

2014 USAS Convention Report



Rick Potter – Officials Chair

Rules & Regulations Committee

- **Subcommittee Reports:**
 - **FINA** – Carol Zeleski reported that there will be an “Extraordinary Congress” meeting of FINA planned for November 29, 2014 to consider some potential rules and regulations legislation. One proposal expected to be considered is to change the rule related to the one butterfly kick allowed during the breaststroke after the start and each turn, such that it would be allowed at any time during the pull-out, prior to the first breaststroke kick, with no requirement for determination that the arm pull was initiated. The second item mentioned for consideration is establishing rules for use of a starting ledge for backstroke. Also, proposing to add a rule that both the starter and deck referee must independently see and confirm false starts that occur prior to the start signal.
 - **Open Water** – USA-S and US Masters partnering to train officials. Regional training clinics are planned in 2015 at venues hosting Open Water events.
 - **YMCA** – Proposed legislation to no longer require USA-S certified officials for a YMCA meet sanctioned as “approved”.
 - **NCAA** – 2015 is a rulemaking year for them. By September 1, 2015 the NCAA will have a new certification for officials and is partnering with USA-S to develop it. There may be USA-S/NCAA dual certification offered.
 - **Masters** – Looking at the ability to conduct combined/parallel/interwoven USA-S and US Masters meets. They are also looking at eliminating the need for lane separation of Masters swimmers competing in the same heats as USA-S swimmers. Definitions of some terms that are currently only in the Masters section of the Rule Book are being considered for addition.
 - **Chair** –The question of how to handle competitions and locker room assignments for gender change/transgender swimmers is being reviewed. A task force will likely be created.
- **Review of Proposed Legislation**
 - Lengthy review and discussion of proposed legislation.

Officials Committee

- **FINA Rules Update**
 - As reported above, there will be an “Extraordinary Congress” meeting of FINA planned for November 29, 2014 to consider some potential rules and regulations legislation. One proposal expected to be considered is to change the rule related to the one butterfly kick allowed during the breaststroke after the start and each turn, such that it would be allowed at any time during the pull-out, prior to the first breaststroke kick, with no requirement for determination that the arm pull was initiated. The second item mentioned for consideration is establishing rules for use of a starting ledge for backstroke. Also, proposing to add a rule that both the starter and referee must independently see/confirm false starts.
- **Officials Tracking System** – Bob Griffiths
 - Recent Functionality Added
 - OQM meets can now be so designated in the OTS setup prior to submitting the OQM application.
 - Historical information regarding officials’ certification in other LSCs is now available in OTS.
 - Future Functionality Planned
 - Online requests for being evaluated at OQM meets.
 - Allowing session detail information to be tracked in the OTS meet report to show what sessions officials worked at what position. Currently only the total sessions by position can be tracked.
- **Testing** – Bill Rose
 - Online tests for NCAA certifications are to be added by Sept. 15, 2015
- **Quarterly Officials Chairs Conference Calls**
 - Held the 1st Wednesday of each quarter at 8:00 PM EST
 - A current initiative this is to collect and share information & training materials developed by LSCs.

SWIMS Registration Workshop

- SWIMS now uses “Swim Date” instead of “Meet Date” for documenting achieved times. Some questions arose around the “age-up” date and competing in a younger age group for the entire meet despite aging-up during a multi-day meet.
- Data Analytics – Some new analytics capabilities will go live in SWIMS on Dec. 1, 2014. Club performance metrics will be available such as Average Rate of Improvement comparison by team/event/etc. There will also be membership statistics available.
- The Apprentice Official status lasts for 60 days from the initial registration, but it may have a start date based on the first on-deck training session. This would need to be reset manually through a request each time to the LSC Registrar.
- Deck Pass – Some LSCs are now using this for their officials’ credentials, such as Illinois.

Safe Sport Workshop

- Covered principles found in the book *Development Zone* by Roeh King - “Better athletes, better people”. The Double Goal Coach – Winning and Life Lessons. Using the “ELM Tree of Mastery” (Effort/results, Learning, and Mistakes are okay) produces lower anxiety, higher self-confidence, and a feeling of control for athletes.

Meet Management Workshop

- Communication between the Meet Director and Meet Referee is critical to success of a meet. Some tips and guidelines were reviewed relating to activities prior to, during and after a meet.

Open Water Workshop

- A National Age Group Open Water Championship is being planned to be held in conjunction with the National Championship. The top 8 finishers for each age group/gender of Zone OW Championships will be invited.
- Highlights and photos of the Open Water Festival at Miramar Lakes near Fort Meyers, FL which included the Crippen Cup and the Crippen Mile events.
- General review of what is involved with Open Water Officiating

Officials Workshop – Hot Topic Questions from Officials

- Q. Is there a standard for penalties associated with violation of Deck Changing rules?
A. No. This is a situational issue that requires use of good judgment by the Referee.
- Q. Why is it so difficult to get chosen for National Championship officiating positions?
A. There are over 135 applications, with only about half as many positions to be filled.
- Q. Can a smart phone stopwatch be used as a manual timing device?
A. It would not be a good idea, but probably would be “legal” if used as a last resort.
- Q. Can Kinesio tape ever be used in USA-S competition?
A. No, it is never allowed, regardless of perceived medical need. Taping two fingers together is permissible, and using an “Ace” bandage on an ankle is okay, if allowed by the Referee.
- Q. Can age-group meets be assigned OQM status for evaluations?
A. Yes, definitely for N2 level evaluations. Ability for N3 would depend on how the meet is run, and the evaluator. LSC Championships are ideal opportunities for N2 OQM evaluations and mentoring.
- Q. What should National Evaluators be compensated?
A. Typically travel and lodging should be covered, and sometimes an honorarium.
- Q. Will the new Legends Meets be considered National Championship meets for purposes of N2/N3 certification requirements?
A. Yes, they are planned to be so designated.