



Dear Coach,

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**To USA Swimming Local Swimming Committees & Local Member Clubs
Assisting a Coach**

Article 502.4.3 “Anyone who coaches athletes at a USA Swimming practice or competition must be a coach member of USA Swimming and must have satisfactorily completed safety training and background screening required by USA Swimming.”

The above article was passed by the USA Swimming House of Delegates and is published in the 2009 USA Swimming rulebook. Effective January 1, 2009, any type of coaching including, but not limited to, swimming and dry land training, must be provided by a registered USA Swimming member Coach. Coaching by any other person who is not a registered coach member, including USA Swimming Athlete Members, is not permitted.

In order for someone other than a coach member to assist the coach in coaching activities, that person must be under the “direct supervision” of the USA Swimming coach and must be a USA Swimming member (i.e. athlete or non-athlete, non-coach member). This would mean the coach must be on deck at all times and must be directly involved in whatever activity with which the non-coach member is assisting. For instance, an athlete could demonstrate strokes to younger swimmers and the athlete would not have to be a coach member in that instance. However, a good example of what is not allowed would be an athlete who is working with a group of swimmers while the coach is separately working with a second group of swimmers. This would not be classified as “direct supervision” and the athlete would have to be a coach member in order to work with the separate group.

Specific questions about this should be addressed to Member Services Staff at USA Swimming Headquarters at 719.866.4578.

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2009 Club Excellence Program announced

USA Swimming proudly announces the 2009 Club Excellence Program which will recognize up to 200 clubs that have attained high levels of performance and organizational success. Information and applications were mailed to all clubs in late December. The applications are also available on the Swim Club page. The application deadline is February 6, 2009.

[Club Excellence information and application](#)



Who's coaching our Kids? An article from pelinks for u:
<http://www.pelinks4u.org/articles/Kulikov-Hagobian1208.htm>

The Thrills and Spills Of 2008
Dec 21, 2008
by Craig Lord from www.swimnews.com

Swimming has enjoyed and endured a year like no other in its history. Great achievement has been tainted by the constant presence of the battle of the bodysuits in a headlong rush to embrace technology that many have now thought twice about and decided "enough is enough".

Thankfully, some things cannot be touched by the suit issue - and here, as we take a break for Christmas, is a rush through the highs and lows of 2008, as voted for by a jury of one: me (not to be taken seriously, of course - except for the suit issues, which cut to the heart of the sport; and no offense intended to the many who have done a great job but get no name check here).

Outstanding Achievement of the Year Award:
Michael Phelps, Bob Bowman, Debbie Phelps, all USA

Male Swimmer of the Year: Phelps (USA)

Coach of the Year - men and overall: Bowman (USA)

Female swimmer of the Year: Rebecca Adlington (GBR)

Coach of the Year - women: Bill Furniss (GBR)

Runners-Up of the Year:

- Male swimmer: Kosuke Kitajima (JPN)
- Female swimmer: Britta Steffen (GER)

Continental heroes (beyond the above):

- Africa: Kirsty Coventry (ZIM); Oussama Mellouli (TUN)
- Asia: Liu Zige (CHN); Park Tae-Hwan (KOR)
- Oceania: Stephanie Rice (AUS); Grant Hackett (AUS)
- Europe: Federica Pelegrini (ITA); Alain Bernard (FRA)
- Americas: Rebecca Soni (USA); Aaron Peirsol (USA)

Team Performance of the Year:

- Men: USA
- Women: AUS

Relays of the Year:

- Men: USA 4x100m free
- Women: NED 4x100m free

Relay swim of the year: Jason Lezak (USA)

Courage takes many forms. Of the many who deserve mention, the following leap to mind:

- In the face of adversity through illness: Coach Michael Lohberg (GER/USA) and swimmers Eric Shanteau (USA), Jade Edminstone (AUS), Janine Pietsch (GER) and Maarten van der Weijden (NED)
- For standing up to hard times in the pool: Katie Hoff (USA); Laszlo Cseh (HUN)

Challenger of the Year: Milorad Cavic (SRB)

Silver lining of the Year: Cseh

Outstanding Contribution to Swimming: Ada Kok (NED), Olympic champion in 1968 and champion ambassador for Speedo until her retirement this month and for her sport of swimming throughout her lifetime. We look forward to seeing Ada around the pool in the months and years to come.

