

USSA, Eastern Division - EFCC Meeting
Sunday, May 3, 2009
9am - 1pm
Killington Mountain School

2008-2009 EFCC Committee Members - In Attendance

Chair	Deb Newson
Vice-Chair/ Appeals	Larry Titus
Coaches	Glenn Eddy
Judges	Sharon O'Connor
Secretary	Sherry Albert
Rules and Technical - ECS	Ed Albert
Rules and Technical - EQS/Western EQS	Mark DePeters
Programs/ECS	DJ Montigny
Development/EQS	Johnny Kroetz
Sponsorship/Eastern EQS	Suzi Preston
Event Organizers	Vinnie Lewis
Free Ride	Nate McKenzie
Member-at-Large	Nick Preston
Member-at-Large	Dean Goodermote

Others in attendance: Michael Lynn-Whiteface, Jonathan Smith - Sugarbush, Ken Darsney - Sunapee, John Witt - Stratton, Jill Firstbrook - Sunapee, Thach Pham - Mt Snow, John Kimble - Sunday River, Sarah Taymore - KMS/Gould, Chase Morsey - Killington, Kip Blake - Killington, Lucy Blake - Killington

Meeting began at 9:15 after waiting for live stream video, we expect Seven Springs to join us via the stream.

Chair, Coaches, R & T and Judges positions will be voted on again next summer (2010).

The agenda for this meeting has been posted on Eastern Freestyle

I. Chair Report:

- Action Items from EFCC Sub-Committee meeting that was held on 5/2:
It was decided it was important to continue to educate the new and current Eastern community about the sport of Freestyle, so to help accomplish this:
 1. We will develop and post on the web site an interactive Rules Quiz (Ed Albert and Mark Depeters), and FAQ's for Parents about Sport (Thach Pham).
 2. We will develop an updated TD Report Card (Ed Albert and Deb Newson).
It was decided it was important to provide affordable and productive options for new families in freestyle so we continue to get younger athletes involved:
 1. J5-J6 Fun Tour in the Central Region (Matt Gnoza) will be created as an option versus the regular Central Region schedule.
 2. An aggressive Eastern Freestyle Marketing Plan (Suzi Preston and Deb Newson) will be pursued.
 3. An Eastern Event Bid Package will be created to ensure quality meets with fair pricing. (John Kroetz and Vinnie Lewis)
- The tentative 09-10 Eastern Freestyle Competition Schedule will be posted online on June 1st. (July 1st)
- Tentative schedule agreements must be returned by May 15th. (June 25th) Eastern Freestyle must hear from all mountains prior to this date. We are hoping to have schedule confirmed prior to summer this year.

II. Office Report:

Eastern reported a small loss to the IRS. Head tax revenue was within \$400 of last year. Expenses were about the same last year. Prize awards will increase expenses for this year due to lack of sponsors. Plan to clean up the Eastern website.

- Financial Report

Motion: Reinstate \$30 divisional dues for all Eastern Freestyle athletes to support the administration of the organization. Had been eliminated. Would like to reinstate to help cover administration. USSA budget constraints are creating a loss in funding for the Eastern freestyle office. Would like to have dues to help offset this loss. Have about 600 eastern freestyle athletes so the income would be \$18k which would cover loss of funding. Believe that we need an office that works more than the 200 hours. Rocky dues are \$75, Inter-mountain \$15. Marketing could be covered by this fee also. Have some cushion. Have to decide today on the fee today. Amend to read that divisional dues to \$15 per athletes.

Reinstate \$15 divisional dues for all Eastern Freestyle athletes to support the administration of the organization. 1 oppose, 1 abstain, 12 yes. **Motion passes.**

- Online Registration
- E-mail and web site

Motion: Import e-mails from online registration to create an Eastern e-mail list. There will be an opt out button. Suggestion made to do the import 2 times at the beginning of the season and after first event. **Motion passed**

Bibs – we are out. Double take will again be our sponsor and provide more bibs. Thanks to Dean.

Motion: For double event days with over 180 competitors' event organizers will not receive double event head tax discount. Deb and Nick both are against the motion. Think it could impact the event in terms of costs for the athlete and for organizers determining their budgets. If this does not pass there would not be a huge impact to Eastern Freestyle. Larry believes that Eastern could cover the impact. **Motion failed.**

III. Development/EQS Report:

- Recommendation to improve aerial participation. Action item: Nick Preston to write up an aerial/acrobatic development pipeline to post on web site.

