

Minutes of OTFA Board Meeting

June 10, 2006
MonteCassino Hotel
Toronto, Ontario

8:30 pm

Present: Albert Tschirhart (Chair), Val Sarjeant, Mike Illingworth, Bill Stephens, Marc Christie, John Craig (staff), Roman Olszewski (Staff arrived 9:15p.m.)

Regrets: Denis Landry

- ❑ **Minutes of Previous Meeting Approved**
- ❑ **Business Arising:** No business arising from previous meeting.
- ❑ **Approval of Agenda:** Approved with items added as New Business as below.
- ❑ **New Business:**
 - Discussion on National Training Centres as they relate to OTFA clubs and athletes.
 - Top Three Meet - Concerns and Issues
 - UTTC Status with Respect to Fees
- ❑ **Eastern Canada Series Update:** AC has provided \$20,000 for the Series. Series coordinators have agreed to use this money to help with travel and accommodation expenses for athletes. OTFA will use its portion of this money for Ontario athletes.

So far there is good out-of-country interest in the Series and some interest from across the country, with many events being represented.

Fields will be limited – maybe two flights in most events. Foreign athletes will take some of the lanes so Ontario athletes should sign up quickly. The OTFA will issue another email to athletes and clubs about the Series. Competition looks like it will be good.

ACTION: OTFA office to send another email to coaches and clubs about the Series and the need to register.

STATUS: Done

Sport Canada has not been able to provide a promised \$15,000 for the Series.

- **Quest for Gold AAP Update:** Bill updated the Board on the 2005 criteria and program. While we faced some problems (mostly due to time constraints) the Selection Committee felt the program went well. We learned from the experience.

2006 Program: With a longer lead time, the Selection Committee has come up with a more comprehensive and meaningful Selection Criteria. The criteria for the current year include a requirement to compete in the OTFA and National Championships. One of the problems with this requirement, however, is the need for junior athletes to run in the junior category instead of the senior category. While this runs counter to our interest in having junior athletes test themselves against senior competition, this seems to be necessary in order to provide a fair and equitable scoring system for the program.

The following changes/clarifications to the Selection Criteria were made:

- Requests for exemptions at the Indoor Championships must be made to the Selection Committee at least 5 working days **prior** to meet.
- Change the maximum number of cards for athletes born in 1980 or earlier to 5 males and 5 females instead of the current 3 males and 3 females.

The Committee is also going to have to better define what an exemption from the Indoor Championships is.

Motion: to accept the AAP Selection Criteria as presented, with the changes as noted above

Tschirhart/Illingworth

Carried

- **OTFA Transfer Policy:** Bill reported on the success of discussions at the Committee level. He will forward a draft policy to the OTFA office for distribution to the Board. This will be tabled until the next meeting and re-introduced for a discussion and a vote.

Bill also suggested the Board give some thought to forming a policy around the creation of new club OTFA clubs. BC has a policy which requires other area clubs to OK any new club. This might help avoid problems and conflicts and reduce the 'poaching' of athletes

He also suggested the OTFA needs to have a strengthened 'poaching investigation process' which would, among other things, show OTFA is serious about dealing with the problem. We need to take a fresh look at the issue, develop new ideas to deal with poaching, and write rules which address this problem.

- **Update on Finances:** An update was provided by John. Applications for Base Grant and Active 2010 funding have been filed with the Ministry and we should

hear from them by mid July as to the success of these applications. Val suggested the OTFA try to provide leadership in working with clubs at the local level for Active2010 Community Grants.

ACTION: John to get more information on Community Active 2010 grants and see if we can provide such information to our clubs.

- **Update on Mentor Coaching:** John provided an update on the OTFA mentor coaching program. All current mentor coaches have been invited to participate in an online learning seminar aimed at showing our coaches how to use the OTFA website in a mentoring capacity. As well, Andy Higgins will be present at the OTFA Championships in Ottawa in July, and will speak to the Mentor Coaches present on “How to be a Mentor Coach”.
- **Receipts for Sports Programs:** Federal tax deduction may be available to families with kids in sports programs. The OTFA may need to provide a service for providing proof of membership for tax purposes. The program itself may enhance membership.

ACTION: Wendy to explore the status of this tax program and see in which ways the OTFA can interact with the government and our membership to take maximum advantage of the program.

- **Report on AC AGM:** Mark and John provided a report; reviews were provided by AC on new staff hiring, finances, budgeting and deficit reduction. The meeting, however, seemed to be more of a reporting mechanism than it was a decision-making opportunity, and in that respect it was, perhaps, redundant to have two OTFA representatives present.

One of the presentations was on the need to look again at any harassment policies which might be in place, and consider removing specific reference to harassment. The view of the presenter, Rachel Corbet of Sport and Law, was that dealing with harassment was perhaps best dealt with on the same level as other complaints. The clue is to write good policies on conduct of all our members and then make sure we follow our policy

ACTION: Val volunteered to assist with re-writing the OTFA Policies and Procedures to remove special reference to Harassment..

