

International Relations Activity & Convention Report
2022 USAAS Convention
St Petersburg, FL
Submitted by International Relations Committee Chair Betty Hazle
September 8, 2022

With the Coronavirus pandemic still among us, many competitions and events occurred under new protocols. Below is a recap of the IR activities since the 2021 convention.

I. 2022 Club Option Program

Club options were awarded to the following clubs:

- **DC Synchronmasters**: Artistic Swimming Winter Championships Portugal Open, held in Lagos-Algarve, Portugal, March 19-20. Approved 1 Solo, 1 Duet in the Masters category (no judge required)
- **Westside Artistic Swimming**: Open de France, held in Paris, France, April 1-3. Approved 1 Solo. (shared costs of judges – Sheila McNabb & Melodie Wallace)
- **Westside Artistic Swimming**: Hellas Open, held in Athens, Greece, May 20-22. Approved 1 Solo. (no judge required)
- **Westside Artistic Swimming**: Hungarian Open, held in Budapest, Hungary, May 27-29. Approved 1 Solo (no judge required)
- **Santa Clara Aquamaids**: 21st Primorje Synchro Cup, held in Rijeka, Croatia, June 16-19. Approved 3 Solos (1-13-15/2-Jr), 2 Duets, Team and Combo in the Junior category. (Shari Darst approved as the judge.)
- **MAC Synchro**: VII Pan American Masters Championships, held in Medellin, Colombia, July 21-28. Approved 1 Solo, 1 Duet in the Masters category (no judge available)
- **Santa Clara Aquamaids**: VII Pan American Masters Championships, held in Medellin, Colombia, July 21-28. Approved 1 Duet in the Masters category (no judge available)
- **Unsyncables of La Mirada**: VII Pan American Masters Championships, held in Medellin, Colombia, July 21-28. Approved 1 Solo in the Masters category – did not attend due to injury
- **USA Down Syndrome Swimming**: 10th World Down Syndrome Swimming and Artistic Swimming Championships, Albufeira, Portugal, Oct 15-23. Approved 4 Solos, 2 Duets, 1 Team. (Shari Darst approved as the judge).

II. 2022 Private Invitations – none requested

III. International Judge Exposure

Since the 2021 convention, I am happy to report that almost all of the 13 FINA/PAQ judges have attended at least one international competition. In addition, former FINA judges have been active as evaluators, volunteers and served in other key roles. This was only possible due to the support of the USOPC, our National Teams, our Club Teams, our Club Option Teams and personal resources. The following current and former FINA/PAQ judges attended international competitions for the end of 2021 and 2022.

- **Shari Darst** – Primorje Cup (CRO), World Down Syndrome Championship (POR)
- **Eugenia Gillan** – 2021 Junior Pan American Games practice judge (COL)
- **Irene Hawes** – FINA World Series # 1 Virtual (CAN/USA) Evaluator, FINA World Aquatics Championships (HUN) Evaluator, Junior European Championships (ESP) Evaluator
- **Betty Hazle** – FINA World Aquatic Championships (HUN) Extraordinary Congress Delegate, FINA Youth Worlds (USA) Assistant Referee
- **Ginny Jasontek** – 2021 Junior Pan Am Games (COL) Executive Member, World Series Super Final (GRE) TASC Commission, FINA World Aquatic Championships (HUN) TASC Commission
- **Krista Karwosky** – no where
- **Erin King** – 2021 Junior Pan American Games (COL), FINA Youth Worlds (USA)
- **Kim Kohut** – FINA World Series #1 Virtual (CAN/USA), FINA Youth Worlds (USA)

- **Shannon Korpela** – FINA World Series # 1 Virtual (CAN/USA), FINA World Series # 4 Virtual (AUS)
- **Debbie Latchford** – FINA World Series Super Final (GRE)
- **Linda Loehndorf** – 2021 Junior Pan American Games (COL) Evaluator, FINA Youth Worlds (USA) Evaluator
- **Heidi Lurenz** – 2021 Junior Pan American Games (COL), FINA World Series # 4 Virtual (AUS), FINA Junior Worlds (CAN)
- **Svetlana Malinovskaya** – no where
- **Sheila McNabb** – FINA World Series # 2 (FRA), FINA Junior Worlds (CAN)
- **Cheryl Russell** – FINA World Aquatic Championships (HUN)
- **Melodie Wallace** – FINA World Series # 2 (FRA)

Evaluations are slowly being sent to our judges.

