



22 Trinity Road, Ware, Herts, SG12 7DB, UK

Phone: +44 (0)7796906256

Email: info@polesports.org

President – KT Coates

Vice-President – Kate Whitley

International Pole Sports Federation Industry Meeting 2013

2/15/2013

9.00am – 4.00pm

Meeting called by: KT Coates and Kate Whitley

Transcribed by: Aimee Lawson and Nia Pearce

Attendees: KT Coates-Maclean, Kate Whitley, Nia Pearce, Aimee Lawson, Judy Pelczéder, Orsolya Pall, Liza Szabo, Sara Brilli, Kim van der Veer, Sue Colebourne, Peter Bowley, Davide Lacagnina, Cristina Casentini, Titty Tamantini, Alessandra Marchetti, Natalia Maria Wojciechowska, Anne Goswell, Laura Ashton, Petra Larson, Pragash Suntharamoorthy, Elena Gibson, Ingrid Jerak, Laura Zonja, Eilionor Fegan, Beverley Kotey, Kathy Buller, Natalia Mouchebouf, Michael Wall, Kay Herm, Annie Norris, Mariana Baum, Ekaterina Romanova, Olga Chapman, Ekaterina Gostevskikh, Florenza Pizanis-Ellis, Sam Amey, Karolina Grzywaczewska, Martin Grzywaczewska, Alison Hudd, Maria Contreras, Dana Mayer.

Skype attendees: Valentina Damico, Sam Remmer, Serena Smith, Jennie Wilkerling

Countries represented:

Apologies: Cindy Coojimans, Tammy Morris, Jady Chang, Birgit Gröll, Polina Sidorova, Angela Hawkes, Faye Robinson, Kate Johnstone

Introduction

- Some decisions will be taken today by all members who are present in the room as well as those attending via Skype or who have sent in apologies.
- Other decisions will be taken by committee members once voting is finalised.
- IPSF is a platform for those who are interested in the sport of pole; it is not directed for dancers. It is a platform for athletes.
- Abides by international laws of all countries.

What the IPSF is currently representing in pole sports

- Offering a platform for those who want to compete in a sporting environment and be recognised as an athlete.
- Setting high standards and guidelines in accordance with international sporting rules and regulations.
- Laying down the foundations for specific judging technicalities that can be adopted under the term 'pole sports' with an exact and precise scoring system that is fair and comprehensive.
- Creating an international organisation as a single point of reference for the pole sports industry run by members of the pole community worldwide.
- Operating as a 'not-for-profit' organisation and not a personal business, with volunteers who have similar beliefs about the sport.

Goals for the future, short and long term

- To be the international governing body for pole sports.
- Work towards each country having a national governing body.
- To unite federations and organisations internationally.



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- Laying down standardisations for rules and regulations.
- To be a member of Sport Accord.
- To show that pole can be accessible to all in accordance to the IOC charter.

Guest Speaker – Cristina Casentini, President of European Union of Gymnastics.

Cristina was invited as a guest and did not represent FIG. She was asked to explain the process and criteria needed for a new sport to become accredited by an organisation such as FIG. She was also asked to explain the benefits of an affiliation rather than being a separate organisation.

- FIG is inside the Olympic committee and to be affiliated by them would raise the profile of pole sports.
- FIG has 150 National Federation members and 7 sports currently represented.
- The World Games are the platform for non-Olympic disciplines (Korea in 2015); need to be recognised by an organisation such as FIG to be included in world games.
- Aerobic gymnastics has been in FIG since 1995 but it is not included in the Olympic programme, pole sports would need to follow a slow but fixed procedure.

