

CSI Championship Meet Proposal

Goals:

- Conduct fun, LSC level championship meets conducive to excellent swimming.
- Promote a sound and logical championship progression from Age Group to Senior swimming in CT.
- Prepare CT swimmers for Senior Level swimming beyond the LSC (Zones, Jr./Sr. Nationals, Olympic Trials, US Opens, College, etc.)
- Obtain long-term alignment with top ranking LSCs (defined by virtual club championship rank)

Connecticut Swimming Inc. has seen significant growth in athlete membership over the past 10+ years. This growth has been a great boost for the sport of swimming in CT. This growth however, presents challenges to conducting LSC level championship meets, in particular a single meet that can serve all levels (10/U, 11-12, 13-14, and 15/18 year olds) of swimming at the LSC, namely the current Age Group Championship Meet. The most recent SC Age Group Championship Meet was once again a great meet, but the crowding on the deck and in the stands and parking lots was at times bordering on unsafe and certainly an annoyance to spectators, athletes and coaches. The crowding and timeline issues that it brings take away from the true focus of the meet which should be fun and excellent swimming.

With this in mind as well as an overall desire to produce an age group program that educates and prepares swimmers for Senior Level swimming in CT and at Zone and National level meets, the following comprehensive proposal for the Championship Meets is being made:

Regional Championships: *Changes proposed by others yet to be implemented*

There does not seem to be much of a consensus that additional changes are needed at the Regional Championship Meet Level. Recent acceptance of time standards and the addition of a third location for LCM is an attempt to solve issues of overcrowding. These changes should be given 2 years before looking at them again.

Age Group Championships: *Comprehensive Changes*

1. Change the meet to a 14 and Under meet. With the following Sessions:
 - Thursday Night 14/U Distance Events
 - Fri, Sat, Sun Mornings 11/12 and 13/14 Preliminaries
 - Fri, Sat, Sun Afternoon 10/U Timed Finals
 - Fri, Sat, Sun Evenings 11/12 and 13/14 Finals
2. Prepare a plan to evaluate and adjust qualification times for 11/12 and 13/14 year olds (likely tightening progressively) to establish a balance between timeline, opportunities for

swimmers, and the desire for a highly competitive meet. These proposed changes are intended to due the following:

- Promote morning/evening pattern of championship meets earlier in the athlete's progression.
- Allow 11-12 year olds to receive adequate rest and nutrition between prelim and finals sessions, currently only 30 min-1 hour between the end of prelims and the start of Finals warm up.
- Allow 10/U to use the full 9 lane course with the addition of breaks, which could include medal ceremonies where the athletes are stepped up on the podium or blocks for their awards.
- Reduce overcrowding on the pool deck, in the parking lot and in the stands, especially during the transition from morning to afternoon session.
- Put CT in line with more successful LSCs (defined by virtual club championship rankings).
- Define Age Group Swimming in CT as 14/Under.
- Eliminate delays in producing the evening finals meet program, which would be finalized during the 10/U session.

Senior Championships: *Changes to times standards to accommodate a transition*

The recent adoption of the 4 swimmer championship final format appeared to increase competition during prelims. This format or a modified version (if a new pool configuration is possible after Wesleyan upgrades) should be continued.

However, the following changes should be instituted at the Senior Championships in order to accommodate swimmers that will no longer be eligible to compete at Age Groups:

1. Change the 2012 SC Senior qualification times to the easier of either:
 - a. The current Senior qualification time; or
 - b. The current 15-18 Age Group qualification time
2. Prepare a plan to evaluate and adjust qualification times (likely tightening progressively) to establish a balance between timeline, opportunities for swimmers, and the desire for a highly competitive meet.

These proposed changes are intended to due the following:

- Allow swimmers that are currently making a transition from AG to Senior swimming the opportunity to improve with the Senior Championship time standards and not be alienated from an LSC level championship meet due to the changes proposed for AG Championships.

Summary

Elements of this proposal have been discussed previously dating to many years ago with varying levels of support. CSI is at a point now however, where we need to take a long term approach to the planning of the championship meets. We have been reactionary, but I feel it is now time to be proactive. This proposal is submitted with the intent of working toward a full quadrennial plan for CSI following the 2012 Olympics to align with USA Swimming and other successful LSCs.

It is my belief that if we implement this plan in the near future and continue with this format through 2016 we will increase the number of swimmers CSI has qualifying for Jr/Sr Nationals, US Opens and Olympic Trials. A shift in the conventional way of thinking is sometimes hard to accept. However, our membership has never been so high and we are coming up to an Olympic year when we can once again expect our numbers to grow.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dan Mascolo