

2013 USAS Convention Report

by

Rick Potter – Officials Chair

Rules & Regulations Committee

- Reports:
 - Open Water – FINA adopted 87.5 degrees F as the maximum water temperature for competition. USA-S has established 85 degrees F for its maximum, so USA-S athletes would need to sign waivers if above 85 F.
 - FINA – Recommendation for USAS to adopt FINA rule changes from 2013 Congress
 - YMCA – Changes to training processes for trainers and students. Online class registration will be used for all classes, with results tracked in their system.
 - NCAA – It's a rulemaking year for them, and they adopted FINA/USA-S rules related to the allowed butterfly kick as part of the breaststroke pull-out. They did not adopt the rules related to the backstroke turn and being submerged at the finish. Use of starter pistols has been eliminated. Referees may disqualify swimmers for wearing suits that display multiple manufacturer logos (excludes FINA approved label).
 - High School – Butterfly kick allowed anytime during the breaststroke pull-out.
 - Masters – One breaststroke kick allowed per butterfly arm stroke.
 - Chair – Consulted with prior Committee members who were involved in establishing the "4-Hour Rule". He will be issuing an interpretation on behalf of the Committee, after the Convention. (This interpretation was subsequently issued via email.)
- Review of Proposed Legislation
 - Lengthy review and discussion of proposed legislation. Item HK-1 related to requirement for the Chief Judge position to be certified was withdrawn after discussion and feedback from LSCs on negative impacts.

Central Zone Technical Rules Committee

- **Open Water Championship Meet bids** – Ohio on Wednesday, June 25; WI on June 7 & 8.
- **Summer Zones** – The majority of LSCs prefer this to be held the first weekend in August.
- **Sectionals** – There are 190k 13-19 yr old Central Zone swimmers. Discussion on how to accommodate more.
 - Establish a meet with qualifying standards between Sectionals and Jr. Nationals?
 - Enhance Senior Zone Championship to make more attractive (only about 55 swimmers)?
 - NCSA Junior National Meet as an alternative?
 - Should the Central Zone support proposed legislation setting standards for Sectionals? (No)
- **Comparison of Central Zone Swimmers** – 11-14 year old performances rank 4th against all zones.

Officials Committee

- **FINA Rules Update**
 - Two-hand touches for breaststroke and fly must be done with hands separated (non-overlapping).
 - The words "at the finish" were removed related to backstroke rule related to not being submerged. Intended to simply be a clarification that swimmers may only be submerged at the start and turns up to 15 meters.
 - New backstroke starting bar approved for use. Can only be used if available for all lanes. Specifications are being finalized, but the bar will have height adjustments, and will suspend from blocks. Officials would need to pull them up out of the water after the start.
- Mentoring and Evaluations
 - Use of N2 LSC designated mentor evaluators was encouraged.
 - N3 Chief Judge certification now requires both an initial and final evaluation.
 - Arizona LSC implemented a "Deck Check" mentoring and evaluation program, with all 200 of their officials competed in one year
 - OTS will soon allow for tracking LSC evaluator designations
- Officials Tracking System
 - Future Planned Functionality

- LSC Evaluations
- Registered Non-Member status – Would allow apprentice activity tracking in OTS for up to 60 days without becoming a USA-S Non-Athlete Member.
- Online requests for being evaluated at meets.
- Ability to print “My History”

Open Water Development Committee

- Proposed requirement for a lead boat to stay with lead swimmers if safe to do so. (Issue of lapping swimmers)
- Discussion on how to help swimmers with disabilities to overcome challenges and fears of participating in OW events. Promoting at the Zone level, and creating a video highlighting participation of disability swimmers?
- Establish a new OW National Age Group Championship?
 - Zones would select entrant participants.
 - Need to coordinate with the Age Group Committee
 - Potentially hold in conjunction with the National OW Championship
- 2014 World OW Championship to be held in Chile – 5K and 10K events for Jrs and Srs.
- OW promotional DVD is under development – Shows pool, lake, river, and ocean events.
- FINA 31 degree C (78.5 F) water temperature limit is not supported by USAS, which uses 30.5 C
- Planning to host 4 regional training clinics for OW officials

Meet Management Workshop

- Communication between the Meet Director and Meet Referee is critical to success of a meet.

