

**United States Curling Association  
Executive Committee Meeting  
June 8-9, 2002  
Marriott Airport Hotel, Minneapolis, MN**

final 6-17

**Minutes**

Present

Jack McNelly, in the chair  
Grayland Cousins  
Phill Drobnick  
Bob Fenson  
Pam Finch  
Peggy Hatch  
Warren Lowe  
Richard Maskel  
Chris Moore  
Donna Purkey  
Mark Swandby (until about 10:30 a.m Sunday)  
Ann Swisshelm  
Jane Thompson

Also present

David Garber, Executive Director  
Ed Lukowich, Athlete Development Director  
Rick Patzke, Director of Communications  
Bev Schroeder, Member Services Manager

1. Introductions, approve prior minutes, correspondence

McNelly called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. **Motion by Lowe, Swisshelm second, to approve the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held April 10 in Bismarck, N.Dak. Approved.**

2. Discussion of selected issues, projects

a. USCA Governance Task Force. McNelly noted that the Governance Task Force, appointed by Hatch, was at work, and asked if Executive Committee members felt that changes were needed in the size of the USCA board. Hatch stated that USCA committees could be comprised of both USCA directors and non-directors. Cousins felt that smaller working groups generated better discussions. Lowe supports a smaller board, but pointed out that the "devil is in the details," and thus the concept needs to be communicated properly to the membership. Swandby stated that he had reported on the project at a recent Wisconsin Association meeting, at which he noted no opposition in principle to board reduction, however there was support for continued proportional representation. Moore noted that the option of halving the member-elected directors would maintain proportionality. McNelly noted that perceptions are also important, in that a large board is not necessarily inefficient. McNelly felt that board-elected director numbers could be reduced. Maskel reported that an AAC athlete is available to serve on the Governance committee. Maskel would like to see "regionality" reduced both in playdown format and director berths. McNelly suggested that regions should be notified of any board reduction, and encouraged to elect their best people to the USCA board. Cousins felt that regions would continue to send their best people. Lowe noted that, since financial means vary among curlers, the need to self-fund expenses for two board meetings per year may limit the pool of potential directors. **Moore asked McNelly to ask the Governance Task Force for a written report which could be circulated to directors, members and clubs well prior to the September board meeting.**

b. Assigning new clubs to USCA member regions. McNelly noted that the post-Olympic growth spurt of clubs in states not currently part of a USCA region, and proposed elimination of the “at-large club” category by establishing regional assignments for all states. There are now actual and/or potential new clubs in Florida, Texas, Tennessee, and other states. Discussion ensued on the relationship between regional board and playdown berth representation. One plan would be to assign at-large clubs to regions, or creating new regions, with a view to encouraging, not hindering, development. Finch pointed out the difficulty of operating playdowns in areas with no ice, especially arena rental costs. McNelly urged a pro-active approach. Moore suggested coordinating this subject with the Governance and Format Task Forces, which was agreed by consensus. Moore asked that the Rules Committee review the “two-year USCA membership requirement for club playdown eligibility” rule for the 2003 USCA Championship Rules booklet to ensure clarification regarding clubs joining during a year.

c. Special USCA internet membership category? Finch introduced this idea, noting it may be advantageous to offer USCA limited memberships through web site, as a means to raise funds and help grow the sport. For a fee of perhaps \$30, a “supporter” would not be a member of a state, region or club, would not have playdown eligibility or other member rights from a by-laws view, but would have access to merchandise, credit card, pins, other promotional materials and programs (special drawings, etc.), special communications, would receive the *U.S. Curling News*. Other sports, like golf, have similar programs, which are evidently attractive to generic sports fans. USCA would need to have an on-line credit card capability. Other possible “supporter” benefits were noted, such as special offers from curling supplies vendors. Patzke mentioned idea of affiliating with a complimentary sport such as golf. Lowe suggested that USCA create a membership card or luggage tag program. Finch will research the potential. Hatch suggested further database enhancement to collect email addresses on database to alert members to upcoming TV coverage, etc. **Motion by Hatch, Swisshelm second, to initiate a program of on-line USCA membership.** The words “athlete” or “member” will not be used. **Approved.**