- **Asian Games:** John advised that a concern had been expressed by a member coach about the qualification for this competition, and that it seemed to exclude non-Asian participants. The Board, however, re-iterated it’s support for this and other similar competitions and programs, advising that this is an underrepresented group which needs development and we should work with them for a while. Perhaps the competition will open up in time.

- **Update on Possible Trillium Application:** John briefly discussed an idea that could drive membership, and for which he wanted to apply for funding to the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The idea needs to be protected until it receives legal protection (trademark and copyright), but it was endorsed by the Board in this exploratory stage.

ACTION: John will pursue the logistics of the program, then apply as appropriate to the Ontario Trillium Foundation for support funding.

- **CAIP:** John described the Canadian Athlete Insurance Program (CAIP). The Board wants to pursue this as a possible service to our members.

ACTION: John and Wendy will explore and bring to next meeting specifics on costs, benefits, administration, website etc. He will also provide recommendation as to which membership group(s) we might start with and how we might administer the program.

- **OOO Travel Subsidy:** John presented a request from the OOC regarding the rate at which official's are reimbursed for travel. With the recent significant rise in gas prices, the OOC wants the OTFA to consider a new rate of 25 cents/km for one driver and 30/km cents for two riders; or 27.5/km cents regardless of the number of riders.

After consideration, the Board agreed to a new travel rate of 28 cents/km regardless of the number of riders. This rate will also apply to Board and staff travel as well.

Motion: To provide Officials with a travel subsidy of 28 cents per km (regardless of the number of officials in the car) for travel to OTFA sanctioned competitions.

Sarjeant/Christie

Carried

- **Newsletter:** The OTFA needs to consider publishing the Newsletter on our website. However, since OTFA clubs pay a small amount for mail delivery of the newsletter each year, it wouldn't be fair at this point to make the newsletter public and free. The OTFA will wait to publish on the web until the new year. At that point we will be able to charge those who want it mailed, and it will be free for people who want to read it on the web.

The Board was clearly of the mind that the more information on our webpage the better.

- **Approval of OTFA Championships Policies and Procedures Handbook:** Roman recommended we accept the new Handbook as presented, knowing that we can make appropriate changes as we go along.

Motion: To accept as presented

Christie/Sarjeant

Carried

- **Update on OSG:** Roman described the negotiations surrounding the re-entry of the OTFA into the OSG and suggested that there had been good cooperation from all sides and the present contract represented a good deal. OTFA is not responsible for the \$70 per athlete fee for those spots we fail to fill, and there is a per diem for each athlete. There is a financial benefit for being involved.

The OTFA needs to advertise benefits of being part of the OSG team and need to register.

Per diem money from the OSG will come to OTFA and we will distribute to clubs.

ACTION: Bill suggests the OTFA host a short coaches' meeting at the meet tomorrow to talk about the OSG. Roman to try to lead this discussion.

ACTION: John to draft up something regarding the benefits of involvement and send to the clubs as an email.

Motion: To accept the OSG proposal as negotiated.

Sarjeant/Christie

Carried

- **OTFA Promotional Booth at High School Meets:** Val reported that OTFA had a tent/booth at the OFSAA outdoor championships and that volunteers talked to about 25 athletes; half were already members and the other half were interested in membership. He suggested we try to do more of this, and that we will need someone to coordinate the effort. Val will help us develop this a bit more. He also suggested a need to 'dress things up a bit' to be more professional, informative and attractive.
- **Junior Officials and OOC Officials:** Concerns continue about the need for more officials and the need for junior assistants or officials at most competitions. We need to find a way to supply more junior officials and, perhaps, grandfather them into the officials programs. We need a plan, and a coordinator to help get these people involved.

We also need to continue to work with the clubs to monitor compliance and keep them coming to the meets. There are some clubs which supply volunteers, and we need to get the other clubs engaged, understanding how important this is.

We also need better and more information on our Officials webpage so new people better understand what they need to do. We need to encourage new membership by promoting the OOC and the possibilities.

ACTION: John to ask Enrico if there is more information that can be posted on the OOC portion of the OTFA website.

- **New Business:** Concerns were expressed about an OTFA registered athlete who went to the States to compete in a meet under a fictitious club name. The OTFA should continue to lobby Athletics Canada to the effect that there be no club affiliated with a National Training Centre.

ACTION: Marc has raised this concern to AC and will let them deal with the specific case involving the athlete who competed in the States with a false club.

OTFA needs to continue to voice concerns to AC regarding a National Centre in Ontario which recruits athletes from other clubs. Solution is to insist that the coach of the National Centre has no affiliation with another club.

OTFA will send a letter to AC about this, pending results of Marc's work with AC.

- **Concerns about the Top Three Meet:** Concerns about timing, and making the meet athlete-centered were heard. There are solutions to these problems, but they involve several different initiatives, including a review of the capabilities of the LOC and the guidelines and support offered. Financial incentives were also discussed as a way of increasing accountability and responsibility.

Adjournment:

Motion to Adjourned

Tschirhart/Stephens

11:32 p.m.