

## United States Curling Association

### Executive Committee Meeting

June 28-29, 2003

O'Hare Hilton, Chicago, Illinois

#4 7-10-03

### Minutes

#### Present

Bob Fenson, in the chair  
Grayland Cousins  
Phill Drobnick (Saturday only)  
Pam Finch  
Warren Lowe  
Richard Maskel  
Jack McNelly  
Chris Moore  
Mark Swandby  
Jane Thompson

#### Not present

Donna Purkey  
Ann Silver  
Phill Drobnick (Sunday)

#### Also present

David Garber, Executive Director  
Ed Lukowich, Athlete Development Director  
Bev Schroeder, Member Services Manager

1. Call to order; parliamentarian; approve prior minutes. **Fenson called the meeting to order at 10:07am. Fenson appointed Lowe as meeting Parliamentarian. Motion by Thompson, Cousins second to approve minutes of the April 25, 2003, meeting. Approved.** Fenson noted that he had merged several committees and two Task Forces to streamline the organization and facilitate a more efficient meeting schedule.
2. 2004 Nationals. Presentation: Fenson distributed a report from Don Barcome of Forks Classic Events, to which the Grand Forks Curling Club has delegated Host duties for the 2004 National Championships. Cousins reviewed the subject of ice making, and noted that the USCA will have added resources from increased playdown entry fees to hire a professional ice maker. The nationals ice making contract will be developed through the USCA Field of Play Committee, and the ice maker will be paid directly by the USCA. The committee agreed that the USCA must control the ice making function for USCA events. Cousins will follow up with the host committee. Cousins also reviewed the subject of using one versus two venues for nationals (for 2004, the Grand Forks Curling Club and the Purpur Arena), and the impact on competitive results. The USCA AAC was unanimous in favoring one venue at nationals. Cousins proposes one venue, the arena.
3. NBC-TV. Finch reported on the "Ice 2003" TV production, to be broadcast on NBC in December, 2003, with coverage of curling (Continental Cup), luge and bobsled events. The "realistic" budget shows a \$37,000 loss per sport. The worst case, meaning no ads are sold, is a loss of \$189,000. The contract must be signed very soon, as NBC cannot save the time slot much longer. After extensive discussion, **motion by Finch, Drobnick second, to authorize the contract to be signed by a USCA officer, and to budget \$36,925 in expenses, and to acknowledge that the ultimate cost may be as**

**much as \$189,000. Approved unanimously.**

4. Strategic Plan Status. Cousins reported. He lauded Peggy Hatch's work in the past several years, and reported that he will have a presentation for the fall Executive Committee meeting.

5. Treasurer.

a. Treasurer's report. Moore distributed a current year-to-date "budget to actual" comparison report, and an initial budget document for fiscal year 2004. He led a discussion of the principles of the relationship between the current USCA surplus and deficit spending. Moore noted that the initial budget shows excess expenses in the Base Funding class. Moore noted the need to more precisely define the term "member services" to better quantify USCA spending in this area.

b. Wisconsin dues motion. Swandby reported on the Wisconsin State Curling Association request to rescind the \$2 dues increase scheduled for FY2004, and the development of that motion. Maskel suggested sending USCA representatives to the next WSCA meeting. Further discussion of the Wisconsin dues proposal was deferred after the upcoming budget process.

6. Executive Director. Garber reported. He noted that he had submitted his budget proposals for staff salaries and benefits, national office expenses, and the *U.S. Curling News*.

a. Travel coordination. Staff will handle the meeting planning part of the USCA Travel Coordinator role next season. With some exceptions, the travelers will book their own air travel. Evelyn Nostrand has retired after many years of excellent service, and due to changes in the economics of the travel industry, it is hard to find a travel agent who wishes to handle the USCA account. Moore suggested that Financial Policy be amended to clarify the types of travel for which the USCA office will provide support (e.g., team travel to Worlds, WCF, etc.) and what types of travel arrangements are the sole responsibility of the traveler (e.g., competitor travel to national championships). Garber will consider developing an air travel expense control form.

b. Liability insurance. The USCA general liability insurance program hit bumps last season when the insurer required use of a waiver and release form. While this administrative burden is not new to most sports organizations, it was new to curlers. In addition, inquiries from two clubs resulted in a close review of the USCA policy over several months. The USCA is open to considering competitive bids from other vendors.

7. U.S. Olympic Committee. McNelly reported.

a. Governance. Changes to USOC governance have been proposed by both a USOC task force, and by a Senate Commission. Both groups agree that the old 100+ member board will become an Assembly, meeting annually, that the Executive Committee would be eliminated, and that a nine-member board of directors would govern. Several differences in the details must be worked out. Senator McCain wants the new structure in place by January, 2004. The McCain proposal would require a re-write of the Amateur Sports Act, which governs the USOC.

b. Funding. The new NBC/IOC Olympic TV agreement should help the overall USOC revenue stream.

