



Initial Contact Project

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Premise & purpose:

As a new staff member to Pacific Swimming, it was my goal to connect with each team to ask them to answer the following questions listed below. From the responses, it would give me some history and direction on what tasks I'd need to accomplish. At the end of the survey and after the data has been sorted and categorized, it was the goal to submit the results to the PC Board of Directors for them to review and possibly delegate to the appropriate persons or committees.

Teams were asked to respond to the following question:

When it comes to meets...

- What do we need to keep doing?
- What do we need to stop doing?
- What do we need to start doing?

Participating teams:

All PC registered teams were invited to have a conversation and submit a response. Those submitting a response or having a meeting to discuss were: Albany Armada, Alto, B&G Club of SF, Burlingame, Swim South Bay, Bay Clubs, Crescent City, Humboldt, Livermore, Mendocino, Morgan Hill, Napa Valley, Olympic Club, Pacific Coast Marlins, Piedmont, Pleasanton, Quicksilver, Race Swami, Reno, Sonoma, SF Seals, Santa Rosa, San Ramon, Sebastopol, Terrapins, Valley Vista, and YPAC. The PC Athletes committee and PC Board of Directors were also invited to give responses, which are included in the results.

Results:

Results are included and categorized by question.

Conclusions:

Conclusions of the study are listed on the last page. These are the 5 most important items I'd recommend beginning taking action with.

Thank you!

Thank you once again to Pacific Swimming for having me as a part of the organization, allowing me to conduct the study, and or reviewing the results and conclusions. Thank you as well to all of the participants for their time and thoughts.

What do we need to keep doing?

Survey responses from PC membership - identifying strengths in our organization

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Issue(s)</u>
General Compliments	Appreciates the coaches input is taken seriously.
	Keep being innovative
	More organized meets than other LSC's - officiating is great
Finance/Fees	Continue raising entry fees so teams will continue to step forward and host meets.
	PC does do a good job with assistance - meet reg, subsidies, but there theres still a great number of families that dont qualify for aid
	Support senior meet hosts
Formatting	Continue trying to separate AG and SR level meets rather than having AG swimmers diluting SR meets.
	Do a good job providing a lot of meets for upper tier athletes.
	Keep offering distance events - no outlet for this in HS meets
	Offer as many events to as many athletes as possible - brings with itself own challenges.
	Give athletes as many competitive opportunities as possible
	Prelims/finals format is important to progress into jr national level. Bigger teams step up but asking them do this all of the time is hard.
Meet Structure	A lot of opportunities for CBA meets,
	All star zone meet - extra cap to exchange
	Awards at meets
	Block parties have been great - if we try to run anything more than an intrasquad, need significantly more officials and planning.
	Having lots of opportunities for meets is something we've been doing great at as well as having lots of officials at each meet.
	I find that I am able to balance my events over multiple days
	I like how easy it is to register for meets on fastswims
	I think it's nice when the pool has two sides and we run a boys and girls side. It allows the meets to flow more efficiently.
	I think we've been doing a good job at including distance events on at least one day of a meet which caters towards our distance swimmers; especially for kids that have a "no-time" in distance events.
	Keep block party concept
	Keep the block party meet concept
	League meets have guaranteed entries
	Mixed relays and combined relays at AG Champs
	Offer as many finals opportunities as we can
	Offering appropriate number of meets, organized with zones, good business support
	Ton of CBA+ meets, good meet offering for basic meets.
	Utilize technology - MM, seeded fast to slow for CBA meets
Officials	Keep officials in the pipeline
	Providing officials for meets
	Officiating is great

Travel Assistance	Travel support for the sectionals+ meets
	When they give us subsidies and travel reimbursement

What do we need to start doing? (Omitted responses)		
Survey responses from PC membership - omitted for various reasons, not recommended action items		
<u>Topic</u>	<u>Issue(s)</u>	<u>Reasoning</u>
Staffing	Maintain Staff positions	Does not deal with meets
Staffing	Some clubs offer scholarship to help retain swimmers	Not a BOD issue

What do we need to stop doing?

