

Age Group Chair Report – Steve Menard

Not a whole lot occurred with Age Group swimming this year. We ran into some timeline issues at the Summer Long Course Age Group Champ meet, which I hope will be addressed with the changed Qualifying Times as well as some proposals I hope to bring to the Spring Competition meeting. Our Long Course Zone meet went well back down in Richmond as PVS took another large team down.

At Convention the biggest thing potentially coming down the pipeline was a discussed USA swimming guideline about banning Tech suits for 12 and unders at Non-Open meets. The consensus from the Age Group chairs from across the country were unanimously in favor of such a ban, both from a fairness aspect, as not all age group swimmers have the money to afford these suits, as well as the aspect and belief that Tech suits are being seen as the magic pill by parents, rather than a reward for hard work. Originally it was believed USA Swimming would issue a Ban, but it is sounding more like they will issue a recommendation and allow LSCs to make their own decision. I know various PVS teams have their own rules on what suits can be worn at what meets, but I think I would like to see a USA Swimming rule or recommendation to help back up the teams that do.

The Spring Junior Olympic meet, despite the reduction of a vast majority of Qualifying Times, many by a significant amount, only seemed to make the smallest dent in our numbers at the meet. At the Spring Competition meeting I brought forth proposals to try and either create a new B level championship meet or alter the PVS 18 & Under Championship meet to allow for stricter JO cuts but giving some of the cut swimmers a place to go. All my proposals were shot down, and so for the 2015-2016 season, major cuts had to be made to the QTs, and once again, it only made a small change. As an LSC I am still of the belief that we need B/BB Level meet to help alleviate the pressure on the JO meet, but I admittedly do not know where it will fit in our already jam packed schedule.

The Short Course Zone meet also went well, considering it ran right into the new Age Group National meet. There has been discussion by various clubs and members of PVS about whether or not we want, as an LSC, to support the short course Zone meet, due in part to the new Age Group National meets, and it is something we will need to address.

Similar to the Short Course champ meet, in order to control the vast numbers at the Summer Long Course Champ meet, significant cuts were made to the QTs of many events. I have also been looking at and potentially bringing to competition, some event changes based of a very thorough analysis of the meet, to once again try and balance our timelines and make the meet more efficient and enjoyable.