d. Frame the citizenship eligibility issue for a September board vote. McNelly asked if the committee felt that a vote could be taken at the September meeting on this issue. Hatch reported that the Grand National region felt there had not been enough comment to GNCC from its members, so GNCC has arranged to get that comment prior to the next USCA meeting. Cousins said there is no choice but to vote in September, and Swisshelm noted anticipates making a motion at that meeting. McNelly suggested that USCA directors should be re-informed about the issue soon, to afford them a better chance to prepare for the vote. Cousins addressed the issue of role and responsibility of USCA directors. Extensive discussion. Majority seemed to agree that a directors first responsibility is to the USCA as a whole, not to individuals, clubs or regions. The question, “should the Executive Committee vote on the issue and provide advice to the full board in advance of the September vote” was discussed. McNelly felt it’s not appropriate to pre-judge the issue by voting now. Moore suggested that the issue be framed to the members in a non-judgmental manner to provide food for thought for the vote. Extensive discussion. Fenson concerned that directors be fully informed. Maskel noted that a citizenship requirement would put to rest any issues related to U.S. residency. Moore suggested that a position paper be prepared as soon as possible to frame the issues which could be shared with directors, members and individual clubs as well as posted on the web site. This will help ensure that all interested parties are well informed and have the opportunity to provide input and comment. **McNelly will write to directors to remind them, and inform the new directors, that a motion and vote are expected in September. McNelly asked Swisshelm to present a motion to group tomorrow morning.** (*Secretary’s note: this was not done for time reasons and will be done soon.*)

e. College curling disciplinary action and future organization. Hatch reported the background of an incident in which a team was suspended after the 2002 College Curling USA Tournament, which is

funded jointly by the USCA and the Illinois State Curling Foundation. After considerable discussion between the ISCF and USCA, it is agreed that any disciplinary process must be handled in compliance with USCA by-laws. Therefore Hatch proposed that, the incident report, in effect a complaint, submitted to USCA by the ISCF, will be submitted to the USCA Board of Review. **Motion by Hatch, Drobnick second, to follow the process under the USCA by-laws to handle the incident.** Hatch noted that for the future, the ISCF plans to develop a code for player conduct. Swisshelm noted that the AAC is developing a Code of Conduct that ISCF athletes could use. The college players in this incident will be advised by the office that the matter is under review. Finch will work with Garber to communicate with the players. **Approved.**

3. Strategic Plan Status. Hatch distributed the Strategic Plan to the committee, updated for expenses and actions during fiscal year 2002 just now concluding. Hatch reviewed, point by point, USCA results versus plan for 2002. In summary, for Priority Issue 1&2, "Grow the Sport" and "Curler Development," the USCA was very successful in the goals "Maximize exposure from Olympic Games;" the "Olympic promotional package" for club use; the "Rock Stars" television program. However the USCA did not conduct additional Member Marketing Seminars, or a Member Marketing Seminar Facilitators curriculum. Junior camps were conducted but limited adult camp activity. The adult, junior and mixed national championships were, taken as a whole, well conducted and completed under budget. A regional officers meeting was not held last season. Most of the competitive programs and operations were completed successfully and on budget. Revenue from Donation program and Olympic pins fell well short of budget. Hatch asked for opinions on how best to utilize the Strategic Plan. It was a big job to update the numbers and results each year. Hatch is happy to continue if it is worthwhile. The committee feels that this is a good planning tool and strongly endorsed Hatch's efforts and encourages her to continue. Hatch said it is important that the USCA define its discretionary income, as opposed to revenue restricted under the terms of grants, and ask the question, what percent of discretionary funds should be spent in each Priority area? Moore noted importance of communications with membership and asked if a "USCA Annual Report" would be a worthwhile project.

#### 4. Treasurer

a. Final 2002 financial results and preliminary 2003 budget plan. Moore distributed the first draft budget plan based on initial submissions from the officers and Executive Director spending areas. Where budget figures have not yet been provided the FY02 figure was simply carried forward. The fiscal year 2003 result will be better than the projection at the April meeting, primarily due to several under-spent areas. The final result may meet or be more favorable than the original budgeted \$22,500 deficit. In addition, an unforeseen \$50,000 or more will be received from USOC shortly from the Roots retail Olympic clothing sales, to be included in the FY2003 revenue budget. (This is not to be confused with the catalog sales, from which the USCA has received about \$1,300 commission.) The internet collaborative deal is still alive but will not be budgeted until financing for the new venture is closed and a check received by USCA. The committee endorsed developing a break-even budget for FY2003.

