

MINUTES
SSGB NORDIC EXEC. COMMITTEE MEETING
11:00 MONDAY 2 APRIL 2007-04-07
SNOWSPORT ENGLAND OFFICE
HALESOWEN

PRESENT

Adam Pinney (SSE), Mark Goodson (Br. Champs Org. & AWSA), Trish Chalk (FIS & SSW), Peter Thorn (SSS), George Gabriel (Chairman)

1 APOLOGIES

Roy Young (conflict of interest)

2 MATTERS ARISING FROM 2 OCT 06

2.1 Approval of Minutes

The Committee had already approved the minutes of 2 Oct 2006 in prior correspondence.

2.2 FIS Representation

TC reported that the Developing Nations Sub-Committee was not proving to be effective, but the Youth/Young Persons Sub-Committee appears to be gaining ground. GG added that the Developing Nations Criterion in Poland was cancelled because of the failure of the chair of the Developing Nations Sub. Committee to communicate with the event organisers. **GG will continue to have discussions with TC about representation on a relevant FIS Nordic Sub-Committee.**

2.3 British Roller Ski Races

Jim Davidson has produced rules and procedures for the roller ski races using FIS criteria. Members discussed the relevance of international criteria for a national event. Jim had also proposed holding a TD course for roller ski race organisers, but PT and AP did not think that there would be much benefit in such a course. The meeting recognised that the current rules may be inadequate. **PT agreed to finalise the rules for running the British series and to send out the Athlete's Waiver before the start of this season. AP agreed to develop a separate set of rules for the safe running of roller ski races, based on those from the FIS but not yet included in the rules to date.**

2.4 Modernisation

TC reported that Mark Simmers has been appointed as Chief Exec. Of SSGB and would commence duties on 2 April 07. **Contact with Mark Simmers by GG and other members (depending on who will be available) will be organised in due course.** Members were disappointed that Jason Cockburn did not visit the British Cross Country Championships, as he had agreed, before departure.

3 BRITISH COUNTRY SKI CHAMPIONSHIPS 2007REPORT

3.1 The Event

MG reported that all scheduled races were held despite the extremely difficult snow conditions in Ruhpolding as elsewhere in Europe this season. The number competing, 211, was down slightly this year compared to 220 last year. Some of the top biathletes were away on the world cup circuit and the number of civilian athletes was down. Alan Eason managed to gain a qualification place at the World Championships as a result of his fourth position in the 15km Classic race.

3.2 Children and Youths

Members discussed the implications of holding races for children on a world cup circuit. There were mixed views about cutting a less demanding course, essentially the issue revolved around the question of whether participation should be for club skiers and national squad skiers or the latter only. **On balance it was thought that the races would not be suitable for inexperienced children.**

The number of children and youths (excluding military youths) attending the races was small. It was noted that club skiers were not likely to attend during school term time and that national squad athletes were preparing for the EYO and World Junior Championships this year. PT informed the meeting the Championships formed an integral and important part of the GB junior's programme. **It was accepted that national level athletes should be seeking competitive races elsewhere during their development phase but the British Championships will in due course play an important role for time trials.**

3.3 Seniors and Masters

There were also a reduced number of seniors and master skiers competing this season. AP noted that the number of masters attending the event was not likely to increase significantly as many seniors and masters are unable to compete successfully at the British Championships against Forces skiers who may have had the benefit of sustained early season training on snow, unlike the civilians with limited choices.

3.4 Draft Programme 2008

MG circulated a proposed draft programme for 2008. The Ruhpolding course will have reduced availability in January next year for cross country, and biathlon will be transferred to Obertilliach along with the 4 x 5 km cross country event. MG noted that the feedback from athletes was that the pursuit was favoured over the skating race. However the sprints would be included in the cross-country timetable. It was pointed out that the sprints were becoming a significant feature of racing and should therefore go through a full programme of qualifying heats before the finals. Currently seeding takes place before the races commence on the grounds that the qualifying athletes are already known through their existing and previous form. **It was agreed that the timetable, reduced by 2 days, would not allow for a full sprint programme to be held in 2008, but the Committee would wish this to be taken into consideration in future years.**

4 APPOINTMENT OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT HEAD COACH

4.1 Application Considered

The chairman reminded members of the need for confidentiality in being party to aspects of personal information about a person. The applicant who had applied previously had not responded to an invitation to be reconsidered on this occasion. One application had been received for the Committee to consider. The application from Roy Young was considered in his absence from the Committee meeting given his conflict of interest.

