

Meeting Notes: Long Range Planning Meeting Middle Atlantic Swimming – April 29, 2000

Present: Killian, German, D.Carson, Seip, K.Southmayd, Waggoner, Champagne, Simendinger, T.Southmayd, Copper, Hagan, Cierski, Petranec, Ramone, Breen, Peterson, S.Carson, Thomson, O'Connor, Platt, Larson, Sullivan, Mattson, Engle, Daum, Holland, Mayo

The meeting was called to order by General Chair, Mike Seip, at 9:00 AM.

Thank you to Tom Southmayd and JP Morgan for providing us with an outstanding meeting facility.

A. Financial

- Overall financial status of MAS described by Burt:
 - Total Annual budget is \$525M, less registration pass-thru of 230M, leaving operating Budget of approx \$300M.
 - Currently, MAS has approx \$350M/280M in accounts, including mutual funds, CDs and money-market accounts.
 - Burt offered the comment that some of these funds (esp Mutual funds) should be moved to less risky mutual funds or accounts; there were several comments in support of this.
 - The need to establish an active investment cmte was acknowledged.
- There was little discussion around how much total Funds MAS should have; the sense was that our reserve funds are adequate.
- Several ways to increase MA income were proposed:
 - - increase amount of the 'rebate fees' paid to MAS
 - - increase 'rebate fee' from Club-hosted March championship meets, when there is no competition and most swimmers will attend the Meet.
- Creating East and West Mini and BC Champs would generate more entries
- Transfer fee (\$10) to change Club membership was discussed; is it necessary? What purpose does it have? A Transfer Form is necessary to protect Clubs from having swimmers leave to another Club with unpaid bills. General sense was that the \$10 fee was worth keeping and was not a burden to anyone.
- Could increase income by eliminating 10% fee reduction for early payment. Approx 75% (6000 out of 8000) athletes register early – loss in income is about \$20M. Benefit to MAS is not to have large influx of registrations at end of year (many of which would not be properly registered as of Jan 1.)
- This discount offers clubs the opportunity to charge full fees and keep the 10% as a Club fund-raiser to use as the club sees fit.
- Consensus to retain discount as early registration incentive
- Other ideas to raise revenue:
 - - Sponsorships from outside sources
 - - Grants
 - - Socials
- If additional money available, could be used for:
 - - Coach education
 - - Camp sponsorships
 - - Developing new programs

B. Sectionals

- Dave Carson – summarized probable proposals for Sectionals to be presented and voted at the Zone Meeting. May consist of one, two or four Sectional Meets in Eastern Zone. A ‘straw-vote’ of attendees showed almost unanimous support for a ONE Sectional Meet proposal. This Meet could be very similar in size and time standards to the present Junior program.
- Sectional must be planned to have approx 400 swimmers each meet – two per year (SC and LC).
- Questions:
 - - Will one (1) Sectional be accepted by USA Swimming?
 - - What effect will participation at Sectionals have on the Zone Teams?
 - - When ? SC – from Feb 15 until 10 days prior to entry deadline for Natls.
 - LC – between July 1 and August 31.
 - - if more than one Sectional, what will be the LSC alignment?
 - - will Meets be open to all LSCs in the Zone? - open to LSCs outside the Zone?
 - - will date conflict with any of our state high school or prep meets?
- Athlete rep (Josh) replied – one reason Jrs were popular was to allow ‘recruitment’ by college coaches. Also, Jr time standards were goals to achieve between Zones and Natls. Third factor is travel opportunity.
- (Mattson) If One Sectional is approved, what is possibility of having an LSC All-Star senior competition (similar to present AG Zones.)? responses – not likely to be supported by the smaller LSCs that now compete at AG Zones.
- Conclusions drawn: 1- We do not like the loss of Juniors; 2- We’d prefer one meet; 3- We should attend Zone meeting with a prepared, written proposal

C. Travel Fund

- Should we provide support to Coaches who attend? – could be a big help to smaller Clubs that may only send one athlete. Little discussion
- Should MA teams behave as a unit at Meets – provide support to other MA Teams.
- Could (should?) MA Teams travel together to Meets? Stay at same hotel to help with expenses? Should MA Office make travel / housing arrangements?
- Should these athletes be supported because they must travel outside the LSC in order to compete at that level?

