D 13, Team 8
Junior Figures 63, Solo 15, Duet 12, Team 5
Senior Technical Duet 5, Free Duet 6
Team Leaders/Coaches will be reminded changes to routine entries are due 2 hours prior to the start of the event; they may be submitted by email

Results will be printed and displayed at the pool, otherwise they will be distributed electronically. Those who wish may give Sue J a memory stick to get a copy of the full results at the end of the competition. Barbara will post the results to the UANA Website. They will then go up on the USA Synchro web site and hopefully on the UANA Pan Am Synchro Facebook group page too. If possible the meet manager will distribute them to her team

leader/coach email lists. Routine scores for each competitor will be presented on completion of the next competitor's performance. Results and related paperwork for each category will be colour coded.

Awards: we confirmed there will be medals for the top 3 competitors in each event including Figures as well as a High Point Award in each category for the top federation. This calculation will include Senior Duets. There will also be an Overall High Point Award for the federation with the highest score across all events.

Live stream of competition: Barbara will post the web address on the website. Sue N noted in the competition information that the schedule would not be adjusted; with live stream we recognize we must stick to the posted times –starting early is not an option.

August 11

In attendance: Rose, Brian, Heather, Victoria, Patricia, Barbara, Charlotte, Leslie, Laura, Sue N, Sue J, Jackie McDaniel (assistant to the Chief Recorder). Ana Maria in transit

- 2. Additions to, adoption of the Agenda:** adopted as circulated. It was noted that the agenda has been reordered at the request of Rose to ensure we do not run out of time to deal with the most important matters. The meeting scheduled for Aug. 13 is cancelled due to the coach/judge/TSSC/volunteers social event.

3. Competitions

AJ UANA Championships: Rose noted we have now completed 2 full competition cycles with each zone hosting a UANA Pan Am synchro competition per cycle as envisioned. Heather noted this is our 9th UANA Pan Am over the past 10 years – we did not hold 1 in 2007.

UANA Contract: Brian is working on an updated contract document– there will be 1 common contract for all UANA events, then addendums for each sport to reflect their specific needs. Brian is looking for content ideas from the TSSC for the Synchro Addendum in particular. Approval of the Summons is one that was mentioned. Also the timeline for flight booking policy and repayment needs to be addressed with each host and UANA. Waiting 3 months for payment is not acceptable to us as a TSSC.

Late Payment/No Payment of Fees: we discussed federations who are very slow to pay their fees or delinquent. It was noted one federation (who withdrew from the 2014 championships) owes for the 2013 event. While the 2014 Summons stated 50% payment was required with the preliminary entry and the final 50% with the final entries this did not happen in a number of cases. As a TSSC we do not want our host federations to have this financial stress. In future Summons we will state entries will not be accepted from federations in arrears on entry fees from previous years.

We will also ask our host federations/organizing committees to send rejection emails to Federations that do not include the required payment for preliminary entries and/or final entries telling them that the entries cannot be accepted without payment attached. We will communicate this new procedure to the federations participating this year along with a note of appreciation for their support of the event. Accreditation could also be withheld unless payment in full is in place. A surcharge for late entries is another option discussed. We do recognize government and banking laws in different countries may make the transfer of funds difficult but we know it is not impossible.

We recognized that moving the date back for Final entries may be sensible – 4 weeks ahead may be too early. Preliminary entries really just need to be numbers in each category and event, final entries must be by name. However hotel reservation cancellation policies/deadlines often dictate when we must have the final entries in by.

Sue J as our Chief Recorder this year said the new Excel spreadsheet system used for the athlete entries and registrations worked very well. We will continue using them. Even better would be an on line registration system if available to us. Barb will do some research into free software. Some available systems charge a fee per registrant which either adds to the federation/club cost or the host.

Schedule: we confirmed at least 1 member of the Commission and the Chief Referee should arrive 2 days prior to the official Technical and Judges Meetings and practice. The remainder of the TSSC should arrive in 1 day prior. We recognized that anyone else on the TSSC arriving early or staying late does so at their own expense.

