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OFFICIALS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Conference Call November 4, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm by Coleman. He read the Mission, Officials Committee Mission, and Conflict of Interest statements.

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

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: John Nelson

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The October 2024 minutes were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Staff Liaison – Mike Seip

- He has 161 sanctioned meets and 18 approved meets so far.
- The Tech Planning Committee is working with coaches and others to come up with a new system of determining qualification times and order of events for championships so that they do not have to replicate the whole process every year.
- Mike is attending a Mega-LSC meeting in Chicago this weekend.

OC Chair – Coleman

- He has been working on improving communication throughout the LSC. Larry Schwartz has volunteered to review messages before they are sent. Coleman is also looking into forming a working group to work on communication issues.
- Coleman shared that the last email to referees regarding checking credentials was reviewed by Larry and had a 96% open rate. It talked about the distinct ways of checking credentials on the USAS app and the MAS/Wallet app. He intends to send out another email soon to all officials with more detailed information, distinguishing the functionality of the two apps.
- Particularly, he wants to stress the importance of downloading the MAS app and learning how to use it. Rob affirmed that reports can be generated to show who hasn't downloaded the app yet. Officials do not get deleted on the app, but they can be expired.

LSC Certification Standardization

- Rick had a question about why a non-USAS approved could not be used for MAS officials certification. Mike Seip informed us that he must approve the approved meet before it can be used.
- Rick was concerned that there seems to be contradictory information on when apprentices could start training on deck. The Foundations clinic indicates that apprentices must take the test

first, but the FAQ says that the test is not necessary. He wanted guidance on what we should do. Coleman will check with Curtis, the Officials Chair liaison to the NOC.

- Rick would also like to have a way to register an apprentice so that they can be recognized as such on deck. There is currently no automatic way to do that.

Certification

- Tiffany asked if referees must retake the AO test to be recertified. It appears that they do not, because recertifying as a referee will recertify all their other certifications. She is concerned that she will not keep her AO skills if she does not have to keep it current.
- There are currently some AO certifications expiring before the referee certification. Those officials may have to retake the AO test to recertify as an AO before they need to recertify as a referee.

Training

- Rick said training was going well. There is an outstanding request for a referee clinic. He needs a trainer. Mike Petrakis is interested in being the trainer.
- Rick shared an incident in which a referee apprentice took the clinic before getting his AO certification. This is clearly in violation to the stated directives of the new LSC certification standards. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that clinics could now be Zoom meetings. A person does not have to register to attend such a meeting. Mary suggested that we keep set the clinic up as a webinar, which does require registration, and elevate the participants as panelists so they might interact.

OTS

- Mary related that there was a very helpful update in OTS in October.
- The new upgrade allows for reports that are very helpful in the certification process. It also simplifies the national certification application process.
- Rick said the new reports are phenomenal. One has all certifications and expirations. Another has all the registrations.

Advancement

- Mike Wigginton indicated that there are many S&Ts and AOs coming through in advancement.
- Mike also said that he is finishing the last of the officials that are being grandfathered in.

Athlete Representative

- Kylie and Nick indicated they had nothing to report, but Kylie had an important contribution on the Junior Officials discussion later.

OLD BUSINESS

Update on the Junior Officials Initiative

- Rick reported that there are two athletes who have completed the process to be Junior Official apprentices.
- There was some discussion whether a Junior Official candidate must take APT again if they have already taken the same module in another capacity, such as a Junior Coach.
- Mike Seip affirmed that nothing else could be added to the current membership after September 1. To become an official, including a Junior Official, one would have to renew their membership for the next year.
- There was concern that many people in the LSC do not know about this initiative. Kylie confirmed that her father, who is the officials coordinator for the Jersey Wahoos, was not familiar with it when she mentioned it to him. She also indicated that she believed athletes on her team would be interested in becoming Junior Officials if they knew about this initiative.
- Coleman indicated that they planned to discuss how to publicize and recruit for the initiative at the upcoming RRA meeting. It was also decided that it would be a good idea to send an email to all referees and meet directors with information on the initiative. They should also put information on the USAS Instagram page.

Update on Championship MR and AR Selection Process

- Rick wanted to know when to form the committee to select the lead officials for SC Championships.
- Coleman will look into getting the applications going. It was reiterated that the host club may recommend officials for these top positions. These recommendations will be taken into consideration, depending on the meet.

NEW BUSINESS**Officials Data**

- In light of the new OTS reports, Rick would like to use the information proactively to welcome and communicate with officials better. Rick would like to attend the upcoming RRA meeting and discuss the possibilities.
- Rick is also in the process of cleaning up other officials data, including Carlos' database.
- A question came up of some officials not having a name badge. There are a number of unclaimed badges in the LSC office. Mike Seip will investigate it when he goes into the office. To replace a lost badge, one must contact Amy and pay for a new one.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is on Monday, December 2, 2024.

ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 pm.

Minutes Submitted by Gwenn Lochstet