

**USA Swimming Steering Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**September 14, 2022 / In-person in Denver, Colorado and Virtual Zoom Call**

**CALL TO ORDER**

USA Swimming Steering Committee Chair, Bruce Gemmell, called the September 14, 2022 Steering Committee meeting to order at 4:00 pm Mountain Time with the following members in attendance:

**PRESENT**

**Committee Members:** Gunnar Bentz, Bob Bowman, Carol Capitani, Bruce Gemmell (Chair), Catherine Kase, Teri McKeever, Greg Meehan, Jaime Lewis (Senior Development Committee), Lindsay Mintenko, Ginny Nussbaum, and Davis Tarwater

On Zoom: Matt Kredich, Cammille Adams, Dave Durden, Connor Jaeger

**USA Swimming Staff:** Matt Barbini, Carli Brashier (zoom), Tim Hinchey, Stacy Michael-Miller, Keenan Robinson, Joel Shinofield, MJ Truex

**Guests:** Todd DeSorbo, Anthony Nesty, Juli Arzave, Topher Bishop, and Tim Bauer

Wednesday September 14

1. Lindsay Mintenko, Committee Staff Liaison, reviewed the Conflict of interest declaration (below): No one had anything to declare at that time.  
*Is any member aware of any conflict of interest (that is, of a personal interest or direct or indirect pecuniary interest) in any matter being considered by this meeting, which should now be reported or disclosed or addressed under the USA Swimming Conflict of Interest Policy? Specifically, are there any members of the committee that have a personal, business, or familial relationship with any National Team athletes, such as parent/child or coach/athlete?*  
  
*If a committee member determines there to be a conflict of interest at any point in the meeting when a specific subject is being discussed and/or action is being taken, a declaration of a conflict of interest should be made at that time.*

Steering Chair, Bruce Gemmell, disclosed that his daughter, Erin Gemmell, was named to the USA Swimming National Team in September 2022, based on instruction from USA Swimming's Ethics Committee.

All coach members of the committee disclosed they have athletes on the National Team.

2. Approval of minutes:
  - a. Greg Meehan made a motion to approve the July 11, 2022 minutes which was seconded by Carol Capitani. The 13 voting members of the Committee on the meeting all approved minutes as written.
3. Legislation- 120-day rule-
  - a. Juli Arzave and Topher Bishop, AEC provided a summary of their rationale in proposing the legislation

- i. Legislative Review at April meeting. Provided resource where individuals could provide feedback. Received 123 responses and 72% agreed 30 days was best option.
    - ii. Received complaints from athletes who had to move (military families, bad situation at club, clubs folding) and couldn't compete for 120 days.
    - iii. At this time a volunteer would need to field appeals to this. Volunteer Registrars did not think these approvals should fall under them
  - b. Shared with Athletes on Committee previously.
  - c. Fact sheet was shared with the committee in writing – reviewed at this meeting
  - d. As long as complies with our rules may be administered by our staff
  - e. Ginny provided her rationale for not changing 120 days (feels that club coaches do not want this). Does agree with exceptions listed (military family, home club closing, safe sport decision, family moves outside of LSC – no waiting period).
  - f. Senior Development declined to support legislation. At least one member of this committee is proposing amendment.
  - g. Membership and Registration Committee is against amendments.
  - h. Needs to speak to AEC before accepting any amendments.
    - i. Welcome to propose on floor.
  - i. This group will write up proposed amendment and submit. AEC will talk to all committees who supported their work on this proposal.
- 4. CAC presentation- Tim Bauer, Chair of Coaches Advisory Council
  - a. Formed a committee last February, Joel and Lindsay are staff leads
  - b. Four different pathways:
    - i. To fast swimming
    - ii. To better communication
    - iii. To becoming a coach
    - iv. To starting a club.
  - c. Presenting to BOD next week. Committee members received feedback in their areas
  - d. Committee want to offer solutions, not complaints
  - e. Send Tim ideas via email or phone
  - f. This group is elected by your peers
- 5. FINA legislation <https://www.fina.org/corporate-events/fina-technical-congress>
  - a. Rule Changes being proposed at FINA Congress October 5 (included below)
  - b. Breaststroke, Backstroke finish are two examples
  - c. If they are changed, they affect our rules immediately.
  - d. Breaststroke
 

