

Disability Committee Report

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For the first time since SCS has had a Disability position, we now have an actual Disability Committee. While we still lack representation from Metro, Orange, and Desert committees, we nevertheless have pressed on with the business of representing the interests of our nearly 200 swimmers with disabilities in our LSC.

Disability Competition/Classification

Yucaipa graciously hosted the first Disability Meet in SCS in years in our LSC. The meet was successful in classifying new athletes as well as providing competitive opportunities for classified athletes with disabilities in our area. We are grateful to the officials and the host team for providing this opportunity, and we hope they will make it an annual occurrence.

CanAm Reimbursement

SCS remains one of the last LSCs to *not* reimburse athletes with disabilities who qualify for and compete in US Paralympics National Para Swimming Championships (or CanAms, for short). Athletes with disabilities not only undergo incredible lengths to train and qualify for this meet, but attending it is often prohibitive in terms of costs. Expenses for athletes with disabilities are *not* the same as their able-bodied counterparts. Often they must travel with a companion to help with mobility. They always have extra equipment and maintenance materials to pack and use when they travel, and just traveling itself can mean threats to the athletes' health that an able-bodied athlete has never known. The precautions these athletes must take, and the efforts they must make to take the trip far outweigh their able-bodied counterparts even before they've stepped foot on deck. They deserve our support, and we have the means to help them.

Proposal:

The Disability Committee has an annual budget of \$5000 that has never, to our knowledge, been spent. **We propose that this year's money go to reimburse athletes who attend CanAms this year in December.** Amounts per athlete would be set based on how many swimmers go, and what falls in line with the reimbursement SCS gives to swimmers who attended Nationals this year.

Next Year

In the coming year, we would like to see more officials qualify to participate in Disability meets and to classify disability swimmers. While USA Swimming holds multiple Disability Clinics throughout the year, we would like to see Yucaipa and one more team host a Disability meet in SCS to provide increased awareness, classification opportunities, and competitive opportunities for these athletes. We would also like to see more athletes qualify for CanAms, and to continue to provide those athletes with some monetary relief for their efforts.

Coming Years

In the next two years, we would like to see the budget for the Disability Committee increase enough that we can host a Disability Camp for our athletes with disabilities along the lines of what we currently host for our Diversity swimmers. We believe a camp like this would increase visibility of our swimmers with disabilities in the LSC, as well as to show these athletes how much we as a governing body believe in them and the contribution they make to our sport.

With thanks, respectfully submitted,

Shari Twidwell, Chair