

Dear Members,

What a great competition at the 2009 Eynchro Age Group Championships in Gainesville, Florida. Thanks to Christy, Pam and Donna as well as all of the Gainesville Gaviatas for their efforts in hosting a terrific event. Thanks also to the Gainesville Sports Commission for a wonderful job at the O'Connell Center and for a very elegant reception. I enjoyed seeing and speaking to so many of you. Thank you for sharing your ideas and concerns for our sport.

Congratulations to all of our National Champions in all four age groups. It is exciting to see so many clubs represented in the entire event and in the final events. It demonstrates the depth of talent all across our country. Our best wishes to all of our graduating seniors and some college freshmen who will be moving beyond the Age Group competitions. We look forward to seeing many of you at Collegiate Nationals. Congratulations and thanks to all of you for your years of dedication to synchronized swimming. I know the lessons you have learned will be valuable in your lives ahead.

My very best wishes also to our National Judges Don Kane and Ruth Zink who were taken to the hospital during the event. Thanks to Katherine Arnold for all her help. Ruth Zink has recovered remarkably and was able to return to the competition. Don Kane has returned home to California and we wish him a speedy recovery. Our thoughts and prayers are with both of these experienced and respected judges for many years of continued good health.

We enjoyed great performances by our U.S. National Team during Monday's final 11-12 events. These athletes have continued their training in Clearwater and will travel to Rome for the World Championships. Thanks to Suncoast Waterworks for its efforts in helping host the National Team and for sacrificing pool time. We all know how valuable pool time is!

I spent a wonderful afternoon with Dennis Frare from the Disney Institute, and his wife Debbie. This was their first exposure to synchronized swimming and they enjoyed it tremendously. Thanks to all of our members who met them and demonstrated what a great organization we are.

Congratulations to the Coral Springs Aquacades, New Canaan Aquianas and Santa Clara Aquamaids who traveled to Peru to represent the United States in competition. I am sure they feel honored to have represented the United States and will bring home many memories from the competition.

Thanks to the University of Arizona Splashcats and particularly Jill Ranucci, Candy Kaemerer and Jeanne Struck for hosting a great U.S. Open Championships in Tucson. Thanks to all the U.S. teams who attended and to the four Canadian provincial teams and Japanese swimmers who traveled to the United States to compete. What a great opportunity for our U.S. clubs to compete against international teams! Congratulations to all the winners in the Junior and Senior competitions!

The passion and commitment of all of you is second to none. When I see how hard you all work it humbles me and makes me want to work even harder for this great sport.

Sincerely,
Duke Zielinski