

US Aquatic Sports Convention
September 16-20 2009 – Hyatt Regency O'Hare, Rosemont, IL

USMS Notes prepared by Jeff Strahota, Delegate from Potomac Valley (TERR)

**Content herein was taken during meetings attended by the author. Official minutes from all meetings are posted at www.usms.org.*

General Recap

Since this was a legislative year, there wasn't as much action in the house of delegates as there were with all the rules that went through last year. Since USMS now has a staff, most of the legislation put in place at this convention was done so to designate responsibilities for the USMS National Office Staff as well as maintain a role for the volunteers who have and will continue to serve on various committees to support the National Office staff and service our growing membership.

There were several committees whose functions are primarily at the National Office level going forward, and all were approved for dissolution by their individual committees: Marketing; International; Publications Management; Communications and the Zone Committee. At the same token the Open Water and Long Distance committee is slated to be split into two; and a new LMSC Development committee may be formed. Open Water is a huge growth area for USMS, and there could be some great opportunities in that area.

One hot topic this year was the new LMSC Minimum Standards that were proposed and approved for implementation by the House of Delegates. These are intended to provide basic minimums of service to membership and be used as guidelines for those in particular roles. Most of the concern came from the several small LMSCs whose membership is a few hundred people and whose volunteer pools are as small as one person. It was also made clear that there was and is no intention to inflict punitive action on those LMSCs who don't follow the recommendations, only that they will have availability to USMS resources to assist in achieving the standards.

Suits were not as hot a topic this year as last year, but when the vote came for what to do about the suits for SCY, the house was pretty equally divided. A motion passed (by about 10 votes) to follow Fina's recommendation, which could be as early as October 1, based on their September 25-26 meeting.

Nationals for 2011 were selected – we'll be heading to Mesa AZ for Short Course Nationals and to Auburn for Long Course Nationals. Should be two great meets at two fantastic pools!

Elections for our officers were held. Most were uncontested, but the VP of Member Services proved to be a very interesting election with several ties! See HOD 3 Notes for more info on who was elected.

As a PV representative, I made every attempt to attend the committee meetings and workshops that I felt were very beneficial to myself as a local PV swimmer and officer. If you have any questions about any of the sessions I attended or would like to ping something off me, please feel free to email (jstrahota@usms.org) or call (240.472.1481).

-jeff

House of Delegates 1 (Thursday, September 17, 2009)

Rob Copeland, current President opened the meeting welcoming all delegates to this year's convention. Theme is "Moving Forward," as we are setting up the organization for how it will function in 10+ years.

Rob Butcher's Executive Address

Rob's 3 Pillars:

1. Serving our members
2. Serving our clubs
3. Marketing our brand

Why Sarasota was chosen for the National Office HQ:

- Support from many local outlets: Masters groups, private sources, public, government
- Many pool and open water opportunities
- very favorable lease from the city

Sally Bradley was USMS's 50,000th member! She signed up on August 31, 2009.

Membership Benefits – specifically ensuring that the membership is getting tangible value for their fees – has been and will be an ongoing point of focus for USMS staff:

- My USMS – new feature of usms.org with members-only features
- Go The Distance/ Fitness Logs (FLOGS) – new logo for GTD; members-only access through myusms for the flogs)
- Email newsletters – several different newsletters going out regularly
- New features in the USMS Magazine
- Competition & Sanctions database in the works for future ease of finding meets

Club & Coach development – Mel Goldstein's project

- USMS stickers, tri-fold brochure, caps, etc. – free to anyone who wants them
- SwimFest Coaching clinic
- Masters Coach Certification through ASCA – to be available in 2010

Marketing and Promotion

- New logo – result of findings from a study started in 2007; goal of logo is ultimately have it be instantly recognizable
- Who is USMS? USMS is an organization of fitness swimmers + competitive swimmers + OW + recreational + beginner swimmers
- All old partners renewed their organizational sponsorship for 2009; new sponsors included ASCM, Gold Bond, Icy Hot, Bullfrog and BlueSeventy

Finances

- Membership growth was 11% in 2009!! This figure was higher than expected and contributed to an increase in inflows accordingly. Combined with less-than-expected costs to move to Sarasota, USMS should finish the year in the black.
- USMS expects a year of negative cashflow in 2010 due to additional costs stemming from the move, hiring staff, etc.

