

# WESTERN ZONE NEWSLETTER

April 2002

## SENIOR ZONE DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Thoughts from the keyboard of the Senior Zone Director...

Another short course season has ended, and based upon the results from the two sectional meets and the National Championships, it appears that it was a very successful one for the clubs and swimmers within the Western Zone. Our top age group swimmers are also doing quite well, as I see many of their names listed in the preliminary Top 16 report for 2002. I would be remiss, however, if I failed to mention the achievements of all the other swimmers in our Zone, who won individual state championships, or who qualified for the Zone meet this summer, and those who simply met their goals for this season. Congratulations to all!

### **Sectionals:**

As I mentioned, both sectional meets were well attended and the results were quite good. Here is the breakdown for each meet:

- MW & SW sectional - 100 teams; 822 athletes; 3,032 individual splashes; 283 relay splashes; 71 US Open cuts made; 52 National Championship cuts made of which 51 were 'new' based on entry times
- 4 Corners & NW sectional - 116 teams; 752 athletes; 2,668 individual splashes; 480 relay splashes; 306 US Open cuts made; 77 National Championship cuts made with 30 being 'new' based on entry times

I'd like to thank all of the site personnel, the volunteers, the officials, the coaches, the athletes, and their parents for making these meets a great experience for all. As should be done, there will be some fine-tuning for both these meets, in response to concerns expressed by those in attendance. Also, in regards to sectionals, it appears that everyone seems to be happy with the two-site configuration and the only modification to the proposed WZ bylaw legislation is to decrease the number of swimmers from "...at least 800 swimmers" to at least 600 swimmers. As such, I am hoping that this will not be a 'long' topic of discussion at Convention. If you haven't seen the proposed



legislation, please let me know and I'll make sure that you get a copy. Lastly, I would like to thank those

individuals who served on the Sectional Committee this past year for their efforts in generating discussion on this topic, and for helping to draft the proposed legislation.

In regards to the future, assuming the legislation will pass, the two sections are to be named the Western Blue (4 Corners & NW) and the Western Gold (California). Thus, in a proactive effort and in accordance with the Western Zone bylaws (Section 10.2), these two new entities are now being charged to submit to the Zone Directors/Secretary their respective bylaws. These bylaws will govern athlete eligibility, specify the officers and their duties, delineate site selection procedures, and develop meet format, scoring, and time standards. Skip Runkle is chairing a committee of representatives from each 'Blue' LSC in this effort, and there is a meeting scheduled for the two representatives from each 'Gold' LSC on Sunday, April 29 in Sacramento to discuss the same. It is my intention, that both groups have a working document ready for "approval" at their respective summer meets.

Dates and sites for the summer LC sectional meets are: Blue - Phoenix Swim Club; Phoenix, AZ; Tuesday, July 23 - Saturday, July 27; Gold - Clovis Olympic Swim Complex; Fresno, CA; Wednesday, July 31 - Sunday, August 4

### **Zones:**

Hale Adams (Colorado) is acting as Meet Coordinator for the 2002 Western Zone Meet to be held on the University of Southern California campus, since Larry Johnson (Montana), our elected Meet Coordinator, is serving as the meet director. Mary Kramer (Arizona) will be serving as the meet referee. Dates for the meet are from Tuesday, August 6 through Saturday, August 10, 2002. Meet packets should be available in the near future.

### **USA Board of Directors Items:**

I'm sure you are probably aware of the main items that are presently being discussed at the BOD level - "new"

club membership program; proposal to increase minimum water depth; the Governance study; and the forthcoming marketing initiatives which dovetails with the proposed membership fee increase. Of these, at the upcoming May 4 meeting only the following items appear on the agenda: new club membership, the Governance study, and the fee increase.

I am optimistic that the Governance study will bring forth some tangible items that the BOD may act upon, for the good of the sport. I believe that the persons in charge have done an admiral job in collecting information from all the various entities that form our membership. I would hope that we all view whatever is presented with an open and responsive mind. I am sure that there will be some disagreement among the Board, as there will be around the Zone and throughout the country. Change is always difficult, yet it is only through change that true growth may occur.

