

2009 USA Aquatic Sports Convention
George Geanon, Officials Chair

Sessions covered in this report:

- 1) Rules and Regulations
- 2) Officials Committee Meeting/Workshop
- 3) Open Water Meet Directors' and Officials' Workshop
- 4) Burning Issues for Officials
- 5) Central Zones Meetings (Thursday and Friday)
- 6) Future Tech: Law Issues and Legal Risks- Online Predators
- 7) Senior Development Committee
- 8) Diversity Workshop
- 9) Safety

1) Rules and Regulations

FINA has reworded some breaststroke language, but no substantive change, and no change in USA Swimming wording.

NCAA has a new rulebook with updated changes (rulebook updated every 2 years).

Breaststroke rule now complies with USA Swimming and FINA

FINA technical suit ban instituted by NCAA 9/1/09

NFHS has adopted FINA swimsuit legislation starting 9/1/09 this year.

Individual states can choose not to follow FINA rule.

LSCs cannot alter or modify Part One of rulebook. An LSC can apply to the Rules and Regulations Committee to make a modification.

Task Force to be formed to consider permitting sponsor advertisements on swimwear.

Possible rule proposal for next year.

Glossary review Task Force underway.

All Rules and Regulation changes adopted at this convention have been posted on the USA Swimming Officials webpage, under the Rules and Regulations tab.

Rule 102.9 SWIMWEAR

.1 Design

A. Swimwear shall include only a swimsuit, cap and goggles. Armbands or leg bands shall not be regarded as parts of the swimsuit and are not allowed.

B. In swimming competitions, the competitor must wear only one swimsuit in one or two pieces. All swimsuits shall be made from textile materials. For men, the swimsuit shall not extend above the navel nor below the knees, and for women, shall not cover the neck, extend past the shoulder, nor extend below the knee.

.1 Exemptions to the foregoing restriction may be granted to a swimmer, on a case by case basis, by the Chair of the Rules & Regulations Committee, or

his/her designee. Exemptions will be granted only for conflicts due to the swimmer's verified religious beliefs or verified medical conditions.

.2 Procedures for applying for an exemption will be established by the Rules & Regulations Committee and posted on the USA Swimming website.

.3 No exemption to this restriction will be granted for a swimsuit that will give the swimmer a competitive advantage.

.4 The decision of the Rules Chair may be appealed only to the entire Rules & Regulations Committee whose decision shall be final and binding on all parties.

C. Only swimsuits approved by FINA, as reflected on its published list of approved swimsuits may be worn in any USA Swimming sanctioned or approved competition.

D. Swimsuits worn for competition must be non-transparent and conform to the current concept of the appropriate.

E. No swimmer is permitted to wear or use any device, substance or swimsuit to help his/her speed, pace, buoyancy or endurance during a race (such as webbed gloves, flippers, fins, etc.). Goggles may be worn, and rubdown oil applied if not considered excessive by the Referee. Any kind of tape on the body is not permitted unless approved by the Referee.

F. The Referee shall have the authority to bar offenders from the competition until they comply with the rule.

Rules 101.1.1, 102.16.1, 103.15: Eliminate references to gun use and discontinue the use of starting pistols in USA Swimming.

Rule 205.10.1 SWIMWEAR IN AGE GROUP COMPETITION

.1 For age group competitions, it is permissible for an athlete to wear a single set of garments underneath his or her competition swimsuit for modesty and/or privacy reasons.

Rule 202.3 CONDITIONS OF SANCTION

.6 The meet announcement shall include information about water depth measured for a distance of 3 feet 3 ½ inches (1.0 meter) to 16 feet 5 inches (5.0 meters) from both end walls.

Rule 207.10 ENTRIES

.5 Only swimmers and relay teams listed on the official entry entered using the procedures stated in the meet information shall be eligible to compete. No changes in Submitted times may be updated up to the entry deadline. Corrections or changes of events entered, or additional entries shall be allowed. No corrections or changes of events entered or additional entries will be accepted after the entry deadline.

Typographical or transcription errors which can be readily verified by entry data or National Times Data Base data may be corrected if attested to by the swimmer, coach, or the swimmer's representative prior to the scratch deadline.

Rule 102.8 CHANGE OF PROGRAM AND POSTPONEMENT

.3 The entry provisions and starting time of any event ~~each~~ all affected swimmers or their coaches must voluntarily agree in writing that they ~~has~~ have been notified and ~~is~~ are in accord with such change. Any affected swimmer or ~~their~~ his or her coach may ~~and~~

should file a written protest with the Referee prior to running of event or meet if they do not agree to such change in time or date.

OPEN WATER Rules Changes

Numerous open water changes adopted, mostly administrative. See final document on Rules and Regulations changes made at the convention, located on the USA Swimming Officials website.

