

Cross Country Sport Committee Meeting Minutes

MAY 16-17, 2002

May 16, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

1. Call to Order

Lee Todd, Chairman of the Cross Country Committee, welcomed all of the Committee members, and guests of the Committee. He stated that the past season has been tremendous, with great results from the athletes, and great event organization with the Olympics. He stated that this has been a great year personally, for many of those who have been involved with the big events of the season, and that interest in the sport is very high now, leading to a large turnout to these meetings.

Mr. Todd then appointed Luke Bodensteiner to keep the minutes of the Cross Country Committee meeting.

2. Roll Call

The following Cross Country Committee members were recognized as being present:

John Aalberg (Officials)	Term limit: Spring '05
Luke Bodensteiner (Nordic Director)	Term limit: by employment
Joey Caterinichio (Alaska)	Term limit: Spring '04
Jon Engen (Athlete)	Term limit: Spring '04
Andrew Gerlach (At-large)	Term limit: Spring '04
Chris Grover (Development)	Term limit: by employment
Bob Hughes (At-large)	Term limit: Spring '03
Chris Klein (Athlete)	Term limit: Spring '04
Reid Lutter (Coaches Chairman)	Term limit: Spring '03
Bill Sterling (Pacific)	Term limit: Spring '04
Kevin Sweeney (At-large)	Term limit: Spring '04
Lee Todd (Chairman)	Term limit: Spring '03
Scott Wilson (Central Alternate)	Term limit: Spring '04

Mr. Bodensteiner recognized the following Committee members as absent:

Anne Donaghy (East)	Term limit: Spring '03
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Mr. Wilson informed the Committee that Mr. Dennis Kruse has been nominated by the Central Division to be seated by the Committee, and that he would be taking the seat occupied by Mr. Wilson, who has and will serve as the alternate to Mr. Kruse. Mr Todd seated Mr. Kruse, noted that this was a regional appointment, which does not need to be confirmed by the committee, and recognized the following:

Dennis Kruse (Central)	Term limit: Spring '05
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Mr. Todd also noted that one athlete representative seat is now unfilled, as Mr. Aalberg has been elected to serve as the Officials' Subcommittee Chairman. He stated that this position would be nominated by Mr. Engen and Mr. Klein, who are recruiting that person now. He stated that he is happy to see all but one of the Committee members present at the meeting, which shows good dedication to their duties, and good interest by the community at-large.

Mr. Bodensteiner also recognized the following guests; John Estle, Jeff Schloss, Lori Horn, Peter Hale, Glenn Jobe, Sally Jones, Trond Nystad, Chris Hall, Matt Laue, Gary Giberson, Rick Kapala, Travis Jones, Katie Gould, Ernie Page, Dragan Danevski, Phil White, Cory Smith, Bob Gross, and Juliann Fritz.

After calling role, Mr. Todd declared a quorum present.

3. Approval of Minutes, Fall Meetings '01

Mr. Todd asked the members present to review the minutes, and make any comments. He stated that the minutes have been distributed prior to the meeting in the meeting materials.

Hearing no comments, and general approval from the floor, Mr. Todd declared the minutes accepted.

4. Re-confirmation of Lee Todd as Chairman until 2003

Mr. Bodensteiner informed the Committee that there was a need to re-confirm Mr. Todd's chairmanship until the spring of 2003, so that the Cross Country Committee will be in coordination with the Board rotations, and so that not all sport committee chairmen expire at the same time.

Mr. Aalberg moved to extend Mr. Todd's term as Cross Country Committee Chairman until 2003, and was seconded by Mr. Engen.

Motion carries.

5. Additions to the Agenda

Mr. Todd stated that the agenda had been distributed prior to the meeting, and called for additions to the agenda. Mr. Bodensteiner stated that three agenda items had been received from Jon Quinn-Hurst, and that they would be addressed during the Coaches' Subcommittee Meeting.

Hearing no other additions, Mr. Todd declared the agenda approved.

6. Staff Report

Mr. Todd turned the floor over to Luke Bodensteiner for his staff report.

Mr. Bodensteiner stated that we have a lot to be proud of this year. He stated that he's proud of the athletes, who achieved so much this year, and their coaches. He's proud of the officials and the race crew that organized such an outstanding Olympics, just down the road from where these meetings are being held. He's proud of the cross country staff, who undertook a gigantic planning effort for years leading up to those Olympics, and who executed that plan perfectly, clearing the way for our athletes to succeed. And he's proud of the Cross Country Committee, and the leadership the Committee has provided to this sport.

He stated that the Committee will remember, 12 months ago, they sat at the meeting table and talked about the need to be clear about the program's goals, and the principles and the philosophies that guide the cross country program toward those goals. He stated that he told them that all Committee members need to understand those principles inside and out, and to understand the evolution of the program, and the history of the decisions that have led them to structure the program in the way they have. He stated that that's a history that probably pre-dates most of us at this table.

He stated that he wanted to make this clear, because it was foreseeable that some people would inevitably try to make us change the way we do business, and the way we've structured our program. And that when he said this, he got a lot of puzzled looks from around the table, because already then, we were seeing better results at the junior and World Cup levels than we'd seen in a long time, but we also knew that the Olympics really change the equation. He stated that we knew not only would there be more pressure on the athletes, there'd also be more pressure on the leadership of this sport. And not only would there be more distractions for the athletes, but also more issues to distract us from our vision, and from our goals.

And he stated that while the athletes performed brilliantly, the Committee also performed brilliantly. Because there were challenges to our program, and to our plan. He stated that we had some bad luck. We lost some critical competitions to the weather. We had challenges to the way in which we selected our teams. And we got some strong criticism from a handful of athletes, which is the most potent type of criticism, and also the kind of which we need to listen most closely to. But we also saw that there are different levels of ability and achievement within athletes, and that athletes at different levels will have different agendas, which are not always consistent with those of this organization. He stated that we're focused on top performance at the highest level. And we're focused, ultimately, on being the best team in the world.

He stated that we made key adjustments before the season, when heads were cool, and when we could get good feedback from the athletes, coaches and volunteers, and then we stayed the course, even when the criticism got intense. We stayed consistent. We didn't panic, and we didn't lose our focus. And the strength of your focus and the strength of your decisions was a critical factor in the successes of the season.

He stated that the successes were many. We had 7 of the 9 best-ever individual Olympic performances by U.S. athletes from our Olympians this year. Only Bill Koch has had better results. We had the best-ever team performance, in the men's relay, where they placed 5th. And this result was repeated 2 weeks later in the World Cup, even when John Bauer was unavailable and replaced by Andrew Johnson. We had the best-ever women's finish in Olympic history by a U.S. athlete. We saw U.S. athletes place 11th, 11th, 14th, 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th in the World Cup this year. 8 different athletes had top-20 finishes in World Cup or Olympic competition this year. And for the 5th year in a row, U.S. athletes again recorded our best-ever results at the Junior World Championships.

He stated that these results are awesome. He stated that he's been personally been criticized for celebrating these results, and for calling them awesome, but that's exactly what they are. He hoped that the Committee members all taken the time to celebrate these successes, as well. Because now it's time to look forward. And it's time to look toward our next big goal, and that's winning a medal in Torino, 2006. That's not going to be an easy chore. It is a mammoth task. And we can't afford any bad decisions, and we can't afford to take a step back. We have to improve our program. We have to bring that same "start-up" mentality that we brought to the table after our outright failure in Nagano, and that same energy and creativity.

He stated that, at the same time, we know we're doing a lot of things right. We don't have to make dramatic changes, like we did after '98. We have to maintain our focus, and to maintain the many good programs already in place. We have to keep doing business the way we've been doing it, because it's working. But we also have to find new programs, and to find ways to build onto what we already have. Unlike after Nagano, when we had to reinvent ourselves, our task now is to understand who we are and what we've done to achieve this level of success, and to make ourselves stronger, and more focused.

He stated that there were a lot of factors that went into the successes of this season. Clubs continue to produce great junior skiers, all across the country. Many of our record-setting Olympians have found ways to stay in the sport for a long time, to the point where they've gained

enough experience to be their own coaches, or to maintain good, long-standing relationships with the coaches they've been with for a long time, which is a great situation. Our teams have taken a much more professional and detailed approach to championship planning than we have in a long, long time, if not ever. For this Olympics, a high-level support system was implemented, which made the top athletes comfortable, confident and relaxed, that supported them with fast skis, psychology, nutrition, medical support, coaching support, and which built a great team spirit, which was a big focus of the staff during this Olympics.

He stated specifically to this group of leaders, that there are some big things you've done to contribute to the successes of this season. You've designed an Athlete Development Pipeline, which identifies the levels of achievement we look for in athletes at different levels of development, and identifies the level of support we strive to provide for those athletes who perform to those standards. And coupled with the Athlete Competency Statement, which this committee developed, you've plotted out the skills that the athletes need to be proficient at to perform well against their peers internationally, at each stage of development.

He stated that the Committee has helped to design a plan to integrate regional and national development, where the development staff assists with camps for the best young skiers in each region, and their coaches, where these athletes and coaches are educated in training, and get a chance to train with their peers in a good camp environment. These camps are a clear partnership between the national development program and the regional development programs, and are organized through that partnership.

He stated that, in the context of the Athlete Development Pipeline, the Committee has developed programs, which have made the steps up the competition ladder smaller, and more achievable. Programs like the Junior Scandinavian Cup and the Europa Cup, which haven't been a consistent part of our program before. And programs like the Nor/Am, which has established high-level, consistent competition for our top-level athletes. The Nor/Am has provided a venue for athletes to challenge themselves and one another, and has raised the level of competition in this country. It also provides an open avenue for athletes not directly supported by a USSA team to qualify for international competition. Athletes who are good enough, can essentially fund themselves by winning prize money through the series. And top-level athletes, like John Bauer and Patrick Weaver, who have coached themselves, and who have approached skiing on their own terms, as they will again this season, have a real opportunity and a real avenue to achieve great international results, like they did this year.