I have heard from many people regarding the new club membership program, with probably a 50-50 split in terms of those being in favor or being opposed. I, personally, think that this is a good idea. I have some reservations about the cost – associated with the completion of the Club Business Management school – but I don't feel that is or should be the primary reason for not approving it. If you're still not sold on this idea, try substituting the word "school" for "club" as you read through the brochure. Being a former public school teacher, that analogy certainly brought home the points for me.

Will the new marketing initiatives to be presented involve a membership fee increase? I am almost certain that they will. I don't have a problem with an increase, if I see that it has some direct benefit to the membership. The question is always, "What do we get from being a part of USA Swimming?" or, "Why should we join USA Swimming?" I realize that everything has a cost, and that those costs are escalating. I just want the most "bang for my buck".

If you have concerns or questions about any of these items, please e-mail me at [BunaTuna@aol.com](mailto:BunaTuna@aol.com). Preferably, before the May 4 meeting.

**Communication:**

The officers have tried to open up as many channels for communication, as possible. We've expanded our e-mail mailing list, posted information on the USA Swimming website through Zone News, sent blast e-mails to all the coaches in the Zone, and responded to queries via telephone and/or e-mail. Also, since the old Zone website seems to have "died", through the efforts of John Lorimer (Colorado) we have a new website where we will be posting a myriad of information. The new address is <http://westernzone.usswim.net/>

**Have a great long course season!** – Ken Ebuna, Sr.  
Western Zone Director

\* \* \* \* \*

**PACIFIC SWIMMING POOL DEPTH SURVEY**

Pacific Swimming has been conducting a survey of pools used by their member clubs to assess the potential impact of legislation that would further restrict race starts into water less than 5 feet deep. A draft report is being reviewed and will be released to Western Zone in the near future. Briefly, the report finds that further restrictions will have a significant impact on both short- and long course pools since a large number of pools would not meet new depth requirements at all, and many pools would be severely reduced in terms of competition lanes that would qualify as having sufficiently deep water. The report points out that the younger age groups are likely to be affected the most, since reduced pool capacity would lead to restricted meet sizes, which would mean more limited competition opportunities for these younger athletes. The most startling realization is that all but one of the pools suitable for major competitions (such as Western Zone Champs, Far Westerns, and the Santa Clara Invitational) would no longer qualify for such competitions. The report concludes by asking if there aren't more constructive ways to promote the safety of our swimmers than merely declaring some pools, and portions of many pools, unsafe due to limited water depth. (Thank you to Pacific Swimming for allowing us to include this in the newsletter.)

\* \* \* \* \*

**ATHLETES' VIEWPOINT** from Tammy Yanagi

This year's Sectionals went pretty well according to athletes who attended, although many athletes decided to go to other meets instead. The merging of the California LSCs for the Sectional meet was successful, with a broader variety of competition, but in general most athletes still didn't like the idea of Sectionals, feeling as if it were a bad substitute for Junior Nationals. The athletes who once attended Junior Nationals, felt as if the meet deprived age group swimmers of one stepping stone in the procession of improving and growing. In order to mitigate this problem, a meet for these swimmers was developed, but went unsupported by USA Swimming. This meet, the NCSA Junior Nationals in Long Beach, turned out to be a successful championship, although many athletes were hesitant to attend because it was not supported by USA Swimming. With time standards similar to those of the US Open and being the only meet of it kind this past spring, the idea of it seems to be growing in popularity in the minds of athletes under 18. At this meet, Senior National time standards were achieved, as well as record times being broken. It also ran 50's of every stroke, and semi-finals for the 50 and 100 races, much like seniors and trials. The meet was

