

**Vice President Education  
Report – Convention 2006  
Jeanne Struck**

What a busy year! Laura Mase and Cathy Gower have been working extremely busily since last November and have put together much material and have presented to many groups information about Synchronized Swimming.

**I.** Coaches College in the fall, with the huge input from the National Team Coaches began the year for education. This year the Coaches College will be one month earlier, so that NT Coaches can attend and so that information will be out to the clubs that much sooner. Plans are being made to make sure the College curriculum is detailed and connected through all levels of competition. The Talent ID concept will be introduced and the Zone Video will be incorporated into the judging portion of the College.

**II.** YMCA Curriculum has been developed, tested and presented 11 times by Laura, Cathy, Jeanne and Ginny. Over the past year, we have established a wonderful working relationship with both Kay Smiley, as well as many of the YMCA faculty and trainers. USSS worked directly with Kay to design an all-inclusive package that enables their instructors to proficiently teach swimmers basic Synchro skills. The program is currently in the process of being rolled out by YMCA faculty in various areas throughout the country. The program was first presented to the national YMCAs' super-faculty at the end of January in Ft. Lauderdale, FL by USSS. Due to the tremendous number of YMCAs and their rigorous training procedures, the program is still in the early stages of implementation.

The program provides a variety of educational materials in order to support YMCA certified instructors who teach the classes. The manual serves as the instructors' primary resource, including weekly outlines, specific lesson plans for each class, and a glossary of synchro-specific terms. The lesson plans include a detailed description of each warm-up, stretches, skills, and routine parts that are covered in each class. The manual follows a similar format to the other programs that are run through the YMCAs.

**III.** Zone Critiques were carried out at all four Senior Zone Championships. Thanks for the help from Charlotte Davis, Gail Emery, and Gail Pucci for critiquing all those routines! The critiques were well received and were more useful to the swimmers and coaches than they might have been had the critiques had been done later in the season.

**IV.** As a result of much expressed concern about standardizing judging throughout the U.S., a zone video is being produced which will include duets and teams from each zone, the last routine to receive a Jr. score and the first routine not to receive the Jr. score in both events, one set from each zone. This material will be available for judges education and then for coaches education.

**V.** Clinics were held at National Age Group Championships in Seattle, conducted by Duke Zelinski. Two 12-13 clinics were held, one 14-15, clinic, and the 16-19 classroom clinic was canceled as not enough signed up. The time schedule for the clinics will be adjusted in 2007 to help make the classroom clinic more convenient for coaches and athletes to attend. The classroom presentation will emphasize mental strategies for competition and preparing for post-age group (Collegiate) swimming.

**VI.** If an effort to advance the organization and cohesive appearance of our USSS officials, the judges page has been further developed on the website. It lists all certified judges who are

members of the organization with their current certified level. Bios on the Emeritus Judges are also in the process of being created.

**VII.** The Talent ID which was piloted at Age Group Nationals, developed with National Team collaboration. A formalized form was created with a follow-up plan for further enhancement of our young athletes.

**VIII.** Coaching Certification Program (CCP) is being expanded with some on-line capabilities, such as collaboration with NCSS (National Center for Sports Safety), and with USA Swimming and US Ski and Snowboarding. Support from USA Swimming and US Ski and Snowboarding has given USSS a DVD on *Successful Sport Parenting*. This will be extremely beneficial for coaches and parents to be educated on parents' role with athletes, coaches, and within the club structure. Also, Level 4 revisions are being finalized and courses will be offered asap.

**IX.** The figures video project is still in its developmental stages. In order to maximize the quality of the educational material in the video for both coaches and swimmers, the video will include several versions of each figure and technical element. It will appeal to a variety of learning styles through aspects such as voiceover coaching tips. Other auditory and visual features will be incorporated into the video in order to maximize the learning experience. The goal of this video is to allow coaches and swimmers of many different ability levels to retain the greatest amount of information possible on the new FINA figures and elements.

**X.** On the collegiate scene three new programs have been added. They include Babson College (Patty Flanagan), University of Hawai'i (Lianne Cameron) and George Mason University (Sabra Hayes and Megan Sturm).

**XI.** Intern Jacqueline Hill reorganized the collegiate web page and added new features to Synchroed University pages.

**XII.** Conventions at which USSS maintained a booth include the National Association of Collegiate Women Athletic Administrators (NACWAA) in Kansas City, Mo., the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) in Orlando, Fl., the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) in Indianapolis, IN, and the American Alliance of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (AAHPERD) in Salt Lake City, UT. At these conventions, USSS sets up a booth with many photos, videos, and pamphlets. The organization is well represented through the numerous educational and informative materials available to all of the participants at the booth. One to two National Staff members are present at these conventions in order to manage these booths and talk with the attendees about our sport and the benefits of Synchro. These Conventions are one of the greatest ways for synchronized swimming to gain exposure and network with potential members.

**XIII.** Julie Thaden presented to the National Athletic Club Administrators (NACAD) in June.

**XIV.** Mary Rose continues her representation for our sport at the National Organization of State Games.