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Officials Newsletter - June 2020

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Officials Newsletter

Greetings From the Chair

The world of swimming certainly mirrors the unpredictable nature of our daily lives right now as pools begin to open and the date for sanctioning meets draws closer. If you participated in the short survey regarding your plans to return to officiating, I thank you. The results measured your willingness to return to volunteer work as officials on the deck. Just over 5500 of more than 15,000 officials across the country answered the questionnaire, and 92% reported favorably to returning as local environments dictate. Many claimed they would even be willing to drive a few hours to help out teams in their LSC. Your dedication to this sport is astounding!

On a more somber note, Gina Mensay, USA Swimming staff liaison passed away earlier this month creating an empty place in our collective heart. Please keep her family in your thoughts and prayers. She often mentioned that working with the officials brought her joy. After just one conversation with Gina, you knew that her single desire was to provide you with an answer that gave direction to your request. She was patient and kind-hearted, and worked tirelessly to ensure our success. Gina also had a great sense of humor; I say this because she always laughed at my jokes and tolerated my endless use of movie quotes. Many of you will be able to recall and rest in fond memories of your interaction with this woman of unmatched character.

Stay well.

Kathleen Scandary

Announcements

- New USA Swimming Website launched TODAY! View the website at usaswimming.org.
- Fall and Winter Meets - Formats of these meets may be altered to accommodate public health concerns. **Please note the addition of the PSS meet in Irvine.**

- Applications will be available on the web site on the 6th of July
- Meet Dates and Referees:
 - US Open (Atlanta Dec 2-5) Lucy Duncan
 - Winter Juniors East (Atlanta Dec 9-12) Peter LaGow
 - Possible LCM Time Trials Sunday morning, 12/13
 - Winter Juniors West (Austin Dec 9-12) Lisa Olack
 - Possible LCM Time Trials Sunday morning, 12/13
 - PSS Richmond (Nov 5-8)
 - PSS Irvine (Nov 12-15)
 - PSS Knoxville (Jan 13-16)

Virtual Meets

LSC OCs will be taking a webinar on Virtual Meets on June 24th. We hope to have the webinar recorded and available for the OCs to bring it to their LSC Referees. Watch for the link to the recorded webinar and accompanying materials on the Officials Page.

Tech Suit Information For Officials

The following rule, proposed by the Age Group Development Committee, will take effect September 1, 2020.

Please take a moment to read the Tech Suit FAQ document linked below.

[READ MORE](#)



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

USA Swimming is committed to a culture of inclusion and opportunity for all. We are dedicated to not only have our sport reflect the demographics of our country, but to intentionally create environments where differences are embraced and everyone feels welcome, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. Equity is how we look to increase fairness through the policies and procedures our organization adopts.

To fully understand what USA Swimming's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts are about, it is important that we know what these terms encompass. Diversity is often readily associated with race and ethnicity. Although both fall under the Diversity umbrella, other areas such as socioeconomic status, age, gender, ability/disability, expression, identity, and religion are also protected categories within our Code of Conduct that also fall under the broad definition of Diversity. We often refer to our Diversity efforts as the "Invitation to the Party". Who are we inviting and who are we missing?

Inclusion is where a bulk of our educational efforts reside. From education comes the awareness and ability to create these inclusive environments for one another. A large part of being able to do this is understanding yourself and the level of awareness you have about what you bring to the environment. Inclusion is "being asked to dance" once you are at the party. It is being involved in the experience and not just a passive participant.

Finally, equity (very different from equality) is what we refer to as "requesting a song to dance to" at the party. You now get to experience our sport in a way that really speaks and connects with you and your needs. At USA Swimming, equity is looking at our policies and procedures and the things that govern our sport. It helps to make sure we are structured in such a way that members get what they need to be successful.

Below are just some resources that are available to our membership.

- **Athletes:** leadership summits, diversity camp opportunities, transgender inclusion recommended best practices, virtual and in-person visits from DEI staff
- **Coaches:** culturally inclusive resource guides, educational training and workshops both virtually and in-person, mentorship programs
- **Volunteers:** scripts for Meet Directors, Officials, and Volunteers when hosting a swim meet, educational training and workshops both virtually and in-person

Other programs and partnerships that exist are our Community Swim Programs and Swim1922 Sigma Gamma Rho initiative. For more information and for a comprehensive list of what we have to offer, please visit our website below.

