



**NEW
JERSEY
SWIMMING**

New Jersey Officials Newsletter – Spring 2020

Volume 3 – Issue 3

Officials Chairman – Ed Miller

Editor – Christopher Barry

Introduction from the Editor

First, thanks to everyone that assisted and officiated at meets during of the 2019-20 SC season. Unfortunately, for the swimmers, the season ended without the completion of the final two championship meets – NJS Senior Championships and NJS Junior Olympics.

Next, at this time I expected to be welcoming all to the LC season and countdown to the Olympic Trials in June and the Olympics later this summer. We now know these meets have been postponed until next summer as well as many other meets, including the entire National schedule, are canceled. We do not know when the swimmers will be back in the water or what swim meets will look like. At this time, some information that can be provided is that from USA Swimming at the National level, to each of the four Zones and then each and every LSC, meetings have been occurring on a weekly basis to address the many issues that the Covid-19 pandemic has brought. Specifically, the meetings are focused on finding ways to help support and prepare teams to be stronger than ever when this pandemic has passed. This has included finding ways to support the clubs through a period of time where little, if any, revenue generation occurs but maintenance costs continue and jobs have been lost; albeit hopefully temporarily.

During the middle of April, NJS held its periodic board meeting as well as the Technical Committee planning meeting and 13 and Over Swimmers meeting in preparation of NJS HOD meeting tentatively scheduled for May 9 at 130pm (site TBD). Recently, USA Swimming announced that no sanctioned meets will be held until at least June 1 and probably later than that date. However, the NJS board will continue to meet and discuss preparations for the eventual return to training and competition. As we do not know what, if any LC season will be and what the SC season will entail, please look to keep in touch with other officials, your club and the NJS and USA swimming web sites for updated information.

Please remember that we are here for the swimmers and to give the swimmers the best conditions to have the best opportunity to reach their goals; whatever they may be – including having fun and enjoying their youth. As we wait for the return to training and competition, please reach out to your fellow officials as we can still connect just not with our favorite smell of chlorine in the background. Take some time to review the various resources that USA Swimming has to keep fresh with the rules and situations that may occur so that you are prepared for the return to competition. USA Swimming Officials recently published their April newsletter with additional information including new Professional Guidelines for all positions and a new apparel vendor.

On a personal note, I want to congratulate Valerie Gibson who was selected to serve at Olympic trials in June but will have to wait a year for her second opportunity to work this meet. I am sure many of you were also looking to accomplish new things this summer but they will have to wait. Also, I wanted to thank Ed Miller, our outgoing Officials Chair and Bud Rimbault for their support in creating and providing this newsletter. Both Ed Miller and Bud Rimbault have provided some final thoughts in their roles for the officials in this issue. Lastly, while I was looking forward to additional learning opportunities as part of the CJ team at Indy Pro Series and lead CJ at the Eastern LC Sectional meet in May, I will follow the above to keep myself ready and hope you will to.

This Newsletter normally attempts to assist you in the annual registration process (including updates to the registration process and offerings by NJ Swimming), provide some helpful reminders of the rules and guide you to locating the meet schedule. While this newsletter will not be comprehensive in covering all the goings on in the officials' community, it will be a point to assist or direct you to other matters. Prior Newsletters are now posted under the Officials tab on the NJS web site to reference past items. Remember that the NJ Swimming and USA Swimming web sites provide the vast majority of information to assist with your questions but you can always reach out to a member of the NJ Official's committee for assistance as well. As this is your Newsletter, if there is something that you would like to see addressed/discussed, feel free to reach out to me or a member of the committee. Hope to see you all on deck at some time in the near future.

Some Musings from the NJS Officials' Chair

NJS Board Covid-19 Actions

As a result of the suspension of swimming activities due to restrictions issued in response to the pandemic, the NJS Executive Board (the "Board") has been hard at work on two fronts.

One task force of the Board has been working on financial assistance packages for the teams to help tide them over until swimming activity can take place again. This group recommended, and the Board approved, outright grants to all the teams based on how many swimmers they had registered on March 1, 2020. Also, payment of the 2019-20 travel grants was accelerated and teams who incurred costs for swim meets canceled were asked to provide the Board of any costs encountered which could not be recouped, for which they will be reimbursed. The task force is now focusing on various additional options to further assist clubs during the shutdown and once the schedule gets back to normal, whatever normal might be.

The second task force is looking into changes on how we may have to run swim meets under the new normal once some of the restrictions are relaxed and some of the facilities open up again, which may not be for some time. At this point, no one can say whether or not we will have an abbreviated long course season, or how the 2020-21 short course season may shape up. But one thing is clear, we will not go back to "business as usual".

You should know that the Board and/or the Task Forces have been meeting at least twice a week for the last four weeks, and will continue to do so as we move forward.

New Referee and New Starter Classes

Faced with the restrictions on group meetings and the unavailability of pool time, the Officials Committee decided to postpone the new referee and new starter classes for this spring. While some had suggested using ZOOM to conduct the classes, the Committee decided not to adopt that approach, as we need pool time for the starter class and neither group, once trained, would be able to complete their apprentice sessions in a timely manner. The plan is to offer these sessions in the fall, assuming we get back into operation.

Training for Existing Officials

Some people are already asking about training for existing officials whose certifications run out this year. USA-S certifications are on a calendar year basis, so we have some time to deal with that situation. For dual certified YMCA officials, whose certifications run out on various dates, Y-USA has already extended those dates by four months. If further extensions are needed, they will be announced at the appropriate times.