8. World Curling Federation. Lowe reported on the availability, through February, 2006, of a WCF Development Assistance Program grant totaling \$40,000. No "matching funds" are required. Lowe led a discussion of USCA strategic international goals. The committee then discussed appropriate USCA use of the WCF grant program. Grant proposals will come to Garber by July 15 from Swandby, Thompson and Finch.

9. USWCA. No report.

10. Athlete Advisory Committee. Maskel reported. The AAC met at the Madison Curling Club the weekend of May 31. The AAC endorsed the “24-4” standard for ice conditions; and endorses use of a professional ice maker at nationals, including a training new ice maker component. The term “World Team Preparation” should be “World Team Support.” The AAC suggests it may be better to name World Team Leaders after nationals so the teams can have more input. The AAC suggests moving World Team Leader selection, and development of their duties, from the Coaching to the World Team Preparation Committee. Maskel suggests developing a USCA Performance Enhancement Team capability. A strict definition for the citizenship “on-track” process was endorsed by a narrow margin. The AAC suggests moving the coaching function into the Elite Programs Committee.

World Team Leader. Maskel initiated a committee discussion of World Team Leader criteria and selection policy. Lukowich suggested ways to improve USCA sports psychology programs.

Drawmaster. The AAC has concerns about championship draws. Cousins explained reasons that made the USCA Drawmaster position a difficult role. There is a possibility that a computer program may be available to develop event draws in the future. Cousins will find people to do the draw.

Publicity for athlete funding. **Motion by Finch, Lowe second, to have a USCA disclosure policy regarding direct athlete support which shall disclose the names of the athletes receiving support along with the aggregate funding dollars. Funding amounts for individual athletes will not be disclosed.** Discussion. **Approved, with Drobnick abstaining.**

*The committee entered an Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.*

11. Marketing & Operations Finch reported.

a. Television. Covered earlier under Treasurer section.

b. Sponsorship, sports marketing companies. The USCA continues to pursue various leads, and will continue to develop its marketing plan.

c. Merchandising. The XP Apparel program generates several hundred dollars per month in royalties for the USCA. USCA has committed to purchase 12,500 OXL program cards, which should be distributed this summer. The cards include buying benefits for USCA members.

d. Database. The new web-based database is up and running. At least one organization has expressed interest in buying the new software.

e. Promotional CD. Finch suggests including \$3,000 in the budget for a mini-sized CD, at a cost of \$1.50 per CD, used for media and sponsor development, as well as instructor programs. This is a WCF program that can be customized for USCA use ([www.curlingbasics.com/wcf/start.swf](http://www.curlingbasics.com/wcf/start.swf)).

f. Playdown eligibility determination & dues. Current USCA policy uses the Club Membership Certification Form to certify that individual players meet eligibility requirements regarding club membership. However there is currently no procedure in place to ensure compliance with the eligibility requirement that membership be in a club “which for the current year and immediate past year is a dues-paying member of a state or regional association.” (Championship Rules booklet Section I.A.) Moreover, the USCA By-laws do not provide penalties for non-payment of dues by member states, regional associations or clubs-at-large. Agreement was reached to continue to rely on the Club Membership Certification Form to determine that an individual player is a member of a USCA member club, subject to verification by the USCA office with the clubs. Discussion included possible future web-

based registration, and how to verify club membership. In addition, a recommendation will be made to the By-Laws Committee that provisions be included in the new By-Laws to define a member "in good standing" and consequences for failure to pay dues in a timely manner. **Garber to develop a proposed verification process to report to the board by the September meeting.**

12. Member Services. Swandby reported.

a. Ice arena trade show. Patzke, Schroeder and Mark Callen of Scotland represented the USCA at the Ice Skating Institute Conference in Las Vegas to promote curling in ice arenas. The WCF assisted with Callan's travel expenses. Callen has experience in the efficient conversion of arenas to/from curling, along with related equipment, including an overlay system that projects the rings on the ice. The USCA exhibit was well-attended by conference attendees. Kudos to Dave Peck and the USOC for loaning exhibit equipment for use at this event.

b. USCA at CCA Congress. Swandby, Broadhurst, Patzke and Schroeder attended the Canadian Curling Association Congress in Quebec in June 18-20. The sessions on member services, marketing and other subjects were extremely valuable. The USCA delegation appreciated their excellent reception and treatment by the CCA organizers and attendees.

c. General. Swandby has allocated more budget dollars to the Regional Officers Meeting (now scheduled for September 6-7). Membership Marketing Seminars will be conducted January-March, 2004, run by four USCA-trained volunteer facilitators. Material will be developed to help convert arena ice; use of the stick; and wheelchair curling. Swandby's preliminary budget proposal for the Member Services committee accounts under his responsibility has increased from \$44,000 to \$56,000, plus the OXL cards, a total increase of about \$25,000, which happens to equal the budgeted dues increase.

