

WETNOTES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF INTERNATIONAL GAY AND LESBIAN
AQUATICS
MAY 1999

The Future is Now

Jason Klugman (Philly FINS), Atlantic Co-President

Less than a month before the IGLA Championships in Atlanta, I sat down amid the clutter of my bedroom/desk/study space, and took a look through the massive e-mail files that I collected during my two years on the IGLA Board. The e-mail history offers a unique glimpse of the topics, challenges, and triumphs of this organization as we look to improve ourselves and our services for the future. I reviewed the never-ending stream of Gay Games Amsterdam "stuff," the Championship Rules and Policies and Procedures discussions, the challenge of European outreach, and the re-design and development of our website. I smiled when I re-read e-mails from queer swimmers in Buenos Aires and Indianapolis, both trying to start new teams. I laughed when I read that both Riverside, California, Kansas City, Missouri, and Edmonton, Canada had chosen the "Waves" as their team names. I was moved to tears when I reviewed the posting from Atlantic Co-Chair Phil Collins regarding the recent bombing of a popular gay bar in London. This is what IGLA is all about.

Three weeks ago, at the Philadelphia FINS annual SwimFest, I met a 39 year-old swimmer from Nashville, Tennessee. He had been out for exactly 5 weeks - and this was his second gay meet (IGLA Treasurer Sean Fitzgerald had met him in Atlanta and convinced him to go to Columbus, Ohio, for the Splash meet in March, as well as convincing him to come to Philly). The swimmer from Nashville was glowing. He was finally realizing that there was a community to which he belonged. I introduced him to another competitor from Tennessee, hoping to make a lasting connection between gay swimmers in an area of the world that is not so friendly or welcoming for our folk. This is what IGLA is all about.

A year ago, I invited a Dutch swimmer who was swimming with the FINS to get involved with IGLA as we made final preparations for the Amersfoort meeting and the Gay Games. He has since co-chaired our Products and Promotions Committee, began the enormous task of drafting a strategic plan for IGLA, embarked on positive negotiations with the European Gay and Lesbian Sports Federation (EGLSF), and used his boundless energy and knowledge of technology to continue to propose new ways for IGLA to meet the needs of member teams. This is what IGLA is all about.

I have learned, over the past two years, that IGLA is a complex and fluid organization. Its tangible products - the association of gay and lesbian aquatic teams from around the world and our annual championship - only provide a sliver of evidence of the important role IGLA has played in the lives of gay and lesbian athletes, our relatives, friends, and supporters, throughout the past 12 years. I want to thank my fellow officers and the

committee co-chairs who have given of their time and expertise, passion and wisdom over the past two years. Their hard work is rarely witnessed by others as it takes place over a cyber-community, but I have all the evidence in my e-mail files. (Fortunately, I have yet to reach the limits of server space from the University of Pennsylvania!) I could not have asked for a more competent or thoughtful collection of fellow officers and I am thankful for their work and dedication. I look forward to watching IGLA grow and mature in the new millennium. ✦

Stay Wett!

Jamie Cole (Wett Ones), Pacific Co-President

Wow! Has it really been two years? It takes more than great swimmers, divers and water polo players to make a great aquatic organization. It takes dedicated volunteers and supporters. It takes expertise and experience. This is what IGLA can boast. In the two years I have served on the board I have come to know and respect the hard work of all members of the board and committees.

The IGLA board and its members have been faced with many challenges over the past two years. It faced them determined to achieve the best for all its members and did so successfully. Through hard work IGLA has ensured a future of high standards for Gay Games aquatics that will be carried on to Sydney Gay Games VI in 2002 and beyond. I can personally assure you that the IGLA Championship Rules and Recommendations booklet is a fundamental part of the planning for the 2002 aquatic events. IGLA has raised the profile of gay and lesbian athletes throughout the world by highlighting and showcasing their talents. Our committees are working together to promote and increase the presence of women in sport; to bridge the gap between IGLA and non-IGLA teams; to fight discrimination faced by teams in many countries; and to create a strategic plan to take us into the future and to continue to ensure the highest possible standards for gay and lesbian aquatics.