Some feedback has been received re the cost of this championship for clubs/federations. We share this concern. Of note though costs per person charged by the hosts seem to be very similar year to year. Suggestions included moving the Free Combination event to the same day as Figures. This may help up to reduce the championships by 1 day. We will look at other aspects of the championship plan to determine what are the 'must have' for a successful competition and what are optional.

Judges: we set a minimum requirement that each participating federation must provide of 1 judge to a maximum of 3.

FINA Evaluator: we will check with Ginny Jasontek (FINA TSSC member from the USA) who will be present later in the week as to the direction the FINA TSSC is going with this. Heather and Barbara will do judge evaluations for this year's event.

Building Synchro in the Americas: We also had a discussion on building federation/club loyalty to the annual UANA Synchro Championships making it **the** event in the Americas to be at each year. One suggestion was to add all Senior events to the program. We should also make it more prominent in the annual UANA Calendar. We do need to accommodate FINA events – this year we were impacted in particular by the change in World Juniors from October to late July. The Pan American Sports Festival may also be a factor to consider if it becomes a quadrennial event. Several federations have developed Open competitions which we encouraged but at the same time we have increased the competition choices for clubs/federations perhaps then limiting the growth of our championships. Another thing we can do is celebrate the athletes who have been part of our UANA events and been successful in FINA as well. Patricia will review the data to identify these athletes.

We have always envisioned this event to be a tool to build the sport in the Americas thereby increasing UANA participation in FINA Synchro events and ultimately at the Olympics.

Leslie spoke of the need for Coaches to learn how to build to high performance and that they should select 3 competitions annually- 1 that is above, 1 that is at and 1 that is below their level of performance. That led to a discussion on how the TSSC could help get facilitate coaching development and through the coaches the desired increases in performance. We recognize our Coaches School proposal while praised has drawn very little interest.

The pilot proposal was implemented we think in a modified format in Barbados with the support of Errol Clark. They accessed a FINA Development Clinic grant and brought in Luca del Mastro (VEN) as the trainer. We will try to find out more about the clinic content and feedback and get some photos if possible to promote it on the SY page on the UANA website if appropriate.

Another idea was having host federations include a FINA Development Clinic along with our annual competition but rather than being classroom based it could be more on deck observation/feedback focussed. We recognized we need to brainstorm more on more ways to build coaching skills in the Americas and that we need to have a discussion with Dale Neuberger, FINA Vice President about what flexibilities in funding FINA may be able to offer to help us achieve this goal. It was recognized that we will need also to speak with the other FINA Bureau members from the Americas. The Pan American Sports Festival may afford us an opportunity to at least meet with Dale (if he is attending) to begin such a discussion. As Leslie is not able to attend she asked Charlotte to work with Rose and Brian and represent the Coaches Sub Committee.

Financial constraints are recognized as a real barrier for many federations in Zone 1 and 2 in particular.

UANA Entry Fee: We are also concerned the UANA Entry fee is not favourable to the Host – Brian will take this forward to the Executive.

Also discussed was levying a late entry fee – we agreed to this in principle.

2015 Host- this competition will be held in Calgary, Alberta, Canada at the Talisman Centre August 16-22.

Hosting for 2016 – bid process. Once we have a new Contract and Synchro Addendum template we can circulate a request for bids for 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019

B] 2014 PASO Olympic Festival: Heather has been the lead TSSC contact for this event September 27-29, 2014 in Mexico City. Our events will take place at the indoor Olympic pool. While our allocation of athletes is 30, the last notification we had of our entry was 43. Swimming was not fully subscribed so UANA proposed to the organizers that the extra spots be allocated to the other aquatic sports participating. They have very kindly allowed this to happen so we have not been required to have a selection process. Final entries are due August 27th.

At the request of UANA and the organizers of the Sports Festival and in recognition of the significant costs of offering this competition opportunity to the UANA federations a number of cost saving measures have been implemented including using more judges from the host federation, using judges from the TSSC, reducing the judge allocation to Zones 3 and 4 to 1, shortening everyone's time in Mexico city, etc. We have cooperated to the best of our ability.

Judge selection has been completed by Rose and Heather as per UANA direction. We were required to follow the Summons guidelines indicating FINA/UANA A and B judges were preferred. We reviewed the FINA Judges List trying to ensure all have been to FINA judges school and used the UANA Judges List as well. A few G judge were selected to fill the 15 positions.

