



Western Zone Athlete Newsletter Winter 2016-2017 Edition

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Welcome and Introduction

Hello Western Zone Athletes!

My name is Grant Sugaski, and I am currently serving as your Western Zone Athlete Representative. I study Computer Science at the University of Arizona and work as a software engineer at Lithe Technology in Tucson, Arizona. I swam for my high school and club, AZ Seals Swim Academy, where I swam breaststroke and IM.



This Newsletter will serve as a seasonal highlight for the Western Zone Athletes, wherein Athletes can find interesting and resourceful content about what's happening around the region. This Newsletter will also serve as a platform for Athletes to submit content they find specifically interesting and feel would be beneficial to share with the Zone.

Convention Recap

The USAS Convention in Atlanta was an incredible experience, and gave our Western Zone athletes an opportunity to learn more about our sport's governance and how they can be effective representatives.

One of the major topics our Zone discussed was athlete representation; we shared ideas on how to ensure our voices are heard in our LSCs, how to effectively recruit new athlete representatives, and how to increase communication between our athletes. We had the opportunity to hear from Olympians, USA Swimming employees, and prominent coaches, officials, and volunteers that gave us information to share with our club teams and LSCs.

On a personal note, it was an honor to be your Western Zone Athlete Representative at Convention, and I hope that I can still stay involved in our amazing Zone in the future! I appreciate all of the hard-working athlete representatives that continue to make their clubs, LSCs, and our Zones better. See you next year in Dallas!

- Janelle Nguyen

2016 Winter Junior Champs: West Highlights

The 2016 Speedo Winter Junior Championships West were held this December in College Station, Texas, from December 7th-10th. Western Zone swimmers put on a strong performance for the winter meet, with numerous athletes placing in every final.

Among some of the more blistering performances of this meet from the West included a 18.71 50-Freestyle on Day 2 by Ryan Hoffer of Scottsdale Aquatics, tying Nathan Adrian's pool record and solidifying first as one of the only two swimmers under 20 seconds. Hoffer continued the meet with wins dominant wins in the 100-Freestyle, 100-Butterfly, and 100-Backstroke. The Scottsdale Aquatics Club found large relay success, winning two relays on Day 1 and setting a NAG in the 200-Freestyle Relay for 15-18 boys at a time of 1:19.55 seconds. Other strong performances included swims from Zoe Bartel of FAST Fort Collins, breaking the meet record in the Women's 100-Breaststroke and 200- Breaststroke with times of 59.67 a 2:07.03. Bartel also swam on the winning Fort Collins Women's 4x100 Medley Relay and 200-Freestyle Relay.

Overall, Western Zone athletes continually populated the the podium at Winter Juniors this year, with athletes claiming meet and national records. Congratulations to all those who participated!

- Grant Sugaski

National Committees: What Does That Entail?

Some LSC Athlete Representatives eventually decide that they want to become more involved in USA Swimming, and look into becoming a National Committee member. Committees ranging from Times & Recognition to Age Group Development are essential pillars of the USA Swimming structure, and require 20% athlete representation on each committee. After a competitive application process, athlete representatives are selected and serve one-year terms on committees.

Being on a national committee entails a level of responsibility, as an athlete does not only represent their LSC, but all athletes in USA Swimming. These committees require a high level of professionalism, as athletes work with coaches, officials, volunteers, and USA Swimming staff to make a difference in our NGB. However, athletes get to see the impact of their hard work; this could entail seeing new meets created, or a successful workshop taking place at Convention. Serving on a national committee is a great learning experience and allows athletes to have a direct impact on USA Swimming.

- Janelle Nguyen

This Edition: Starts

Although they seem to happen in the blink of an eye, starts serve as a fundamental part of every race. Looking back, some of my favorite competitive moments were within the first two seconds after exploding off the block. In [this](#) video, Head Coach Dave Durden of the University of California-Berkeley discuss the importance of starts in 3 key components.



With the help of former Missouri and Cal swimmer Bennett Clark, Coach Durden demonstrates three different elements of the start: hand placement, foot placement, and weight placement. Coach Durden emphasizes the significance of proper body posture on the blocks, allowing for athletes to get off the blocks as powerfully and as quickly as possible.

Western Zone General Information

- **Current Western Zone LSC's**

- Alaska
- Arizona
- Central California
- Colorado
- Hawaii
- Inland Empire
- Montana
- New Mexico
- Oregon
- Pacific Swimming
- Pacific Northwest
- San Diego Imperial
- Sierra Nevada
- Snake River
- Southern California
- Utah
- Wyoming

- **Western Zone Website**

- [Western Zone Website Link](#)

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