Survey responses from PC membership - suggested responsibility for discussion

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Issue(s)</u>	<u>Responsibility for discussion</u>
Fees/Finance	Using price lists for meets. Taking such a large % of meet income.	1) BOD 2) Finance committee
Fees/Finance	Shouldnt charge coaches passes - should be included in fees - increase to swimmers fees.	1) BOD 2) Finance committee
<u>Topic</u>	<u>Issue(s)</u>	<u>Responsibility for discussion</u>
Officials	Stop allowing unlimited officials to officiate meets. We do not need 80 officials at Far Westerns or 30 officials to run AG meets. Limiting the number of corner officials and meets. Meets are over officated - financial burden to feed everyone Sometimes we have more officials than parents watching. Meets over officiated - Real concern with burning out officials - if we don't need many, then we don't need to work every weekend. Guilt tripping teams into not hosting meets because they dont have enough officials in the area. Avoid seeding an event 30 min before event is to take place	1) Officials committee 2) Individual Zones 3) Competition Coordinator
<u>Topic</u>	<u>Issue(s)</u>	<u>Responsibility for discussion</u>
Philosophy	Failing to realize that swimming needs to compete with soccer and other sports who use teenage refs in dynamic situations but still have higher rated competition experiences.	1) BOD 2) Zones/Clubs 3) Competition Coordinator
<u>Topic</u>	<u>Issue(s)</u>	<u>Responsibility for discussion</u>
Meet structure/Offering	STOP trying to compete with high quality meets outside our LSC. We are not going to make our Seniors taper for a cold outdoor meet when there are ample high quality meets with excellent facilities outside our LSC.. waste of time trying to organize these as they will never be supported until we get a quality indoor facility in our LSC.	1) AG/Sr Committee 2) Scheduling 3) Competition coordinator
	Thinking CBA plus meets are the future, they are the past.	1) Zones 2) Competition coordinator
	Stop worrying about timeline and make meets more fun	1) Zones for CBA meets 2) Competition coordinator, AG/Sr Committees for PC meets
	Stop enforcing mandatory scratch downs on distance swims	1) Zones for CBA meets 2) Competition coordinator, AG/Sr Committees for PC meets
	Less all-weekend meets, more 1-day meets on multiple weekends; Meets that last 10-12 hours/day, other than champs meets	1) Zones/Clubs 2) Competition Coordinator
	Stop running meets with no relays, no scoring, no team identity	1) Zones/Clubs 2) Competition Coordinator
	Stop skipping awards - there are many CBA meets that don't have awards and it is very frustrating for the younger kids	1) Meet hosts/Zones
	Figure out a way to automate the way a meet is ran and reduce volunteers needed.	1) Zones/Clubs 2) Competition Coordinator
	Poor planning to run the exact same meet in the summer as in short course/winter.	1) AG & Senior Committees 2) Zones 3) Competition coordinator
<u>Topic</u>	<u>Issue(s)</u>	<u>Responsibility for discussion</u>
Rules/Regs/Entry Process	Thinking it's ok for a weekend to have a meet close before the entry deadline with no alternatives for paid USA Swimming members to get swims in Remove stress from meet entry Meets sell out within hours with bulk registration	1) Competition Coordinator 2) Officials 3) Meet Directors

	Making the meet sanctioning process so delayed and complicated.	1) Sanctioning
	September meets are a good opportunity for on-boarding, but they open in July before new swimmers have registered or joined.	1) Registration 2) Competition coordinator
	Stop advertising that entries can be mailed	1) Sanctioning 2) Meet hosts
	Positive check-in relays - instead of just turning in relay cards with names in the morning	1) Sanctioning 2) Meet hosts

What do we need to stop doing? (Omitted)		
Survey responses from PC membership - omitted for various reasons, not recommended action items		
Topic	Issue(s)	Reason
Philosophy	Everything is so political in swimming - it's just youth sports.	Vague/Unspecific
	We're creating catch-alls - can get behind it if it makes sense and theres a reason, but theres no purpose that's being presented.	Vague/Unspecific Possible resolution - State a purpose for each meet in the announcement/template
	PC is spending too much time on just the scheduling	Vague/Unspecific
	Creating barriers to be more inclusive	Vague/Unspecific
Fun/Awards	Coach of the year award and relay of the year award since no one nominates	Already working on making this better
What do we need to stop doing? (Meet Specific)		
Survey responses from PC membership - pass onto specific committees and meet hosts about 1 particular meet, does not necessarily need BOD Oversight		
Topic	Issue(s)	Reason
Format/Structure	Change the limits on distance entries at meets. For example the Orinda Senior meet this month has a limit of only 2 heats of miles for boys and girls each and that makes it very hard to get in.	Already pushed to zones to try to incorporate more distance opportunities
Format/Structure	I find that time trials, especially at senior meets, tend to have really confusing timelines. Would like timelines and the order of events to be clear and transparent.	Need to clear up timeline, order of events, and communicating such before eliminating time trials
Format/Structure	When relays are start late a lot of teams don't end up doing relays because it's so late and swimmers are swimming the next day. And relays are really fun to do so when it is to late to do because people are swimming the next day it is kind of disappointing	Could be pushed to planning for relays at a different time of the meet
Format/Structure	Removing the pace lane should be taken into consideration because very few people use it. Especially at crowded meets where any lane space open is helpful.	Lots of swimmers do need this - may not be applicable at every meet

