

USATF-New England Annual Meeting  
Brandeis University, Waltham MA  
September 20, 1999

Minutes taken by Christina Newlin, Office Manager

The annual meeting of the New England Association of USATF was held September 20, 1999 at Brandeis University. Attending: Marja Bakker, Ron Boemker (RITFO), Peter Brook (SRR), Phil Byrne (BAA), Ed Daniels (NHTracksters), John Evans (SRR), Nancy Given (SRR), Dan Hart (HFC), Rich Hart (HFC), Duke Hutchinson (CSU), Frank Jackson (BITC), Ann Jennings (CMS), Justin Kuo (NEWalkers), Pat Lavelle (WMTFOA), Kim LeSage (CSU), Kate McClendon-Kent (ATA), Kathy Nary (CMS), Mike Nary (Unatt), Jim O'Brien (GBTC), Glen O'Connor (CSU), Rob O'Hara (TVFR), Tom Petranoff (MFAthletic), Dave Post (MTFOA), Jeff Robbins (ATA), Ken Robichaud (NMC), Gary Snyder (GBTC), Peter Stasz (GSH), Jen Toomey (CMS), Stephen Viegas (IATC),  
Office Staff: Christina Newlin, Steve Vaitones  
These individuals, representing 15 of 112 member clubs, established a quorum.

President Dan Hart called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm, and gave a state of the association report. He started by thanking the other officers of the board for their service and for helping him to adjust to all the roles he's had to learn to play as the association's new president. He also thanked Steve Vaitones, Managing Director of the association office for his ability to multitask, and for serving as a resource. He also expressed thanks to the Vice President Marja Bakker for the timely production of the new and improved newsletter, and to Racewalk Chair Justin Kuo and former Athlete Representative Joanna Veltri for the creation and maintenance of the professional looking association web page. He also mentioned the many improvements made in the office, including the addition of New England Runner magazine as co-tenants, and urged everyone to stop by.

President Hart reported on the successful bids by the New England Association for several national championships at the 1999 USAT&F National Convention. The National Masters Indoor Track & Field Meet will be held in Boston in both 2000 and 2001. In addition, the National Fall Cross Country Championships 2000 will be held at Franklin Park. The meet was last held here in 1995.

In closing, President Hart outlined his focus for the upcoming year. He reported that the number of individual memberships has declined in recent years. He stated that he feels the key to increasing member numbers is to work through the clubs, to have them encourage their members to join. He has been attending club meetings and events as a representative of the association, and will continue to do so. He also feels that an emphasis of this next year's board should be to foster currently existing relationships with corporate and individual sponsors, facilities, and volunteers, and to develop new partnerships.

Steve Vaitones then gave a report of the office's activities over the past year. He also began by thanking board members for their involvement. He reiterated that memberships are down, due in part to a number of the larger marathons dropping the requirement that runners have USATF memberships. The office has sanctioned over 300 events, the largest number by any association this year. There are fewer member clubs this year. He praised the organizers and volunteers that put on a large number of quality events, including the National Masters Indoor Track and Field Championships, the Eastern Regional Masters Championships, the New England Indoor and Outdoor Track and Field Championships, and the Northeastern Twilight and CanAm Track and Field series. Special thanks to Brown University, Franklin Park (Boston Parks & Recreation), Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center, Reebok, New Balance, the Chase Corporate Challenge, and Conventures.  
He invited all to call or stop by the office for information.

Steve also made mention of the National Organization's plans to implement a 12 month membership program starting in 2000, and the pros and cons of such a program. The details of the program have not been made available from the National Organization.

Steve provided a tentative indoor schedule, and Grand Prix team and individual results to date.

Ken Robichaud, Men's LDR Chair, announced the November 8 meeting to select races for the 2000 Grand Prix. He encouraged everyone to fill out the survey he handed out concerning the 1999 Grand Prix so comments could be used to better plan the 2000 series. He had posted the list of Ironrunners to date, and a sign up sheet for the Ironrunner jackets/sizes.

Corutney Bird, Vice President, was unable to attend. He sent a spokesman, Jon Evans, to announce that registration for the Cape Cod Marathon October 31, 1999 was up from 1998 to the point that they might have to close out the race for runner safety. He wanted to assure everyone that should that be the case, members of USATF in good standing would not be excluded from the race even if they had not yet registered.

Betsy Harshbarger also was not in attendance, so there was no report from the Secretary.

