

*Draft Minutes
Tri-State Wheelchair & Ambulatory Athletics Board Meeting
January 17, 2015*

The meeting was held at Children's Specialized Hospital, Mountainside, and was called to order by Chairperson Ralph Armento at 8:40 am.

Present: Ralph Armento, Ken Brucato, Debbie Armento, Carolynne Bethka, Jim Cuevas, Phil Galli, Jennifer Johnson, Dan Martin, Carlos Quiles, Maggie Redden, Pat Redden, Trisha Yurochko

Guest: Abe Waugh

Approval of Minutes:

Trisha Yurochko made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of September 13, 2014. The motion was seconded by Debbie Armento and accepted unanimously.

Treasurer's Report:

We have a balance of \$9705. The chapter fee for WASUSA, \$250, was paid in December. The 990 form for the year ending 6/30/2013 has been filed; the report for 2014 is due on February 15, 2015. This report is a postcard only. We might have to file for NJ Charities, but that might only be the case if the balance sheet is over \$10,000, which is not a problem. Debbie Armento moved to accept the report; Jim Cuevas seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Urgent Business: Other possible hosts for the 2015 NJDC fell through, so it will be in New Jersey, and a presentation was made by the Local Organizing Committee. The LOC will be headed by Trisha Yurochko, Paul Kolterjahn, Phil Galli and Jim Cuevas, with Debbie and Ralph assisting. Ralph will be retiring as office manager for WASUSA in April, so he will have more time. Trisha led the discussion of plans for NJDC.

The venues are not yet confirmed, but the relevant parties were meeting yesterday. Negotiations with host hotel(s) are ongoing. It would have been good to go back to Rutgers, but they have already committed to day camps and athletic camps. The sponsor is Childrens' Miracle Network at Childrens Specialized Hospital. Events will include track, field, swimming, archery, and powerlifting. The schedule will be basically the same as last year. There will be no table tennis because of the small number of competitors in the past (about 5 to 6), the cost of bringing in tables, and the lack of appropriate venue (no gym is available). Few regional games other than Thunder in the Valley, which is mostly adults, have table tennis, and last year the higher level, older players went to the table tennis nationals which were held at the same time as NJDC. Jennifer Johnson said another reason for the small number of competitors was the schedule, since athletes had the option of coming only for part of the week.

The LOC will be meeting in the afternoon with parent groups from both NJ teams to set up committees and bring them up to speed.

Sponsors will be needed, but they will have to be cleared before contact to avoid conflicts with the hospital's capital campaign. The sponsorship document breaks down what they get at each financial level, which range from Friends (under \$1000) to Diamond (\$100,000 or higher); these levels are similar to those used in 2008. Past NJDC events in NJ cost between \$125,000 and \$175,000, but the cost is higher now. In-kind donations are welcome and would get the same recognition as cash donations. A package will be available to send to potential donors, who will receive a letter from the LOC as well as a personal note from the individual contactor. CSH will be at the diamond level. An IT company and US Paralympics have committed support. Right now we are using CSH's 501(c)3.

On behalf of the Junior Committee, Debbie Armento thanked everyone for taking on the event.

Old Business:

1. **Review of National Delegate Assembly (NDA):** Phil Galli, Trisha Yurochko, Debbie Armento and Ralph Armento attended the NDA, which is now to be called the Leadership Summit. All sat in on different committee meetings.

Debbie ran the Junior Committee meeting but also sat in on the meeting for CP athletes. The Junior Committee discussed changing the name of NJDC and adding different sports. There are bids for

2016 and 2017 from Blaze Sports in Atlanta and from Lincoln, Nebraska, respectively. There will be some changes for lower level athletes in archery.

Phil Galli met with USATF. The track standards are unchanged, but the field levels are slightly loosened to encourage athletes to concentrate on field, not track. The track standards had been changed last year after 10 years and they were fine. There are no changes in rules from IPC this year. Field rules were already implemented, although we are still making sure the field chairs are in conformity. To date 230 officials have passed the IPC test, and lists of IPC-certified officials will be listed by WASUSA for meet officials to search. There are 15 to 20 certified officials within a few hours of us, who may be called on for NJDC.

The Junior Committee has taken back IWAS after not being involved for the last few years. IWAS will be in the Netherlands this year. Five or six staff members have been chosen out of nine applicants, but they have not been approved by the WASUSA board yet. A trainer will join the staff this year. Thirty six athletes have applied for 24 slots in track, field, and archery. Fencing will be on the schedule but not as an official sport. Phil Galli is on the IWAS game committee. The adult games will be in Sochi in the fall.