Final Executive Director Notes:

Business Report is prepared by Rob Butcher on a quarterly basis and available online at usms.org

Thank you to Rob Copeland for last four years of service to USMS

Deb Morrin-Nordlund, Elections Chair, announced the candidates running for office this year:

President: Jeff Moxie

VP Community Services: Nadine Day

VP Local Operations: Jerry Clark/ Ed Tsuzuki

VP Member Services: Dave Diehl, Doug Garcia, Chris McGiffin, Michael Moore

VP National Operations: Michael Heather

Treasurer: Ralph Davis

Secretary: C.J. Rushman

Patty Miller, Governance Committee Chair, briefly touched on some of the legislation being considered at this year's convention. The Governance Committee is responsible for the role of the Board of Directors

Dissolved Committees Proposed:

1. Communications – roles handled by the National Office
2. Publications Management – roles handled by the National Office
3. International – liaison to other governing bodies should be handled by the President
4. Marketing – roles handled by the National Office
5. Zone Committee – roles to be handled by proposed new LMSC Development committee

Changed Committees proposed:

1. Finance – now to be a sub-committee of the Board of Directors
2. OW and Long Distance – a few scenarios exist on how to split up this area with a rather large workload
3. Executive Committee – how to include the Board of Directors

General:

With the new organization structure, most of these changes are being proposed to better define the role and powers of the Board of Directors and some of the operations of the Board.

LMSC Minimum standards proposal

The BOD approved a motion to “sunset” the Professional Management Guidelines (PMG), as they are no longer applicable under the current structure of USMS.

Motion to Adjourn.

Fitness Education (Thursday, September 17, 2009)

There were no fitness award Nominees. Reminder that ANY USMS member can nominate someone. Check-off Challenge bid presented by the Swim Dogs of Denver. 2010's event will have a dog theme.

Go the Distance (GTD) Report - with additional input by non-committee member Jim Matysek
Transition from the Excel/email format to the online Fitness Logs (Flogs) made in July

- This has been very popular – one of USMS's website's most popular areas
- Private, members-only tool (Membership Benefits)

Participation

- double 2008's number of total participants signed up as of Jan 1; second year of that happening
- July – when the Flogs were launched – saw a spike in GTD participants
- Some discussion about increased drop-out rates seen this year

Moving Forward

- Encourage Flog entry!
- Discussion on how to handle hand entries – Nadine Day mentioned that proposed LMSC Minimum Standards may have a point about the Fitness Chair assisting in any hand entries
- Real time reports coming soon!
Committee approved a motion to accept flogs as primary method of input for all individuals, but at the same time, offering manual assistance those who may enter as a team (and some older folks, military, etc.) on a case-by-case basis.

Awards

- Committee approved a motion to OK year-unspecific awards that can be used year to year
- Committee discussed potential T-shirts for next year with the new USMS-influenced GTD logo and milestones; actual design TBD
- Committee approved motion to eliminate GTD stuff at CafePress.com
- Committee approved motion to eliminate patches

Committee noted that they can always use more people to help out with GTD, GTD articles and the Fitness Education Committee in general.

Motion to adjourn.

Coaches Committee (Thursday, September 17, 2009)

Nadine Day, as VP for Community Services-elect (sort of), sat at table with the Committee.

Commented that coaches will be counted on to help promote things like Go the Distance, Check-off Challenge, etc.

Part I – discuss rules that affect the Coaches Committee:

1. LMSC Minimum Standards – “Requirement” vs. “Recommended” Coaches Chair position
 - a. A separate person is not necessary, as in the case of Alaska (and other smaller LMSCs, where number of volunteers may not be plentiful)
 - b. Committee discussed the LMSC Coaches Chair as functioning as a LMSC Point of Contact for anyone from the National Office, Coaches Committee, etc., to get a hold of that area’s coaches.
 - c. Committee motioned to “Recommended Strongly” that their be a LMSC Coaches Chair
2. Suits – committee motioned to propose that they support USMS recommendation on Fina’s Jan 1 2010 meters ruling about the suits

