

U. S. Aquatic Sports 2014 Convention

September 17-21

Jacksonville, FL



### **House of Delegate meeting #1**

Nadine Day, the president of USMS, addressed the members and reminded us of the values of the USMS organization: fitness, health, and competition for adult swimmers. The goals and objectives of this year's convention are to amend rules, review the budget, and elect members of the Board of Directors.

A bit of history: 46 years ago a survey revealed that a swim club for adults would help to promote swimming. The founders of this club were Paul Huttinger and June Krauser. Krauser ran the publication, Swim-Master, herself. After reflecting on this

history, it was acknowledged that there is a new generation of adult swimmers and USMS as an organization needs to develop itself as a resource for adult swimmers.

The current financial picture: the organization has no debt, the reserve was increased by \$800,000, and there are plans to use some of the reserve to implement new plans in 2015.

### **Breadbasket Zone Meeting**

In the Zone meeting, the Breadbasket delegates met the nominee for the at-large director positions on the Board of Directors. Bruce Hopson is the new At-Large Director for the Breadbasket zone. This will be his second term as Director At-Large. Hopson is an attorney from the Ozark LMSC and swims with the St. Louis Area Masters (SLAM) club.

Also discussed was the use of Internet presence to attract members and promote the Masters organization. Colorado has a website that is a good example of an effective web presence. It is updated often, clearly displays the calendar of events, and has informative sidebars for prospective members. Other topics that may be good for our zone to explore: outreach to triathletes who want to improve the swimming portion of their sport, member retention strategies, and looking at a website that would link all of the Zone's LMSCs together. Discussion included whether or not updating the Places to Swim aspect of the web presence

should be left up to the National side of USMS or to the local groups, and determining the needs of area swimmers: do they want coached workouts or just a place to lapswim?

Next year's Zone meeting will be held in Kansas City, MO. Locations for subsequent years: 2016-Nebraska, 2017-Ozark, and 2018-Iowa.

### **House of Delegates #2**

This session was mostly devoted to allowing the candidates for the Director At-Large positions to speak and answer questions from the HOD. Candidates who were unopposed, including Breadbasket's Bruce Hopson, were elected into their positions unanimously. Those candidates who were left took part in a Q & A session.

Topics and questions brought to the candidates included: increasing and managing diversity among the LMSCs, bridging the generations of swimmers that are within the LMSCs (young, not so young, and older), how best to deal with conflicts of interest that may be present within the Board of Directors, and the possibility of a committee to address swimmer with disabilities.



### **Sports Medicine and Science Committee Meeting**

This committee meeting began with a discussion of how well the skin cancer screenings at some swim events were received and the possibility of repeating the screenings or trying something different. Air and water quality and how to get swimmers more involved and to take ownership in improving air and water quality was brought up as an option for future booths at events. There was a good-sized audience for this committee meeting, and several topics for events raised from those observing include: exercise-induced asthma, hypothermia, posture, and nutrition/hydration/sports supplements. The committee also talked about video production updates on the website, the viability of a sports medicine blog, and a Coaches Clinic presentation.



### **Workshop: A New Paradigm in Volunteering**

Presented by Bill Meier,  
chairman of the New England  
LMSC

Meier talked about how he came up with the Swimming Saves Lives program. Swimming Saves Lives is essentially a program that utilizes members of LMSC clubs to teach adults to swim. It grew out of a program for kids called Swim America,

but Meier soon realized, after talking to the kids' parents, that many adults have a desire to learn to swim, or at least swim well enough to survive if put into a situation that demanded they swim for their own safety.

The benefits of asking Masters swimmers to volunteer their time for this kind of program:

~To teach is to learn. You are forced to really examine how something is done properly if you must teach it to others.

~Shared mission creates lasting friendships.

~Community leadership. Masters swimmers will help to promote themselves as a group of reference for other people looking for opportunities to swim.

~Learned empathy.

~Volunteering is the greatest gift.

For the Masters groups themselves, the program would foster team building and camaraderie.

### **Workshop: Budgeting for an LMSC**

This workshop is exactly what the title says it is.

Why budget? A budget is used as a guide for month to month operations and allows the organization to organize focus on short and long term goals and projects.