Maskel asked if there is any chance to build reserve funds to cope with extra expenses in the 2006 Olympic year. Moore noted the build up in the past several years of USCA net worth to \$250,000 as one reserve. However, achieving this target simply allows a balanced, rather than surplus, budget. In addition, the USCA has flexibility with the current Joint Marketing Agreement in how it allocates the income. In effect, the USCA has spread the heavily front-loaded contract fairly evenly over the 4½-year contract period. Maskel hoped the USCA could create a plan for contingency funds for 2006 to take care of unforeseen problems.

b. Records retention policy. Moore handed out a proposed records retention policy. **Motion by Moore, Swisshelm second, to approve a USCA records retention policy as distributed, with the addition to the permanent retention list of the U.S. Curling News, which contain USCA**

**competition results.** Thompson asked about individual records people might keep at home. Finch felt there is no way to address this, except that USCA directors should follow the new policy. Accordingly, the policy should be made available on the web site and in the USCA Directors Reference Manual. The new policy is to be included as an appendix to these minutes. **Approved.**

## 5. Executive Director.

a. Olympic impact. Garber reported that, in view of the sometimes contentious views regarding use of USCA resources for member services versus elite athlete programs, it was a "great irony of 2002" that the presence of curling in the Olympic Winter Games had provided the biggest boost to the USCA Grass Roots in his memory, as reported in the *U.S. Curling News*.

b. Consultants. In view of the beginning of a new quadrennium, and in view of the significant USCA resources devoted to staff, including two replacement employees starting in June (now full time per board approval in April). Garber asked senior business consultants/curlers Mike Griem and Dick Urevig to visit the USCA office (pro-bono) and evaluate office work efficiencies. That visit was made May 22-24. Griem and Urevig will report their findings to the USCA Human Resources Committee, with a summary report to the USCA Directors at the September board meeting. Garber is very appreciative of their contribution.

c. Glodoski commended. Garber reported that staff makes a consistent effort to be worth the USCA investment; that in his opinion staff does good work and has high morale. Sandy Glodoski, who is retiring, was commended for 10 fine years of work for the USCA.

d. Staff replacements. Offers to candidates for the Administrative Assistant and Communications Specialist positions were made and verbally accepted when Garber left for this meeting. The USCA office had about 60 applicants for the two open positions approved by the USCA board in April. About 15 candidates were interviewed, with second interviews for six candidates. The six finalists were interviewed by Garber, Patzke, Schroeder and Sandy Robinson. Garber is very pleased to announce that Sandy Robinson, who had considered a retirement date of June, 2003, has decided to remain with the USCA indefinitely, likely at least through the 2006 Torino Olympic Games.

e. Insurance. Garber reported that the USCA liability and employee health insurance premiums will rise due to general insurance cycle. Swisshelm will work with Garber to ensure that USCA keeps current in providing mandatory athlete insurance coverage per USOC guidelines.

## 6. USOC.

a. Paralympic governance. McNelly reported that USA Tennis will handle that sport's Paralympic operations, but tennis has great resources and is the only National Governing Body (NGB) to do so as yet. For now, USCA will move carefully as it learns the responsibilities and the resources available to match the responsibilities. **The committee authorized Garber and Finch to work with Weston Smith to survey U.S. clubs as to their handicapped accessibility.** The World Curling Federation is evaluating its paralympic involvement. In the U.S., governance will be by either USCA or the USOC Paralympic NGB.

b. World University Games (WUGS). McNelly reported that he had authorized USCA participation in the 2003 WUGS based on the benefits to USCA in international relations and member services, rather than an immediate benefit to elite programs. A team selection procedure is needed. Maskel stated that the USCA AAC generally prefers selection by on-ice competition, but based on short notice would accept selection from pool of applicants, even creating teams from among applicants. The committee then extensively discussed the benefits, costs (about \$12,000 for 2003) and selection

procedure options. Due to the January schedule and conflict with both junior and adult playdowns, participants may not be the top tier players. Swisshelm suggested that the USCA should make its first priority the selection of the best team possible for the Junior Men's B challenge. **Motion by Hatch, Fenson second, to select the WUGS teams via applications by individuals, with the final team selection made by a committee appointed by president McNelly to include, at minimum, an AAC rep, a representative from the Elite Programs Committee, and the ADD.** Further discussion. **Swisshelm or Garber to get from USOC in writing that WUGS is NOT a protected competition under the Amateur Sports Act. Approved, with one opposed and Drobnick abstaining.**

7. World Curling Federation.

Lowe reported there was not much new since the April board meeting report. Keith Wendorf is now a full time employee with the WCF.