A letter was circulated to the UANA federations as well as copied to the TSSC explaining the changes that have been made. A few federations have sent in judge nominations that we were not able to accept as the selection process was already complete.

2 of our TSSC members are not able to join us at this event. Travel itineraries should be forthcoming very soon. Ana Paul with ACODEPA has been of tremendous help.

The competition schedule was circulated. Heather will also send it by email along with the list of judges selected for the Festival.

To our knowledge athletes and coaches arrival dates have not been adjusted but with the shortening of TSSC and judges time in Mexico City the opportunity to hold training sessions has been drastically reduced. We do not know if there are any other activities scheduled for us so it is difficult to plan – as we get more details we will look at what we can do.

Information needed- hotel, ground transportation – airport to hotel and to and from the pool, uniforms, special events *Patricia notified us that no uniforms were being provided. Heather will follow up with Ana Paula on the other matters.

C] 2015 Pan Am Games & 2015 UANA Congress: Rose and Heather have been part of a number of teleconferences with the synchro competition organizers over the past 8-10 months. At Rose's request Heather is acting as an alternate technical delegate as needed.

Heather distributed a document with some unconfirmed timelines on it for Synchro. The Qualification document has been circulated. Technical Officials (Judges) are to be selected by December of this year. The Canadian Open will be a test event. Rose is invited to attend; there may be some funding support to PAN AM entries to come too. The aquatic centre/field house is scheduled to be open this month.

<http://www.toronto2015.org/venue/aquatics-centre-and-field-house>

Synchro will be a live broadcast event, the opening ceremonies will involve Cirque de Soleil, MSL will be in charge of results (did the same job in Guadalajara), we share the aquatics space with Diving.

The UANA Congress will take place on July 13th one day after our scheduled date of departure. The UANA Executive is aware that Rose and Brian will need to stay on for this; there is no word so far as to whether any of the rest of us will be supported to attend.

We need to prepare our report for the past quadrennial; we will identify potential content as we meet.

D] 2014 UANA Synchro Calendar of Competitions/events: Heather noted response from federations was very limited this year. She has recently received 2 more competition notices that she will add and then circulate it again.

E] UANA TSSC Operations Manual – UANA Competition Rules: Heather noted we have now offered an annual competition for 9 of the past 10 years and developed quite a body of rules, policy and procedures, forms and competition reports that we can now use. The need to provide our hosts with some standardized documents (Summons template, Entry Excel Templates, etc.) was also mentioned as a significant amount of paperwork is being done year to year that can be streamlined

She has begun moving a lot of this information into a UANA Synchro Handbook – a draft was circulated to the TSSC but there is still much to be done.

August 12

In attendance: Rose, Brian, Heather, Victoria, Patricia, Barbara, Charlotte, Leslie, and Ana Maria. Laura was not with as she was called home by her family to attend to an important matter.

4. Business arising from the UANA TSSC Minutes of August 2013 – items below are from the Meeting Task List that do not appear elsewhere in this Agenda

- Profiles/Pictures for UANA Website: Barbara requested these in late June; some have been received, those who have not completed the form and sent in their picture are reminded to do so. Heather thanked Barbara for taking this task on.

5. Reports:

A] President: Rose thanked everyone for their ongoing hard work and acknowledged Patricia in particular for the great job she is doing with our Statistics. At this point we clarified these statistics are primarily for TSSC use and for our UANA reports

B] UANA Liaison: Brian noted the UANA TSSC is recognized positively for the quality and quantity of work it does and added his own words of appreciation. The UANA Executive will meet in Toronto in April of 2015.

C] Coaches Sub Committee: discussion continued on the topic of sport development in the Americas and coaching in particular. We need to think about how we can move forward using existing FINA funds, build partnerships, sustain coaching development and therefore athletes development, learn about the impacts on participants, keep moving forward, think about alternate models, be innovative and global in our approaches

D] Judges Sub Committee: Barbara noted getting responses to her request for Activity reports for our database continues to be challenging. Many times the email request reaches the federation contact but not the synchro folks. She asked the Zone TSSC members to remind their contacts complete these forms and send them in to her.