2) Officials Committee Meeting/Workshop

New DQ slip available. May use up supply of older forms.

National Certifications remain current for 3 years, increased from two years. If you do not recertify in 3 years, you are decertified. You then have 3 years to re-establish your credentials by completing the recertification process. If this is not done within 3 years of the lapse of your credentials, you must restart the certification process from the beginning.

Online Testing:

- New instructions online
- New Stroke/Turn and Timer Recertification test online
- New Open Water test online

If you undergo N2 or N3 evaluation, please fill out the Evaluate the Evaluator form that will be sent to you. Please be honest. Evaluator consistency is improving.

Please keep your email address current on your linked USA Swimming account or through your registration chair, in order to receive communications from USA Swimming.

An Officials Guide to Open Water Officiating will be online in the next two weeks (Officials website).

Open Water Referee Guide should be ready within the year.

Part Seven, Open Water rules, are now in the mini-rulebook.

3) Open Water Meet Directors' and Officials' Workshop

There is a Track/Cross Country computer program for finishes that is being modified for use with Open Water Swimming as well.

LSC Certification of Officials:

- Should debut in the next year
- Complete on line test
- Complete an Open Water clinic or pre-meet clinic
- Work 1-2 Open Water meets
- Considering certification as Open Water Official, without having Pool Certification as an Official

Issue: Some elite open water athletes are avoiding FINA meets to go to sponsored invitationals, for the money.

Considering rule to allow wetsuits if water temperature is less than 61 degrees (driven by “equator countries”).

Open water websites: 10kswim.com and 10kswimmer.com

Coaching Open Water:

- Considering development of Open Water School for Coaches (based on Australian system)
- Athlete needs to be able to handle 130% of the prescribed distance to be successful
- Marlins Swim Club
 - Club takes a shorter break in summer, longer in winter, to increase practice time
 - 2 OW practices per week for 13 and over, one practice for 12 and Under
 - Parents out in kayaks during practice for safety
 - Many swimmers cannot handle the physicality of OW swimming

Educate swimmers about dark water, seaweed, critters, etc. Do not sugarcoat possibility of wildlife.

Consider an obstacle course with open water practice to take their mind off the open water fear factor.

Meet Management in Open Water:

- Select safe body of water
- Check water quality (sometimes local college labs will do this for free)
- Check with local authorities to see if permits are needed
- If lifeguards are stationed there, bring them on board. If not, need to locate some.
- Consider parents and children swimming together
- If unable to obtain a big sponsor or group of sponsors, make sure entry covers expenses
- Consider off duty police for security (usually about \$200 for two)
- Display an aerial photo of the course, if available. Display at venue and post online, which can help reduce fear factor.
- Make the fee non-refundable, in case of cancellation. Need to cover the expenses you have incurred.
- Watercraft: kayaks (check with local clubs), boats (check with local dealers)
- Food/Water donations
 - Check with local grocery stores and vegetable stands for water and fruit donations
 - Local bagel companies for donated bagels
 - Give out local store coupons

4) Burning Issues for Officials

Swimwear issues discussed

- New FINA guidelines regarding swimwear.
- Noseplugs can be used for now. FINA will discuss at their 11/09 meeting, and they may be banned, but unlikely
- Second suit will be allowed for modesty or support, for Age Group Meets only

Wheelchair bound volunteers interested in Officiating:

- Can and do serve as Stroke/Turn officials as well as Starter or Referee
- As starter, can sit in a wheelchair, stationary chair, or some work from a lifeguard chair
- Consider certifying as a Starter or Admin Referee, and bypass training as a Stroke/Turn Official

For a National Qualifying Meet, it is best to have an N3 evaluator who is not a member of your LSC, but from an outside LSC.

If a swimmer steps onto the block and it is apparent there is an illegal suit or illegal second suit (such as two jammers for a male), step them down and send the next heat while the swimmer changes. This is preferable to knowingly letting them swim, then disqualifying the swimmer.

Issues:

1. After the start or turn, can you surface, re-submerge and then resurface prior to the 15 meter mark? **Yes**, in the backstroke and freestyle. **No**, in the butterfly.
2. Disqualification for elbows above the water during the swim:
 - a. If the elbows are above the surface of the water when in a trough (and below the level surface of the water), there is no disqualification.
 - b. If the elbows are above the level surface of the water, this is a disqualification.
3. Declared False Start: (I will have a document on this process put on our website shortly, after it has been reviewed by the National Rules/Regulations Chair)
 - a. Prelims/Finals event: allowed for any reason in prelims, not allowed in finals
 - b. Timed Finals with fastest heat swimming with Finals: declared false start is permissible in Timed Finals, as well as the fastest heat swimming with Finals.
4. Scratching into finals and potential No Show penalty
 - a. National Championship Protocol
 - b. If the swimmer or coach is notified by the Referee or Admin Referee that they have scratched into any of the finals heats, and they accept that position, the swimmer must swim. If the swimmer does not swim, then the penalty is out for the meet.
 - c. If the swimmer is seeded into the finals heats but is not notified and does not accept the placement, there is no penalty if they do not show.
 - d. If the swimmer scratches into the alternate position, and either accepts the alternate position or is not aware of the alternate placement, there is no penalty if they do not show.

