MSTCA Cross Country Committee Meeting
8/24/19
Minutes

PRESENT: James Fletcher, Fred Doyle, Todd Deely, Bill Babcock, Alex Evans, Mike Budd, Susannah Tracy, Rebecca Gauvin, Don Hennigar, John Laverty, Mike Merrill, Len Harmon, Joe Cusack, Jayson Sylvain, Jeremy Nute, Phil Maia

Brief (re)introduction period followed by a request from the Chair to update members e-mail addresses

Item #1 (Review of fall meet formats)
- The format for the Duck races was an old format last used 3 years ago. Since that time there have been some changes to the format. This was a clerical error and has been fixed. The format on MSTCA website is accurate

Item #2 (Baystate Invitational discussion)
- The logistics of the relay will not be an issue
- Meet Director (Fletcher) suggested removing the co-ed option
  - Direct Athletics can’t accept co-ed entries. Manual entry would be required
  - Individual gender relays would be kept with a “Championship” division created with a limit of one team per school
  - Teams could run a 1-2 person “team” so kids don’t get left out but the team would not appear in results

DISCUSSION:
- We should poll coaches after the meet to get feedback
- Question if we had an idea of numbers... concern “Championship” race could be too small
  - No firm numbers yet but good response so far
- Can an athlete run in more than one division?
- Could the issue with Direct Athletics be handled if we only gave numbers to the last runner and did not require names to be entered (State/Steele Relay Model)
  - If we did this the co-ed would need to be e-mailed to Fletch
- Discussion of the long term viability of this meet as a relay meet
  - Baystate should be an All-State Preview if at all possible
  - The relay meet could continue under a different name/date if successful

MOTION: Fred Doyle: The Baystate Invitational will use the relay format for this year only. The original format of grade level and co-ed races will be followed. Athletes will only run in one race.
SECOND: John Laverty
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Item #3: (Helpers for XC Meets)
- Rick Kates has reached out looking for help at meets this year
- Committee members are asked to help out at least once a year over the course of the 3 seasons
- A suggestion was made to have a person with a radio in the “back” of Wrentham for safety purposes

MOTION: John Laverty: The MSTCA will station an adult with a radio in the back portion of the course at Wrentham, just past the mile mark in the event a runner needs help
SECOND: Rebecca Gauvin
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY
- Conversation veered into a discussion about the course at Gardner.
- Course preview at 1pm Sun November 10th... leaves little time to see the course before dark
- Are there alternate sites in C-Mass for a championship meet? Grafton, Devens? Sturbridge?
  - Parking can be an issue at many Central Mass sites
- The issue comes up every year and at some point alternatives need to be explored
- Could a neutral site (Franklin Park) be found to hold the meet on a yearly basis?
- Should the MSTCA explore purchasing land to build a course, could the BAA be of help in this project?
- What are the alternatives to Gardner in the event of weather? Rain is a bigger issue at Gardner than snow
  - 2019 backup is Western Mass (Northfield, Westfield)

Item #4 (Massachusetts participation in New England Championships)
  - Presentation by Alex Evans
  - The new MIAA rules allow for an earlier start to practice. This could be a start to a restructure of the schedule
  - Kids are missing out on this opportunity and the meet is missing out by not having MA representation
    - How can we restructure to make this happen?
  - Suggestion was made for teams that just miss out on All-States to represent us at the New England Meet
    - Based on recent events in track the New England Committee might not approve
  - Could teams be given the choice of All-States or New England?
    - This could severely weaken the All-State Meet
  - Nationals seems to have become more important to teams/individuals than the NE Meet
    - Many track athletes opt to skip the New England Meet
    - What is the NE Committee doing to counteract this and enhance the meet experience?

MOTION: Alex Evans: The MSTCA should explore the possibility of realigning to enable participation of MA athletes in the New England Championship
SECOND: Phil Maia
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY
  - If the E-Board approves a sub-committee can be created

Item #5 (Coaches Poll)
  - Joe Cusak administered the poll
  - 8 schools voted in the large school poll and 10 in the small school poll
    - Pleased with the cross section of votes
  - Top 20 in each poll receive points. 20 points for a 1st place team, 19 for a 2nd place vote etc.
    - More than 20 teams received votes

MOTION: Todd Deely: The “next 5” teams receiving votes should be listed at the bottom of the poll in alphabetical order under the heading “Also receiving votes”
SECOND: Fred Doyle
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

- Poll to posted on all platforms by 8/25
- Remaining Polls will be conducted on 9/15, 9/29, 10/20 and 10/29

Item #6 (New Business)
  - MSTCA would like to make the meets as appealing as possible
  - Mat on top of the “hill” near finish. Announce will be able to announce athletes/teams finishing
- Kids really like music between and during races
- Suggestion to try to implement virtual scoring
- Could starting line assignments not be based on alphabetical order?
- Should the MSTCA collaborate with some of the smaller events around the State
- New Awards this year (see May Minutes)
- Could the MSTCA do some alumni recognition? Molly Huddle at Ocean State as an example. Perhaps they could present awards.
- The Great American model is great. Music, entertainment... the meet is an event not just a race.

- Next meeting will be Saturday November 23 at 1PM

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Fred Doyle
SECOND: Everyone
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

MEETING ADJURNED AT 4:10