2. Tri-State Hall of Fame: Ralph Armento and Pat Redden presented a draft document describing the procedure for selecting members of the Hall of Fame. There was a question about the number of members on the committee (5 were suggested), the number of honorees in the first year, and the staggered 3-year terms. The recommendation was made that the committee members should be current TSWAA members and should represent the organization from a historical perspective, since nominees might not be known to more recent board members. Ralph asked that all board members review the document and send comments to Ralph, Pat or Ken Brucato. The document will be voted on at the annual meeting, with the first class to be selected next year. The approved document will be posted on the website and made part of the operations manual.

3. Tri-State Reunion: Carolynne Bethka gave Maggie ideas for a letter to send out via email. They are planning to have an athlete and coach reunion open to all who ever participated in TSWAA games, not just to Tristate athletes. It would be held on Memorial Day weekend, 2015. Athletes can participate in the games if they choose, but they would have to pay the regular registration fee. She remembered that we discussed an additional \$40 charge for the reunion and dinner to pay for the tent and refreshments. That weekend the Mets are playing in New York, and she might be able to get free tickets for the reunion participants.. Another possibility is to have a yoga class for those no longer participating in track and field, at an additional charge. Ralph and Debbie, or possibly the Masons, may be able to donate the tent. Yoga could be in a parking lot or in the tent. Transportation to the Mets would have to be considered, as well as the schedule to avoid conflicts with other events. Phil said that the transportation could be with the company they will be using for the meet. Ralph suggested that this year's event be low key for local people, then next year could be bigger and include the Hall of Fame. Debbie and Carolynne suggested information be put on Facebook, social media and websites this year as well. The cost might be \$50. Abe Waugh suggested a barbeque lunch in the tent, which would have to be cleared with the park since it would involve using grills in a non-designated area. If that doesn't work, offer a lunch specially for them. The board needs all planning information from the committee as soon as possible.

4. Adult Team: Joan Wheeler reported that she has not done much yet. She wanted to work on archery, but that is not yet ready to go. Hand cycling or field might be of interest. There are 5 or 6 possible athletes, and it might be possible to have something going for the Tristate meet.

5. Social Media and Articles:

April Martin and Maggie Redden want to combine the public group and the TSWAA page on Facebook, and get a link to the page from the website. Jen Armento will work with them on Twitter. Ralph would like someone to back up Phil on website management; it is based on GoDaddy and uses Expressions by Microsoft. No attendee volunteered.

6. Tri-State Meets:

(a) Tri-State Swim Meet: The meet will be held at Rutgers on February 28. No national classifiers will be in attendance. The applications have been sent out. Trisha is reaching out to Montclair State, NJCU,

Rutgers Medical School for volunteers. The meet is WASUSA sanctioned and will be a qualifying meet for NJDC.

(b) CSH Invitational: The track used in the past is under renovation, so there will be a new track at the same venue as that planned for NJDC. Applications will be out in the middle or end of March. The meet is scheduled for May 2.

(c) Tri-State Games: The meet will be on Memorial Day weekend (May 22-24) and will be tied in with Kessler. Friday night will be powerlifting; Saturday morning will be a road race, then archery, field, and an open track event in the evening; track will be on Sunday, with the Kessler 10K on Monday. Ralph and Trisha met on January 15 with the Bergen County officials to discuss Overpeck Park venue. They would have liked to host NJDC, but the local hotels are too expensive. The county will supply Port-a-Johns and build ramps for them since there are no curb cuts. The park has been extremely welcoming. The snack bar will be open, so food will only be provided for athletes and officials. WASUSA got a grant from the Craig H. Nielsen Foundation, and we may receive \$10,000 for this meet and another \$10,000 for NJDC, specifically aimed at athletes with spinal cord injuries. If we increase the outreach to vets, we may also be eligible for another grant. In-kind donations for athlete goodie bags would be welcome. Ken Brucato said that Nu-Motion might be a source of such donations, but he wants to see the meet budget.

