

TISCA Board Zoom Meeting

May 20, 2025

7:00 PM Central / 8:00 PM Eastern

Present: Pat Killian (president), Joe Peeden (VP), Justin Karpinos (Secretary), April Parker (Membership Chair, Treasurer), Tim Jones (Diving rep), Stan Corcoran (Chattanooga area), Nathan Love (East TN area)

1) Review of State 2025:

- i. Recognition of Stan Corcoran, head coach of McCallie, for his change from head coach to passing that baton off to Zane Hamilton; happy transition to this new rule after some of the best teams TN has ever seen.
- ii. Biggest change this year was the *size* of the State meet. We ended up with 618 total athletes, 532 qualifiers, 35 relay only swimmers, and 51 divers. Obviously sad to leave home kids who would have qualified the year before, but the size felt more manageable during warmups, on the deck, w.r.t. prelim session timelines

(see screenshot on numbers)

Also, pre-verification for teams who needed to, and that went as well as possible. If anything, some teams who didn't need to pre-verify thought they did, which is a fine problem to have.

More open warmup time; last 30 min. of WU time was unassigned.

Live Stream! 1000-2000 views per session were nice to see, and was a great addition to the meet. Many comments on the high quality production of the live-stream.

2) Planning for State 2026 #1: NFHS rule re: backstroke wedges

Proposal to permit backstroke ledges for use in accordance with NFHS rules in all TN high-school swimming competition.

(see screenshot)

Safety requirements are noted, for the benefit of coaches.

Motion to follow NFHS guidelines. Approved.

3) Planning for State 2026 #2: New Awards program

We are giving new trophies to the top-performing men's and women's teams among all programs from TSSAA Division I-A, I-AA, and II-A schools, as well as home school teams

We top performing men's and women's teams among all programs from TSSAA Division I-AAA schools.

Input needed: Names for both awards? To honor legends and also for expediency...like Tom Fay is in Middle TN for example? Doris Coady (longtime Oakland coach).

April: notes that these should be named for high school coaches, club coaches. Maybe for elite swimmers in those categories that the teams represent...?

Pat will send this solicitation out to the whole membership. Looking for 2 names.

Proposal was amended to offer ribbons for 1st-16th place per event in eligible results. This will have to happen AFTER the meet concludes.

Our new category will have to happen AFTER the meet concludes.

Justin is hesitant to make any changes to the Meet Manager file while the meet is going. Pat isn't a huge fan of the ribbons at all – not sure if it's a meaningful recognition for high school swimmers.

4) Planning for State 2026 #3: Livestream at the Sportsplex

We will need some change to bleacher space at the Sportsplex to make this happen. Budget is \$3,000. 1.2-2.2K views per session.

We are treating this as an ongoing expense.

April: We may need to change the timing of *when* the budget is presented and announced. It could be better to set the budget at the fall meeting for the year ahead. That would be a bylaw change.

5) Planning for 25-26 season: "Bona fide" competition rule

Bonafide = sanctioned meet: certified officials, compliant timing systems, documenting of results. Meets before two or more HS teams are automatically sanctioned by TISCA unless challenged. Intrasquad and time-trial meets must be pre-approved by TISCA VP and must submit post-meet assessment.

Template provided for pre- and post-meet assessment.

Questions to resolve:

-What certification do officials need?

-Should all meet results be submitted to TISCA?

-How to educate coaches: NFHS dual-meet rules, “compliant” timing systems, “good faith” efforts to secure officials

Generally, this rule gives us a lot of flexibility for accommodating and evaluating potential exceptions. Some requirements are deliberately vague to give teams some wiggle room – with certified officials, for example.

“Certified:” what does that mean?

-Summer league certification vs. USA swimming certification.

Joe: certification by the regional levels is automatically approved by TISCA, so if the regional level says it’s okay, it’s okay with TISCA.

Pat: is NFHS certification test a viable option? This is a 2 hour course.

The Board’s imperative is to cultivate officials, to recruit and train people who have a passing knowledge of stroke and turn rules. We should be working to broaden this pool of potential officials.

-Consensus is that this is a good direction for us to go in.

