

MCSL Reps Meeting

MCSL Reps Meeting Agenda February 11, 2021

Meeting called to order via Zoom at 8:05 pm by Kathy Aitken, MCSL President

Team Sign In: done via a sign-in link posted at the beginning of the meeting. 83 teams signed in to the meeting. Teams not signed in: Ashton, Bethesda, Carderock Springs, James Creek, and Rock Creek.

Kathy Aitken, President, president@mcsl.org

- Kathy opened the meeting with some words on Covid-19 and welcomed the membership to our new season
 - As much as we all love the sport of swimming, some big health issues are still continuing today unfortunately
 - But good news – the 7-day average of new cases is much lower than one month ago, and we hope that trend will continue
 - The vaccine process is frustrating, but underway. We have hope for the future.
 - Unfortunately, we are not yet where we want to be in combatting the virus and there is still some concern about stopping it. We are still in a serious place.
- Kathy proceeded with an introduction and general rules for tonight's Zoom meeting
 - Please do not put questions into chat until end of the meeting, so we can better keep track of them and answer them
 - All reps should keep their microphones on mute

MCSL Board Introductions:

- Liz – MCSL Vice President, Chair of Rules and Awards, from Manor Woods
- Kristine – MCSL Secretary, Chair of Advertising & Sponsorships, on Clinics and Rules, from Lake Marion
- Beverly – MCSL Treasurer, on Competition and Hospitality, from Flower Hill
- Dave M – Old Georgetown alumni, on Rules and Competition
- Jim – on Rules, Competition, and Officials, from Darnestown
- Bob Hincke – Chair of Automation, MCSL Website, from Lake Marion
- Marty – Competition and Rules, formerly Mill Creek
- Andrew – on Handbook and Rules, from Glenmont
- Scott – Chair of Clinics, on Competition, Rules, and Handbook, from Olney Mill
- Eric – Automation and website, from North Chevy Chase
- Jessica – Chair of Safe Sport, Greenbook, Bag Tags, from North West Branch
- Gabe – A rep for Forest Knolls, on Greenbook, Hall of Fame and Records
- Tom – on Competition and Clinics, from Waters Landing
- Rebecca – Team rep of Old Georgetown, on Advertising & Sponsorships, will be taking lead on Covid-19

Sponsors:

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Kristine introduced three MCSL sponsors who were in attendance tonight:

1. Elli Overton - Swimtopia
2. Enser Cole- Sport Fair
3. Mike Morris – Capital Sport and Swim

Covid Planning – Kathy

Kathy read a letter to the membership on the Board's Covid-19 planning to date:

- We still remaining hopeful for a traditional season, but we are subject to norms and restrictions by the County. We don't yet know the restrictions for this summer.
- The Board is committed to holding a 2021 season.
- We have to consider that the format of our season may need to be altered and we have been looking at alternative formats.
- At the very least we anticipate a virtual dual meet season.
- We have been planning a way forward.
- In conjunction with our Coaches Advisory Committee, we will engage with the Montgomery County Department of Health for practices and meets, obtaining waivers that will likely be necessary.
- We are unlikely to have final answers before April, as things continue to change.
- As we continue this process, we do need input from team reps regarding the status of your pool and team.
- We know that the pandemic has had an adverse effect on jobs and many financial situations. We know that in some cases the financial situation of your pool may not be good, and in some cases, some pools may be unable to return.
- Please take the next two weeks to contact your pool and swim team Boards to discuss the prospects of a 2021 season.
- By the end of February, the MCSL Board will send out an electronic survey to all teams to please complete by the March meeting.
- The most important information we need is the likelihood of your team's participation this summer. Your response to this survey will not be binding, as we know things are evolving.
- We need this early information to plan. For example, if we know that 12 teams won't be participating, it may change our league.
- Eventually there will be a deadline to confirm participation.
- Thank you in advance for helping us with our planning and please be on the lookout for the survey by the end of February.

Liz – Update on MCSL Rules Committee

- There are no rules proposals we have to vote on this season
- USA Swimming changed its technical swim suit rule last fall. However, the Rules committee has decided that MCSL will not follow it (at least for now). It will be very difficult to enforce. We do expect this to work itself out in the next few years.
- Concussion protocol – It is highly encouraged that your coaches to get trained in this very important protocol. We will have a link to the online training that can be shared

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with all coaches. The Board will evaluate how this goes. It could be mandatory for 2022. We will send more details once the links are available.

