

Talent & Performance Steering Group

Wednesday 16 September 2015. 11:30-16:00 latest

Details: National Office, Scholes Mill, Tansley



Attendees:

Bob Dredge (BD)	Chair & Director
Jackie Newton (JN)	Performance Director
Allan Bogle (AB)	Northern Ireland
Nev Myers (NM)	JROS
Roger Scrutton (RS)	Scotland (standing in for Marsela McLeod)
Mark Saunders (MS)	Wales
Megan Carter-Davies (MCD)	Athlete
Dave Schorah (DS)	Athlete (standing in for Kris Jones)
Paul Murgatroyd (PM)	Technical Expert
Mike Hamilton (MH)	CEO

Minute taker: MH

Apologies: None received

1. Welcome & Meeting Administration

The Chair welcomed members to the group and in particular the athlete representatives, Dave Schorah standing in for Kris Jones, and Megan Carter-Davies now an official athlete representative on the group. The Chair agreed to communicate our thanks to Rhona McMillan for her previous contribution.

The Chair also welcomed NM as the official JROS representative.

No additional declarations of interest were made.

2. Actions from the last meeting, February 2015

1. JROS member of group accepted by BO Board: The Board supported the request to include a representative of JROS on the Steering Group.
2. Board/BO Strategy: Agenda item but needs to include:
 - a. What a performance culture is; that is, having a mind-set of putting development/performance first; everyone around the athlete providing support.
 - b. Strong linkages with JROS, educating parents etc.
3. Monitoring: Data that can be used for monitoring had been considered and in the short term these will be the same as are used for the Board and for the returns to sports councils as part of the funding agreements. Once the new Strategic plan is in place the targets and KPIs will be re-defined. MH provided background to the strategic plan and explained how the development of the plan had progressed. RS commented that the strategy for the sport should encompass what funding bodies may need in the future and this was agreed. MH agreed to circulate appropriate data as and when it was available
4. Website update: Website has been updated over the summer

3. Review of 2015 Programme

JN provided a brief overview of performance against targets and other issues of relevance including the recommendations and outcomes of the review of various training camps and developments in liaison and mutual working with JROS.

JN tabled a paper summarising these matters and took the group through the paper page by page. The key points made included:

1. Performance and talent targets were hit in 2015.

2. Opportunities should be explored for joint camps with other countries after linking successfully with Sweden whilst in Switzerland during 2015 for JWOC 2016 training.
3. Talent staff and JROS staff are planning 'open weekends' together to give further training opportunities for athletes within and outside of both programmes
4. Transfer of talented athletes from other sports through to orienteering – DS highlighted that such athletes will need extensive support and that there was, as yet, little evidence of success in this approach. Both DS and AB agreed that the sprint discipline is likely to see more success than forest and perhaps focus could be given to that first.
5. Coaching:
 - a. Physical lead & using support such as using Bashir Hussain in England and Wales and Alister Russell in Scotland for running specific coaching within the squads.
 - b. Discussions with the SIS (Scottish Institute of Sport) had determined that they will support sports that can show a 'cultural significance' within Scotland and orienteering may be considered such a sport. Scottish Institute of Sport have told us that they will consider a proposal from us to make a case for further support but warn that it will be a 'challenge' because we are not an Olympic or Commonwealth sport and because of their limited capacity.
 - c. Governance re the staffing structure needs to be resolved ie who the line manages who? (Note this has now been reviewed and clarified to all staff.)
6. Review:
 - a. Lots of positive feedback from staff and athletes once the programme was up and running (accepting the late start due to staffing changes at British Orienteering in the Autumn of 2014).
 - b. MCD expressed her views and those of some of her colleagues that whilst there had been significant improvement in the overall structure and delivery of the 2014/15 programme – and athletes appreciated this – there remains a view that there should be more camps and more technical orienteering development and less time in class rooms sessions. MCD added that 'open' camps will be of great benefit.
 - c. BD reiterated these points in that views passed to him were that the programme was well received this year, better than last year but more technical orienteering continues to be requested by some.
 - d. PM spoke to the changes for 2015/16 for the talent programme
 - e. DS agreed that the number of camps was good. There was also a need to make some camps less time intensive and give athletes the opportunity to both engage in all the session but also to have time to reflect and recover as well. He further noted the view of athletes that the current team was functioning in a very cohesive and supportive way, he thought it was probably the most cohesive team in his experience.
 - f. Communication (inc maps/exercises) about camps and what has taken place to go to JROS coaches; there is a need for a report to be communicated to JROS after each camp so that they can be aware of and be consistent with the messages given at national camps.
 - g. It was recognised that there is a problem with athletes 'racing'/competing and trying to do everything rather than focusing on training and competition that will enhance their development/performance.
 - h. Coach Development: Need for more formal programme but successful as a pilot during 2015; relationship with MMU is supporting this; RS commented that there is a need to build on sports psych as a theme to the talent programme.
 - i. 2016 Programme has been drafted and was extensively discussed. JN agreed to consider the many valuable points made and redraft the programme in the light of some of these and in particular:
 1. Overall shape of programme needs documenting including competitions to be included, training camps, squad size that can be supported etc.
 2. Selection Criteria: comments for improvement on criteria, process and application for all teams (to cover following-EYOC, JWOC, WOC, World Cups, Euromeet etc.)
 3. Review of decision regarding MW16 athletes at EYOC: it was agreed that MW16 athletes should be considered for selection – see selection item.
 4. Role of Selection Advisors and process for appointment
 5. Selection process for 2016