*During each complete cycle, some part of the swimmer's head must break the surface of the water. All movements of the legs shall be simultaneous and ~~on the same horizontal plane~~ without alternating movement.*
  - e. Backstroke
 

***During the last stroke immediately prior to the finish the swimmer may be totally submerged. Upon the finish of the race the swimmer must touch the wall while on the back in his/her respective lane.***
  - f. Wearables
 

*No swimmer shall be permitted to use or wear any device or swimsuit that may aid his/her speed, buoyancy or endurance during a competition (such as webbed gloves,*

*flippers, fins, power bands, or adhesive substances, etc.). **The use of technology and automated data collection devices is permissible for the sole purpose of collecting data. Automated devices shall not be utilized to transmit data, sounds, or signals to the swimmer and may not be used to aid their speed.** Goggles may be worn. Any kind of tape on the body is not permitted unless approved by FINA Sport Medicine Committee.*

g. Individual Medley

*In individual medley events, the swimmer covers the four swimming strokes in the following order: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Freestyle. Each of the strokes must cover one quarter (1/4) of the distance. **Leaving the wall on the back during the freestyle portion is permissible but no kicking action is permitted until the swimmer has returned past the vertical to the breast at which point kicking, including a butterfly kick(s) may commence.***

6. 2022 debrief- The 2022 debrief will help us to prepare for discussions around 2024 camp and 2023 Junior Team Competition

a. WC Head Coaches

- i. From Trials to Worlds went well
- ii. Doesn't think timing is as important as it is for Games.
- iii. Gave time to go home, re-set, get back to work.
- iv. Gave time to go to altitude after Trials.
- v. Everyone seemed to manage it very well.
- vi. 33 days between Trials and Games was longest. This one is 37 days.
- vii. It was tough being in April but everyone managed it.
- viii. Coaches did a good job managing it.
- ix. 58% were better at Worlds than Trials.

b. Erik Posegay

- i. Block issues
- ii. Incredibly warm water
- iii. Hour long bus ride each direction
- iv. Resort hotel was loud
- v. Still had Junior World Record and successful swims
- vi. Pleasantly surprised with April Trials and performance in August
- vii. Coaches expressed interest in meeting in California night before to meet, connect, and talk. Didn't meet until they were on deck in Hawaii
- viii. Do not anticipate there will be a 2023 World Junior Championships so we need to find an opportunity for them.

7. 2023 calendar

a. Nationals/ International Team Trials:

- i. Jaime and Lindsay proposing this be National Championships
- ii. Senior Development in charge of Nationals when not a selection meet
- iii. National Team in charge of Nationals when it is a selection meet
- iv. Discussion around late July/early August time frame to have a LC meet at end of summer for those athletes who do not make a team
- v. Opportunity for Pan Ams to get LCM meet in during summer

b. Senior Development Committee proposal presented by Committee Chair, Jaime Lewis.

