

## **Minutes of the Age Group Committee Meeting**

**March 8, 2012**

- I. Members on the Call:** Kat Donatello, Chuck Graziano, Chair, Ken Modica, Molly Smith, Steve Sutherland, Jim Weaver, Jack Weiss (Board Liaison), Tim Yount. Also, joining the discussion were: Charlie Crawford and Kathy Matejka  
The meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM

**II. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes were deemed approved as submitted in accordance with the procedure adopted by the AGC at the last meeting (If no objections- changes/corrections- are received by the specified date after circulation, they are approved)

**III. New Business**

In deference to our guests on the call, Charlie Crawford and Kathy Matejka, who were present primarily to contribute to the discussion concerning new weight limits for Athena and Clydesdale athletes, this item was taken out of order on the agenda to allow the option of them dropping off of the call if they wished following discussion.

**a. Athena/Clydesdale Weight Limit Proposed Change**

Jack Weiss presented the committee with a draft of a resolution he had prepared for the Board that would raise the weight minimum for Athena athletes from 150 to 165 pounds and for Clydesdale athletes from 200 to 220 pounds. Jack stated that this increase in no way is being proposed in a derogatory context, but that athletes today are bigger and stronger (and consequently heavier) than they were in the past. In discussion, Jack also indicated that the RDC has already signed off on this proposal.

Charlie Crawford indicated that he had no objection to the change, however, for clarity he had suggested that the terms “Clydesdale” and “Athena” be changed in the rule book to “Weight Classification Athletes”. This in no way would impact a race directors desire to continue to use the former terms at their events.

Kathy Matejka stated that the RDC did not oppose the proposal and they believed that the current weight minimums are on the light side. They did stipulate that the weight increase be proportionate for men and women rather than a flat amount of weight.

Molly Ann Smith forwarded by email to the committee an article appearing in the LA Times on November 28, 2011 that discussed the weight gain of the average American over the past 20 years, indicating that the average “self reported” weight for men and women was 196 pounds and 160 pounds, respectively; an increase of about 20 pounds in both sexes.

In discussion, the committee was concerned about the timing of this proposal going into effect and Jack resubmitted the proposed policy with a January 1, 2013 effective date.

Following discussion, the following motion was made:

Motion: Kat Donatello/Ken Modica- That the proposed minimum weight changes included in the draft resolution submitted by Jack Weiss be endorsed by this committee at 165 pounds for women and 220 pounds for men and that this change take effect on January 1, 2013.

Motion Carried: Unanimously

#### **IV. Unfinished Business**

The committee returned to the regular order of business.

##### **a. Age Group Prize Money**

Chuck reviewed the history of this issue with the committee. The AGC had recommended that the maximum prize purse for amateur athletes be increased from the current \$4,999.99 to \$10,000. This recommendation was forward to the AAC, however no action has been taken by that committee over the past year. There was also a task force appointed to review this issue, and that task force has neither met nor acted upon any recommendation. The rationale for recommending the change is basically a housekeeping measure. The current limit was set at least 22 years ago. The AGC has looked at the change in CPI as published by the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics and found that the present value of \$5,000 invested in 1988 is \$9,575.00, therefore, due to inflation, the prize purse should be increased to something above the \$9,575.00 level in order to keep up with the initial intent of the policy.

After discussion, the following motion was made:

Motion: Jim Weaver/Steve Sutherland- that a draft resolution for board action be submitted to the RDC and the AAC with a notation that we would like comments back prior to our May 17, 2012 conference call so that we can discuss those comments and submit any proposed resolution to the board of directors by May 25<sup>th</sup>, in time for consideration at their June 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. Both Chuck's name (as Chair of the AGC) and Jack's name (as Board Liaison) will be included on the resolution.

Motion Carried: Unanimously

##### **b. Rankings System Task Force**

A task force consisting of representatives of various committees and members of staff is being formed to review the current rankings system to see what if any changes need to be made to improve the system's validity. There will be an anticipated 5-10 hours of conference call time and an additional 5-10 hours of email communication time required. Steve Sutherland volunteered to be the AGC representative for this task force.

**c. AOY Celebration and Cruise**

Steve Sutherland summarized the process that produced this year's class of Athletes of the Year. He indicated that this year, they moved the process to "secret ballot" voting and he believed that this produced a better end-result than in the past where open voting during the conference call took place.

Kat Donatello summarized the planning that has taken place for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Celebration and Cruise to take place in Burlington, Vermont in conjunction with Age Group Championship Weekend. Caitlin Snow will be our guest speaker and a sell-out cruise is expected again this year. The cruise will be on the same boat as last year. Planning for the event is in the final stages.

**d. Hall of Fame Update**

Chuck gave a status report of the Hall of Fame. The 4<sup>th</sup> Class of Inductees will be celebrated on May 10<sup>th</sup> in conjunction with the ITU race to be held in San Diego. The Bahia Hotel and Resort will provide a great venue for this event and, although the current capacity of the ballroom is 250 as reserved, we have the ability to expand that number up to about 400. We expect that we will likely have to expand somewhat due to the location (San Diego) and the individuals who are being inducted this year.

**V. New Business**

**b. Athletes of the Year- Exclusion of Those who had been Pros at one point**

A suggestion had been made that Athletes of the Year should be strictly recognition of age group athletes and those who had once been pros should not be considered. Several different viewpoints of this issue were voiced, with the consensus being that former pros should not be excluded forever, but that a time limit be placed on the exclusion. After discussing the various scenarios, it was felt that a limit of 7 to 10 years on such a ban should be placed, but that there should also be a "special circumstance" option so that the AOY Selection Subcommittee could consider subjective information that might be relevant and make the ban inappropriate.

Steve Sutherland agreed to survey the members of the AOY Selection Subcommittee to get a consensus of what they'd like to see. This item will be discussed again on the next conference call and after the subcommittee has submitted its comments.

**c. Opt out timing options for athletes in events**

Tim Yount submitted this as a discussion item. The issue is whether or not there should be a "non-competitive" division in races to allow people to participate without being timed. Jack Weiss indicated his concern as a race director of having people enter the water without chips, making it very difficult to account for all participants. Chuck asked if this would also impact the time limit on events and the permits that are issued for road closures, etc. Other safety concerns were

voiced by various people on the committee. It was also suggested that triathlon cannot be compared to a road race and that many safety issues exist that are not present for runners and walkers. After discussion, a straw poll of the committee resulted in nobody being in favor of such a division being created.

**VI. Confirm Next Meeting Date/Adjourn**

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the AGC will take place on Thursday, May 17, 2012 beginning at 7:00 PM EDT.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:29 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Chuck Graziano, Chair  
USAT Age Group Committee