

Performance Committee

Minutes:

Saturday 3 November 2012, 11:30



Dukes Barn Outdoor Activity Centre, Beeley, Derbyshire

Attendees: Martin Ward (MW), Jon Cross (JC), Sarah Hague (SH), Helen Marsden (HM), Mark Nixon (MN), Hollie Orr (HO)

Non-voting attendees: Mike Hamilton (MH), Graham Gristwood (GG)

Minute taker: Martin Ward (MW)

Apologies received: Tony Carlyle (TC), Jackie Newton (JN)

Item Subject

1. Committee membership, and Terms of Reference

Athlete reps. Former athlete rep John Rocke has stood down from the committee, and is replaced by athlete reps Mark Nixon and Hollie Orr. Graham Gristwood also attended in a non-voting capacity.

Staff reps. It was agreed that the three existing staff positions on the committee would remain as-is (albeit one is currently vacant).

Terms of Reference. The ToR will be updated and re-published, to take account of the change of name of the committee (agreed in 2011) and the change of representation from staff and athletes.

Action: MW to update ToR, copy to Board for information, and publish on website.

2. Overall context / funding update

Funding: Sport England. SH provided an update on the discussions with Sport England (SE) regarding the application for funding of the Talent Pathway. The SE Board meeting in December should be the point at which we have confirmation of funding, though final discussions may mean it is not until the new year that final confirmation of the 2013-2017 is confirmed.

Funding: British Orienteering. MW provided an update on the funding of the Performance element of the programme to be provided by British Orienteering. This would be at a lower level than the UK Sport funding previously received, but which terminates in March 2013. MW noted the importance of the Performance Programme and its athletes having a higher profile amongst the orienteering community and BO membership, and that the benefits of supporting the programme were clear. MH noted that the Board was very clear in its support to the Performance Programme. The Board has agreed the funding as part of the overall 2013 budget, and further funding in future years would be subject to review during the annual budgeting process.

Winning Students scholarships. SH provided an update on the process used to award scholarships under the Winning Students scheme in Scotland. SH noted that further details about which athletes have been selected have yet to be agreed (despite publication by Winning Students of the scholarships on its website).

Winning Students (WS) is keen to retain orienteering as a core sport for at least the four year period 2013-2017. Previously BO has used UKSport funding to top-up the coach role at the Edinburgh Centre of Excellence. That UKS funding no longer exists, so BO is unable to continue to do so. In future the coach role will exist but be funded by WS and Edinburgh University. It was noted that BO should continue to maintain a relationship with WS and Edinburgh University regarding the Centre of Excellence, despite not having any direct influence over it.

Action: SH to finalise the details with Winning Students and Edinburgh University, then notify athletes and publish a news item.

Item Subject

Other funding sources. It was noted that existing sponsors of the squads are Inov-8 and Noname, and the sponsorship agreements with each of these continues until December 2013.

MH provided a brief on a current piece of work being undertaken for British Orienteering by marketing consultant Four Communications. Within the scope of this study they will review the potential sponsorship value of certain things including the British Team and WOC 2015, and towards the end of the study (likely Feb/March 2013) they will help BO to find potential specific sponsors.

It was noted that we would not sign up the team to sponsorships agreements that athletes would not be comfortable with.

The TASS funding previously received by certain athletes was administered by UK Sport, and therefore is also not available for the 2013-2017 funding cycle. Current UK Sport strategy is to focus funding on Olympic sports, but MH noted that we should not give up entirely on this situation changing again in future.

Athlete sponsorship. It was noted that there had been issues during the 2012 season where potential athlete sponsorship opportunities were missed as a result of the existing kit policy not allowing individual athlete sponsorship and the associated logos to be used on kit. It was agreed in principle that athlete personal sponsorship should be allowed. The issues noted in the paper prepared by JC were reviewed, and SH provided additional information regarding the approach taken by other teams including Switzerland and Sweden.

Action: SH to develop the detailed guidelines of a new athlete sponsorship/GBR kit policy, and to get input from athlete reps and Caroline Povey, for circulation to Performance Committee in January 2013. (See also item 8 regarding kit guidelines and the new policy).

3. Performance Programme Strategy (the big picture) for 2013 to 2017

Tiers within the Talent and Performance programmes. SH provided a brief on the structure of the Nationally Managed Talent Pathway, which is itself a requirement for funding from Sport England. SH provided an update on the staffing within each tier, though it was noted that this is subject to agreement of funding for 2013-2017 from SE.

The progression of athletes through the talent pathway is a key concern for SE, and consequently the proposed measures will monitor this. Athletes that have "plateaued" and are no longer improving over a reasonable period will not be able to remain within the programme.

The concerns about the interfaces between the talent pathway and other stakeholders (e.g. non-England home nations, and the regional squads) were discussed.