IV. **2022 International Assignments – selected by FINA / Pan Am Aquatics / LEN**

FINA, Pan Am Aquatics and LEN approved the following assignments in 2022. Once again, please join me in congratulating the following individuals on their assignments:

- Irene Hawes – FINA Evaluator at FINA World Series # 1 Virtual (CAN/USA); FINA Evaluator at World Championships, Budapest, Hungary, June 2022; FINA Evaluator at Junior Europeans, Alicante, Spain, June 2022
- Linda Loehndorf – FINA Evaluator at Junior Pan Am Games, Cali, COL, Dec 2021; FINA Evaluator at Youth World Championships, Charlotte, North Carolina, August 2022
- Cheryl Russell – Judge at the World Championships, Budapest, Hungary, June 2022
- Betty Hazle – Assistant Referee at Youth World Championships, Charlotte, North Carolina, Aug 2022

Congratulations again to Irene, Linda, Cheryl and Betty on their assignments!

V. **FINA TASC Commission Member Retires – Ginny Jasontek**

On behalf of the IR committee and entire organization, we owe a deep gratitude to Ginny Jasontek for serving on the FINA TASC for 26 years. She has represented the USA with dignity, compassion, honesty, and always with the athlete foremost in her mind with every opinion and decision.

Thank you Ginny Jasontek for your many years of service!

VI. **FINA “A” Judge retirement – Melodie Wallace**

It is with sadness that we must say goodbye to FINA “A” judge, Melodie Wallace. At the end of 2022, she reaches the mandatory retirement age imposed by FINA. We will no longer see her familiar face in the judge’s chair at international events. On behalf of USA Artistic Swimming, the IR committee, FINA/Pan Am Aquatic judges, athletes and coaches, I wish to extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Melodie for her continued dedication and service to international judging for the last 12 years as a FINA judge.

Thank you so much Melodie for your many years of service!

VII. **Technical Controllers/ Lecturers – selected by FINA**

Last November, Sheila McNabb was invited and attended the FINA Lecturer Seminar in early December for the new scoring system. There have been no further seminars for Lecturers, though much has changed.

Just prior to Christmas last year, the FINA office shared the job description and application form for the new Technical and Assistant Technical Controllers in Artistic Swimming. Many of our current and retired FINA judges, coaches and staff expressed interest. Thirteen applications were sent to FINA from the USA. In early February, FINA announced that Bill May and Svetlana Malinovskaya were selected to the 1st group of controllers to be trained. A Training webinar was held in early March, with subsequent webinars cancelled due to the Ukraine situation. FINA will continue the training sessions in September.

Congratulations to Sheila, Bill and Svetlana on their selection!

VII. UANA (Pan Am Aquatic) Events

The first Junior Pan Am Games was held in December 2021 in Cali, Colombia. Our National Team participated and was quite successful. USA participants included Ginny Jasontek (Executive Member), Denise Shively (TASC member), Bill May (TASC Athlete Representative member), Linda Loendorf (Evaluator), FINA Judges Erin King, Heidi Lurenz and Eugenia Gillan. Betty Hazle was unable to attend due to a previous family obligation.

The TASC requested no UANA Championships event be held in 2022 in order to support the USA and Canada as they were hosting 2 upcoming FINA Championships in August. The thought was to encourage our continent to participate in those prestigious FINA events. The Championships will once again be held in 2023.

The TASC Commission organized a virtual seminar on March 15th on “How to coach Acrobatics in Artistic Swimming”. It was to be led by Svitlana Saidova and Anastasiya Petrenko from Ukraine, both experts in acrobatics. Unfortunately the seminar was cancelled due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The UANA/ Pan Am Aquatic Executive began discussions of a Continental Championship for all sports when the FINA World Championships in Japan were postponed to 2023. With FINA announcing that Hungary would host the 2022 World Championships in June, the discussion was dropped for this year.

The TASC Commission organized a Question/ Answer session on July 28th to review the proposed FINA rules. Questions were sent in prior to the webinar and answered by FINA Innovation committee members Maria Jose Bilbao and Kara Heald. The questions and answers were distributed in English and Spanish and posted to the new PAQ website following the event.

The TASC Commission has begun preparations for the Pan Am Games to be held November 2023 in Santiago, Chile.

