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**April 22, 2025**

**AOAC Meeting Minutes**

**In attendance**: Geneviève Fortin-Robinson, Bob Real, Tim Buchanan, Nick Bubela, Thomas Trusler, Tori Johnston, Shawn Banfield, Joey Lavigne, Jacques Reid

**Absent:**

## Action Items

* [ ] Compile a list of programs and initiatives pre-COVID and post-COVID to identify changes that may have impacted athlete development.
* [ ] Establish a U12/U10 development subcommittee to focus on skill development and best practices.
* [ ] Review the target number of race days and training days for U14 and U16 competitive programs.
* [ ] Discuss the appropriateness of terrain and venues used for U14 races.
* [ ] Develop a broader survey for O Cup coaches to gather feedback on the race schedule and other aspects.
* [ ] Schedule a follow-up meeting in two weeks to discuss the survey results and other action items.

## Outline

### Division Updates

* Patrick Biggs initiates the meeting, mentioning updates from various regions.
* Shawn reports on NCD, noting training completion and the lack of interest in certain events like the Man.
* Joey provides an update on NCO, mentioning the finalization of new coaches to replace Alex Lennox and increased interest in the program.
* Tim discusses usual meetings, invitational races, and an upcoming sod group meeting involving head coaches and program directors.
* The SOD group is planning for next year, considering the number of kids and the need for more coaches.
* Bob discussion about moving the Mealy to the first week of February to better align with the school calendar.
* Gen shares details about a successful mega asylum camp involving all clubs and athletes, highlighting the benefits for future volunteer bases and races.

### Survey Feedback and O Cup Schedule

* Patrick Biggs mentions the need for feedback on the O Cup schedule and the coach debrief.
* Discussion on the importance of reviewing performance and development at U 14 and U 16 levels.
* Tori presents data on performance trends before and after COVID, noting a significant drop in results post-COVID.
* Tori provides detailed data on U 14 and U 16 performances, comparing Ontario, Quebec, and the US.

### Challenges Post-COVID and Development Strategies

* Bob and Thomas discuss the impact of COVID on athlete development, noting the lack of snow and training time.
* Gen suggests comparing pre-COVID and post-COVID programs to identify changes and areas for improvement.
* Shawn highlights regional differences in training and racing, noting the impact on athlete independence and development.
* Nick emphasizes the need for better skills training and competitiveness at younger ages.

### Proposed Subcommittee for U 12 and U 10 Development

* Patrick Biggs proposes forming a subcommittee to focus on U 12 and U 10 development, linking leaders within the province.
* Jacques supports the idea, emphasizing the importance of skill development and decision training.
* Tim recommends involving Kevin Gosselin and Tess Hynes for their experience and boots-on-the-ground perspective.
* Discussion on the importance of the strive app for skill development and the need for continuity in training programs.

### O Cup Survey and Scheduling Adjustments

* Patrick Biggs and Tori discuss the value of the O Cup survey and the need for broader questions in future surveys.
* Tim suggests reducing the number of races in the O Cup schedule to improve the training-to-race ratio.
* General support of the idea of integrating more opportunities for Ontario athletes to compete against Quebec athletes earlier in the season.
* Discussion on the appropriateness of race venues and the need for better terrain for skill development at younger ages.

### Final Thoughts and Next Steps

* The group agrees to schedule a follow-up meeting after the coach debrief to discuss scheduling and other topics.
* Patrick Biggs will follow up with meeting notes, survey results, and additional information by email.
* The meeting concludes with a commitment to continue working on improving athlete development and competition at all levels.

**-Meeting adjourned-**