

Vice President of Competitive Programs

2025 Report to the Board of Governors and Board of Directors

Submitted by Rebecca Phillips

2025 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. Once again, several large changes were shared by AQUA. Changes included:

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

- A new acro manual intending to simplify coding of acrobatics

- Changes to the number of hybrids in each routine

- Removal of Apnea requirements

The Tech controlling process became more solidified as educational courses and tests were enhanced for consistency of training and skill development. WhatsApp chats were maintained to allow coaches to ask questions on coding to tech controllers. A clarification document was maintained to help coaches and controllers understand what some of the wording in the AQUA document means in practice.

Highlights from 2025

Coaches continue to help each other understand the system. The coach card checker developed by Chris Leahy became utilized by most teams, helping to reduce basemarks from coding errors. Coaches, athletes and officials became better at expecting and adapting to change.

Competitions by the numbers. All of our national competitions had an increase from the prior year.

2024 Masters 282

Collegiate had 150 athletes participate

JR/SR/AWD 286 athletes participate

Youth/12U invite had 409 athletes participate

Junior Olympics had 1000 athletes participate marking the first time post covid that this event hit the 1000 athlete mark.

Looking forward to 2026

World Aquatics has begun to share their plans to move masters athletes internationally to the new system. Our masters group will need to consider to what extent they want to adapt the international rules or maintain their own system. This work will take place over the 2026 season.

I want to thank the committee members and chairs for their tireless effort to clarify and improve how we operate at national meets. Please see officials report by Linda Loendorff and Rules committee report by Patricia Jones for additional details of the work that has occurred this year to improve communication and processes. I want to thank the USAAS staff for their tireless effort to create experiences that will last a lifetime for our athletes and families. I want to thank all the coaches, officials, volunteers, parents, spouses, friends and family who support our athletes to be their best. Finally, I want to thank everyone who helped and provided feedback to me throughout the season.