Long term goals versus Short term goals. Though there is clearly a lot of focus (especially amongst athletes) on WOC 2015 in Scotland, it was agreed that as far as programme results are concerned all WOCs (before and after 2015) should be "treated equally". The emphasis must be on continual improvement, with 2015 just being a potential specific opportunity to do well. However, MH also noted that athletes should not be expected to "peak" every year, and therefore individuals should have goals around specific WOCs rather than all of them. We need to plan over a 2-3 year period for performance, rather than always have a 1-year horizon.

It was agreed that in our selection principles we need to achieve a balance within a selected team of (a) athletes that are high-performance now, and (b) athletes that are still developing. Given a selection choice between two athletes of equal current form, the developing athlete would be preferred over the athlete no longer improving.

Target setting and monitoring. For the Talent Identification, Talent Development and Elite Development tiers within the programme we can use the targets proposed to SE. For the Elite Performance tier it was proposed to use overall nation ranking as a measure of success, along with the number of top 30/20/10 placings at WOC/JWOC. In order to form a target for specific numbers of medals at future WOCs, we should build the target from athletes' individual targets. We could specify the target as "x medals over the next 4-year period".

Item Subject

Action: MW to circulate the proposed SE targets (which are still subject to further discussion with SE) to Performance Committee members.

Action: SH to develop the details of measures and targets for the Elite Performance tier of the programme after further discussions with athletes and athlete reps.

4. Beyond 2013

WOC 2015 strategy. Committee members joined the athletes' "Project 2015" Planning Weekend session. For further details see www.project2015.co.uk.

WOC in the Future update. MW noted that IOF has published no more details of the WOC in the Future project, after the decisions that were taken in Switzerland at the IOF General Assembly. There was discussion about a number of concerns about the ways in which the number of athletes per nation would be allocated, and also about the detail of the way in which the WOC week schedule would be implemented.

It was agreed that we need to put views to the IOF Foot-O Commission (that is now responsible for developing the WOC programme details). These should come both from athletes, and from the programme staff and BO Board.

Action: MN/HO to gather latest feedback and comments/proposals from athletes.

Action: MW to contact David May, a member to IOF Foot-O Commission, to ask for details of the process by which the commission will gather views and develop and seek approval for the new WOC rules.

It was noted that WOC 2014 (Italy) will fully implement the new WOC in the Future formats. It was believed likely that WOC 2015 (Scotland) would also do so.

5. & 6. 2013 Season specific issues & Draft 2013 Season Policy

Selection Policy principles. MH and SH had re-drafted the General Selection Policy. The committee discussed the key principles that were intended to be applied through this update, but did not review the detailed wording of the proposed draft policy.

One principle is that there should be pools of athletes from which senior selections are then made. These pools would be:

- Performance pool
- Elite Development pool
- Other places if available

An issue is to achieve the right balance within a team of athletes from those pools.

In the current draft of the General Selection Policy we need to insert another category to ensure non-squad athletes that come back into contention can be selected.

Another key decision is to decide whether to make selections shortly before WOC (e.g. 3 weeks) or further in advance to give selected athletes more time to prepare (e.g. 3 months). MH noted that there were pros and cons to each approach, and much debate in other sports and within SE and UK Sport on this issue. In orienteering different countries have different approaches.

We also need the policy to cover the means by which athletes that are ill at stage one get back into contention – this was covered in the old policy but is missing from the latest draft.

WOC Selection. It was agreed that a 2-stage selection strategy would be used for WOC selection, with early selection (~3 months out, most likely the JK) used to select a pool of athletes, who would either be pre-selected, or who would then undertake a final selection process 2-3 weeks ahead of WOC. Limiting the number of athletes able to be considered in the second stage makes the logistics potentially easier, as compared to having a large group of athletes take part in a single selection race shortly before WOC.

Item Subject

JWOC selection. It was noted that consideration has to be given to the timing of exams, and therefore a single selection at about 3-months in advance of JWOC was appropriate. For 2013 this will be the JK.

Selector / Selection Panel. There was discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of having a single selector, versus a panel of selectors. MH noted that all Olympic sports now use a single selector, but that appropriate selection advisors and other “checks and balances” are in place to ensure selections are unbiased in accordance with the selection policy and long term performance goals. It was noted that by ensuring there are good communications between athletes and selector(s), there should be “no surprises” when it comes to final selections. Athletes should be well aware of the performance standards they need to achieve for selection.

It was agreed that we would follow the single selector approach, though the detail of who that would be for each of the competitions in the 2013 programme was not discussed. This will need to be identified in the matrix of camps & competitions that form the 2013 season.

Performance Coach. The BO Performance Coach position is currently vacant. Performance athletes noted that they typically already have personal coaches and access to club coaches, but it was agreed that at a minimum we need a Performance Coach for WOC at least.

