

USA Swimming Convention Report

Marie and Leo Lin

Rules and Regulation

1. Reviewed several governance proposals attached to the recommended Governance Task Force recommendation to restructure the organization of USA Swimming. This includes making the Board of Directors more a strategic governance body, and having the CEO/President and staff the operational body which oversees the operational committees that are staffed by volunteers with a designated staff as liaison. Athletes fully supported the Task force recommendation but clearly articulated that they did not feel that Rules and Regulation had appropriate authority to make any recommendation regarding acceptance or rejection of the legislation. They, however agreed to “approve” it because they did not wish to mislead the body (HOD) to think the Rules and Regulation did not approve of the change.
2. Turn on the freestyle in the IM and Medley Relay: Swimmers are allowed to come off the wall on their back, but may not take a stroke or a kick before turning to the breast.
3. Carol Zaleski reports that FINA made no substantive changes to the rules. Most of the changes were to wording to create more clarity.
4. The number of events limits is still under discussion.
5. The Transgender Task Force is reviewing on a case by case basis how to classify the swimmer in terms of entry. Whatever gender is chosen, all previous swims data will be transferred to the new gender.

Official’s Clinic #1

1. FINA updates – Carol Zaleski
 - a. minimal changes to rule, none of substance
 - b. Tokyo Olympics has given 3 more events to swimming – we chose 800 men, 1500 women, mixed medley relay
2. Program Operations – Dan McAllen
 - a. Winter Nationals – Ohio MR Dave Coddington
 - b. Juniors East - ?? MR Jim Holcomb
 - c. Juniors West – Iowa, MR Kathy S

- d. Summer Nationals – Irvine July 25-29
 - e. Summer Juniors – Irvine July 31-Aug 4
 - f. US Open Water – Tempe AZ, May 11-12, 2018
 - g. Summer Futures – Aug 2-5
Richmond VA, Carey NC, Rochester MINN, Santa Clara, CA
 - h. Pro Series – Austin TX Jan 11-13, Atlanta GA March 1-3, Mesa AZ April, Indianapolis IN, May, Santa Clara CA June 14-17, Columbus OH July 4-8
 - i. Winter Nationals 2018 –Greensboro NC Nov 28-Dec 1
 - j. Winter Junior Nationals 2018 Dec 5-6 – East Greensboro NC, West –UofTex Austin, Tex
 - k. Summer Nationals 2019 – Stanford CA, July 31-Aug 4
 - l. Summer Junior Nationals 2019 – Aug 6-10
 - m. New National Team Director will be appointed in about 3 week
3. Open Water – Sandy Drake
- a. Open water officials clinic- Tempe AZ May 10
 - b. Each LSC should nominate one official to go to the clinic
 - c. Nationals – Tempe AZ May 11-13
 - d. Budapest –Worlds, 13 entries from USA, 11 top ten times, 1 gold
4. Rules- Jay Thomas
- a. Freestyle turn in IM and Medley Relay rule change, - swimmer may come off the wall after the turn on the back, but must be towards the breast prior to first stroke or kick – Effective September 21
 - b. Butterfly clarification – you can kick on your side provided you are past vertical towards the breast
 - c. Fin wedge – cannot take off standing on the top of the wedge, cannot have the wedge fully to the front and use it to take off for relay exchanges, the last foot must leave from touching the block

- d. Backstroke start – cannot use side bars as the grip, only the designated backstroke grips on the block may be used.
- e. Strobe lights indicating short & long whistles, and take your mark (different colored lights) are not prohibited.

5. Testing – Bill Rose

- a. April 15 the system shuts down to allow loading of new tests'
- b. Any questions that have been answered incorrectly 25% of the time for the year will be reevaluated to see if there are clarity issues.
- c. Working with NCAA on their newer tests – there were some errors that have resulted in scoring being inaccurate. They have been fixed, but new ones have just been discovered and Bill is working on those changes.