Part II – Committee projects

1. ASCA/ Masters clinics (see part III)
2. Coaches Certification (see part III)
3. Coach of the year will be announced at the banquet on Saturday evening
4. Kerry O’Brien Coaching award (for grassroots efforts to increase club/USMS membership) will be announced at the banquet on Saturday evening
5. On-Deck Coaching - successful at SC, LC Nationals; good response for swimfest and convention
6. International Coaching at Worlds 2010 – USMS NGB has not approved funding to date
 - a. Jim Miller, Mel Goldstein, Bob Bruce and Mike Collins all spoke on why this was not good, with topics such as: this being a bad precedent, swimmer protest support, location scouting, etc
 - b. Motion was made to support coaching at this event by re-proposing the \$6,000 budget; as well as create a sub-committee to look into alternate means of funding for this
7. Online Coaching (Chuck Burr) – now a members-only feature (Membership Benefits)
8. USMS Swimmer Magazine contributions – magazine is always looking for new features from new people
9. Coaches Newsletter – going out regularly to USMS coaches
10. Mentor-Clinics – there are grants available to hold these coaching clinics

Part III – new/revised topics

1. ASCA Masters Certification – Chris Colburn, Mo Chambers, Laurie Hug and Mel Goldstein
 - a. Re-write, re-brand and re-launch masters certification
 - b. Develop curriculum for levels 1 (mostly in place) through 5 (where lots of work needs to be done) in time for availability at 2010’s ASCA Convention
2. High Performance Clinic – Hill Carrow & Nancy Rideout
 - a. Re-launching in the Raleigh/Durham area as part of that area’s selection as a USMS regional partner
 - b. People selected to attend have best ideas for disseminating info back in their LMSCs
 - c. Coaches Committee responsible for 2-3 coaches with great technical knowledge

Motion to adjourn.

Marketing (Thursday, September 17, 2009)

Recap of 2008-9 Committee Projects

1. Website Project – determine scope of use of new USMS logo & Join/Renew button on LMSC/Club websites
 - a. Not many links are up
 - b. Lots of out-of-the-box websites like Team Unify
 - c. Masters clubs buried on USA-S team's site
2. Swim Buddies Draft – previously submitted to Rob Butcher for consideration
3. USMS 30 Day Trial Draft – previously submitted to Rob Butcher for consideration

With Swim Buddies and the USMS 30-day Trial, these are two programs already being implemented in various forms today. Our proposal is simply to ensure that the membership knows of these programs and create a forum where everyone knows about them. Additionally, perhaps the National Office staff would be interested in pursuing a standardization and mass implementation of these programs that would be of benefit to LMSCs, Clubs and Individuals.

New Governance

- “Member Services” is about delivering value to the members
- We, as a committee, wanted to be sure we were made available to the volunteer pool

Motion to support L43 was approved.

Other topics discussed:

- Our recommendation to cancel the USMS planner was approved by Rob Butcher and will not be available in that form in 2010 and beyond.
- How can USMS provide a nation-wide drop-in policy for travelers, vacationers, etc.? Can USMS do something like this? Someone mentioned that their coach charges “twice what your team charges” in a satirical way of encouraging teams to encourage free drop-ins, since zero times 2 is free!
- An audience member wanted to know if we had different strategies for approaching the different levels/types of swimmers in USMS. No, we don't, that this was more for the Club/LMSC Task Force.

Motion to adjourn.

Open Water & Long Distance 1 (Thursday, September 17, 2009)

2008-09 Recap

Susan Kirk implemented an online document storage place for the committee

Postal and OW growth in general – 1hr postal had 2500 participants!!

Online Entry made everything really easy – Club Assistant

Clinics – developing new OW and LD interest through clinics was a huge success in ‘09

Reports

All Americans – no report

All-Star – still compiling

Online Entries – Club Assistant came by to say hi. They mentioned that they make it THEIR job to meet the needs of the Committee or event host – so that they do not need to worry at all about entries, data and results.