Following Atlanta in June, I start a new chapter in my life. I am following my heart and moving to Paris. This will be exciting and challenging experience for me. It will give me the opportunity to swim with new teams, go back to school and learn a new language. I am very confident that the many friends I have made through IGLA will help make this transition easier. I look forward to getting to know the members of Paris Aquatique much closer and sharing our love for swimming.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to be so involved in gay and lesbian aquatics. My time on the IGLA board has enabled me to learn and develop new skills. It has given me the confidence and the opportunity to become involved in Sydney GGVI and opened many other doors for me. It has given me the opportunity to make many lasting friendships from around the world. It continues to help me achieve my personal best in and out of the water.

I thank all my fellow board members for all their untiring work, for their care and support. I wish all IGLA members happiness and success and look forward to once again being with you in Atlanta.

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

In preparation for the Atlanta General Meeting, this issue of Wetnotes contains a number of important items. You will find the draft minutes of last year's General Meeting in the Netherlands (for your approval), the proposed Championship Rules (rules for IGLA Championships and Gay Games) and Policy and Procedures (rules for IGLA's internal operations) amendments, which will be voted on at the meeting. Finally, there is an agenda for the meeting. **Please make sure the IGLA Team Representative who will attend the General Meeting gets these documents. Copies will not be available at the meeting; you must bring these materials with you.**

- Any team rep has the right to request that a CR or P&P item be pulled for discussion and a separate vote. In this case reps should notify John Peller, IGLA Secretary, at John@IGLA.org AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
- Committee co-chairs or others may request to have all the items that were not pulled for discussion voted in toto and without discussion.

You can download the current CR and P&P books from <http://www.igla.org/publications.htm>.

In addition, we will elect new officers (see page 5) and vote on host city for IGLA 2001 (see page 6). Finally, remember that any member of your team can serve as the team rep at the General Meeting. They must check in with a member of the board when they arrive. If you have any questions, please contact John Peller at John@IGLA.org.

WE REACHED RECORD SIZE

SEAN FITZGERALD, IGLA TREASURER, ATLANTA

IGLA has continued to grow during 1999. We now have nearly 50 members. I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome all the new members and remind them to become involved by sending representatives to the IGLA General Meeting on Thursday, June 17, from 2-6pm. The growth of IGLA has been seen in both swimming and water polo. In addition to the growth in the number of teams, IGLA has also seen an increase in the size of many teams. I've attached a listing of the current teams.

Small teams:

English Bay (Vancouver)
Gruppo Pesce Milano (Italy)
Ojai/Santa Barbara
Rainbow Swim Austria
Southern California Aquatics
Team Auckland
Team Mermaid (Denmark)

Medium teams:

A Contre-Courant (Montreal)
Atlanta Rainbow Trout Water Polo
Brussels Starfish

Chicago Smelts
Different Strokes Calgary
HHZV Plons (The Hague)
Jax Splash (Jacksonville, FL)
Kansas City Wave
Liquid Assets New England (Formerly Different Strokes Boston)
Making Waves (Edmonton, Canada)
Nadadores (South Beach)
Orca Swim Team (Seattle)
Ontario Rideau Speedeaus
Riverside (California) Waves
Sacramento Masters
Seattle Otters Water Polo
San Diego Cygnets Water Polo
TOGS (South Africa)
USF Masters
Washington Wetskins
West Hollywood Water Polo
Wett Ones (Sydney)

Large teams:

Downtown Swim Club (Toronto)
Ohio Splash
San Francisco Tsunami
Swimming Queers United in Denver (SQUID)
Team Dallas Aquatics Club

Very Large teams:

A2QUA (Ann Arbor)
Atlanta Rainbow Trout
Different Strokes San Diego
District of Columbia Aquatics Club
Out 2 Swim (London)
Philadelphia FINS
Paris Aquatique
Queer Utah Aquatic Club
Team New York Aquatics
West Hollywood Aquatics

Homophobic Belgium National FINA Federation Bars Starfish

Phil Collins, Atlantic Co-Chair

Some of you will already be aware of the problems an IGLA member, Brussels Gaysport, is having registering with their National Swimming Federation. In brief they have been refused membership because the officials think a gay swimming club would upset their current membership.

Since IGLA requires its members to be affiliated to FINA, through local federations, to compete in its own championships and other sanctioned meets, the Board believes Brussels Gaysport should be given IGLA's full support in its efforts to earn full membership status for the Brussels swim team. We urge you to help Brussels Gaysport by writing to the Belgium Federation.