Administrative Official

- **Why?** – To establish consistency in correctly obtaining valid times and scoring at meets
- Watch times are almost always faster than button times.
- Highlighted heat results in Hy-Tek Meet Manager require investigation, not just automatic acceptance of suggested adjustments.
- A quick guide for verifying times in Hy-Tek Meet Manager 5.0 has been developed and will be sent out. (received and posted on website). This should be a standard handout at Admin Official clinics.

Central Zone Meeting

- The 2014 Senior Zone Championship will be in Minneapolis on 8/1-8/3.
- The 2014 14 & U Zone Championships will be in Geneva, OH and Oklahoma City
- USA Swimming President Bruce Stratton provided an overview of the background and structure behind the USIC, which is 100% owned by USA-S, with a \$30M net worth. Being self-insured through a subsidiary established in Barbados allowed for much greater coverage with lower capitulation, plus tax advantages. USA-S hired an outside consultant to provide a recommendation on whether to continue this approach, or to consider options that were not previously viable.

Officials Workshop

- One of the athlete representatives commented that he believes most swimmers don't know much about what officials do, and do not notice officials unless they are subject to disqualification.
- At the Barcelona OW Championships, they used stickers on the swimmers to number them instead of using ink stamps or markers.
- I submitted a question in advance asking if the Meet Referee may also serve as the Administrative Official, as long as that person is not serving as Deck Referee, Starter, Chief Judge, or Stroke & Turn Judge. The initial answer from Rules and Regs Committee Chair Dan McAllen was that yes this could be done. Later, after some apparent further side-bar discussion, Dan McAllen reversed his position on this and stated that neither an Administrative Official nor “Referee” may serve in more than one capacity. I suggested that the term “Referee” used in that part of the Technical Rules was intended to mean “Deck Referee”, since it is clearly understood that a “Meet Referee” may also serve as “Deck Referee”. I asserted that this suggests a “Meet Referee” (not “Deck Referee”) can indeed serve in more than one role, so why not as Administrative Official instead of “Deck Referee”? The debate was cut off to move onto the next topic, but I pursued this with Dan McAllen and Officials Committee Chair Clark Hammond after the session adjourned.

- Some common “myths” were discussed, such as needing to stay in one position at all times as a stroke and turn official, or having to put the right foot forward when observing (instead of the left foot).
- After the session adjourned, I spoke with Dan McAllen about the issue regarding definitions of “Meet Referee” and “Referee”. I pointed out that the proposed legislation in R2 to establish definitions that would have the “Meet Referee” be defined the same as “Referee”, would then create a conflict with the provision in the technical rules that currently allows the Meet Referee to also serve as Deck Referee. This position was also supported by Iowa Officials Chair Phil Barnes who joined in on the discussion. Upon realization of that as an issue, it was decided that the Committee would seek to withdraw that legislation at the H.O.D. meeting. They would also form a small task force to review the use of the term “Referee” in throughout the Technical Rules to clarify whether it is intended to referee to a Meet Referee or Deck Referee, or both, in each reference. I and Phil Barnes were asked to serve on that task force.

College Swimming

- A panel of coaches and an athlete provided their insights on college swimming
- Eddie Shepherd discussed how the NAIA is structured in comparison to NCAA D1/D2/D3 programs.
- Dave Marsh talked about swimming at D3 schools, which cannot provide athletic scholarship. He mainly focused on swimmers needing to figure out what is the best match for them.
- John McCall discussed D2 swimming and recruiting practices. He mentioned that as swimmer my go on 5 formal D1 and/or D2 visits, but may go on as many D2 visits as desired after the first 5.
- The swimmer athlete talked about the ups and downs of being recruited, and finding a program that fit. It takes time, and eventually you will know what is right for you if you don’t rush too much.
- An “official” recruiting visit is one that lasts 48 hours and is paid for by the recruiting school. 5 are allowed for D1.
- Academic status of a swimmer is very important when it comes to selection, and combined athletic/academic scholarship opportunities. Advanced Placement classes don’t necessarily help you if your GPA suffers and test scores are not high. Some schools use weighted GPA, and some do not
- It is important to proactively show interest in programs by contacting coaches and letting them know. Don’t expect to be chased after unless you are in the top 5% of swimmers. Swimmers need to sell themselves to coaches.

Bridging Generations – Generational Differences in the Workplace - Jennifer Deal, Ph.D

- Author of the book “Retiring the Generation Gap”.
- Has done extensive research on perceived and/or real generational differences.
- Most perceived stereotypes related to generation differences are not statistically supported by research.
- Environmental and economic conditions of the time period seem to have the greatest impact on attitudinal differences amongst age groups.