

SAFETY

October 6, 2007

530 incidents were reported Nationally for the 2nd quarter through June, 2007. Our LSC accounted for 17 of those accidents. While the top 3 age groups Nationally were 11-12 (24%), 15-18 (20%) and 13-14 (19%), our LSC reflected 13-14 (35%), 11-12 (23%), and 9-10 (18%). Nationally, the 3 top injuries were leg/foot (27%), head/neck (20%), and hand/arm (18%) and most injuries occurred in the water (40%) during a meet/competition (57%). The top 3 injuries in our LSC were leg/foot (29%), ENT/mouth (23%), and a tie between hand/arm & knee (18%). Most of our injuries occurred in the water (41%) during a meet/competition.

We had a safety issue in our LSC involving an outdoor pool in cold weather and what warming equipment would be allowed on the pool deck. The Ref on deck made decisions that were questioned by some teams and I decided to ask USA Swim for a ruling. My first response was from Bruce Stratton, Rules and Regulations Committee Chair. "USA Swimming does not have a policy on this particular situation that I am aware of. It would be difficult, if not impossible to try and address every safety issue that could come up. Generally speaking, we have to rely on common sense and good judgment in determining what is safe for swimmers and what is not. The Meet Referee, as the person in charge of the competition, certainly has that authority and hopefully would use it if it were determined to be unsafe."

My second response was from Sandi Blumit, Sr. VP with the insurance company. "We on the insurance side totally agree with Bruce." She went on to suggest that a message could be sent to all potential participants (teams) prior to the meet outlining any restrictions so that this type of problem could be avoided in the future.

Cindy Smith, SE Safety Chairman