You could mention the following in your letter:

- No other IGLA member teams have experienced anything but welcome, cordial relations with their governing bodies.

- FINA affiliation is important to us, and that we acknowledge the opinions about young people, but that such concerns have proven unfounded over our 12+ years of experience.
- Your club's relationship with the local/national federation.
- Your club's participation and acceptance in mainstream meets.
- Your members participation and acceptance as officials in the local federation.
- Your members' participation on local/national federation committees.
- Supportive statements from local/national federation.

Please send letters by email to me (phil@igla.org) and I will forward a hard copy by post to the Ligue Francophone Belge Natation. The appeal from Brussels Gaysport follows together with correspondence from the Belgium Federation.

AFFILIATION OF THE SWIM SECTION OF BRUSSELS GAY SPORTS REFUSED IN BELGIUM BY THE OFFICIAL FEDERATION (LIGUE) (Note: This is the original text of the Brussels press release.)

Brussels Gay Sports (BGS) is one of the main gay/lesbian multi-sport clubs in Belgium with over 300 members.

The swimming section of BGS, Brussels Starfish, is a fast growing swim club with over 110 participants. Brussels Starfish participates regularly in gay/lesbian competitions in Europe and USA. The club also participated in the Gay Games in the New York and Amsterdam.

Over the last years a growing trend has been for gay/lesbian swimming clubs to become affiliated to national federations (official and ...straight) in order to participate in sanctioned competitions. This means that the judges are accredited by the international federation FINA and in case of a record it will be recognized as being as official as that of any straight swimming competition. However, this also means that if a gay swimming competition is to be FINA accredited, then only affiliated swimmers can participate.

Brussels Gay Sports therefore started the administrative procedure for affiliation. Belgium is a complicated country due to the linguistic situation. There are two federations: one is French speaking and the other is Dutch speaking. BGS opted for the French speaking one: Ligue Francophone Belge de Natation (LFBN) The answer just received for our request is NO!!! based on homophobic statements (no professional arguments are used and no survey of our club has ever been undertaken by LFBN to get information – see copy of their refusal letter, enclosed at the end of this message).

This means that the swim team of BGS cannot participate in any sanctioned competitions in the future! BGS is looking to appeal this initial decision and to make them aware of the discriminatory acts of this refusal.

APPEAL FOR YOUR SUPPORT

With the help of IGLA (International Gay and Lesbian Aquatics) and EGLSF (European Gay and Lesbian Federation) - both of which BGS is a member – we would like you to write to the LFBN and either show your support (and tell them that your club has been accepted in your country) and/or to protest the decision of the LFBN. If you have good relationships with your national swim federation, you could also ask them to write and say that they support/collaborate with you in your country. (due to the cooperation with IGLA and EGLSF you might receive this action alert twice - sorry for the inconvenience).

IMPORTANT: Please write in a polite and courteous way - we prefer to let them know that they are old-fashioned, that times are changing and that in other countries this kind of reaction is history by now, than being rude. Thanks.

The address of is LIGUE FRANCOPHONE BELGE DE NATATION, Att. Mr. P. Everard, Rue des Olympiades 2
6000 Charleroi, Fax: +32 71 3011 83. (they have no e-mail address unfortunately).
Please send a copy to BGS: swim@bgs.org, or fax +32 2 299 48 04 (you can also look at our home page <http://www.bgs.org>)

(We just learned that the gay club Active Company of Antwerpen in the Flemish part of Belgian has just been accepted by the Vlamse Zwemliga - the two LIGUES are totally independent in Belgium).

We thank you very much for your interest and your help is strongly appreciated. For BGS, Susana Perez, Président of Brussels Gay Sports. For further questions you can e-mail Nils Koch nilskoch@compuserve.com

Here is the translation of the refusal letter of LFBN:

*"March 24, 1999, Brussels Gay Sport, Rue Haute, 55
1000 Brussels*

"Dear President,

"The Board of Directors of the LFBN, meeting on March 22, 1999, deemed that there were at present no new grounds for delivering a favorable opinion on your request for membership.

"We sincerely regret the polemic that has arisen from our refusal, the implication being that our decision is due to the fact that you claim the right to declare your sexual preference. I would point out that in the last case considered by the LFBN, on membership for Enjoy Bastogne, a similar decision was taken. It may seem absurd to outsiders that we should reject new applications for membership, but the statutes of our federation state that we must preserve the activities of recognized clubs and thus avoid competition which could only weaken the federation as a whole.

