

## **Questions from ASA March Organizational Meeting:**

### **COVID Safety:**

**How did teams manage swimmers going on vacation/out of town weeks and then returning to the team? Any quarantine mandates?**

- Teams created COVID Q&A forms for daily screening, if swimmers were at risk, they were not permitted. The process may be different for different HOAs/Pool Boards.
- Teams could require participants to either produce a negative COVID test upon returning from travel OR “quarantine” and not participate in practices or meets for a week to 10 days if they do not produce a negative COVID test

**Did any teams last summer have a dedicated liability waiver for COVID-19? If so, can the League share it?**

- Many teams adjusted their team waiver to include much of the language from the ASA waiver. The language from that waiver was specifically written with advice from our league attorney and in consultation with our insurance company.

**Where do we get a copy of the COVID waiver that needs to be filled out for Registration?**

- The ASA Waiver can be found by clicking on , or at <https://asa.swimtopia.com/downloads>

**Are there any rapid COVID test providers that we can conduct onsite COVID testing of coaches as needed?**

- Teams should familiarize with local COVID testing facilities near their pool, in case a test is needed due to exposure. In many cases free testing can be obtained via your county board of health at various locations in your community.
- Viral Solutions is an operator who has been contracted by year round programs, if teams would like to inquire.

**How do teams deal with inclement weather?**

- This may provide an extra challenge for teams since the normal solution to crowd into a clubhouse or concession area may not allow for social distancing. Teams should make a plan in advance to get people to safety given the added challenges this may involve. This may include having a text chain to quickly communicate with families that they may have to come to the pool quickly to get their swimmers and return home.

**What is the recommended COVID symptom / daily check process for teams for practice and meets?**

- Many teams had a coach or parent do a quick temperature and symptom check when swimmers arrived at the pool each day.

**How have teams done lessons/close contact teaching for younger kids?**

- Face shields and masks and gloves have been a method adopted by teams in 2020 as well as lesson programs in Atlanta. Confirm with your individual HOA/Pool Board as part of your COVID Safety Plan.
- Some teams had parents serve as the hands on person in the water with their swimmers while the coach offered instruction from the deck.

**How did swim teams manage Pool Sanitation Plans last year?**

- It is recommended to present your HOA the sanitation plan for the swim team (including bathrooms and common areas after practice and before the pool opens daily, or at the end of the day for evening practices). Align in advance is any paperwork/tracking would be required by the HOA/Pool Board. One team last year had Coaches/Assistant Coaches staffed to clean bathrooms on a schedule, as well as sanitize shared equipment.

## **Background Checks:**

**If your Club already does a background check, are you required to do another one through SummerLeagueSwimming.com?**

Yes. Our League insurance requires it.

**Can coaches under the age of 18 get background checks?**

- Yes, with parent authorization. The process is described on the SLS website.  
<https://summerleagueswimming.com/background-check/>

## **General Questions:**

**Will 19 year olds be allowed to swim this year?**

YES!

**How many swim meets must a team compete in to be eligible for the ASA Championship Meet?**

- Swimmers will be required to compete in at least one regular season meet (in person or virtual to be eligible to swim in the ASA Championship at the end of the season.

## **Suggestions/Experience for Practices from last summer:**

**Are there ideas from teams who competed last year about how they handled practices to enhance safety, etc?**

- Teams need to think about practice from the moment swimmers are coming to the pool to the moment they leave, it is not just time in the water. This includes planning for swimmer arrival, allowing parents to be on deck for practice or not, using the entire pool deck (not just the pool) for practice, traffic flow around the deck, marking the deck and areas to provide visual cues for social distancing, transition periods when one group leaves and another arrives, and cleaning the pool area.
- Each pool and their surrounding area is different, which required a variety of approaches to make things work. The first thing teams have to sort out is the first number of swimmers that can safely be in the water and in the surrounding deck area for practice, teams should coordinate with their HOA and pool management company to find out how many people can be in the pool and in the surrounding area.

### **Planning for practice schedules**

- If capacity is limited per lane / per practice, teams had to add extra practices per age group or limit the number of practices swimmers could attend each week.
- Other solutions included shorter practice sessions (30 minutes instead of 45 minutes, 45 minutes instead of 60) to allow for more practice sessions during the week.
- Many teams had swimmers practice 2-4 times each week, instead of the usual 4-5 times. This opened up more capacity at practice for more swimmers. Teams divide the team into groups and only practice 2-3 days/wk for each swimmer (alternating weeks, which group gets 2 days and which group gets 3 days)
- Many teams encouraged club swimmers to practice with their club and don't come to as many (or any) summer team practices.
- Teams should keep accurate attendance records for ALL team events; practices, meets and any other team functions. This is crucial if contact tracing has to be done at any point during the season.

