

United States Swimming National Convention

September 21-24, 2016

Atlanta, Georgia

Notes from Marie Koenigsfeld, ISI Communications and Logistics Coordinator

Focus during the Convention:

- Rollout of new USA Swimming website and DeckPass Integration
- Athlete Leadership and Athlete Committee guidance
- Age Group workshops (alternate to AG Chair, Frankie Hanson)
 - How to retain 13 and under swimmers by engaging them and their parents at an early age.

Convention Workshop and Meeting Notes

SWIMS Times Module (Sept 21)

New USA Swimming Website

- Mobile friendly design
 - Web pages will automatically fit screen size
 - When scrolling, toolbars and menus remain fixed so always in view
- Very cool

Website integration with DeckPass account

- Dynamic searches based upon your settings in DeckPass.
 - When you set up your DeckPass account you will indicate if you are an athlete, parent, officials, parent. These can be changed at any time in your settings while logged in.
 - Your website content will change based upon what category you indicate.
 - Your search results will also change be different based upon your setting.
 - So, if you are looking for officiating material or articles, you will want to change your settings to Official. Coaching materials, Coach. Etc.
 - Should make it easier to find the relevant docs and pages
- Question was raised if coaches or clubs would have access to athlete information and performance analytics. It was answered that Club Portals will still be in place for this purpose.
- SWIMS has been updated to reflect Top Times by LSC and NAG Records
 - Discussion was raised about how registrars use LSC and Club portals to access information. Elaine already uses LSC portal for the purpose of Updating Records and Top 16 times.

- It was raised that LSCs should be accessing their portal at least weekly to see if LSC/Zones/USA records have been broken by their members. If it is done only once a season then you will miss athletes who broke a record, which was then broken again by another athlete. Mainly for the purpose of recognition and awards.

DeckPass Mobile App and True Sport (Sept 21)

- True Sport is a separate entity and contracted by USA Swimming to produce inspiring videos for DeckPass App and programming. Main contact is Jennifer Dodd
- DeckPass is equipped with dynamic content. If you are an official, your main screens will reflect things important to you as an official. Likewise, parents will find content and videos relevant to parenting a swimmer, for example how to inspire and nutritional articles. Coaches, ditto. And finally athlete members.
- Membership credentials are currently available for all members, athlete and non-athlete.
- All membership cards from USA Swimming will be paperless beginning 2017. LSCs could produce and mail their own cards. **Each member can also go to the USA Swimming website, log in, and print their own cards, if they wish.**

How to use DeckPass to engage athletes ages 8-13.

- DeckPass mobile App will be useful to athletes of all ages to find best times analytics. Lots of cool graphing options! Very interesting for athletes already engaged in the sport, and parents to track progress.
 - Discussion was again brought up if Coaches would have access to whole team times and analytics. It will not be available via DeckPass. Club portals to SWIMS will stay in place.
- Patches
 - Swimmers, and non-athlete members, collect patches as they complete items on DeckPass.
 - There are several built in patches already on DeckPass. Such as when videos are watched, Time Cut achievements, Out of LSC meet attended, etc. etc.
 - **Custom patches may be produced!**
 - Thinking LSC Championships and Regionals for sure, anything individual to Clubs or ISI
 - Jim Fox said he can get this done with 3-4 weeks notice
 - Scavenger Hunts
 - If you participated in the OT scavenger hunts in AquaZone, you are already familiar. Hunts can be done anywhere for any purpose.
 - How?
 - Jennifer Dodd can set up a Scavenger Hunt including QR codes.
 - Again, thinking AG State Champs

South Carolina Swim Club: Test Club for DeckPass Integration

- Education of young swimmers 6-12 about DeckPass
- How to engage young swimmers
 - Focus primarily on Patches
 - Education of DeckPass by making them want to use the tools available on it.
 - Informational tables at meets for swimmers and parents with materials were found to not be very beneficial as target audience is focused on the meet.