“Opposition to your application was registered by the club CNSN (note of BGS: this letter stated that it was too dangerous to put homosexuals together with kids during competitions!!! - they later refused to give us a copy of the letter) and upheld by the district of Brabant Francophone. We can understand the difficulty they have in explaining to parents of young swimmers why membership should be granted to a club whose name is provocative to say the least. The explicit title of your club would inevitably raise questions from our competitors. Moreover, we feel that you are overeager to accuse the League and its clubs of intolerance, discrimination and intent to humiliate, without wanting to admit that we would inevitably have to deal with negative reactions if your request for recognition were to be granted.

“We have every respect for your personal choices of lifestyle, but we must recall that each of us has made a commitment to the world of swimming in order to help young people build character, determination and wholesome habits in preparation for their lives as adults. Sincerely, A. Everard, President. P. Everaerts, Secretary General” ✦

IGLA GENERAL MEETING JUNE 17, ATLANTA GA

The most lively and interesting part of an IGLA championship is always the IGLA General Meeting, right? Intrigue fills the air as teams battle against each other to pass IGLA rule changes or change internal operating procedures. The pages fly in Robert's Rules as board members try to figure out how to out-procedure each other.

OK, maybe the IGLA General Meeting you attended wasn't like that, but we can tell you that the 1999 meeting will be as brief as possible, fun and interesting, and worth your while to attend. What better way is there to meet and get to know other team leaders and IGLA enthusiasts from around the globe? **Please join us on Thursday, June 17 from 2 PM to 6 PM at the Sheraton Colony Square in Atlanta.**

LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD OFFICERS: IGLA BOARD POSITIONS OPEN

The following positions will be up for elections at the IGLA general meeting: **Atlantic Co-Chair; Pacific Co-Chair; and Treasurer.** The Co-Chairs are responsible for making sure IGLA functions properly internally. After one year, the Co-Chairs become Co-Presidents. The Treasurer collects dues, writes checks, maintains IGLA's finances, and participates in board decisions. If you like long nights hunched over your e-mail building the future of queer aquatics, this is the job for you. We are particularly looking for women to fill these positions. Become a part of the IGLA board and help make aquatic history!

In addition, we will be looking for dedicated volunteers to serve as committee co-chairs. See the list of board of directors and committee chairs on page three for a list of committees. And we look forward to working with all of you!

Committee Report: Water Polo

**Patrick Riordan, Water Polo Committee Chair,
Team New York Aquatics Polo**

The biggest accomplishment this tenacious committee has made in 1998-1999 has been to promote women's water polo. Both the IOC and NCAA are making women's water polo their cause célèbre, and we at IGLA are keeping pace with both those organizations. Working closely with the Women's Development committee, we will hold the first IGLA women's water polo TOURNAMENT here in Atlanta, due, in a large part to a wellspring of interest from our friends from across the Atlantic. This is quite encouraging since the IGLA championships will be in Europe again next year. Undoubtedly, many new contacts will be fostered in Atlanta, generating interest, energy and momentum for women's water polo.

Our host city has produced one of the liveliest and most attractive new swim teams our league has seen recently, and we can now welcome their water polo team into IGLA. We look forward to playing the Atlanta polo team here, and in future tournaments.

New York lost star player Jim Ruggiero to San Francisco a few years ago, but he has been hard at work forming a team out there. The current stumbling block is finding pool time. Any ideas? The Denver Squid are looking to field a team à Paris next year. André Beraud maintains the team in Montréal, which does not travel, but has a wonderful facility available. Did someone say "tournament site?" In Salt Lake there is interest, but no one has taken the bull by the horns, YET!

USWP adopted a "Diversity Vision Statement" this January as follows:

"We are building upon our rich history of innovation and success to become a truly democratic, culturally and regionally pluralistic organization. All members of our organization understand that cultural diversity is one of America's greatest strengths and it will be one of ours. United States Water Polo Inc., welcomes and unites people of all ethnicities, genders, sexual orientation, socioeconomic classes, religions, abilities and ages and empowers them as individuals and as groups."