What do we need to start doing?

Survey responses from PC membership - suggestion to pass onto responsible parties for discussion

Topic	Issue/Concern	Suggested Responsibility
Calendar	Adjust calendar more to fit school schedule	1) Scheduling committee 2) Competition Coordinator 3) AG/SR Committees
Facilities	Secure facilities for LSC champs meets/run professionally	1) Meet Hosts/Zones 2) Competition Coordinator
Facilities	Utilize indoor pools in winter time/colder months	1) Meet Hosts/Zones 2) Competition Coordinator
Fees/Finance/Reimb	Increase swimmer/coach travel stipends/reimbursements for Sections,	1) Finance & Senior committees
Fees/Finance/Reimb	Remove all limits on meet pricing	1) Finance Committee
Fun!	Consider asking some USA National team members to attend some of our meets. Make meets more fun with music and announcing More athlete recognition at championship meets Shorter, funner, simpler meets are a good way to bring kids in - little more focus on what gets a 10&U more excited about a meet - these are future senior swimmers. Team Scores more relevant and present	1) Create a sub-committee or task-force within AG & Senior committees, and including Meet Directors -
Fun!	Live streaming meets and races - Could MM do this? Bring the meet to the people via livestream. Be the pilot program for live streaming through USAS.	1) Meet hosts 2) AG/Sr Committees 3) Zone Boards
Formatting/Structure	50's non-free at all meets	1) Zones 2) Competition coordinator
Formatting/Structure	Assigned warm-ups	1) Clubs/Zones/Meet hosts
Formatting/Structure	Avoid risk of being closed out, streamline entry process, more meets are created, incentivizes clubs to grow officials and format their own meets	1) Clubs/Zones/Meet hosts 2) Competition coordinator
Formatting/Structure	Begin to phase out CBA meets when capacity limits are reached or exceeded	1) Clubs/Zones 2) Competition coordinator
Formatting/Structure	Developmental championship meet	1) Competition Coordinator 2) Scheduling
Formatting/Structure	Give teams a chance to enter their whole team so they avoid parent complaints from those who don't get in.	1) Zones 2) Competition coordinator
Formatting/Structure	Having a championship type of meet, sectional level and below knows they can swim.	1) Zones 2) Competition Coordinator
Formatting/Structure	Meets that are quick and done in 1 day or evening	1) Clubs/Zones 2) Competition coordinator
Formatting/Structure	Need meet sheets in advance of sign-up to understand format before commitment is due; start announcing when meet entry opens	1) Zones 2) Competition Coordinator 3) Scheduling
Formatting/Structure	Need to clean up Sr Series - likes to use Sr meets to get over to other zones. Timing should be looked at when and where they're placed - which are p/f and which are not.	1) Senior Committee 2) Scheduling committee
Formatting/Structure	Offer all events and relays that are contested nationally	1) SR/AG Committee 2) Competition coordinator
Officials	Check credentials at meets	1) Meet referees, admin officials 2) Meet hosts/directors

Philosophy	Encourage clubs to be more inclusive - reach out to the under represented groups in the community - Community outreach in places where swim is not common	1) Clubs/Hosts/Zones 2) Competition Coordinator 3) BOD
Philosophy	Encourage PC to globally figure out their job - should the support to athletes be progressive? Should zone athletes get same support as faster meets	1) BOD/ Governance committee
Philosophy	More engagement for the 10&U - deemphasize performance and reenergize participation	1) Clubs/hosts/zones
Philosophy	Remember who pays the bills - it's not the fastest swimmers . we cannot lose them or they wont rise up the pyramid	1) Clubs/Hosts/Zones 2) Competition Coordinator 3) BOD
Philosophy	Start asking - What are the goals, which swimmers are served by each of these meets.	1) Zones - CBA meets 2) BOD - Champs meets 3) Competition Coordinator
Philosophy	Understand the base and entry level athlete & family	1) Clubs/Hosts/Zones 2) Competition Coordinator 3) BOD