- **Athlete Ambassadors**
 - Ages 11-14 done at the club level
- Word of Mouth was found to be the best way. Kids at meets play on iPads, iPods, Kindles, etc. They all crowd around on another in crash room to play games or watch movies. Once a small number of athletes were into DP then interest exploded.
- Parent Education
 - USA Swimming has all of the Marketing Material available already for FB posts, email blasts, LSC Website content, etc
- How Clubs need to be at the front line
 - Club coaches are the main point of contact for young swimmers and parents. So, the club coaches need to fully support and use DeckPass to engage their swimmers.
 - First, we must educate the Clubs and Coaches as to Why they need to implement DeckPass.
 - Data on young swimmer retention
 - USA Swimming has this data
 - Why young swimmers leave
 - USA Swimming has this data
 - Many ideas presented how the clubs, or even LSCs could bring attention to DeckPass.
 - Patch collection contest
 - Contest as to who can collect the most patches based on True Sport videos
 - Break it down, make a list of videos a coach feels are important for an age group or training group. Everyone who completes the list goes into a drawing for a prize.
 - Anything! The way to use this is endless
 - Unique patches for LSC meets, collection contest
 - Have a bullying problem within your club. Focus of Anti-bullying videos. Kids not bring the right foods to meets, focus on Nutritional videos.
 - Coaches award patches, parents attend Parent meeting swimmer gains a patch, times goal achievements, special practice patches.
 - I admit that I did not catch how to get this done but I have all the contact information for all presenters and they were very eager to help with anything.

SWIMS – DeckPass

- DeckPass connects directly to SWIMS database.
- Swimmers will gain automatically a variety of patches. Zones, Time Cut Achievements, Attend an out of LSC meet, etc.
- Coaches can use this to encourage progress in the pool as well.
- Within the app, is a SWIMS times search portal. Mobile Friendly!
 - Swimmer wants to know the history of a competitor at a certain meet because they are in the same heat? Takes a few moments.
 - Spectators in stands see a crazy fast time for another swimmer. Where did he/she get that cut?? Instant access to SWIMS and mobile friendly
 - Coaches, same thing.

New Website, New DeckPass features

- With the new features available in new USA Swimming website, additional features will be available with DeckPass as well.

- New “personas”. Now it is just Athlete, or Non-Athlete. DeckPass lumps all members together.
- Personas will include Athletes, Parents, Coaches, Officials (maybe others)
- Currently there is no way for Parents to view their athletes’ times, patches etc on the parent’s DeckPass account.
 - Side note, Parents should make their own DeckPass accounts to see their own parent related content! Once roll out is complete, they should be able to link their swimmers accounts to theirs? Now, parents can just get their swimmers username and password to log into the swimmers DP page.

The rollout of both the new website and new DeckPass should be a priority of Iowa Swimming. The features of DeckPass will appeal to all ages. Younger swimmers can work to earn patches while learning more and more about swimming. Extra fun options at big meets like Scavenger Hunts. Unique patches specific to Iowa Swimming. Older swimmers who are already engaged will use the amazing times and goal setting features. The way the mobile app lays out the goal setting and performance graphs is really really cool.

Need to get in touch with Jim Fox for all marketing material available from USA Swimming for rollout. Ready made parent emails, Facebook posts etc. He is also the contact for custom patches, 3-4 weeks lead time.

Jennifer Dodd is the contact for True Sport. Sets up scavenger hunts. I also have her contact info and she said she is happy to help us set up a Scavenger Hunt.

LSC Age Group Workshop (Sept. 22)

10 and Under Program Strategies

- Coaching People Training Athletes
 - At this age sports and activities are more likely to be Parent Driven with parents largely determining what their kids will focus on.
 - Educate Parents from early age of swimmers! Engage parents and you are more likely to retain a swimmer.
 - Constant positive reinforcement
 - Do Not compare swimmers
 - Do Not focus solely on results. The goal is development of a lifelong swimmer not a 10 yr old prodigy.

