

Cruciger & Soltis Awards

Congratulations to the two recipients of this year's Fred Cruciger and Al Soltis Awards. All officials are eligible for the Cruciger Award, while only Stroke & Turn judges are eligible for the Soltis Award. Both awards recognize officials who are professional, helpful, fair, consistent, knowledgeable of the rules, patient, mentor others, always willing to help at every meet, and are simply officials we look up to because of their attitude and value to Florida Swimming Officiating. Area 1 Representative **Steve Plapp** is this year's Cruciger Award winner, while **Diana Woolbright** from Area 2 is the recipient of the Soltis Award.

Athlete Protection Training/2012 Membership Registration

The second phase of the athlete protection program is now available on the USA Swimming website. In order to register for a 2012 USAS membership, all officials must complete the web-based program. Once completed, information will be forwarded to the Florida Swimming office so that registration can be processed. The program consists of an online tutorial with questions at the end designed to reinforce important topics. That final segment is often referred to as a test, but is easily passed. While the program looks more closely at swimmer-coach interactions, it's extremely valuable for all parents who want to help their children understand parameters that should be followed in all activities involving adults, and helps all parents establish their own guidelines when involved with youth activities. Swimming is certainly the main focus, but parents will benefit when they broaden the application of this program.

For more information and to access the program, please follow this link.

<http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1960&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en-US>

Bullying, False Reporting and Athlete Protection Policies

A new rule regarding bullying has gone into effect and is published in Article 305 Athlete Protection Policies. Please be aware that while this rule specifically relates to all athlete and non-athlete members, USA Swimming and Florida Swimming have broad Code of Conduct and Sportsmanship guidelines for everyone involved with the sport to follow. The new rule states: *"Bullying is prohibited. For these purposes, the term "bullying" shall mean, regardless of when or where it may occur, the severe or repeated use by one or more USA Swimming members ("Members") of an oral, written, electronic or other technological expression, image, sound, data or intelligence of any nature (regardless of the method of transmission), or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any other Member that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of: (i) causing physical or emotional harm to the other Member or damage to the other Member's property; (ii) placing the other Member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property; (iii) creating a hostile environment for the other Member at any USA Swimming activity; (iv) infringing on the rights of the other Member at any USA Swimming activity; or (v) materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member club or LSC)."*

An additional rule was also put into place to strengthen false allegation measures at USA Swimming. The new rule states that anyone who knowingly files a false allegation may be subject to criminal and civil defamation laws as well as disciplinary action by USA Swimming (306.3).

HyTek's Meet Manager, Officials Committee Meeting Minutes and Recruiting Officials

At last weekend's Florida Swimming Annual Meetings, a very important meeting was held to help further the education and knowledge of meet referees and meet scoring operators. A HyTek Meet Manager workshop was conducted for about 25 attendees, and provided the proper method for reconciling pad, button and watch times, as well as other tips available in both Meet Manager 3.0 and 4.0 (now available). Florida Swimming is the first of many stops for this program, and the manual used will eventually be offered on the Officials Training and Education page of the USA Swimming website for the use of all teams, meet referees and scoring operators. The hottest tips from the workshop: **NEVER** input a watch time in place of a missing pad time. Do the math! **NEVER** input a watch time in place of a button time in the calculate screen. **Do you know why??**

The annual Officials Committee meeting was held right after the HyTek workshop. Minutes from the meeting are posted on the Officials page of the Florida Swimming website. One of the main topics discussed was recruiting new officials. Several options were discussed, and are listed here. The consensus is that the **COACH** has the most influence getting parents to volunteer. Don't hesitate to use the coach for that purpose. Also consider:

- Using a lead official on your team to help with recruiting and scheduling
- Do the clinic, Stroke & Turn video and test over lunch (provided by the team)
- Do the clinic, video and test Saturday morning during practice, and provide breakfast
- Offer a clinic during lunch at a meet, and hold it in Hospitality where free food is available and maybe even air conditioning
- Look for a web-based clinic coming to this LSC soon!
- Have you seen the new Deck Pass for swimmers? Would something like that be fun or a bother for officials? Would it help recruit parents of younger swimmers?

New Officials Chairman and Vice Chairman

This has been my fourth and final year serving as Chairman of the Officials Committee. Under the Term Limits procedure we instituted four years ago, the committee has nominated a new chair and vice chair to take over the positions that Steve Alzheimer and I are vacating.

It has been a pleasure for both of us to serve on the Officials Committee of Florida Swimming, but we especially applaud the dedication and unwavering support that come from hundreds of officials who volunteer their free time on the weekends to the benefit of the swimmers and teams in this LSC.

PLEASE WELCOME MATT WILSON AS THE NEW OFFICIALS CHAIRMAN, AND BOB GRIFFITHS AS THE VICE CHAIR. Matt's email is mpwilson1205@gmail.com and Bob's is griffiths.bob@verizon.net

###