

REPORT – CONVENTION

Disability Committee – Attended the Disability Committee meeting and workshop while in Anaheim. The committee addressed the request sent to the VP – Operations to have the US Paralympic Open Championships observed so it could be used as the qualifying meet to determine qualification for USA Swimming's Scholastic All-American award. We received word that both this meet and the Paralympic Trials would be used for qualifying for the 2008 awards.

We also spent time discussing how the Disability records would be kept in the future. Apparently, the US Paralympic Committee will be keeping the records for Classes S1-13. Class S14 (cognitive) is being dropped by IPC and therefore records will no longer be kept. This classification covers athletes with Autism. One parent who attended the meeting was very concerned, since she has an Autistic child. After much discussion to include Mary Jo, we determined that since this Class has such great differences in severity there was nothing that could be done at the present.

We also brought to the attention of Jim Wood and Chuck Wilgus the lack of any disabled swimmers in the annual video. Even though this year's Sullivan Award winner was a Disabled Swimmer (Jessica Long).

During the workshop, a panel of two swimmers, two coaches and an official discussed how to help coaches be more receptive to include disabled swimmers on their teams and how best to include them in workouts without disrupting the rest of the team.