There was considerable further discussion on the 2016 programme. No additional recommendations were made for the Junior Programme but there was concern at the cost to the senior athletes of the proposed programme and in particular the inclusion of the South African camp and test races. DS commented that altitude training is positively received by the athletes but the cost and timing, the Christmas period, are real issues. Similarly, concerns had been expressed over the timing of the proposed test races. BD was concerned that the programme should be accessible (both time and costs) to all potential athletes and be framed to allow for this. Discussion was held around whether or not a test race was needed and warranted for next year given the busy calendar and the opportunity for coaches to work with athletes who have been selected early enough to prepare thoroughly for WOC 2016. Opinions and points of view expressed by the athlete representatives were particularly insightful in this discussion and highly valued. There was agreement that ideally there should be a final, open test race on terrain that matched WOC and at an appropriate time but there was also acceptance that this was not feasible in 2016. The final decision on this was left with JN.

4. Sharing information about talent & performance across the UK

Briefings from the relevant member including: funding, programme, staff (paid & unpaid), key achievements/issues during 2015 and into 2016:

- England (JN)
As per GBR
- Northern Ireland (AB)
Well-funded for a small association and with only a small number of talented athletes.
2 full time posts, one for performance and one for development
SNI are having a discussion about the needs for perf/talent in NI; discussions should be beneficial for O in NI.
Talent pool, one has potential to run for GBR; lots of benefits of programmes being close to GBR programmes.
- Scotland (RS)
No funding for performance/talent. WOC/S6Ds has been well received by Sport Scotland and there is hope for future funding especially based on 40% of GBR team being Scottish. Additionally 60% of GBR squad have been EUOC alumni.
Winning Students is of great value.
SEDS management has moved on with Jess & James Tullie stepping down. Scots JOS Bill Stevenson has also stepped down.
WOC has left a great deal of volunteer exhaustion
- Wales (MS)
Minimal financial support, £3,000 from Sport Wales. Very active with 2 week long camps in 2015; all driven by parental support.
- JROS (NM)
Personal donations have been beneficial to the JROS programme; camps have been successful and reports are due out soon. Individual athletes have received reports/feedback; JIRCS weekend after next. Quite a lot of coach development has been included within the programme this year with a Level 2 coach programme delivered over the summer.
Very positive to the movement towards the closer integration of the JROS programme and National programme.
21 Nov JROS AGM and Hawkeshead last weekend in November

5. Developing the Strategic Plan to deliver 'more (sustained) podiums'

MH gave the group an update on the development of the vision and strategic plan including:

- a) *Vision* Discussion Paper circulated and now in consultation phase
- b) The Board will progress the development of the Strategic Plan at the Board meeting on the following Saturday
- c) It will be important that this group helps to develop 'milestones' and significant objectives to deliver within the plan that will bring the vision to reality
- d) Impact of the IOF 'split WOC' decision needs careful consideration
- e) Way forward; the plan will be drafted during autumn and taken to the Board in December before the next stage in consultation commences.

6. Selection during 2016

The group received an update on selection for 2016 and were taken through the various draft papers explaining the process for 2016, the people who will be involved in selection and the criteria that will be used.

The group discussed the papers and made the following points, recommendations:

- Process:
Aim of the Senior process, bullet 1: recommendation, to change to 'to provide the selection plan that will create the best opportunity'
Junior process: To include summer camps
Athletes to be selected for EYOC (MW16/18) if they are technically competent and if inclusion will be to the benefit of the athletes in the eyes of the staff involved.
NOTE: JN asked to confirm the actually wording to be used – the above should not be taken as being part of the selection process.
- The criteria to be used: for Juniors - to specify the inclusion of BOC Long.
- Those involved in selection should be specified within the selection process & criteria papers when they are published.

The Role of Selector was approved and should be published.

The selectors were ratified and will be included in the published papers once they have agreed to be involved.

On this basis the group was in support of the draft papers and asked JN to complete work on them in order that they be published as quickly as is feasible.

DS asked for thought to be given to the 2017 programme and that this too should be published as early as possible – ideally the athletes would like this before the end of the 2015.

7. Targets for 2016

Members asked to be reminded of the targets that are already agreed ie the Sport England and Sport Northern Ireland contractual targets. JN agreed to circulate these.

There was discussion around the senior targets and JN was asked to discuss these targets with programme staff and athletes before reporting back to the group.

8. Any other business

It was agreed that a paper be prepared to consider the ramifications of the changing funding situation. 1 April 2017 will see the next Sport England funding cycle and this could seriously impact on the T&P programme. JN/MH asked to consider this situation and bring back to the group updates as and when it is better understood.

To deal with any other pertinent business notified prior to the meeting.

Date of next meeting.

Suggested dates to be circulated to members.