Federation of the Year: USA, for steering its troops to victory in the pool and for being big enough to recognise that a mistake has been made on suits and then taking action to try to resolve the issue

Swimming Guardianship Award: all those who can and cannot be named but know themselves to have worked tirelessly in the interests of swimming and against the tide of technology that has no place in the pool

Legacy Award: Bill Sweetenham, for the shape he left Britain in as it approaches a home Games in London, 2012

Presentation Award: Manchester 2008 for showing what can be achieved (though if you're going to have lane four walk out for the race last, you have to give lane four time to get his or her kit off...)

Unsung Workaholics Award: All who work in the FINA office in Lausanne - a team including and led by Executive Director Cornel Marculescu - that strives to do what's best for aquatics sports across the world, often under duress and pressure from opposing parties

Team of the year beyond the pool: hugely biased this one but I make no apology - it was my absolute pleasure (and pain) to work on Aquatics - 100 Years of Excellence in Sport, FINA's Centenary Book with this terrific team of people, including two patient pillars of strength called Derek Parr and Pedro Adrega.

Passing of an era Award: Krisztina Egerszegi (HUN) lost her 200m backstroke world record after almost 17 years - and while it went to a great athlete, Kirsty Coventry (ZIM), the tragedy is that we will never know how long the Hungarian's standard would have lasted had it not been for performance-enhancing suit technology. The same could be said of any record broken in a fast-suit this year, but Queen Krisztina's is a poignant case in point.

World Records of the Year: so many to choose from but I'll opt for these as the top 3 - Phelps, 200m freestyle and 400m medley, and Adlington, 800m freestyle

Breakthrough of the Year: Amaury Leveaux (FRA) - but just where he sits in the real world of fair suitery remains to be seen. Amaury's TYR suit - not tailor made, size 30, I am happy to point out ... but also not available to all who may want the latest cut of the TYR fastsuit - is helping big time. Let's see what Amaury can do without his prop. Only then will he be eligible for a shot at greatness. To those who continually point at Phelps on this one: he did it in an LZR, he did it in an FS-Pro, he did it in models that pre-dated that. He would do it in a woolly number with a weight attached to his toes - and if the sport draws a line, he'll do it, I'd wager, within any boundary set by the rules of his sport.

Venue of the Year: the Water Cube at the Olympic Games in Beijing

Suit Maker of the Year: shared by Speedo and Arena - Speedo for spending a great deal of money on finding ways to unlock the secret of speed and in so doing showing the sport why it ought not to go down a certain road, and Arena for saying back in April that 2008 technology - accompanied by a redefining of the words "fabric" and "device" - was not the right solution for the sport ... they were right

Warning of the Year: no apologies for claiming a modest prize in my own vote, but I wrote this in my hotel room overnight on April 7 to 8. Many would not have read it. Many did not want too. Too long. Especially for generation X and those with the attention span of a gnat. Too boring.

Too much wobbling on about suits. What's his problem? And so on and so forth. Many more now understand the issues - and swimming is a stronger sport for it. Much work remains to be done to return fairness and harmony to the world governed by FINA, which is now working on a solution that the sport, its key asset - swimmers - and those who spend their lives working with athletes can all live with and prosper by.

And on that theme, the debate is over as to whether something needs to be done to halt the suits chaos now reigning in the sport. Focus has shifted to finding solutions, with FINA, LEN, coaches and the suit makers who sit at the core of the sport and have proved themselves over many years to have the interests of swimming at heart all committed to a new start. Here are my 2008 suit awards:

Curse of the Year: high-tech "fabric" solutions to speed

Sage Words of the Year: Dennis Pursley, former US head coach now at the helm in Britain: If suit design before this year had "helped to maximize performance", he said, then the suits of 2008 had "enhanced performance". Pursley added: "A line has been crossed ... seeing so many world records fall in one year demeans their value. It's like cheating to some extent." He, along with many others, was "very concerned that we could soon see individual suits being tailored for specific individuals. That would take the whole sport in a very different direction."