5) Central Zones Meeting (Thursday and Friday)

2009 Zone reports given.

Meet Bids for Age Group and Senior Zones for 2010 and 2011 discussed and accepted:

- Age Group: 8/6-8/2010, Midwestern Swimming, Lincoln, Nebraska
- Age Group: 8/6-8/2010, Kenosha Barracuda Swim Team, Pleasant Prairie, WI.
- Senior: 8/5-8/2010, North Dakota Swimming, Bismarck, North Dakota
 - This meet moved from 8/12-15
 - Prior date conflicted with high school swimming, swimmers leaving for college, etc
- Age Group: 8/5-7/2011, Topeka Swimming Association, Topeka, Kansas
- Age Group: 8/5-7/2011, Indiana Swimming, Indianapolis, IN (IUPUI Natatorium)
- Senior: Iowa Swimming withdrew their bid

The Zone Meet in 2010 at the RecPlex in Wisconsin will host: Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio.

Bill Schalz re-elected as Zone Director Coach.

Formats for the Age Group and Senior Zone meets will stay the same this year. If the Senior Zone meet is continued after this year, new meet formats for the Senior and Age Group Meets will be placed in the Zone manual. Senior Zone format will be posted on the Central Zone website.

Lake Erie, Indiana and Illinois have completed Level 1 of LEAP program. Wisconsin will start this process this year.

Zone legislation passed and will be posted on the website. No major changes.

6) Future Tech: Law Issues and Legal Risks – Online Predators

Michael Sullivan, Deputy Chief, Illinois Attorney General's Office

Kids are the “computer experts” in most households. They think they are anonymous on the computer, but with free programs from Google, can locate a house within a few blocks. Online predators can then suggest local parks, motels, movie theaters, etc, to meet.

Online Predators:

- “Where is your computer?”, “Who uses it?”, “Any siblings?”. These are questions to assess threat levels to an online seduction.
- Address and phone number. **Never** provide this information.
- Use a nickname, not your real name.
- Protective software programs available. Computer turned off based on several types of triggers, such as foul language, sexual terms, and sexually explicit invitations.
- One of the biggest risks for children: digital or web cameras.
- Dangerous question: “Can you keep a secret?” There is no reason, ever, for an adult to ask a child this question online.

Risky Behavior:

- Talking to people you do not know
- Strangers added to buddy lists. Many teens have 100s of people on their buddy lists. They will not talk to a stranger on the street, but will do so online.
- Putting your location on a website
- Talking to strangers about sex
- Looking at pornography
- Acting in a rude or nasty manner online
- Harassing or posting embarrassing information about others online (taking nude pictures of others and posting them online can carry up to a 30 year prison term)
- Posting personal information in a profile on a blog or webpage
- Suggest giving a zip code 100s of miles away, for social sites
- Telling strangers your personal information

Information/Behavior that is safer:

- Use a nickname, not real name
- Give a zip code 100s of miles away
- Use cartoons or drawings of your interests, not actual images of you and your interests
- Remember, best friends get mad at each other, and occasionally send your pictures out.
- Never use a single person photo, use a team photo. Your friends and family know you.
- Never use images that identify hometown or high school (such as shirts with team name)
- Make sure your profile is private, and discuss with parent who may be invited to see your profile
- Must have parental permission to add people
- Be careful of background in your photos, which may reveal location

Protective Software:

- Make sure you have good virus protection. Many sites teens use to download music, etc, such as "P and P", are loaded with viruses.
- Can use settings from your internet provider to limit content
- On your computer, try Tools – Internet Options – Content - Enable
- Many software programs available
- Speaker uses CS Web Management System, costs about \$40.
 - Has a stealth mode- teen does not know if it is on. Use active mode, so they know you are monitoring their computer usage.
 - Program turns the computer off if they go to an inappropriate site.
 - Will then send an email to the parent as well.
 - Between the ages of 6-18 is the time to instill computer discipline into children, before they leave at age 18.
 - Block Word Library
 - Blocks terms related to hate, sex and violence

- Will also block names, phone numbers, address, school names, date of birth, favorite playground or park, cell phone number, credit card numbers, etc.
- Parent would have to turn this off temporarily for student to put their name on a term paper, homework, etc., then re-engage the block.