[DEI RESOURCES](#)

Open Water Happenings!

The 10k race at World Championships is the Olympic qualifying event. You must finish in the top-10 to be invited to compete at the Olympics. The 2019 Open Water Nationals at Biscayne Bay, Florida were the Open Water Olympic Trials for the US, with the top-2 finishers earning an invitation to the World Championships in South Korea and a chance to qualify for the Olympics. For the U.S., those swimmers were Haley Anderson and Ashley Twichell for the women, and Jordan Wilimovsky and David Heron for the men.

By finishing 2nd and 6th respectively at Worlds, both Haley Anderson and Ashley Twichell qualified for the women and Jordan Wilimovsky qualified for the men with a 5th place finish. This will be the third Olympics for Haley, the second for Jordan, and the first for Ashley.

Open Water Nationals

Mike Murphy is the head referee for the 2020 OW Nationals. For the first time ever, there were too many applications and officials had to be turned away. People have discovered how exciting Open Water swimming can be!

The Open Water Nationals scheduled for April in Ft. Myers, FL were postponed. We're looking at re-scheduling in October. Be on the lookout for updates on the USA Swim Officials Facebook page as well as the USA Swimming website.

If you have not attended an Open Water event, put it on your bucket list. You're always at a body of water (lake, river, ocean) with beautiful surroundings. Open Water swimming is never the same. We always say prepare for the unexpected and be flexible. If you've never seen an Open Water race, think of NASCAR racing. Seriously, it's that exciting, especially the sprint down the chute after swimming a 10k.

FINA Open Water News

FINA has decided to cancel all International competition through the end of September. They had a task force that recommended doing this because of safety of the athletes, lack of training, and restrictions in travel. Crossing fingers, the event in Hong Kong will happen late October for our athletes.

FINA has asked the Federations to nominate four people to list #14. Currently for list #13, USA Swimming is represented by Matt Wilson, Pam Wilson, and Sandy Drake. Their appointment runs from January 2019 through December 31, 2022. For the new list #14, USA Swimming will be nominating Mark McCaw (currently on list #12 expires 12/31/2020), Mike Murphy (currently on list #12), Tom Lombardo (new), and John Fox (new). Congrats to you all! You will represent USA Swimming well.

New Evaluation Templates

In response to feedback received from officials via surveys, new evaluation material was created for mentors to help streamline the process and bring consistency and common understanding for both mentors and mentees. The Evaluation Templates mimic verbatim the Professional Documents for each position. Reviewing the Professional Documents are now the best resources for guidance and preparation.

The templates were introduced and distributed to all N3 Evaluators via webinar this past Spring. There was tremendous participation, comments/questions, and feedback. Using the webinar allowed us to reach the intended evaluators and gives us the ability to bring new ones on board seamlessly.

Educational Evaluations are no longer offered unless it was a specific action item of a previous evaluation. For instance, "Kathleen needs to work in this position at one or more Sectional level meets to gain experience before requesting another evaluation". The Educational Evaluation must be requested prior to the evaluation. Once an evaluation has begun it cannot be changed to Educational.

All future OQMs will use these templates for evaluation. Plans are being developed to educate the N2 Evaluators, who are designated at the LSC level by the Officials Chair. Please be patient with us as we look to find the best time for a scheduled webinar for this group.

Thank you for your voice and active participation in improving mentoring at all levels.



Officials Excellence Award

Dean Scheeler - North Dakota

Dean Scheeler has been a stroke and turn official for the Fargo Moorhead Gators for just over ten years. Throughout that time, Dean has developed into a leader within the North Dakota LSC, becoming a top trainer and mentoring dozens of new officials. The apprentices that train under him have had nothing but rave reviews for his patience and wealth of knowledge. Dean began officiating when his children were involved in USA swimming, but has continued to volunteer his time, officiating meets even after his children were no longer involved in the sport. Dean always offers to work in any position on the deck and is willing to lend a hand wherever he is needed. Even though Dean could have chosen to work his way up through the ranks of officiating, he chose to perfect the craft of a stroke and turn official. Dean is a joy to be around on deck and won the "Official's Dance-Off" at a swim meet in 2016. In 2018, Dean was named North Dakota's Official of The Year. Dean is very deserving of this award and North Dakota Swimming is thankful for all of his hard work and dedication to swimming.

Talk to us today

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