

2015 General Chair's Convention Report

The 2015 USA Aquatic Sports Convention was held in Kansas City, MO September 29th through October 3rd. Montana was well represented sending twelve delegates including four athlete representatives. Nine of our delegates may attend per our bylaws and three others went due to their holding voting committee positions or presidential at-large positions.

One of my goals, as identified in our strategic planning meetings, was to explore the possibility of "Build A Pool" coming to Montana for the \$2900 fee they normally charge. I felt this would be better as we could get all Montana cities involved instead of only one or two people going to Florida for a conference. In the end, Mick, from BAP, decide he could come to Missoula and put on a conference if we could get 25 people there. Oh yes, by the way, put on a conference **for free** if we can get at least 25 people there. Coach Jade spoke to IE and I spoke to Snake River, IE, and Alaska and they are "all in" for this event. Now we need to get our cities and governing bodies to send a representative to this conference so they can see the importance of a pool in their community.

We were presented with a \$1000 check for attaining LEAP 2 and are one of only seven LSCs to reach this level, so far. We were first in the Mighty 2500 and second in the Western Zone!

There is discussion going on about banning the high dollar tech suits in the 12&U age group meets, but that is likely a year to 18 months away from happening.

The Sports Medicine and Science Committee, of which I am a member, held a very informative meeting on breathing issues and a second topic on weight training and how much/when it is a benefit to swimmers. The breathing problems are often associated with the pool chemical or psychological factors. Core strength and stability were identified as critical in the conditioning part of the meeting.

Most of the LSCs are going to a paid person to perform the general running of the LSC. I am not saying we are there, yet, but I believe the writing is on the wall – sooner or later we too will have to hire an office staff.

I would like you to visit our LSC Portal on the USAS website. If you are a numbers person you will love the graphs, charts, and tables containing all our demographics. By knowing where we are we can better plot the course to where we want to go.

There were many more informative meetings/events, but the item I must comment on the most is the team work of our Montana delegates. We were very busy running to various meetings, but we came together several times in dedicated meetings to compare notes and our excitement of what we were learning and what we want to bring back to MTS. Our athlete reps were especially active in wanting to bring good things back and I hope you become infected by their enthusiasm. These young people have their stuff together and I plan on giving them more and more responsibility to unite our teams and increase competitive swimmer numbers throughout the state.

Alaska has gone from about 1200 swimmers to over 2500 in just a couple of years and they have worse pool and distance problems than we do. If they can do it, we can do it. We have Big Sky so let's have Big Dreams and attain Big Success!

Dr. Tony Popp

A.J.'s Dad

Montana Swimming General Chair

