

SASA Open Water Swimming Committee

Minutes of Meeting

National Swimming Academy – 19th January 2008

Attendees : Andrea Gellan (AG), Tony Davis (TD), Brian Bain (BB), Alistair Forrest (AF), Doug Milne (DM), Joyce McIntosh (JM), Susan Black (SB), Lesley Prentice (LP), Chris Bostock (CB)

Apologies : Ian MacCallum

Discussion With Chris Bostock

Chris Bostock, attending in his capacity as the chairman of the British Swimming Committee, was welcomed to the meeting.

CB had previously attended a meeting of the SASA STO committee to discuss changes in the way in which swimming officials would be trained, qualified and regulated. At this meeting it was noted that open water swimming in Scotland wasn't regulated through the STO and that a separate discussion may be appropriate.

CB explained a number of issues

- In the summer of 2006 there was discussion on the governance of open water in Britain and particularly the confusion between the role of British Swimming and ASA. This resulted in the British Open Water Swimming Committee being disbanded and responsibility being transferred to Bill Sweetenham. However, Bill Sweetenham had little interest in open water swimming and delegated responsibility to Sean Kelly.
- British swimming was previously funded by ASA/SASA/WASA but is now funded by UK Sport.
- By this time it had been decided that open water would be included in the Olympics and that the principles applied to international selection for pool swimming should also be applied to open water. There was some disagreement among coaches on the detail of selection policies.
- Sam Greetham is still regarded as a big influence since he remains as secretary of LEN Open Water Swimming.
- Michael Scott's appointment should be positive for open water as he is keen supporter.
- The British Swimming Technical committee are trying to ensure that open water swimmers are treated the same as pool swimmers at the same level.
- Chris Martin is the Scottish representative on the committee and we should use him as our link to communicate our views. However, we may also contact Jane Davis or CB directly.
- The World Championship selection trial was originally planned for Midmar but this had to be moved to a different date and a venue near Cape Town for reasons

outwith British Swimming's control. The selection structure will not be changed until after the Beijing Olympics.

- British Swimming was also unhappy about the structure of qualification of officials and selection for the FINA lists. This is now being restructured. The introduction of the "60 year" rule has meant that the existing open water officials are too old for consideration for the 2012 Olympics. LP's stance on the matter together with her age made her a natural choice to be appointed to the FINA list.
- Some have considering contested the age criteria on discrimination grounds but British Swimming believe they would not be able to win a case since FINA is based in Switzerland where age discrimination laws are not as strong as in the UK.
- As a result of the ruling there are now opportunities for officials aged 46 or under to get on the FINA lists with potential to officiate at the 2012 Olympics where GB could have 8 officials. Les Debenham has been asked to lead the coaching of officials. Whereas Scotland has an officials qualification procedure for 4 years, Wales has no equivalent.
- Qualification of officials is changing with the home countries moving towards a common approach which is less based on written examinations. Les Debenham is also leading on this.
- LP was effectively asked by British Swimming to represent Scotland on the development of officials but it is recognised that the SASA open water committee have the right to change this.
- There will be referees exams in December this year and successful candidates would be eligible to be placed on the FINA list in 2010. SASA open water officials will be automatically transferred to GB lists. British Swimming are looking for more integration and would like Scotland to encourage more officials.
- The London Docklands event costs £100,000 per year to stage and is not an ideal venue. It is not being staged in 2008. It could be resurrected in 2009 to be staged in the Serpentine. There are infrastructure problems with the venue and facilities would have to be brought in.
- The British Championships will take place in Nottingham on 9th/10th August along with the ASA Age-Groups and masters.
- Holme Pierrepont will close shortly and be converted to a marina. Liverpool is being considered as an alternative.
- Although there the organisation and qualification of officials is to be standardised there are no plans to introduce British rules to replace ASA and SASA rules. ASA and SASA rules can be considered as promoters conditions.

Minutes of Meeting on 30th September.

The minutes were proposed by AG and accepted by DM. BB queried whether their had been an agreement to change the criteria for the Denis Sullivan award to be restricted to the senior swimmers following the introduction of the Eian Prentice award for junior swimmers. There were differing views on what had been agreed at the previous meeting

but it was now decided to leave the criteria as they were with junior swimmers being eligible for both awards.

Matters Arising

Independent membership for canoes and safety crews : There was no resolution on this issue but it was noted that since independent members were entitled to vote at SASA meetings it was clear that this category was intended for members with a greater involvement in the running of the association who were not aligned with a particular club rather than canoeists and safety crews assisting on an intermittent basis. The same problem exists with ASA and WASA but BLDSA have arranged insurance for people in this category for £3/day.

Actions

- CB to provide information on how insurance is arranged for safety cover assistance at British Swimming events.
- BB/DM to contact Ian MacCallum.

Safety Guidance Document : Work is still ongoing to finalise the document and will now be undertaken by BB following AF standing down from the committee.

LTADP : Information now available on the web site

Remaining Budget for 2006-2007 : The amount left over from last years budget was not established so no additional purchases were made at the end of the last financial year.

2007-2008 Budget : This has been confirmed as £12,700.

British Selection Policies : These weren't forwarded but are now available on the British Swimming Website. CB acknowledged that there had been deficiencies in how policies had been posted in 2007 but this is hoped to improve this year. In addition Chris Martin should be forwarding information.

November Training Day : This took place but with less swimmers than hoped for partially due to a clash with an East District event.

Selection Criteria : These are not available due to AF standing down as team manager.

