

USA Wrestling State Leaders Summit

August 14-16, 2019

Denver, Colorado

Michigan Attendees: Dennis Boone, Michigan USA Wrestling State Chairperson, Dan Coon, Michigan USA Wrestling Folkstyle Director, MMWA Representatives Laretta Allen and Donna Taylor

Laretta and Donna appreciate being able to attend these educational and informative meetings and being able to share thoughts and ideas with leaders from other states. This year there were 140 attendees from 43 states.

We dove right in to our first meeting Wednesday afternoon after enjoying a buffet luncheon and renewing friendships with our fellow attendees. Tony Black, Director of State Services, opened the summit, greeting attendees and introducing the kick-off presenter, John O'Sullivan.

John gave a very informative and compelling talk on his passion for 'Changing the Game'. 40 million children play sports. Three out of four are done with sports by the time they reach high school. Sports should be fun and about learning. John's mission is to help coaches and parents do their part to make sure youth sports are a positive part of the child's physical, social, and cognitive education. We would encourage all coaches and parents to visit the website changingthegameproject.com

The next session we attended was presented by Dan Prochnow, USAW Director of Safe Sports. Dan gave us additional insight into safe sport, dealing with issues, and some basic ground rules for coaches and parents. Some of Dan's key points were:

- 1) One on one coaching must be in the open, observable, and interruptible.
- 2) One on one private coaching must have written permission from parents.
- 3) There should be no one on one electronic communications between a coach and athlete. Parents or other coaches should be included.

- 4) No, one on one travel with coach/parent and an athlete, that is not their child without written permission.
- 5) Abuse prevention using age appropriate training.

This was part of Dan's initial presentation. We attended two additional workshop sessions the next day where Dan elaborated on situations and examples and how to handle issues, whether at the club, organization, state or national level. The safe sport handbook, which was in the process of being developed last year, is now available on line by going to teamsua.org and selecting the Safesport tab.

The state services yearly recap was presented by Tony Black. 2019 total athlete memberships and leadership memberships increased over 6% from 2018. Nine states (MA WV NJ DE NH ME AR NC AZ) attained double digit growth.

The membership system now includes tutorial videos and a chat function. The safe sport and NCSI (background check) are now incorporated within the membership system so you do not have to go to a separate site. There are tabs to select these functions when you go to USAWrestling.org Safe sport training will be required for high school athletes turning 18 during the school year. There will also be increased emphasis on safe sport training for leaders, parents, and volunteers. USAW representatives will be out monitoring events this year.

All Membership cards going forward must include a photo, whether it is just the paper copy or hard plastic card, and all cards will now be bar coded. The bar code can be scanned for easy verification of membership at events.

We were pleased and honored to have Ali Gray dine with us on our final evening reception dinner. Ali was a 2016 Olympian and a four time senior world champion and has a long list of additional accomplishments in wrestling. She entertained us with stories from her wrestling experiences including her stint at the USA Training Center in Marquette, MI.

Overall it was an enjoyable, positive, and educational experience