Clearly, USWP is reaching out to those of us who have previously thought we were invisible to USWP, especially those of us that are gay and lesbian, old, or not too talented players! For IGLA polo to continue as a vital presence within the water polo community at-large, we need to foster closer ties with USWP. To this end, the Seattle Otters again held The Pacific Northwest Open Water Polo Tournament, which is now the largest annual amateur water polo event in the Northwest. This tournament had more than twenty local teams bringing together gay and straight college, club and open teams for a weekend of intense competition. Additionally, TNYA has benefited greatly from its ties with the Columbia University team who competed along with teams from Washington and Atlanta at a quad tournament they held in April.

Tere Ma, 1998 U.S. Water Polo "Referee of the Year," will be officiating at this year's IGLA Championships. Tere has been an invaluable source of levelheaded information and perspective on water polo issues for years, and we are glad to have him on deck this year. IGLA water polo is fortunate to have its championships in the nation's premiere aquatics facility, with nation's best referee officiating. With IGLA '99, Atlanta has set a new standard against which future IGLA championships will be judged.

The final words of the committee: Renounce the mundane shackles of swimming and find your inner 'Crawford' in a stimulating game of polo! ✦

Committee Report: Women's Development

Karen Sauvigné, Tara Robertson, Co-Chairs

What has happened since Amsterdam? Well...lots of cyber-development. Thanks to Jeff Abrahamson, the Woman's Development e-mail discussion group was born. Some lively discussions have happened about what is keeping women, namely queer women, out of swimming and some ideas on how to remedy this. A call for women to come to Atlanta and the possibility of women's water polo at Atlanta also generated discussion. The stereotype that women are a bunch of chatty kathys is not true; there were times when the discussion list was silent (not necessarily a bad thing as no one likes getting endless silly e-mail). Sean Fitzgerald, the water polo organizer for Atlanta, has been great in supporting and generating additional support behind having a woman's water polo tourney. John Peller, IGLA's fabulous secretary, has been ultra supportive and has put up a link to WD off the IGLA webpage. The address is <http://www.igla.org/wodev.htm>. Hmm...it's difficult to list who was involved with WD; many people posted to the discussion group and women and men have been doing different things at the club level to attract and retain more women. It was especially cool that so many men have supported WD and that several men have led their clubs in trying to get more women out to the pool. Hopefully we can keep the momentum going, so please bring your ideas and energy to the IGLA GM. ✦

IGLA Calendar

IGLA '99 Championships

Atlanta, GA, USA, June 18-20, 1999

Contact: questions@igla99.org

'96 Olympic pool at Georgia Tech

Seattle ORCA Swim Meet

Seattle, WA, USA, July 3, 1999

Contact: brad.palmer@alaskaair.com

Part of Team Seattle Sports Festival

Out to Swim

London, UK, July 31, 1999

Contact: phlc@dircon.co.uk

Crystal Palace Nat'l Sports Centre, 50M pool

San Francisco Swim '99

San Francisco, CA, Aug. 14, 1999
Contact: nuderry@aol.com

Annual Columbus Day Classic

Washington D.C., October 9 '99
Contact: scottbloom@JHU.edu
A fall tradition

Coupe de Montréal des Nageurs Gais et Lesbiennes

Montreal, Canada, Nov. 26-28, 1999
Contact: Paul.Boisvert@kin.msp.ulaval.ca
American Thanksgiving weekend

2000 and Beyond Calendar

IGLA 2000
Paris, France, April 23-25
Contact: paris-aquatique@gaysport.org
The first IGLA Championship in Europe!

Eurogames VII

Zurich, Switzerland, June 1-4, 2000
Contact: info@gaysport.org

Gay Games VI (*Note new dates*)

Sydney, Australia, November 2-9, 2002
contacts2002@gaygamesVI.org.au
"Under New Skies"

Committee Report: Products and Promotions

Lou Theunissen and Dan MacGregor, Co-Chairs

The Products & Promotions Committee has devoted themselves in the last year to specific issues regarding the future of IGLA. With a strategic plan as a discussion piece, we addressed selected major issues for IGLA, some of which will be discussed in the upcoming General Meeting. Ideas with regard to outreach and sponsoring are:

a. Change the dues structure to a larger fixed fee per team plus a nominal fee per swimmer. The intent is to encourage teams to register full team size. Accurate membership numbers would assist IGLA with its negotiations with potential sponsors. A changed fee structure might also provide the opportunity to extend discounts to member teams. In the distant future, individual membership could provide individual benefits.

