

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