### **Arriving at practice, leaving practice**

- Many teams had specific arrival/pick up windows for practice, swimmers could not just be dropped off en masse and be allowed to hang out at the pool until their practice started or after it ended, everybody counts when it comes to how many people are allowed in the pool area.
- Teams had specifically assigned areas/locations for swimmers to leave their items while they were practicing. Some teams went as far as taping off locations around the deck for this purpose.
- Swimmers were encouraged to come to the pool in their suits and not use the bathrooms as changing areas unless absolutely necessary.
- Some teams built in 5 minute breaks after practice to get everyone out of the pool area before the next group came in.
- Most if not all teams did some form of symptom and temperature check when people came into the pool area. This is something that coaches or parent coordinators handled. It does not take a ton of time but provides a great deal of peace of mind for everyone.
- If the pool had the ability to do so many teams arranged for people to come into the pool area from one entrance and exit the pool from a different location.
- Swimmers were encouraged to wear a mask until they were getting into the water and to bring a Ziploc bag (with their name on it) to put their mask in while they were in the water. They were encouraged to put their mask back on once they were out of the water.
- Use of common training items like kickboards, fins, paddles, etc...should not be shared or should be sanitized in between uses. Swimmers were encouraged to bring their own to practice.

### **In the water and on the deck**

- Plan how many swimmers per lane and how to safely space swimmers in each lane in the water. Please see the attached diagram to get 5 swimmers into each lane in the water and maintain social distancing.
- Other possibilities include having swimmers line up on the deck for 25's, 50's and shorter sets. See the attached diagram for ideas on how to do this during practice. The more deck space you have the more kids can be there.
- Teams marked the deck with everything from gorilla tape to paint to sidewalk chalk to rubber/plastic discs and even deck furniture to provide visual clues to encourage social distancing.
- Some teams used specific lane assignments for practice, stick with them even if swimmers are absent. This made repeatable behavior by the swimmers easier to learn.
- Have a plan for dealing with 6 and unders, junior programs and less experienced swimmers. This may require coaches to wear face shields Face shields and masks and gloves have been a method adopted by teams in 2020 as well as lesson programs in Atlanta. Confirm with your individual HOA/Pool Board as part of your COVID Safety Plan.
- Some teams had parents serve as the hands on person in the water with their swimmers while the coach offered instruction from the deck.
- Use the entire pool and deck. Many teams had different "stations" around the deck and used the diving area for things like vertical kicking, short sprints, starts and other drills. Many teams used the surrounding pool deck to do dry land exercises, stretching and other drills. Use every inch of your pool to maximize the number of swimmers you can have at practice.
- Coaches need to lead by example, they need to stay distanced and not cluster next to each other to chat during practice. We still advise wearing masks at all times, so unless the CDC or other health officials change their tune on this, teams should plan on doing so and having their coaches do so as well.

### **Virtual Meets:**

#### **How do we run a Virtual Meet?**

- Full details as regarding the operation of a Virtual Meet will be covered during the April Rules Meeting. Page 7-18 of the 2020 ASA Rule Book describes roles in a Virtual meet, for review in advance of the April Rules Meeting. Below are some of the highlights of how a virtual meet is different from an in person meet.
  - Teams can swim their events at their own pool on any date or time of their choosing the week of their scheduled meet. Teams agree in advance on a deadline for their swims to be completed and for results to be exchanged.
  - Many teams broke their swimming sessions at their pool into different groups to manage the number of people present better and encourage social distancing. For example 8 and under, 10 and under and 11 and over. Those swimming sessions could be done throughout one day or spread over multiple days to fit into the scheduling needs of their pool and stay in the good graces of their HOA.
  - Many teams swam all of their 6 and under events as one session (usually first) to get their events out of the way quickly (usually in 20-30 minutes).
  - Teams do not need to swim on the same day or at the same time unless they choose to do so. They just need to swim and send their results to each other by the agreed upon deadline.
  - At that point teams will e mail each other their results and the results can be merged in Hy Tek following a few steps, merging the results usually takes about the same amount of time it would take to consolidate an in person meet.
  - The standard pre-meet lineup exchange is not needed for virtual meets since the teams won't be swimming together, only an exchange of meet results is needed.
  - Teams used all available lanes in their pool to swim their events, not just the odd (away team) or even (home team) lanes normally used in an in person meet.
  - Teams can self-officiate their portion of the meet, or a league provided ASA official can be used. Most teams self-officiated their meets in 2020.
  - Since swimmers from both teams are not present, place judges will not determine the order of finish, times will be used to determine the order of finish.
  - Swimmers from any heat can score points, instead of just heat 1.
  - Scoring limits (max of 2 scorers per individual event and 1 scorer per relay event) still apply.
  - Ribbons can be done based on either the merged results or the results of swims at your pool, it is up to the teams to choose. Most teams did their ribbons based on the swims at their pools instead of the merged results.
  - Teams will have to sort out amongst themselves how to handle a situation where one team can dive in and the other cannot. This needs to be worked out in advance of the meet.
  - Virtual meets worked well for teams last year and provided a great deal of flexibility to deal with

**Will a referee be required for a Virtual Meet?**

- Teams can self-officiate their portion of their virtual meets, but teams can request an ASA official if desired.