6. Mentoring – Melissa Hellervik-Bing

- a. Theme for last year's evaluators clinics was "treating officials as customers" – use hospitality as model to encourage volunteers
- b. 4 Zone workshops aimed at N3 evaluators many of whom started in the beginning – focus on mentoring them on mentoring
- c. Encourage LSCs that bring in outside evaluators to ask those mentors to mentor the LSCs N2 evaluators
- d. At Nationals and Junior Nationals every official will be evaluated automatically
- e. Encourage officials to ask for evaluations at Pro Series, and Futures
- f. Forms will be being put up electronically

7. Education – Ann Lawley

- a. Clusters focus like – how to vet calls between CJ and Deck Ref
- b. Share sites are coming to share things from the various LSCs

8. Communication – Jamie

- a. Quarterly calls for LSC Officials chairs – next one Oct 4
- b. Exploring conference call for all officials

9. Athletes – Patrick Hunter and Andrew Tang

- a. Stroke and Turn Plan on web
 - b. Starter Plan on web
 - c. Situations and Resolutions Revised almost ready to be on web.
 - d. Guidelines for including athletes on Officials committee – under “recruit on the website
10. New Uniform – for 3 stars events and above (Nationals, Pro Series, Junior Nationals), black pants, black socks and black shoes. Shirts remain the same. All other meets are as they were before.
11. 2018 Officials Card – Deck Pass can serve as official registration validation, or you can print the card off Deck Pass on colored stock.
12. National Meet Applications – in general stay open (only the winter ones close early) – usually 100 applications for 60 positions.
- a. Usually open up 6 months prior to event
13. 2 Zone workshops coming up: Central/West and Southern/East
14. Officials workshop in 2 weeks in Denver

Officials – Navigating Coach/Official Relations

- 1. Consistency is the main focus
- 2. With regard to relationships – respectfulness and confidence with regard to doing your own job adequately

Championship Evaluation Committee – Results from the past national events (Nationals, Junior Nationals, Pro Series, Futures)

- 1. Size is an issue for some meets – too small a pool of swimmers, but then swimmers can swim finals.
- 2. For some there are issues that come up because of the locale of the venue - ie. East Meadow great pool, great staff and support, very expensive.
- 3. Time line is always an issue – small number of entries, short timeline, swimmers can get to bed early, but not as much rest between swims, and less stiff competition vs. large entries, great competition, too long, can’t get to bed early enough as an example
- 4. Suggestion that finals should be listed as starting at 5 but with flexibility to have it start later if entries require that adjustment

5. Hospitality is often an issue – not enough protein, no gluten free options, given out at the wrong time, not enough available so when officials finally get off shift to eat there is nothing left but white table cloths.
6. Official's chair would like feedback sooner – so for example one place had said starters were uneven, and Jim did not hear until now.
7. Surveys now standardized so they will be able to compare year to year, and do stats across meets of the same type (futures, pro series)
8. Survey set up to both get responses on scale 1-10 and to also garner comments, with focus of not asking leading questions.

Western Zone Meeting

1. Working on changing Western Zone Age Group meet to last week in July or 1st 2 weeks of August because so many schools are starting in August. The motion to do this passed.
2. Western Zones Age Group and Senior had significantly more officials – 53 in total
3. Next year – Age Group will be in Roseville, and Seniors in Clovis
4. 2019 Age Group will be in Oregon and Seniors in Clovis
5. Vote to support Western Zone Camp in San Diego with and increase of \$1500 +, and \$2000 for Black History Swim in Washington DC.
6. Athletes will form a task force to see how to maintain skits, but have them occur in a way that will be less problematic for the flow of the meet.
7. Age Group meet host will be allowed to charge an entrance fee – determined by the team with approval by Western Zones.

Officials – Burning Issues

Myths and Urban Legends

1. Consistency is main focus – yes
2. Uniform change to black pants, socks and shoes, at Nationals, Jr. Nationals, and Pro Series – yes
3. Always go to edge of pool with right/left foot forward – no, whatever stance keeps you stable and not fall into the pool unless there are specific meet requirements
4. Always stand to right/left of blocks – no , unless there are specific meet requirements (tv)