- Marty – The Rules committee has made a clarification to the Swim-Up rule. This rule is one of the most misinterpreted rules in the league. The Rules committee has rewritten the rule again to hopefully clarify the key points. This is not a new rule, but a clarification of an existing rule.
- As a reminder, three rules changes were passed last year that will go into effect this year: 1) new order of events, 2) 7gii Team Transfers from Waiting List, and 3) placement of relay takeoff judges. Details of these rules changes are on the website.
- The transfer window for swimmers to transfer teams will open on March 15 and will close on May 1. We will be fluid with this date.

Beverly – Treasury report

- We still have a good bank account balance. We did have some expenses and we did buy the ribbons last year.
- The proposed budget will be reviewed and voted on in March.
- We will incorporate the responses from the surveys before the March meeting.

Around the Horn:

- Scott (Clinics) –
 - Liz mentioned earlier that the Team Transfer Process begins on March 15. The transfer form will go live on March 15.
 - All MCSL official certifications were extended by one year. All team reps should look at their officials' database on the MCSL website and make sure it looks right. We will hold all clinics this year virtually. The clinic schedule will be posted by the end of February. It will look similar, but there will be some differences. For new S&T clinics, we will not have any in-water demonstrations. All training will be virtual using videos. Online clinics are not optimal for new S&T and Starter. It is our intent to return to more traditional clinics when it is safe to do so. Post-Covid, we may keep some clinics virtual, but some will return to in-person.
 - We will host two Advanced Referee clinics online this year. If you have an official that is referee certified, this clinic will renew their referee certification and their S&T certification (and their Starter certification, if they currently hold that too). Dates will be posted online. Please pass this on to all your referees.
 - Something new this year – we will hold a new coaches clinic. The content is currently under review. Based on what we have seen in past seasons, there is a need to go over with new (and even existing) coaches how dual meets run, the swim up rule, scratches, the big meets, etc. The date for this new clinic is not yet set, but will be in June sometime. This clinic will be open to all coaches, especially new Head Coaches.
- Liz (Awards) – Nothing to report

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- Bob (Automation) – During a normal season, team reps would log into the MCSL website to enter their team data and scratches. Now is the time to please update your team data (e.g. reps names, etc.). Please email web@mcsl.org if you need your team login.
- Eric (Automation) – We typically run several automation clinics before the season starts. All automation clinics will be online this year. There are no scheduled dates yet, but we will schedule something in the May/June timeframe.
- Kristine (Secretary) – please update your team data on the MCSL website. Emails to reps are generated from the team data. Kristine downloads a new email list every time a new team rep communication goes out. Please carefully check your spelling. Many times a team rep will inquire why they are not receiving MCSL emails, and it is usually because there is a typo in the email address.
- Jim (Rules/Competition) – we will not be meeting in person until at least May, so please expect more Zoom meetings for the next few months. Now is the time to find your starting equipment and test it out. Jim will get prices on new starting equipment from Colorado. If you need a new starter or any other starting equipment, please email Jim at rules@mcsl.org.
- Marty (Competition) – it is our intent to go to the County to request a waiver for the MCSL to operate this summer. We have formed a sub-group and are putting together the protocols for the waiver, similar to what Potomac Valley Swimming (PVS) did. We will be engaging with the county shortly. Individual swim teams do **not** need to work a waiver separately. We are working a blanket waiver that would apply to all MCSL teams. Stay tuned for further updates.
- Dave – Nothing to report
- Tom – Nothing to report
- Gabe – Nothing to report
- Rebecca – Nothing to report
- Jessica – Nothing to report

Other updates – Kathy

- All reps can look on the MCSL website for a number of resources that are available to help you be a team rep. We do have our Greenbook, which we may/may not be printing this year. But it is available online. We will also post important messages on the website as well.
- Vaccinations – we were asked a question if we (MCSL) would be able to get vaccine to vaccinate our swim populations. The answer is no. Additionally, there are no plans to require vaccinations by participants. That is all we can say on vaccines at this time.

Chat Questions – Kathy

1. New Coaches Clinic – Yes, this clinic is being developed for all coaches. We highly encourage all new head coaches to attend, but it is open to all. We will have a date likely next month.