He stated that the Committee has helped to make significant reforms to our team selection systems. The old style of team selection for our top senior teams, where we evaluated 4 or 5 races in a week to pick our teams, is essentially gone. Now we have a long-term evaluation period, where we can see how athletes perform in a variety of competitions, both domestically and abroad, and at the highest levels of competition. This system drives a great racing calendar domestically, and gives reason for athletes to compete at a high level internationally for a block of the year. And coupled with our ranking system, races at all levels, and at all points of the season have taken on new importance. One of the first things we said was important was that we have to give our athletes a reason to compete. And we've done that.

He stated that this system lays the foundation for good results. Despite the criticisms early on in the process, when a number of athletes and coaches were struggling with the change, the selection system worked, and it paved the way for good results. Our former Head Coach, Christer Skog, said that he couldn't have done a better job of selecting the Olympic team even if he could use 100% coaches' discretion, which is how he operated when running the Swedish Ski Team.

He stated that some people criticized the system when Patrick Weaver was selected to the Olympic Team. People felt he wasn't up to a level where he'd be competitive at the Olympics, and that he earned his spot from races that happened the previous season, and that he was no

longer ready to compete at a high level. After his 16th place finish at the Olympics, Patrick said to me right away, that the selection system was one of the keys to his success, because he could see well in advance that he was likely to qualify for the Olympic team, and that he could focus all of his preparation on performing at the Olympics, and not during an Olympic trial, and that his 16th place was the result. This was also the case with the other top performers, who knew well in advance that they were very likely to qualify, and didn't have the stress of qualifying close to the Games, or peaking for a trials, and could focus on performance when it counted.

He stated that there were also those that thought that the process was closed early on, and that it was impossible to ski their way onto the team, even if they had top performances close to the time the team was selected. And this was proven not to be the case by athletes who did perform in December and January of last season. Racers like John Bauer, who essentially came out of retirement to make the team, and became our second most successful Olympian ever.

He stated that the Committee has enabled a development program for our top young athletes, which is based on residence programs. And we plan to continue to operate, and work directly with a maximum of 4 residence programs, currently Gold 2002 in Anchorage, the residence center in Park City, and the residence center in Marquette. And we'll continue to support those development team athletes who train full-time in one of those centers, because the concept has been successful.

He stated that the U.S. Ski Team had 7 of the 9 best-ever individual Olympic performances by U.S. athletes last season. And 3 of those 7 best-ever results, almost half of the best-ever results, came from athletes directly involved in the residence center-based development program. The program the Committee's helped to structure is already paying dividends. Because the program is structured to help ensure that we surround our best athletes with top-level coaching, a comprehensive support system of psychology, nutrition, technical support, medical support, training facilities, sports science, education, and that we cluster them, so they can train together, support each other, learn from each other, celebrate each other's successes, and develop a team, which is something that this program has lacked in the 16 years he's been directly involved as an athlete or staff member.

He stated that there have been a lot of coaching changes within our team this year. Chris Grover has been promoted to the Development Coach position. Trond Nystad has taken the helm as Head Coach. And Pete Vordenberg has been hired to assist him. And though this hiring process, he's received a lot of resumes from a lot of top coaches, both domestically and abroad. And the bulk of these resumes had the same message. He stated that he'd like to read to the Committee from one of the resumes, which was submitted by an individual who's been around this program for a long time, at a very high level, and in a number of aspects within this program. He stated that this letter really captures the essence of the message that was brought forward by many top candidates.

He read:

"Dear Luke, the United States Nordic program is on the verge of becoming a first-tier skiing nation. I am amazed by what was accomplished by the United States Nordic program at Soldier Hollow. As an interested observer, I feel there is one last ingredient that will catapult the United States onto the podium in Torino in 2006. That missing ingredient is a functioning unit designed specifically for placing one of their own on the podium, a "Team". History has shown that a combination of great team chemistry, bold leadership, and a common purpose designed from the essence of the group itself is paramount to achieving victory. This concept has proven itself in recent history with the success of the Germans, Canadian Women and Italian Men's teams. I am the person who can supply the leadership and energy to spawn our own group of tightly knit athletes functioning for that one purpose; an Olympic medal for the United States. For the first time in my skiing life, I can see the reality of an American on the podium in an Olympics."

He stated that that, in his opinion, is where we have to focus our energies, our leadership, and our creativity. We have to build a team. Because that's an ingredient we're missing, and an ingredient we probably haven't had since Bill Koch was at the top of the world more than two decades ago.

He stated that he's not talking about building a team at the expense of our clubs. He's talking about a couple of new athletes coming into the program each year. He's talking about a system where good clubs graduate athletes into a top-level national program, and feel proud about it. And where their communities recognize that local athletes were developed in a way in which they became successful, and moved on to a team at the highest level.

He stated that we're on the brink now, of achieving successes that we've never achieved before. It's right in front of us. And the focus on our goal of winning an Olympic medal in 2006 should drive every one of our decisions. Because now it's time to get the job done, and we do that by maintaining everything good that we've built up in the last 6 years, and by doing it better, and by adding to it.

He stated that the agenda that the Committee has assembled reflects this, and will make this an extremely positive, and productive meeting.

Mr. Todd then gave the floor to Mr. Grover, who informed the Committee of the names of the National Development Group nominees, and submitted a detailed handout explaining the development program, and the benefits and requirements of participation on that team. He stated that there are four athletes who will continue in the program, and the two additional athletes have been named, although he noted that Kristina Trygstad-Saari has not yet accepted her nomination to the team.

He stated that these athletes had been nominated because of their Junior World Championship results of 6th and 14th place, which is consistent with the top-15 target that has been used before. He stated that these results go hand-in-hand with a long-term commitment to training, and the potential progress toward a multitude of markers, which are all key in the selection to this group.

He also noted that two former NDG members, Kris Freeman and Andrew Johnson, who have been with the program for two and three years, have been named to the U.S. Ski Team, and that Rob Whitney has stepped down from the team.

He stated that the NDG program is based on residence in three programs, the regional training centers in Anchorage (Gold 2002), Park City, and Marquette. He stated that the purpose of operating out of these three centers is to surround athletes with a high-level support structure, including support with nutrition, psychology, and facilities, among others, and to surround the athletes with members of their peer group.

Mr. Grover then gave an overview of the specific NDG plan, including camps and competitions, which is tailored to the individual needs of each athlete, within the context of the team program. He stated that the focus is on long-term development on an individual basis through the support of the team, and that emphasis was not only on competition goals, but also on markers which track training, technique, psychology, and many other aspects of performance. He stated that the program takes a long-term approach with the athletes, and then once named, they will typically be with the program for a long term.

He stated that the Regional Elite Group program continues to be a high priority. The five regional camps for this season have already been established in partnership with the leaders from each region. These camps provide education and instruction through a working partnership with the regional and local coaches.

Mr. Todd then turned the floor over to Trond Nystad, the new Head Coach of the U.S. Ski Team.

Mr. Nystad introduced himself and explained his background. He stated that he is a former competitor, having raced for the University of Vermont. After his competitive career, he was a coach at the Northern Michigan University, when Sten Fjeldheim was there working as the Olympic Education Center Coach. Since then, he's been the running and skiing coach of Denver University, where he also earned his MBA.

He thanked the Committee for its leadership, because they make his job easier, and he thanked them for making him look good. He stated that the media tends to focus on the person in the head role, but he knows and appreciates the big role that this committee plays.

He stated that he is operating a relatively small team, but that it is larger than in the past several years. He added that his staff is also dedicated to working with other top national athletes who have not been named to the team. With the exception of one athlete, all of the team athletes will be living and training in Park City, and working with the staff coaches, which he feels fortunate for. He then gave an overview of the camp and competition schedule for his team. The goal for the season is to maintain the momentum developed last season. He feels fortunate to be able to take the reigns of a team, which already has a lot of momentum behind it. The main focus is to build a team of coaches and athletes, and also it involve the community in that concept of team. He said that we will not always agree on everything, but he does value the constructive input from experts.

Mr. Todd then turned the floor over for general comments.

Mr. Gerlach agreed with the importance of the team concept and emphasis on it, and hopes that concept can be brought even further, so that the ski community at large feels like a part of that team. He stated that this responsibility falls onto the Committee, who really have to help in promoting the program and the athletes to their local constituencies. He stated that we have to let people know what we do, what we're good at, that we have the best staff working for us that we've probably ever had, and to talk about our accomplishments. Communication, which is an area we've lacked in, has not effectively made a broad base of people in the ski community feel like they're a part of the good things that are happening. He hopes that everyone with skis can feel like they're a part of the "team".

Mr. Laue stated that more heritage needs to be brought back to where the kids come from. We need to maintain an athlete's club identity all the way through their careers, until they retire. He also stated that while we need to build a tighter team, it's hard to build a women's team with only one woman on he squad.

Mr. Engen stated that women will need a little more attention to bring them up to speed, and that maybe we need to focus on having more women's development.

Mr. Grover stated that it is important to note that while there is only one woman on the U.S. Ski Team, there are five women on the National Development Group, reflecting the chance to build and develop a talented team of young women, and that this group is well coordinated with the National Team.

Mr. Lutter stated that we are probably with the women now where we were with them men five years ago when we had talents, and brought them up. He stated that he's happy that we've kept a high standard for team selections, and only selected athletes when they've achieved a high level of success at their stage of development.

