

Age Group Chair Report

This report will cover the 2016-2017 season and what my job encompassed as the Age Group Chair. This was my first year as the chair so a lot of it was spent learning and understanding the expectations of the position, as well as developing a plan with the Senior Chair as to what direction we want to go in as a LSC. I worked hand in hand with Mark Faherty and talked a lot about the Open Meets, the Zone Meet, and the LSC Championship meets. I also worked with Tom Ugast and Heather Purk on the Zone Meet and having a clear direction there. My seasons started off at the USA Swimming Convention and I was able to get a lot of experience as well as get to know everyone who was on the board and what their role was. It was a pleasure this season to work on this board and learn from everyone that was on it. I thought the communication between both the Coaches and Officials was impressive and I think it is so important to the LSC to have that relationship.

One of the duties of the Age Group Chair is to work with the Age Group Championship meets and develop the proper cut times and timelines. For the Spring Short Course JO meet we needed to cut the times down on some of the events due to the timelines the year before. The meet went very smoothly and the timelines all worked, with only one session coming close to running into the next warm up. University of Maryland does a great job with having us ready for the meet, and everyone running the meet makes it a really great experience for both the Coaches and Swimmers.

There was a lot of discussion on different awards and how we should implement the Most Outstanding Athlete award for PVS. The criterion has taken a lot of criticism but it continues to be a difficult process in getting everyone on the same page. This is an important award and many people have different thoughts on the way it should be given out and applied for. I am happy to say that there have been people working hard on making the award work for everyone and I feel as though by next year the process will be much smoother. We ran into a couple of timeline issues and people not being on time with the award. Dave Dinardo has been developing a google calendar with all events and important times located on the calendar for all to see. I think this will go into helping situations like this moving forward.

The Zone Meet took on a different look this year as Dave Greene retired from his position of coordinator, and Aardvark closed its doors as a company. Heather Purk was in place as Dave's assistant, so naturally she continued on and took a step up into Dave's shoes. This was a quick transition and seemed to go smoothly. We did have conversations about what apparel company to go with, and took multiple bids on the apparel. Metro and Sport Fair both had similar bids, but the relationship with Metro is what moved us in the direction to go with them. Transitioning into new leadership is always a little tricky, but this meet seemed to go well and the feedback that I have received was mainly positive. Zones will be going in a different direction as a whole next year and we will be working to make that transition as easy as possible as we learn more about how the meet will be run.

The Long Course Age Group Champs meet was one of the more challenging situations this year as both George Mason and University of Maryland were closed for renovations. There were many ideas and attempts to secure different pools for this event. In the end, the best place for us to hold the meet was

at Fairland because they were willing to do whatever we needed and accommodate us the best they could. The challenges at Fairland are that the space is a little bit smaller and there is no warm up/warm down pool for the swimmers. While this is important to every swimmer, we had no other option and were very happy that Fairland was able to accommodate us for this summer. Having less space means that we needed to cut the qualifying times pretty significantly to ensure we could have a great meet. While it is always difficult to see that we continue to cut times, it is also impressive that while we cut the times, the swimmers keep getting faster and hitting those cuts.

Moving forward, a big topic of discussion for us as an LSC is what do we do with the "Open" Meets. We continue to grow as an LSC and might be outgrowing what we currently have in place. Tim Husson has started a committee to brainstorm ideas as to what direction we should go in with these meets and come up with new strategies and ways to do this. I know as the Age Group Chair I need to come up with some of the ideas and work more vigilantly in helping Tim in this process. I look forward to continuing to be Age Group Chair next year and helping our LSC find the direction that is best for everyone.

Blair Piddington
Potomac Valley Age Group Chair