Diplo-doublespeak Daft Response of the Year Award: British Swimming's statement saying that Pursley had used "emotional language". No he didn't. He told it like it is. Wake up and do your homework - and know what's on the skin of your swimmers. (And that goes for many more federations who have simply failed to do their homework - months and months and months and months after the media first posed the question: are you truly happy about where this technological breakthrough is leading you?)

Protest of the Year: Thomas Rupprath and Helge Meeuw, who wore briefs to make their point in Rijeka - and their point could hardly have been clearer

Stand of the Year: Coaches worldwide who were prepared to stand up and have their voices heard. Their contribution to the FINA process of finding the right solutions on suits is of vital importance - not just to the sport but the survival of their profession as one paramount to the process of preparing, honing and delivering world-class athletes.

Special mention goes to John Leonard, ASCA Executive Director and member of the FINA Coaches Commission, who called the suits issue a battle for the soul of the sport. How right he was - and is.

Campaign of the Year: the efforts of all those, many who cannot be identified but know who they are, who have worked to ensure that the principles of fairness and standardization that form the foundations of FINA stand firm in the face of unwelcome technology.

Lifetime Achievement Award: love him or hate him for the war of words he had waged on suits, Forbes Carlile, a pioneer of swimming and sports science has pricked the conscience of the sport since the summer and since the bodysuit was accepted back in 2000

Homework Award: Joel Stager, whose work confirmed what we all know - the suits have skewed the result; and Cecil Colwin, whose writing on coaches and coaching continue to show us what would be lost if all results are subsumed beneath the weight of technological performance-enhancement.

Ball and Chain Award: Rocket Man and his view that an arm, a leg and a lung are the same as a suit; the entire shoal of wetsuits that have no place in the pool; and all those who think that what we've seen of late and what we saw in Rijeka represented the right future for a great sport

And on that note, we salute all those who retired in 2008, including the following great athletes: Pieter van den Hoogenband; Ai Shibata; Alan Ford; Grant Hackett; and Yana Klochkova .

We also salute all those in the swimming world who passed away, who are now hopefully sitting by or wading through a heavenly bodysuitless=2 0pool beyond this life, including these four good men and women: John Carew ; Buck Dawson ; Margaret Colwin ; Javier Ostos Mora, and Jean-Louis Meuret.

Next year is one in which swimming must decide its fate. We at SwimNews - founded by Nick Thierry, who works daily behind the scenes to ensure good guardianship and recording of the history of our sport - will vote for more skin and a return to a place where suits help to maximize performance, not enhance it (i.e., no-one should interpret this as a wish for Weissmuller's first togs to be the future of the sport), and hope that the sport avoids going further down a road that will lead to a suit that tarnishes all events in precisely the same way as doping has done for the best part of 40 years.

The suits issue (and the same could be said of all issues of governance in the sport) is not just about yesterday and today, it is about tomorrow. Chess is where boardroom thinking should be at. Three or four or more moves ahead is the key to finding the right path in the water.

That is the case for some good men and women in FINA. It needs to be the case for every single one of those men and women who will plonk their backsides down on a chair and stick their hands in the air in Rome next summer and profess to have the best interests of their sport at heart. Let them ask not what FINA can do for them but what they can do for FINA and the sports governed in its name.

We wish everyone a very happy, healthy, wealthy, wise and harmonious 2009, stacked with races that thrill us with human effort and endeavor away from a battle of bodysuits that strips the sport of the ethics, aesthetics and values that have been at the heart of 100 great years of FINA history.

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Check out USA Swimming's new Club Recognition program. Follow the blueprint to develop a strong, stable, financially sound and athletically productive organization. See <http://www.usaswimming.org/ClubRecognition>