

**MCSL Reps Meeting Agenda  
May 21, 2020**

Meeting called to order via Zoom at 8:05 pm by Kathy Aitken, MCSL President

Team Sign In: done via a sign-in link posted mid-meeting. 65 teams signed in (we know not every team was able to sign in and/or some did not realize they needed to sign in)

Kathy Aitken, President, [president@mcsl.org](mailto:president@mcsl.org)

- Good evening everyone, thank you for joining us virtually
- Unfortunately the COVID-19 pandemic has brought illness and death all over the world. There has been a lot of impact, stress, and families separated in quarantine
- We want to reach out to you, whatever you are going through, to let you know that our thoughts and prayers are with you. Your MCSL Executive Board has heard you. We want our swimming community to be strong. It is very important to remember we are united by our dedication and support of each other and the support of our athletes
- We will conduct tonight's meeting with some general announcements, but before we do that, we ask that you refrain from sending in questions until we have completed our agenda in its entirety. It is very likely your questions are things we will address
- Kathy read the formal MCSL statement released during the meeting (please see end of meeting notes for that statement)
- Scott then spoke to address questions. The Board has spent countless hours deliberating with care. We did not want to announce a season cancellation and say "see you next February." We have put together a document of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Some of the questions may seem obvious, but we wanted to make sure that we covered as much as we could. This list of questions will evolve over time as we think about 2021.
- The following questions were covered:
  - Division Alignment for 2021: Will remain the same
  - The three rules proposed back in March: They were voted and approved. They are now in effect and they do not need to be voted again. Team Reps may propose rules for 2021 using an online "rule change proposal" form. The form is being created and will be available on the MCSL website
  - Team Transfer Requests: several transfers were received while the window was open and those decisions were rendered. Those who submitted may swim with their new team in 2021
  - Changing teams 2021: 2019 is considered "the prior season," so any transfers in 2021 who swam in A meets in 2019, must file a team transfer request. If transfers did not swim A meets in 2019, no transfer request is required
  - Team Transfer Report: This is typically due in June. No filing this year.
  - 18-year-old graduating seniors: The Board wholeheartedly agrees that those missing their graduating season, and their team traditions and comradery, should be given an opportunity to be part of this in 2021. Many of these seniors have swam for their teams for many years. But there were many factors that the Board had to consider very carefully in determining how graduating seniors

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should participate next year. We wanted to include graduating swimmers in a fair and equitable way, both at the individual team level and league-wide. Any decision we considered was evaluated for impacts to the entire league – big vs. small teams, A to O divisions. We recognize that not all teams may have graduates returning. We also did not want to change the composition to existing age groups in fairness to those swimmers. Key points:

- The Board has agreed to make this one-year exception in light of a catastrophic public health crisis. This will not go on in perpetuity.
- Returning graduating seniors must be registered with same team they swam with during the 2019 season
  - Teams may not recruit new 19-year-olds onto their rosters and no team transfers for 19-year-olds
  - The intent is to allow the graduating senior to close out their MCSL career with the team they have been with
- 19-year olds are not eligible to set any records. This goes back to the fair and equitable principle
- There will not be a 15-19 age group next season. Instead, 19-year-olds will swim in their own age group. The 15-18 age group remains unchanged
- For Individual Events at Dual A meets: 19-year-olds may swim in separate 19-year-old events, but cannot score points that would affect the outcome of the meet. There will be one 19-year-old heat for each event. Times will not be used to calculate division placement for the next season
- Relays: 19-year-olds may swim the Open Age Medley relay events in all dual, divisionals and all relay carnival meets including All Star Relays
- MCSL Invitational meets: 19-year-olds will swim in separate age group events where there will be one heat. Swimmers are eligible to receive awards for Coaches LC and Individual All Stars
- Other FAQs:
  - MCSL Swimmer Age Groups – all swimmers will swim in the age group based on their ages as of June 1, 2021
  - Officials Certifications – We will extend certification for all MCSL officials by one year. There will be no new MCSL clinics run this year. There will be PVS clinics in the fall for those officials who seek reciprocity.
  - Sarah E Auer Memorial Scholarship – Scott has spoken with the Auer family. Unfortunately, not due to COVID-19, they will not be able to offer the scholarship for MCSL swimmers going forward

At the end of the presentation, Scott invited team reps to submit questions into the chat window. Scott also posted a link for team reps to record their attendance tonight. He also reminded reps they have until November 1, 2020 to submit rule change proposals for 2021.

