



ATHLETES' SPLASH

News and information from the Athlete Executive Committee

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A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

Get ready for USAS by learning why it's in place

In this edition of the AEC newsletter you will find some helpful information leading into next month's USAS convention. Whether this will be your first convention or 15th there is always something to be learned about USA Swimming.

As you may or may not know, USA Swimming is a sister National Governing Body to the other aquatic organizations, Masters, Synchro, Diving, and Water Polo. Our umbrella organization is United States Aquatic Sports (USAS), which reports to FINA (international swimming federation), then up the chain to the International Olympic Committee. While we will go over this in more detail in a few weeks, you should come into convention knowing that you have a great opportunity. Only in the United States are Athletes so directly involved in the governance of their sport. Your voice and vote contribute directly to the success of

our athletes at the highest levels.

Over the course of convention week take some time to look over the schedule and pick out a few meetings that you think might be interesting. If you might be interested in Rules, seek out that meeting, if Finance is more your thing, try Audit of Investment. The list goes on and on, and there is something for everyone. Whatever you do, ask questions! There are athletes at all levels who can learn from one another, Olympian to C States qualifiers.

In addition to this newsletter you should receive a Survival Guide which goes much more in depth into the week. Also, go to USASwimming.org/Convention for more general information.

As always, please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any comments, suggestions, or questions.



Tim Liebhold Athlete's Vice President and Chair

FOREWORD TO CONVENTION 2013

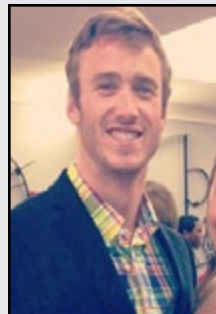
GREETINGS FROM CONVENTION CHAIR CJ FIALA

Convention is almost here. The 2013 USAS convention is shaping up to be a great one this year in beautiful Anaheim, California. The AEC is looking forward to meeting all of the LSC and National Athlete Representatives. At convention we will be discussing a number of important things that will help impact the future of our sport. As athletes, this is important as it directly affects us in the water. Our voice is needed and we are looking forward to helping USA Swimming continue to grow stronger.

At convention we will have several things going on and the days will be filled with exciting events. We will be kicking it off

Wednesday at 2pm with our Athlete Meet and Greet where all the athletes will get a chance to meet one another and meet the members of the AEC. The USAS Insurance Banquet will be held Wednesday evening and everyone will get a chance to meet various representatives from USA Swimming

and the other aquatic sports. Thursday will be our first full day of meetings and we will get a chance to get out of the hotel and do



some bowling that night. On Friday we will meet with representatives from the USA Swimming marketing department and hear special presentations about Safe Sport and College Swimming. Saturday is the annual House of Delegates and will feature our first ever Athlete Send-Off Event.

The USA Swimming Convention is a great opportunity to learn what goes on behind the scenes at USA Swimming. The athletes at Convention will play a vital role in the future of our sport here in the United States. I look forward to meeting everyone and it is going to be a great week.

ATHLETES' ADVISORY COUNCIL UPDATE

Peter Vanderkaay reports from the United States Olympic Committee

With the one-year anniversary of the London Olympics now behind us, the AAC has moved forward with identifying and confronting the issues in the current quadrennial

The issues generally blanket each and every Olympic sport. Our goal is to continue to develop programs and relationships that will serve the best interests of the athletes moving forward.

There are four initiatives that the current leadership feels are most important to address in the strategic plan:

IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS

and efficiency of AAC operations to increase productivity, enhance members' experience, and provide meaningful opportunities for active engagement.

INCREASE THE QUALITY

and effectiveness of athlete support services/programs, especially Career Program, Elite Athlete Health Insurance (EAHI), OTC services, and Safe Sport.

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT

a strategy to strengthen relationships between AAC and key domestic and international stakeholders.

DESIGN AND DEPLOY

strategy to be more inclusive and responsive to the role and needs of Paralympic athlete representatives,

in compliance with the "20% rule" and without negatively impacting Olympic/Pan American athlete representative roles.

The initiatives aim to increase the productivity of the AAC by streamlining operations and communications procedures so that more work can be accomplished in less time. This



means utilizing newer technologies and making amendments to current by-laws for better

transparency and satisfaction for our constituents. We also recognize that quality programs and services are needed for the long-term success of the USOC athletes. With existing relationships strengthened, and new relationships forged, we will strive to design new programs as well as improve and modernize existing programs. Lastly, we want to make sure that Olympic and Paralympic athlete's interests are served in a mutually beneficial way.

As the work I do in the AAC unfolds, I look forward to keeping everyone abreast of the progress in future AEC newsletters. Also, please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions, comments, or concerns.