8. United States Women's Curling Association.

Purkey noted not much new since April meeting report. The USWCA web site is now up and running.

9. Athletes Advisory Council. Chair Maskel and USOC-AAC rep Swisshelm reported.

a. Elections. The AAC met May 31, June 1 and 2 in Minneapolis, with seven members present. The meeting included discussion about its own by-laws and methods of seating AAC members. As a result, the AAC expanded to 11 members, of whom only nine will serve on the USCA Board, instead of the previous 10 (*Secretary's note: this would result in a 45 member USCA board in 2003, so nine athletes meets the 20% requirement*). Now, the two national team representatives, who are not elected by all eligible athletes, will not be USCA directors. The AAC proposes to change its bylaws so that the council will not include national team representatives in the future, so that all members will be athlete-elected.

b. Evaluations. The AAC evaluated reports from athletes on the 2002 National, World and Olympic teams. Comments on Olympic team housing and the role of World Team Leaders will be included in proposals to better meet athlete needs for future competitions.

c. Citizenship. The AAC debated the nationals citizenship eligibility issue, and voted 5-2 in favor of excluding non-U.S. citizens from national playdowns, which, Maskel noted, is consistent with past AAC votes on this issue.

d. Officiating. The AAC considered changes in the officiating system as suggested by Cousins. The AAC favors eliminating the position "on-ice observer."

e. Format. The AAC reviewed the proposals from the USCA Format Task Force, and unanimously supports retaining the current men's format. The AAC advocates seeding a certain number of elite women's teams directly into the women's national championships, which, Maskel says, could encourage more women's teams to enter playdowns while helping to ensure the strongest teams reach the nationals, rather than risk top teams eliminating each other in a regional competition.

f. Nationals bids. The AAC reviewed and endorsed the bid by the Centerville (Wisc.) Curling Club to host the 2004 U.S. Junior Nationals. The AAC looked at a possible rotation system among curling clubs with five sheets or more for hosting men's and women's national events.

g. Flat rate nationals transportation. The AAC voted 5-2 to support Cousins' proposal, on a one-

year trial basis, for a flat rate payment to nationals teams to cover transportation to nationals, rather than reimbursement for mileage or booking flights through USCA Travel Coordinator.

h. Championship rocks. The AAC supports a USCA purchase a set of championship event rocks. Since funding is an issue, Maskel said the AAC proposed getting a sponsor to underwrite that cost, in exchange for exposure.

i. 2006 Selection procedure. The council recommended utilizing the 2002 Olympic Team Selection Procedures for the 2006 Games. Swisshelm said the AAC favors a fall selection event (vs. spring).

j. Continental Cup. The AAC would support selection of the national champions for the Continental Cup, even in an Olympic year.

k. Athlete Development Director; World Team Leaders; medical support. The AAC supports current ADD Ed Lukowich, and favors a renewal of his contract, up to four years. The AAC supports expansion of the pool of qualified World and Olympic team leader candidates; it was noted that since at least two other countries assigned physical therapists to accompany their teams to recent world championships, the USCA may want to look into this practice, or at least establish a policy for medical/physical therapy support at international championships; the AAC would like alternative choices for sports psychologist support of USCA athletes.

l. Ice Technician. The AAC debated the idea of making the USCA Ice Technician a paid position, and proposes that the USCA board consider this for the future, plus USCA financial support for continuing education.

m. USOC AAC rep. Swisshelm reported. There are many major issues at the USOC, including filling the recently vacated USOC President position; dealing with a number of organizational restructurings, and choosing a host city candidate for the 2012 Olympics. Swisshelm said she has been offered an internship with the USOC, and that she is a candidate to be the athlete services representative for the 2002 World University Winter Games. Maskel commended Swisshelm for her continued service on the AAC.

