

General Chair Report

Virginia Swimming, Inc.

April 22, 2013

Safe Sport is here to stay - many thanks to Jerry Hayes for his consistent leadership in the VSI Safe Sport Committee. More than one half of our VSI clubs have appointed a safe sport coordinator, who serves as a messenger between the Club members and USA Swimming. Recently, USA Swimming completed and released the computer based training module for athletes on the recognition of Safe Sport practices. These guidelines serve as valuable adjuncts to protect our swimmers.

Safety: Water safety continues to be a high priority in our swimming venues. The Meet Safety Guidelines for Warm-ups / Warm-downs was reviewed and revised by the VSI Board in March. Steve Woolfolk, Safety Comm. Chair, has published monthly safety reminders on our VSI website. We still use and regard marshals as a high priority at every meet. As you are aware, marshals need to be on the pool deck from the first splash in the pool at warm-ups until the last swimmer leaves the water at the end of the session.

Open Water: May 18th marks the day of our showcase open water meet at Lake Anna. Stephanie Suhling and Gordon Hair have done a superb job organizing this meet. Water Safety is again a top priority, and Stephanie and Gordon have boat as well as land "spotters" to oversee the races. A clinic for new open water meet officials will also be held at Lake Anna on this weekend.

Learn to Swim: Coupled with the energy and enthusiasm for state of the art Open Water events is the growth of our Learn to Swim programs in several Virginia localities. The mission of Virginia Swimming's Learn to Swim program is to raise awareness of the need to provide the motivation, systems, and tools to "waterproof" our community so that all children have basic swimming skills and are safe around and in the water. VSI solicits grants from USA Swimming Make A Splash local partners and USA Swimming registered VSI teams in Virginia to further this mission.

Hosting Zone Meets: VSI volunteers successfully hosted the SC Sectionals meet from March 21 – 24th in Christiansburg, Virginia. More than 1100 athletes participated! Kudos to the Hokie's host team parents, the great pool facility personnel, and the Officials for pulling off a very successful meet. Our next very big meet is coming up in August, with the Long Course Eastern Zone Age Group Meet.

VSI Task Forces: In order to have a more consistent approach on where, how, and from whom to acquire the VSI Championship meet equipment for our large VSI sponsored meets, the General Chair has appointed a task force consisting of Bob Rustin (Chair), Stephanie Suhling, Bryan Wallin, and Michael Braum. The General Chair has also appointed a second task force, to look at the process for Championship meet contract review. As our VSI sponsored championship meets increase in size, it becomes essential to have a strong contract that clearly spells out the expectations of the host facility, the host team (if local club coordinators), and VSI. The task force members include Bill Geiszler (Chair),

Scott Baldwin, Steve Woolfolk, and Janet Sheffer. Any feedback on either of these two issues may be directed to the chairs of the above respective task forces.

Newly Elected Athlete Representative: The athletes in our LSC continue to amaze us as they drop times and push new records. Kara Morgan, BASS, is the newly elected athlete representative who will serve on the VSI Board of Directors. At our SC Senior Champs meet at least six (6) other athletes indicated an interest in serving as representatives for their peer athletes on key VSI committees. We need to continue to encourage our athletes to provide feedback to VSI officials and BOD members, and to become involved themselves in the many VSI leadership opportunities for our athletes.

Respectfully submitted,

David Strider
General Chair
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