GG had canvassed the views of the development squad manager, parents and other interested parties on the general principles of having a head coach. The written submission provided by Roy Young does not conflict with the views expressed by these interested parties. The Committee considered criteria for a national coach based on the Strategic Development and Performance Plan for Cross Country Skiing and **agreed that Roy Young's written submission is in line with the plan and in terms of qualification and experience he should be given the role of head coach.**

GG stated that a memorandum of understanding could be considered in agreeing to the appointment on a voluntary basis, although expenses would be provided through payments from athletes. The memorandum would take into account SSSB policy on child protection, promoting good practice, anti-bullying and anti-doping.

Before finalising the appointment GG will ensure that the relevant CRB/police disclosure is in place for the applicant.

5 PERFORMANCE AGAINST TARGETS 2006/07

5.1 Seniors

There was only one athlete over 23 years of age on the national team this season. Alan Eason reported to the chairman that his results at the World Championships were disappointing for several reasons, including failure to wax correctly for the difficult conditions. Alan expressed appreciation with Nicola Walker who volunteered to act as team manager. **GG will explore the possibility of Nicola carrying out a co-ordinating/managing role for the seniors when she returns to the UK.** A key lesson for world competition is that an athlete must have management support.

The highlight for the under 23s was Posy Musgrave reaching the 200 FIS pts level in the Norges Cup. Athletes in this group are faced with the challenge of gaining more competition experience and applying a more focused approach to training.

5.2 Juniors

Juniors in the Development Squad have exceeded strategic targets for the year and demonstrate their continuing development in the sport. The teams competing in the Norges Cup, Austrian national championships, Canadian national championships and EYO have all shown that the squad is becoming competitive as a nation and could be included as one of the leading developing (or no snow nation) within 10 years. PT made the meeting aware the organisers of the GB Junior Squad would look after athletes until at least World Junior levels and will extend support to the younger seniors if they wish to take advantage of the offer.

6 SELECTION POLICY

6.1 Draft Policy

Members discussed the draft selection policy raising a number of queries and comments. A couple of key issues concern the selection process for athletes based abroad and for the World Junior Championships (WJC) FIS pts target. **The Committee agreed to hold to the current selection criteria for the WJC until GG had met with the head coach and discussed the proposals for the WJC contained in his written submission, along with AP's comments made in separate correspondence. The Committee would be asked to endorse the subsequent recommendations made by GG and the head coach through correspondence.**

7 BRITISH ROLLER SKI RACE SERIES 2007

7.1 Insurance

Insurance cover for athletes can be provided through the clubs. The use of a waiver was considered as a reasonable measure although it did not eliminate the need for insurance cover. Day membership of the relevant home nation council could be explored. There appear to be different arrangements for insurance cover between SSS and SSE which could be considered if any of the races are held under their relevant banner. **What is important for this season is that all athletes obtain suitable insurance cover. MG to supply PT with a copy of declaration used by**

BBU. GG to consider insurance implications when information supplied by members and PT will issue amended race rules and procedures subsequently if considered suitable.

7.2 Calendar of Races

PT circulated the calendar of races for 2007, the first beginning in Hayes, London on 15 April hosted by the London Nordic Club. The races to be held by the London Region Nordic Ski Club in April and May are not included as part of the British Series. **The race calendar to be circulated by PT and AP to all clubs and posted on the relevant websites.**

8 FUNDING

8.1 Funding for National Team

GG noted that a working group had already been established to look at the question of funding for the infrastructure and for the teams. The group includes GG, AP, Roy Young, Alan Eason and Kath Joy-Newby-Grant and has yet to meet formally. GG has asked the squad manager to provide a shopping list of team requirements that could be met by the £700 available from SSGB. The procedure for obtaining the money has yet to be clarified. The Committee were also made aware that 2000 Swiss Francs is available for cross country from FIS as a result of having a competitor in the World Championships. **GG will seek to confirm this money has indeed been received by SSGB and then arrange for its proper use.** Members of the Committee have been made aware of SSGB's policy of not providing expenses to committees for meetings. Video-conferencing is not feasible for some of the members and there is a need for face to face meetings on some occasions.

Members were reminded of the SSGB newsletter that is produced fortnightly and is an opportunity to show the sport to existing and potential sponsors and supporters. Articles should be sent via GG. The deadline for submission to SSGB is the Wednesday before publication on the Friday every fortnight. **It is hoped the newsletter will continue through the summer months – GG will confirm.**

9 AOB

TC noted that she and RY had met Mike Hay the new Head of Performance at the BOA. **Further introductions to Mike Hay to raise awareness of cross country will be co-ordinated by GG. It is anticipated that the BOA will run a course on team management in the summer for head coaches and squad managers. GG and TC will raise this with Angharad Evans and RY.**

10 Date and Time of Next Meeting

– 11am Monday 1st October or Monday 8th October 2007 at the offices of SSE, Halesowen, England.