IX. Pan Am Aquatic Judge mentors

During the first year of the pandemic, the Pan Am Aquatic TASC Judges Subcommittee offered virtual webinars and mentorship by our continent’s FINA Evaluators. Irene Hawes and Linda Loendorf both participated in the mentorship program which entailed meeting virtually one-on-one with a PAQ judge to assist them with their areas of weakness. The program was designed to provide a select group of judges from South and Central America to raise their level of expertise and experience. In May 2022, Irene continued in the program working with a judge from Chile on improving her English, as that is a requirement to be able to speak English in the FINA and PAQ judges meetings.

Thank you Irene for your continued service in the PAQ mentorship program!

X. FINA Judge Pathway Update/ Possible Promotion

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we are waiting for an update from FINA regarding the FINA Judges Pathway, and reconfirmation process for the 2023 FINA list.

Per the announcement at the 2019 convention, our 3 new FINA/UANA “G” judges have passed the FINA Advanced Test and are waiting for a FINA Certification Test. This last requirement is needed to finalize their confirmation on the FINA “G” list. They were on the FINA list for 1 year (without the ability to judge at FINA events), but were removed the following year by FINA due to a policy change. **Eugenia Gillan, Krista Karwoksy and Svetlana Malinovskaya** anxiously await the FINA Certification School in 2022, hosted by the USA.

In April 2022, a letter was written to FINA on behalf of 1 of our FINA “G” judges requesting review of her evaluations for promotion purposes. Due to the new rules and upcoming mandatory testing, we were advised that **Erin King** must take the upcoming test and afterwards will possibly be considered for promotion. In addition,

after this competitive session, our other FINA “G” judge, **Kim Kohut**, is looking good for moving up to FINA “A” status. As soon as her evaluation from Youth Worlds is received, we will review her work and if appropriate, request review of her evaluations as well.

Good Luck to Erin King and Kim Kohut in possible promotion to FINA “A” status!

XI. New FINA Rule Proposals – 2023-2025

The IRC legislation subcommittee met from May – September 2021 to review, discuss and propose wording for new FINA rule changes. The subcommittee consisted of **Judy McGowan, chair, Gail Emery, Betty Hazle, Ginny Jasontek, Sue Johnson, Chris Leahy, Bill May, and Sue Nesbitt (Masters)**. Once finalized, the legislation was submitted to the UANA/Pan Am Aquatic TASC for input. It was submitted to USAS to forward to FINA in January. With the postponement of the World Championships in Japan in July to 2023, in March 2022, FINA ultimately decided to reschedule the Technical Congresses to October of 2022 to be held virtually. Thus, the legislation was not due until the end of June to FINA. Our legislation was submitted and after some technical issues, the proposals from the Federations were posted to the FINA website, along with the new draft rules and appendices. The legislation subcommittee and other interested persons met again in early August to review the new draft rules to plan our strategy for the Congress.

XII. FINA Extraordinary Congress Delegate & FINA Technical Congress Delegates

At the World Championships in Budapest, Hungary in June, FINA held an Extraordinary Congress to elect the new Aquatic Integrity Unit and approve the new policy on gender inclusion. The USAS rotation was Swimming and Artistic Swimming. **Betty Hazle** was selected the AS delegate by the IRC in May. Observers from USAAS included **Adam Andrasko and Laurette Longmire**.

The IRC met via zoom on July 19, 2022 to review the list of interested persons for the Technical Delegate positions for the FINA AS Technical Congress to be held virtually on Oct 3, 2022. FINA allows each Federation attending to select up to 2 Delegates. The IRC selected **Irene Hawes** and **Ginny Jasontek**. In addition, the committee also recommended that **Lara Teixeira** attend as an Observer (if possible and if FINA allows Observers). It was recommended that Lara and Irene attend the Congress from the same location, so even though Lara does not have a vote, she can provide comments and feedback to Irene as well as observe the Congress for experience for the future.

Good Luck to Betty, Irene, Ginny and Lara on your selection!

XIII. Pan Am Aquatics Extraordinary Congress

Pan Am Aquatics held an Extraordinary Congress in Budapest, Hungary during the World Aquatic Championships in June. The purpose of the Congress was to review and approve revisions to the UANA Constitution, changing the name from UANA to Pan Am Aquatics. The USAS rotation for Congress Delegates was Swimming and Water polo. The Congress was attended by Executive committee member, **Ginny Jasontek**, TASC member, **Betty Hazle**, Observers **Adam Andrasko** and **Laurette Longmire**. A new website is also being created along with new branding materials.

