

# **2005 LSC OFFICIALS CHAIRS MEETING**

Omaha, NE

October 7-9, 2005

Kevin Hogan attending

## **General**

- Meeting was run by Dan McAllen (Co-chair, USA-S Officials Committee) and Mike Saltzstein (Vice President, Program Operations)

## **What Coaches Want (Randy Reese)**

- Thinks there are some miscalls at high level meets because officials aren't used to seeing athletes move that fast (there's a progression in what you see from summer league to age group swimming to nationals)
- Wants to see video review, especially because miscalls can also have a huge financial impact at the national level
- Thinks there's a lot of misinformation going around about the new breaststroke rule change (indicated that the Australians have a different interpretation of the rule than we do)
- Wants to have a video/CD showing legal/illegal strokes
- Does not like the fact that his LSC in Texas will not allow officials from outside the LSC to work the meet
- Tries to push parents of his athletes into volunteer activities such as officiating
- Wants to see the technical rules of swimming reconciled among the various governing bodies
- USA-S has a lot of money and they need to be smaller

## **What Athletes Want (Ryan Berube)**

- Wants to see consistency from meet to meet, LSC to LSC, country to country – requires education and communications
- Wants to see officials show consideration (show some empathy when notifying an athlete of a disqualification, and show some appreciation for the effort)
- Be a good shepherd – a 13/14 year old at nationals can be as clueless as an age group swimmer at a B/C meet – be helpful
- Sees similarities between athletes and officials (long days, commitment, etc.)

## **National Certification Program (Bob Griffiths)**

- N1/N2/N3 programs should be considered to be in effect
- Changing from a recognition program for showing up at a meet to be a certification process that qualifies someone to work at a particular level of meet
- Provides for training and qualification of officials to work at upper level meets
- Requires experienced officials to work at the LSC level
- Detailed handouts were provided and are to be posted on the USA-S website soon (I'm not going to try to summarize as there are too many details)

- There are still details to work out, but the program is being implemented immediately and additional details will be filled in along the way

### **Tour of Qwest Convention Center**

- Location of the 2008 Olympic trials
- Omaha has no 50 M pools but will have two for the trials
- A 50 M modular pool will be installed in the Qwest Arena (presently configured for ice hockey) after first removing 10 rows of seating
- Almost 14,000 seats will be available and they believe they'll be able to sell out the arena
- Immediately adjacent to the arena is the convention center, which will have both a 50 M and 25 M pool installed
- Thousands of square feet are available for aquashop, vendors, etc.
- Will be able to segregate the venue such that once athletes pass through security they will be able to eat, rest, warm-up, and swim without having to pass through public areas

### **Breakout Session #1**

- Dealing with a slippery, wobbly block leading to false start
  - Be proactive and correct the problem beforehand
  - Deck referee has a responsibility to listen
  - May have to offer re-swim
- Role of Officials Chair
  - Recruit and train officials
  - Liaison between LSC and national committee
  - Work with tech planning
  - Leadership
  - Quality control
- What do you need from the USA-S Officials Committee
  - Situations & resolutions as well as on-line testing seen as a positive
  - Need information on responsibilities of different job positions
  - Installation of new certification process
  - How to set up an officials committee
  - Database for tracking officials
  - Have tools ready when new requirements go out
- How to use officials as they age
  - Mentoring role
  - Provide honest feedback if they've reached the point where they are no longer doing a satisfactory job
  - Handle on a case-by-case basis

- Technical running of a meet verses marketing
  - Question was answered at the level of the LSC meet – how do you sell the experience of swimming while balancing long sessions, DQs, etc.
  - They were looking for an answer at the national level – can you run a good meet while dealing with television requirements and such – feeling was that you can but it requires good communications so that there aren't any surprises
- How do you teach recognizing a false start to starters/referees
  - Dan M. offered visualizing the swimmer in a glass box, they can twitch but they can't break out of the glass
  - Stationary, not motionless

### **FINA Rule Changes (Carol Zaleski, Vice Chairman, FINA Technical Swimming Committee)**

- Must read rules sequentially and must not read a particular sentence in isolation
- Presented the new rules from the perspective of FINA (she read from the FINA rule book and spoke as a FINA official, not as a representative of the USA-S Rules & Regulations Committee)
- Backstroke
  - Carol wrote the new backstroke rule and traced its history
  - Because she wrote the rule and knows the philosophy behind the changes she feels confident that she knows how it should be interpreted
  - She believes the interpretation of the new USA-S rule is correct as it reflects what was intended with the FINA rule change
- Breaststroke
  - Carol was not involved in writing the FINA so she felt she could not speak as authoritatively on it as she could on the backstroke rule
  - She believes that the new USA-S rule and its interpretation reflect what FINA intended, however, until the FINA TSC meets in October we won't know for sure
  - She was asked about the requirement for the legs to be in the same horizontal plane and would only say that the requirement was not new to the FINA rule and she would not comment from a USA-S perspective
- A question was raised about the need for the current stroke briefing document to be updated and Dan M. indicated that they had decided not to do anything with it until after the FINA TSC met so that if they changed their interpretations and USA-S R&R decided to do the same, they wouldn't have to change it twice

### **Breakout Session #2**

- Suggestions for new starter video
  - Show everything, make it like a real meet
  - Include distractions, examples of poor starting, young swimmers
- Ideal officials training program
  - Necessarily different for different LSCs

- Live in-water demonstrations are very helpful
- Include a mentoring component
- What to do with officials that think they are the show
  - Ultimately need to confront them but how will differ according to the circumstances
  - At a meet it might be done by the chief judge or referee
  - Outside of a meet setting it might be the LSC officials chair, a senior level official, a contemporary official
- Utility/need for bringing protocols from the national level to the local level
  - Instill a sense of professionalism
  - Administrative procedures to protect swimmers rights
  - Looking for leadership potential
- Ideal mentoring program
  - Identify individuals for next level of responsibility
  - Match responsibilities with personality
- How to improve communications from the USA-S Officials Committee to the LSC Officials Chairs
  - Send minutes of committee meetings
  - Email new information rather than simply post to website
  - Use a listserv for communications
  - Closed forum or emails for discussion
  - When emailing using links to documents
  - E-rooms

#### **Online Officials Certification Tracking System Survey (Bob Griffiths)**

- Took a survey
- Reviewed the Colorado Swimming tracking system
- Tracking LSC level meets worked, mentoring activity, etc. are becoming an issue with the new national certification program

#### **Getting and Keeping Volunteer Officials (Carol Burch)**

- Many useful handouts including (can't find on website but will find out if they will be posted)-
  - "Volunteers Have the Right to:", "Working with Volunteers": this is generic but useful information
  - Recruiting materials brochure: general introductory material to swimming and to officiating
  - Retention materials brochure: retention ideas and leadership ideas
  - Education materials: Utah training material
  - Reciprocity guidelines: we're already following

- People volunteer for different reasons but the #1 reason is that they want to do something useful
- Officials-something other than sitting in stands, give something back, make a difference, meet club service requirement, social, learn the rules, best seat in the house, role model for children
- #1 way to get a volunteer is to ask directly
- Match the volunteer with interest
- Good training involves making someone feel welcome, mentoring in position, parent orientation, common sense approach to training, sense that the work you are doing is meaningful, trainees are good role models, enthusiasm, saying thank you, listening and acting on input, setting example

### **On-line Officials Tests**

- Reviewed how to review tests, call up individual tests, generate reports, generate tests and answer keys for paper tests