Precompetitive Program

- Provides a place for swimmers who are interested in a swim program but not yet ready for a competitive program. Could consist of a lessons program or a Rec league program.
- Hints for a successful program:
 - Get in the pool with them, show them don’t just tell them
 - Stroke Drills
 - Limit to 2-3 base drills then build from there. Don’t give them 8-10 drills for the same technique
 - Break down stroke technique into basic skill sets. Build upon those few skill sets.
 - Basic Fundamentals then move them up to the Competitive Program
 - Training groups by Levels not Ages

Creative Meet Models for Age Group swimmers

- Intrasquad, Duals, Single Age, Relay Only, Girls v. Boys, Mixers, Email meets
- Nice to see that Iowa Swimming clubs already utilize many of these formats
- Most interesting one is the email meet.
 - Basic Dual meet but teams each swim at their own facilities.
 - One team swims an event then the other team swims the event.
 - Results are sent real time back and forth between clubs
 - Team bonding as swimmers can see how fast their team mates must swim to beat the other team's swims.
 - Speaker said they were forced to do this once due to blizzard on weekend of scheduled duel. It has become an annual event.
- Rock Paper Scissors Relay
 - Very cool and fun concept.
 - Coaches sitting by me said they use it primarily during practice not meets.
 - Could work for both
 - Only works well in 50M pool, 4x100M relay. Two teams per lane. Start at opposite ends of the pool. When swimmers meet in the middle they play Rock Paper Scissors. Loser goes back to start end of pool flip turn then continues. Winner continues his length. Whenever two swimmers meet they repeat game.

American Development Model Study for USA Swimming

- The ADM report is attached to my email and will be posted on the ISI Website.

During our LSC Development conference the retention of 12 and under swimmers was a priority for Iowa Swimming. I believe that with focus on parent education and putting in place age group programs we will get swimmers engaged in swimming and therefore they are less likely to leave the sport. Much of this can be done at the club level but Iowa Swimming could be doing more. Parent/member quarterly newsletters. Make our Regional meets a true Championship meet, not a Last Chance meet. A large segment of our swimmers will have their last meet of the season at Regionals. We are telling them that after all their hard work all season long they failed if they do not get a Q time.

Diversity and Inclusion LSC Camps (Sept.22)

Workshop Discussion of Texas LSC D/I camp

- Set participation goals such as 2 athletes per team
- Day or Overnight program
- Similar setup as Zones D/I
- Perhaps set times standards to isolate certain levels over several camps
- Add ½ day Parent Track workshops
 - Educate parents of benefits and importance of D/I swimmers
- Add Swag – simple things
 - Caps with names very helpful for swim clinics
- Offer different workshops
 - Nutrition, Goal setting skills, racing strategies, mental strategies, USA Swimming DeckPass presentation
- Clinic with guest clinician
 - Look into the USA program that brings in Nat team members for different things

- Games, team building interactions mixed into workshops, get kids up and moving

Don Spellman and I discussed the possibility of bringing this to ISI. We will be working on the possibility and logistics of a clinic. Need to find out number of D/I swimmers in Iowa first. Is there enough interest? Then work from there. I have the contact information for presenter Jennie Schamburg.

Vendor Contacts (Sept 23)

Friday morning, I talked with several of the vendors before they left. I spoke with Fitter and Faster tour about the possibility of bringing one or two clinics to Iowa. The process of marketing and cost to ISI. The logistics of the LSC hosting the clinics versus specific clubs. Contact: Julie Bauer julie@fitterandfaster.com. She also happens to be a coach in ISI, Urchins Swim Club.

I also spent time with Omega timing and Atlanta Timing equipment rep. He explained the new video boards and blocks. Passed along all the information to Chet Culver, DMYMCA president regarding new 50M pool construct. Very cool video boards and scoreboards.