b. Try to find out what prevents European swim teams from registering with IGLA. Since IGLA renders similar services as EGLSF, we suggest cooperating with EGLSF in a way that both parties and all members benefit. EGLSF's aquatics committee is reputed to be a weak link in EGLSF. It may be possible to inject IGLA's administrative capabilities into EGLSF in return for European team membership in IGLA.

c. Select a series of existing swim meets in both North America and Europe to receive IGLA sanction or approval. This series of meets would represent another level of opportunity for our sponsors to advertise their products/services to our membership. Financial benefits from sponsors could be passed on to meets selected as part of the series.

d. Reactivate IGLA's Outreach Committee and try to find "IGLA ambassadors" in Europe to join this committee. This committee could use IGLA Series Meets for outreach activities and could become a catalyst in the cooperation with EGLSF. In the distant future this committee should stretch its activities to other areas in the world where non-acceptance of gay lifestyle is more prevalent.

e. Change the committee's name from "Product & Promotions" to "Marketing" to avoid confusion with the "Policies & Procedures" committee and to more accurately reflect its intended purpose.

Again, some of these issues will be addressed during the General Meeting. If you like to comment on any of the, please e-mail to Lou (weesp603@xs4all.nl) or Dan (dmacgreg@cadvision.com). ✦

The Sports Forecast Under New Skies: Clear and Sunny, with Rainbow

**Roberto Mantaci, Alternate Delegate
to the Federation of Gay Games**

Sydney 2002 sports people amazed us again with their professionalism at the Sport Committee Meeting of the Federation mid-year Meeting in Montreal, Quebec.

Stuart Borrie, the chief of the Sports portfolio of Sydney 2002, reported the progress made by his group. Stuart's report is fairly summarized by saying that no previous host city has ever showed such a degree of organization and professionalism at this point in time (more than 3 and 1/2 year before the event).

Your luggage for Sydney might be lighter than you thought! Indeed, the dates for Gay Games VI have been changed to November 2-9, 2002. The daylight will be longer in November than in the previously scheduled period and the weather will be warmer. So leave some of those sweaters at home and use that extra room to pack T-shirts and shorts.

Luckily, despite the change of dates, most of the scheduled facilities remained available. Only very few sports had to be rescheduled in new facilities, which are generally larger and more convenient than the original ones.

The sport facilities of Gay Games VI are divided into three groups depending on the area in which they are located. The largest of these areas is the Homebush Olympic Park, the

site of most of the sport facilities of the 2000 Olympics. Sydney 2002 reported that about 66% of the participants (about 7000 individuals) will play their favorite sport in this area, which is 22 minutes away from the Central Station by train ride. Good news for the aquatics athletes: unlike New York and Amsterdam, we will be again "in the middle of the sports action". The Sydney Aquatics Center is located in Homebush Park, not far from the train stop and just in front of the Track and Field stadium.

Sydney 2002 has also selected a sport coordinator for each of the 30 medal sports. The list of names and contacts of these coordinators was distributed to the Federation Directors.

In short, Sydney 2002 has clearly confirmed that they are the most qualified group of people and the most capable to put together the best possible Gay Games at this time. The Federation has always felt this way since the moment when Sydney won the bidding process for Gay Games VI. The Federation actually held to this belief even in moments of crisis, such as the General Meeting in Seattle last November, when Sydney 2002 requested to renegotiate their contract with the Federation.

The Federation's confidence in Sydney was probably the determining factor that led the Federation to compromise with Sydney 2002 and renegotiate the contract, rather than taking the Games away from them, an option that was then still legally available. You should know that the Federation is also trying to appoint two coordinators (one female, one male) for each of the 22 Gay Games core sports. Their role will be to interact with their colleagues of the host city, in order to insure that the minimum standards and other requirements of the contract are respected, to collaborate in solving sport-related issues that might arise during the organization and to relay information between the Federation and the host city, and between the participants and the host city.

