High Performance Committee Minutes

5.23.2023

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

Agenda
Introduction of Catherine Starr to HPC
Discussion of Recent Coach Hiring & Selection Camp 2 Coaching Staff
Presentation of CHPO's Ideal American Structure
Review of Selection Camp 1
Direct Athlete Stipend (DAS) Update for Next Period
Planning for Next Year

The meeting was called to order at 12:00PM EST.

Introduction of Catherine Starr to HPC

Chair Stephen Hap Whelpley called the meeting to order with the High Performance Committee (HPC) and began by introducing Catherine Starr as the new U19 representative on the High Performance Committee.

In response to the vertical restructuring of USRowing's National Team, the HPC and Chief High Performance Officer (CHPO) Josy Verdonkschot found it necessary to establish another seat on the HPC that better represented the U19 constituents. After the USRowing board amended the HPC Charter and the nomination committee subsequently interviewed applicants, the HPC was pleased to welcome Catherine to its meetings. The HPC appreciates all who were willing and interested in the position.

Discussion of Recent Coach Hiring & Selection Camp 2 Coaching Staff

The coaching discussion began with a review of Isabelle Jacobs' hiring as the High Performance Sculling Coach for the Senior National Team. The HPC received feedback from the community as to what the hiring process was since there was not an open search. The CHPO explained that there was an immediate need for a hire and clear validation for it. Josy had an immediate need for a coach at Selection Camp 1 with international experience and prior familiarity with his leadership. Furthermore, after soliciting coaching recommendations from the National Team athletes present at the Winter Altitude Camp, Isabelle's name was a universal suggestion across both genders and disciplines.

After this discussion, Josy consulted the HPC regarding potential appointments to the Selection Panels for Selection Camp 2 in June/July of 2023. Both men's and women's camps will be held in Princeton, NJ.

Like Selection Camp 2 in 2023, each camp will require two lead coaches (one sweep, one scull) and a selector. Per the 2023 National Senior Team Selection Procedures, each camp will have a selection panel consisting of the selector, the lead coach and the CHPO.

The HPC engaged in a full discussion of the potential candidates proposed by Josy with an eye towards the 2023 World Championships. Being in the summer, a broader list of candidates were available with the conclusion of the collegiate season. That being said, Coaches Tom Terhaar and Laurel Korholz were not available to coach this summer. The HPC reviewed the rest of the coaches involved in last year's team, their availability, and additional new candidates in consideration.

Presentation of CHPO's Ideal American Structure

The CHPO presented his general schematic for the ideal American structure. This structure would incorporate the geographical diversity of the states through utilizing well-equipped and coached clubs, while also developing training centers to centralize resources and athletes. The ultimate goal would have USRowing run training centers in strategic geographical areas like the northeast (e.g. Boston), mid-atlantic (Princeton), southeast (Sarasota), southwest (Chula Vista), and northwest (Seattle).

Clubs would work to continue developing athletes, while the training centers would ensure athlete growth and development to those already in the system.

Realistically, USRowing must begin by making one well-equipped training center that can support its athletes with adequate high performance resources. As such, attention needs to be directed to the Princeton Training Center in order to further flesh out its support of athletes.

In addition to financial backing and support, this system will require ongoing communication between USRowing and clubs in order to ensure the most appropriate development, support, and talent identification of athletes.

Review of Selection Camp 1

The CHPO updated the HPC on the first selection camp.

The M2x and W2- that won the National Selection Regatta elected to go back to their home club, California Rowing Club, to train in preparation for World Cup 2. They will join the team in Erba, Italy, for final preparations. The winning M2- participated in the M4- selection. Similarly, the W2x entered W4x selection. The NSR winners of the M1x and W1x were invited to camp and participated.

Through the camp, both men's and women's fours were selected. These lineups are not necessarily the final lineups to race at the World Championships, but were selected to compete at World Cup 2 in order to identify the potential speed of the boat class. In addition to the fours, two men's pairs and one women's pair were selected to race at the World Cup for experience and development. All of these sweep athletes in both the pairs and the fours from this camp are pre-selected to the team for the World Championships though their seats for the World Championships are yet to be named.

Out of camp, four female scullers were pre-selected to the senior team for competition at the World Cup. These athletes will compete in both doubles and a quad at the World Cup.

No male scullers were pre-selected to the team.

The camp was staffed by Casey Galvanek (men's sweep), Jesse Foglia (women's sweep), Peter Mansfled (lightweight men and W1x), Isabelle Jacobs (women's sculling), and Kris Korzeniowski (selector and men's sculling).

Direct Athlete Stipend (DAS) Update for Next Period

As noted in the last meeting, the majority of invitations for Selection Camp 2 went out by the end of April. Any athlete who was receiving DAS from last year's performance at the World Championships will continue to receive DAS into the next period regardless of his or her participation at Selection Camp 1 if that athlete has been invited to attend Selection Camp 2.

In anticipation of this, the CHPO advised a couple small adjustments. One athlete from last year's World Championship squad will lose funding as he did not participate in any of the winter or spring racing. The athlete understood and was fine with this decision. In addition to this, another athlete who would not be invited to Selection Camp 2 was notified that his DAS support would continue through the next period in order to allow for necessary medical coverage. After the next period, his support would be suspended unless the athlete was victorious through a trials event.

Planning for Next Year

To conclude the meeting, the HPC briefly discussed some of the dates and locations for next year. The CHPO explained that much of the Olympic selection would happen between the months of January and April in 2024. Noting the challenges to Chula Vista this year as well as its limited availability next year, Sarasota appears to be the most likely training and racing venue for the 2024 Olympic selection.

There being no other business for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:10PM EST.