**Can a team start the season as Virtual and then transition to In Person?**

- Yes, pending there are even numbers of teams interested. Please let us know your preference when you complete your league survey updating your team status for 2021.

**How did teams manage having added people/traffic at the start end of the pool for Virtual Meets?**

- One team advised using one timer for every two lanes (two stopwatches).
- One team advised after older kids swimming 50s/100s would swim a 25 easy after their race and get out at the other end of the pool to limit number of swimmers behind the blocks and to allow for some recovery times for swimmers since the normal pacing of a virtual meet is different.

**In Person Meets:**

**Were any meets done in person in 2020?**

- All meets were done virtually in 2020.

### **What if two teams are schedule for a meet and have different safety protocols for COVID?**

- The host team will set the rules for the COVID protocols used for the meet since it is their facility.
- Teams should discuss in advance, if resolution cannot be found, default to a Virtual Meet.
- Teams should work together constructively to make this work and be done as responsibly as possible.

### **Can teams do a hybrid meet, with some events in person and some done virtually?**

- This is an option several teams have already suggested. Teams could choose to do one age block (10 and under, 11 and over, 9-14, or any combination) in person and then complete the remainder of their events virtually. Teams could rotate the groups to allow everyone to have an opportunity to swim a couple of their meets in person.

### **What other considerations/restrictions might come into play with an in person meet?**

- It is likely distancing and capacity requirements at most pools will still limit the number of people who can be present at the pool. This may require teams to break their in person meets into multiple sessions, possibly swum over multiple days.
- Limits on spectators will likely be required to make in person meets work. A meet between two average size teams involves over 200 swimmers and meet volunteers, that would take a pretty large space to fit into current distancing requirements.
- While the hope is that these requirements will be relaxed as the spring approaches, there are no guarantees.

### **How do teams plan to manage Concession Stands for meets this year?**

- For teams managing their own concession stands, prepackaged single serve options are good ideas to promote safety and COVID health guidelines.
- One team is planning to schedule a Food Truck to serve in the parking lot during their meets. This possibly could be a team fundraiser when partnering with a Food Truck too.

### **The What If's**

Like anything in life, things don't always go as planned. Teams should do their best to plan for the unexpected. It will let you act quickly and proactively, not reactively.

- Did any teams have swimmers or coaches who contracted COVID during last season, how did they handle it?
  - This happened to a few teams. Each team had a plan in place in advance of the season and followed their protocols without any significant problems. In each case teams held the person in question out of practice for 7-10 days and notified any possible people who may have come in contact with that person.
- What if someone on the team (swimmer or coach) tests positive?
  - Teams communicated their plans in advance of the season with their families as a means to show that they had thought through this process and would act proactively instead of reactively.
  - Communicate openly with your team and your HOA/Pool Board, as well as any people who were possibly exposed and need to be tested.
  - Privacy of possibly infected people should be respected in this communication process, but if the person who may be sick is open to letting folks know they are the person in question it is up to the team with letting others who may have come in contact with that person know.
  - Taking attendance and having specifically assigned lanes for practice can play an important role in contact tracing if it has to be done.
  - Most teams required any person who tested positive for COVID or came in contact with someone who tested positive to stay away from the pool for at least a week to 10 days and in most cases provide a negative test before returning to the pool.

- Teams may want to explore what their local schools did in these cases during the 2020-21 school year.
- HOA's and pool management companies established policies for the pool as to how long the pool would be out of commission in the event someone who was infected was at the pool.

**What other resources are available for reference and guidelines?**

CDC Guidelines for Pools - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/aquatic-venues.html>

USA Swimming - <https://www.usaswimming.org/home/covid-news>

US Aquatics Coalition - <http://www.aquatics-coalition.org/>

Swimtopia Planning a Safe Swim Season - <https://www.swimtopia.com/planning-a-safe-swim-season-in-2021/>

Georgia Department of Health – <https://dph.georgia.gov/>

Pool and Hot Tub Alliance - <https://www.phtacoronaupdate.com/>