To be an international federation the IPSF need:

- A minimum of 4 continents must be represented with a minimum of 40 federations
- 1 competition in each continent is required.
- Standardisation of all Pole affairs must become the normal , “The sport is in the hands of the judges” -Cristina Casentini
- A ‘Code of Points’ which is a coding scheme of all moves which are given a difficulty mark. The ‘Code of Points’ is an international code of points which will not be altered from country to country or from event to event. It is a universal document showing the difficulty level of each particular move. This is vital and to be used in every National Federation at competition level as well as International competition level.
- Judges training. Suggestion of a judges log book a sample of which was shown to the meeting members in the room. The discussion of having judges training in levels as in gymnastics
- Pole industry needs to work together

Sport Accord

- Regarding membership to Sport Accord. Only one way to be approved, Pole Sports first step is Sport Accord Associate Membership.
- Pole Sport needs to be recognised by Sports Accord for growth (= Government Funding) leads onto FIG



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- Need support from both Sport Accord and FIG in order to gain support from each of the bodies. Working with both and gaining acceptance from one will help gain acceptance from the other. We want approval from both bodies.
- Judging needs to be exact around the world each judge can go to another country and will judge the same criteria in the same way.
- Every federation must adopt the same principles in the long term goal, it will not be acceptable to take certain parts and 'tweak' them to fit their own criteria – standardization is the key. Governing bodies demand this.
- A national federation template is required – can we take the international template and adapt this to fit other country's laws? If a template/framework is provided it may overcome the barrier to setting up national federations
- Educate our athletes in Anti-Doping practises
- Achieve over 80 worldwide participating members within the Federation; The 80 members would/could include worldwide: Pole Organisations, Training Schools, Affiliated/Accredited Competitions, etc...
- Set up a testing pool
- Show complete IOC Charter compliance throughout the organisation – globally.

How to raise the profile of pole sports – discussion

- Raising the profile of Pole Sports – HOW?
- Call it 'Pole Sports' to have clear terminology
- Define the image of pole sports
- Invite professionals in press/media
- Use a suitable and appropriate environment
- Educate the pole industry and educate the public
- Use media
- Use good role models
- Celebrity supporters
- Positive publicity

Steering committee

Information was given about each role and a job description read out too. This information is available on the IPSF website. Applications to stand as a committee member need to in by 20th February.

- Extended deadline for voting members in for committee – voting will close at midnight on 27th Feb public announcement on 1st march after successful applicants have been invited to accept their positions.



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- Suggestion from Laura Ashton that an IT or Technical Co-ordinator position should be created who will look after websites etc. this was met with agreement and will be decided by the committee.
- Voted in majority that only people present in the room, via Skype and who had made apologies for un-attendance may be eligible to vote for the committee members' appointments in the first instance.
- Laura Ashton suggested that those with commercial interests should abstain from voting to ensure no conflict of interest should occur during voting procedure. This was not put to the vote but will be carried forward as a suggestion for the committee to decide.
- Suggestion was made that IPSF members should be listed on the IPSF website this was met with no objection – however – before this is put into practice, legislation regarding the data-protection act will need to be confirmed.
- It was advised to the attendees that an online voting system will be purchased for the future voting of policies however in the short term this may not be in force for initial committee voting.
- Petra Larsson suggested that the Swedish Board Committee sat for a minimum of two years in their posts and that only half of the board were re-elected at a time. This ensured that on-going work was not lost by the occasion of full new committee appointment. This was met with a mixed response in the room. The questions arose that if a new committee is not elected does it block new ideas from coming forward. The response being if a full new committee is elected the previous work could be lost. Ideas and opinions on both sides and a matter to be discussed further.
- What is the maximum time a member can sit in their position on the committee? Should there be a maximum time?

Volunteer bank

This was introduced for people who want to help and commit some time, but are not able to stand as a committee member for any reason. The information will be on the IPSF website shortly.

Policies and Procedures

Policies and Procedures are matters which are set in stone and cannot be altered. These are requirements for each federation to adopt in full.

Anti-doping

- Important to note that anti-doping doesn't just take place at competitions, testing can be done at any time and in any place once an athlete is registered for a federation activity.
- Anti-doping applies to the athlete and the coach.