## 10. Marketing & Operations.

a. Internet Collaborative. Discussed previously.

b. Television update. Patzke reported that he and WCF Development Officer Richard Harding met in May with three U.S. networks including NBC discuss broadcast opportunities. The WCF and USCA are considering various options, from time-buys to possible barter deals, for getting coverage of future world and U.S. championships on U.S. television. The WCF has indicated a strong interest in assisting the USCA in increasing the amount of televised curling coverage in the United States.

c. Donations legal requirement. Finch reported on state and national reporting requirements for non-profits that accept donations, based on information learned at a recent seminar. USCA must file and pay registration fees of \$1,435 to cover 38 states, plus nominal annual renewal fees. Finch noted that clubs or regions that are non-profits and that accept donations should also be aware of these requirements. Finch reviewed options for setting up a Donor Advisor Fund that can be delegated solely for specific purposes. Finch is still seeking a candidate for USCA Donation Program chairman.

d. Sponsorship. Hatch reported on sponsorship opportunities and use of a sports marketing company to handle USCA account. A major merchandiser has been approached as a potential apparel sponsor for the USCA. Hatch is handling this opportunity. Finch is working on getting advice for sports

marketing companies with whom the USCA could consider working.

e. USOC at curling clinic. Finch noted that several U.S. Olympic Committee employees took part in a curling clinic in Colorado in May.

*Meeting recesses Saturday evening, and reconvenes at 8:06 a.m. Sunday*

#### 11. Member Services.

a. Overall. Swandby reported on status and plans of member services. He highlighted some of the items that the committee will need to consider when further reviewing the budget. Swandby had visited USCA office in Stevens Point Friday May 31, to review Member Services operations. Swandby's approach will be to make minor adjustments to Member Services programs for the present, as he learns more about the program.

b. College. Swandby briefly reviewed college curling operations.

c. Youth. The Youth Curling Committee chair is now Anne Robertson. The "Curling in the Gym" program will continue, with USCA people attending state teachers conventions in Wisconsin and perhaps other states. Swandby will recruit people in Minnesota and North Dakota to handle these events so as to spread the travel role to reduce Schroeder's travel schedule. The Junior Merit Manual is being revised by Cyndee Johnson. The demand for junior rocks has lessened over the past five years. Lowe observed that perhaps the national need has been met for the time being.

d. Training & Instruction. New chair Hatch reported that, with new clubs and new members for the next season, the committee will be particularly important. Her plans include appointment of six National Course Conductors (Level 3), with candidates Cousins (GNCC), Ann Brown (IL), Schroeder (WI area), Neil Doese (WI), Lynette Munkberg (MN) and "to be determined" (AK). Goal is to develop 232 Level 2 Instructors (two for every three sheets of ice) and 696 Level 1 (two for every sheet). Budget request is \$5,000 for camps, travel and teaching materials. Junior camps have been scheduled and placed on USCA calendar.

e. Club Membership and Development. Swandby reported that the Membership Marketing Seminars work well, and more will be scheduled this season—two in Wisc./Minn., and one in Grand National. The USCA registration and certification database needs a major overhaul to get it up to date and work will be done in this area.

f. Rock pool. Loaner rock pool is depleted, with work to be done to replenish the pool. USCA plan is to purchase rocks where available for leaseback to new clubs, subject to budget approval. Lakeshore (Wisc.) Curling Club ended operations several years ago, but will donate \$3,500 of its remaining assets to the USCA for use by new clubs. Intent is that this donation be used to help provide rocks to new clubs. Committee asked Schroeder to work with Lakeshore. Hatch related Tom Garber's thoughts on a starter kit for new clubs. Schroeder will follow up T. Garber. Schroeder lauded Ed Shipstad for his work in promoting curling in both Tennessee and Florida. Swisshelm is working with the Chicago Park district on a youth program and will need stones. Concern expressed with identifying the location of 10 sheets of WCF and ACF rocks in Utah. Hatch suggested assignment of one director to track this down.

g. Internet. Swandby reported that Patzke is working with vendor/sponsor to develop options for direct web entry of membership information. Budget not yet known. Swandby advocated continuing Regional Officers meetings. The committee expressed strong support for continuing this program, with early fall meeting this fall.