What do we need to start doing? (Meet Specific)	
Survey responses from PC membership - pass onto specific committees and meet hosts about 1 particular meet, does not necessarily need BOD Oversight	
Far Westerns	Summer FW's only has A final...a B final would be great if timeline allows.
Far Westerns	FW needs to change - too many holding onto tradition - doesnt adequately serve our athletes in the best way possible.
Far Westerns	-Spring FW - SC should be done by the time march is over, and not carried over into April. 2nd weekend of april is too late.
Far Westerns	Kids generally not excited about FW cause there's only 1 final. Room for improvement in terms of how we finish the season with high level age-groupers. Hard to get kids excited for FW only 2-3 weeks after AG Champs. Sometimes were not willing to step away from tradition even through we can go right back to it
AG Champs	Senior minus meets/ add 14&O back to AG Champs
Meet hosts	We could have specific warm up/ cool down lanes for younger kids at specific meets so they don't get trampled and get lanes for their own speeds
Meet hosts	I think we should start opening dive lines earlier to give more time to people in the first couple of events Maybe we could tell people what lanes will become dive lanes at a certain time so they know to clear them out when the time comes? Like we will have pre selected dive lanes and at a certain time they will open
Meet hosts	Similar to the the warm up lanes- we could also have lanes that are designated to warm down vs warm up so the people who are doing slower swimming won't have to keep stopping and letting people pass by, and the athletes warming up can go faster as they need
Meet hosts	We could try to have more screens showing the event and heat numbers - like what summer fw did at Morgan Hill in front of the warmup pool
Meet hosts	it is hard to tell what the heat or event number is. It would be helpful if that was always on the board.
Meet hosts	I think it would be helpful to always have the time of day on the scoreboard, especially during warmups.
Formatting/Structure	Stick with formatting and standards once their published - allow coaches and athletes to plan
Formatting/Structure	Formatting and entry process needs to be more inclusive for teams that must travel 2+ hours
Formatting/Structure	Every coach wants pre-seeded meets, even if its a little inefficient. Consistency in seeding - pre seeded vs deck seeding
Formatting/Structure	More relays at age group level meets
Formatting/Structure	Time verification only if swimmer/athlete races below the time standard
Open Water	Open Water meets
Zones/CBA meets	Relays at CBA meets

