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OFFICIALS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Conference Call December 2, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm by Mary. Coleman had audio issues and advised us to begin while he tried to restart his connection. Mary read the Mission, Officials Committee Mission, and Conflict of Interest statements. Coleman was able to join us with full audio while we were discussing the November 2024 OC minutes.

PRESENT: Coleman Bye*, Gwenn Lochstet*, Mary Poletto*, Rick Carson*, Tiffany Epoca*, Mike Wigginton*, Nick Furia*, Mike Seip, Jamie Platt (*Denotes voting members)

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: John Nelson, Kylie McMurray

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The November 2024 minutes were approved after making corrections.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Staff Liaison – Mike Seip

- He reports that there are 174 Sanctioned meets, 22 Approved meets, and 5 Observed meets so far.
- The SC Championships announcements are in drafts. Event orders have been updated, and times have been put in.
- He and Jamie are working on a favorable OME process for the SC Championships.
- The Mega-LSC meeting in Chicago went well. He had meaningful discussions with the other LSC's. They swapped ideas, discussed goals, and shared best practices. Jamie did a masterful job moderating the meeting.

OC Chair – Coleman

- The RR&A group will meet again on 12/8/24. They intend to draft congratulatory letter for those certifying as officials for the first time and those advancing.
- The deadline for applications to be MR/AR for the SC Championships has been extended one week. Applications are due on 12/7/24. Coleman has chosen members to serve on the selection group. They will be given the applications to review and will meet shortly to select the lead officials for the championship meets. This group will also serve as the selection group for the LC championships in 2025.
- For transparency purposes, Coleman will publish the list of selection group members. The group includes 2 members from the OC. Coleman wants to add an athlete representative. The members were chosen according to the criteria document proposed by the working group. Rick advised that this document is a work in progress and that it should be revised as necessary as the process carries out.

LSC Certification Standardization

- Mary reports that there was a new database update that allows direct integration of information into the MA Wallet app. When an apprentice is certified in the database, that is automatically updated in the Wallet app.
- Mary is working closely with Rob to determine what other functionalities might be wanted for the Wallet app.
- Rick indicated that there will be a change in the Wallet app database. Now, the app only shows the earliest expiration date of multiple certifications. In the future, it will show the expiration dates of all certifications. With that information, he will be able to send proactive reminders to officials about imminently-expiring certifications.

Training

- Rick reported that he ran a referee clinic 2 weeks ago.
- Another person has indicated an interest in a referee clinic, but he is waiting for those going through the AO pipeline to finish that certification before offering another clinic.

Certification

- Mary and Rick worked to identify registered officials whose certifications are expiring in 2024. Rick intends to send them a reminder, particularly to notify him if they passed the test. He does not automatically know that information.
- Rick suggested creating a separate tab on the Officials portion of the website, listing criteria and which test to take, and reminding applicants to notify him when they have passed a test.

OTS

- Mary was happy to report that there was nothing new in OTS.

Advancement

- Mike Wigginton said that activities have slowed down for the holidays. He expected applications to resume in January, as well as finally finishing with those grandfathered in at that time.

Athlete Representative

- Nick had nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS

Junior Officials Initiative

- Coleman reported that there is not much new interest among athletes to become Junior Officials.
- There was discussion on how to publicize the initiative better and to generate more interest.
- Coleman suggested that they should send out a new message every quarter to remind athletes and to keep it fresh in their minds. He also suggested marketing to the coaches to get them to embrace and push the initiative.
- Coleman will meet with Jamie to discuss how best to use Instagram to promote the initiative. The RR&A group will also discuss how to market and recruit for the initiative. He wondered if there was some way to find officials with marketing skills and tap them to help with communications and promotions.

NEW BUSINESS

Meeting Planning

- Coleman would like to implement a process to schedule, prepare for, and document meetings, much as MA conducts their other meetings.
- Coleman will send out email invitations for the next meeting shortly after the current one. He will also out a form to subcommittee heads asking for agenda items and background information, so that members will be more prepared for the upcoming meeting.
- Coleman would also like to set up an annual shared calendar for the OC, to track dates and deadlines better.

Apprentice Training under Non-USA-Certified Officials

- Mike Seip brought up the issue of whether an YMCA official who is presiding over an Approved meet could sign off on a USAS apprentice who has trained at that meet.
- The language of the R9 FAQ does not specify whether this is authorized or not. Coleman will pose the question to Curtis.
- Mike was particularly concerned that the trainee might miss experiencing the mandatory SafeSport items that will be at Sanctioned meets.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is on Monday, January 6, 2025.

ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm.

Minutes Submitted by Secretary, Gwenn Lochstet