Mr. Danevski asked what the selection criteria for the National Development Group is.

Mr. Grover stated that, in principle, the standard for participation is to finish in the top-15 at the Junior World Championships, but that many factors, including commitment, results in other competitions, and other indicators go into the selection decisions.

Mr. Bodensteiner added that the Committee purposely decided to use only coaches' discretion in selecting the members of the National Development Group. He reminded the group of the direction that Miles Minson set when he said that he wasn't worried about black and white results for athletes at this age. He looked for a range of performance, and then focused on training and other improvements without focusing on the progress toward better competition results. If the fundamentals were attended to, then the results would come in the future, but they wouldn't always get better and better before an athlete would reach peak potential. Some would take a step back due to increased training loads, and so forth. He stated that we need to be smarter in selecting young athletes than just looking at competition results from one or two competitions.

Ms. Caterinichio suggested that maybe the Committee should look at some kind of objective criteria, so that it isn't all based on discretion.

Mr. Gerlach asked if there was a better way to indicate to the ski community at large why specific athletes have been selected to the team, which might prevent people from speculating why or why not an athlete was chosen.

Mr. Laue asked if there are different levels of funding within the team. He stated that partial funding for some athletes may be a way to get more of them onto the team.

Mr. Nystad stated that when we get an athlete on the team, we've selected them because we want to get them to the next level, and we want to support them fully, not just to get the job done part of the way. We don't want to dilute what we're doing. He said that we can give every skier a dollar and get basically nothing back, or we can focus on those who are on-target, get behind them fully, and push them to the next level.

Mr. Danevski asked if physical testing results are taken into account in team selection.

Mr. Grover stated that test results are interesting, but that there aren't standardized labs to make the test results consistent, and that not all athletes have been tested. He stated that talent ID, however, is potentially an area where we could improve.

Mr. Bodensteiner asked for Mr. Fjeldheim's comments, as he approach talent ID when he was working as the Development Coach.

Mr. Fjeldheim stated that he'd set standards in field tests, based on the real results of the development team members, for regional skiers to compare themselves to. But this was never considered for use in identifying talented athletes. It was only used to identify athletes' strengths and weaknesses, and to tailor an individual's training to address them.

Hearing no more discussion, Mr. Todd then moved on to Junior Olympic rules.

Junior Olympic Rule Changes

Mr. Lutter made a proposal to accept the following, and was seconded by Mr. Hughes:

72.2 The Championships should rotate every five years through the Regions which comprise the USSA in this order; (East, Mountain, Central, Pacific, Alaska)

Motion approved.

Mr. Sterling made a motion to accept the following, and was seconded by Mr. Hughes:

- 79 The Competition Jury shall consist of
 - 79.1 The USSA Technical Delegate
 - 79.2 The Assistant Technical Delegate
 - 79.3 The USSA Technical Office Representative
 - 79.4 The Chief of Competition
 - 79.5 The Assistant Chief of Competition
- Eliminate existing 79.2, 79.3, 79.4

Motion approved.

Mr Lutter made a motion to accept the following, and was seconded by Mr. Hughes:

82. Sprint Rules

82.1. General Technical Details

- 82.1.1. The sprint event will be held on a course of not less than 750 meters nor more than 1250 meters.
- 82.1.2. There must be a minimum of six (four) start lanes and not less than four finish lanes
- 82.1.3. Each start lane and each finish lane must be not less than 3m in width
- 82.1.4. The sprint will be held in free technique
- 82.1.5. The qualifying round will be held in the morning, and the elimination round later in the day.
- 82.1.6. The break between the qualifying round and the elimination round should be such that for any competitor making it to the qualifying there is a minimum of 90 minutes between completing the qualifying round and taking the starting line for the first time in the elimination round .
- 82.1.7. For the elimination round, new bibs will be assigned to all competitors who have qualified. These bib numbers should reflect the competitor's qualifying rank. Each competitor will wear this assigned bib throughout the elimination round.

82.2. Structure of Classes

- 82.2.1. In the qualification round, OJ and J1 competitors of the same sex will be seeded together as a single start group.
- 82.2.2. If there are less than 36 competitors in the OJ girls class or in the OJ boys class, that class will compete in the elimination round in combination with the J1 class (both sexes). If there are 36 or more competitors in the OJ girls class or in the OJ boys class, the OJ class will compete in the elimination round as its own class (both sexes).

82.3. Start Order of Classes

- 82.3.1. The order of the sexes within a given class will be the same in both qualifying round and the elimination round
- 82.3.2. The order of the sexes will alternate from year to year
- 82.3.3. Sample Order-Qualifying Round
 - 2003: J2 girls – J2 boys – J1/OJ girls – J1/OJ boys
 - 2004: J2 boys – J2 girls – J1/OJ boys – J1/OJ girls
 - 2005: J2 girls – J2 boys – J1/OJ girls – J1/OJ boys
 - 2006: J2 boys – J2 girls – J1/OJ boys – J1/OJ girls
- 82.3.4. Sample Order-Elimination Round

<u>Year/Bracket</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>
First Bracket	J2 girls/boys	J2 boys/girls	J2 girls/boys	J2 boys/girls

Second Bracket	J1 girls/boys	J1 boys/girls	J1 girls/boys	J1 boys/girls
Third Bracket	OJ girls/boys	OJ boys/girls	OJ girls/boys	OJ boys/girls

82.4. Qualifying Round

82.4.1. The qualifying round consists of a time trial, with single starts at 15-second intervals

82.4.2. Small breaks in the start order may be placed between sexes and classes.

82.4.3. In the case of a tie for a qualifying position, the competitor with the lower bib number in the qualifying round will be awarded the higher seed position

82.4.4. In the case of a tie for the final qualifying position, both skiers advance to Quarterfinal 1 in the elimination round.

82.5. Elimination Round

82.5.1. For elimination round heat composition and timetable, please see the attached appendix.

82.5.2. In the Quarterfinals, competitors choose their start positions based upon their final qualification rankings. The competitors with the higher rankings choose ahead of those qualifiers who are below them in the rankings.

82.5.3. In the Semi-Finals, "B" Final and Final, competitors choose start positions based upon 1) their finish in the previous round and 2) their qualifying rank. Example:

First choice goes to the 1st-place finisher in the previous round with the faster qualifying time

Second choice goes to the 1st-place finisher in the previous round with the slower qualifying time

Third choice goes to the 2nd-place finisher in the previous round with the faster qualifying time

Fourth choice goes to the 2nd-place finisher in the previous round with the slower qualifying time, etc.

82.5.4. In the case that a competitor in excess of the prescribed number is added to a heat due to ties, protests or disqualifications, the competitor(s) added will start behind the front row.

82.5.5. When the number of competitors in a heat increases beyond the number specified in the rules, the number of competitors who qualify for the next round does not increase.

APPENDIX – Elimination Round Heat Assignments and Heat Timetable:

SIX PER QUARTERFINAL HEAT, FOUR IN SEMIFINAL AND FINAL HEATS

Quarterfinal Heat 1: Qualifiers 1-8-9-16-17-24

Quarterfinal Heat 2: 4-5-12-13-20-21

Quarterfinal Heat 3: 2-7-10-15-18-23

Quarterfinal Heat 4: 3-6-11-14-19-22

Semi-Final 1: first two finishers from Heat 1 and first two finishers from Heat 2

Semi-Final 2: first two finishers from Heat 3 and first two finishers from Heat 4

"B" Final: finishers #3-4 from Semifinal 1 and finishers #3-4 from Semifinal 2

Final: finishers #1-2 from Semifinal 1 and finishers #1-2 from Semifinal 2

Rule 83 – Seeding and the draw

EXISTING RULE:

83.3 In individual events, the J1/OJ skiers will be drawn and seeded as one combined class, with four seed groups of 30 skiers each. Group 1 4, the Red Group, consists of the 30 skiers with the best national ranking from the USSA points list, Group 2 with the next best ranking, etc. If there are more than 120 skiers, a fifth seed group will be added. Skiers finishing in the top 20 of the combined J1/OJ class in any individual event during the JOC will be seeded in the Red Group for the remainder of the JOC

- 83.3 Junior 1 and Older Junior Classes
- 83.3.1 In individual events, the J1/OJ skiers will be drawn and seeded as one combined class.
- 83.3.2 Competitors who do not have valid NRL points will be placed in Group 0 and randomly drawn within that group
- 83.3.3 Competitors who are ranked on the NRL and who have valid NRL points are considered "seeded" and will be grouped with other competitors who have valid points
- 83.3.4 The 30 highest-ranked competitors will be considered to be the Red Group for the entire JOC
- 83.3.5 If the number of seeded competitors (with valid points) is 120 or less, there will be four seeded groups: the Red Group of 30, and three other groups, divided as equally as possible.
- 83.3.6 If the number of seeded competitors is 121 or more, there will be five seeded groups: the Red Group of 30, and four other groups, divided as equally as possible.
- 83.3.7 From fastest to slowest, the seeded groups are: Red Group-(Group 4)-Group 3-Group 2-Group 1
- 83.3.8 The normal start order of the groups is 0-1-2-3-(4)-Red
- 83.3.9 The Competition Jury may alter the order of start of the groups if conditions warrant such a change.
- 83.3.10 In the Wednesday individual event, the first 2 male finishers in the combined J1/OJ top 20, and the first 2 female finishers in the combined J1/OJ top 20 whose points did not place them in the Red Group for the Wednesday event will be placed in the Red Group for the Friday individual event.