Motion: To increase the total number of runs allowed on single event days at EQS events to 180. To let all athletes get 2 runs at each event. In the rule book Eastern 13 talks about the number of runs at both A's and B's. Was not the intent to change the elimination format in A's. **Motion passed**

Motion: To implement a registration cut-off for all regular season EQS events to allow for two runs for all athletes at all events. The following cut-off points are been recommended for the 09-10 EQS competition season: mogul events (90), aerials (90) and slopestyle (90), double events days (60 for each event). We should review the cut off points every year. If we are going to max out a double event day we cannot have a long training time in between the two different events. Need training on second venue while first event is going on. The cutoff will be managed through the website. The hope is that B athletes will spend less time competing and more time training. **Motion passed.**

Motion: To restrict registration for EQS events to in-region athletes only prior to 6pm on the Monday before the event at which point registration would be open to all EQS competitors. Purpose is to give all athletes a chance to compete. Registration will require athletes to register their mountains at registration. Would also allow for team awards. Trying to encourage more training and less competing. Should we change the refund policy to shorten the 48 hours? How do we protect the event organizers from last minute cancellations that are not filled? Refund request could be automated. We could either adjust the refund hours to 72 hours or let registration stay open 1 day longer. 1 opposition, 1 abstain, 13 yes **Motion passed.**

1. Enforce coach ticket policy at mountains. - A list of coaches from each USSA program in the East is available at www.easternfreestyle.org. The policy is quite simple. Any individual requesting a coaches 'credential at any USSA event must be on this list.

Discussions:

Mountains show up with coaches other than those on the USSA list and demanded tickets. Make sure that all host mountains understand the policy.

2. Enforce Coaches' Certification rules for athletes performing qualified maneuvers at events. - USSA invert policy is very clear that in order for an athlete to perform a qualified invert/off-axis maneuver they must be qualified AND they must have a certified coach present.

Discussions:

Items discussed include the fact that a qualified coach must be present – not necessarily the athletes coach. B aeriels should have any off-axis / invert maneuvers checked out and verified during training by the TD and Head Judge.

Jury can DSQ an athlete that is not on the qualified list. Must practice the jump that they will compete according to the rules. Nick does not believe that this is practical.

3. Enforce a minimum coaches' license for all events – proposal is to create a policy whereby a minimum of Level 1 license is required to be coaching at competitions

Discussions:

Coaches have attended clinics but may not have completed their ASEP. Other coaches have not attended a clinic at all. We would need to make a commitment on increasing the number of coaches' clinics prior to enforcing the policy for all traveling coaches. Suggestion was made that perhaps a minimum of one of the coaches from a program would be present at the event. This policy could impact participation of independent athletes.

Not a requirement and not a motion. Trying to get coaches to clinics.

4. Eliminate Rotations greater than 720, Inverts and off-axis in EQS slopestyle.

Discussions:

This would help to promote the progression of athlete development and discourage an athlete from moving forward too quickly. This would also make Aerials more interesting. This is mainly a safety issue. There are no specifications for any of the features on the SS course and landings are typically not chopped. This could also be limiting the development of athletes as well and potentially be moving this event backwards. The athlete can also compete at A events where these maneuvers are allowed.

Motion: To eliminate rotations greater than 720, inverts and off-axis in EQS slopestyle. 1 abstain 3 oppose 11 yes Motion passed

How many B athletes were off axis this past season? Probably less than 5.

5. EQS Champs - bid proposal at Spring Meeting. - proposal is to require a written bid package be submitted to the EFCC one year prior to hosting EQS Championships defining at a minimum competition venues, banquet facilities, Chief of Comp, Chief of Course, etc.

Discussions:

This would help to make sure that the event organizing committee is thinking about the event and would help facilitate communications between the EFCC and the event staff. Mountains that do not perform up to the level of the EFCC's expectations may be removed from the EQS Championship rotation.

Championship rotation has been working for 15 years. Think we cannot eliminate a mountain without a motion. How do we measure the success of an event? Rules & Tech TD report card could help this. Maybe we need to look at the report from the regional event the year before to have a minimum competency. Should it be a TD/head judge report? Is this practical? If there is a major safety issue will this be recognized? Need to table this discussion and have a working group session to come up with a measurable process to be awarded championship events. This can then be discussed at the fall conference call.

