

## **Associations Business Meeting December 3, 2009**

**Road Running Technical Council** – Karen announced that we would have a 'workshop within a workshop' this year to cover course measurement. Gene Newman is the chair of the RRTC and said they were 'nerds' because they deal with numbers and technical issues. Many people think they certified a course, when what they actually do is measure the course. The course measurer submits the course measurement to a Regional certifier, who in turn looks over the paperwork, and if everything is ok, issues a certificate stating the course meets USATF standards. A certification is good for ten years, at which time the course will need to be remeasured or go through another process. The council consists of 7 or 8 members. Anyone can be a measurer and there will be a workshop for anyone interested. You can also become a certifier. They measure and certify about 2,000 courses a year. Visit their website at [www.rrtc.net](http://www.rrtc.net) where you can get a list by state of course measurers as well as maps and other information.

**Officials Certification** – Len spoke about problems with not getting information back in a timely manner. This can be a big problem with officials certification/recertification. Also, Associations should have a three person committee to handle upgrades, as opposed to one person. Please ensure that the people handling this process are doing their job. The Officials page <http://www.usatf.org/groups/Officials/> has information on best practices that could be very helpful. There are also many valuable links for rules, clinics, webinars and other training. Please take advantage of this valuable site.

**Leadership** – theme of the week. We will not promise more than we can deliver, but we will deliver what we promise. Karen addressed Presidents, stating that we were not elected to be the owner of the Association – we do not own it! Presidents were elected to serve all the members and should not expect to be spoon fed; instead they should be prepared to work at it. Please get familiar with and take advantage of all the information on the website before contacting Andy or Sherry. The Zone Reps will be asked to produce newsletters. Association Officers are tasked with following their by-laws; do not ignore them. You must provide clinics, meets, etc., to all your constituents. It is your job to know the accreditation standards and know your Association's rating. Do you know how to put an action plan together, if needed? If you don't, your Zone Rep will help you. As the AEC group, we will try to do as much as possible to help you. Remember, if you don't like what's happening in your Association, you can do something about it – elect someone else! Step up to the plate and do not be intimidated by anyone else. If you file a grievance, make sure it's legitimate; make sure you can win. Karen just wants everyone to understand that we are here to help you. We need to take the personalities out of it and be leaders.

**Andy's Report** – 2009 was an incredible year. We had a record breaking year in terms of membership and sanctions and we redefined the background check program. We also staged our first world youth trials and we implemented drug testing for youth events. We now have batch processing for clubs and will send out an email to let clubs know this is available. The clubs can also run reports on their membership from this site. Coaches will be sent an email if they input the same address for their athletes, as opposed to the individual athlete's home addresses. This was our highest membership number in many years, as we have grown to just shy of 97,000, with 88% of members joining on-line. We also had a record year with 2,640 clubs this year. We also met a new record in sanctions, processing 4,900 ytd. We

are currently working on an online process for sanctioning. Another major accomplishment was centralizing the background screening process. 3500 individuals went through the process and we were able to identify 10 people who did not pass the process and are not allowed to coach our youth. We had 120 attendees from 48 Associations attend the Workshop this year. The 2010 Workshop will be in Buffalo, so do get your passports in order if you would like to go over to Canada. There will be a rookie workshop in February or March for new membership chairs so they can get the right perspective on how to do things. Accreditation has 19 categories and the current breakout is that 36 are fully accredited; 19 provisional; 2 suspended. The Zone Reps will become more involved in helping Associations who are not fully accredited. Briefly, to be considered for the Outstanding Association award, you must meet all 19 categories in the Accreditation standards and you must meet higher standards than are established for the number of members/sanctions/clubs per 100,000. The 2009 winners are – Gold: Maine; Silver: NW; Bronze: Long Island and NJ. Club Championships – Devon Martin is the new chair. Association Marketing kits – a \$500 stipend is available to help Associations purchase materials to help their meets and events look more professional. Andy encouraged everyone to invest in additional items beyond the \$500 stipend. We also created two membership brochures this year and made them available to the Associations for purchase. For the 10<sup>th</sup> year in a row, we provided \$20k in Association Grants for Associations to provide programs or services. For the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in a row, we provided Associations with D&O Insurance for all Associations who are incorporated and in good standing with their State filing. Mark Springer Travel Grant program awarded \$50k in 2009 to youth clubs who attended JO and Junior National events. The drug testing program did not uncover any real issues with positive drug tests nor with parents or athletes and privacy concerns. The newly created Phidippides Award recognizes Masters athletes for their participation in USATF. We have already given out over 100 awards. We are looking at ways to market this award. Information can be found at <http://www.usatf.org/groups/RoadRunning/PhidippidesAward/index.asp>. In conclusion, Andy thanked Karen and the entire Association's Committee for all the work done during this past year. Andy seconded Karen's remarks about Leadership and feels that there is a growing number of leaders who are falling short, or not in their leadership positions for the right reasons. This causes unnecessary tension and resources that can be directed in a more positive fashion. Andy wants to challenge everyone to take stock and make sure we are all making the right decisions and moving the Association in the right direction and taking the right path to a more productive and professional way of doing business. Andy stressed that this only applies to a small number of people and that a lot of Associations have made incredible improvements over the last couple of years.