Awards – generic, year un-specific stuff is the standard and a 3yr supply was purchased

Clinics – very popular and successful – 20 put on by the committee (or members of)

Legislation – split the Committee up to free up resources for each

OW National Championship bids for 2011 were presented

Bids for the 3 postal events (1 hour swim; 5k/10k LCM; 3000/6000y) were presented. Bid winners would be announced at meeting #2.

Motion to adjourn.

Legislation Proposals *(Thursday, September 17, 2009)*

Discussion of proposals

1 – Registration date for clubs is being proposed to change to October 1 to accommodate the implementation of any changes made at Convention to regulations, requirements, etc.

2 – Establishment of the “Chapter” in the hierarchy of USMS as the official Workout Group name. A Chapter is a workout group of a Club. Pieces of the proposal that were most hotly questioned were:

a) that they must compete as a club at Zone/National Meets

b) at local meets, meet directors do not have to recognize the Chapter in organizing the meet if they state to that effect in the meet rules

c) meet directors must submit results with the CLUB name only

d) fees associated registering a chapter may not exceed what would be charged to a club; such fees (if so desired) are set by the LMSC

3 – LD/OW Committee Splitting

there are two scenarios – L41 & L42; or L70 & L71. The Committee will vote to recommend one or the other, and the House of Delegates may either approve the Committee’s recommendation or override it with the other option with a 2/3 vote.

LMSC Communications Workshop (Thursday, September 17, 2009)

Heather Hagadorn led a roundtable contingent of Colorado LMSC folks who shared their ideas on their particular areas of expertise.

Rebecca Friedlander – Newsletter

- Having a print newsletter creates an open dialogue from members to members, as well as an open dialogue from members to the newsletter editor
- Important to have a variety of articles in every newsletter – event (pool, ow) recaps, event announcements, drills w/ feature coaches, coaching profiles, sample workouts, usms updates, etc.
- Get input from members – encourage member submissions and follow up with them continuously to keep pipeline open

Tips for keeping costs down:

- Find a print mailhouse to do everything for you (print, labels, mail) – they can probably do it cheaper
- Get published WITH the USMS magazine

Kim Crouch – Webmaster

- Keep your website current!
- Check out what everyone else is doing – check out other websites and note the same bullet action items they are using; they may be applicable to your club
- USMS vendors (Club Assistant, Team Unify) can help out with design and hosting
- Pay someone for a professional look
- Create contingency plans for if someone leaves
- Small teams can use things like Facebook and YahooGroups as a base for a team website if the need is large but team is small

Mark Johnston – Coaches

- Coaches are often left out of the loop – make sure they are included in team communications
- Text message communications work great for last minute stuff – cancellations 15 minutes prior to practice because of lightning
- Strong advocate of Facebook use, especially if coaches are younger and use that tool

Mrcia Anziano – Registrar

- Constant Contact email list has made things a lot easier in getting emails out to their lmsc
- Facebook and YahooGroups also effective and useful for smaller groups AND larger groups, especially with self-subscribing/unsubscribing features
- Club Assistant club lists have helped significantly in keeping track of people

Putting on a Multi-Day Meet Workshop *(Thursday, September 17, 2009)*

Attended last 30 minutes of this meeting.

Budget – Important for successful meet. Itemize everything! If first budget, make additions during actualization and make notes for future reference.

Hospitality Suite

- what will you pay for?
- what will your team and/or volunteers provide and do?

Hotels – get deals with hotels for kickbacks, free rooms, blocks, etc. recommend 40:1 for a free room at a minimum

Socials – especially for a multi-day meet, this is important to many meet-goers to get in some fun away from the pool

Sponsorship – EVERYTHING is sponsorable. Nothing is off-limits.

Volunteer sources: think outside the box when the local team or kids team can't help

- High School and College teams
- Civic organizations
- Other sports
- Retirement homes

House of Delegates 2 (Friday, September 18, 2009)

Rob Copeland recognized the many USMS members that have passed away since last year's convention. Rob also recognized those who have been to multiple conventions

Championship Award was presented to Barry.

Fina Masters – meeting is September 25-26. Contact Nancy Rideout (USMS delegate to Fina) with any concerns, issues, questions, comments, etc.

