

MCASA Swimming Officials Committee

Meeting held by zoom on

7th April

Those present:- Ralph Shortland, Tony Burton, Gillian Neil, Susie Breslin, Pam Crofts, Andy Dixon, Jacek Reder.

Apologies for Absence:- Brian Kapp

Purpose of Meeting:- to re-engage with official's training, to broaden the available trainers, to plan ongoing courses.

Ralph opened the meeting with an introduction to the role the referee plays in the progression of training for all candidates. He advised that Swim England were not planning to take J2 and J2S on line in the immediate future. These would continue to be course-leader led but with no final assessment now needed for J2. J2S still has full practical assessment. The qualification for J2 would be completely dependent on mentor's comments, competencies signed off and the course leader's recommendation based on the work-book evidence.

Ralph now receives a monthly list of all new J1 trainees who have completed the course and notified SE. o date there are about 800 people who undertaken the course but failed to notify SE via the certificate link at the end of the course. For those who do, t he instruction given to them by SE has been, since the on-line course began, to contact Ralph as Regional Co-ordinator. To date nobody has done so. Ralph now contacts them to ensure they have his email address and offering to update instructions with reminder on dress code and equipment required.

Ralph and Gillian both commented on the dropping standard of officials under the new system. Gillian asked if it would be possible to organise a tutorial to follow the on-line course either face to face or on zoom at which trainees could be encouraged to ask questions and trainers could expand on the work learnt on line and stress particular areas. Ralph pointed out the list changes continuously. Gillian offered to arrange something every other month. It would not be compulsory to attend. Ralph suggested that, if this went ahead, he could notify new trainees in his email.

Ralph explained the need to limit the number of trainees per session to make it manageable. Andy commented that the best mentored session he had received had been when swimmers were specifically asked to come along to the County Development Day. They then demonstrated both correct and incorrect technique. Ralph said the problem with this was the cost of hiring a pool assuming one could be found willing to let us have water time and the continuous roll-over of trainees.

The meeting discussed the need for clear comments from mentors in the work-books and Pam suggested some guidance could be included by the referee in the briefing at each meet. Ralph will consider running a Mentoring CPD. He also agreed to draw up a paper setting out the training progression for circulation to all involved.

Ralph explained the process for anybody initially only wanting to complete the time-keeper qualification. Although the instruction now is that the candidate shall be observed rather than given a practical assessment, the observation should still include a check that times are within the expected parameters.

The meeting then looked at the make-up of the SOC with a view to expanding the volunteer base. Tony agreed to head the committee as Chair and Pam agreed to, at least for the immediate future, act as minutes secretary. Both Andy Dixon and Jac Reder were willing to become part of the committee. All present were willing to serve on the committee and Brian had already expressed his willingness to continue as a member. Ralph advised that it was anticipated that a new FINA updates would be available by October. He would arrange CPD's as needed and he would notify SE of attendance.

The Contemporary Issues CPD is being revised and should be available soon. The current one is supposed to automatically update to SE but is not working. Therefore candidates need to scan certificate and email to Helen Akers who is amending the database manually. Hopefully the automated system will be working soon.

Officials can gain points for their license renewal by mentoring trainees. Ralph is considering a Mentoring CPD presentation. At SOG meeting it had been raised that some officials who only work at their own club's level 4 meets were struggling to get the required 10points. SE are looking at whether to amend the process.

Pam suggested they should look at the whole process of progression to referee as very few officials were involved in swimming for sufficient time to go through the complete process as they gave up once their children stopped swimming.

Ralph had already circulated the new application form which now only invites candidates to apply for J2 and J2S. The charge is £8 but covers both qualifications. The form states very clearly that a minimum of 20 hours post-qualification experience is required before being accepted for progressing to the next level of qualification.

Pam suggested discussing dates but Ralph felt this should be at a subsequent meeting which Tony and Pam should liaise over. Pam suggested that the committee aim to return to the idea of overlapping courses so candidates had the opportunity to utilise both if dates set were a problem.

Tony is part way through a face to face J2 course. He had planned to run session2 in January but covid had prevented him being able to hire the room. He is hoping to reschedule for 30th April.

Gillian has offered to train as a referee trainer and will attend once the needed course is available in Loughborough.