Rob O'Hara, Master's LDR Chair mentioned a few ideas for next year's events that would be explored. One was to have numbers color coded for the different age groups, so competition would be easier to identify. The other was to score competitors in 5 year age groups vs. 10 year groups.

Tom Petranoff, Athlete's Rep, reported on the events he attended this year including outdoor Nationals, the Pan Am Games, and the World Masters meet. He stressed the need for athlete input in the planning for housing, scheduling, etc. for these meets. He said that in his earlier days of competition he had not been much of a fan of USATF, but was now proud to be part of this association and had renewed hope for the sport. His interest is in development, particularly in the throws. He has started 3 different programs for kids in MA, RI, and CT, and hopes to expand these and add sponsors.

Justin Kuo, Racewalk Chair, announced the upcoming National 1 HR/2HR Racewalk Championships. He brought entries, and said to call him for more information.

Rich Hart, Track & Field Chair, announced plans for more clinics and an emphasis on development in the upcoming year. A preliminary indoor schedule is available from the office. The indoor New England Championship meet will be held at the Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center Friday, February 18 - the first time it has been held at that facility. He also mentioned that planning has already begun for the summer Twilight meets at Northeastern University. Rich is now coaching at Northeastern, and will be the liason with the administration.

Ed Daniels, Master's Track & Field Chair, reported on the great success of the the Regional Master's Meet held at Springfield College this summer. Springfield has offered the use of the facility again in the future, so there is the potential this meet to be an annual event if we are interested in holding it. The National Master's Indoors Meet has a long term home here in Boston if we are interested. It is scheduled to be held at the Reggie Lewis facility in 2000 and 2001. The logo for the 2000 meet has already been designed and Ed and a few others were modeling the t-shirts. He urged club members to promote the meet, especially the relay events, via their clubs.

Ron Boemker, Youth Chair, apologized for being late. He had come from the Downtown 5k in Providence, where the race start was delayed by someone threatening to jump from a building ledge somewhere on the course! He reported that the Junior Olympics program is healthy and strong: greater

than 6000 kids participated in the Nationals in Nebraska this year, pumping \$17 million into the city's economy. The J.O. Nationals 2000 are to be held in Buffalo, and will include events in the finals for wheel chair, amputee, and blind athletes. Bryant College, the site of this fall's New England J.O. Cross Country Championships, has a new \$2 million facility and new leadership that is impressed with our event management, so we can probably look to holding other events there. Ron also reported progress on the officiating front: he ran several 8 hour classes for new officials this year. The 8 hours can be used toward USATF certification, and he got some states to fund their officials' training. Also, Ron put out a call for officials and volunteers for the Paralympics Team Trials to be held at Connecticut College the last week in June. Call him for details.

Dave Post, Officials Certification Chair, gave a brief report, and made a printed one available as well. There are 171 members in the MTFOA, which ranks us 9th or 10th out of 56 associations for the number of certified officials. Membership is up this year, in part because we have required that the officials we have used for our events be certified. See Dave if you want to become certified.

Jim O' Brien, Treasurer, also gave a brief report, and had passed out a brief review of this year (through 9/1/99) and last year's finances. New computer equipment was purchased for the office totaling \$2700. He stated that we are in a relatively good position overall.

The financial report prompted requests for clarification of some of the data, and of the policies governing expenditures, holdings, and investments. In particular, Gary Snyder (GBTC) asked why we had \$150,000 in savings, and how that amount had been decided upon. Ron Boemker explained that the plan had been to set aside the equivalent of two years operating expenses, a conservative standard for nonprofit organizations to guard against financial difficulties due to changes in numbers of members, donors, etc. Dan Hart added that if our memberships numbers stabilize we will have a financial committee reexamine that practice. Pete Stasz (Greater Springfield Harriers) wanted to know why that fund was not earning more interest, which could be significant. He suggested that the money could be invested in low risk 2 year treasury notes on a rotating schedule (\$10,000 being invested every month). Pete then made a motion as to this effect. Gary Snyder noted that since some of the information begged financial consideration, a committee be formed. Ron reported that, although it is not formally described in the bylaws, a financial committee exists. It has traditionally consisted of the Vice Presidents, immediate and past Presidents as voting members, plus other non-voting attendees. Dan asked all interested parties to meet briefly after the general meeting.

Dan recognized the remaining officers, Vice Presidents Marja Bakker and Kathy Nary, who had nothing to report.

