

USA Field Hockey Club Task Force

Meeting Minutes

August 21, 2012

I. Call to order

Simon Hoskins called to order the regular meeting of the USA Field Hockey Club Task Force at 9:00 PM EDT on August 21, 2012.

II. Roll call

The following members were present: Brian Bernatchez, Karen Collins, Lauren Cornthwaite, Simon Hoskins, Richard Kentwell, Kathi Liszewski, Steve Locke, Tina Reinprecht, Emily Thomas, Nigel Traverso and Larry Zappone. The following members were not present: Laura Darling, Tony Gulotta, Karen Klassner and Andy Muir.

III. Items Discussed

1. **2012 Regional Club Championships and National Club Championships** – The format of the Regional Club Championships and how teams advanced to the National Club Championships were discussed. There was a lot of discussion regarding the RCC and the different obstacles in different regions. We also discuss the format for team selection for the U14 NCC for 2013.

A. **Regional Club Championship** – The main issue discussed was how each region ran their RCC and how many teams signed up for each region. Our original recommendation was that each region must have 4 teams to host a RCC. There were several regions that did not have 4 teams. USAFH felt it was better to go on with the RCC in those regions to ensure regional representation and in an attempt to gain interest from other teams in those regions for future years. It was suggested that a new format is used for allocation of spots to the NCC. The group felt going forward a region must have 4 teams to hold the RCC. If a region doesn't have the numbers they can combine with another region but should not receive a spot for each region combining. In order to ensure the spots for the NCC are filled with quality teams but are not a constant so one region is never guaranteed the majority of the spots we suggested a percentage based format. Spots to the NCC should be allocated based on the teams per region (a minimum of 4) divided by the total number of teams entered for all regions multiplied by 16 (rounded accordingly). This formula will give you 16 teams and allows for the number of spots per region to change based on interest and growth. There is a spreadsheet attached to the email showing how this works with 8 and 9 regions. It was suggested region 4 join the Northeast region. The number of teams entered can be input in the yellow cells on the spreadsheet. Different numbers will result in different allocations per region. One other suggestion made to draw more attention and possibly more interest in future events was more communication/recognition to all USAFH members on which teams qualified at the different RCCs. USAFH was to provide numbers from all regions. This was to be used to review the proposed change in how spots for NCC will be allocated going forward. This will need to be revisited at the next meeting.

B. **National Club Championship** – All members thought the 2012 NCC was much better overall than the 2011 NCC. The location was much better and received a 4.1 out of 5 in the post event survey. Everyone was much happier with the playing surface, it received a 4.8 out of 5 on the post event survey. Some of the negative comments from the group and the post event survey were surrounding timing of the event and umpires. The group feels that there must be only the best umpires at these events. It was suggested that instead of asking umpires who are available that they are invited to

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events based on their current level. This way they cannot pick and choose the events they want to attend, rather USAFH can tell them where they are most needed. The timing presents many conflicts with summer vacations and college camps. It was suggested the NCC be held immediately following the National Futures Tournament. It was thought this would increase the number of college coaches in attendance and would make less of a conflict as many of the athletes would already be in VA Beach for that event. Another suggested improvement was to allow players participating in the NCC to be eligible for selection to National Camp and other higher level playing opportunities offered by the Futures program. There are many players overlooked at their Regional Futures Tournament because of the makeup of teams and the lack of experience playing together. This would provide an opportunity for players overlooked to be recognized in a format where their skills can be better showcased. This may also be motivation for more teams to try to qualify for this event, possibly helping the RCC sites meet the minimum numbers needed.