This meeting could request that the 2 mountains holding championships next season to submit bids as of now to be in sometime in the near future to be reviewed by the Eastern chair.

6. B events - TOO MANY of them....need to have mountains alternate years: At minimum regional schedules should reflect EVERY OTHER weekend. Proposal is to schedule events to encourage a balance that is more skewed towards training than competition.

Discussions:

This would help promote athlete training. Regions should be able to create schedules that meet their own needs and some events would be scheduled back to back.

Competition days can be considered to be training. However if a mountain has a mogul venue they will get more training in by staying home. And sometimes even flat training can be more beneficial

7. Close events at 100 athletes so everyone gets two runs. Also, raise number of allowable judged runs from 170 to 200. Events open to in region skiers only until the Monday before the event. Never voted on.

Discussions:

It will be extremely difficult for the judges to effectively and accurately judge 200 runs – propose we move to 90 skiers. Making sure that all B athletes get two runs is highly desirable. Keeping events open to only in region skiers will help to make sure that those skiers have first choice on their events. There are time of day as well as potential weather issues. Limiting registrations could also stunt the growth of the sport. We could make the athlete declare both region and program during the registration process. We could also create a separate J5/J6 circuit in the central region to take some of the burden off of the regular events.

8. Two events on the same day – If we exceed 170 runs on one day due to two events being scheduled we should pay the judges for two days. Skipped

Discussions:

Current rule is that regular season events pay out two days pay if 170 runs is exceeded, Championships do not. Change number of runs judged to 180 and events will not receive the two event/day discount on head taxes if they exceed it. Training time in between events takes time and it is difficult for the event organizer to set up two different courses and for the TD to be in two places at once. Perhaps shortening and standardizing the SS courses could be beneficial. Look into limiting registration quotas. When running both SS and Aerials it is a good idea if the course is built such that the last hit in the SS course is the actual Aerials site – this could help to justify a reduction in training time between events if SS is run first.

9. In Aerials B's must do the jump they call, or do not call the jump at all

Discussions: Should B's be penalized if they miss a small element in their trick? Athletes should be performing jumps that they are proficient in. If they do not complete the maneuver they call and the trick they throw is clearly not the jump they called the score would be RNS.

Table to rules and technical

10. Team awards

Discussions:

Registration process will allow us to bring back the team award. These awards will be optional for event organizers.

IV. Judges:

- From meeting on 5/2 – recommendation to restructure judging criteria for EQS Slopestyle events. There is a document at the USSA level that would help to define. Currently rules are vague – 5 hits, 100 point scale. Tabled till after the USSA meeting to see what comes out of the meeting.
- From meeting on 5/2 - Recruitment Mission 2009 Ideas: clinics in each region in the fall, discipline specific judges, getting in touch with former competitors on Facebook, creation of online course, communication with each mountain's park crew. Will try to schedule 2 additional site sessions in early to Dec; one in NY and one in ME to accommodate those that can not make it to the fall festival where a clinic will be held in the fall.
- From meeting on 5/2 – Point of clarification regarding additional officials' pay. Judges will receive two days' pay on double event days that have more than 170 runs. This does not apply to single event days that exceed 170 runs due to a jury decision to exceed maximum runs per day rule.
- Recommendation to adjust EQS Slopestyle criteria will be discussed after USSA Spring Congress,

Could use the clinics for parents as education and maybe that would draw people in. Communication could be more explicit to get the education message across

V. Rules and Technical, ECS:

1. Highlights and recap of the 2008/2009 Freestyle Season
 - a. Recap of TD Reports/Protests/Juries/Number of Competitors/Injuries, etc.
 - b. Recap of Official's credentials and total number now in system.

11 reportable injuries – on sled or skiing services. At least 4 of 11 skied the next day.

0 protests, 3rd year without an official protests.

1 disipline, 1 DSQ for non-qualified jump

2 biggest issues that were reported on TD reports were:

Posting of scores and times inconsistent throughout the east.

Timing issues

Had a clinic last year. In attendance were 18 return TD's and 34 new TD's. Had 17 officials working the east. 5 people made it through the process to become a TD this year. Not an easy position to be the person in charge of the rules.

Up to version 5 of the TD clinic CD.

3 handouts:

Event checklist – started at the TD clinic last year. Starts the timeline 3 weeks prior to the event through the event.