An effective budget is realistic and must be well reasoned. It must reflect current conditions (wild guess cost estimates are not helpful) and should be consistent with the short and long term

plan of the organization's mission. While it should be flexible enough to be amended if necessary, the budget should also be measurable on a monthly basis review.

To create a budget: start a budget committee and have them create a timeline and estimate costs to achieve goals or objectives, estimate any expected dates and amounts of revenue to be generated, compare the expected dates and amounts of revenue to the estimated expenses, and finally, develop a final budget for board approval. One thing to remind your committee: When spending money that is not yours, you must approve the use of the money.

A one person budget committee is okay if the organization is small, but if the board is much larger, an odd-numbered committee is best (to create a majority ruling, if voting is necessary). The budget committee must be open to address and answer any questions that may arise from board or committee members. Questions will help find problems. All budget decisions are to be documented.

#### **House of Delegates #4**

This meeting presented the election results and the end of the awards session that had begun at the end of the last meeting.

USMS Strategic Plan Update was presented.

Mission: To promote health, wellness, fitness and competition for adults through swimming.

Vision: USMS will be a premier resource for adult aquatic fitness in the U.S. and will make fitness through swimming available to as many adults as possible.

Values: health and fitness, respect, fun, learning, excellence

The Pillars of the Strategic Plan:

1. Enhance volunteer experience and improve volunteer performance through role clarity, training, recognition, and recruitment.
2. Create and enhance membership value through expanded and improved USMS products, service, and delivery infrastructure.
3. Increase awareness of and strengthen the USMS brand and image in targeted markets. Masters Swimming now carries a trademark.
4. Engage and activate partnerships with organizations that align with the USMS mission, vision and values.

Following the Strategic Plan was the Financial Presentation. The Financial Committee reviews statements monthly, gives the annual forecast quarterly, and maintains Financial Operating Guidelines (FOG).

41% of the budget goes to membership services. 18% goes to education services.

The budget was presented on the overhead screen and there were questions from the HOD for the Budget Committee:

~web operations—values not challenged, but details were requested.

~liability insurance—issue taken with surcharge fee

~Adult Learn to Swim—values not challenged, but details requested.

~VP, Local operations—administrative expenses

~SSL Fund Operating Costs

The Rules/Long Distance Forum was held after the Budget presentation. Issues discussed were water temperature, distances, and approved swimwear.

According to the Registration Committee, USMS membership has exceeded 60,000 this year.

### **House of Delegates #5**

Rules-Long Distance

Rules are the what, process is the how.

The rules that were to be amended were read aloud, waiting for challenges from the HOD.

LD6 rule amendment challenged: water temperature. Swimmers who customarily swam in cooler water challenged the change to the approved water temperature of an outdoor event without a thermal plan (wetsuits). Their argument was that setting an allowable temperature higher than the lowest allowed may rule out some established swim races. The counter to this claim was that the races would be allowed to run if a thermal plan was in place. Another challenge was in regard to the way the temperature in a lake is tested. Some places of the lake may read at different temperatures than others. Finally, it was asked if USMS shouldn't just bring their temperature rules in line with those of FINA.

There was a vote to amend the rule. As there was no obvious majority, votes were counted. The motion to amend the temperature rule was defeated and the amendment failed.

The proposed amendment to the rule regarding the prohibition of GPS-enabled swim goggles was unanimously approved. The rationale was that the navigational advantage would be unfair to swimmers not in possession of the technology.

### **House of Delegates #6**

This final session of the HOD began with a presentation from the Championship Committee about the 2016 National Championships meet to be held in Greensboro, SC, April 28 through May 1. A slide show featuring the aquatic center and surrounding area was shown. The 2016 summer USMS Swimming National Championship will be held at Mt Hood Community College, Gresham, OR.

The budget was then approved by the HOD, with a request made that there be more details about the budget from the finance committee before voting time. A question about the insurance surcharge of \$1000 for sanctioned events was raised. The surcharge is to be upheld for 2015 only. The motion was carried.

Closing remarks: A recognition of officers leaving their positions, recognition of new officers to their new positions, recognition of new delegates (me, et. al.) and final announcements with regards to the remainder of Convention. Convention was adjourned and the HOD was free to go.