- i. August 1-5 in Irvine, California
- ii. 1200 athletes

- iii. 19 and over standard: 300-350
  - iv. 18 and under standard: 800-850
  - v. C Final protected 18 and Under
    - 1. Concern expressed about this and doing athletes a disservice
    - 2. Set a standard and make people rise to meet it (good experience)
    - 3. National Teams are getting younger so we want them to step up when it matters. Better to swim in A final at Futures than D final at Nationals.
  - vi. Crowning a Team Champion for clubs
  - vii. All relays but no relay-only swimmers
  - viii. Worlds Team Members can return and compete
  - ix. Concern has been expressed about very fast standards (moving bottom tier of Juniors and moving them back to Futures since there is no Juniors). Olympic Trials caliber situation.
  - x. Had 600 at Nationals, 1200 athletes at Juniors, and many at Futures (estimate about 5000 athletes total had opportunities)
  - xi. Futures essentially will be the new Juniors.
  - xii. 5 weeks between Trials and this competition.
- c. 2023 Junior Team Competition: Lindsay Mintenko on behalf of Erik Posegay
- i. Junior Pan Pac type competition next year – some concerns such as swimming too many events, not just the event you qualified in.
  - ii. Does force athletes to learn how to swim fast in AM.
  - iii. Preference World Junior Schedule meet for international experience
  - iv. Need to have discussions with other Pan Pacs Charter Nations
  - v. What would this meet look like?
8. Relay discussion- 2023, Lindsay Mintenko
- a. Ms. Mintenko provided an explanation about qualification as a country for 2024 Olympic Games relays. Previously top 12 at World Championships. Due to times not being validated, FINA has implemented stricter rules. Which means qualifying at FINA competitions. Medal in 2023 automatically qualify for 2024 Olympic Games, and top 13 at 2024 World Championships. Would have to take a large number of athletes to create 7 relays. Putting emphasis on 2023 relays and examining significant financial incentive for winning all 7 relays. Goal is to win all relays in 2024 (incentive in place for performance at Olympic Games).
  - b. Incentives
    - i. For entire World Championships Team, not just relay swimmers.
    - ii. Relay swimmers could receive larger bonus.
    - iii. Want team culture to reflect Team USA Success
    - iv. Will return to this group when we know more.
  - c. Camps, explanation provided by Matt Barbini, Director of Performance
    - i. Feel that this emphasizes importance of qualifying all of these relays in 2023 Worlds.
    - ii. Bring everyone together who could be on relays
    - iii. Make this everyone's focus for upcoming season.
    - iv. Late April - look at proposal that was sent to you.
    - v. Looking at location and needs
    - vi. Looking at motivation of athletes -
      - 1. Concern expressed about paying athletes to create a motivation to give your best performance

2. Like continuing to add value for performance.
3. This is a way to get more excited and puts more on the line
4. Camp idea well received.
5. Discussion of culture around the “just made a relay” philosophy, not supporting the relays getting medals. Messaging needs to be now.
6. Create pride for being Team USA at the camp
7. Is there a way to institutionalize this?
8. Who is saying “I just made a relay?”, Leaders need to step in and foster culture
9. Removed relays from Nationals. Does it take away from that culture if we don’t have experience on our soil. Make it fun again
10. Eliminate of “it’s just a relay” culture
11. Top 4 100 Free and Top 4 200 Free could do exhibition relay at end of meet
12. Create energy and confidence that we can compete
13. Honor to be invited to this camp
14. Look at video of relays -know your history of the legacy that came before you. EDUCATION.
15. Have club coaches there and educate them
16. Put on Instagram relay figures
17. Stop using term “relay only” swimmer
18. Time that gets you on a medal winning relay (at Trials) puts you automatically on the National Team and funded(?)
19. Consider open water in incentive (part of World Championships Team).
20. How are you selecting attendees?

- I. 2024 calendar/ camp – Calendars were distributed in advance to committee members.
  - a. 3 options to discuss and must be decided tonight.
    - i. Home for a week/domestic camp for a week
    - ii. Three weeks in one spot is too long
    - iii. Some people like two weeks at home then camp
    - iv. Concern about people training at home by themselves for two weeks – could be building team cohesiveness for those weeks
    - v. Would prefer to be surrounded by people who are focused.
    - vi. Can get “messiness” out of way at domestic camp – USOPC requirements, etc. Eliminate distractions when you get to international camp.
    - vii. Trials ends the 23<sup>rd</sup> people go home the afternoon of the 24<sup>th</sup>. Athletes will be required to stay for something the morning of the 24<sup>th</sup> (hopefully USOPC processing).
    - viii. Opinion raised for full week at home to get over Trials
    - ix. Raise USA Pride on July 4 – bring team in then.
    - x. Depart for Paris 22<sup>nd</sup>. Pool competition starts 27<sup>th</sup>. Four full days in Village. Only couple of hours transportation to get from Croatia to Paris.
    - xi. Discussed travel on Monday, July 1 (6 full days at home)
    - xii. Discussed travel on Tuesday, July 2 (7 full days at home)
    - xiii. Discussed concern that week of July 1 is the “work week” – a short domestic camp would negate that.