XIV. FINA committees 2023 – 2025 and USAS officer positions

USA Artistic Swimming was very fortunate this year to have 3 candidates for FINA committee positions appointed by the FINA President. **Tammy McGregor** was selected the Chair of the FINA Coaches Committee and **Betty Hazle** was selected as member of the FINA Technical Artistic Swimming Committee.

Bill May was selected from all of the athlete nominations from the US Aquatic Sports to represent the USA on the FINA Athlete Committee. He was then successful in being elected to the FINA Athlete Committee.

Laurette Longmire was approved by US Aquatics Sports as the USA nominee for the FINA National Federation Relations Committee to be put forward to the FINA President. Unfortunately, FINA eliminated that committee for the future.

At this convention, the IR committee will determine their nominees for US Aquatic Sports Officer (USAS) positions. In the past year, US Aquatic Sports revised their By-Laws to now only have 3 officers (rather than 5): President, Vice President of Administration and Treasurer. Therefore, no longer does each of the disciplines hold an officer position. In late August, a call for interested persons was distributed to the members of the International Relations committee, FINA and Pan Am Aquatic Judges and other interested persons. Declarations of candidacy were accepted until September 5th. The IR committee will review submissions and interview any interested candidates during their closed convention meeting and make their recommendations to the USAAS Board of Directors for approval. At this time, USAS will hold a meeting in October to determine their new officers. The USAS Officer term is 2 years.

Congratulations to Betty Hazle, Bill May, and Tammy McGregor on your FINA appointments!

XV. International Awards – ISHOF & MISHOF

The International Swimming Hall of Fame (ISHOF) has scheduled their 2022 Hall of Fame Induction ceremony and Paragon Award ceremony for the weekend of Oct 14-15, 2022 in Fort Lauderdale, FL. The Paragon award ceremony will be held on Oct 14th.

Unfortunately, no Artistic Swimming persons have been selected to be inducted this year. The Paragon Award for Synchronized Swimming presented for outstanding contributions will be presented to Margaret MacLennan from Canada.

The Masters International Swimming Hall of Fame will also be held the same weekend. Dr. Jane Katz from the USA and also a Masters Artistic Swimmer will be honored as a Masters Contributor. Along with Dr Katz, Brite Hohlstein from Germany will be honored as a Masters Artistic Swimmer.

Congratulations to Margaret MacLennan, Dr Jane Katz and Brite Holstein!

XVI. International Bids – 2022 FINA World Series, FINA Judges School, FINA Coaches Clinic, PAQ Duet Camp

FINA announced the World Series events which are a circuit of current artistic swimming events throughout the year, which results in prize money awarded at the conclusion at the Super Final event. Once again, USA Artistic Swimming applied to host one of the World Series events in conjunction this time with Canada. The event was held virtually on March 19-20, 2022.

A FINA Judges Certification School and Coaches Clinic was awarded to USA Artistic Swimming. The School and Clinic will be held in conjunction in Colorado Springs, in November.

In addition, the same week, the USA will be hosting a Pan Am Aquatic Duet camp by special invitation to those Pan Am Federations hoping to qualify for the Pan American Games in 2023 and Paris Olympics in 2024. Federations with Mixed Duets have also been invited to continue their growth and improvement. The camp is partially funded by Pan Am Sports and the USOPC, with a small amount as self-funding by the Federation.

XVII. Succession Plan Continues & Update is needed

It is time to review the list of candidates and mentors that are a part of the Succession Plan and the IR committee will discuss additions and deletions to the list. Many individuals have been appointed positions and the IR committee needs to continue to develop talented and interested persons for positions within and outside of our organization.

The IR succession subcommittee was established in 2013 and consisted of Charlotte Davis, Betty Hazle, Ginny Jasontek, Judy McGowan and Barbara McNamee. The role of the subcommittee is to develop an overall succession plan with assigned mentors for interested persons for the FINA and UANA Technical committee positions. In 2017, the positions within United States Aquatic Sports were added to the list for possible succession plan development. It is now time to also consider positions within our organization.

The following individuals are currently included in the succession program and have been assigned mentors. In addition, many have been selected to FINA, UANA or USAS positions.