Rule 84 – Relays

- 84.5 When a division, district . . .
- 84.6 When the number of tracks set in the start grid is less than that specified in 084.4, but there is space for more than one lane per division or district . . .

Motion approved.

Mr. Lutter made a motion to accept the following, and was seconded by Mr. Sterling.

- 85.6 Start Format
- 85.6.1 The start format for the sprint qualifying and for the individual start free technique event shall be single starts at 15-second intervals. The start format for the individual start classic event shall be single starts at 30-second intervals.

Motion approved.

Mr. Hughes made a motion to accept the following, and was seconded by Mr. Aalberg.

- 85.7 Ski-Marking
- 85.7.1 There will be no ski-marking in any events at JOC

In discussion, it was noted that the desire of the Committee is to relieve the amount of volunteer support necessary for ski marking, and to use that manpower to increase the number of course marshals.

Motion approved.

May 16, 12:00pm – 5:00pm

Coaches Subcommittee

Mr. Lutter, Chairman of the Coaches' Subcommittee, called role and noted that only Anne Donaghy was not present. He therefore declared a quorum for the meeting.

1. Review 2003 Calendar

Mr. Lutter asked Mr. Bodensteiner to walk the Subcommittee through the 2003 draft calendar, which was presented in the meeting materials. He noted that the OPA races on the calendar are tentative, and that the development staff is also looking at alternative competitions for those same weekends in Europe. He stated that this was still not firm because the calendars aren't fixed until after the FIS meetings in June, and other competition series' in Europe may be better suited to the team's needs. He stated that the specific scored competitions would be noted in the Competition Guide.

Mr. Klein asked if the sprint competitions are now fixed as freestyle.

Mr. Bodensteiner said that this is a very good question, and one that again won't be answered until the FIS meetings in June. He also said that the techniques and distances indicated on the calendar should also be reviewed after Canada fixes the techniques and distances for their Nor/Ams. He then asked for a working group of Chris Klein, Cory Smith and himself to fix the techniques and distances after the FIS meetings, and Mr. Lutter then appointed that group to do so.

Mr. Bodensteiner also asked for a working group to help him review the Spring Series RFPs, which would be returned to USSA in June. Mr. Lutter then appointed Mr. Gerlach, Mr. Kapala, Mr. Grover and Mr. Bodensteiner to review the proposals, and empowered them to decide upon the location of the 2003 International Spring Series.

Mr. Fjeldheim informed the group that Marquette is planning to bid for the Spring Series, and noted that there are no major races taking place in the Central division this season. He stated his opinion that Central should be looked upon favorably as the host for the Spring Series for this reason.

Mr. Bodensteiner then asked for comments about the proposed Ski Duathlon during the Nor/Am in Fairbanks.

Mr. Smith stated that he is not a fan of the Duathlon, since competitors are timed not only on their skiing ability, but also on how good they are at changing their equipment. If you use a certain brand of equipment, you can have a significant changeover advantage over competitors using another brand. Some things are nice about the event, and it is probably preferable to the one-day pursuit, but as an athlete, he prefers the pursuit to be held over two days. He recognized, though, that if the Duathlon is going to be a part of the World Championship program, then the athletes should get some experience in it. He state that Fairbanks may be the best venue for this, since it is early in the season, and there is a higher minimum penalty, potentially reducing its importance in team selection.

Mr. Klein also stated that if the Duathlon is here to stay on the international program, then we need to do it. He agreed with Mr. Smith on the timing of it during the season, and stated that the big problem last year was that it was untested, and was planned to be used as part of the Olympic team selection.

Mr. Engen stated that the equipment issue is a problem, but as long as the format is here to stay, then the equipment issues will sort themselves out over time. He stated that the Duathlon would

be just about impossible to run during the National Championship, with such big fields, and that the Nor/Am is probably the most effective avenue for getting the top athletes, who actually have to compete in the Duathlon internationally, experienced in the format.

Mr. Bodensteiner then asked if the calendar has a good distribution of sprints, long-distance, and middle-distance races. He stated that there was a bit of criticism to the calendar last year, because some athletes felt there were not enough long-distance races.

Mr. Kapala stated that it's not practical to run too many long-distance races during the Nor/Am, which happens in the first half of the season, and not smart for athletic preparation. He stated that one solution may be to add another mass-start marathon race to the calendar, the weekend before or after the Birkie. Mr. Bodensteiner said he'd look into this possibility.

Mr. Bodensteiner noted that there was a proposal from NENSA to score the Dec. 30-31 competition in Fort Kent, ME with a minimum penalty of 35.00. He stated that they are planning to run a high-quality event, with generous prize money, and that they anticipate having a number of top competitors on hand, since it takes place right before the Nationals, and is only 4 hours away. He stated that the current minimum penalty policy exists, so that we can help to guide the top athletes into selected competitions, that make athletic sense in the calendar, and so that we control the schedule in a way that limits an excessive need to "chase points". He stated that dropping this penalty could make this race very important to World Championship qualification, and that we would force our top athletes into two more races right before what will already be a tough week during the Nationals. He stated that he believed that this will still be a high-quality competition opportunity for athletes who want a warm-up competition to prepare for the Nationals, since they are offering good prize money, and many athletes will look for a low-key competition opportunity before the Nationals.

Mr. Kapala stated that a minimum penalty of 35.00, as proposed, may not have much of an effect on the very best athletes, but might have a great effect on the competitors in the middle of the field, who won't qualify for teams, but do want to improve their points. A competition like this could give them a great opportunity to race against the best and improve their points significantly.

Mr. Grover stated that between the last Nor/Am in December and the Nationals, there already isn't much time to train, and adding a competition with significant weight would cut even deeper into that training period.

Mr. Klein made a motion to score the Fort Kent Dec. 30-31 competitions with a minimum penalty of 35.00, and was seconded by Mr. Engen.

Motion does not carry.

2. Review 2003 Nationals competition program

Mr. Bodensteiner stated that there are several issues to address with the competition program for the 2003 U.S. Nationals. He had received proposals regarding the addition of a junior heat to the sprint, a proposal from NENSA regarding the daily program, and a proposal to add a USSA Collegiate Championship to the program. He also said that the group should consider the place of the pursuit within the program.

Mr. Jones proposed the addition of a sprint finals for juniors during the Nationals. He stated that, currently, only one or two juniors normally qualify for the finals in the sprint. He stated that this has a definite effect on the Junior World Championship and Junior Scandinavian Cup qualification, since team decisions are being made on the qualification round only, where the differences in time are very small.

Mr. Hughes added that this proposal would also give our junior competitors one more high-level finals opportunity, which they don't always have access to.

Mr. Smith stated that this may increase the length of an already long day. He stated that evaluating the qualification round might have more value than evaluating the finals, since the competitors don't always qualify for the finals in international competition.

Mr. Kapala stated that we've had success in the sprint at the Junior Worlds, and more kids are likely to qualify there than at the Nationals. He stated that we want to select the best sprinters, and plan on them making the finals. He agreed, however, with Mr. Smith that this needs to be managed by the race organizers in a way that it doesn't lengthen the day. He then made a motion to include a sprint final for juniors to the competition program at the Nationals, with the number of heats and qualifiers to be determined by the Jury, and was seconded by Mr. Sterling.

Motion approved.

Mr. Nystad stated that the colleges have proposed a "USSA Collegiate Championship" to be held during the U.S. Nationals. If this is approved, it will allow the teams to attend the nationals as if it were a college meet, and will likely increase the number of colleges attending. This would likely bring several of the western schools east, increasing the field size and quality.

Mr. Lutter stated that this will also reward those schools who only have cross country teams, and cannot compete for the big honors at the NCAA championships, since they don't have alpine teams.

Mr. Bodensteiner asked if the colleges could develop their own specific scoring rules for this meet, and score it themselves. Mr. Sweeney and Mr. Fjeldheim answered yes. Mr. Bodensteiner stated that it would be important in the management of this event for the colleges to manage their own rules as to who is scored, what races are scored, etc. He then suggested that this be a team award only, so the awards ceremony would not be lengthened.

Mr. Hughes made a motion to hold the USSA Collegiate Championships during the U.S. Nationals, awarding a men's overall and women's overall team award only, with rules to be developed by the college coaches, and the scoring to be managed by the college coaches. This motion was seconded by Mr. Grover.

Motion approved.

Mr. Bodensteiner then asked for discussion as to whether or not the pursuit format belongs in the National Championship any longer. He stated the two-day style pursuit no longer exists on the World Cup, Olympic or World Championship calendar, so it may no longer be necessary to include it in the National Championship program.

The general feeling of the group is that if the 2-day pursuit format will no longer be on the international program, then there is no need to organize it during the National Championships.

Mr. Bodensteiner then asked for some discussion about the daily program for the National Championship.

Mr. Fjeldheim stated that the Sprint is a very demanding race to run on the first day of the competitions. He stated that it's a long day for those who qualify for the finals, and is a hard way to start a hard week. Mr. Bodensteiner added that this is also a very difficult way for the organizers to begin, with 15 second starts, and finals to run in the afternoon.

Mr. Bodensteiner stated that he had received a request from NENSA to hold the sprint and a short distance race on the first weekend, since they felt that this would increase participation among the skiers in the region.

After much discussion, Mr. Hughes made a motion proposing the following schedule:

Day 1 – 15/30km C
Day 3 – 5/10km F
Day 4 – 5/10km C or Pursuit if the 2-day pursuit format is resurrected
Day 6 – Sprint
Day 9 – 30/50km F mass-start

This motion was seconded by Mr. Gerlach.

Motion approved.

3. Nomination and confirmation of regional NRL competitions

A representative from each region nominated the competitions within their region that will be eligible for scoring to the National Ranking List. No issues were noted by the Committee, and all competitions were approved.