Committee Reports

- 1 – USMS Endowment Fund – focusing efforts on educating USMS public about the fund
- 3 – Fitness Education – minutes approved
- 4 – History and Archives – minutes approved
- 5 – Communications –
 - Newsletter of the Year award – Mountain View Masters;
 - June Krouser Communications Award – Meg Smath
- 8 – Sports Medicine – reminder of annual convention presentation; \$2k addition to the budget approved
- 9 – Recognition/Awards – Ransom Arthur Award presented to Julie Heather

LMSC Minimum Standards discussion

- history of why this has come about
- delegates provided comments

Motion to adjourn.

Championship 2 (Friday, September 18, 2009)

(This was meeting 2 of 2; agenda items 1-6 were discussed in meeting 1)

7 – brief discussion of rule/legislation proposals that affect the Championship Committee

- Committee approved motion on emergency rule proposal that allowed for a club to protest another's designation as a regional or local club at Nationals
- Committee approved motion to state that it is the committee's responsibility to solicit bids for national championships, and they would do so with the assistance of the National Office

8 – 2012 bids

- Potential for 2012 LC Nationals at the Qwest Center, same pool as used for Olympic Trials
- Rob Butcher has been in talks with USA Swimming about their contract for the pool, USMS use of end-of-meet tickets and generally how we could make this work.
- Potentially cost prohibitive, as initial worst-case figures on cost were \$186k for a 5-day meet
- Most likely to take place after trials; Trials meet is June 25-July 2, with 2-day US Olympic Team camp afterwards. Meet would likely be July 4-8, 2012
- Motion approved to table further discussion until USA-S finishes their contract.

9 – Title Sponsorships

- Rob Butcher presented idea to sell title sponsorship of our national meets over a multi-year period as a source of income
- Motion approved to allow for a title sponsorship
- Motion approved to re-adjust the requirements for national meet title wording

10 – other discussion

- Talked about Ohio State as a venue for nationals
- Talked about the possibility of 2013 Pan-American Masters Championship in USA (Mark Gill-liaison)
- USMS National Office and National Championship Logo Design – Committee and National office will work in conjunction to develop logo with Meet Host
- Subcommittee formed to work with national office on marketing/promotion of National Championships; include pool and open water championships

Sports Medicine Presentation (Friday, September 18, 2009)

Dr. Jane Moore (PNA) presented “Exercise Is Medicine”

Weekly recommended minimums (in general)

150 minutes a week of moderately vigorous exercise (minimum)

or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise (minimum)

this is to be aerobic exercise (ie swimming)

also two times weekly muscle-strengthening activity (not necessarily weight lifting)

American College of Sports Medicine

- all kinds of specialties represented by this organization
- ASCM leading the charge on “Exercise is Medicine”
- ACSM is looking to create “Exercise is Medicine” program so that people, specifically physicians, will be more aware of the benefits of exercise to patient physical and mental health
- Overwhelming evidence with continued accumulating evidence that exercise is beneficial
- Program goal is to train a) physicians on education, prescribing, etc., and b) public to request this as a treatment
- Further goal is to change rules so insurance will recognize exercise programs as treatment
- Working on “Your Prescription for Health” literature
 - Exercising after a heart attack, stroke, etc.
 - Exercise in the workplace (walking meetings, taking the stairs, etc.)

House of Delegates 3 (Friday, September 18, 2009)

Rob Copeland Called the meeting to order

Rob asked for motion to approve the board of directors meeting minutes (approved).

We voted.

Reports

Coaches

Kerry O'Brien Coaches Awards presented – PV's Dyann from Germantown Masters was a winner!!!

Coach of the year presented to Chris Colburn

A few amendments made to minutes; approved

Marketing – minutes approved

Rulebook Cover picked; dedication for 2010 to Bill Volkening

Recognition/Awards

Dot Donnelly DOT awards presented

Club of the Year awards to NASTI and MVN

Other awards presented

Records & Tabulation – minutes approved

Officials – minutes approved

Zone – went over LMSC Standards; discussion followed

Here's who we voted for:

- President: **Jeff Moxie**
- VP Community Services: **Nadine Day**
- VP Local Operations: Jerry Clark/ **Ed Tsuzuki**
- VP Member Services: **Dave Diehl**, Doug Garcia, Chris McGiffin, Michael Moore
- VP National Operations: **Michael Heather**
- Treasurer: **Ralph Davis**
- Secretary: **C.J. Rushman**