GETTING INTO THE ZONE

ZONE UPDATES FROM YOUR ATHLETE REPRESENTATIVES



Amy Schulz

The Central zone is trying to decide whether Central Zone should keep going with senior zones after next year since not many swimmers go each year. Another topic being addressed is to possibly

make the sectional time standards faster. Both of these topics will be discussed at convention.



Nick Smagula

First, I would like to congratulate all of the athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers for another great season in the Eastern Zone. From our athletes at Wold Championships in Barcelona to everyone swimming at each LSC Championship

meet, the Eastern Zone has had a great year.

As we start up the new season, there are a few reminders for all of the athletes. First, if you have not done so already, please take the time to participate in the USA Swimming Athlete Safe Sport Training. It is extremely beneficial and worth the time. Second, make sure you have completed all of your paperwork so you can participate at convention in September.

I am looking forward to convention and our very productive, yet enjoyable week of work. As always, if you have any questions feel free to contact me.



Steve Sholdra

Western Zone has continued its growth, gaining almost 10,000 additional athletes since 2012. The Western Zone Championships were held in Roseville, CA this August. Our athletes attended USA

Swimming's Junior Nationals, US Open, and Open Water Nationals, which were all held in the Western Zone this summer.

The Western Zone Athlete Newsletter is being distributed; Athlete Reps, if you have something you would like to submit for the Newsletter, please send your article to ssholdra@yahoo.com. We congratulate Western Zone athletes for your successful season, and want to extend a special thank-you to the Western Zone Athlete Representatives for your support and involvement in the governance of our sport.



Patrick Lane

The Southern zone is getting ready for the USAS convention. Bids are being placed and schedules being made for future swim meets. The Southern Zone has been quiet since the last convention and is looking to

make all changes needed or suggested at convention.

THE BEST IN THE WORLD **BARCELONA CHAMPIONSHIPS**

NATIONAL TEAM VICE-CHAIR RICKY BERENS REFLECTS

I have just arrived back in the states from the 2013 FINA World Championships. This meet was my third World Championships, and possibly one of the most fun and enjoyable experiences that I have had on these international trips. I have to give a huge thanks to USA Swimming for putting together an incredible trip, from training camp we had in Vitoria, Spain all the way to our accommodations in Barcelona.

Putting these trips together is always tough, with so many swimmers doing different things. It is difficult to make everyone happy. Our managers Brandon Drawz and Shannon Gilesby always made sure that the swimmers were taken care of in our team area and all the way up to after our races. We have some of the best doctors and massage therapists in the world, which always makes the trip easier. Besides sleeping at night, I don't think our massage therapists stopped working the entire trip! Team USA's performance owes a huge thanks to the support staff that was on hand in Barcelona.

Overall, Team USA had an incredible meet.



Men's team captain Ricky Berens with 'the massage guys' Brian, Cyrus, and Andy.

Coming off one of the greatest Olympic performances by the United States, I didn't know how we would perform. Sometimes the post-Olympic year can be slower, but we all got together as a team and put together some great performances. Our team had a lot of new faces that made individual podiums, lots of young "veterans" that continued their success from London, and then the old veterans still bringing home some hardware.

This World Championships has me really excited for what's to come with USA Swimming and the national team. It's a long way away, but 2016 Rio Games will be here before you know it!

AEC'S REIMAGINED DIGITAL PRESENCE

Plans for a more connected athlete base

Social media has always been one of the main topics within the Athletes' Committee. Many years ago people talked about Myspace pages and on the dawn of Facebook's creation our attention shifted to pages and blog posting. No matter what form of media we used, though, attention to athlete feedback typically dwindled as we moved away from convention.

THE REASON WE PUT OURSELVES OUT THERE IS FOR YOU, THE ATHLETE

We want USA Swimming athletes to know who we are and what we do. We exist to collect feedback and insure us, the athletes, are being provided with the best service possible as an organization. We believe by combining our previous efforts into a smaller number of areas, will ultimately, render better feedback and a more informed Athletes' Committee.

The following goals are what we believe will bolster the Athlete Committee for years to come.



CREATE A DIGESTIBLE SOURCE OF INFO

This newsletter was never available in the past and over the span of three issues it has grown into what you see now. We hope to continue this to bring you information concerning athlete oriented matters.

ONE PLACE FOR ALL INFORMATION

Working with USA Swimming staff we are in the process of rolling out our own web page, which will be located at (www.usaswimming.org/athleterep). The page will be easily accessible and informative for potential representatives and current representatives by providing documents and resources.

CREATING AWARENESS

We can't stay representatives forever and in order to ensure a steady attendance of leaders we need to make sure the best leaders know of governance options. Using our Twitter handle @USASwimming_AEC we hope to expose ourselves to as many swimmers as possible which will, hopefully, lead to leaders gaining a desire to become a representative.

