

Coaches, Club Representatives and MA Swimming House of Delegates Members,

This Monday evening at the June 11th House of Delegates meeting, under old business, we will again discuss the motion to switch the order of the MA Championship meets for the SCY 2002 season. After much discussion on the motion at the last HoD meeting, there will be a vote on the issue at this meeting. This is an important decision for our LSC and your support and vote are important.

Passing this motion will place the MA East & West BB/C Regional Championships (BB/C Champs) the weekend prior to MA Junior Olympics (A Champs). This will establish a natural progression of championship meets in our LSC and allow more championship opportunities/choices for our swimmers and coaches with no adverse affects to our LSC, its swimmers, coaches and administrators.

The two possible championship meet schedules are listed below:

Current MA 'SCY 2002' Championship Schedule (vote against the motion)

Mar 9-10 Mini MA Mini Championships

Mar 14-17 Senior Eastern Zone Region II Sectional Championships

JOs MA Junior Olympic Age Group Championships

Mar 22-24 BB/C MA East & West Regional BB/C Championships

Apr 4-6 Zones USA Swimming Eastern Zone Age-Group Championships

Proposed MA 'SCY 2002' Championship Schedule (vote for the motion)

Mar 9-10 Mini MA Mini Championships

Mar 15-17 BB/C MA East & West Regional BB/C Championships

Senior Eastern Zone Region II Sectional Championships

Mar 22-24 JOs MA Junior Olympic Age Group Championships

Apr 4-6 Zones USA Swimming Eastern Zone Age-Group Championships

Each of us has reasons for voting for or against this motion, however, I feel that there are more positive reasons to pass this motion than defeat it. While we each look at the impact that this change may have on ourselves and our respective teams, please also consider the larger picture, MA Swimming and the betterment and success of our LSC. Please consider the points below when formulating your decision.

Benefits:

* Allows a natural progression from B/C Champs to JOs (and adds additional incentive for B/C swimmers). This progression is natural, both in training and competition. As coaches, we advocate constant improvement, moving from one level of challenges to the next;

- * Supports the majority of swimmers in MA (more BB/C swimmers than A+ swimmers) and has no adverse affect on the minority (A+ swimmers).
- * Allows Senior swimmers more choices - can swim Sectionals and JOs if they desire.
- * Would make the JO meet a truer age-group champs because all swimmers will have the opportunity to participate (no other meet that weekend);
- * Allows coaches more opportunities to be with their swimmers (especially from small clubs) - coaches can be available for swimmers at both Sectionals and JOs (especially if those swimmers are in the same training group) if the meets are on different weekends
- * Doesn't affect Zones athletes or entries because the Zone meet will still be two weeks after JOs (Zones was moved one week later to 4-6 April);
- * Allows more time to train for JOs - one extra week;
- * At the East & West Regional BB/C Champs this past winter, there were 518 JO qualifying times, an impressive 6% of the swims. 1 swim out of 16 (1 swim every 2 heats) would have qualified for the JO meet. It is obvious that the average BB/C swimmer gets excited for the meet, now imagine if we place an incentive like participating in JOs. This will certainly inspire more young swimmers and soon raise the quality of age-group swimming in our LSC.

Concerns:

- * It will make the JO Champs meet too large - MA should first be trying to get more of our kids to qualify for the meet, and then worry about the timeline. If the timeline is too long MA should make the qualifying standards faster (raise the bar). The swimmers will swim to it, that's what goals, training, and competition are all about!
- * MA Zone team considerations (entry and team preparation) - Maybe the Zone entry/selection process needs to be revised, but not at the expense of the MA meet schedule. The proposed meet schedule change does not adversely affect any established Zone policy or process. I don't think a third week of preparation or an additional week to submit the MA entry will necessarily help so much that it's worth sacrificing the opportunity to make a significantly positive change for the LSC. Remember, Zones affects only 80-100 swimmers vice potentially >1000 BB/C swimmers.
- * Too many choices for our athletes. Life is about choices. As coaches, that's part of our job, to help swimmers make good choices. If you have a championship caliber swimmer (HS States, sectionals, JOs, Zone potential swimmer) - and remember, these are going to be the older, more 'mature' swimmers in high school, they will have to make choices, just like they do every day. This one they can plan for and be prepared to handle the challenge of several meets or just prepare for one or two. The choices issue probably affects the high school swimmers the most and they should learn to make smart choices.
- * We all like to keep our kids in the water as long as possible (keeps them swimming, and it's our source of revenue). This change will only cost us a week in this area. This has to be the best opportunity (next year) to see if this format works as it will have very little affect on time in the

pool for the B/C swimmers.

Regardless of how you decide to vote, please consider this issue and attend this Monday's meeting and participate. The HoD meeting is your opportunity to be heard and help determine the direction of Middle Atlantic Swimming.

Thank you for your consideration in this important matter,

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