A triple run-off occurred for VP of member Services between Dave Diehl and Doug Garcia

Open Water and Long Distance 2 (Friday, September 18, 2009)

2011 Open Water National Championships were awarded

1. 25k – Noblesville IN (GRIN) 7/16/11
2. >6 mi – Ft. Myers, FL (FLA) 4/30 or 5/1/11
3. 3-6 mi – Coney Island, NY (METRO) 6/25/11
4. 1 mi – COMA (OREGON) 7/3/11
5. 2 mi cable – Lake Placid, NY (ADIRONDACK) 8/13/11
6. 1-3 mi – Lake Monona, WI (WISC) 8/20/11

2011 Postal Events were awarded

1. 1hr – Tualatin Hills (OREG)
2. 5/10k – YMCA Indy SwimFit (IN)
3. 3000/6000 – Chicago Smelts (IL)

New Business discussed

- Discussion on splitting the committee into two, one for rules/events, and the other for promotion of OW swimming
- Discussion on development of open water clinics
- Discussion on developing more cable courses; motion approved to add \$500 allocation for development of new venues
- Discussion of Susan Kirk's use of Google Docs for committee documents
- Club Assistant presentation on uses of online registration for open water swims. Bottom line is that it is very successful and very error free at a low cost per entry

Colonies Zone Meeting (Saturday, September 19, 2009)

Zone DOT awards

No nominations for 2009

For 2010, we will nag the heck out of people to get nominations

Presently, mostly emailing LMSC contacts; will look to email lists, websites and email members to solicit nominations from more members

Announce request for nominations at SC Zones in April

Zones 2009 SCM – last minute bid sort of on the table from TNYA and Aquafit Masters, Metro LMSC

Dec 5-6, Flushing Meadows/Corona Park pool

Propose having normal session + distance session

Zones 2010 SCY – GMUP April 23-25 is only bid; accepted

Zone Elections

Deb Morrin Nordlund re-elected as chair, contingent on having a vice-chair to carry most of the load until she can officially retire next year, as she's expecting to be the Colonies Zone At-Large BOD representative

Lisa Bennett volunteers to be vice-chair

New Business

Discussed CZ Zone Champ OW swims

For 2010, potentially Grimaldo's Mile in NY; potential date conflict with PR nationals; looking into Hudson River 3/3.5 mi swim; talked about a few others.

Nominated a CZ OW committee to look into Zone OW Champs and designating swims as such

House of Delegates 4 (Saturday, September 19, 2009)

Rob Copeland called the meeting to order

Rob recognized those who had birthdays at or very close to the convention dates

LMSC Standards discussion was wrapped up with two housekeeping/clarification items

Championship Committee presented two winning championship bids for 2011 nationals

2011 SCY Nationals – Mesa AZ – Kino Aquatic Center (dates TBD)

- 5 minutes from hotels; 15 minutes from airport
- hosted by mesa sports and tourism & mesa aquatics club masters
- two 9 lane courses + 10 lane warmdown, 7ft depth
- 1,500 covered seats, 50,000 sqft of grass for tents, etc.

2011 LCM Nationals – August 6-11 2011 Auburn University

- 8 50m lanes 9ft wide, 9ft deep
- warmdown: 6/7 lanes in diving well + outdoor 50m pool
- Atlanta is closest airport 100 miles away
- Closest hotels about 1 mile away

Julie Heather announced new At-Large Zone representatives to the BOD

Publications Management – minutes approved

OW/Long Distance – motions and minutes approved

Legislation – most proposals passed without a fight; “Workout Groups” was a hot topic

Finance

- Added \$6k to coaches committee and \$800 to FINA
- Discussed Manual of Accounting Practices and Financial Operating Guide (lots of jokes here about MAPs to get through the FOG)

Rules Committee

- rules r1, r2; u1-7 approved
- House voted on SCY/Fina suit recommendation – follow recommendation made by fina to be adopted for SCY as early as Oct 1, if a recommendation was made by Fina at their Septe 25-26 meetings

That’s it!