## 12. Competitive Programs.

a. Performance Funding Grant Application. Thompson asked Lukowich to report. Lukowich reported that he, McNelly, Swisshelm and Garber presented the USCA Performance Funding Grant application at to the U.S. Olympic Committee at Colorado Springs in early May. The USCA request was \$409,000, and USOC staff recommendation is to grant \$115,500, which is subject to USOC Executive Committee approving an addition to the funding pool. If not the recommendation will be for between \$40-75,000. The USCA can appeal this staff recommendation. Garber, Swisshelm, Hatch and McNelly discussed the nature of these decisions and the difficulty of predicting what criteria the USOC staff really uses for allocating dollars. A strong appeal is needed. For example, Hatch referred to USOC reference to "ROI" on athlete support. USCA position is that curling elite careers are long and the investment will help future Olympians now or the next quad. USOC liked the new emphasis on athlete accountability. USCA wants more specific feedback. Feels unsure of objective process and needs more information from USOC even if it disagrees with USOC opinion. USCA feels like USOC ignores its statement that NGB understands its sport best. USOC says it is funding USCA system, not specific athletes, early this quad. USCA counters that its application is a package in which the athlete funding component enables athletes to fully exploit the programs, such as early ice. Long-term disagreement seems to be USOC hesitancy to fund more than one national team. USCA knows no one can tell who will win nationals or Olympic Trials in a given season. So far, no nation has shown that all-star team concept will work in curling (vs. self-formed teams). Lukowich hoped to develop further opportunities on World Curling Tour. McNelly noted that Base Funding has been decreased to \$250,000 for all NGBs, and Performance Pool seems to be used to lesson the decrease for some sports that have taken a big decrease. Hatch—what about coach driven, athlete centered philosophy? Swisshelm stated that it is absolutely wrong to narrow funding to one team at the beginning of the quadrennium. **The committee supports by consensus an appeal of the Performance Grant award.**

*At this time the Executive Committee went into executive session, without staff present, to discuss various Human Resources matters.*

b. Budget. Thompson will adjust her budget based on final Performance Grant when known. Thompson has added dollars to Coaching Committee budget for Coaching Training Clinics and a Coaching Symposium. Proposed budget covers two team leaders for Junior Worlds; and one team leader and four trainees for Men's & Women's Worlds. The Continental Cup budget will be proposed shortly. The World University Games expense will be budgeted under College Curling or the president's budget.

### c. Athlete funding; updated budget spreadsheet.

i. Discussion. Moore will email an updated budget spreadsheet for officers review, to be followed by a special meeting via conference call. The committee discussed best uses of Internet Collaborative dollars, if/when they are forthcoming. McNelly introduced the concept of Lukowich spending a small part of his time on marketing, about 10%, to develop future sources of sponsorship revenue. Lukowich is agreeable, and this will be considered. McNelly suggested that the first \$50,000 of Internet Collaborative dollars be allocated to Elite Programs.

ii. Athlete funding applications. Thompson noted that the athlete funding process and applications will be ready to distribute when the final budget amounts are known.

d. Karuizawa tournament, invitation policy. USCA has accepted the invitation to the February, 2003 Karuizawa men's competition. **Motion by Thompson, Drobnick second, to nominate Team**



**Pustovar as the U.S. representatives. Approved, with Maskel abstaining.**

e. World team uniform order. **Thompson was authorized to include jackets for senior world teams in the Pacesetter order.** Lowe noted that World Seniors is not a “done deal” for 2003. Schroeder will check inventory of World Team Banners.

f. World Junior Men’s “B” Challenge. **It was agreed by consensus that the competition to select a U.S. representative will take place at a midwest club on the weekend of either November 7-10; Nov. 14-17; or Nov. 21-24. Team applications and final details will be available on the USCA web site the week of June 18.** An Elite Programs sub-committee (Thompson, Drobnick, D. Brown) will finalize details (see also item 13.c., below).

