

September 13, 2008

Aloha Hawaiian Swimming Members,

There continues to be a shortage of certified deck officials on most islands. Deck officials include the positions of stroke/turn judges, starters, referees, timing console operators, and deck computer operators. These shortages impact our athletes in two significant ways. First is the ability to operate scheduled meets. Second is providing athletes with consistent technical observation. The later issue impacts swimmers as they progress to higher meet levels such as our championship meets and mainland meets. When more officials are available at important meets there is simply more opportunity for a violation to be observed. Swimmers at national levels have been interviewed and have repeatedly stated that consistent officiating from their early age group years through their high school and college years would be best for all levels of athletes.

This fall, the Hawaiian Swimming Local Swim Committee (LSC) board will be reviewing options which range from imposing fines and club surcharges to canceling of meets. We would prefer to not resort to such measures as other LSCs across the nation have done. At this time we are strongly encouraging head coaches and club presidents to review their club's officiating contributions relative to their team size. A minimum ratio of one USA-S certified official for every fifteen athlete members should be the target goal of each Hawaiian Swimming club. Please note timers do not count towards this objective. Each club's timer contributions are in addition to certified deck positions.

In order to provide needed relief for over-extended officials, and to account for officials who have moved or retired during the summer, the number of officiating volunteers across the state needs to double in size. Achieving this objective without regulation is the LSC Board's preference. Please give serious consideration to this matter. It is for the benefit of each athlete - no matter their age or level.

Mahalo,

Your LSC Board