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2. Concussion Training – Yes, this is the same training required by USA Swimming. There is no cost for the training and it is open to all. This training will be strongly encouraged for all head coaches this season. We may make it mandatory in future seasons.
3. Can the pool transfer date be changed? The current window is March 15-May 1. We know there may be a lot of flux and we will adjust dates accordingly.
4. Opening statement - Yes, we will post the statement online that Kathy read (it has since been posted to the MCSL website and can be found at the end of the meeting notes)
5. Olympia Pools – please let Gabe know if they ever did work on your pool or facility, and if you have a recommendation for them (good or bad)
6. Officials – if officials have a “2019” next to their name, they need to recertify this year. If they have a “2020” next to their name, they are good for this upcoming season.
7. What about Safe Sport Training? – At this time Safe Sport training is not required of MCSL coaches.
8. Vaccines are hard to get – how can we have a safe swim season? The state of VA has been having safe swim meets all winter without vaccines. At this time, we are cannot make any further comments about vaccinations.
9. What type of questions should we be asking our pool boards over the coming weeks? The biggest thing you should be asking is if your pool is going to open this summer? If yes, do they anticipate having established rules? Can you run your swim team? What are the hours the team will have to practice? (Even with 4 swimmers per lane limits, you can't practice a full team typically the way you have done in the past).
10. Divisionals – if we do have a virtual season, we would anticipate a virtual Divisionals meet.
11. What is a virtual meet? Your team swims your events at your pool officiated by your own officials. You will swim in your team lanes as assigned in the meet program. This would enable good spacing of swimmers and timers on the pool deck. The opponent team does the same thing at their pool. Automation would submit team results to the League and we would merge the results to find out who won.
12. Waiver for practices - We are looking to address the “one swimmer per lane rule” with the County. Many year-round swim teams have this type of waiver. We are hopeful we can get a blanket waiver for the MCSL. We are currently working this.
13. Team reps survey – the survey we will soon send out will not be binding. We do ask you to give us your best estimate. Some pools may know things now, others may not.

Closing – Kathy

- We thank all of you for the work you do to support your teams
- It will be a different summer, but we are hopeful we can have some type of a season
- The next meeting will be Thursday, March 11 at 8pm via Zoom
- We wish you all a healthy time and peace

NEXT MEETING: March 11, 2021 8pm (Zoom)

General meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm

Minutes submitted by Kristine Frohman, Secretary

Message from the MCSL Executive Board (released February 11, 2021)

When we convened almost one year ago, we were all hopeful for a return to a traditional swim season in 2021. That remains our hope. We are aware, however, that the MCSL is subject to rules and restrictions put forth by the county and the state government as they pertain to the coronavirus pandemic. Though COVID-19 vaccines provide optimism regarding the end to this global pandemic, the timing of a return to “normal” is still unknown. We simply do not have a clear understanding of the situation and restrictions that will be in place during the upcoming season.

What we can tell you is that ***the MCSL Executive Board is committed to holding a 2021 season.*** At this time, we do not know exactly what that season will look like. We would love to return to traditional swim competition as in the past, but we must consider that the format of our competitive season may need to be altered.

The Board has been looking at and discussing the various formats under which we could conduct our season this summer. Until we have more clarity as to the restrictions under which we will be operating, we cannot answer questions as to what the exact format of the season will be as it pertains to not only dual meets, but also divisional and championship meets. At the very least, we expect to have a virtual dual meet season.

Though the pandemic and the vaccination process are changing and evolving, and we are unable to make any firm decisions regarding season 2021, we are planning a way forward. In conjunction with our Coaches Advisory committee, and on behalf of our member teams, we will be engaging in dialogue with the MOCO Dept. of Health to determine our options for holding practices and meets. We will take the lead in providing operating scenarios for the county to review. We hope for clarity at the earliest date, but it may be unlikely that we will have final answers regarding this summer’s season before April.

As we continue this process, we need some input regarding the status of your pools and teams. We realize the pandemic has had a negative effect on the financial situations of many pools, and we suspect it is possible that some pools may not be able to return for season 2021. Please take these next few weeks to contact your pool and swim team boards and discuss prospects for a 2021 operating season.

We will be sending an electronic survey toward the end of February that all team reps must complete before the March meeting. While there may be additional information requested, the most important information you will be asked to provide is the likelihood of your team’s participation this summer:

- Highly likely
- Likely
- Not Very Likely

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- Will Not have a Team for season 2021

Please know that **as of March**, a team's response is not binding. Things are evolving and much is yet unknown, but this early information will help us plan. Eventually, an obligatory deadline will be established for teams to confirm their participation.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this important subject.

The MCSL Board looks with optimism and hope toward MCSL 2021. We will continue to do all that we can to support our athletes and the wonderful sport of competitive swimming in our county.