**L&L** – Scott reported that the L&L committee compromised on the two big areas of contention – coach selection and changes in the operating regulations requiring only 50% plus 1 as opposed to 2/3 favorable vote for passage. So, the package will be modified to read by-laws and regulations both require 2/3 favorable vote for passage. The reason they agreed to do that was that historically there has never been a vote that was between 50% and 2/3. So, why worry about it and put the entire package in jeopardy of not passing. The committee passed the background screen requirement removal from the accreditation requirements. Scott is also working on tweaking the Association Operating Procedures and will have a draft for distribution at the Saturday business meeting.

## **Associations Business Meeting December 5, 2009**

**Annual Meeting Survey** – Ed Koch asked everyone to fill out a survey on preferences for future annual meetings.

**Coaches Ed** – Pat Pretty reported that there would be a level 2 youth school in 2010. Regular Level 2 will be at Villa Nova in 2010. Information should be posted on the website shortly. The Youth Level 2 will be held in conjunction with the close of the National JO meet. This is not for High School coaches, but the curriculum is designed for youth coaches. Applications should be available in early February at the USATF Coaches Ed page. As far as Level 1 schools go, the Association Presidents have been asked to develop a two-year window of requested schools. Per the Operating Regulations, all Associations must conduct a level 1 school at least once every 4 years.

**SWAT Analysis** – Stephanie Hightower asked all Chairs to send her an analysis of strengths and weaknesses. Karen told her our strength was with the National Office staff and our ability to conduct a mid year workshop. Some of our weaknesses are not having the finances or time to send the Zone reps into all Associations that may need help. Resistance to change is also a weakness if we do not accept that it is inevitable. We have a lot of opportunities coming in the next few years and we want to help Associations. Karen would like to see standardization in 57 separate by-laws that correspond closer to the National bylaws, without touching the local procedures. The threats to our Committee and the Associations are sometimes just clashes of personalities within our Associations and plain old inability to work together for the common good. When our members feel undervalued that is also a threat. And sometimes it's just individuals in Associations who manage to just spend too much, creating a drain on an already limited resource. So, no matter how big or small the Association, we need to think about how to better manage our resources.

**Law & Legislation** – Scott Erwin reported that while the package is still not finalized, he does not expect any substantial changes. All the major committees are happy with the changes that have been made and are now on board with supporting the by-law changes. Organizational Services has proposed adding financial soundness of the Association as a new standard. A handout of the Associations committee Operating Procedures was provided with the changes made to bring them up-to-date.

**Motion: To accept the changes to the Associations Committee Operations Procedures.**

**All in favor; no opposed or abstained.**

**Disabled Athletes** – Cathy Sellers, USOC and US Paralympics, and Tina Kaufman are interested in disabled athletes in your Associations. They would like to include them in existing events. The athletes can contact Cathy or Tina directly. Andy will send the Associations an email blast with the information. Cathy showed very interesting videos and made a very compelling presentation. They need coaches and officials, as well as opportunities to be able to compete, especially at all-comers meets. [Cathy.Sellers@usoc.org](mailto:Cathy.Sellers@usoc.org) 719-866-3236. Cathy hopes to be able send a blind athlete DVD to all Associations by the end of the year.

**Track the Truck** – website page allows you to see the schedule of the truck and the potential availability to come to your Associations events. Andy mentioned they are doing a better job of communicating when the truck will be near your Association. It is a great marketing outreach and has been well received.

**990 Income Tax Form** – there were major changes to the 990 form this year. If you have 500K or less in gross revenues and assets less than 1.25 million, you can file 990EZ. For membership fees, you should only count \$15.00 or \$10.00 as your income, as the other half of the money goes to National. Additionally, the 990 Online, developed by the nonprofit [Urban Institute](http://urbaninstitute.org), provides nonprofit organizations with a simple way to prepare their returns and electronically file them with the IRS at <http://efile.form990.org>.

