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OFFICIALS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Conference Call October 7, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Coleman. He read the Mission, Officials Committee Mission, and Conflict of Interest statements.

PRESENT: Coleman Bye*, Gwenn Lochstet*, Mary Poletto*, Rick Carson*, Tiffany Epoca*, Mike Seip, Kylie McMurray*, Nick Furia*, Mike Wigginton* (*Denotes voting members)

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: John Nelson

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The September 2024 minutes were approved after revisions.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Introducing our new Athlete Representative, Nick Furia, from East Coast Sea Serpents swim club.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Staff Liaison – Mike Seip

- He has 161 sanctioned meets and 16 approved meets so far.
- He had a productive time at the Annual Business Meeting (ABM) in Denver.
- The SC champion sites have been chosen and are up on the MA website.
- They are working to finalize time standards for SC championships.

OC Chair – Coleman at ABM

- At the ABM in Denver, Coleman presented on a panel about recruiting and retaining officials. MA is bucking the trend of declining officials with increasing numbers. He will make the same presentation again at the National Official Committee (NOC) meeting on Wednesday.
- Mary won the Lifetime Membership Award at ABM.
- Some other things discussed at ABM were block parties for smaller and isolated swim clubs, following procedures for disabled swimmers, scheduling OQM's in advance, and the new AO and Starter online training clinics.
- MASI made an appearance at ABM and was a hit.
- There was a vote on the Junior Officials initiative, and it was approved.

Training and OTS – Mary

- R9 will now be called LSC Official Standards.
- Mary indicated that features on OTS are accessible, and there is nothing new for everyday users.
- She took the new AO online clinic and gave positive feedback about its interactivity and review of the seeding process.

Advancement – Mike Wigginton

- He indicated that it is starting to pick up.

Certification – Rick

- Certification has begun to get busy again.
- People are finding the clinics online.
- He and Mary had a meeting to talk about cleaning up the website on certification information.
- Coleman, Tiffany, and Mary can now do certification along with Rick.

Athlete Representative – Kylie and Nick

- Both emphasized that the MA Swimming Instagram site is an important place to advertise the Junior Officials Initiative to athletes.

OLD BUSINESS

Pending Status of Database and Website Issues

- Rick asked about the status of getting a common database repository for MA files. Mike Seip will ask Jamie about it.
- The old Officials site will now redirect to the Officials page on the MA site. Mike Seip can post items to the new website.

NEW BUSINESS

Junior Officials Initiative

- The athlete representatives were asked to help with advertising the initiative to fellow athletes. They suggested posting on Instagram.
- The requirements are the same as for S&T, except 17-year-old athletes do not have to take APT. Instead, they must take the Safe Sport for Youth Athletes training. They are also only limited to work at 12&U and non-championship meets.
- Rick perceived that he would have a problem communicating with minor junior athletes unless he has a parent or guardian email address to copy, per MAAPP requirements.
- A registration process needs to be determined. They cannot be put on the Wallet app unless there is an address for them.
- There is a FAQ document with all the relevant information. Mary will put the information on the website.

Championship MR and AR Selection Process

- Rick presented the criteria proposed by the working group, which consists of Larry Schwartz, Coleman, Sam Kieffer, Tiffany, Mike Wigginton, Rick, and Mary.
- The purpose is to create a transparent selection process that is open to all officials.
- Criteria were developed for each SC and LC championship meet. Standards for consideration includes being willing to travel, willing to commit to all sessions including the Wednesday technical meeting, diversity, interpersonal skills, having attained national certification, have worked outside of the LSC at championship meets, having experience running a multi-session, multi-team meet, and have at least one year and 10-sessions of experience as a deck referee or AO.
- A selection committee will be chosen each year to determine the MR and AR from applicants. Members on the selection committee cannot be considered as applicants to work the MR and AR positions at any of the championship meets. Tentatively, the committee will present their final decisions on November 15 for SC championships and April 15 for LC championships.
- These are the details of a proposed process mandated at the last MA board meeting.
- This proposed process will be presented to Jamie for comments. The final decision will be made by Coleman.
- It is hoped that the process may be implemented for the SC championships this year.

AO Initiatives

- Mary, Gwenn, Mike Wigginton, and Lisa Serafin have developed a guide for AO's to use when training AO apprentices.
- They waited until the AO online training came out to make sure it aligns with it.

- The guide consists of four checklists for the first four apprentice sessions. Hopefully the guide could be adapted into a MA AO evaluation form, which we could submit to NOC for approval.
- They will also host a monthly AO roundtable, called Table Talks, for officials to discuss questions and share expertise. The first one is planned for October 23.

Communications Committee

- Rick suggested that a committee be formed to address the need for better communication to officials in the LSC.
- Gwenn is interested in being on the committee and serving as the point person to receive news that will be formatted into a regular newsletter.
- This could be discussed more at the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is on Monday, November 4, 2024.

ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 pm.

Minutes Submitted by Gwenn Lochstet