Mr. Sullivan has authored a book "Online Predator: A Parents Guide to the Virtual Playground", from Xulon press. This can be obtained at Borders, Barnes, or online.

To have a representative from your local task force on internet crime speak to your organization, go to ICACtrainging.org to locate your local commander.

7) Senior Development Committee

Same order of events for all 5 day National Meets, similar to World Trials.

Junior National Team composed of top 6 per event based on place, not time.

All 6 go to Vancouver 5/11, top 2 to World Cup (Stockholm)

LSCs to help cover cost of National Junior Team members

Selection meets: National Junior Championships, Nationals, US Open versus Nationals and US Open.

Olympic Trials

6/25/2012 to 7/2/2012 in Omaha at the Quest Center

800-1000 athletes (1200 last trials)

Time Standards to be developed after fall 2010

National Events

See USA Swimming website for meet locations

Outdoor sites preferable in summer due to air quality

Awards: consider finish event, exit pool and go right to awards stand. Affects ability to dress properly

Motion made to mail team award instead of award ceremony on last night of the Meet.

Motion failed.

Consensus was to try and emphasize "team" and team awards

Retain Junior National time standards and 2 bonus swims. Changing relay standards reduced number from 300 to 137.

Swimsuits

1/1/2010: Technical suits to be banned by FINA

New requirements;

1. Textile, natural or synthetic, woven. No polyurethane
2. Coverage
 - a. Navel to knees for men
 - b. Shoulder to knees for women (not covering arms or neck)
3. No zippers or fasteners

High School and NCAA have banned suits as of now

USA to vote on banning suits 10/1/09

Senior Zones

Two meets held this summer

1. Southern Zones: 5,000 athletes eligible, about 86 came to the meet.
2. Western Zones: held in Hawaii. About 26 participated.

USA Swimming spent \$22,000 on the meets (\$11,000 each meet)

Meets will be held in 2010, then USA Swimming and Senior Committee to reassess viability of the meet.

Meets were held second full weekend of August. Some swimmers may have restarted high school swimming by that time, or left for college and did not participate.

Central Zones will use AAA time standards.

Age Group Report

IMX Extreme Challenge at four sites

1. Indianapolis, IN: 11/20-22/2009
2. Phoenix AZ: 11/20-22/2009
3. Gresham, OR: 12/11-13/2009
4. San Antonio, TX: 12/11-13/2009

Qualifying Standards

1. 11&12: Boys 2000 Girls 2100
2. 13&14: Boys 2000 Girls 2100

8) Diversity Workshop

Some clubs are partnering with minority swim programs, paying for their USA swimming fees. Potomac Valley swim club pays the fees for Nadar Por Vida, a Latino club in Washington, DC.

Preferred Minority terms: African American, Latino, Asian.

Fundraising tips:

- Seek out foundations: corporate or individual
- Align your potential donor with swimming
- Most corporations support communities at risk, such as minority swim programs
- Approach your donor with a detailed plan
 - The population you are targeting for support (ex: minority swimmers)
 - The goal (ex: reducing the drowning rate for minority children by teaching them how to swim)
 - Face to face solicitation is essential, not a mass mailing
 - Tell them how supporting your program will enhance their image or community standing
 - Let them know your other sources of funding, particularly if another foundation or corporation in your location
 - Ask for a matching donation
 - Invite them to a swim meet or practice so they can “see” what swimming is about
 - Close the deal before you leave the interview (when can you expect to receive a check)

Nicely done presentation on fundraising that can be applied to any group or goal. Speaker is to send a copy of her presentation to attendees. Let me know if you would like a copy (if I actually receive one).

9) Safety

If you utilize a massage therapist who is not a Non-Athlete USA Swimming member, they must be under the direct supervision of a coach.

Private lessons have insurance coverage if the coach and swimmer are both USA members. Avoid one on one instruction. Have parent or other individual present to chaperone.

Personal assistants for disability swimmers do not have to be USA Swimming members to assist the swimmer on deck. But, if they fall, they are not covered by insurance. Have them sign a waiver. It is up to the Meet Referee to allow an assistant on deck.

Report of Occurrence: not completed often enough. Fill out even if volunteer injured. The number of reports submitted does not affect your insurance coverage.

Photographer Vendors on deck need to provide a certificate of insurance. Have a check box on entry form: "I am aware pictures may be taken of my child".

Kids and Masters can practice and have meets together if there is a USA member coach present. For meets, separate sanctions needed.

Coach cannot have infant on deck.

Know your Emergency Action plan. If you do not have one, develop one.

Marshals instruction card to be posted on Officials website next week, and on Risk Management site.

Make sure your club and LSC have an updated Safety/Loss Control manual.

Respectfully submitted

George Geanon
Wisconsin Swimming Officials Chair
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