Dan then made a call for nominations for officers. Steve Vaitones clarified that it was acceptable to nominate those not present to accept if they had previous knowledge of the nomination. Nominated were the following:

Men's LDR:	incumbent Ken Robichaud
Women's LDR:	as co-chairs Molly Taber and Jill Gaitenby, not present (1st M Bakker, 2nd R O'Hara)
Master's LDR:	incumbent Rob O'Hara
Master's:	incumbent co-chairs Phil Byrne and Ed Daniels
T&F:	incumbent Rich Hart
Youth:	incumbent Ron Boemker
Cross Country:	Tom Derderian, not present (1st G Snyder, 2nd P Stasz)
Racewalk:	incumbent Justin Kuo
Mountain & Trail:	incumbent Dave Dunham

Athlete's Rep: incumbent Tom Petranoff  
 Anne Jennings (1st K Nary, 2nd M Bakker)  
 Jen Lincoln (1st P Byrne, 2nd M Bakker)

Nominations were then closed (1st R Boemker, 2nd T Petranoff). Many then moved to accept those non-opposed as elected, and many seconded. None were opposed. Thus, the slate was approved

Before the election for Athlete's Representatives took place, Phil Byrne asked if there was any reason not to have 3 representatives, thus eliminating the need for an election. This generated some discussion. Ron Boemker explained that the bylaws specified 2 representatives, in order to maintain balance of power within the board, and that a motion would have to be made to amend the bylaws to include a third representative. In addition, the motion would have to carry by 90% because an announcement of a vote to change the bylaws hadn't been made beforehand. Ron cautioned against a vote changing the bylaws without prior notification, because it could engender hard feelings in those not present. Ken Robichaud says having 3 representatives might encourage more people to become involved with the Board. Marja Bakker made the observation that being involved with the Board did not require membership on the Board.

Ken moved for a vote to have 3 Athletes Representatives. Steve read from the bylaws: any article to the bylaws can be made by a 2/3 majority vote at any meeting if announced 30 days prior to the date of the vote. Ken then withdrew his previous motion, and moved to accept the two candidates garnering the most votes instead of having 2 separate votes for a single candidate. Many seconded, none were opposed.

Each candidate was then given 3 minutes to introduce his- or herself, timed by Ken Robichaud, and some additional time to answer questions. Dan Hart then called for the vote. Marja Bakker tallied the votes, and Dan announced the winners: Tom Petranoff and Anne Jennings.

While the votes were being collected, Ron Boemker asked for the names of those elected to the Board and alternates who intended to go to the National Convention. Reimbursement for 1999 will be up to \$400. Those who stated that they intended to go: Ron and Laurie Boemker, Pat Lavelle, Ken Robichaud, Phil Byrne, Justin Kuo, Dan Hart, Tom Petranoff, Kathy Nary, Anne Jennings, Marja Bakker, Dave Post and Steve Vaitones. Ron moved to accept these 13 names, and leave it to the President to recruit someone to have full representation (14 attendees). Ken Robichaud seconded, none were opposed.

Before adjourning, there was some discussion on a number of topics. Tom Petranoff wanted to know why New England had no chair or committee to address development, given there is a national chair and committee. He felt that a formal development program would also help in procuring funding/sponsors. Dan Hart said that the Board was open to suggestions, and gave the examples of Dave Dunham creating the chair for mountain running & trails, and mentioned Ron Boemker's desire to create a para representative position. Jeff Robbins mentioned that as of 1999, 6 states offer the pole vault for high school girls. He credited the support of this association and the office in particular for that development. Ron Boemker said one approach to development might be to establish an informal network of coaches with expertise in different disciplines as a resource for the less experienced coaches. This might be a feasible short term goal while we discuss a more formal development program. Tom Petranoff said that he would begin work on some that.

There was some further discussion on the membership program supposedly being implemented by the National Office for 2000. Issues broached were the benefits and drawbacks of 12 month membership, multi-year memberships, and the lack of information from the National Office. Ron Boemker made a motion to trust Dan and Steve to put forth a proposal, as they are most familiar with the issues. The motion was seconded by many, and opposed by none. The Board will be updated as information becomes available.

In other business:

Dan Hart made a big call for volunteers. In particular, volunteers will be needed for the upcoming Tufts 10K (see Marja Bakker or Kathy Nary), and for the indoor National Master's Championships in March 2000.

Steve Vaitones made the announcement that Arthur Lydiard would be speaking here in Boston October 27, and that he would send the details to clubs and to coaches. Jen Lincoln requested that the information go to high school coaches as well as college coaches.

Rich Hart made the motion to adjourn. Many seconded, and all were in favor. The meeting ended at approximately 9:30 PM.