Action : BB to produce Scottish Team selection criteria for discussion, modification and approval at next meeting.

Contact with Bret Ferguson : It was confirmed that Bret Ferguson was selected for funding to go to the British selection trial in South Africa.

Action : BB to contact Bret Ferguson with information on Scottish open water swimming.

District Reports

East : TD confirmed that he has been reappointed as East District Convenor
Midland : JM confirmed that she has been reappointed as Midland District Convenor
Midland District Championships are now scheduled for 5th July
North : BB confirmed that he has been reappointed as North District Convenor
A budget of £2000 has been allocated to help develop open water swimming among North District clubs. Part of this budget will be spent on a small team to compete in an overseas event.
West : SB confirmed that she has been reappointed as West District Convenor

Health & Safety

Access to jetties should be restricted to swimmers and official and life jackets should be provided for officials who have to be close to the waters edge or in boats.

2008 is the last year of the five year agreement with Dundee Sea Cadets for the provision of safety craft. A new agreement is required for 2009 onwards but DM does not envisage that there will be a difficulty with this.

Action : AG to write letter to Dundee Sea Cadets to request ongoing support for 2009 and beyond.

Scottish Development Squad/Scottish Team

AF has now stepped down from the role of team manager but is willing to provide assistance when available and required. This can include acting as team manager for some teams travelling outside Scotland.

LP and BB indicated that they were prepared to act as team manager until a new appointment was made. It was agreed that BB would take on the role.

There was some discussion on the provision of coaching for the Scottish Team and Development Squad. Alternatives include recruitment of a National coach with an honorarium or sharing the role between a number of interested coaches for the 2008 season and reassessing the situation after that.

There was discussion on the selection of swimmers for the Scottish Development Squad. This resulted in the selection of the following 15 swimmers (in alphabetical order);

Peter Anderson	Mark Deans	Glenn McIntosh
Steven Anderson	Lynne Duncan	Chris Ritchie
Pamela Beck	Jamie Forrest	Ishbel Rodger
Jamie Coulter	James Leitch	Katherine Simpson
Jennifer Davis	Jo-Ann McGarvey	Gemma Veale

No reserves were identified. If some swimmers did not accept places the squad would be smaller.

Action : BB to write to swimmers informing them of their selection and establish their acceptance or otherwise.

BB reported that pool and meeting rooms have been booked for a training weekend on 19th/20th April.

Action : BB to make any necessary arrangements for holding the training weekend pending appointment of Scottish Team manager.

Some old team kit has been made available and there is an indication that a new set of kit will be available for 2008.

Action : AF to follow up allocation of kit with office staff. [Post Meeting Note : A request for kit requirements was subsequently issued by Kirsten Baker when AF was unavailable and was dealt with by BB]

Jamie Forrest competed in the British trial for the World Championships. Following the decision taken at the last meeting he is entitled to partial funding of £500. However, AF indicated that only £300 would be required.

Institute Selection Policy

The selection criteria for open water swimmers to the Area Institutes of Sport has been finalised. Unless swimmers are part of a British team there is a compulsory requirement for swimmers to obtain a 5 Km time in an indoor accredited event. It was noted that the British Championships do not have a 5 Km event in there programme this year and there is no scheduled event in Scotland. This will have to be addressed if an indoor time requirement is still in place for 2008.

Only Jamie Forrest met the qualifying criteria and AG believes that Ally Whike is progressing his nomination.

Action : BB to check with Ally Whike that Jamie's nomination is being progressed.

Dates for Scottish Open Water Events

The British and ASA Championships are now scheduled for 9th/10th August and so clash with the proposed date for the Scottish Championships. As a result it was decided to move the Lochore date to 26th July.

Action : AG to check availability of Lochore Meadows for 26th July.

SB proposed a date of 23rd August for the West District Championships.

It was decided that entry forms for this year's event should be sent directly to the organiser rather than to a single entry secretary.

Scottish Open Water Swimming Grand Prix

The Grand Prix will be run on similar lines to previous years and with the same prize money. BB will coordinate collation of points and awarding of prizes.

Action : BB to produce updated set of rules for this year's Grand Prix series

It was noted that the ASA appear not to be running a Grand Prix series this year.

Co-Opted Members for 2008-2009

LP to be co-opted as officials coordinator and DM as Safety officer. The remaining co-opted place would be left for the team manager when appointed in the event that this is not one of the existing members of the committee.

Officials

It was agreed to look at additional kit for officials including waterproofs and trousers.

Actions : AF to make recommendations.

LP to review competition equipment

SASA Structure Review

BB reported on the two meetings of the Scottish Swimming Restructuring Committee on Committee Structures. Work is ongoing but there is no suggestion at present that the existence and remit of the open water committee will be substantially changes.

There are proposals to appoint a development officer for the disciplines other than swimming.

Action : BB to obtain further details of the proposals for the next meeting.

Communication

It was noted that the edition of SplashNews due to be issued in September 2007 and which was expected to have front page articles on open water swimming, appeared never to have been issued.

AOCB

Licensing : BB suggested that if the withholding of licences for club events held the same days as Scottish Championships or the Championships within that District is not to be enforced for open water events then the regulations it should be changed to allow this.

Commonwealth Games : Following the award of the 2014 Commonwealth Games to Glasgow the possibility of open water swimming being included was raised. The general opinion is that open water cannot be included because it was not in the bid document.

5 Km Indoor Championships : The possibility of resurrecting the Scottish 5 Km indoor event was raised but deferred to the next meeting.