

Vice President of Competitive Programs

2024 Report to the Board of Governors and Board of Directors

Submitted by Rebecca Phillips

2024 Competitive Season

Change continues to be in the forefront of our sport. This season once again brought changes to help improve and clarify the new scoring system that World Aquatics adopted in 2023. The largest changes occurred mid-season with changes in the difficulty guide and the introduction of Apnea. With the importance of consistency in the controllers several measures were taken to improve the athlete's experience. The Tech controlling process became more solidified as educational courses and tests were introduced for consistency of training and skill development. WhatsApp chats were introduced to allow coaches to ask questions on coding to tech controllers. A clarification document was created to help coaches and controllers understand what some of the wording in the AQUA document means in practice. As the season progressed documents were provided to teams to help better understand the review process for DTC decisions. This smoothed out the process and allowed us to provide results in a timely fashion.

Highlights from 2024

The collegiate program adopted the new scoring system this season. Numerous people helped to make this transition as smooth as possible.

This season could not have happened without the persistent help from a multitude of people. I would like to thank each and every one of you who helped a fellow coach or official learn the information and share with others. The competitions went as smoothly as they did this season because of the amazing members that helped others. There was an overall feeling of camaraderie and humor as the membership learned and moved with the changes together. Coaches, athletes and officials became more nimble and accepting of change as we understood together that it was in our sports interest to stay in a test and adjust phase.

Competitions and trainings by the numbers:

DTC 1 test was passed by 160 members

DTC 2 test was passed by 51 members

STC 1 test was passed by 185 members

STC 2 test was passed by 50 members

Collegiate had 127 athletes participate

JR/SR/AWD had 271 athletes participate

Youth/12U invite had 372 athletes participate

Junior Olympics had 970 athletes participate with over 1000 participants when including officials.

Looking forward to 2025

World Aquatics anticipates publishing several changes. Potential changes and clarifications that could become part of the 2025 competition season include:

- A new difficulty guide that should provide more balance to routines and allow for choreography with more variation to be successful.

- A new acro manual that is intended to simplify coding of acrobatics

- Proposed adjustments to some TREs and figures

- Changes to the number of hybrids in each routine

A focus on training more volunteers that understand the scoring software and the roles of scorers in the new system will be important for the success of local meets.

I want to thank everyone who helped me in my first year in this role. I had a giant learning curve this season and could not have done it without all the help and grace you provided me. The number of people who patiently helped me understand things I had not previously considered was uncountable. To everyone who helped me this year I appreciate you.