4. Consider 2004 Junior Olympics Proposal from Lake Placid, NY

Mr. Lutter explained that Lake Placid had submitted their bid according to the January 1 deadline to the Junior Working Group, the members of which have reviewed its contents. At the Junior Working Group meeting during the Junior Olympics in McCall in March, the Group voted to approve the selection of Lake Placid as the host of the 2004 Junior Olympics. He noted that Lake Placid was the only organizer to submit a bid. He also informed the group that a JO Oversight group of Gregg Lawley, Todd Johnson, Joe Haggemiller, Luke Bodensteiner and the eventual TD for the event has been named. Additionally, Bob Hughes has been named to that group as the former Chairman.

Mr. Kapala made a motion to confirm Lake Placid as the organizer of the 2004 Junior Olympics, and was seconded by Bob Hughes.

Motion approved.

5. Review 2004 draft calendar

Mr. Bodensteiner presented and explained the 2004 draft calendar. It was noted that Rumford appears on the 2004 draft as the National Championship organizer, and Mr. Bodensteiner explained that a two year contract has been signed with Rumford. Much discussion on this issue ensued, and Mr. Bodensteiner stated that he would invite Jeremy Forster, USSA Event Director to the next day's meeting to explain the thought behind the two-year event organization agreement.

Mr. Bodensteiner noted that the post-national championship Nor/Ams are scheduled for either the East or Central. He asked, with the Nationals scheduled for the East, if it would be acceptable to schedule the following Nor/Ams in the Midwest, and asked for specific feedback from Cory Smith and Chris Klein, as two individuals who have raced on the Nor/Am.

Mr. Klein stated that it was acceptable. Mr. Smith stated that while travel is a concern for the athletes who are following the series, often on their own dime, the benefits are also big for the

region, and probably outweigh the demands on the full-time competitors, so he felt it wasn't such a big concern.

6. Consider the addition of the "High Plains" Junior Olympic district

Mr. Bodensteiner explained that he had received a request from Bob Matson, who had made the proposal to add the "High Plains" district, to table this issue until the Spring meeting in 2003. Mr. Matson explained that the "district" felt it needed more time to establish its local governance before it actually made this request.

Mr. Kapala stated that this was a wise decision, and that they are working hard to sort out all of their local issues before they make the formal request.

7. Consider a new rotational schedule for the Junior Olympics

Mr. Lutter presented a proposal, approved by the Junior Working Group at their annual meeting during the Junior Olympics, which would change the regional rotation for the Junior Olympics. He stated that the Western Region is made up of four different divisions, and that all other regions are made up of one to two divisions or districts. In his mind, it is fairer for the West to be split into two regions, and to be visited in the rotation more often. The Junior Olympics can be a big development tool for the regions, and the Cross Country Committee has recognized the West as two regions, so in his opinion, it would be appropriate to do so in this instance, as well. He stated that divisions like Far West and PNSA are small, but are growing, and that this proposal can help them to develop. Additionally, he stated, this proposal will give our athletes closer to 50% of their championship experiences at altitude and sea-level.

Ms. Caterinichio stated that she was not in favor of this proposal, as it would add additional travel expense, especially for those in the East and in Alaska.

Mr. Lutter stated that the average athlete goes to the JOs 4-5 times, so they get to race at home at least once during their careers.

Ms. Caterinichio stated that she didn't see a practical need for this change, since we didn't see bids come out of PNSA and Far West during the last western bidding period.

Mr. Jobe stated that the Pacific region has found several sites planning to bid during the next go-around.

Mr. Kapala made a motion to create a new regional rotation for the Junior Olympics, which will go into effect after the Fairbanks Junior Olympics, and which will be as follows:

East
Pacific
Central
Mountain
Alaska

This motion was seconded by Mr. Hughes.

One negative vote was cast, by Ms. Caterinichio.

Motion carries.

Noting that there was still time in the day, Mr. Lutter suggested that the group tackle two additional items of business, the 2004 U.S. Ski Team selection criteria, the 2003 Junior Scandinavian Cup selection criteria and the 2003 Junior World Championship selection criteria.

8. Review and approve 2003 Junior Scandinavian Cup selection criteria

The proposed criteria was distributed prior to the meeting. Mr. Lutter explained that this is the same system that was used last season. Some typos were pointed out and corrected.

Mr. Hughes made a motion to accept the criteria as presented, with the typos corrected, and was seconded by Ms. Caterinichio.

Mr. Kapala stated that it is important for everyone to bear in mind that quotas for this event, and the Junior World Championships, may or may not expand or contract, and that we just have to deal with it when those circumstances arise.

Motion carries.

9. Review and approve 2003 Junior World Championship selection criteria

Mr. Lutter emphasized Mr. Kapala's statement about team quota sizes, and noted again that we have to be prepared to deal with any changes that are given to us after these criteria are approved.

Mr. Grover pointed out that the selection process is proposed to be added to this season, which will make a significant change in the criteria from that which was used last season. He stated that, traditionally, team selections for this group have only been done through races at the U.S. Nationals. This has been done to drive junior athletes into the Nationals where they can compete against older athletes, and to give them a clear head-to-head evaluation period. The situation the coaches have run into is that it can be very tough on the athletes to prepare for nationals, race the nationals, travel to Europe, and then try to perform at the Junior Worlds. He's seen that top athletes are often run down or sick from this kind of schedule.

Therefore, he had worked with Mr. Danevski to create a way for very outstanding competitors to qualify for the Junior Worlds before the Nationals begin. This would allow our very best athletes to use the Nationals as a tool for preparation, and have a little less stress leading into the Junior Worlds. He stated that this is consistent with the way in which we now select our senior teams, which has proven to be very effective.

He stated that the proposal from he and Mr. Danevski was to qualify a few athletes through the Nor/Am in November and December.

Ms. Caterinichio stated that travel for junior athletes is tough, and that we do not want to force our juniors to have to compete on the Nor/Am to qualify for the Junior Worlds. She stated that not many of the juniors, even the top ones, can travel to the west and to Canada, and this may give western kids an advantage in team qualification.

Mr. Lutter stated that he agrees with the concept of allowing a few athletes to qualify before the nationals, but also agrees with Ms. Caterinichio that the Nor/Am may not be the avenue for that. He suggested that the avenue may be through the NRL, which is the same avenue we use for the seniors.

Mr. Kapala stated that he generally agrees with the concept, but that the number of kids who can qualify through the Nor/Am should be limited at 2 men and 2 women, so a lot of weight is still

placed on the nationals for the bulk of the team. He stated that if more than 2 per gender could qualify through the Nor/Am, the message we send might be to go ski the Nor/Am in December instead of training during that important time of the year.

Mr. Danevski stated that the level of skiing in this country is getting to a high level. He stated that we can't let travel costs, or time on the road get in the way of getting kids into more and more high-level competitions. He stated that to focus so much on the nationals, have a demanding series of races there, and then to try and get prepared for the World Juniors is not ideal. He stated that the best kids need to be able to know well before the nationals that they are going to the Junior Worlds, so they can prepare for that.

Mr. Sterling stated that the ability for some athletes to qualify in one place at one time needs to be preserved, but that he also favors a small number of selections prior to the nationals.

Mr. Hughes stated that we can take up to 25% of the team via coaches' discretion, and maybe we ought to think about qualifying another 25%, or 2 athletes per gender through the Nor/Am. He stated that the weight still needs to be on the Nationals, however, and that we need to keep our best juniors skiing against our seniors.

Mr. Danevski stated that that is his point. His proposal is made to get the juniors to ski more consistently with the seniors during the Nor/Am.

Mr. Bodensteiner made a motion to accept the criteria as presented in the meeting materials, and was seconded by Mr. Klein.

Mr. Fjeldheim suggested a friendly amendment to Mr. Bodensteiner, that the number of Nor/Am selections be capped at two per sex, and Mr. Bodensteiner accepted this amendment.

Mr. Bodensteiner also amended his motion to say that an NRL point standard in Nor/Am races would be fixed instead of a finishing place standard as was originally proposed. He proposed that the criteria be accepted in this way, and that a working group made up of Ms. Caterinichio, Mr. Fjeldheim, Mr. Danevski, Mr. Grover and Mr. Kapala decide on the NRL point standard which would appear in the final criteria.

Motion accepted.

Mr. Lutter stated that it would be important to review this criteria again next spring, to assess its effectiveness.

10. Review and approve the 2004 U.S. Ski Team selection criteria

Mr. Lutter stated that the selection criteria had been presented in the meeting information, and asked Mr. Nystad to comment.

Mr. Nystad stated that this is essentially the same criteria that has been used over the past few years, and it works well. Coaches' discretion is involved. It sets a high international standard. We need to identify standards that live up to our goals. He stated that we need to have flexibility in the criteria to keep the team size to a manageable level.

Mr. Bodensteiner made a motion to accept this criteria as presented, and was seconded by Mr. Lutter.

Motion accepted.

May 16, 12:00pm – 5:00pm and May 17, 8:00am-12:00pm

Officials Subcommittee

Mr. Aalberg, Chairman of the Officials Subcommittee, called the meeting to order, and noted the following members present: Lee Todd, Scott Wilson, Bob Gross, Lori Horn, Gary Giberson, Sally Jones, Bill Clark, Ernie Page, John Estle, and Matt Laue.

The agenda was approved with no comments.

1. Goals of Meeting

Mr. Aalberg stated that the goals of the meeting are; to define working groups, clarify responsibilities and tasks, and seat members. To maximize the potential of Officials Education - Clinics and Seminars, Officials Training and the Officials Newsletter. To finalize the Officials Pipeline and Event Organizers Pipeline. Review and approve action regarding Sr. National results' protest 2002/03 TD assignments.

