

Athlete Rep Report
Convention 2019
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Athletes at Convention attended many meetings at which topics included a thorough breakdown of MAAPP and SafeSport, a presentation by USADA on CleanSport and TrueSport, athlete presentations on the above, and various athlete leadership workshops, including a national committee fair. We were also introduced to the eight candidates running for a position on the USA Swimming Board of Directors. There was a session dedicated to Rules and Regs, in order to fully prepare the athletes for the House of Delegates meeting. This extensive preparation meant the Saturday HOD meeting lasted a mere one and a half hours!

The biggest issue discussed at HOD was the proposed increase of minimum club dues to USA Swimming. The House, including the athlete delegates, was asked on multiple occasions to approve this increase from \$70 a year to \$250 a year for existing clubs. With some pretty heavy debate, which accounted for the majority of the time we spent in the meeting, the resolution was voted down. It is important to note that this was denied not just because it is an incredible increase and burden on clubs; USA Swimming did not provide adequate explanation for where the new funds would be used and seemed to be dodging a fair amount of questioning from delegates throughout the course of the Convention. This resolution will most likely appear again next year or, if some of the threats are to be believed, sooner.

I got the chance to chat with the General Chair of South Dakota Swimming again this year, as well as meet the three reps he brought to Convention this year (up from just one last year!). Joel is a great guy and last year, a really exceptional conversation took place between him, myself, and some of the other MT reps. We discussed the athlete voice and the role we play on these boards. One of the things that he said really stuck out to him from our conversation was that "athletes are elected the same way as other board members and [they] deserve to be treated as equals". Joel went back after Jacksonville and, I am told by his athletes, totally revamped his LSC. One of the things he and Katie (the rep from last year) did was to make athlete elections entirely electronic. Based on what I've seen of the MTS Bylaws, there should not be an issue enacting this as it is a method of electing athlete representatives. It would be appreciated by the other athlete reps and myself if coaches would be willing to work with us as we try to get this system up before short course state.

At Convention, the athlete reps were encouraged to focus on how they can exercise their voice in their LSC. Part of this is actively participating in HOD meetings and taking an interest in making proposals. Unfortunately all of this came too late to submit proposals for the 2019 fall meeting. The reps and I will be compiling a list of some of the proposals we would like to see worked on and eventually accepted. If anybody is interested in either helping us or working with us for athlete related proposals, don't hesitate to contact us, but make sure you are complying with MAAPP when you do!

On top of all that important stuff, the reps and Coach Kirby got to meet Elizabeth Beisel, Chase Kalisz, and Rowdy Gaines! We all also got to go up to the top of the Gateway Arch, which was a blast! Convention 2019 was amazing and it will forever stand in my memory as one of my top ten moments with MT Swimming.