

Officials Meeting

Reports were submitted by the various members of the Officials Committee regarding the activities that fall within their scope of responsibility.

Testing is working on a policy and procedure to purge tests which have been outstanding for a long period of time. Trying to determine what this time frame should be.

Official Tracking System (OTS) has seen some enhancements this past year including the ability to support local certifications, and provide information regarding those which have completed the background check and Athlete Protection Program. There are approximately 11,500 officials within OTS.

Communication has issued 5 e-letters this past year. Format is to have a feature articles and situations. Will use Swimming World and the USA Swimming Officials Facebook page as mediums to communicate with officials. Also would like to hear from LSCs that have their own news letters to get some of their ideas about effective communication.

Beginning in October there will be a quarterly conference call with the LSC Officials Chair and the National Officials Chair Committee. Call will begin at 8 PM (ET) and last about an hour. The call may include a guest speaker and burning issues. Looking for input from the LSC OCs concentrating on consistency of officiating and ways to strengthen communication between athletes and officials.

Education taskforce has completed a series called the "Professional Official" for each of the positions at a meet (S&T, CJ, Starter, Admin Ref, and Deck Ref) which is available on the Officials page of the USA Swimming website. These documents highlight standards one should strive to attain to present a professional manner and the requirements to attain N2 and N3 status for the position.

Earlier this year the committee presented a webinar regarding mentoring which is now available on line at the officials page of the USA Swimming website. Since its inception the quality of the written evaluations provided by mentors to the committee has improved dramatically. Additionally, there has been more feedback from the person being evaluated as to the ability of their mentor. In summation the webinar in conjunction with the "Professional" documents have created a greater consistency. The committee encourages the LSC OCs and the Zone OCs to nominate officials to be evaluators. Such nominations will be vetted and voted upon by the committee.

Open water reported that there will be two levels of certification for OW officials. In the past there had only been one category of official for OW. The new categories will be OW Referee and OW Official.

The athletes on the committee commented that the summer Junior National Championships were well officiated but there was still a need for more officials to work developmental meets so that the consistency of officiating would be the same at all levels of meets including National Championships. As for OW the athletes said that the positioning of the officials' boats had improved so that the athletes were no longer bothered by the diesel fumes from the engines of these boats. In addition they talked about needing to develop guidelines regarding proper conduct by the athletes at the feeding stations.

During the next FINA Congress to be held next year, it appears that the downward butterfly kick in the breaststroke will be an issue. One recommendation being considered would allow the downward butterfly kick to occur at any time before the start of the second arm pull.

Times Module Work Shop & Times / Recognition Committee Meeting

Many of the same topics were discussed at both of these sessions so I have combined the items into one document.

Meeting began with an overview of how TIMES is integrated with SWIMS and the other components which comprise SWIMS. Summary data regarding number of records attained in the past year as well as the detail of the individual records was presented. There was discussion on how the Age Group Motivational Times are developed. In addition summary data was presented for SWIMS data (meets, times, athletes) and the Scholastic All-American Program data (males, females, zone, LSC, club.etc.)

Enhancements made to the system as proposed by the T&R committee included an improved times reconciliation, lead-off performances by relay swimmers, and the electronic submission of applications for Scholastic All-American status.

Scholastic All-American members decreased this year from approximately 1700 to 1200. This attributable to the change in time standards from the 2009 Junior National cuts to the 2011 Junior National Bonus cuts. These time standards will remain in place for four years.

We discussed the importance of uploading meets according to their correct classification of meet: sanctioned, approved, and observed. Failure to do so causes differences between the SWIMS data and that maintained by the chairperson.

Burning Issues

This was an open forum to discuss various topics.

The background check for new officials will be \$39 and the link to apply on-line is now available. Officials whose background check will be lapsing later this year or in early 2013 will be charged \$19, but the link is not available and should not attempt to apply until it has been activated.

People who are mentoring / evaluation officials or who perform the stroke or timers' briefing may add this as an activity by utilizing the Official Tracking System (OTS).

Use the timers briefing as a vehicle to recruit new officials.

Jim Sheehan and Jay Thomas will meet with Pat Hogan about the feasibility of distributing the officials' e-letter to coaches.

Starters may not be familiar with the protocol for hearing impaired swimmers. By performing one or more of these starts each session will ensure familiarity and confidence when such a start will be required.

With new legislation providing for an administrative official, there were questions as to which LSCs may have training modules for this position. Arizona, Indiana, and Virginia had such information.

N3 Mentoring S&T and CJs

N3 Mentoring Refs and Starters

These were two distinct sessions but the general premises regarding mentoring as a process were the same for both workshops.

Stressed the idea that your role as a mentor was to nurture a candidate and not be the final judge and jury as to whether they move to the next level. At an evaluator at an N3 qualifying meet you will know in advance the people that are assigned to you. Take this opportunity to open up communication with the candidate and refer them to the various documents they need to review before the meet. Explain to them your role in the process and be familiar with the criteria you will use to evaluate the official.

The “Professional Official” documents which may be found on the Officials page of the USA Swimming website were used as the basis for the presentation and some role playing between the official and the evaluator were performed.

Club & LSC Financial Management

This workshop should be renamed to “An Introduction to Preparing IRS Form 990”. The only thing that came to light that needs to be explored concerns whether NJ recognizes NJS as a 501c3 that is permitted to be exempt from NJ sales tax and state unemployment insurance.