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2012 Paratriathlon Committee Report

Mission

The mission of the USA Paratriathlon Committee is to further the sport of paratriathlon through recruitment, education and outreach

2012 Accomplishments

The 2012 Committee goals/objectives are listed below along with the corresponding 2012 results:

1. To form an efficient mechanism of communication among committee members.

RESULT: Despite the challenge of having members in four different time zones, the Committee successfully met once a month by telephone and utilized a Google Group to communicate during other times throughout the year. Both the monthly meetings and group site proved to be an invaluable to stay informed, share ideas, and monitor progress throughout the year.

2. To meet regularly and consider the best ways of communicating with those interested in Paratriathlon as participants, supporters, coaches/trainers, and organizations with programs towards development of the sport.

RESULT: Along with the monthly meetings mentioned above, the Committee attempted to align members to specific USAT regions throughout the country. This worked better in some regions and we expect this partnership with the regions to increase to a more efficient alignment in 2013. Regional Councils appear to be more inviting to the notion of using Committee members' expertise to help shape their own regional paratriathlon programs. Additionally, Committee members attended regional multisport expos, educational seminars, and webinars as presenters on a variety of topics relating to "paratriathlon". This effort, too, is expected to expand in 2013.

3. To assist with the development programs, the Committee led efforts in the creation of three key documents:
 - Paratriathlon 101 slide deck
 - Race Directors' Guidebook for Paratriathlon
 - Application form for USA Paratriathlon Friendly races

RESULT: The formal use of these three documents was implemented in the fourth quarter, 2012, with the expectations of broader use in 2013.





4. To make timely reports on all committee activities to the Board of Directors and in public forums as appropriate.

RESULT: On an *informal* basis, the inclusion of Jack Weiss, national BOD member and liaison to the Paratriathlon Committee, aided our efforts to keep the BOD directors informed on our activities. Also, the Google Group site included Board president, Bob Wendling, who actively followed Committee members' posts as a way to likewise stay informed. Lastly, during a handful of key moments during the year, the Committee provided *formal* responses to questions posted on public forums such as Facebook, Slowtwitch.com, and others.

5. To conduct an in-person mid-year committee meeting at the USA National Paratriathlon Championship. Conduct an awareness/educational event in conjunction with the race.

RESULT: Committee members attended the USA Paratriathlon National Championship in Austin, TX (May, 2013) and was able to conduct a face-to-face meeting with Committee members, Jack Weiss, and Amanda Duke. In addition to this planned effort, the Committee assisted the race directors in the planning and execution for the Paratriathlon Championship. The Committee also conducted a Q&A session with paratriathlete participants prior to the competition day in conjunction with the race directors' safety briefing.

6. To create a database of US Paratriathletes of all ability levels, named races deemed to be "paratriathlon- friendly", and other relevant data for public consumption as appropriate.

RESULT: The creation of a database remains a challenge for the Committee. We continue to attempt to collect paratriathlon names/contact information through paratriathlon organizations such as Dare2Tri, Getting2Tri Foundation, and the Challenged Athletes Foundation. Our recommendation remains that we look at the information technology investments that USAT has already made, especially with respect to demographics information collected during annual membership enrollments and/or USAT sanctioned race registrations, as a potential way to better assemble a national list of paratriathletes. In addition, we will work with the High Performance leadership and USA Paratriathlon program manager, to align all efforts on this topic.

7. To assist the High Performance Staff in identifying Paratriathletes with the potential to become elite Paratriathletes.

RESULT: The Committee feels strongly that we have a close working relationship with Andy Schmitz and Amanda Duke. Continued dialogs with both Andy and Amanda have continued to assist in the identification process for possible high performance paratriathlete team members.





8. To assist in the creation of 10 USAT clubs that have specific opportunities for integrating Paratriathletes into their annual programming by the end of the calendar year.

RESULT: Along with the before mentioned alignment of Committee members to USAT regional councils, the Committee offered a fourth quarter grant opportunity to organizations who had plans for paratriathlon programs in 2013. Six \$1,000 grants were awarded to six unique organizations as seed money for their planned efforts in 2013.

9. To perform any other duties as specifically requested by the USAT Board of Directors.

RESULT: Committee members remained available for inquiries from the USAT BOD throughout the year. Topics varied and included strategy-shaping dialogs on: goals/directions for the Committee in future years, ideal composition of the Committee, increasing certified ITU classifiers (both national and international), and recommendations for paratriathlon racing series in 2013, just to name a few.

Additionally, the USA Paratriathlon Committee was asked to assist USAT in the implementation of the “Veterans to Victors” program in 2012. *Veterans to Victors* was a grant program awarded to USAT by the USOC in support of paralympic sports opportunities for military veterans with physical disabilities.

RESULT: Arguably, a huge success for USAT and USA Paratriathlon! The event was planned and executed under the primary direction of our Committee. Approximately 30 veterans were trained using facilities on or near Fort Sam Houston, TX (San Antonio) over a 3-day camp setting. Days 1 and 2 were focused on teaching the disciplines of swimming, cycling, hand-cycling, running and racing wheelchair. Additional instruction in triathlon transitions, Paratriathlon 101, and the 2013 USA Paratriathlon National Championship were also covered. The final day was devoted to an actual competition, offering camp participants the option of competing in a sprint, super sprint, or “mixed” super sprint distance races. The success of this year’s Veterans to Victors program can serve as a model program for other paratriathlon camps at other military installations in future years.

2013 Objectives

In the Fall of 2011, USAT created new membership for the USA Paratriathlon Committee (“Committee”) that is focused on grassroots initiatives. Current Committee members include:

- Mike Lenhart (committee chair)
- Patricia Walsh
- Keri Schindler
- Jack Weiss (USAT BOD liaison)
- Travis Ricks
- Amanda Duke (USAT Program Manager)





Please note that the committee may be expanding its members in 2013. Expansion efforts will be to first identify what “roles/experiences” are missing from the current committee, then look for individuals with those skills to fill the gaps.

The 2013 Committee goals and objectives are as follows:

1. To form an efficient mechanism of communication among committee members. Consider the use of current technology platforms/trends (Internet, mobile applications, blogs, social media) to best support this goal.
2. To meet regularly and consider the best ways of communicating with those interested in paratriathlon as participants, supporters, coaches/trainers, and organizations with programs towards development of the sport.
3. To make timely reports on all committee activities to the Board of Directors and in public forums as appropriate.
4. To conduct an in-person mid-year committee meeting at the USA National Paratriathlon Championship (Austin, TX). Conduct an awareness/educational/social “meet-and-greet” with paratriathletes in conjunction with the race.
5. To create a database of US paratriathletes of all ability levels, named races deemed to be "paratriathlon- friendly", and other relevant data for public consumption as appropriate.
6. To continue USAT clubs’ development of initiatives that has specific focus for integrating paratriathletes into their annual programming.
7. To have a demonstrated presence within the 10 USAT regions that includes: Committee liaison relationships to regional councils, attendance at regional events such as expos, paratriathlon championship races, and educational forums.
8. Increase membership on the USA Paratriathlon Committee as appropriate to address growing responsibilities, key alignment relationships with the 10 USAT regions, and subject-matter expertise in areas of specific interest for both elite and participatory paratriathletes.
9. To perform any other duties as specifically requested by the USAT Board of Directors.

Conclusion

The USA Paratriathlon Committee represents a collective group of individuals from different regions of the country, different adaptive sports experiences, yet singularly focused on increasing the growth of *participatory* paratriathlon in the United States. To that end, the members collectively are honored to be a part of that movement.

Submitted by: Michael E. Lenhart, Chair