13. Competitive Programs. Thompson reported.

a. Performance Funding grant. Thompson reported no specific information yet on the Performance Funding grant. It is expected that the USOC will advise USCA of its grant in early July.

b. World Seniors and Wheelchair. Nothing has been budgeted yet for uniforms. Funding sources for the Wheelchair event are being determined.

c. Junior B & Junior B National Coach. Finch reported. About four team applications have been submitted as of June 26. The deadline is July 1. Three applications for the proposed Junior B coach position were received.

*The committee entered an Executive Session to discuss matters relating to Junior B team support.*

14. Championships. Cousins reported.

a. Championship sites and dates. D. Brown has sent an email regarding the impact of WCF world championship date changes and the impact on the USCA Championship Calendar. Discussion was deferred be included in the Format Task Force proposal discussion.

b. Site selection. **Motion by Cousins, Thompson second, to approve the Belfast and Bemidji Curling Clubs as the sites for World Wheelchair (Belfast) and World Junior B (Bemidji) team selection events.** Discussion. Host terms will be finalized as contracts are finalized. Contracts are expected to be similar to 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance contract, e.g., no frills events. **Approved.**

c. Format Task Force/2006 Olympic team selection. The Format/Olympic Team Selection Task Force met Thursday evening and Friday. The group drafted an open concept world team selection and

a club-type national playdown process for vote at the fall USCA meeting. These drafts will be available for review in two weeks. The Task Force also drafted a similar Olympic Team Selection process that is being reviewed at the direction of the Executive Committee (fall vs. spring selection).

The 2005 World Team Selection must be moved up two weeks to avoid conflict with women's world championships.

The schedule will consider the ultimate dates of the 2005 Continental Cup.

*Meeting recessed at 6:42pm.*

*Meeting reconvened at 8:02am Sunday.*

15. Other business. None.

16. Unfinished business

a. Budget discussions. Moore distributed budget worksheets. The committee reviewed the budget numbers and made a number of adjustments. Moore reported that based on current information the expected actual surplus for FY2003 should be approximately \$35,000. However, he cautioned that this is very preliminary, as significant revenue and expenses have yet to be recognized at the time the last financial report was prepared as of 6-22-03. Moore also indicated that if the USCA does realize a surplus of about \$35,000 that the long term goal of a \$250,000 net worth will have been achieved as of year-end FY 2003. Assuming that the foregoing happens, the committee discussed a willingness to approve a budget for FY2004 that reflects up to a \$36,000 deficit to fund the one-time expense of the National Governing Body three-sport television production project.

b. Budget approval. The discussion ended with the proposed budget still showing a \$13,000 deficit in the "Base" class of spending and a \$46,000 deficit overall. Moore will work with the USCA office and various officers/committee chairs, once a better estimate of the final results of FY2003 are available, to make further adjustments in the budget. The budget will also need to be reviewed by the Finance Committee. Moore will then send an updated budget proposal to the committee for action at a conference call meeting to be held in the near future.

*Moore left the meeting.*

c. Next president. Fenson asked if Nominating Committee should develop a proposal to the board, naming the next USCA president, in time for the September meeting. The consensus was "yes." Fenson will contact the Nominating Committee with that request.

d. 2004 Nationals. Fenson asked for resolution on two open items related to the 2004 Nationals at Grand Forks: first, the two- or one-venue issue; second, the amount agreed that is available for the ice maker. The USCA does not pay for ice rental for Nationals. Cousins and the Field of Play Committee will resolve ice maker payment policy.

e. Wisconsin dues request. The committee discussed the budget outlook and financial needs. Swandby and Moore will discuss the subjects further and will prepare a proposal to bring to the next meeting. Swandby will invite USCA representatives to attend the next Wisconsin State Curling Association meeting.

f. 2006 Olympic team selection procedure. Fenson asked Cousins to review the Task Force selection process schedule as proposed yesterday. McNelly expressed serious concerns with a fall selection, including the number of additional events needed to have a fall selection, from the competitive, cost and administrative aspects. **Motion by McNelly, Finch second, that the Task**

**Force proposal be sent back to the Task Force for reconsideration, for re-submission to the committee by August 1.** Discussion, with comments from those favoring both spring and fall selections. **Approved, 6-1.**

17. New business. Maskel announced that, as chair of the Athlete Recognition Committee, he will put a moratorium on further awards of the Bruce Bennett Media Award, due to concerns with the selection process and criteria. Discussion. Fenson suggestion that the Athlete Recognition Committee evaluate the situation and bring any proposal for change to the board. **Motion by McNelly, Maskel second, to reiterate the Bennett Award criteria. Approved, with Finch opposed.**

*The committee entered into an Executive Session to discuss matters related to personnel. During that session, there was a motion by Finch, Lowe second, to authorize McNelly (as USCA Immediate Past President) to sign a succession planning agreement. Approved, 7-0.*

18. **Motion by McNelly, Lowe second, to adjourn the meeting at 12:35pm. Approved.**

Respectfully submitted,  
David Garber  
Recording Secretary

Reviewed and authorized  
R. Chris Moore  
Secretary