5. Hold kids on top of block while handle issues –no try to handle issues before getting them on the block.
6. Referee must move to stand on the otherside of backstroke flags once swimmers are sent off – no, referee stands where they want (while addressing visibility issues)
7. There is a starter's dance – no – starter stands where they can give a good start
8. Referee must stand with whistle in the mouth and hand outstretched until all swimmers heads come up or until they are all past 15 meter mark – no, send and drop arm and whistle,
9. Referee cannot have whistle in pocket, must be on lanyard – no, but it prevents dropping whistle into the pool.
10. Referee's short whistles must be soft as opposed to long whistles – no swimmers don't distinguish loudness of whistles for any purpose
11. Circle may use the fox 40 – it's just hard on the ears.
12. False Starts must be marked in a certain way (dot, circle number, underline, etc) on the sheets to count – no mark in whatever way that makes it clear
13. You must write with a pen on the DQ slip – no can be pen, pencil , but should be legible
14. Shoes must be totally white – no we usually apply the Wimbledon rule.
15. CJ should sign the DQ slip for Stroke- no , Stroke should verify that the DQ slip is correct and preferable for the ST to sign it.
16. At an OQM you cannot wear shorts – no you may if authorized, especially in an outdoor pool
17. Starter must hold microphone with one hand only – no hold it with whatever works best for you, though it often works well if you hold mike with one hand and cord with the other, if your hands are big enough.
18. In backstroke start hips and butt must stay in the water – no
19. Toes of one foot must be against the wall for a valid backstroke start - no – at least one toe from each foot must be against the wall.
20. In butterfly arms must be straight when entering water, otherwise if hands get in first and then stretch out it is an underwater recovery – no

21. DQ slip is a legal document – no it is informational, clerical errors are to be corrected and as long as the infraction occurred and there is no confusion around whether it did and who did it the DQ is upheld.
22. Referee must know which hand touched first, on nonsimultaneous touch, or which hand touched in a one hand touch for the DQ to be valid – no – as long as DQ was discernible it is upheld.
23. Referee must have a full picture of what happened to uphold a DQ – no – a sketch is sufficient provided the relevant elements are described.
24. You need to describe how far (in inches), exactly where, the time difference for DQ to be upheld – no it must be discernible.
25. Any Jolyn suit is illegal – no – all suits with a fastening system are illegal (but can be worn during warm ups). Jolyn has made legal suits as well as tie suits. Ties are considered a fastener system and are illegal.
26. Forward start grips can be used in the backstroke start – no – only backstroke grips

Burning Questions

1. There is no “penalty” for deck changing – this is educational and aimed to help change the culture
2. When Transgender Swims officially change their gender and it is recognized by USA Swimming all the times the swimmer has swum previously will be transferred to the recognized gender.
3. Advancement Evaluations are not done at National Championships or any 3 star or above meets – only recertifications
4. Heart rate monitors are legal (just like watches) as long as they are not being used to help the swimmer or provide feedback.
5. There are decertification procedures on the website
6. We do have apprentice officials in OTS – all uncared trainees must be under supervision while on deck.
7. Alternating kick in the butterfly is defined as having the legs going in opposite directions. It is legal for one leg to cross the ankle of the other leg or foot provided they are going in the same direction.
8. The composition of a Meet Jury Committee is public information.

Evaluate the Evaluator

1. We are teaching the people
2. Negative feedback can be a tip to growth – deliver it in a positive way
3. Give 3 positives before getting to areas for growth
4. Give 3 things to the mentee to work on – starting with the easiest – as they improve the first it gives a sense of accomplishment and builds confidence to do the next.

NCAA – Suzanne Heath

1. 3 requirements for NCAA times to be input into swims (next year – not this year)
 - a. Bona fide competition – rule 9
 - b. Officiating is in compliance with NCAA rule book – rule 4 (3 to 4 or more officials)
 - c. All meet results have to be sent to NCAA/USA website within 72 hours of meet ending
2. Waiver for lane malfunction
3. Kinesiotape is allowed by NCAA and will not disqualify the time provided it is not a US Open, American record.
4. These observed meets will start next year – R6

HOD

1. New BOD Structure with fewer board members (12) and a nominating process (which requires candidates be vetted. was passed.
2. New "flex" membership is to start in September, 2018. It will be optional for all LSCs. It is predicted to lose money for the first 2 years but it is hoped we will be able to attract more swimmers who are not year round dedicated swimmers. They have yet to have the mechanism to measure if a "flex" swimmer has swum their maximum two meets in the season.
3. The 120 day rule for changing teams will be waived for swimmers caught in the problems caused by Harvey and Irma.
4. Swimmers in relays may not launch from on top of the wedge of the backstroke ledge and must leave from one foot on the starting block surface

5. Backstroke swimmers may only use backstroke grips for backstroke starts and cannot use the forward start grips..