

USMS 2023 RELAY - EVENT DEVELOPMENT

October 20-22, 2023 in Houston, Texas

Patrick Sullivan, Ozark LMSC Representative Report

USMS 101 discussed the structure of USMS: Local clubs, Local Masters Swimming Committees (LMSCs), Zones, and National office.

Relay Kickoff: Got to hear from the CEO of USMS, the President of the Board, Bill Brenner with Club Development. Discussed Grown-up swimming program and their search for League Directors (sounds awesome, I would love to be a part of it, but my schedule just won't allow me to be a league director).

Best Practices for Sanctions Chairs: Discussed why to sanction an event (official times, records, pool measurements, fair races, top 10s), who is involved (Sanctions chairs, event hosts, referees, safety coordinators, club assistant, top 10 chairs), Sanctioned vs Recognized events, Dual USMS and USA Swimming events, meet announcements, and open water sanctioned events.

Hosting meets: Discussed why a club should host a meet (revenue from entry fees, merchandise, sponsorships, raffles; participation--goodwill), how to recruit volunteers (college swimmers, reaching out to Officials, ALTS participants, enticing with free food and swag and payments and free entry fees to future events, high schools), why an aquatic facility should host an event (revenue from entries, concessions, parking; additional hours for staff, more visibility of sponsors, networking, keeping track of meet goals), disadvantages we may face (number of pools, cost, equipment operators, facilities' own rules, area, length of meet), what a LMSC can do to help (run the meet, have a zoom meeting with meet directors, promotion, pay club fees, have board members become certified as Officials), grants from LMSC and USMS, and celebrating the meet (records, social media).

Community Building Events: Discussed elements for successful community events (cause-oriented--raise awareness, call to action, funds; catchy name/taglines, well-organized, clear and proactive communication, tradition, fun and positive atmosphere, engages other teams, organizations and communities; has local community leaders' support and attendance; has something unique, poignant, or memorable; creates tradition bringing people together; get sponsors (give awards, swag); themed meets, non-conforming meets, pentathlon, dual or tri meets, USMS 1-hour virtual, intrasquad meets; other water activity events--stroke clinics, adult learn to swim lessons, open water swimming, themed practices, marathon training days, full moon swims, and new year's swim; dry activities--awards and Hall of Fame receptions, parties (holidays), bowling, dancing, trivia, yoga and exercise class, charitable events (habitat for humanity, food bank); LMSC meetings.

Adding Pizzazz to your event: discussed themed events--good for open water, using videos, pre-race publicity, using high school art and music depts to help; fun ideas--custom awards, medals and plaques, closest to seed time, single event meets; social events--breakfast, BBQs, Awards Ceremony; fun relays--costumes, ball, fins; individual fun awards--trivia, crazy hat contest, best dive; swag ideas--coasters, beer openers, temporary tattoos, luggage tags.