2. Review of Subcommittee structure, working groups and members

Mr. Aalberg led a discussion regarding the working groups and asked each member present at the meeting to assign themselves to a working group. The discussion continued and it was agreed that the Homologation working group would be renamed "Course and Venue Certification" working group. Members not present would remain as working group members pending their requests. A new working group was added, and will be named the Information Technology (I.T.) working group. One task of the I.T. group will be to develop a set of criteria that could be used to evaluate and rank timing contractors and provide timing guidelines that organizers can use to produce a successfully timed event. A chair for the I.T. group was not forthcoming and a request will be sent to members not present.

3. Education materials and curriculum

The education-working group will utilize the materials developed for the 2002 Olympics (reviewed in Power-point format during the session) as well as other collected materials, and produce a curriculum that will be useable for each level of Officials training and each level of the Event Organizers pipeline.

Mr. Wilson suggested that trained regional representatives could present this education material to officials and event organizers within their region, through workshops and seminars. These educational seminars would support the officials and event organizers pipeline model. Ms. Horn suggested that the existing Power-point presentation could be developed into a modular system that would allow seminar leaders to customize their training sessions to suit the level of attendees. This presentation could be made available on an Internet site (site TBD).

4. "New" FIS rules/guidelines

Rules working group discussion identified conflicts in the USSA rulebook. Several USSA rules are modified, expanded and "old" FIS rules, which have caused confusion and controversy at some events. Mr. Gross suggested that a standardized version of FIS rules be considered for the USSA rulebook to help eliminate controversy, especially for junior level events. Mr. Estle suggested that FIS rules be clearly identified in the rulebook and that any rules that are modified elsewhere be notated. Mr. Clark suggested that the rulebook and all necessary forms and information be made available in CD format similar to what Alpine Officials currently have in place.

5. Certification system/database

Mr. Aalberg led a discussion of the two pipeline models; the officials' pipeline and the event organizers' pipeline. Mr. Estle suggested that the officials' pipeline might be too restrictive because some officials may not be interested in becoming the highest level of T.D. i.e. a Level 1 FIS T.D., and that official and T.D. certification and pipelines be separated. Mr. Laue suggested that a linear outline be created for the official's pipeline that would reflect 4 levels for the official, and 4 levels for the T.D. to match the 4 levels of the event organizers pipeline. Further discussion revealed that Officials could specialize within several disciplines such as course and grooming, timing and results, chief of competition or chief of stadium.

A passport system of tracking achievement to facilitate certification was discussed. It was also agreed that the pipelines should be included in the CC Competition Guide, with additional description regarding how to get involved and "advance" in officiating at a National level.

Testing as a requirement for official's certification was discussed and it was suggested that an open book system be used except for the highest level, which would require a closed book test. Practical application for rules could be required as part of the test as well as problem solving using case study analysis and presentation of solutions to the entire group. A set of potential test questions and case studies would be made available for all seminar presenters.

Mr. Gross suggested that a national T.D. uniform be considered to improve visibility for the T.D. and Jury members. Mr. Gross further suggested that it is important to develop an official's culture to attract new people into the system.

Sheryl Fine, USSA Member Services Director presented an example of the officials' certification computer screen, which utilizes the officials' data base information. The system is flexible and the small numbers of CC officials allows for easy input of information to track certification levels of officials and T.Ds. Ms. Fine suggested that the task of the Officials subcommittee is to fine tune the specific criteria that will be used for the Officials' and T.D. certification levels. Ms. Fine also suggested that her team could add specialty fields within the certification screen that would allow visual tracking of the previously discussed Officials specialization.

An Officials handbook is not currently available in the United States however it was noted that Canada has a good manual that might be modified for our use. It was suggested that the Officials Handbook be renamed the Event Organizers Handbook.

The Event pipeline outlines each level of event and describes the criteria necessary to be classified within each level. The event pipeline is now designed to correspond with the Officials' and T.D. certification levels to provide accurate cross-reference.

6. Homologation

A list of current and upcoming site certifications was presented to the subcommittee and Mr. Clark asked that Auburn Ski Club be added to the list of upcoming sites.

Certified sites in US:

<u>Site</u>		<u>Course</u>
- Kincaid Park, Anchorage	- FIS	(?)
- Soldier Hollow, Midway	- FIS	(from 1.5-16.7km)
- Putney, VT	- FIS	(5 km)
- Ponderosa Park, McCall	- USSA 1,2	(5km, 7.5 km)
- Bohart Ranch, Bozeman	- USSA 3,4,5,6	(5, 7.5, 10, 12.5km)
- Lake Placid	- FIS expired	

Upcoming:

<u>Site</u>	<u>Requirement</u>
- Fairbanks	- course maps/profiles
- Rumford	- course maps/profiles
- Lake Placid	- course maps/profiles
- West Yellowstone	- course maps/profiles
- Ft. Kent	- inspection
- Auburn ski club	- inspection

Further discussion revealed that course and event certification in the U.S. has its own special criteria (less stringent than FIS) because of the variations in the available terrain.

Proposal: To adopt and implement the suggested systems for the Officials and Event Pipelines

Motion: To bring forward to the Sport Committee for approval

Motion approved

Mr. Todd suggested that officials training seminars be scheduled around national events either to correspond with a site inspection or as hands on training during the event. Further discussion led to agreement that two seminars would be provided per year, one around the spring congress at Park City and one "update" in the fall which could address a specific topic and could be scheduled around a specific venue i.e. nationals in Rumford.

It was suggested that any race organizer should be able to request an officials seminar, however this would be dependent upon the availability of trained seminar leaders in their region.

7. Correction to 2002 U.S. Nationals Pursuit Results

Mr. Aalberg presented the problem illustrated by the letter from Justin Freeman regarding the results from Senior Nationals. Mr. Gross, who was assistant T.D at the event, provided the subcommittee with clarification of Mr. Freeman's position.

Proposal: To change the final order of finish to reflect other non-protested results according to Justin Freeman's letter.

Motion: Ask the race organizer to request that the timing subcontractor provide final results according to the official order of finish and that the timing subcontractor verify this with documentation. Mr. Wilson amended the motion to require as much documentation as possible.

Motion approved

8. TD Assignments 2003

Meeting closed for TD assignment Working Group.
USSA Officials' Committee meeting adjourned.

**May 17, 8:00am-12:00pm
Coaches' Subcommittee**

Mr. Lutter welcomed the group back to the table, and noted the same members present. He also noted the presence of Torbjorn Karlsen.

1. Development team structure and operations issues

Mr. Lutter introduced discussion about a letter sent to the cross country staff, and copied widely throughout the ski community. A copy of this letter was included in the meeting materials. He

stated that he was incredibly disappointed by the actions of the authors of this letter. He stated that this is not the way we do business. Genuine concerns always need to be addressed, but to do it in the manner these authors have done it, to make ethical accusations and to send them widely throughout the community in an email is cowardly, and attune to a character assassination of our ski team staff. He stated that he is happy about the way the response to this letter was handled. You don't respond to an email like this with another email. We do business by discussing our issues, and by dealing with them face-to-face at the meeting table, and we don't try to use public opinion and one-sided information to influence issues. He stated that these meetings are an open forum, and that we get a lot done through the context of these meetings. We've done big analyses of our development programs in our meetings.

Mr. Lutter then asked Mr. Bodensteiner to comment.

Mr. Bodensteiner stated that, despite the threatening tone of the letter, which essentially stated demands, and threatened legal action of those demands weren't met, and despite the fact that the letter made some unwarranted allegations about the ethics of the staff, that he wasn't surprised to get a letter like this. He stated that there were several reasons that he wasn't surprised. First, he stated that he gets letters like this every so often. He gets letters from people who don't agree with a decision that they've made, or a direction that they're headed in, and who've taken the time to write to express their concerns, because they're passionate about the sport, and because they want USSA to be successful. He stated that these letters more often than not come from individuals who aren't involved with the program at a high level, or who do not have a real understanding as to why certain decisions are made, or certain direction is set. He stated that these are often individuals who've read something on a website somewhere that has touched on an issues, but has painted an incomplete picture. He stated that we all know that there are websites out there that carry their own agendas, which often aren't consistent with that of this organization. He then read an excerpt from a website, which was a preface written by the editor, also a signer of the letter, to the letter when it was posted to that website.

"Already facing major coaching changes (see above) and a significant slash to the operating budget post-SLC2002, USSA is confronting perhaps the most serious challenge in the form of a united front of opposition coming from many of the biggest names in the development pipeline. Although talk has circulated in the Nordic community for the past decade of cross country leaving U.S. Ski and Snowboarding auspices and joining another National Governing Body (number one choice being U.S. Biathlon), up until now the lack of a powerful coalition to lead that breakaway has prevented anything more than talk. The mere fact that coaches representing programs ranging from elite development to NCAA to juniors are so united is a very significant development. One that just might have the potential to shake the sport to its core."

He stated that, had he received a simple phone call from the authors, he could have explained that, for the fifth year in a row, the cross country budget is, in fact, increasing, and they would have been able to portray a more complete picture.

He stated that sometimes, these are individuals who've heard about something we've done, from one of their buddies out on the ski trail, and who don't have the complete picture in front of them. He stated that these are often unique and constructive situations, since it gives him the chance to communicate with someone he hasn't had the chance to communicate with before, and to help them understand the complexity of the issues that we face, and the depth of the decisions that we have to make. And after a conversation like that, these individuals often have a much clearer picture of what it is we do, and why we do it, and often become good supporters of the program.

