

USAS Convention Report
Jonathan Watson, NCS General Chairman
NCS House of Delegates Meeting
October 5, 2008

The following is a report of the meetings attended at the 2008 US Aquatic Sports Convention September 24-27 in Atlanta, Georgia.

LSC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The main project unveiled by this committee is the LSC Evaluation & Achievement Program or **LEAP**. The LEAP program will be a tool used by the NCS Board of Directors which is similar to USA Swimming's Club Recognition program. The board will gather, produce, locate and review LSC documents, programs, policies and procedures that USA Swimming would like the LSC to be sure it is using to be effective. Measuring LSC effectiveness was one of the five priorities of the 2009-2012 quadrennium identified by USA Swimming's Executive Director Chuck Wielgus.

LSC's will be evaluated on four areas:

1. Volunteer Development
2. Athlete Development
3. Business Organization / Success
4. Coach & Club Development

The LEAP program allows the LSC to be recognized in one of three levels. Level 1 is mandatory. Levels 2 and 3 have some optional items that LSC boards must complete.

NC Swimming will be one of several pilot LSC's during 2008-09 with the nationwide launch of the program occurring in 2009-10.

AGE GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Age Group Chairmen from around the nation were surveyed by this committee to find out the following:

- 1) How do Age Group Chairmen communicate within the LSC?
The suggestion was made for AG Chairs to get the emails of all registered coaches including assistant coaches at every club in the LSC.
- 2) Do you host formal meetings with the coaches in the LSC?
Currently the most formal meetings held in our LSC are at the House of Delegates meetings and at occasional LSC championship meets.
- 3) What kind of Camps is your LSC running?
Select Camp in May is the only LSC camp currently being conducted on an annual basis.
- 4) Feedback on IMX. Who is using it? What kind of programs exist?
Many clubs are using IMX. Some are creating meet formats to launch the program.

There were two main issues that were the focus of the Age Group Development Committee. These included:

- 1) Hi Tech swimsuits and their use by age group swimmers, and
- 2) The IMX Extreme Games Project

Hi Tech Swimsuits

The committee was lobbying hard to prevent age group swimmers from utilizing the new swimsuits in age group competition. John Leonard of ASCA has written several articles on this subject and was there to speak out against the suits for 14 and under athletes. The rationale for not allowing the suits in age group competition included:

- ◆ Economic issue – high cost of suits
- ◆ Philosophical reasons – too much belief that victory was due to the suit
- ◆ Unfairness of competition when some cannot afford, nor be allowed to wear the suit

Later in the convention, there was legislation that passed that bans suits that go past the shoulder or below the knee from being worn in 12&U competition by 12&U athletes.

IMX Extreme Games Project

In development is a nation-wide meet that would be entered based on IMX scores. The committee has put together a format with workable timelines and are working on an incentive program and other details for such a meet. Launch date set is early December 2009.

COACH PANEL

A coaches panel discussion was moderated by Harvey Humphries (UGA & ABSC) and included four area coaches including Chris Davis of SwimAtlanta. There was much discussion on a variety of subjects including the following:

- 1) Customer satisfaction – all coaches urged others to be sure to treat their customers well. Athlete retention should be something everyone emphasizes after the tremendous surge in membership sweeping the country after the 2008 Games.
- 2) Offer more programs to customers
 - a. Spinning on Saturdays
 - b. Optional Sunday make-ups
 - c. Stroke technique Saturdays
 - d. Varsity program for high school beginners
- 3) Parent Education Ideas
 - a. Handouts do not work
 - b. Powerpoint presentations kept to under one hour are good
 - c. Bring in a speaker, expert on a topic

USA SWIMMING CEO CHUCK WIELGUS AND THE 5 PRIORITIES FOR 2009-2012

USA Swimming CEO, Chuck Wielgus presented his 5 priorities for 2009-2012. In a meeting with all of the General Chairmen from around the US, Wielgus highlighted the following:

- 1) Build the membership of USA Swimming by 20% between now and 2012;
- 2) Promote and increase recognition of the USA Swimming brand, increase revenue and net worth, and increase partnerships with media;
- 3) Achieve – seek to have the 2012 Olympic team win more medals than any other Olympic team
- 4) Improve LSC effectiveness – the new program known as LEAP is seen as a first step toward this goal (see description on page 1).
- 5) Support the USA Swimming Foundation grow.

The State of the Sport report in its entirety is available to be read at the USA Swimming website at www.usa-swimming.org.

At the General Chairmen's lunch meeting the chairmen were introduced to the new program known as LEAP. **LEAP** is the acronym for **LSC Effectiveness and Achievement Program**. Comments about LEAP can be sent to Lee Ann Spletzer at spletzer@aol.com or Sue Anderson at sanderson@usa-swimming.org.

A Friends of Swimming program for USA Swimming is being developed in which the public can donate money just to support the program. It will be a major fundraising initiative nationwide.

General Chairs were asked about what each LSC planned to do to retain the new swimmers that are being accepted by clubs across the country. The expectation is for a 7-20% increase in membership during the coming year. Some of the ideas generated included:

- ◆ Separate competitions for new novice swimmers
- ◆ Increase funding trickling back to new swimmers
- ◆ Create a varsity program for older novice athletes
- ◆ Short "sizzler" meets on Fridays

WORKSHOPS ANNOUNCED

October 22-23, 2008 – Event Management and Marketing Symposium
Colorado Springs

April 3-5, 2009 – Disability Swimming Workshop
Near Colorado Springs, CO; Randy Julian, Club Development Division to host

Fall, 2009 – National Diversity Summit
LSC Diversity Liaison – replaced LSC Outreach Coordinator

NEW WEBSITE FOR USA SWIMMING MEMBERSHIP

www.swimnetwork.com is the newest blog/photos/video website for USA Swimming members. Check it out!