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- Athlete needs to take responsibility for their own medications & can check on WADA. Not knowing is no excuse
- Very expensive for inclusion of anti-doping the IPSF is not looking to test athletes in 2013 competition but the policy is in place and will be a future addition.
- Put policy into practice, make announcement then implement. – Give notice to athletes. If we do that we have to be a recognised governing body or have our own in-house testing pool run in accordance with WADA policy.
- UKAD/WADA can do testing for us but you have to pay for it £1000's
- Anti-Doping Policy (bring into place for next year) spread awareness through the next year and to offer advice / training.
- UKAD qualified advisor to be at Pole Sports this year.
- Petra Larsson remarked that under the Swedish International Olympic Committee regulations anti-doping testing is free of charge. The possibility of this for the UK should be investigated. The suggestion to move the WPSC to a country where free anti-doping is covered was a possibility. The opinion was that the location should remain static for a minimum term of three years in order to ensure the event is strong enough to allow movement of the location.

Welfare and safeguarding for young people in pole sports

Guest speaker – Florenza Pizanis

- Safeguarding policies in place to “minimise misinterpretation of pole sports”.
- Safeguarding Policy for Children will be available online to view ASAP. This will be subject to regular change as the policies and laws of the land change as will other policies, such as Safeguarding policy for Children with Disabilities in Sport etc.
- The policies are written to UK specifications and will need to be undertaken by each national federation in order to ensure the laws of that land are adhered to.
- Novice 10-14year Junior 15-17yrs, over 18 is senior level.
- The changes to the judging and criteria for the younger athletes were discussed, with regard to anatomical requirements of the younger body and mind.
- To ensure the IPSF leads the way in looking after and safeguarding young people in Pole Sport. The IPSF is accountable and responsible for giving guidance to other organisations/federations.

Ethics policy

The amended policy will be available online by 1st July 2013.

Judges criteria

- Judges will declare all interest to ensure transparency. This is for public perceptions



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- Judging training – 1 day course. Offer from Davide Lacagnina for location in Italy for international accreditation training location for future years.
- Committee will make the decision if judge training is on the day before the WPSC or prior to as the group were unable to make the decision. The point was raised that training the day before the competition (19th July 2013) would ensure less travel for international members. Particularly for cost purposes as expenses are unable to be paid.
- Majority agreement following discussion that judges need to have pole industry experience.
- Judges will be deemed suitable for particular criteria; this will be through training and examination.
- Limited certification period with skill to be updated and refreshed through further training and industry development – the suggestion was for a one year annual refresher at this moment in time due to the fast paced growth of the industry at this time.
- Differences for National and International graded judging was touched upon as a subject
- “At least one judge should be certified at National level competition” (KT Coates) in the short term plan. With the view that all judges should be certified on the panel in the future.
- Judges do not get paid, but it is a high priority for the IPSF to have their full expenses paid. The budget each year will need to include an element of expenditure with the amount increasing slightly to ensure the high level of training a judge does is not wasted by lack of finances and the ability to attend competitions.

By-laws and constitution

These need to be amended and will be available online by the 1st July 2013.

Accreditation

- The ideal accredited federation uses rules, regs and scoring system.
- National Federation needs to follow criteria and policies -> the first that ticks those boxes will be accredited by IPSF. The issue was raised that the first to achieve this may not be the best federation. This was discussed and the matter was unsolved due to time constraints however the situation was left that those federations who were prepared to go through the process to achieve the accreditation would be likely to be the best candidate as they would not bother with the process if they were not prepared to be involved as the process is a lengthy and in-depth one.



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- Gold, Silver and Bronze accreditation was discussed and was it the best form to use? Would IPSF want to approve a federation who were not up to the highest gold standards? This issue remains to be discussed.

WPSC new categories

Youth and masters.