On a Personal Note

As many of you probably know, I am finishing my second term as Officials Chair, and under USA-S rules, I have to step down, so this will be my last newsletter as Chairman. Although, I will stay on the Committee and process your certifications.

I want to thank Christopher Barry for his extraordinary efforts to get the newsletter off the ground and to continue to act as its editor. He puts a lot of time in and it shows. You have a lot more information now thanks to his great work! We will continue to publish the newsletter as previously scheduled to keep you informed as to what we know as the situation evolves. I would also urge you to keep in touch with your fellow officials, albeit by e-mail or from ten feet away, to keep up with what is happening on your individual teams.

In my musings, I have tried to give you some upbeat thoughts and also to get you to focus on this important task and how you step up to it. Becoming an official and progressing to whatever level you wish to achieve takes a lot of time and effort. And we are all volunteers, you and me alike! I am extremely proud of this group and sing your praises to my fellow Officials Chairs; we are as good as any group in the country! If some of my musings have caused you to feel a little uncomfortable at times, that says much about how seriously you take your job. And that is not bad! I ask myself periodically why I still do it and am I still doing it right. That's the sign of a real professional.

I have truly enjoyed meeting so many of you in person and putting a face to a name on the roster. I appreciate your support over these last four years. Thank you!!!

Officials advancing to Starter, Chief Judge and Referee

Congratulations to the following officials who have completed their apprentice training this SC Season and have stepped up to greater responsibilities by advancing in their certification to a Starter or Chief Judge.

New Starters

John Lawlor	BAC	Jenny Lee	SHY	Mary Wang	SVY		
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New Chief Judges

Brian Geary	BAC	David Jones	BAC	Jim Jourdan	NJBL	Rob Masella	CAT
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A Message from the NJ LSC General Chair, Bud Rimbault

During this unanticipated and unwanted break from competitive swimming, I hope that you are taking a fond look back over the past season. Not so much about the DQs that you wrote while patiently explaining to swimmers and coaches the reason for the DQ. Rather remember the opportunity to maintain a level playing field for the many kids who competed in the meets that you worked. This is one of the beauties of our sport, parents working to provide swimmers with an environment where they, the swimmers, can pursue a sport they love.

Just like you I hope that we get our sport back soon. How soon no one can know for sure. Swimming will return. It will look and feel different at the outset, but kids will get the opportunity to pursue their dreams of swimming fast. This is what is important.

Swimming needs its officials and volunteers to be ready to go when the sport gets back in the water. The return to competition will seem a bit strange because it is very likely that meets will be structured differently than we are used to. It's all going to depend on what we are permitted to do by facilities, health departments and the like. So, our officials need to be flexible and find ways to make the new reality work and keep the playing field level for all of our swimmers. Stay safe and see you soon.

Other Swimming Meets Opportunities

Another area of service for officials is the Para Swimming community. Para Swimmers compete under the same FINA guidelines with some adaptations at either separate meets or included in USA swimming meets. Those adaptations can be found in your USA Swimming rule book in Article 105. Feel free to read the entire section so that you are prepared for future possibilities. For those further interested in working with Para Swimmers, feel free to reach out to Doug Griswold (douglasq@multi-plastics.com) or Christopher Barry (accebarry@verizon.net).

Another competitive event for USA Swimming is Open Water. Traditionally, this occurs during the summer months and there are limited opportunities for USA Swimming sanctioned events. However, these meets are always looking for volunteer officials to assist in the operation of the meets. The roles for Open Water swimming meets are both similar and different but the primary goal is the safety of the swimmers during the event. If you are interested in finding out more information in advance of next summer, feel free to reach out to Christopher Barry (Accebarry@verizon.net) for more information.

Meet your Officials Committee

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USA Swimming National Championship Schedule – Fall and Winter 2020-21

While the summer national schedule has been canceled given the current events, USA Swimming will look to focus their efforts on introducing a new series of summer events better tailored to the current environment when competition can resume. The introduction of 14-16 regional events in mid to late August would allow for a successful return to pools and training and help kickoff the competition season. These regionally focused events will limit the need for travel and promote a safer competition environment for our athletes, families and everyone involved. The approval of these event sanctions will be subject to local health guidelines and directives. They are hopeful and look forward to providing further details in the future. Below is the current national schedule when hopefully a return to something more “normal” returns in the fall.

Host	Dates	Meet	Applications	Location	Course
USA	11/5-8	USA TYR Pro Series #1	Pending	Richmond, Va.	LCM
USA	12/2-5	USA Swimming Open Championships	Pending	Atlanta, Ga.	LCM
USA	12/9-12	USA Swimming Winter Juniors Championships- East	Pending	Atlanta, Ga.	LCM
USA	12/9-12	USA Swimming Winter Juniors Championships- West	Pending	Austin, Tx.	LCM
USA	1/13-16	USA TYR Pro Series #2	Pending	Knoxville, Tn.	LCM
USA	3/3-6	USA TYR Pro Series #3	Pending	San Antonio, Tx.	LCM
USA	4/8-11	USA TYR Pro Series #4	Pending	Mission Viejo, Ca.	LCM
USA	5/12-15	USA TYR Pro Series #5	Pending	Indianapolis, In.	LCM

Look forward to seeing everyone on deck in the near future and until then stay safe.