

Talent and Performance Steering Group

Wednesday 7th September 2016

Details: National Office, Scholes Mills, Tansley

Attendees

Alan Bogle (AB)

Bob Dredge (BD)

Mike Hamilton (MH)

Paul Murgatroyd (PM)

Nev Myers (NM)

Jackie Newton (JN)

Mark Saunders (MS)

Minute Taker: BD

Apologies

Roger Scrutton

Kris Jones

1. Welcome and meeting administration

BD thanked all the attendees for making the commitment to attend the meeting. He explained that the timing was due to the availability of the key professional staff and the desire to hold a meeting in September. Unfortunately this meant that some could not attend. However he had spoken to, and received a full note of thoughts from, Kris Jones on behalf of the athletes. BD said he would attempt to represent these as and when appropriate.

2. Actions from the last meeting

.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2015 were agreed without amendment.

.2 JROS engagement-this will be covered in later items but essentially the desire to develop closer working collaboration had been put in place. NM asked that he be copied into relevant athlete emails and communications that impacted on camp and weekend training plans and activities, and also for general information so that he could be aware of developments that may impact on JROS.

.3 Website update- it was noted that there was still some work needed to update the site and make it current.

ACTION-BD and NM agreed to review the current site and make suggestions for update along with practical ideas on how this can be achieved.

.4 Joint camps with other nations-this was still a desired objective but practical timing and resource issues were an issue. Where it is possible to arrange these they will be put in place.

.5 Coach Development- 4 coaches (2 in the South, 2 in the lakes) have been able to attend County based coaching courses and benefit from engagement with the wider community of sports coaches. Squad weekends continue to benefit from the help and involvement of local coaches and some have agreed to assist in future international events. There was a discussion on the identification of potential further assistance and especially the desire to encourage female coaches to become more involved with the squad programme.

.6 Monitoring data- there had been little progress in this area. Members had asked for periodic information on the progress of the programme such as being copied into reports on camps and early notification of significant developments such as team announcements.

ACTION- JN to copy relevant emails and other papers to all group members at the time of the initial circulation to the squad or others.

3. Review of 2016 programme and forward look to 2017

JN presented her paper on the review of the 2015 programme. It was explained that due to timing there had been, as yet, no detailed evaluation of the WOC results but the successes in the sprints and male relay were welcomed and recognised.

It was noted that the SE targets for JWOC and the internal BOF targets for performances had both not been achieved.

For JWOC it was believed that the effects of altitude had been more severe than had been anticipated. It was disappointing that more of the squad had not taken the opportunity of using the altitude training simulators that had been made available to them. However as no currently planned JWOC countries were "at altitude" this would not be expected in the following years. Whilst targets had not been achieved there was encouragement in some individual performances and also in the general emerging depth of positions amongst the squad.

EYOC was seen as a successful event with podium placings for two of the athletes and eight top 10 results.

The results of the EYOC team, and in particular the two gold medal positions, were celebrated and thanks asked to be passed on to the squad and also the team management.

A full review of the WOC event and athlete and team assessments of what goals were achieved and why others were not will be written up and distributed to the group.

ACTION –JN-circulate review report on WOC when completed

There was a lengthy debate on the policy of selecting athletes for individual disciplines and the perception that the professional staff is limiting athletes' choices and development as both sprint

and forest orienteers. It was explained clearly that discussions and guidance with the junior athletes focus on a realistic expectation of where they are currently best placed to get the best results for their relative performance, fitness and technical skills. This is not to foreclose any subsequent development or specialisation. The policy of not entering all athletes in all disciplines was also discussed and again the professional staff explained and reiterated their rationale for this.

The approach to not consider 2nd year 20 year old athletes for JWOC unless they were serious contenders for a top 20 position, but rather use this place to develop an up and coming athlete who is believed to have a realistic chance of future excellent results was explained and confirmed.

JN explained how a few potentially high performing junior athletes had been identified and tracked since 2014. Generally they had achieved expected positions but some had not. JN proposed to do a review of why some had and some had not. There was support for the idea of doing this again in 2017 and tracking this cohort of athletes through the programme.