- Should standards be less stringent for the masters section? The matter was discussed and it was deemed appropriate to adapt the level appropriately for aging body types. Less weighted judging (for example on back flexibility)
- Masters and Youth category should be open for everyone at this stage as the amount of entrants will be lower due to the early stages of these categories.

Feedback

- Feedback from last years' competition was very positive and this year feedback forms will be available during the competition for immediate feedback to be gained rather than requested after the event.
- Feedback proved that the judging panel were a respected panel and that a clear and fair scoring system was in place.
- Communication was good between the IPSF and the athletes.
- Vendors good feedback
- Facilities on the whole pretty good and amendments have been made as listed below.
- Changing rooms have now been upgraded and in 2013 an outdoor sheltered warm up area will be included in the facilities
- Ticketing for groups was discussed and will be offered for 2013. This will have to be done by email and direct PayPal payments made as etickets cannot offer this facility
- Improvement will be made in security and extra helpers will be on hand
- Information packs for athletes have been upgraded and will include new information
- Seating plan and new floor plan was provided to those in the room
- Parking arrangements have been made for 2013
- All feedback that was given for 2012 has been actioned upon and improvements that were possible have been made for 2013
- Welcome pack for athletes now including a map and other additions. It was suggested that translations should be available; there was a suggestion that the national federations could make this available for their own athletes.
- Suggestion for a bi-lingual volunteer backstage and for athletes representative to have some multi-lingual cards with relevant instructions available to ensure communication problems could be quickly alleviated
- A grip aid banned and accepted list must be available



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Music

- The music issue was raised regarding last years' criteria; royalty free music is no longer required however music should still be without lyrics.
- Laws relating to live streaming need to be adhered to; this is a possibility if the decision to do so goes ahead.

POLES

- A lengthy discussion took place regarding poles – Fit Pole from Finland came recommended from many members of the meeting
- Industrial fans on stage and stage lights off in between performers would help to keep the poles cooler and may alleviate some problems. Still to be discussed.
- Athletes must not wipe the poles themselves. Only IPSF pole cleaners must do so.
- Is it an option for IPSF to create a competition pole which could be used year on year to their individual standards? This would alleviate the problem of having to search for a pole company to provide poles for the WPSC event year on year? Many options were discussed, Annie Norris mentioned a company in Bristol (UK) who may be able to make a custom made pole for IPSF use as well as Natalia Wojciechowska (Poland) who made a suggestion of a company who may be able to do the same. The idea of whether this would be safety approved in the UK was discussed. This is a topic that needs further discussion and will be taken by the committee.

Scoring system

Guest speaker – Davide Lacagnina. Davide has been working on a code of points with Florenza, KT and Ekaterina Gostevskikh. He spoke about the compulsory moves that would become part of a routine. This was for discussion and would be finalized by the Acting-Technical Committee for March 1st so athletes can apply for a place at the WPSC with the full scoring system available to them.

Technical 60

Choreography 20

Artistry 20

Compulsories

Deductions

- It was suggested that a video was available of each compulsory element in order to alleviate any language barrier or for any discussion to take place on how the compulsory element should be executed
- One judge will be responsible for compulsory elements – they will not judge the technicalities of the element they will solely be responsible for making sure the athlete attempts to perform the compulsory element
- 10 elements (5 Flexibility & 5 Strength)
- The athlete must present the list of compulsory moves they will execute in order of appearance. The judge will only be required to confirm that the elements took place



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- This is the first step in creating a 'Code of Points' as required by FIG
- Bonus points will be gained by combining compulsory elements without stopping or faltering in between the 2 elements
- Capped deductions
- -5 points for not attempting to execute a compulsory move
- Technical judge will score how well the move was performed NOT the compulsory judge
- A variation of a move does not count as an additional move
- Further discussion is required on this subject as language barriers held up proceedings during this section of the meeting time

Finances

- The IPSF has NO MONEY – the aim is to achieve a minimum of 800 tickets sold for 2013 WPSC. Athlete fees are included for 2013 the price is £25; it was discussed that national federations should sponsor their athletes for WPSC this was agreed although a majority decision was not taken on this matter at the time.

