

Athlete Report

By Chris Finnegan

THURSDAY

Athletes Meeting (3pm – 4pm)

- This meeting was basically a welcome for all new athlete representatives.
- The meeting was run by the Athletic Executive Committee, or AEC
- Members of the AEC introduced themselves and said how many years they have been coming to convention.
- The AEC explained to the new athlete representatives how important it was that we voice our opinions at the meetings. They went onto explain the law passed by the US Senate after the disassembly of the Amateur Athletics Union in the 1970's. The law states that all decisions made in athletics must be voted on, and 20% of that vote must be comprised of athletes.
- The AEC also stressed that we as athletes dress and act appropriately while we are at the convention.

Athlete Leadership Workshop- Dwight Stones Lecture on Leadership (4pm-6:15pm)

- Dwight Stones, an Olympic track and field high jumper who competed in the 70's, came to give a brief lecture to the athletes on leadership. However he also hit on some other very different views about what it takes to get to the top.
- Dwight told us a brief summary of his life story, about how he began to participate in Track and Field while he was in High School and quickly rose to the top in his event, the high jump.
- Dwight also warned all of the athletes about who we befriend. He wanted us to make sure that we don't hang out with a crowd from out past that can get us into trouble. He used Michael Vick and the dog fighting incident as an example.
- Dwight also spoke about how he hated the way the U.S. ran Track and Field. He use to be a "hot headed" athlete who was known for doing things his own way and then verbally and publicly abusing the track and field federation.
- Later on in life, Dwight finally learned the way to make things change, a person must go within the organization and state his complaints there.
- Dwight complimented us on being there at the US Aquatic Sports Convention and encouraged us to remain active in order to see to it that things get done

Athletes Welcome Reception (6:15pm – 7pm)

- Run by the AEC, this informal meeting was basically appetizers and different name games to get to know the other athletes.

Eastern Zone Meeting (7pm-9pm)

- In this meeting, all of the LSC's in the Eastern Zone, we made executive decisions such as location of championship meets, zone standard times, and established "open" and "closed" policies for the two sectional meets in the eastern zone.
- For more information on this meeting, please refer to the other metro representative's reports.

FRIDAY

Athletes Meeting (8am-8:45am)

-This meeting consisted of no real value. Nothing important was discussed and the meeting ended fairly shortly.

- I believe the only thing done was a quick review of some acronyms such as LSC, AEC, etc.

Athletes Board of Review (12pm – 2pm)

- This meeting was also run by the AEC,
- The AEC explained how the House of Delegates meeting would be run by using “*Robert’s Rules.*” At the beginning of the meeting, every athlete received the 2006-2007 USA Swimming Rule Book. For the duration of the 2 hours, we sat and discussed the different rules and procedures discussed in the book.
- During this meeting we also broke up into our zones and had a meeting with the Head Athlete representative from our zone. We discussed better ways of keeping in communication throughout the year if necessary.

Eastern Zone Meeting (3:30pm-5:30pm)

-In this meeting, the Eastern Zone Representatives continued to discuss information touched upon in the first meeting. We also heard from the head athlete representative, Hailey Smith, about what the athlete representatives discussed earlier in the day.

- New administrative representative positions were voted upon and filled\

House of Delegates (7pm-9pm)

-Since I was not eligible to vote at this meeting, it was not the most exciting one I attended. However it was interesting to see how the House of Delegates operates and it was a wonderful experience to be a part of.

SATURDAY

Athletes Meeting (8:30am – 9:30am)

-This meeting was similar to the day before. Mainly just going over some basic procedures for the athletes to use in the House of Delegates and the AEC educating us how to use the rule book when specific sections are mentioned.

-“*Robert’s Rule’s*” were also reviewed.

House of Delegates (10am -2pm – For all Representatives of USA Swimming)

- The two main issues that concerned athletes during this concluding session of the House of Delegates were:

-Should Athletes under the age of 18 be able to serve on the National Board of Review?

-The National Board of Review is an extremely important body as its decisions effect each and ever member of USA Swimming

-Multiple adults suggested that athletes under the age of 18 should not be able to make important decisions that affect every member of USA Swimming .The athletes were successful in defending their abilities to make smart decisions and demonstrate maturity. They pointed out that it was up to the LSC’s to elect smart, mature, appropriate people for the position of athlete representatives.

-Should there be more athlete representation in USA Swimming?

-The proposal that was presented suggested the creation of an athlete board in every LSC. Such a board would consist of at least one athlete from every team in the LSC.

-While some athletes were in favor of the proposal and thought it was a great way to communicate the problems within the LSC, the proposal was shut down due to the inconvenience that such a board would cause. The House believed that the job of the LSC Athlete Representatives was to hear the opinions of athletes from every team in their LSC, making the creation of an athlete board for each LSC unnecessary.

-It was pointed out that it would be too difficult to organize that many athlete representatives to meet regularly to discuss the problems of the LSC, with the busy lives we lead.