

NEWS FROM THE CENTRAL ZONE

Greetings!

Here is a quick update regarding Central Zone business and the January meeting of the USA Swimming Board of Directors.

Central Zone

- **General Chairs Meeting** - We have been unable to find a date that will attract enough LSC representatives to warrant the time and expense that such a meeting would require. There will be no meeting of the CZ LSC General Chairs anytime prior to the 2004 Convention. The General Chairs can discuss this further among themselves at the Tuesday night Central Zone forum at Convention. Perhaps a suitable date for the majority can be established at that time.
- **Central Zone Forum** – Typically, this forum time has been used to deal with matters relating to Sectionals. Last year, the General Chairs indicated that they wished to have no specific topic on the agenda, leaving LSCs free to network among themselves. Please email Julie or Eric to indicate whether you would prefer to have specific topics addressed at this time – such as Sectionals, Zone Meet format, matters relating to USA Swimming, etc. In July, we will publish an agenda for the forum so that you can determine whether you want to work this meeting into your travel schedule.
- **Zone Meet Bids** – Please send your bids to Eric or Julie. The contract and bid form are available from the National Events Department at USA Swimming.
- **Sectional Meet Bids** – Remember that legislation was passed such that the bids need to be submitted to the National Events Department. They also have the bid forms and contracts. Each Section determines its own winning bid, but the forms and contracts need to go to HQ.
- **Proposal for Short Course Zone Meet** – We have received a proposal from Nick Imen that the Central Zone host a short course zone meet. This will be on the fall agenda. It could also be discussed at the forum.
- **Central Zone Manual** – The 2004 version is posted on the Central Zone web site (www.centralzones.org). Hard copies will be provided to each LSC sometime this spring.

USA Swimming Update

- **Web Site** – We are told that a new, friendlier web site will be launched on June 1.
- **Rule Books** – Rule books are being distributed. Updated doping rules were inadvertently omitted from the book but will be included separately with the mailing.
- **2006 Masters World Championships** – A bid has been submitted to host this meet at Stanford University.
- **Males in Swimming** – A task force is attempting to identify the reasons we have so few males in swimming and then to formulate solutions. If you have any insight about this topic or know of projects that have been successful in attracting males or retaining them, please share them with Pat Hogan at HQ.
- **Governance Study** – George Block will be submitting legislation to further implement improvements suggested by the governance study.
- **USA Swimming Foundation** – This foundation has been established by USA Swimming to provide a safe donation vehicle for people who are serious donors. The Foundation will be hosting its inaugural signature fundraising black tie event on November 15, 2004, in New York City at the Hammerstein Ballroom. This will be called the Golden Goggles and a prestigious award will be given to the swimmer of the year (criteria and selection process to be determined). Big name entertainment will be provided and Olympians past and present will be rubbing elbows with the attendees. Cost will be \$8000 per table. Swimming is thinking big and hopes that the Golden Goggles will become a well-known and highly regarded annual event.
- **Doc Counsilman** – A celebration honoring Doc's life is scheduled for April 18th in Indianapolis.
- **Coaches Safety Training** – Murray Stephens has been working diligently with the Red Cross to effect some changes that will make the course material more relevant to competitive swim coaches.

- **Marketing Partners** – The valued sponsors for USA Swimming for 2004 (in alphabetical order) are Argent Mortgage Company, AT&T Wireless, BIC Shaver, Chevy, ConocoPhillips, Mutual of Omaha, Speedo, V8 Splash, and VISA.
- **Game Plan 2005-08** – The budget process has already begun. There has been lots of discussion about Athletes Assistance and Outreach. More after the May meeting.
- **Right to Participate** – USA Swimming is making a concerted effort to support efforts to remove restrictions on athletes who face high school eligibility challenges because they participate with USA Swimming clubs.
- **Minors at Convention** – Requirements for supervision of minors at Convention and for the completion of certain forms will probably be in place soon. Your LSC should be addressing this since you are the ones who will be expected to supervise your minor athletes.
- **Recruitment/General Advertising** – The Board is developing a definition of targeted advertising, with targeted advertising being prohibited in the recruitment of athletes. An explanation of what constitutes targeted advertising will probably be hammered out before Convention. It is not clear whether this will come in the form of legislation to be included in the rule book or whether it will simply serve as a rule interpretation.
- **Mutual of Omaha Duel in the Pool** – It looks like the event will be in April, 2005 and will be against a team of European All-stars (we can't convince the Aussies to return). NBC wants to provide live TV coverage.
- **Background Checks** – USA Swimming will be requiring background checks for persons working directly with the athletes (coaches, chaperons, team trip personnel, etc.). It is not yet clear whether this will be effective for the 2005 registration year. Details and costs of this initiative are being worked out. Right now it appears, at a minimum, that a fingerprint check will be required before an application for membership will be processed. While the scope may be expanded, the current objective is to identify individuals who have committed crimes against children or have been identified as sexual predators. Whether the burden will fall on clubs, LSCs, or HQ is yet to be determined. However, right now it appears that it will be done at a national level with the cost born by the person applying for membership. Contact Mary Jo Swalley if you want more information on this initiative.

Good luck to everyone at Nationals, Sectionals, LSC Championships, and all of the other things that happen at this busy time of year. Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

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