He stated that as he read through this letter, it was reasonable for him to think that this was written by people who have not been involved in the leadership process of the Committee, and who do not understand how the program is structured, or why it's structured in that way. The letter states that USSA must have a long-term development plan, and he stated that this does

exist. The Committee helped to develop the Athlete Development Pipeline and Athlete Competency Statement, which together identify the levels of development, what skills need to be delivered to the athletes at those levels, and identifies the level of opportunities USSA strives to deliver to athletes who meet the standards set forth at each level of development.

The letter stated that there needs to be a coaches' symposium to address development issues. Mr. Bodensteiner stated, of course this is important. He stated that it's so important that they don't just do it once a year, they do it twice a year. They met the last time in Minneapolis, and are meeting again now to discuss development issues. This is done through the normal committee meeting structure.

The letter stated that USSA has abandoned the developmental aspects of the sport, such as coaches' education and youth development. Mr. Bodensteiner stated that, in fact, USSA helps to organize five coaches' clinics a year, one in each region, a biennial National Coaches' Conference, and has produced a coaches' education video and manual made available to all USSA members. Additionally, the youth ski league is still being managed by USSA in much the same way it has been for many, many years. He stated that if you weren't paying attention, you might think that program had been dropped, but in fact, only the name had been changed from the Bill Koch Youth Ski League to Nordic Kids, and it still provides youth clubs with manuals, newsletters, achievement charts and low-cost race insurance, like it always has.

He stated that as he read the names of the authors of the letter, it was also easy to assume that this letter was being written by people not involved with the leadership of the sport at this level. He stated that there were signers to the letter who hadn't been members of USSA since 1994, who, despite their claims that discussions on the issues outlined in this letter were ongoing, hadn't communicated with him or other members of the USSA staff in 5 to 6 years, and who hadn't attended these planning meetings in as long as he's been attending, which is six years. He stated that none of the individual signers contacted him specifically about the issues raised by the letter before he received the letter, and before it was distributed widely throughout the ski community.

He stated that, even as he read through the letter several times, it wasn't apparent to him what the signers aimed to accomplish. He stated that he could read the demands outlined in the letter, but he couldn't really decipher what it was the group wanted to improve, or how they wanted to build onto the program. He stated that he couldn't understand why someone would take this approach to airing their concerns, why the signers would post a letter like this to the websites they own or edit, why they would send copies of the letter to the USOC board, why they would make sure a U.S. Ski Team sponsor would see this letter, and why they would contact the U.S. Olympic Committee to research where USSA might possibly be in violation of the Amateur Sports Act. He stated that this wasn't readily apparent to him.

He stated that Mr. Hughes was the first Committee member to respond to the authors of this letter, and he wrote back to them saying that there is a forum to have their concerns discussed and considered, and that this forum was through the Committee process.

Mr. Hughes stated that he'd received a response from one of the signers that indicated that they felt the Committee had been stripped of its power to oversee the U.S. Ski Team program, and that the time for talking was over.

Mr. Bodensteiner stated that Mr. Lutter, being the good Chairman that he is, finally contacted the signers to find out what they would like on the agenda for discussion, and they got back to him with three issues. Mr. Bodensteiner stated that these issues were; Discuss holding a national coaches' symposium, where a long-term and sustainable development plan could be formed. Review the application of team selection criteria at all levels, especially the use of coaches' discretion. Review the logistical planning of U.S. Ski Team trips, especially for the Junior World

Championships and Junior Scandinavian Cup. Mr. Bodensteiner suggested that tackling these three issues might be the place to start to move forward.

Mr. Lutter stated that we've had five years of unprecedented success with this program because of the program we've built, and we can only continue that if we communicate.

Mr. Grover stated that much of this issue stems from communication. He stated that he had talked to two of the NDG athletes about the requirements of the program before he had spoken with their coach, but after he had received negative comments about this from the coach through a telephone call, he was able to work out their issues in a constructive manner. He also stated that he had been in contact with the coaches of the new athletes who'd been invited into the program, and that he had worked hard to give them and their athletes more clear information about the expectations and benefits of the program, as well as information about the working relationship between the club coaches and the USSA staff. He stated that these issues had also been worked out in a constructive manner.

Mr. Danevski stated that it isn't right to talk about the tone of the letter. He stated that we need to talk about the message. We can't say that these people don't have credibility. These people are concerned about skiing, and because they care about it, not because they make a lot of money in the sport. When these people are not contacted by the Committee or by the staff, they feel left out and get angry. If someone spends five years coaching someone and they are left out of the coaching loop, they will be disappointed.

He stated that, instead of speaking to the letter, he'd like to hear from the group what's gone well and what hasn't in the past several years, so we can push forward. He stated that he still doesn't think we are at a level with our program where we can be the best in the world, and we have to find out where to build on it. If we take away some of the people on this letter, then we won't have top international skiers, and we'll be back to where we were five years ago.

Mr. Lutter stated that he is not trying to discard the signer's concerns at all. He stated that they just handled it in the wrong way. He commended Mr. Bodensteiner for not responding in the same way, and for not firing back a blistering email. He stated that the staff has responded professionally by communicating on a personal basis with those who've indicated that they want to communicate in that way. He stated that he also has things he'd like to see be improved, but the way to go about it is to go through the Committee process.

Mr. Hale stated that the group needs to consider the past history of some of the signers, which pre-dates even the members of this staff. He stated that this letter was sent in April, because it was perceived that if they waited until the meetings in May, then it would be too late to address the issues for this coming season. He stated that, in April, NDG athletes were being contacted and asked to make decisions about their plans for the upcoming season. He stated that a lot of the points in the letter are based on perception. He stated that if there is a plan in place, we need to make it more clear. He stated that this letter was copied widely within the community because the perception was that it would not be shared with others, and would be buried, if it was not widely spread.

Mr. Fjeldheim stated that he felt that in the original conference call among the signers that the methods of contacting the athletes was the main issue. He stated that many coaches in the community have produced many good skiers despite a lack of funds, and a lack of coaches' education opportunities. But, he stated, we also have to understand that these are the realities we have to face in this sport. He stated that he personally had been able to work out the issues he'd had in a productive manner, by calling the staff and discussing the issues with them over the phone.

He stated that he regretted putting his name in this letter. He stated that his understanding was that this would go to the staff, who would have a chance to respond and that it would be resolved that way. He stated that he was shocked to see it go out over the internet like it did.

He stated that we need to solidify our development plan, and ask if we should get behind a single residence program in Park City, or not. He stated that we need to improve what we are already doing in coaches' education, and we need to have a plan for that. He stated that he decided to attend these meetings because he wants to be a part of the solution, and not part of the problem.

Mr. Karlson stated that he feels most of the discussion here is centered on the methods of the letter, and not the issues. He stated that, with regard to the opening comments about the methods being cowardly, he doesn't feel like a coward. He stated that he feels frustrated as someone working with a national team skier. He stated that there were comments about how this isn't the way we do business, but he had made an application to the U.S. Ski Team staff, and was never even given a written response as to why his application was turned down.

Mr. Bodensteiner stated that he would like to make a point of clarification to Mr. Karlson's comments, and stated that the application Mr. Karlson referred to was a request by Mr. Karlson to receive a salary of \$8,000 plus his expenses to coach Justin Wadsworth. He stated that he'd contacted Mr. Karlson via telephone to let him know that they would not grant his request, and that Mr. Alan Ashley had sent a written response, which he was copied on.

Mr. Karlson stated that this request was actually for \$7,500 and no expenses, or at least something.

He stated that he thinks our Olympic competitors last season should have been in the top-10, and that communication and support of the personal coaches would have made the difference.

Mr. Jones asked Mr. Karlson if support meant support through communication, or financial support, and Mr. Karlson stated that he meant a little of both.

Mr. Karlson stated that the team needs to find a better way to communicate with the personal coaches, because they are a resource, and that the team coaches can probably learn from them. He stated that he's coached athletes who have been in the top-10 of the World Cup on the guy's side, and who have won a silver medal on the women's side, and that no U.S. Ski Team coaches have contacted him to find out what kind of interval sessions, for example, that they are doing. He stated that Becky Scott finished in the 40's in the Olympics in 1998 and now won a silver medal in 2002, and if he were another coach, he'd like to know what they changed to make that happen. He stated that when he was a young coach, he interviewed at least five other coaches a year to find out what they were doing.

Ms. Caterinichio suggested that we may want to look at increasing the number of residence centers, and that we may also want to consider making a National Select Team, so that we give a broader range of athletes the chance to have an official title. Mr. Lutter responded that this actually takes place, but through the context of the regional elite teams.

Mr. Kapala stated that maybe there's a need to hold a development nuts and bolts meeting early each spring to speak specifically about camp dates, team plans, etc.

He stated that he really disagrees with Jon Quinn-Hurst's interpretation of the application of the selection criteria. He stated that one of the best things that this group has done in the past several years has been a thorough review of the selection criteria, as this meeting shows. He stated that the topic of team logistics came up, and that, in his experience, they are very well coordinated, and that plans have been very well communicated, especially as compared to how they were done several years ago. But if there is a place to continue to improve, it's in the communication of those planning logistics farther in advance.

Mr. Hughes stated that Chris Grover will have to work very hard to communicate, and build involvement with the coaches. He suggested another day tacked onto the fall meeting so that we can have even more in-depth discussion about our development program.

Mr. Lutter stated that the key concepts here are that we have a long-term development plan with a national team, a national development group based on residence programs, and regional elite groups, which we will continue with. We will continue to refine our program through our committee meetings. And we can intensify our communications with coaches as well as athletes.