With FINA Evaluations suspended for 2014, we do not have any current data to use in selecting our 2015 Pan Am Games judges. LEN has continued to do judge evaluations; in UANA we have encouraged them.

We will let our FINA TSSC members from the Americas know that we support evaluation of judges and need this information for continental development and selection. Judges also need/ want to know the standard they are judging at. They also need a process that outlines how they move up from G to B to A. This is important to us too.

It seems some UANA judges did not get their 2013 evaluations from Chantal. Heather and Barbara will follow up.

While several FINA Judges School were held in the Americas in early 2014, not all our judges are passing. While this may be a language and/or a training factor we are concerned as our ability to grow our judges' ranks is affected negatively.

August 16

In attendance: Rose, Heather, Victoria, Patricia, Barbara, Charlotte, Leslie, and Ana Maria. Brian joined us a little later

Rose announced Ana Maria has been selected to be the Chief Referee at the 2014 Pan American Sports Festival. And that Victoria will be nominated as Chief Referee for the 2015 Pan American Games. We congratulated both of them. Rose also recognized the 2015 UANA Congress will see elections for the Executive who will then in turn appoint the Technical Committees. She expressed her appreciation for the ongoing commitment of the committee members and their hard work, noting we still have the 2014 Pan Am Sports festival, 2015 Pan Am Games and 2015 UANA Pan Am Synchro Championships to carry out as the 2011-2015 UANA TSSC!

6. Communications & Statistics:

- UANA website – Barbara updated us on web site matters. We all want to express our thanks to Greg for all his help with this
- UANA Databases, maps – we discussed further what data would be helpful for promoting our events and for our 2015 Congress report. Patricia will identify the top 10 entries out of our UANA competition in the various events and track their progress in FINA events.
- We also discussed improving our communications within the UANA Synchro family – sending a thank you message to federations to close out the annual championships, developing a synchro update that would recognize success, improvement, results, etc. Ana Maria, Victoria and Patricia will work on this. The Update could focus on UANA matters and outcomes then on FINA matters and outcomes. We would like to distribute the 1st synchro update in late October.
We also want to post more pictures to the website
- UANA TSSC Meeting Minutes: only approved Minutes are posted to the UANA Website. UANA usually allows a certain review period once the draft Minutes are circulated then declares them official if no corrections are received.

7. Strategic Plan:

- As time was running out we did not do an in depth review of 2011-2014 or goal setting for 2014-2015 beyond what is mentioned elsewhere.
- We do want to build talent in the Americas as athletes, coaches, judges, scorers, referees, completion managers and sport managers
- We need to share judges training curricula with those federations getting started with synchro and/or wanting to increase their judges abilities and knowledge
- Another idea was to add a Figure creation clinic to our UANA Pan Ams in 2016 and submit them to FINA for the 2017-2021 list.
- Other topics to discuss include the FINA Highlight routine and proposed Mixed Duet event and if/how/where they might fit in our annual championships. There will be an Extraordinary FINA Congress in Doha in late November where new synchro proposals and rule changes may come forward.

8. **Wrap up, competition debrief:** schedule was good but we can improve it; judges would like a little more quiet time between routines especially if we want routine comments for the coaches and athletes, announcements must be in both languages, we all liked the involvement of past Olympic athletes who were present and invited to present medals. This is a strategy we will look to build on.

Eliminating Solo warm ups was another suggestion as was developing TSSC job descriptions for our on deck roles. A policy from UANA to be included in the host contract is also needed re destruction of photo identification and passport copies, music files and email lists. Heather will review the Minutes and past competition reports for other items that should form part of the contract and/or the Synchro addendum

Our meeting was adjourned at 3:45 pm so we could return to the pool for the International Gala Show.

UPCOMING 2014 FINA SYNCHRO EVENTS IN THE AMERICAS

- Oct 2-5 13th FINA World Cup – Quebec City, Canada
- Oct 15-25 FINA Development Clinic, Kingston JAM
- Oct 29 – Nov 2 FINA Development Clinic, Colorado Springs, USA