(d) Masonic Regional Meet: The meet will be on June 6-7. Ralph is trying to contact Bill O'Connor at the North and South Brunswick high schools about the venue. The infield on the track has a synthetic surface so can't be used for field events; there is room in another area for wheelchair field but it isn't good for ambulatory field. We need the North Brunswick site for the pool; preference would be to have only 1 site for the whole meet. A decision on the site(s) will be made later in the week. The Masons want to do dinner, but generally only some officials and 2 teams (Rochester and Connecticut) attend. The Masons may be looking into providing a timing system. Ken and Ralph are members of the Shriners, which had a big meeting last weekend, and they asked if there is a conflict between the Shriners Hospitals and Childrens Miracle Network as potential sponsors for NJDC. Trisha will check.

(e) Burke Wheelchair games: The games are scheduled for September 26. Ralph will work with Phil, Debbie and Trisha to incorporate lower level athletes and make sure we have appropriate equipment. He suggested going to the schools to make the opportunity to participate known. Carolynne asked if we can get athletes from the NY State Empire Games. Phil answered that we have tried but in NY athletes are school-based, Monday to Friday only, so they don't come out on weekends. Trisha and Jim Cuevas have been in contact with NYC parks department with the date and information, and they would like us to do a clinic. Paul Kolterjahn and Phil met with the NY Roadrunners to discuss weekly events for kids in the schools and to encourage attendance at NJDC; the club might also want a wheelchair event in the Fifth Avenue Mile race in September 2015.

New Business:

1. Upcoming meetings: The annual meeting will be on March 28 at 9:30, possibly at Saint Peter's University, followed by a meeting for NJDC. The next meeting will be October 3 at Burke. Conference calls will be held as necessary.

2. Changes to the by-laws: Ralph asked if we should consider a name change, possibly something like Tri-State Adaptive Sports, to make it clear we are not only for wheelchair athletes. We could list the new name with DBA, "doing business as." Phil suggested putting that off to next year. He also said we should come up with 10 search criteria (tags) to put on the web so people can more easily find our website.

3. Elections: According to the minutes of the March 2014 meeting Phil, Jennifer, Dan and Pat have terms expiring in 2015. The treasurer and vice-chair officers (Trisha and Dan) are also up for election. Terms expiring in 2016 include Maggie Redden, Ralph, Ken, Joan and Carolynne; Trisha, Jim, Debbie and Carlos Quiles have terms expiring in 2017. We need to put a notice on the website to get nominees for the board. Since Dan is up for election, Ralph will be in charge of the election.

4. Awards: Ralph will provide a list of past recipients and descriptions of the awards. Nominations can be made at the next meeting or by email to Ralph. Awards include:

(a) Pat Putt award for a meet organizer, coach, etc.

(b) Bob Mc Shane award for an official; a suggestion was made to consider a name change for the award

(c) Terry Tierney award for a junior athlete who has continued to contribute as an adult

(d) Ted Kaplan award, a national award given at NJDC for lifetime contributions to the disabled sports movement

5. Table Tennis: Debbie, Ralph and Jennifer Johnson had discussions with Sharon Brooks by email. Scheduling might be best on a different weekend from meets because of logistical needs such as lighting and room size. Another possibility is to piggy-back on other meets. Jennifer has a lead on a site in Dunellen but no information yet on cost. If table tennis can be done correctly between the Masons and Tri-State meets, we can omit it from the Masons meet. Burke has table tennis on Saturdays, but we would need to let our athletes know about it and set up a particular date and schedule since their training is done on a one-on-one basis and is strictly recreational, not competitive. Phil will try to link the information on the Burke website to the TSWAA website. Arrangements for September at Burke would help develop athletes for the 2016 NJDC. A suggestion was made to hold a clinic, possibly at the Dunellen site. USTTA may hold a junior tournament but the timing may be very close to IWAS and NJDC. Andy Chasanoff did a regional table tennis meet in Tampa in December 2014.

6. Other New Business:

(a) Canine Companions for Independence was approved to have a table at the meets, if they wish. Trisha will check with the venues.

(b) Joan is preparing an exhibit on wheelchair sports and may be putting it on in Haddonfield. Pat will check with Liberty Science Center about staging it there to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the ADA.

(c) Clayton Frech, who has an amputee son, holds a community-based day for disabled youth. The date and location are uncertain, but our participation is possible.

(d) Carolynne mentioned that NJ has a Disability Pride Day parade in Trenton in fall.

(e) Carolynne also mentioned the Real Abilities Expo. No other information is available.