### Questions and Comments:

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- Will there be any further meetings in June or July? No, we will meet again in February 2021. However there will be a Google Form that will come out in July for all team reps to vote on the 2021 MCSL calendar
- Kathy told all the reps that personally her youngest daughter will be a senior this year. The Board understands completely where the teams are coming from. We worked hard to keep things fair and equitable. Hopefully you can come to peace with this
- Board response to the messages coming through the chat window: These were very hard decisions, we all love swimming, and we love nothing more than to put on the big meets and see the kids break records. We have put Olympians out there. But this particular year it just won't happen, unfortunately
- Woodley Gardens wrote, "We got our pool! We are not going anywhere." Congratulations to Woodley Gardens!
- Will the executive board members remain the same next year? Yes, the executive board members will remain in their roles next year. Current officers are serving 2-year terms and this is the first of two years

### **Around the Horn:**

- Eric (Automation) – All automation clinics will be canceled
- Liz (Awards) – Approximately 3 or 4 teams have put in orders for B meet ribbons. Those teams may resubmit their orders next year
- Kristine (Advertising) – You may have noticed we have not had any advertisers join us since March, since we were in a wait-and-see for the season. With the cancellation of the season, we have also cancelled our advertising season. However, we will be leaving all of our 2019 silver and gold sponsors up on our website, including new ones that signed up early in 2020. Kristine will also send out the full list of 2019 sponsors. For many years these sponsors have supported our league. Many of them are small businesses who are now struggling through COVID-19. If you are able to do anything with your team this summer, or when you start 2021 planning this fall/winter, please consider our MCSL sponsors and give them your business. There are a wide range of sponsors that can offer services to your team: t-shirts and apparel, swim suits, ribbons and awards, swim team management software, restaurants, team outings, etc.
- Jim (SSL hours) – if pools open or not, you still may do things as a team that qualify your swimmers to earn SSL hours. Please email Jim at [rules@mcsl.org](mailto:rules@mcsl.org) with SSL tasks and a copy of your team liability insurance

### **More questions:**

- Will FAQs be on website? Yes. This will be a live document and updated as things come in
- From the chat window: There is a petition on change.org directed to Governor Hogan, asking him to please open outdoor pools
- Scott shared that the Board has also missed out on something this year. Before our May Team Reps meeting, the Board stuffs team rep bags with everything they need for the season. Every year the Board sees how fast we can do it. We set a Board record last

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year. Unfortunately, we were not able to break that record this year, but we are planning to next May 😊

- Dues: None for 2020. Beverly (Treasurer) confirmed that only a few teams received their invoices and no one has paid anything

Kathy (President) concluded the May meeting:

- Thank you for all the work you do for your teams
- We know all the work being a Team Rep entails
- Tonight's meeting has been somber and many may be disappointed
- Let's keep the situation in perspective: COVID-19 has wreaked havoc all over the world and highlighted a lot of weaknesses. We understand there may be frustration over a lost swim season. Let's do whatever things we can within our teams, with regulations, to support swimming and our communities
- Let us practice kindness, reliance, and respect going forward
- The Executive Board wishes all of you safety and well-being

NEXT MEETING: February 11, 2021 (8pm, Location TBD)

Reps will be sent a voting form in July for the 2021 MCSL season calendar

General meeting adjourned at 8:47 pm

Minutes submitted by Kristine Frohman, Secretary

### **Message from the MCSL Executive Board (released May 21, 2020)**

The COVID-19 pandemic continues, and Montgomery County currently has a higher rate of infection, hospitalization, and death than many other counties in MD. Our county government has yet to remove the "stay at home" restriction and will be looking for sustained downward trends in several key COVID-19 related metrics (number of new cases in an environment of increased testing, hospitalization rate, ICU admissions, deaths and emergency room visits) before restrictions will be loosened. Unfortunately, there is no way to accurately know when these circumstances will occur. Nor is it predictable when outdoor pools will be allowed to open, or what level of restrictions will be required at that time.

As we all know, MCSL competitions involve the gathering of large groups and the close sharing of spaces, even if limited to some type of virtual meets. If the county eventually allows for the opening of outdoor pools, it is expected that those openings will be permitted under a condition of continued strict social distancing guidelines and group limitations. It will be incredibly difficult, if not impossible, to execute competition in a safe manner.

Since the very beginning of the pandemic, our primary concern has been and remains the safety and health of our athletes, coaches, and volunteers, as well as all the other people with whom these individuals associate. We delayed a final decision about this summer's season as long as

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we felt possible to ensure a determination based on the most current information and guidelines. After much research, contemplation, consideration, and discussion, we regret to announce the cancellation of the MCSL competitive swim season for 2020.

We understand many will have questions or concerns about what this means going forward. Please refer to the MCSL website for answers to frequently asked questions regarding our response to COVID-19 and the effects it will have for the 2021 season.

We encourage our swimming community to use this opportunity to examine ways that this difficult and unexpected time of adversity may be used to help build resilience and perseverance, skills that will serve any competitive swimmer not just in the pool, but in life. We also hope that teams will find ways to stay connected this summer and, if permitted, find safe ways to sustain the sport of swimming.

We expect and anticipate that this announcement may produce a wide range of responses and emotions in our community members. Some will feel relief, others frustration, and many (if not all) sorrow. We not only acknowledge this, but we understand it, as we also feel these emotions. We respectfully ask each athlete, parent, and coach to focus on the health, well-being and happiness of their respective pool communities this summer. In this manner we work together to ensure the continued health of both the individual pools and our league moving forward.

The MCSL Board looks with optimism and hope toward MCSL 2021. We will continue to do all that we can to support our athletes and the wonderful sport of competitive swimming in our county.