- xiv. Proposal: return home 24<sup>th</sup>, home 7 full days, travel July 2, stay until the 10<sup>th</sup>, arrive the 11<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> travel to Paris, 4 full days in village then start 27<sup>th</sup>.
    - xv. Option to arrive the 30<sup>th</sup> or the 2<sup>nd</sup>. No other choices.
- II. 2023 international competition priorities – see included information regarding three international competitions prior to the 2024 Olympic Games. We hope to have a robust discussion regarding these priorities
  - a. 2023 Worlds Champs
  - b. 2023 Pan Ams
  - c. 2024 World Champs

Choices: choose all three at Team Trials

Could we send a team to Mare Nostrum rather than WUGS. Would have to do selection on paper (NCAA's),

Duel in the Pool type competition?

Another country's Nationals?

Something to qualify for.

Quad meet in US – All Star Team

2024 Worlds not an option for the collegiate population

1) Can we make Pan Ams age limited?

If we cannot what are the options?

Commit to finding opportunity for collegiate athletes (23 or under). Mirror what has already been done for selection

Are we okay with three separate teams? 2023 Worlds, Pan Ams, 2024 Worlds (do we need a fourth to catch University level)

Three separate teams is best option possible relay flexibility needed

Do all selections at one meet.

Adjourned 8:14pm

Thursday September 15

Erik Posegay and Dave Durden joined the group, Davis Tarwater not in attendance

Hotel summer of 2024 in Croatia:

- Will be there for ten days
- Pool location same – have entire facility for ourselves
- Western property on water, weight room, western facility – nothing around there
- Go to town, non-western hotel but many things to do.
- Can rent weight room from Hilton we stayed at this summer.
- Hilton all ocean view rooms and AC
- Convenience at Hilton of weight room, drive is short, could swim at pool at Hilton (or ocean)
- Can assist with walking or do excursions to other places
- Being removed may be good. Waikiki was too much, you want it to be a little boring.
- Every minute on bus takes something out of them.
- Shuttle to town every two days or so to explore sites

Group discussed both options and decided to stay at the Hilton property for the 2024 Olympic Games international camp.

Summer of 2023:

- 300 senior and 900 junior athletes, not pushing 18 and under heats at night (concerned about needs for both sets of athletes. Not sold on 1 meet).
  - 1200 athletes at Juniors this summer. Coaches wanted to take whole team to one meet and not be in Irvine for two weeks. That is a convenience issue, and possible disservice to athletes.
  - Shorten up senior meet (a four day meet?) – wanted to mirror US Open format (3.5 days).
  - Senior Development only is allowing foreign athletes who are members of USA Swimming, would exclude countries who may want to come as a team.
  - Sounds like college teams came to the summer meet, need to have something for them.
  - Meet where people would get Trials cuts is Juniors or Futures.
    - 3.5 day for older/faster athletes and hold Juniors after. Two meets provides two opportunities to swim. General consensus of group is two meets is preferred.
- I. Selection for 2025
- Draft of 2025-2028 was shared with group
  - Returning to WUGS in 2025 (July 16-27) in Germany – same time as World Championships
  - In order to meet all WUGS requirements, we need to have Trials end 30 days prior to that (late May, early June)
  - Committee would like to hold Trials as late as possible (end June 14)
  - Will wait to discuss 2026 until we see how 2023 goes
- II. NCAA Strategic Planning- time permitting
- Anticipating changes that potentially will need to be made to USA Swimming
  - NIL changes
  - Conference changes
  - Should something to happen Olympic sports in the collegiate realm, what do we need to do. We rely on the NCAA system more heavily than any other NGB (athlete development, coaching, facilities, etc). If that were to dwindle what will that do to the sport of swimming to ensure ongoing competitive success.
  - What can we do proactively not knowing what the changes may be?
- Short Course Worlds: first round of invites out today, team to be named by end of month
  - Future Meetings: Would like to meet in person around relay camp once that is scheduled
  - Start earlier and finish in one day so people can leave first thing next AM.
  - April for next in-person (twice a year in person) and then zoom in between.
  - Next meeting October 17 via zoom.
  - Better to have on calendar and cancel if not needed.
  - Another time for meetings? Noon Eastern/9am Pacific? Agree better than evening.
  - Athletes will block out time on calendars around work schedules – if too many conflicts we'll alternate

**Meeting adjourned**