

# Athletes Committee Meeting Minutes

## **PanAm Aquatics**

**Date:** October 11, 2025

**Time:** 3:00 PM – 3:40 PM CT

**Location:** Zoom

**Facilitator:** Valerie Gruest (Chair)

**Minutes Recorded By:** Valerie Gruest (Chair) and Bill May (Secretary)

## 1. Call to Order

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The meeting was called to order at 3:00 PM CT by Chair Valerie Gruest.

## 2. Roll Call / Attendance

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### **Members Present:**

- Bill May
- Yona Knight-Wisdom
- Dylan Woodhead
- Ana Marcela Cunha
- Edgar Crespo
- Jack Dahlgren

## 3. Committee Updates and Ongoing Initiatives

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### **Masters Working Group**

Updates shared on continued collaboration and progress within the Masters community.

### **Mentorship Program**

The program remains active with ongoing mentor-mentee communication and engagement. New topic specific sessions coming soon + reminder to schedule the 3rd check-in with mentees.

### **Power Up Lab**

Discussion on next steps and coordination for upcoming sessions to strengthen athlete development opportunities.

### **Impact Sessions**

Planning underway for the next round of sessions, with focus on engagement and topic diversity - volunteers needed.

### **Underwater Chats (UWC) Podcast Launch**

Launch preparations continue; early promotion and scheduling discussed. Feedback for lineup.

### **UWC Coaches Series**

Upcoming series confirmed to highlight coaching perspectives and athlete-coach dynamics.

### **Diffusion Channels**

The group explored additional ways to distribute content and expand reach, including new interactive formats. Need to launch athlete community channels soon! Will continue to distribute surveys to gather phone numbers to add (for WhatsApp).

## **4. Engagement and Outreach**

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### **Q&As / Town Halls**

The committee agreed on the value of hosting regular Q&A or Town Hall sessions (find a more engaging name) as Instagram Live events to foster direct interaction with athletes.

### **AC Development Across the Americas**

Plan established to:

- Reach out to National Federations (NFs) that have not yet responded.
- Host one collective session for all Athlete Committee representatives across the Americas to share best practices and next steps.
- Provide follow-up one-on-one support to committees as requested.

## 5. Website Development

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The Committee expressed unanimous support for the creation of the **PAQ Athlete Core** — a centralized hub for athletes. Members emphasized the importance of having a dedicated, accessible platform to share resources, news, and opportunities.

## 6. Certification Program

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All members expressed enthusiasm for a **discipline-based certification structure**.

The Committee will collaborate on developing the structure, followed by recording and rollout per discipline.

## 7. Athlete Forum

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The Committee reviewed the initial draft of the Athlete Forum program and discussed refining the structure to ensure balanced focus and time allocation across topics.

Key considerations include:

- Organizing mini-blocks with potential for deeper follow-up sessions through initiatives like UWC, webinars, and courses.
- Ensuring interactive components to engage athletes actively.
- Prioritizing strong outreach to maximize athlete participation.
- Gathering feedback post-event to inform future programming.

## 8. Action Items

Task	Responsible Party	Notes
Coordinate next Power Up Lab and Impact Sessions	Dylan W. (Lead)	Scheduling to be confirmed
Prepare and launch UWC Podcast and Coaches Series	All Members	Promotion and scheduling
Plan and host regional Q&A/Town Hall sessions	All Members	Focus on Instagram Lives

Contact remaining National Federations	Val	Outreach in progress
Develop structure for discipline-based certification	All Members	To be finalized collaboratively
Review and refine Athlete Forum draft	All Members	Focus on balance, engagement, and feedback plan

## 9. Adjournment

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The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 PM CT by Chair Valerie Gruest.

### Minutes Submitted By:

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Valerie Gruest (Chair) & Bill May (Secretary)  
Date Prepared: October 11, 2025