SAFE SPORT PROGRAM **WHAT IS IT?**

USA SWIMMING DIRECTOR OF SAFE SPORT SUSAN WOESSNER DETAILS

Some of you may have heard or read about USA Swimming's Safe Sport Program – our effort to make sure swimming is a safe and healthy sport for all athletes. Maybe you're thinking, I'm a swimmer ... I know about water safety. And I know you know how to stay safe in and around the water – don't dive in the shallow end, don't run on the deck, and get out when you see lightning. The Safe Sport Program is all of those things, but it's also about how to stay safe out of the water. Swimming is a sport where you will learn to set goals and work hard to achieve them. For the most part, your teammates and adults are great people who support you and care about you. But unfortunately, sometimes a teammate or an adult might do something that makes you feel uncomfortable or crosses a line and that's why Safe Sport exists. If someone is

doing something that makes you or someone you know feel uncomfortable – like sexting or inappropriate touching – that's not okay. We are here to listen, to help you, and to make it stop.

Still not sure just what Safe Sport is? Take the training just for athletes – it's full of information about what's okay and not okay with the adults in your life and what to do if something is not right.

Want to talk about something? Call or text us: Susan 719 332-0184 or Liz 719 237-2705. We're on Twitter at @SwimSafeSport and Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/swimsafesport>

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:
WWW.USASWIMMING.ORG/PROTECT**

FINA'S ATHLETE COUNCIL CYCLES REPRESENTATIVES

Aaron Piersol, FINA representative, reports from Barcelona

Perhaps the biggest impact of this most recent meeting of FINA's Athletes' Committee, like many of the others, was the outgoing of some well established and impactful members. It's worth acknowledging them.

GUSTAVO BORGES, WHO HAD BEEN ON FOR NEARLY A DECADE, SAID HIS FAREWELL TO A GROUP OF BEFUDDLED MEMBERS.

I believe it was acknowledged by those who'd been around for the past decade on the committee, that the most important form of progress for the athletes, however

subtle it may seem, was in pushing and receiving a presence on other boards such as the Technical Swimming Committee. Without a voice to be heard, no ideal has much weight and power.

While we will miss Gustavo, a slew of anticipated and respected minds will enter the committee. Replacing Alex Popov as chairman of the committee will be China's Wu Minxia. Romania's Camelia Potec, Australia's Patrick Murphy, Brazil's Thiago Pereira,



and Kenya's Jason Dunford will round out a much anticipated addition to the committee.

These new committee members will be facing a few of the issues the most recent committee just convened over. One of the most contentious of the issues that was unanimously concurred on was the proposed breaststroke rule change. All of the members of the committee felt strongly about preserving what we felt like was the integrity of a stroke that was already unique unto itself. If anything, we felt the rule change was heading in the wrong direction, with the possibility of allowing more dolphin kicks underwater, instead of eliminating them altogether. Change is fine and by all means inevitable. But mitigated change with deference to the virtue of breaststroke should come first. We need not adhere to those bending the

rules for an unfair advantage, but should listen to those who are the majority within the stroke itself. This rule would not be very well received, and it would be better to acknowledge that now and not feel a backlash later. We're afraid this might be taking the stroke in the wrong direction.

The issue of allowing the Athletes Committee to be a democratically chosen entity is still a goal of the committee itself.

AS WE USHER IN ANOTHER FOUR YEARS FOR FINA'S ATHLETES COMMITTEE, WE LOOK FORWARD TO BEING A VOICE FOR THE ATHLETES.



LAST CALL CONVENTION FORMS

In April 2013, the Board of Directors approved a set of athlete forms that must be on file for an athlete to participate as a USA Swimming athlete representative. With convention one month away, it is vital these forms are submitted by athletes participating in convention as soon as possible.

YOU SHOULD HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED AN EMAIL FROM CATHY DURANCE WITH THE DOCUMENTS.

All forms within the appropriate packet must be completed and turned in ASAP to USASwimmingAthleteForms@gmail.com.

ATHLETES LACKING COMPLETED FORMS ON FILE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO CHECK-IN AT CONVENTION'S REGISTRATION DESK UNTIL THE FORMS ARE COMPLETE.

CONNECTING WITH THE ATHLETES' COMMITTEE

WANT INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT WE DO?

Please head to www.usaswimming.org/athletere

WANT TO FOLLOW US ONLINE FOR UP TO DATE INFORMATION?

Please follow us on Twitter! @USASwimming_AEC

LOOKING FOR OUR PAST MINUTES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS?

Head over to www.usaswimming.org/athletere and look under links

BURNING QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

As always, feel free to reach us by emailing our chair Tim Liebold (chair.aec@gmail.com) or the entire AEC (aec2012-2014@googlegroups.com)