IGLA is pleased that the application of Philip Hayman as male swimming coordinator was successfully accepted. As most of you know, Philip, a WH2O swimmer and former IGLA Championship Rules Committee Co-chair has been instrumental in the creation of the Rules and Recommendation booklet for IGLA Championships, a document which will also govern the aquatics competition at the future Gay Games starting with Sydney 2002. Philip has a good knowledge of the way the Federation works, having attended several Federation's General Meetings. With Philip's appointment, IGLA's active involvement in the Federation grows stronger.

Let me say to conclude how thrilled I am, as I am going to see many of you in Atlanta soon. I hope we will truly be more than 1,000 there, as this is also the hope of the Rainbow Trouts and the whole Board. And I can't wait to experience that southern hospitality everybody keeps talking about. See you in Atlanta, the Olympic City! ✦

Federation of Gay Games Update: Leaders Change, Work Continues

By Charles Carson, FGG Delegate

Faced with repeated questions from Federation Directors regarding their administration of day-to-day business during the last six months, halfway through the first day of the

Montreal meeting (Thursday, 22 April) the Executive Committee stepped down. A temporary meeting chair and meeting secretary was appointed and the Policies & Procedures Committee, which I chair, convened in emergency session to investigate what a "leaderless" board could do to stay in compliance with California corporations law.

I was chosen with two other members of the P&P Committee to contact qualified attorneys and find one who could assist us on short notice. We spent the entire Friday in a hotel room doing just that, along with compiling relevant questions.

The three of us chose Dave Wharton, Esq., of San Francisco, who has 30 years' experience in California corporations law, who is gay and knew Gay Games founder Tom Waddell, but had no prior experience with the Federation. Dave assured us that the Federation's bylaws were in accordance with California law regarding the Board's ability to select acting officers to conduct Federation business. We taped a 30-minute question and answer session with Dave to play for the Federation Board the next morning.

Meanwhile, Federation committee work continued all that Friday. Roberto's article gives you an idea about that. I myself missed both the regular Membership Committee and P&P Committee meetings - and I also missed swimming with ACC - but duty called.

On Saturday the Board accepted Dave's advice (it followed most everyone's instinct anyway) and decided to elect new officers. First, however, there was an open mike session where people could take up to two minutes to express their feelings about the resignations and anything else on their minds. The former officers, who'd suggested the session in the first place, suddenly objected to the two-minute limit so we granted those who resigned as much time as they wanted. Including observers, the session lasted an hour and a half.

Most disagreements centered on former officers saying the Federation's structure doesn't give officers enough freedom to act without clearing matters with the Board. Others countered that bylaws and policies & procedures may be cumbersome but they protect the Federation's overall interests by ensuring a neutral operating process. Because everyone knows I agree with the latter opinion, I passed when my turn came to speak.

That afternoon we elected acting officers until regular elections can be held at the annual meeting this fall. To be eligible, one must have served on the Board for a year. No eligible non-Americans accepted a nomination, and no eligible women who were present would run for the Female Co-President position. The acting officers are: Gene Dermody (San Francisco; International Wrestling Alliance), Vice President Derek Liecty (Oakland; Individual Director), Treasurer Joseph E. Pasquarella Smith (Seattle; Team Seattle), Corresponding Secretary Roy Vestal (Denver; Lesbian & Gay Bands of America) and me as Recording Secretary.

Acting officers from organizations were not required to step down from representing those organizations, which happens at regular elections. The acting officers will be doing our best to spread more of the Federation work among committees. We have a short

window to get the Federation back on firm footing, but I am convinced we have the good will and support of the majority of the Board.

Why is this important to IGLA? At the last two Gay Games, there have been times the Director Organizations - including IGLA - have felt the officers have stepped over the line to side with the Games host at the expense of Federation Directors. We all know the difficulties that ensued regarding our sports at the last Games. In general, Federation officers have too often seen themselves as setting policy rather than implementing policy set by the entire Board.

Unlike the former officers, the acting officers are not convinced the Federation structure is unworkable. We will do our best to try to make it work. If it doesn't, the Federation can always change the structure as a Board, not just at the hands of a small group. At the very least, the acting officers will be putting more information about the Federation into the public's hands - including your hands - very soon.

As for information, it helps when what you are receiving is plain and clear. So I need to make clear that my comments last issue about the Sydney 2002 contract difficulties at the November meeting in Seattle were about the license fee payments to the Federation. The difficulties had nothing to do with the sports plans and I agree completely with Roberto's praise about that elsewhere in this issue. ✦