### 13. Championships.

a. 2003 M/W Nationals site selection. **Motion by Swisshelm, second by Thompson to approve Utica as the site for the 2003 USCA Men’s and Women’s National Championships. Approved unanimously.**

b. 2004 Jr. Nationals site selection. **Motion by Finch, second by Swisshelm, to approve Centerville as the site for the 2004 USCA Junior National Championships. Approved 12-1.** *(It was noted that the agenda item to approve Mankato as the 2004 Mixed Nationals site had previously been handled and approved.)*

c. Jr. Men’s World “B” pool challenge.

i. Copenhagen event. Thompson noted that the board had previously agreed to participate in the 2003 Junior World “B” competition in order to attempt to re-qualify the U.S. junior men for the 2003 World Junior Curling Championships. The event will be held January 8-12 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The format is round robin, no playoff, with the top two countries advancing to the 2003 World Junior Men’s Curling Championship. The U.S. team will be accompanied by a certified coach and a team leader, or the Athlete Development Director. The committee proposes that the team arrive three days prior to the practice day. The estimated budget expense for the U.S. playdown, U.S. team training and the WJCC “B” is \$18,000-20,000. Garber will research potential for a USOC contingency grant for this program.

ii. U.S. team selection. The U.S. playdown is expected to involve up to six teams, selected based on national/world competition experience. It is expected that teams who must fly will be reimbursed using “nationals policy.” Possible formats were discussed. The selection committee is to be named, and will meet during the September USCA board meeting.

### 14. Special projects.

a. Format Task Force. Fenson distributed an outline of a draft proposal, seeking comments and feedback. The goal of the task force is to develop a playdown process resulting in the best teams in the nationals, and through nationals. Present system is not broken but can be improved. Task Force is trying to consolidate state/region berths to make process more manageable. Phase 1—To be implemented in the 2003-2004 season. Two regions combine to equal one zone. Two teams advance. Phase 2—3-5 year horizon, with a further breakdown of regional boundaries allowing only the top team to advance. Discussion ensued, and included, as a separate option, the development and implementation of a developmental club nationals for recreational curlers and developing teams using existing regional boundaries.

i. Men's Playdowns and Format Proposal:

- for the 2004 season, consolidate existing regions into "x" number of larger regions based on playdown numbers, maybe six.
- build into the playdowns the 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance concept by sending two teams per region to the USCA National Championships. This eliminates the need for a separate 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance event.
- encourage regions to use a two week pyramiding playdown
- allow regions to hold playdowns in February to allow more teams the opportunity to prepare in January
- play a 10 or 12 team round robin at nationals

ii. Women's Playdown and Format

- For 2003 season, consolidate existing regions into 5 or 6 larger regions based on playdown numbers
- Allow regions to hold playdowns in February
- continue to play a ten-team round robin at nationals

iii. Extensive discussion included these subjects: how to get best teams to nationals; value of 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance competition; extra event that may be needed to select state/regional champion if nationals berths were consolidated; concept that 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance provides excellent competition as tune-up for nationals; 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance gives unfair disadvantage to 1<sup>st</sup> place teams at regions; standardize region playdown dates to equalize timing of state/regional playdowns. Moore recommended that if the task force plans to bring a proposal to the September board meeting that a written proposal be prepared and available to clubs and regions for review and comment this summer.

15. Other business. There was no other business.

16. Unfinished business. The budget plan for FY2003 will be reviewed and approved during a special meeting via conference call in the near future.

17. New business.

a. Code of Ethics. Swisshelm urged consideration of adoption by USCA directors of USOC Code of Ethics. **Garber will distribute the USOC Code of Ethics to USCA directors prior to September meeting.**

b. Flat rate travel to nationals. Cousins asked for approval of the proposal discussed earlier in the meeting, noting the goal is to get USCA out of the travel business. The 2003 flat rate would be calculated by athlete (not by team) at \$350 per athlete for flyers, \$250 divided by 4 for drivers. Consideration to be given to supplement rate or buy tickets for Alaska teams. Office will divide the gross allowance per team by the number of team members listed on the playdown entry forms and state/region winner certification forms, based on driving distance. **Motion by Lowe, Finch second, to approve the flat rate policy. Approved.**

c. USCA history. Maskel urged USCA to do more to chronicle and celebrate its own history, including compiling playdown records and statistics, noting championship anniversaries, etc., and asked for consideration of action at a future meeting. McNelly noted Maskel's comments and suggested that it may be appropriate to appoint a USCA historian.

18. Adjourn. **Motion by Drobnick, duly seconded and approved, so the meeting was adjourned at 12:22 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
David Garber  
Recording Secretary

Reviewed and authorized  
R. Chris Moore  
Secretary