COACH TICKET

- Who is a 'coach' backstage? This needs to be discussed and written in finer detail.
- No-one except athletes backstage.
- Coaches should only be allowed in certain areas; training/warm up areas, allocated seating.

VENDOR

- Prices for vendor stalls should be higher in 2014 as the group felt £100 was too little for a 2 day event.
- It was suggested that vendors could benefit from an early bird discount on the price of vendor stalls.
- Pick and mix options for those who want smaller or larger vendor spaces for a varied budget and brand.

SPONSORSHIP

- Sponsors need to display the IPSF logo on their front page material & to promote the IPSF as part of their sponsorship
- E-banner and E-marketing material should be provided by IPSF to everyone to ensure that people are using IPSF approved logos and header banners on E-material. And links should be provided for cross-promotion between sites on the banners & logos.

JUDGES

- Judges master classes were discussed; it was generally thought that this should be at the arrangement of the particular judges to arrange if they wanted to. It would be a way for judges to re-coup the travelling costs during the time where expenses are unable to be paid by IPSF.



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Membership

- This issue was not able to be finalized this was due to too many factors to be considered and time constraints on the day. It is a matter that will not be able to move forward and will not be finalized until all members have been given the chance to reply
- Membership for Individuals, Schools, Federations and Competitions were discussed.
- Priority tickets for members
- Individual Members; Member Seating, discounted Merchandise, Discount vouchers from Vendors.
- School Membership; Reseller tickets, exclusive membership merchandise, insurance discounts, membership listed on IPSF website
- Federation Membership; seal of approval, raising the level to join the IPSF, recognition of their athlete in the WPSC, mentorship, partnering with Physio/Private health clinics, use IPSF for lobbying, associate/full membership options
- Competition Membership; Top 3 rather than top 2 sending winners to IPSF, endorsement, judges and support, mentorship by the way of policies and documents, information from IPSF, access to scoring and guidelines, they must 100% follow the youth criteria.
- How much to charge? Caused much discussion and was not solved on the day – this is to be discussed further and no decision will be made without consultation with the members.
- Introductory member discount -> is it that we offer levels of membership? Figures of £10 and £25 were suggested for an individual membership. Committee members will decide on this when they are voted in
- Wording for Membership. Should it be a membership fee or a donation to the IPSF?
- All members will gain voting rights
- Is it right to 'brand' the winner of WPSC to ensure they are required to use the IPSF logo or pay a fee to the IPSF to use the status for career advancement?

ACCOMMODATION

- A new Travelodge at Bethnal Green is recommended accommodation; parking for £25 per day is available to vendors and is 3 minutes away from the venue. Rooms are available at £32/room at the moment

Industry Awards

Categories are:

Life time achievement award - (who has done the most for pole sports over the years)

Person to best promote pole sports - (the person who has promoted pole sports the most over the year)

Best National or Regional Pole sports competition - (the comp that upholds the best pole sports ethos)

Best pole sports athletes - (not necessary the best person but the athlete that is the most dedicated to pole sports)



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Best pole sports school - (the school that promotes the ethos of pole sports, this could be by producing pole sports athletes or training or in the media)

- Only members of IPSF to vote on industry awards
- To vote membership numbers should be used to ensure accurate voting by members only

Dates for the diary

1st March – Announcements

- Committee members
- Tickets go on sale
- Policies and procedures for this year finalised
- Applications open for judges
- Applications open for athletes
- Scoring system finalised

26th April – Committee Meeting by Skype

5th July – WPSC Meeting – all members welcome

20th/21st / - WPSC – EVERYONE WELCOME!!

7th/8th September – WPSC Review, Las Vegas Pole Expo. All members welcome

29th November – Committee Meeting by Skype

21st February – AGM – All members welcome