

Convention Report – Senior Athlete Rep Gabby Werner 09.23.14

My exciting journey to the USAS convention began on Tuesday, September 16th, 2014; there I was able to learn more information about the sport, rules and regulations, as well as new ideas that I could use to benefit the swimmers of NJ. I believe, what I learned can improve NJ swimming, and can have the ability to educate my fellow NJ swimmers.

On Wednesday, September 17th, I attended the Athlete Meet and Greet, along with two athlete meetings. At these meetings I learned the basic reasons why the Athletes attend convention. One reason is that according to the USA swimming rules, it is necessary to have Athletes represent twenty percent of a vote. On Thursday, we had two athlete meetings, community service, and our individual Eastern zone meeting. At our first athlete meeting, we split up into our zones, where we discussed how athlete representatives are picked, interesting ideas we have, and big debates going on in our LSC's. I will talk about these ideas later. At our next meeting, we went over rules and regulations. Lastly, at our Eastern Zone meeting, we went over various new rules and regulations pertaining to the eastern zone, as well as our summer championship meet plans. On Friday, we had another two meetings, and attended HOD where various awards were granted. At our first meeting, we had Jim Thompson speak to us. He went over the importance of positivity, and leadership within a club, also going over the tradition of hazing and how dangerous it can be. For example, research has been done, that it ruins performance, and that it is not successful at bonding the team. At our next meeting, we debated on the different rules and regulations, while practicing using Roberts Rules. Lastly, on Saturday we attended HOD. At HOD, popular topics we voted on were the use of the backstroke ledge, which was passed. The prohibition of deck changing, which was passed, new mixed relays, which are now allowed, and lastly the limitation of past presidents on the board, which was rejected. Overall, this describes my schedule at convention.

Specific ideas I learned that could help NJ swimming, is to increase the use of social media. While speaking to other LSC's such as Connecticut, they have over six hundred twitter followers, most of their followers being swimmers. They use their twitter page to send out information regarding new rules and regulations, and fun events that are occurring. I believe having a twitter page to send out information can be useful, because social media is a very effective way for swimmers to get information, and to spread the news about NJ swimming. Other social media ideas I had were to have a Facebook page, and a blog. On this blog, the athlete representatives can put up reports following our NJ meetings. This could be useful, so other athletes can see what is going on in our swimming government. Lastly, while speaking to other members of the eastern zone, it was apparent that NJ is the only LSC that allows athletes to run for representative, without writing an essay, or filling out a questionnaire. This would be a more intelligent idea, because then we will get to see who would be best to represent NJ, and it would be a good way for athletes to ask questions, and learn about the position before running. In conclusion, I believe that if we do go forward, and increase our use of social media, NJ swimmers will be more included in our LSC, and that I would allow our athletes to be more educated about the sport, and the athlete representative position.