Adjournment:

Debbie moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:58. Phil seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

TSWAA HALL OF FAME

The Tri-State Hall of Fame (HOF) is an honor that is awarded annually to the following classes of individuals:

Class 1 : Competitor - Recognizes those adaptive athletes from the Tri-State Region who have exhibited exceptional national and/or international sports performance and sportsmanship in either junior or adult age groups. *(The adult age group includes those athletes in the masters category).*

Class 2: Contributors - Recognizes individuals who have made a significant contribution to the advancement of adaptive athletics in the Tri-State Region. This includes, but is not limited to, meet organizers, meet directors, officials, classifiers, patrons, administrators and supporters.

In addition to the above, candidates for the Hall of Fame will have satisfied a minimum of five (5) years activity in the competitor class or, seven (7) years for the contributor class. . An individual who is nominated because of significant contributions in both categories must have a total of seven years of activity and will be considered for the category with the longest period of activity.

An inductee may be either an active or retired individual. An individual may also be inducted posthumously. Inductees must be either current or past members of TSWAA,

Procedures: Each August, candidates for HOF are solicited by the Hall of Fame Committee. Candidates can be either self-nominated, or nominated by another TSWAA (or WASUSA ?) member. The nominator must submit materials supporting the nomination by the stated deadline. The committee compiles the background materials, maintains a master list, and confirms eligibility of the nominees. Once a candidate is nominated, he or she remains on the master list for a period of five years. If that period has expired without election, the candidate will be removed from the master list, unless re-nominated .

The HOF committee is comprised of the chair of TSWAA and four (4) additional members. These members must be current members of Tri-State and, as a whole, should represent the organization from a historical perspective. Each member will be approved for the committee by a majority vote of the Board. The elected members of the HOF committee serve staggered 3 year terms. Should a member of the committee be a candidate for the HOF (or a family member of such a candidate), , the committee member must recuse him/herself for the year. In such case, the Board will elect a temporary replacement.

Each year the HOF committee reviews the list and recommends not more than three candidates from Class 1 (competitors) and three candidates from Class 2 (contributors). These recommendations with summarized resumes are submitted in ballot form to the BOD for a final vote at the annual meeting each March. It takes a two-thirds affirmative vote of BOD members to elect candidates to the HOF.

(In the initial year of balloting for the HOF, seven (7) inductees will be selected from each class; a maximum of fourteen (14) candidates for each category will be submitted to the BOD for final vote. In later years, this is limited to one inductee in each class).

DRAFT

TRI-STATE AWARDS

1. **Pat Putt Award:** This is awarded to either a coach, meet organizer or other Tri-State member who distinguishes themselves by their dedication to the organization and their athletes. Past winners have include Trisha Yurochko, Don Chaffee, Dick Doucette,
2. **Robert McShane Award:** This is awarded to a Tri-State official who has gone above and beyond the call of duty in working with the athletes and coaches of Tri-State. Recent past winners include Debbie Armento, Paul Kolterjahn, Terry Tierney, Herb Stahl and Zoila Anemone.

Notes: These awards have historically been given out at the Tri-State Dinner.

3. **Ted Kaplan Award.** This is a national award given out at the Junior Nationals dinner. Ted Kaplan was a real pioneer in the development of wheelchair sports. Ted started the NJ Wheelchair Athletic Association in the early 1970's along with Sharon Brooks, Ken Brooks and Andy Chasanoff. If a junior athlete couldn't make it to basketball practice, Ted made sure he picked him up and delivered him to the venue himself. Ted, who was also wheelchair bound, died of cancer in the early 1980's. His portrait continues to grace the Clark Recreation Center where the NJ Jaguars practice to this day. As a result of his legacy, the NJ Wheelchair Athletic Association annually honored his memory by awarding a pewter dish to a deserving individual who has made a significant contribution in the advancement of junior wheelchair sports. Debbie and Ralph Armento carried over this tradition from NJWAA to Tri-State. Past winners include: Debbie Armento, Don Chaffee, Jan Elix, Marty Morse, Arleen Sand, Pat Putt, Pam Carey, Denise Hutchins and Sharon Brooks.
4. **Terry Tierney Award:** We started this award a number of years ago in order to honor Bob Shields Jr. who was (and is still) competing in wheelchair sports at the age of 40!!! Last year, we had a discussion as to the criteria for a legacy award: should it be based purely on performance, or on longevity, or some of each. This should make for some lively discussion. This award is usually given out at the Masonic Games