ACTION JN

The meeting then turned to the plans outlined for 2017. JN had put forward a number of worthy developments that, if implemented, would likely enhance greatly the overall shape and activities of the programmes. However it was realised that they were not deliverable within current, let alone the likely reduced, resource that will be available to the programme following the 2017 Sport England bidding round.

The positive developments with the Centre of Excellence at Sheffield University and the support being given to athletes by local coaches was welcomed, as was the continuing support of the Edinburgh centre. The emerging and vital role that JROS has and will play in the development structure was discussed and welcomed.

In the light of the constraints on the programme JN undertook to develop an affordable model for the 2017 programme based upon the support that is known to be available from external bodies and the priorities the staff saw for funding. In this context the support given to the senior athletes from BOF own funds-at around 10% of non-staff costs was recognised. Comment was also made as to the possibility of senior athletes raising their and the squads domestic profile by, for example, attending home events in squad kit, offering to give prizes at significant events and the like. It is felt that this will better demonstrate their and British Orienteering's commitment to the performance and development side of the sport.

ACTION JN by 30/9/2016

JN introduced a proposal to rationalise the number of athletes in the squads and to focus on genuine high level achievement or potential and as a consequence of this resources may be concentrated on these athletes. Athletes would be asked to be accepted for the squads and chosen on merit and be part funded. This would not disbar any athlete from selection based upon their achieving appropriate results and satisfying the wider selection criteria. A number of the athletes had commented on the strengths and weaknesses in the programme as they perceived them. NM agreed to attempt a succinct summary of these.

ACTION NM

The positive development of working with JROS was outlined. These were welcomed and further integration encouraged. This will be especially helpful as resources become more constrained and JROS can and will play a role in early stage development and talent identification. The work being done within JROS on developing an orienteering pathway will form a focus for this and also for the progression of athletes to senior representative levels. It is believed that the pathway paper will be available in April 2017.

The success of the open weekends and the continuation of this arrangement were also welcomed. NM emphasised the need for the professional staff to copy him into relevant communications about national camps and plans so that they can be integrated into JROS planning timetables.

ACTION PM

Selection 2017

Proposals for selection criteria and Advisors for teams were discussed and agreed in principal. Comment was made about the balance of selection race form and results as against prior year results and it was felt that more emphasis on current rather than past form would be an improvement in the criteria.

There was discussion on the merits of pre selecting relay teams and the need from time to time to change them at the competition. The staff view was that early selection gives the athletes the time to prepare mentally and physically for the particular demands of their leg. They were of the view that changes should only be made in the event of injury, illness or a severe deterioration in form.

For EYOC the policy of selecting only those U16 athletes who were felt appropriately developed to benefit from the experience was reiterated. Generally but not universally these would be athletes who had already been entered into the appropriate squads.

National Activities

AB noted the continuing support of SNI and was please to inform the meeting of the emerging success of one athlete who is becoming a potential future GB squad athlete and appears committed to the GB rather than the Ireland pathway.

Targets for 2017

To be included in JNs paper on proposals for 2017 (see above).

Any Other Business

Forthcoming JROS activities were drawn to the attention of the group, namely JHIs (8/9 October), AGM (19 November) and Hawkshead weekend (3/4 December).

Development squad camps are proposed for weekends of January 20th (Blencathera) and 11/12 February (Twin Peaks)

Next meeting

Request for dates attached with minutes.

- .1 Apologies
- .2 Welcome and meeting administration
- .3 Declaration of Interest
- .4 Actions from last meeting
 - Minutes of meeting held 15 September 2015
 - JROS engagement
 - Website update -joint camps with other nations
 - Coach development
 - Monitoring data
- .5 review of 2016 Programme-Jackie Newton has produced the attached paper to produce a brief paper outlining results against targets (SE and internal) and comments on success/under performance areas
- .6 2017 programme-outline due to funding uncertainties
- .7 Selection-Thoughts on 2017 selection criteria and process
- .8 Selector Advisers and process for 2017
- .9 Briefings from Members re national activates
- .10 Targets and monitoring of progress and achievements in 2017
- .11 Any Other Business
- .12 Provisional dates for 2017 review meeting