apparently well designed and organized. It appears to the athletes that Sectionals mainly benefits the larger teams with senior swimmers. They feel that USA Swimming needs to put its focus back on the developmental aspect of swimming from age group swimming to senior swimming. What seems to be lacking is still the middle stepping stone that age groupers and other senior swimmers need, to stay in the sport and to remain motivated to reach higher levels of swimming. After two years with Sectionals in place, the majority of athletes' views hold strong; they aren't leaving much hope for Sectionals to work successfully as a championship meet. For those athletes, it is important to remember that although we may disapprove of what implementations USA Swimming has made, Junior Nationals wasn't an overnight success either. Just because it doesn't fulfill every swimmers' desire for the perfect championship meet right now, doesn't mean it can't ever reach its potential as a high-caliber championship meet, similar to what Junior Nationals once was.

\* \* \* \* \*

**"OFFICIALLY" SPEAKING** from Larry W. Johnson

Many thanks go to Don Hart and Mike Saltzstein for the great jobs they did as our meet referees for the spring sectional meets. Thank you gentlemen! With the rules expanded at these meets for National Championship certification and re-certification, many of our officials had opportunities to step up or renew. These opportunities will occur again this summer in Phoenix and Sacramento. Apply early to get the position that you would like. The applications will be posted and sent out shortly.

Western Zone Championship information should be out in the next few weeks. Be looking for the official's application. This will be a large meet and if we can get a good number of officials to work the meet it will make everyone's job easier.

On the national level, if there is an official in your LSC who has made an outstanding contribution of time and effort to the swimming community, please consider nominating them for the Maxwell Award. Each LSC can submit a candidate who is deserving. From the nominees one is selected by the National Officials Committee and recognized in Swimming World every two months. Contact me if you have someone you would like to nominate.

Have a great summer and I hope to see you around the pool.

\* \* \* \* \*

USA SWIMMING ADAPTED COMMITTEE REPORT  
From Char Tester

We've had a busy year already with our annual meeting being held in Chicago on February 2-3, 2002. **Charlie Huebner was the guest speaker** and spoke on the vision and plans for US Para-lympics whose main objective is to win medals and make sure athletes are receiving quality coaching and preparation.

**Championships Update.** Guest Mike Saltzstein presented 2002 Disability Meet information. It will be held June 13-15 at Federal Way, classifications tentatively on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. Only Paralympic events will be swum in finals, all others will be prelims (timed finals) only. We will be using FINA and USA Swimming rules.

**National Level Certification for Classifiers** was discussed. We will recommend to US Paralympics, for review and adoption, the classification policies and procedures presented in the Classification Subcommittee's report. Becoming Classifiers is becoming a monumental task and we are attempting to get our people on a recognized level of certification. Mary Kramer is chairing the subcommittee.

**Update of records** was submitted by Bea Hartigan and is now available on USA Swimming website.

**Vignettes are available** on the web to LSCs, parents, coaches, groups, etc. Please feel free to download and pass them on. We will be using them as tools for our workshop at Convention in Dallas, Texas, September 10-15, 2002.

**LSC Liaisons** are still very necessary and important to the Adaptive Committee and we continue to pursue them to get input from the people in the "field" and to answer any questions they may have. At present we are asking them what they would feel should be included in our workshop at Convention so if you are a Liaison please contact any of us on the committee.

**ISHOF Display** is a lot of legwork right now but many people and organizations are interested. If you have any ideas contact me.

**Inclusion.** We have a first. CENTRAL ZONE LSCs have approved inclusion in this meet for swimmers with disabilities.

**Scholastic All-American Honors** application forms are available on the USA-S website and are to be submitted to Marvin and Joyce Lamphere. Two male and two female swimmers with a disability (Matt Frey and Alex Nichols) (Sarah Castle & Sharon Schoenberg) received recognition for the 2000-2001 reporting year.

**Newsletter for athletes** to include information about many subjects and will be distributed at the 2002 Disability Champs. Athletes will be available and

visible to answer questions and provide information between prelims/finals and at registration.