At the conclusion of this discussion, Mr. Lutter welcomed Jeremy Forster, Event Director, and invited comments about the 2004 National Championships. Several comments were made about the pros and cons of two year event organization deals, and Jeremy thanked the group for their comments, which would figure into his thoughts about future event strategies.

2. Creation of a “Junior Nor/Am”?

Mr. Lutter asked Mr. Danevski, who had made a proposal to create a Junior Nor/Am, to comment.

Mr. Danevski stated that the intent of this proposal is to recognize the juniors who compete consistently, and at a high level in the Nor/Am. This would be awarded to the overall winner of the series, and would become another title a young athlete could aspire to.

Ms. Caterinichio stated that she had the same concerns with this as she did for using the Nor/Am in Junior World Championship team selection. She stated that she was worried about the amount of travel this might force on a kid. She voiced her support for this proposal, but only if no team selection or prize money were tied to it, and it was for an honor only.

Mr. Bodensteiner made a motion to recognize the Junior Nor/Am Champion by scoring the junior class in all Nor/Am competitions according to the Continental Cup scoring system, and counting each athlete's best five competitions. This motion was seconded by Mr. Kapala.

Motion approved.

3. Midwest coaches' education series

Mr. Lutter stated that this group talks a lot about the importance of coaches' education, but realistically, we know there isn't enough money right now to tackle it in a big way. Therefore, we need to think about doing Level 1 education at the regional level, organized by regional leadership. In the Central division, a group of coaches have organized a series of seminars, which could provide a model for Level 1 education in other regions, and if Level 1 education was standardized across regions and divisions, then it would be his proposal that USSA recognize the participants in those clinics, and register them as Level 1 coaches.

He stated that Level 2 education could potentially be handled through the REG program, Level 3 through the National Coaches' Conference, and Level 4 could be a university-based course to be defined.

He stated that if this system is to be effective, it needs to be tied in with some sort of certification system recognized nationally by USSA, and which provides certain privileges to coaches, such as access to junior trips, Junior Olympic coaching credentials, or others, who have completed certain levels of education.

Mr. Bodensteiner suggested that the most important step toward standardizing the Level 1 education system was to define a curriculum that could be shared across divisions. He stated

that if we could develop and agree to a Level 1 curriculum by the next meeting, in the fall, that that would be a significant step forward.

Mr. Sterling noted that much of this may already exist from previous staff, and if we found it, could give us a great head-start.

Mr. Hale stated that he'd contact Steve Gaskill to see if he still had any of the old USSA coaches' education curriculum. Mr. Klein stated he'd do the same with NENSA, who has also been conducting many clinics, and Mr. Grover stated that he'd contact Cross Country Canada for the same.

4. Regional Training Center Review

Mr. Lutter explained that the standards we set forth for the Regional Training Centers call for a performance review after each Olympic cycle. He then asked Mr. Bodensteiner to appoint a working group to assist him in this review. Mr. Bodensteiner appointed Mr. Lutter and Mr. Klein to work with him on this review.

May 17, 1:00pm-3:30pm

Cross Country Committee

Mr. Todd reconvened the Cross Country Committee by calling role, noting the same members present, and declaring a quorum. He said that he was very impressed by the work that went on within the subcommittees.

He then turned over the floor to Mr. Aalberg, Chairman of the Officials Subcommittee for his report.

1. Report and Proposals from the Officials' Subcommittee

Mr. Aalberg stated that, in his first meeting as the Officials Chairman, the goal was to identify the roles and responsibilities, and the goals of the subcommittee. He stated that he had reviewed with the subcommittee the tasks, organization and description of the subcommittee in the bylaws, and as they flush through their operating issues, they may make some changes.

He stated that they had appointed chairmen for the Homologation Working Group, which they hope to re-name as the Course and Venue Certification Working Group, the Rules Working Group, the TD Appointment Working Group, the Officials' Education Working Group, and the newly formed Information Technology Working Group. He then described the IT working group, indicating that its task is to describe the IT requirements for major events.

Mr. Bodensteiner asked if the changes he'd made to the subcommittee meant that we'd need to change the bylaws. Mr. Todd responded that it may be something to consider, but that Mr. Aalberg would need more time to make a firm proposal of that order.

Mr. Aalberg reported that in the area of certification and licensing, he'd been working with the USSA membership department to develop a system of licensing TDs and officials in four different levels, which will be reflected on their membership cards. He stated that he has also actively implemented a history of each officials' education, working assignments, and teaching into a database managed by USSA staff.

He reported that the subcommittee discussed rules, guidelines and pipelines, and discussed the difference between rules and guidelines. He reported that they'd discussed the Officials and Event/Venue development pipelines, and accepted these documents.

He then made a motion to require all championship event organizers to submit course maps and profiles for review before the event is awarded. This motion was seconded by Mr. Sterling.

Mr. Bodensteiner asked whether or not this meant that homologation would be required for Nor/Am venues, and Mr. Aalberg stated that no, this would not be a requirement. This was only meant to give the venues some review, and to suggest possible improvements. But new sites, who do apply to organize a championship, will need to have an inspection done by at least a regional homologation inspector.

Motion carries.

Mr. Aalberg reported that the subcommittee aspires to hold a national seminar or clinic in conjunction with the spring meeting of the Cross Country Committee. Additionally, the subcommittee may chose not to meet during the fall meeting, but suggested instead that the fall meetings be held near one of the next year's championship sites, so they can do a seminar for the championship organizers instead of holding a normal meeting.

He reported that the subcommittee had reviewed a problem with the results from the National Championship pursuit race, and had decided to revise the results accordingly. He then made a motion to request that the 2002 National Championship Organizing Committee change the results of the pursuit event according to the order of finish, and that these results will be made official, and posted as such in their materials and on their website.

Mr. Todd stated that this would fall under the guidelines for clerical errors.

This motion was seconded by Mr. Lutter.

Motion carries.

Mr. Aalberg then reported that some TD assignments had been made, but many still needed to be confirmed with the TDs, so he had no report to make on that subject.

2. Report and Proposals from the Coaches' Subcommittee

Mr. Lutter reported that the subcommittee had reviewed and approved the 2003 competition calendar. He stated that a working group of Mr. Gerlach, Mr. Grover, Mr. Kapala and Mr. Bodensteiner had been formed to review the bids for the Spring Series, and that this group would decide on the organizer, and award the event. He stated that a Ski Duathlon would be organized during the Nor/Am in Fairbanks. He presented the new daily program for the National Championships. He stated that a junior heat would be added to the National Championship Sprint.

Mr. Sterling then made a motion to accept the 2003 National Calendar, and was seconded by Mr. Hughes.

Motion approved.

Mr. Lutter then reported that the subcommittee proposes organizing a USSA Collegiate Championship during the U.S. Nationals, to be managed and scored by the college coaches.

Mr. Sweeney suggested that this should be called a tournament or a cup instead of a championship, so that it was not in conflict with the NCAA Championships.

Mr. Lutter made a motion to approve the proposal for a USSA Collegiate Cup, and was seconded by Ms. Caterinichio.

Motion approved.

Mr. Lutter then made a motion to accept Lake Placid's proposal to host the 2004 Junor Olympics, and was seconded by Mr. Gerlach.

Motion approved.

Mr. Lutter then made a motion to accept the new Junior Olympic regional rotational schedule, as developed by the Coaches' Subcommittee, and was seconded by Mr. Sterling. Ms. Caterinichio casted the only negative vote.

Motion approved.

Mr. Lutter then commented on the National Championship timing issue addressed by the Officials' Subcommittee, and expressed the need for some sort of timing homologation system. This was noted by Mr. Aalberg.

Mr. Lutter then made a presentation to the committee of the changes to the proposed Junior World Championship selection criteria, and the method to solidify the Nor/Am selection standards before publication of the criteria.

Mr. Sterling made a motion to accept this proposal for the Junior World Championship criteria, and was seconded by Mr. Hughes.

Motion approved.

Mr. Aalberg made a motion to approve the 2004 U.S. Ski Team selection, as it was presented, and was seconded by Mr. Engen.

Motion approved.

Mr. Hughes made a motion to approve the 2003 Junior Scandinavian Cup team selection criteria, as it was presented, and was seconded by Ms. Caterinichio.

Motion approved.

Mr. Grover made a motion to name a Junior Nor/Am Champion using athletes' best 5 Nor/Am competitions during the year, and was seconded by Mr. Sterling.

Motion approved.

Mr. Lutter reported that the subcommittee discussed coaches' education, and hope to have a Level 1 education curriculum to present at the fall meetings.

Mr. Aalberg stated that this certification system should be in sync with the officials' education system, and that, potentially, the education materials should be posted to the web.

Mr. Lutter stated that the Regional Training Centers would be reviewed by a working group of himself, Mr. Bodensteiner and Mr. Klein, in accordance to the established standards.

Mr. Lutter stated that, with regards to the "development concerns" letter, he was glad that four of the signers showed up to the meeting. He expressed his disappointment with the approach that the individuals took. He stated that many of the issues brought up by the letter are already being addressed. He stated that communication, as always, is something that needs to be intensified. He stated his support for the USSA staff members and staff coaches, and acknowledged the many challenges they face in implementing a very complex program.

Mr. Hughes reconfirmed that development issues will be addressed again during the next regular meeting of the Committee.

Mr. Aalberg suggested that, in the future, if the signers of the letter have complaints, that they also need to provide concrete solutions.

Mr. Lutter stated that the three agenda items provided for his subcommittee were discussed, but no action was taken.

3. Adjournment

Mr. Lutter made a motion to call the meeting to a close and was seconded by Mr. Sterling.

Motion approved.