High Performance Committee Minutes

12.2.2022

Attendance
Wyatt Allen
Liam Corrigan
Yaz Farooq
Genevra Stone
Josy Verdonkschot (CHPO)
Stephen Hap Whelpley (Chair)

Agenda
Update on Hiring Process for Training Center Coach
Review of DAS Criteria and Allocations
Preliminary Review of 2023 Selection Procedures for Seniors & U23s

Update on Hiring Process for Training Center Coach

The HPC began the meeting by discussing where the hiring process was for a new coach at the Princeton Training Center. While the HPC did not meet to discuss all of the applicants, Chief High Performance Officer Josy Verdonkschot conducted the interviews of the finalists along with Genevra Stone. Following the interviews, Josy presented the HPC with his proposed nomination for the position. The HPC approved of this nomination via email.

In this meeting, Josy updated the HPC that the nomination had been passed onto the Board of Directors and negotiations were underway.

Review of DAS Criteria and Allocations

Josy shared his 2023 criteria for Direct Athlete Support. Its allocation generally mimics last year, but supports many more athletes due to the recent 2022 World Championships and the continuation of more athletes than we saw after the 2021 Olympics. Currently, all athletes who competed in an Olympic boat class at 2022 Worlds are receiving some level of funding.

For the coming year, there will still be three tiers: Performance A, Performance B, and Training. As before, Performance A and B are determined by performance standards, whereas training stipends are discretionary allocations based on performance and training. There will be three periods for the coming year: Period 1: January 1, 2023 – May 31, 2023, Period 2: June 1, 2023 – September 30, 2023, and Period 3: October 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023.

Different from last year, DAS athletes will be expected to meet the following criteria in order to maintain their funding:

1. Train full time and use TrainingPeaks to log training;
2. Submit erg scores on the USRowing website:
    a. 6,000m open rate for December 2022 and/or January 2023;

    b. 2,000m open rate for February 2023 and/or March 2023;
3. Attend training and selection camps when invited;
4. Participate in the Winter Speed Orders March 2023.

Josy took care to note that Performance B and Training levels are both held at $1,000/month for the time being. This is a budgetary constraint as a result of supporting more athletes for a longer period of time. If funding changes, then the stipends will as well. For now, the priorities are to support the top athletes as well as possible and to try and support as many athletes with Olympic potential as possible.

Preliminary Review of 2023 Selection Procedures for Seniors & U23s

Prior to the meeting, Josy presented the HPC with a preliminary draft of the 2023 Selection Procedures. The HPC positively remarked that the drafted procedures moved selection in a thoughtful and more competitive direction. At the same time, the HPC noted the exceptional amount of change and some of its challenges.

Josy explained that the goal throughout these procedures is to provide a fair system for the best athletes without excluding anyone from the opportunity of being considered.

The HPC engaged in a thorough discussion about the procedures with purposeful considerations around:

- Dates and location
- Reintroduction of time standards and the development of Competitive Standard Times (CSTs)
- Lightweight doubles selection camp
- World Cup standards for NSR qualification
- Incorporation of declined or unqualified NSR boat classes in Selection Camp 2
- Selection Camp Criteria

Considering venue availability, camp logistics, and budgetary needs, some locations and dates are set in stone for the year. Some members of the HPC expressed a need to reconsider the location of non-Olympic and U23 trials. As part of this discussion, the HPC acknowledged the prohibitive cost of each selection regatta as an unavaoidable factor in planning for these events.

Josy explained to the HPC that the reintroduction of time standards for trial events is a different consideration depending on the event. Non-Olympic events, U23s, and U19s are not considered immediate gateways to the Olympics. As such, the Ted Stevens Act does not apply to them and time standards can be applied. Meanwhile, Olympic boat classes are an immediate gateway to the Olympics, so time standards cannot affect qualification. However, they can be applied to the funding of Olympic events.

Along these lines, the proposed selection procedures outline the need for Competitive Standard Times as a more accurate way of determining the performance level of a crew. Josy noted that the adjustment of CSTs for situational conditions is done in order to be more inclusive rather than exclusive while maintaining a continual eye toward performance.

With regards to the lightweight doubles moving to a camp selection, Josy discussed with the HPC how developing four athletes toward this common goal is better than isolated training sites with only two athletes. Off of this, the HPC considered how the camp selection process could actually contribute to a deeper development in these boat classes that might help to ensure the success of the LW2x.

At sixty-four minutes into the meeting and following this topic, Liam Corrigan left the call.

The final discussions examined both the process for NSR boats as well as the selection camps. Josy explained that the overall goal is to boat the most competitive crews possible while making sure to not miss opportunities for building faster crews through the coordination of a camp. Depending on results, athletes can still qualify for Worlds through placement at the NSR and subsequent placement at a specified World Cup. The standards for placement at the World Cup are a bit more dynamic than last year since the 2022 World Championship results exist and the Olympic qualification is forthcoming. Similar to last year, athletes can still make selection camps through USRowing hosted events (Winter Speed Order and National Selection Regatta). Unlike last year, there are no guaranteed spots based on ergometer scores. The majority of invitations will be awarded based on criteria outlined in the selection procedures.

In conclusion, Josy and the HPC agreed that the selection procedures should go out for comment as soon as possible. If necessary, Josy volunteered that a town hall could be held in an effort to expedite the discussion before final ratification by the HPC.