Other Contacts (Sept 23)

I had breakfast/brunch(?) with two Wisconsin delegates. We discussed various similarities and dissimilarities within our LSCs. Mainly, Social Media rules which they have put into place. Also, Team Iowa coaches' stipend versus WI and MN stipends. The Lake Erie LSC volunteer model, charging clubs an additional \$200 at registration. They then have a point system based on club volunteer hours or LSC involvement. If a club meets their point goal then the \$200 is refunded.

Lunch with Athlete Rep, Andrew Rottinghaus (Sept 23)

Andrew requested to meet over lunch to discuss the ideas they had regarding ISI HOD mtg.

- Inform ALL athletes of HOD meeting, not just through the Clubs. This can be accomplished if there was better access to emails through registration process. Or, once Social Media is set up and running. Now, use of the FB account to inform parents at least.
 - Ways to make it more inviting and engaging so athletes want to attend
 - Powerpoint, spread out each agenda item to one of the six reps
- Would they like to use the athleterep@isiswim.org email account?
 - Pros - all could see and track email discussions.
 - Pro - use of Google Drive to collaborate on projects such as the Powerpoint for HOD
 - Con – another email address for the athletes to track. They usually already have at least two, personal and school accounts.
 - Will discuss with all athletes
- Athletes Tab on Team Unify site. There is one already. How often do athletes go to the site? How can we increase traffic to the TU site?
- Custom made ISI Athlete Rep polo shirts to be worn at things like Convention, HOD and other functions, including team functions and meets. Advertises their role as Athlete Reps.
 - I will look into this with Splash Multi.
- They wish to have a closed executive meeting held before Committee meeting, at 10:00
- Check ByLaws, possibility of permanently changing election of athlete reps to LCC versus Short Course champs meet. Reasoning, the terms are Sept 1- Aug 31. If elected in Feb they are not doing anything until Sept and have lost the enthusiasm they held in Feb when elected.

Registration Workshop (Sept 23)

- More information regarding DeckPass and new website rollout from Jim Fox, marketing director for USA Swimming.
 - Get in touch with Jim, he has a bunch of ready made marketing tools for DeckPass and website. Email templates, Website promos, Social media promos, newsletters to send out.
- Asked when the Officials Certs will be linked to DeckPass accounts. He said possibly Q4.
- New Background Check vendor for USA Swimming. No more BG level 1 checks. If you had a previous BG-1 you will have to start over at next registration cycle and complete a BG-2.
 - Should be seamless through the registration portal for Officials and Coaches.

Central Zone Meeting (Sept 23)

I don't have many notes from this meeting. I mainly listened and absorbed. I believe others have detailed notes in their reports. Very interesting discussions though!

House of Delegates (Sept 23)

Athletes did a wonderful job of accepting our LEAP2 award.

House of Delegates (Sept 24)

The amendment changes are posted on the ISI website

Lunch with Athlete Reps (Sept 24)

Had a very nice end of convention wrap-up lunch with all six athletes. They all were very enthusiastic about what they had done and learned about. Gave them some direction and focus moving forward. Talked about Athlete Committee Meeting at HOD. Each one chose a topic to focus on. They will work together on a Powerpoint presentation. Their goal is to have more athletes attend these meetings in the future by engaging the athletes within the LSC. I was so impressed with the athletes this week. They all conducted themselves in a professional manner. They were truly excited to make changes within ISI at the athlete level.

Conclusion

I was immediately overwhelmed by the convention being my first year attending. I skipped around to a bunch of topics just to get a feel for what was what. I walked into and out of a few meetings in addition to those above. Overall, I ultimately got a much better feel for USA Swimming. What it does, how it does it. But most importantly I was so surprised by all the people I met. Everyone was so accessible. I made a bunch of contacts and heard a lot of great things happening all over the country.

Thank you to Iowa Swimming for allowing me to attend. I hope I can use and share the knowledge I attained to help make ISI even better in the future.

Sincerely,

Marie Koenigsfeld

ISI Communications and Logistics Coordinator