What do we need to start doing? (Omitted responses)		
Survey responses from PC membership - omitted for various reasons, not recommended action items		
Topic	Issue(s)	Reason
Calendar	Get the large power SR teams to have a say in the schedule, not just one SR committee chairperson who has minimal kids attending these meets.	Every team is awarded voice in the matter
Fees/Finance/Reimb	if it's possible to entice teams to host meets, if you don't make x amount of dollars, the lsc can subsidize.	Believed to already be in place
	Need to look at what we're allocating our money towards. What are the requirements for getting assistance for higher level - have to attend 2 Sr 2 meets for travel assistance outside the LSC. Hard for zone 4.	Not 100% sure what they're asking, could be tabled and reinserted
Format/Structure	A little more fun and variety, including a few fun things into CBA+ format.	Already covered
	Allow 12&U to join Sr Open meets - Let the coaches decide more on meet selection. Stop making a rule for just a few people.	This is a current and ongoing discussion amongst Sr Committee
	Alternate meet formats - More unique formats - distance meet, dual meets, pentathlon, etc. Distance only meets	Defer to clubs - easier to get this accomplished on the club level vs the LSC level
	Create formats that are good for athletes and coaches.	Unspecific and vague
	Have a pacific senior championship	1) Sr Committee 2) Competition Coordinator <i>note: the February senior meet is intended to be a PC Senior Championship</i>
	How do we get more teams capable of running a senior prelim/final meet? Dont necessary need to do this for developmental kids	Several ways this can go
	Lean into block party meets - USA needs to sell a basic product to more people. Broaden your base of business, get to 5 million trying the sport.	Already doing this and working through this challenge and opportunity
	Make a 200 person in season meet the ideal for swimmers and teams financially (a team at the last Z1S board meeting said they were against block party meets because they couldn't make any money with a 600 swimmer meet, if you can't make significant money on a meet that is already so long that no one wants to be there, the system is too flawed to survive.)	A lot of thoughts in here, possibly already covered
	Need a 3rd tiered meet - maybe 1 meet has a maximum and minimum standard.	Unspecific on age groups, seasons, etc.
	Put more pressure on Stanford and CAL to attend some of our SR meets. Would be nice for our kids to see them once or twice per year.	We can ask- that's about it
	Scoring structure and entry guidelines.	No Directive
	Split courses by age instead of gender - side A 12&U, side B 13&O	Will depend on meet format and what the facility will allow
	Would be nice if there were more special meets, not necessary champs meet, just run on a different template than the traditional CBA+ meets.	Defer to clubs - easier to do this when clubs are creating meets, not zones or PC
Fun!	Connect running the meet to having fun.	Already covered
Meet operations	Also updating the timeline as the meet goes on in case the meet is running behind or ahead	Difficult to add administrative tasks in-meet at this point
	We went to a meet in Mission Viejo and they had outdoor heaters in the winter that might be a good idea if the budget allows for it	Meet host choice and responsibility, must follow local safety laws
Officials	Faster advancement of officials - more teams would host, meets would go faster, meets wouldnt close as fast, wouldnt have priorities.	Already a process for this, following USAS guidelines
	If we continue to over officiate our meets REQUIRE officials to take over Marshal duties from host teams. This will free up team parents to focus on other important meet areas to ensure higher quality meets. 99% of our meets use meet marshals who are not qualified and at times under 18 years old. PC officials need to take on this key safety responsibility but 99% of officials will see this as "below them" and resist doing this. Instead of 20 officials standing around, have them work as marshals.	Marshals are required by USAS rules, in part so officials do not have to do this. More officials could mean using them at an additional meet.
	Making the referee and starter training periods last no more than 3 months.	Already possible following USAS guidelines
Philosophy	Eliminate red tape and bureaucracy to get stuff done - keep it straight forward and simple	Unspecific on defining red tape
	Insert meet training course - need to prepare for when Larry Rice retires.	Unsure if there is anyone else in the pipeline

	Meet hosts need to care - avoid showing up and meet host doesn't seem to care.	Difficult to measure
	More participation & buy-in from clubs to the LSC and vice-versa	Unspecific, no directive
	More practical athlete centric meet admin	Unspecific, no directive
	Thinking of coaches as partners to support instead of servants.	Difficult to qualify, measure, no examples given; self-governance is part of our sport
	We knock out a dual meet where people get 3 events, 3.5-4 hours - 200 kids/team. Real community builder - parents have fun and make friends, neighborhood base, leads to parties and other fun stuff.	Great idea - big shift from CBA model - more possible on club level
Other	Camps - Boys 12-15 focusing on how growth comes later; Girls 13-15 tough part of dropping time as growth slows, how to continue progressing; Distance camp - learning to race longer events, stepping stone, goes with 12+ OPTC distance camp; Open water/triathlon camp	Not meet specific
	Run Senior Camps	Not meet specific

Conclusions

These are my own opinions of the most important items to address for growth and achievement within our LSC,
based on research from this survey and time spent in Pacific Swimming

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Issue(s)</u>	<u>Reason(s)</u>
CBA meets	Begin to phase out CBA Meets - turn into club sponsored invitationals	Too many athletes are getting shut out Meets fill up and close at an unknown time Meet formats need to fit what the facility can handle
Finance/Fees	Come up with a formula where PC can operate in the black, and clubs can charge what they need to	Need to incentivize hosts to run more meets
Officials	Maximize the official's time with watching races; minimize the total amount of admin roles <i>Note: this is intended to utilize an abundance of officials to create more meets or more sessions of a meet, and not to take away breaks or to prohibit advancement.</i>	Officials are as important as a facility when it comes to meet participation and increasing splashes - no officials = no valid times
Philosophy	Keep the athlete and parent at the center of the equation and decisions	Athletes are the consumer, parents are the customer - we have to sell to each of them if we want to keep doing this
Philosophy	Create a fun committee - best practices for meets to be more fun!	Meets must be more than glorified time trials - need some additional engagement beyond racing