**Associations Workshop** – Ashley put together a power point on the survey results for the 2009 workshop. 46 Associations were represented, with 125 attendees at the Workshop. However, only 38 people returned a survey and we hope to have a better response in the future. The highest rated session was Risk Management, Association Resources, National Background Check program and Associations Chair remarks. Leadership and Diversity was the lowest ranked session. It was suggested that the power point presentation be available on an CD.

**Member Benefits** – Kristina is working closely with Katherine Branch now. The Sam's Club benefit is only good for 6 months, so it will expire at the end of the year and then be available again mid 2010. That is a restriction from Sam's Club.

**Zone Reps Reports** – **West Zone** discussed development of a newsletter, as well as 990 reporting. They also covered unified by-laws, risk management, on-line sanctioning and youth coaches background screening and credentialing of youth coaches at practices, as well as meets. **East Zone** had 11 out of the 12 Associations attend from East Zone. One major topic was communications regarding the website. They also have a yahoo list that is closed to their Zone, but will add a Facebook that will be open. They discussed accreditation standards and would like to see the number of required championship dropped from 8 to 5. They request that Coaches Ed be removed from the required list until it is a certified program. **North Zone** approved their minutes, discussed by-laws and the size and boundaries of the Associations. Website development – they suggested that a webmaster be employed on a part time basis who would work on all 4 Zone website. Adjoining Associations should also be able to work with each other to help out. Facebook was suggested as a way to keep youth interested. Jackie Callendar, **South Zone** rep, was not available and did not send a report. All Zones minutes will be posted on the Associations web page.

Submitted by,  
Linda Bommicino, Secretary

## **Associations Membership Workshop December 4, 2009**

**ACH Payments** – fairly new process where you can pay by check on-line using your bank routing number and your checking account number. However, just like a check, it can bounce, and the National Office isn't notified until 7-10 days later. So,

**Member Benefits** – Andy discussed many of the benefit discounts available to members. A question was raised regarding on-line discounts for Nike, and Andy will look into it. Right now the discount is only applicable at Niketowns. Another question asked about waiving shipping, but Andy did not think that would be viable. Shipping is a hard cost and is either figured into the cost of the product or must be eaten by the company.

**Marketing Brochures** – Currently have an overall Membership brochure and a Youth oriented brochure. They are working on one for Masters.

**Duplicate Membership Policy** - can be found in the Associations Resource page of the website. We never delete a membership out of the system for history, legal or insurance reasons. On rare occasions, we can get a duplicate membership because of the “double click”, where the user clicks on submit more than once in a short time span. Another scenario is where someone purchases two memberships inadvertently. There are now warning messages to prevent this, but sometimes they are ignored. The National Office can override this if notified. If a new zip code opens up and it is not loaded in the database yet, that member will be assigned to 57.

**Privacy Guidelines** – there is a published privacy policy that must be followed. Handout was provided. Basically, we do not share private contact information with anyone and Associations must follow this policy. They can only be more restrictive, never less, than the National policy. If a committee chair wants a list and the membership chair cannot send out the mailing, have them sign the Mailing List Agreement that is in the handout.

**Batch Membership Processing** – allows clubs coaches/administrators to do one payment for multiple memberships. There are links on the membership page, as well as the club page. Individual parents can also use this area to enter more than one family member. Clubs can also run membership reports on their athletes and can take the data into excel. They can also download the club logo for their use. Clubs can only use the club logo, never the Association federation logo. The main club contact can also assign access to the club area to other people on their club.

**Membership System** – overview of on-line system and q&a.

### **SANCTIONS WORKSHOP**

Non-Sanctionable Events:

- Non-competitive events (not timed or scored)
- Camps and clinics
- Events that do not fall under the jurisdiction of USATF
- Events that use the word “Olympic” or “Olympics”

- Events limited to wheelchairs
- Snowshoe competitions
- Triathlons/Dualathlons
- Extreme running events

Benefits of Sanctioning:

- Increase prestige
- Liability insurance
- Medical insurance for USATF member athletes
- Promotion through the USATF National calendar
- Records – USA or World records can generally only be broken at a sanctioned meets
- Resolving Disputes – USATF is required to resolve any disputes at a sanctioned meet
- Special Offers and Discounts – bib numbers; awards; conference call services

Ashley provided a handout with forms and cover letter examples and discussed each of them. Only use the current forms. Jim Elias covered the insurance aspect of sanctions.

### **HOW TO CONDUCT SAFE EVENTS**

Mike Esix, Esix Insurance, spoke about risk management and how to conduct a safe event that minimizes risk, injuries and lawsuits. This session was video taped and will be available on DVD from the National office.

Submitted by,  
Linda Bommicino, Secretary