Discussion around Alternative to Travel Fund:

- Travel Fund should NOT be considered an entitlement. Why not provide ‘block grants’ to each Team to use as they desire – to support Travel, recruitment, development, education, etc.
- Amount of grant could be based on: (a) number of swimmers, or (b) number of MA Splashes, or (c) other means or combination.
- Could reduce Entry Fee paid to meet host; let each Club charge their own swimmers a higher fee or surcharge.
- Decided to establish ad hoc committee to study alternatives to travel fund

How would Zone Team be sponsored? via MA and parents as current policy

D. Meets

- Doug Copper presented revised Meet alignment for March (specific for March, 2001). Will be affected by decision on Sectionals.
- Tighten standards for JOs to make it an A+ meet, using data from past meets
- Split BC Champs into East and West Champs, including the A and below times excluded from JOs
- Split Mini Champs into East and West meets
- Ideas and comments:
 - - have JO Champ in April – after B/C swimmers have likely stopped swimming. Will eliminate Zone Team members.
 - - “C” Meet should not be a Championship!
 - - assign Teams to attend specific meets during the year – especially on weekends when multiple meets are held; would avoid situation of more teams applying than one meet can handle, and at same time having other Meets be un-filled. Ask teams for their intentions at beginning of season.
 - - should have a quality AA+ Meet during the season – attract teams from outside MA, like the old PSDS.
- Do we need our own LSC time standards
- Better to have Championship Meets at end of month – so swimmers can be ‘charged’ for the full month before leaving program for the summer. Is this an LSC concern or better left to clubs to reformat their fee structure?
- “Track” system – a swimmer needs to get a certain number of events with an ‘A’ time, and then is ‘tracked’ into the A-Meet system. Can then swim any event at an ‘A’ meet. In effect, upon reaching a determined number of A times, a swimmer is considered an A swimmer, and the same would be true for a B swimmer.
- Solve award problem at BB/C meets by giving awards based on time swum – not the entry time. Swimmers who advance a level get that as their reward.
- Allow individual Clubs to be more creative in deciding the Meet format for their meet – i.e., events to be swum, event order, etc.
- Award ‘traditional’ meets for 3-5 years; would not have to be re-bid, but then should be opened to other Clubs wanting that Meet. This would help a club in the early years of a meet, knowing that they could be guaranteed that same meet for a number of years.
- Have a system where ALL Meets are BID – including meets during season, as well as current MA hosted Meets. The Meet would go to the Clubs offering the highest \$\$ bid. Smaller clubs could combine to bid on a Meet.
- If we continue to award Meets based on ‘tradition’, how will new Clubs ever be able to participate as hosts?
- Eliminate ‘blind’ bids – allow Clubs to get together to decide which Club should host a given Meets; would allow clubs to trade-off dates, make compromises, etc.
- Should have a Novice Meet or Time Trials meet to allow new swimmers to get a time in a new event. Do NOT accept ‘NT’ as entry – even to a ‘C’ meet.
- Encourage diversity in meet formats

E. House of Delegates – Committees

- Proposal to have fewer HofD meetings. There was general overall acceptance of this proposal.
- Committee Meetings should be regularly scheduled. Posted (on Internet?) to allow interested parties to attend.
- Increase membership on committees.
- Allow committee decisions to stand – respect of work done by cmtes
- Have Meetings at a central location on same night – to allow committees to interact or get information from other Committees, when needed.

- Suggestion to have meetings in evenings or weekends (since many Coaches/parents have 9-5 jobs) rather than during the day
- Proposal to have representative from several key committees (Tech Planning, Senior, Age Group) be members of other committees.
- Don't have all House of Delegates on Monday nights, an occasional Saturday would allow more people, especially coaches, to attend
- Rotate meetings – committee, Board, House – on a monthly basis
- Agreement that three-four HofD meetings a year would be appropriate.

F. Internet

- Encourage electronic LSC
- Meet Information, Meet Results – could be available on Internet. Proposal to have ALL Meet Information sent only via Internet beginning next year was suggested. Any Club not having Internet access could still be paper copied. Will be implemented, if possible.
- Each club will be required to provide email address on club application
- Webmaster – new webmaster (replaced Craig Edelbrock) just took a new job in Virginia; says he wants to continue – but we are concerned about his continuing interest.
- MA should look into getting professional support for their Website. What are surrounding LSCs doing for their Internet support?
- Expect to continue to expand use of Internet for all communications.

Action Items

- Finance committee to meet to review investments
- Eastern Zone attendees to meet 5/9 to put Middle Atlantic Sectional Meet Proposal on paper to present at Zone meeting
- Create ad hoc committee to study alternatives to a travel fund
- Site Selection alternative: All clubs bidding to host meets will meet to trade meets, make compromises, and develop meet schedule
- Meeting schedule: Create a rotation for meetings. Beginning with committee meetings in September followed by Board meetings, then House of Delegates. Establish set schedule for committee meetings so that members may adjust their calendars in order to attend.
- Propose all meet announcements be posted on the website instead of mailing hard copies