

**Curt A. Oppel**  
**Administrative Vice Chair**  
2017 USAS Convention Report

**General Statement:** The 2017 United States Aquatic Sports Convention in Dallas, Texas was my third USAS convention. I have learned valuable information each year of my attendance and I believe we need to send two more people to the convention. My recommendations are the Finance Chair and the Safety and Risk Management Chair. There are several topics that our current group of attendants were not able to cover and they are important topics. For example, this year, I missed the presentations on LSC Financing, LEAP 3 Financial Requirements, and a couple of presentations for officials. I believe the benefits our LSC would receive would outweigh the cost of sending the two additional LSC representatives to the USAS annual convention.

**Session Reports:** I attended the following sessions during the 2017 USAS Convention:

- a. Rules and Regulations Committee Meeting (Wednesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>) – I sat through the Rules and Regulations Committee Meeting. I felt this meeting was important in light of the issues that were presented at the USA Swimming HOD meeting, namely the board restructuring resolutions, the flex membership proposals and the meet operations presentations (new technical swimming rules). I left this meeting early to attend the Safe Sport at Meets session.
- b. Open Water Development Committee (Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup>) – I listened to the various reports made to the Open Water Committee. I learned that we are in the same position as many LSC with respect to providing Open Water Competitions. Most Open Water Competitions are being sanctioned at the Zone levels. Open Water Competitions are growing in participation. We need to:
  - i. Create and support an LSC Open Water Committee – This committee will develop and assist clubs with open water competitions.
  - ii. Invest some capital into Open Water Swimming – we need to devote resources to Open Water Swimming such as acquiring basic open water equipment and training meet directors and officials.
- c. Safe Sport Meetings. I attended and participated in the following Safe Sport Meetings and Clinics:
  - i. Safe Sports at Meets Workshop (Wednesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>) – I participated in the Safe Sport at Meets clinic. This was an interactive session with representatives from the USA Swimming Safe Sport Committee. I attach the Power Point Presentation from the clinic. This was an enlightening discussion. I believe we need to have clinics within our LSC about the topics raised in this meeting. We need to be more proactive on our safe sport issues during swim meets (education of not just officials on safe sport issues, but athletes and parents, access to decks during the meet, swimmer areas, venue safety, and the effective use of meet marshals). Two

- recommendations that were made were training sessions for meet directors and training sessions for meet marshals. These were made in an effort to make planning and running meets safer for our athletes.
- ii. *Swimming with the Sharks: Managing Risks in Swimming (Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup>)*
    - The following items were reviewed and discussed with during this meeting:
      - a. **Three-Point Entry** – Arizona Swimming has created a Video and posted it on You Tube about the importance of a three-point entry (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-zZVTh4Bos>). The Safe Sport Committee believes this is an important warm-up safety rule.
      - b. **Backstroke Start Certifications** – The Safe Sport Committee has developed a procedure for teaching backstroke starts and a record keeping tool for clubs to maintain proof that each swimmer has been certified in a forward start and a backstroke start (See PowerPoint Presentation).
      - c. **Injury Reports** – It is important that Injury Reports are completed and filed even if the athlete will not be seen by a health care provider for the injury. USA Swimming and Risk Management maintain all reports to protect against claims that are made years after the accident. For example, chipped teeth – The accident can happen years before a claim is filed.
      - d. **Insurance provided by Risk Management** – Clubs should visit the USA Swimming Insurance page. USA Swimming, through Risk Management, offers several good insurance products such as life insurance for coaches.
  - d. Officials Clinics – I attended the following officials’ clinics.
    - i. *Officials Committee Meeting (Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup>)* – I listened to the reports from the various members of the officials committee. The most significant thing I learned during this meeting was that the quarterly officials chair conference calls are available to all officials and the conference call-in information and the minutes following the meeting minutes should be distributed to all officials in our LSC.
    - ii. *Burning Issues for Officials (Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup>)* – This was an open discussion led by Jim Holcomb, Chair of the USA Swimming Officials Committee.
  - b. Athlete Committee – Engaging and Empowering LSC Athlete Leadership (Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup>) – This workshop was put on by the Athlete Committee. There were two parts to this workshop. The first part was a panel discussion by athlete representatives of several LSC that have successfully grown and engaged their athlete representatives. After attending this workshop it is apparent that we need a dedicated volunteer that will mentor and develop our athletes into leaders.
  - c. LSC Development – Laying Foundations & Building Bridges (Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup>) – The topic of this workshop was how an LSC can create a good employment environment with its professional staff. The items I learned from this workshop were:
    - i. *Personnel Committee* – We need to activate and engage our personnel committee to assist the management of our professional staff.

- ii. *Annual Reviews* – We need to develop annual review procedure for our employees. These annual reviews will include self-assessments by our staff.
  - iii. *Organizational Chart* – We need to develop an organizational chart to enforce the accountability and reporting of information from our professional staff to our board.
  - iv. *Reports to the Board of Directors* – Our employees should provide written reports to the board of directors at each board meeting. We need to develop with our employees what items should be reported to the Board.
- d. Zone Committee Meetings (Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup> and Friday September 15<sup>th</sup>) – I was a representative for our LSC to both Central Zone meetings.
- e. USA Swimming Meetings – I attended the following meetings held by USA Swimming.
- i. Town Hall Meeting (Friday, September 14<sup>th</sup>)
  - ii. House of Delegates Meeting (Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup>)
  - iii. House of Delegates Meeting (Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup>)
  - iv. Awards Dinner (Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup>)
- f. Swimposium Meeting (Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup>) – On Thursday, Phil, Marie and I met with Cathy Durance to schedule and discuss our 2018 Swimposium. We decided that our Swimposium will be held on Saturday, **October 6, 2018** with the Fall 2018 ISI House of Delegates Meeting to be held on Sunday, October 7, 2018. This will close the first weekend of October of 2018 to swim meets and other activities.

**Summary:** In summary, I am adding the following task items to my 2017 – 2018 task list:

1. Activate the Personnel Committee.
2. Work with our Board to create and empower an Open Water Committee to Promote Open Water Swimming in our LSC.
3. Create and implement Safe Sport Training for Meet Directors, Referees and meet hosts.
4. Find an appropriate mentor for our athlete committee.