Helps the TD and organizer pull off a successful event

Report Card – will be revised by the fall to incorporate rubrics instead of number rating system. The intent is to provide the event organizers with feedback of the event and help them. Will help develop standards. This scorecard was a vote that took place at the Eastern meeting 2 years ago and is a catch-up. The head judge should also have input.

TD Report – national report revised for use in the east.

All 3 handouts are subject to revision and ideas are welcome and encouraged.

2. Vote on Rules and Technical Subcommittee recommendations from Saturday, May 2, 2009
 - a. **Housekeeping 4 items need to be included and added back to eastern rules** things that were left off in the rewrite
 - b. **Communication and Education**

Unsafe venues and what to do about them will become a discussion item.

Moving starts will also be discussed – not allowed.

Chopping and the purpose to create a safe venue will also be discussed.

Motion: Adjust Eastern 3: Helmets that are modified from the manufacturer's specifications are not allowed. Competitors must have an appropriate helmet in order to compete. 1 opposition. **Motion passed.**

Does this allow for baseball hats? Cannot legislate what is under the helmet, just states that if they have to modify the helmet to allow for what is under it. Will not do helmet checks. What this it trying to do is just deal with the obvious issues. FIS has asked TD's to help enforce the helmet rule. Discretion will have to be used.

VI. Rules and Technical, EQS:

- Speed point calculator approved for 09-10. Pace set times worked this year and will remain in place for next year.

Motion: Athletes must call their jump at EQS Aerial events. A RNS will be issued for athlete's that fail to perform announced jump. **Motion passed unanimously**

Motion: Mountains will have to pay for tickets at competitions for any coaches that do not hold at least a USSA level one coaches certification. Skipped

Clinics held in November, Level 1 & 2. There will be an aerial clinic at Lake Placid this summer. Need to be on the USSA coaches mailing list to receive notification

Check your coaches card to make sure the certifications are accurate.

Changes in coaching levels are posted on the USSA website.

There will be more clinics in the fall, probably in the November

Is there an official form for coaches to log their certification hours? Glenn will follow up on this.

There will also be refresher requirements

Links will be added to the Eastern site to learn about how to become a coach and judge. Listed on the USSA site.

VIII. Old Business

EQS championships, how will the quota be determined. Maybe if we weigh the season less and regional finals more we would encourage athletes to stay home and train so that they are ready for the championship season.

Motion: The invitation process for EQS champs would be to increase the wild card pool from 18 (20 %) to 30 (30%) 7 boys and 3 girls. Placing greater emphasis on athletes improving over the season without over emphasizing. Motion failed.

In order to qualify on points now, adding more wild cards would take away from the point slots.

There is an issue with over competing and under training but maybe it should be addressed by education and not legislation. Progression of an athlete is steep and by regionals they have their best run. Thinks the wild card process would capture where the athlete is at that point in the season and recognizes progress. Follows the philosophy at the ECS where there is a wild card slot from Easterns to go to National championships and the Gold Cup slot that gets an athlete to the Olympics. Less than 20 girls get in on points the way it stands today; could make chasing point even worse. Using ratios for male to female is not highly thought of throughout the rest of the country.

When we go to Holiday Valley we will see more J1 and J2's that have not moved up to A's. The western region is encouraged to create opportunities for their older athletes to move up to the A's.

Notes to organizers. There is a rule in place that will be enforced this year. If EQS meets plan to charge more than the mandated \$37 fee that has been recommended they must submit a bid package with their sanction agreements. Should the \$37 be changed? Tickets prices at the mountain drive the pricing.

Motion: Change the ceiling price of a B event to \$45. 2 Opposed Motion passed

Schedule Eastern champs EQS to 3rd weekend in March. Preliminary schedule will be posted on Eastern. Preliminary agreements will go out soon.

IX. New Business

Request that there be a method to go on line and lookup an athletes jump qualifications. On the agenda. Trying to automate as much as possible.

Can we add on snow qualifications to the Eastern schedule.

Language on B score sheets could become more friendly - Sharon will take this on

- 2009 Eastern Freestyle Fall Festival, September 19 and 20.

Clinics for coaches, judges clinics for coaches and parents, head injuries and base line testing. Silent auction and dinner dance that could support our scholarship committee. Discount golf packages. Dry land training for athletes. 5k road race. Is this the right date? Propose dates that will work. Think about equipment.

- Set dates for USSA clinics for coaches, scoring, TD and Judges clinics in the fall

