

**Committee:** Athlete Committee

**Liaison to the Board:** Calla Richards (Senior Athlete Rep)

**Date of Last Meeting:** September 2016

**2016 Convention Report:**

**The Athlete Track:**

During Convention the athletes had mandatory and optional meetings to attend everyday. The mandatory meetings consisted of athlete meetings, meetings designed specifically for the athletes, and zone meetings. The optional meetings varied in topic. In the athlete meetings we discussed the uses of different committees, how to apply Roger's Rules, the job of Safe Sport, how to improve outreach to athletes as individuals and in marketing, and several other topics. In the zone meetings some of the things we talked about were ways to encourage kids to compete in meets, penalties to LSC's whose OME entries are late, and meet format.

**Maximize Our Athletes:**

The most talked about topic at convention was athlete inclusion. This was discussed in two ways: how LSC's treat their athlete representatives and how athlete representatives are always looking for more athlete participation in leadership roles. Horror stories of LSC's excluding athlete representatives from meetings were shared by different LSC's. We deliberated how to handle this situation if it ever occurred in our own LSC and how to help those where it is occurring. We discussed how some LSC's encourage athlete development by not even starting a meeting if less than 20% of the attendees are athletes. How to get athlete representatives, if our LSC is not requiring athletes to be represented at meetings, was also talked about. This was discussed most when I went to a LSC Development: Athlete Engagement Workshop. Here, I discussed ways to recruit athletes to be representatives with other LSC's. We shared what has been tried, what has been successful, and what should no longer be used. We were given a packet which we filled out as the workshop continued. In the packet we were to write down questions, ideas, expectations, and goals for ourselves and our LSC. By the end of the workshop PAC had come up with some lofty goals that consisted of: 1) to educate swimmers on the governing system of USA Swimming and PAC Swimming 2) to increase the number and commitment levels of athlete representatives in PAC

Swimming 3) to obtain the General Chair's influence to insure committee chairs will take athlete representatives seriously.

In order to increase athlete knowledge of the governing of our sport several ideas were discussed. Having flyers at the check in at meets with a small amount of information on them: contact information for PAC representatives and zone representatives, a link to safe sport pages, and social media sites for PAC, were among them. Shirts for zone representatives and PAC representatives to wear at meets was also discussed. These shirts could have the title of the person (Example: "Zone 3 Athlete Representative"), the name of the person, and then a blurb saying something along the lines of "Come talk to me if you want to know about USA Swimming". Once people start to become interested we want to start a system of voting athlete representatives into their position. A way to do this is have each club send one athlete representative from their team to a social event of some kind that would be held by the athlete committee. This would be a kind of retreat for athletes to learn about the governing of PAC and USA Swimming and then if they were interested present a speech of why they are qualified to be a zone or PAC representative. At this meeting the athlete representatives from each club would vote in the zone and PAC representatives. This process will insure that the athlete representatives will be committed and it will also educate a mass about of people who can go back to their clubs and teach their teammates about the governing of our sport. PAC members felt the General Chair's position is essential to the success of the athlete representatives. At convention the PAC people at this workshop felt that without the General Chair notably behind the athletes, committee chairs do not take them seriously or forget to include them. Our thought was with the general Chair's word committees would take athletes more seriously.