-Accurate documentation and results: results must be recorded using compliant timing systems and submitted to the appropriate governing body – what does that entail?

Joe’s answer: that’s up to the regions themselves. TISCA is NOT asking teams to submit dual meet results. Middle TN region is suspicious of the time trial scenarios, not so much the dual meets.

Pat: question about the degree to which we follow NFHS rules for dual meets. NFHS prohibits changes to the meet event order, for example. Do we want to require teams to follow these kinds of rules for ordinary dual meets in order to be certified?

Joe: likes this idea in principle, but as long as teams are meeting the region standards, it's not TISCA's place to regulate this.

Justin: would be fine with us writing a one-pager for Points of Emphasis or non-negotiables for dual meets, but don't want to create a barrier to entry for dual meets to gain certification.

Moving forward: we'll revisit this and will work on a One-pager for teams to follow for dual meets.

6) Review: TN legislation re: participation of transgender athletes

At the 2019 annual meeting, TISCA adopted guidelines regarding the participation of transgender athletes.

In April 2021, TN adopted SB 0228, which requires that a student's gender for the purposes of participation in interscholastic athletics "be determined by the student's sex at the time of the student's birth."

Moved: we formally rescind the 2019 policies. Motion passes. (Will we keep this as a matter of historical record? Or just cut it altogether?)

7) Review: TSSAA change to transfer rules

Background: 3/25, TSSAA passes addition to eligibility rules, allowing transfer without penalty, "the first time the student transfers to another school due to a significant academic, social-emotional, environmental or mental health need."

HB 25 / SB 16: if passed, effectively requires TSSAA to allow one-time transfers without loss of eligibility.

Specifically, the bill prohibits public schools from public funds to join a sports association that does not allow a one-time transfer.

Relevant links:

<https://tssaa.org/article/transfer-rule-update-2024-12-13>

<https://tssaa.org/article/legislative-council-adds-provision-for-academic-transfers>

We don't want to be caught off-guard if this bill passes (it was tabled until February).

Moved: Amend TISCA article VII.3.3. to include language of the new TSSAA rule.

Presently: TISCA transfers have to be between seasons, and it has to be any non-athletic reason. What we do not allow is an in-season transfer (with rare exceptions and approval from the VP).

Joe: in this case, we certainly don't need to be more stringent on transfer rules, but we do need to keep an eye on TSSAA's response here. Right now, this is premature.

Pat: we had an in-season transfer a couple of years ago, and it was allowed b/c we didn't have a rule against it. But now we would prohibit that, whereas current TSSAA rules would provide a pathway for them to play right away. Thinks we should not be more restrictive than TSSAA on these kinds of matters.

We HAVE to be prepared to talk about this In February at the annual membership meeting, and punting until February is a viable pathway.

Motion is withdrawn, but unless something significant changes, we'll bring this question again for the annual meeting in February.

8) Question: universal pre-verification of State Q times?

Should we require universal pre-verification for State entries?

If so, how will we create and maintain the necessary database of results?

This is a lot easier question to consider now than it is in the fall.

Are we happy with our status quo, or do we want to move in that direction?

Stan: in TN, a lot of swimmers qualify at USA swimming meets, but in GA, times have to be submitted from in-season dual meets.

Pat: would not be in favor of applying the GA system for our system of organizing.

April: concerned about access, b/c some teams are sending in literally images of results and have no access to electronic records. Likes pre-verification b/c it demands coaches think about this sooner, but it would be a big added task for coaches and would make it harder.

Generally we are not in favor of moving in this direction but not voting on this tonight.

9) Brainstorming: Supporting and promoting the sport

-A running statewide leaderboard and ranking system?

-What could we do to promote the sport throughout the season?

-coaches' education?

- Stan is offering to do New Coaches 101 Zoom
- looking into group Team Manager license to help new/smaller teams
- Communications & marketing
- MaxPreps is used by other sports, and by swimming programs in other sports

Pat: want us to be continuing to think of us as the advocates for the sport as well as the governors of the sport. What are the action steps we can take to show up for the sport in constructive ways?

Action item: send Pat potential questions for membership survey.