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Mentor</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
Krista Bessinger	Charlotte Davis	
Betty Hazle	Ginny Jasontek	PAQ TASC/ FINA TASC member
Linda Loehndorf	Judy McGowan	
Laurette Longmire	Judy McGowan	USAS VP Administration
Sue Nesbitt	Charlotte Davis	
Denise Shively	Barbara McNamee	PAQ TASC
Tammy McGregor	Charlotte Davis	FINA Coaches Committee
Mariya Koroleva	TBD	
Maggie Downey	TBD	

XVIII. International Club Exchange Program (ICE)

With the lack of interest in this program for the past few years, the IR committee is recommending deletion of this program. Clubs may still do exchanges with notification to the IR Chair.

XIX. National Competitions in the US with International Participants

A. US Nationals – April 2022

This year, we were fortunate to have international participation at our US Nationals in Geneva, Ohio. Participating Federations included Singapore and Aruba.

B. US 13-15 Championship – April 2022

This year, we were fortunate to have international participation at our US 13-15 Championship in Irvine, California. Participating Federation was the Philippines.

XX. 2022 USOPC International Relations Grant – Update

No grant was approved for 2022.

XXI. Invitation and Intent to Participate Forms – Local Events

This year we continued the use of our foreign invitation and intent to participate form to assist local meet hosts with notifying the IR Chair of foreign participation at their local, regional and zone championships. The form is used to inform local, regional and zone meet managers of the rules and policies of the organization. Last fall, the form was distributed to each Zone Chair to distribute to their registered clubs.

XXII. Private Invitation Form

This year we continued the use of the form for our clubs to notify the IR Chair and National Office of private invitations to international events. The form is very similar to the Club Option application form. Private invitations follow the same policies and procedures as the Club Option policies, except no deposit is required.

XXIII. IR Review Subcommittee

Throughout the year, the IR Review Subcommittee was asked to review and approve 9 club option applications (see section I). Note: Masters club option applications for most events do not need approval as the competitions allow multiple entries so the IR Chair approves the applications rather than the subcommittee.

XXIV. International Clinics, Schools, Coaching Assignments & Invitations

In addition to items already listed in this report, many members of our organization have been requested to organize clinics, coach foreign individuals and teams, and lecture at seminars around the world, as well as others have attended various competitions/ events. Below is a summary of those activities provided to the IR Chair.

- Lecturer at an Online FINA coaches clinic in Curacao (Dec) – Ashley Johnson

- Hosted Masters athlete from Netherlands – DC Synchromasters
- Hosted Spanish intermediate athlete – Buffalo Swimkins
- Hosted Mexico athlete (Andrea Icazbalceta Mares) – Dallas Synergy Artistic Swimming
- Worldwide Invitational Event hosted Cayman Island, Colombia, Ecuador, Jamaica and Mexico (May) - Ashley Johnson and Coral Springs Aquacades
- Hosted Slovakia athlete (Rebeka Concal) – Potomac Valley Pearls
- Helped Grand Cayman athletes, coaches and judges while vacationing and participating in a masters open water event (June) - Charlotte Davis
- Invited by Palm Hills club from Egypt to lecture (Aug) – Tammy McGregor
- Hosted exchange student/athlete from Switzerland (Anais Haeuptli) (Aug) – Meraquas of Irvine
- Hosted Spanish Team for training and annual water show (Sept) – Walnut Creek Aquanuts

XXV. Club Options 2023

If interested in a 2023 Club Option, applications will be due **Tuesday, January 31st**. Please refer to the website for additional information or contact the IR Review Subcommittee Chair for more information.

XXVI. Upcoming Events in 2022-2023

- A. FINA Technical Congress, Oct 3, 2022, Virtual, Time TBD
- B. South American Championships, Oct 6-9, 2022, Paraguay
- C. 2022 ISHOF/Paragon induction weekend, Oct 14-15, 2022, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- D. FINA Certification School, FINA Coaches Clinic, Pan Am Aquatics Duet clinic, Nov 2022, Colorado Springs, CO
- E. CAC Pan Am Games Qualifier, June 23-July 8, 2023
- F. FINA World Championships, July 14-30, 2023, Fukuoka, JPN**
- G. FINA Masters World Championships, Aug 2-11, 2023, Kyushu, JPN**
- H. Pan American Games, Nov 2-5, 2023, Santiago, CHI**