

CONVENTION 2016 REPORT

JACOB JOHNSON – VICE ADMIN CHAIR

PRESENTATION/CLASS:

PreCompetitive Programs and Coaching Age Group Swimmers
Panel including John Leonard and Kevin Milak

GENERAL SYNOPSIS:

I had to leave this one early to attend the Swim-A-Thon presentation, but saw a lot of good material in a short time. The section on 'pre-teams' was interesting; every characteristic was highly variable except almost none got insurance through USA Swimming. John Leonard gave a talk on the characteristics of a good age group coach that had a lot of good, small takeaways. Kevin had a section on their learn-to-swim pre-team and also some great information to give out to 'first time' coaches.

POSSIBLE MAIN POINTS OR TAKEAWAYS FOR...

- LSC BOARD / COMMITTEE MEMBERS
 - Nothing on governance
- LSC TEAMS
 - Pre-team programming is a great way to funnel kids into the program. There doesn't seem to be one 'right way' to do it, so do whatever works for your program and area.
 - Consider the new and young coaches that you hire – what do you do to mentor and educate them on how to coach and work with kids?
- LSC COACHES
 - Lots of great tidbits on characteristics of a good coach.
 - A reminder that the coach/swimmer relationship is huge and that you play a big role in whether they stay in the sport.
 - Best to take the long view and not worry about results right away.
 - Parent education can be tough but is vital and important.
- LSC ATHLETES
 - Older athletes are often 'coaches' for learn-to-swim program – great job!
- LSC OFFICIALS
 - Nothing for officials
- LSC OTHERS
 -

ADDITIONAL/RAW NOTES ALSO INCLUDED IN THIS REPORT

Precompetitive Trends in USA swim clubs – panel

Frist discussion was about survey results relating to bridging the gap between learn to swim and USA teams.

LOTS of variety along nearly anything you wanted to measure regarding learn to swim programs (prerequisites, when do they move to the team, class length, session length, class size, number of days a week, etc.)

Biggest commonality was regarding insurance. Nearly all get learn-to-swim insurance through somewhere OTHER than USA Swimming

Characteristics of a Good AG Coach – John Leonard

So much of a child's enjoyment in the sport is dependent on the coach. They stay in a sport or leave based on their relationship with the coach.

First characteristic is that they have to love children, but also have to enjoy and respect them – children won't wilt.

Children learn by watching and doing more than by listening

Children have a need to be listened to

First build their capacity to learn, then build their capacity to train

Practice doesn't make perfect, it just makes habit.

Myelin sheath is hugely important with this age – do it as well as they can as often as they can, and do it poorly as little as possible.

He feels that it's the hardest time in history to coach – rise of the internet and 'context free' information

Role is to educate parents

Don't treat 10-unders like mini-Seniors

Some 'yelling' is okay – being harsh isn't. Stay away from belittling them, stay away from comparing them.

Make a 'teaching plan' versus a 'training plan'

Mistake to focus on results, focus on teaching and on starting a process

Think of it as 'coaching people' versus 'training athletes'

Big mistake to ignore parents – you have to educate them. Our role is to help parents raise good kids

Swimming memories will be about events, not about results

Planning and Execution for a pre-comp program

Bring a happy face and a swim suit

Fins every day – a racing and a teaching tool – it makes it easy and easy is fun

Have base drills and then have drill progressions from there

Kids sit in school all day long – they're eager to move instead of being talked to

'Rule of 3' stemming from motor learning;

Intro – what are we doing

Refine – comment on what was done well and what was done poorly

Repetition – more feedback, add a few points, and go again

[Much more on this, but I had to go..]