

USAS CONVENTION 2008

Atlanta, GA

Athlete Report by Zach Coleman

THURSDAY

Athlete's Meeting- First Timers (1:00pm-2:00pm)

- This was a welcome meeting for all of the first time swimmers at the USAS convention.
- The meeting was run by the Athletes Executive Committee or the AEC.
- The AEC informed us of all the events going on that week
- They told us valuable information about the USAS (United States Aquatic Sports) and which sports made up USAS (USA swimming, USA Diving, USA Synchro, USA Masters Swimming and USA Water Polo)
- The AEC gave us a brief history of USAS in a brief PowerPoint presentation. They told us about the Ted Stevens Amateur Sports Act, which is a law passed that requires any decisions made about an amateur sport must be voted on. At least 20% of the vote must be made up of athletes.

Athletes Welcome Reception- Athletes Meet & Greet (2:00pm-4:00pm)

- During this meeting, every member of the AEC introduced themselves, and told the athletes a little bit about themselves. They told us how many years they have been to convention, what their favorite moment in swimming was, and some of their hobbies.
- After we met the entire AEC, we went over certain acronyms such as LSC, HOD, and USADA.
- Next we went over "Roberts Rules", the rules that apply to every HOD meeting and even our local meetings.
- At the end of the meeting, a representative of USADA (United States Anti-Doping Agency) spoke with us about doping and how drug testing procedures work.

Eastern Zone Meeting (7:00pm-9:00pm)

- This was a pretty long meeting, and there were many issues discussed.
- Issues that were discussed included the elimination of 17-18 year olds from the Eastern Zone All Star meet. In my opinion, eliminating the 17-18 year old age group would be a bad idea. The main argument was that, this meet is supposed to be a "Stepping Stone" meet, so kids at this age should be swimming at JR. Nats or Sectionals. They did not think of the athletes who would never make those meets, but still wanted to swim at Zones.

FRIDAY

Athletes Meeting (8:00am-9:50am)

- This was another informational meeting run by the AEC, trying to prepare us for the HOD meeting on Saturday.

- The AEC introduced us to every committee that was a part of USA Swimming. We learned a little about each committee and what each one's role in USA swimming is.
- We all received a copy of the 2007-2008 Rules and Regulations Handbook.

College Swimming 101 (10:00am-12:00pm)

- This was probably the most interesting and useful meeting I attended during convention.
- It was run by the AEC, and they each told us about their personal college recruiting experiences.
- They told us the most important things to look for in colleges, which were academics, location, size of school, swim program, cost, how you like the coach/team, and the climate.
- We learned that some colleges are dropping their swimming programs, and what to do if that your college program is dropped.
- We also learned about the recruiting process and scholarships.

Athletes Board of Review Certification (1:00pm-1:30pm)

- This was a relatively quick meeting.
- We learned about the National Board of Review, what its job is, and what its role is in USA Swimming.
- We were asked to put our names and email addresses on a list if wanted to be a part of the National Board of Review.

Athletes Leadership Seminar (1:30pm-3:00pm)

- During this meeting, we went over "Hot Topics" or topics that would probably be pulled for discussion at the HOD meeting on Saturday.
- Some "Hot Topics" included the uses of "High Tech" suits in age group meets, and the minimum age of an athlete on a National Board of Review.
- We then broke up into our respective zones, and met with our Eastern Zone Athlete Representative, Hailey Smith. We discussed ways of keeping in touch throughout the year, and how we can get more of the clubs in our LSC's involved.

Eastern Zone Meeting (7:00pm-9:00pm)

- In this meeting we finished the items on our agenda that we could not finish the night before.
- This meeting was much quicker than the previous nights.
- We discussed where certain meets were going to be held, such as Sectionals, and the Zone All-Star Meet.
- We also discussed the possibility of having a Sr. Eastern Zone meet in August, the same weekend as Jr. Nats. This would be a meet for swimmers in between the sectional and Jr. Nat level.

SATURDAY

Athletes Meeting- Athlete Elections (7:30pm-8:30pm)

- During this meeting, we elected members of the AEC to new positions. This went relatively quick, since many people were running unopposed.
- Some positions we voted on were, Chair, Vice Chair, LSC Vice Chair, Convention Vice Chair, etc.

- We also went over “Robert’s Rules” for the House of Delegates meeting coming up.

House of Delegates Meeting (9:00am-12:15pm)

- This was one of the longer meetings throughout the whole convention, but it went much quicker than originally planned.
- During this meeting, the great successes of the US swimmers at 2008 Olympics in Beijing were discussed. A video was shown, highlighting the greatest moments of the 2008 Olympics.
- Major issues that were discussed at this meeting included changing the wording of certain rules and the use of “High tech” suits in age group competition.
- The main purpose of limiting “High tech” suits to senior competitors was to keep the sport cost friendly, because some new suits cost over \$500. Swimmers that are 12 years old and younger do not need this type of suit, especially if it is just at a local club meet.
- The rule was voted upon, now the rule states that “Swimmers under the age of 12 can not wear suits that extend past the knee or extend past the top of the shoulder.”
- This rule does not apply to swimmers who are under 12 years old but are competing at a senior level.