Draft 2013 Season Selection Policy. Having agreed some selection principles, the committee then reviewed a matrix of specific competitions and training camps that would be part of the 2013 programme. It was agreed that given the reduced funding situation, it would be preferable to focus funding on WOC, and make World Cups self-funded.

In discussion of EYOC, it was noted that next year this will be hosted by Israel in October/November. JC believed that one nation had already declared that they would not compete due to safety/security concerns. We will need to maintain awareness of the situation and latest travel advice nearer the time.

It was agreed that currently squad training/coaching weekends would be exclusively for squad members. It was noted that other countries make some or all of their training camps open to others (who have to pay to attend), and agreed that this approach may be something that we would consider doing later.

Action: SH/MH to re-draft the General Selection Policy to incorporate the principles agreed, by 19 November.

Action: SH to update the matrix of specific 2013 competitions and camps to include a proposal for funding, selection races and named selector in relation to each competition/camp, by 19 November.

The aim is to get comments back from the next draft and incorporate them into the policies so that a fairly final draft can be seen at the athletes’ running weekend on 29/30 November, and the final policy can be approved and published in December.

7. Communications / publicity / marketing

- Improving communications within the programme
- Publicity with stakeholders e.g. BO membership, financial supporters
- Marketing to sponsors

There was insufficient time to address these items at the meeting (though aspects of the issues were discussed under other headings).

Action: MW to discuss these issues with SH, and then circulate proposals to the committee for how best to deal with them before the next meeting.

Item Subject

8. Other issues

Kit guidelines. The issue of the use of British kit at self funded competitions was discussed (and the issues that had arisen over athletes competing at JEC in 2012 were noted). It was agreed in principle that (a) competitions at which you run for GBR will be subject to selection, even if self-funded, and (b) that at such competitions GBR kit shall be worn. However, there are complications in the detail of how these principles should be applied (e.g. who pays for the kit), so further consultation is required before a policy can be confirmed.

Action: SH to consult athletes and others, before bringing a proposal back to Performance Committee in January 2013.

Future Meetings 2012 & 2013

In order to finalise the detail of the General Selection Policy, and the 2013 season specific details, there is a need for a teleconference shortly after publication of the next draft of the policy (by 19 November).

Action: MW to schedule a teleconference at a date to be agreed, between 21 and 28 November.

9. AOB

MW noted that within the project to review British Orienteering Committee and Group structures, there was a proposal from Lyn West (BO Chair) to start two workgroups in January 2013, at which representation from Performance would be required. MW noted that he would be happy to provide input to such workgroups.

The athlete reps noted the unfortunate clash (again) between the British Long Distance Championships and the Tio Mila relays in 2013. In future years their strong preference is that the British Champs should not clash with Tio Mila.

Action: **MW** to notify/remind Mike Cope, Chair of Event Scheduling Group, of this preference.

The meeting closed at 17:00.

Summary of Actions:

Ref:	What	Who	When
1.1	MW to update Terms of Reference, copy to Board for information, and publish on website.	MW	ASAP
2.1	SH to finalise the details with Winning Students and Edinburgh University, then notify athletes and publish a news item.	SH	ASAP
2.2	SH to develop the detailed guidelines of a new athlete sponsorship/GBR kit policy, and to get input from athlete reps and Caroline Povey, for circulation to Performance Committee in January 2013. (See also item 8 regarding kit guidelines and the new policy).	SH	End Jan 2013
3.1	MW to circulate the proposed SE targets (which are still subject to further discussion with SE) to Performance Committee members.	MW	ASAP
3.2	SH to develop the details of measures and targets for the Elite Performance tier of the programme after further discussions with athletes and athlete reps.	SH	End Dec 2012
4.1	MN/HO to gather latest feedback and comments/proposals from athletes, regarding the latest proposals from IOF on the future of WOC (in particular, rules for qualifying).	MN/HO	End Nov 2012
4.2	MW to contact David May, a member to IOF Foot-O Commission, to ask for details of the process by which the commission will gather views and develop and seek approval for the new WOC rules.	MW	ASAP
5.1	SH/MH to re-draft the General Selection Policy to incorporate the principles agreed, by 19 November.	SH/MH	19 Nov
5.2	SH to update the matrix of specific 2013 competitions and camps to include a proposal for funding, selection races and named selector in relation to each competition/camp, by 19 November.	SH	19 Nov
7.1	MW to discuss these issues with SH, and then circulate proposals to the committee for how best to deal with them before the next meeting.	MW	End Dec 2012
8.1	SH to consult athletes and others, before bringing a proposal for GBR Kit Guidelines back to Performance Committee in January 2013.	SH	End Jan 2013
8.2	MW to schedule a teleconference at a date to be agreed, between 21 and 28 November, for discussion of the next draft of the selection policy.	MW	ASAP
9.1	MW to notify/remind Mike Cope, Chair of Event Scheduling Group, of the preference for British Long Distance Champs not to clash with TioMila.	MW	ASAP