- C. **2013 U14 Club Championship** – The group wanted to know how this age group would be selected for next year. The group did not think there would be enough interest to hold Regional Tournaments for U14. There was a suggestion to use the rankings to assist in selecting teams but since we do not have a U14 ranking some did not agree with using the U16 or U19 rankings for this. It was suggested that U14 would be the place for regional representation. Give one team from each region a spot. This may increase the interest for those regions currently under represented for U16 and U19 in future Club Championships. This item will need to be revisited during the next meeting to finalize a selection process for final recommendation.
2. **2012 – 2013 Affiliation Policy** – The new club affiliation policy was rolled out to all members. The window to change your affiliation was extended from 9/15 to 10/1 to allow more time for changes. The affiliation policy now applies to The National Hockey Festival. Teams are allowed 3 guest players for the National Hockey Festival. A guest player is anyone not affiliated with your club, either affiliated with another club or no affiliation. There was not much discussion surrounding this policy.
3. **Ongoing role and structure of the Club Advisory Task Force** – USAFH felt this task force was a great resource and wanted to keep it going. Steve Locke reviewed the bylaws and there were some changes needed to ensure the CATF was in compliance with the current bylaws. The ongoing mission of the CATF is “ to provide input into the programming, services and events provided by USA Field Hockey for member clubs”. The group must have 8 members, plus 2 USAFH Board observers, and whatever staff is needed to listen/present. Steve used the ED Weekly to solicit any member who wants to be considered to email in their request to be considered for one year term on the CATF. USAFH would like to keep 4 current members on, which provides for some continuity. All current members can email Steve to be considered to continue. In an effort to meet the requirements in the bylaws, 2 new members need to be elite athletes (10 yrs from being NT players). USAFH will keep the same name for the task for to provide continuity. When the new group is formed members may elect Chair and Secretary, although may be good to continue as is. USA Field Hockey to continue to recommend agenda for each session, with an addition of an AOB session at end where CATF members can raise any other business. The timeline for these changes are anticipated to be completed by the end of August or early September. Steve will determine members of CATF and invite them, then make public the group who will serve for the next 12 months.

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4. **Additional Business** – The CATF had a few additional items they wanted to discuss. The group wanted to discuss the selection process for Festival, a way to make the task force available to the membership, club director functions at USAFH events, Disney registration and the Olympic Pipeline.
 - A. **Festival** - The group suggested that the minimum number a players needed to be eligible to enter a spot for the 2013 National Hockey festival should be increased to ensure teams have the membership before registering. There were some teams who dropped out and there has been a lot of teams reaching out looking for players because they do not have enough to field a team. Some members feel guest players are only needed because teams are signing up for events but that they do not have the players to field a full team. The group suggested raising the minimum number of players needed to 25 or 30. The number of U19 players can be inflated because it consists of U14s, U16s, U19s and players in college whose current U19 membership has not yet lapsed. It was also suggested that in order to be eligible for a 2nd team you must meet another minimum, such as 50 players for a 2nd team. Obviously, if there was room for a 3rd team additional minimums would be needed. These numbers will need to be decided during the next meeting.
 - B. **CATF Outreach** – Feedback has been received by CATF members that other clubs would like to have a voice as well. It was suggested when the new CATF is announce that a forum is also announced for clubs not on the task force to bring concerns and suggestions to the task force for review and discussion during meetings.
 - C. **Functions** – It was suggested that USAFH provide a meeting/function to all club directors during large events like Festival and Disney. It was felt club directors do not get to interact as a group and this would be a great opportunity to have an open forum. It was suggested for Festival that this be held in conjunction with team check-in.
 - D. **Disney Registration** – It was suggested that the registration for the Disney Showcase should be changed. Some members felt the 1st come 1st serve registration was unfair and left many clubs out of the event. USAFH responded that the event if ran by Disney and they want a sold out event. There were policies put in place to ensure the top teams were represented using the ranking system to allow some teams to have early registration. It was suggested a similar registration process is used for Disney as is used for Festival.
 - E. **Olympic Pipeline** – Members of the group wanted to know what, if anything was planned to review the current state of the Olympic Pipeline. USAFH will be having a task force to focus on three areas. The main area is the women and the path to Rio. The second area will be the current pipeline for the Men’s program. The final area for that task force will be a recap one year out from the 2012 Olympics. This is being done to strengthen the current program and ensure a successful future.

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IV. Outstanding Business

1. Revisit team selection process for 2013 U14 National Club Championship.
2. USAFH to provide final numbers from all regions for the RCC.
3. Revisit new proposed method for allocation of spots for the NCC.
4. Review and possibly change the numbers required to enter a team into Festival.

V. Next Meeting

No further meetings schedule

VI. Adjournment

Richard Kentwell adjourned the meeting at 10:30 PM EDT.

Minutes submitted by: Kathi Liszewski

Minutes approved by: *Emily Thomas*