

Western Region General Membership Meeting
Wet Set Lake, Newberry Springs, California
July 27, 2006

Call to Order: 4:12 pm. by T C Boice, EVP.

Attendance taken and quorum announced with 60 members in attendance. (Washington 9, Oregon 6, Idaho 3, California 37, Nevada 1, Colorado 4) Minutes of prior meeting approved.

Current council and committee members in attendance were introduced and thanked for their dedication and work. (Directors and Council in attendance included EVP TC Boice, Directors Gaile Heieck and Mike Hayes, councilpersons Connie Morris, Brad Conger, Owen Letcher, Tad Scharpf, Brad Stevenson, and Barry Young)

Regional Tournaments: Frank Harrison, tournament chairman for this year's Western Regional Championships was introduced. The membership thanked Frank and his organization for all the hard and effective work they did to provide another quality Regional Championship.

Connie Morris gave an update of Imperial Lakes' readiness and plans for the 2007 Regional championships and invited all.

Election Results: Phil Yastrow announced election results. More than 240 members voted by electronic and paper ballots, electing the following:

EVP	T C Boice	Area 4	Nick Ithomitis
Director	Gaile Heieck	Area 5	Tad Scharpf
USA WS Director	Randy Hocking	Area 6	Stacy Holbert
Alternate	Jim Lang	Area 7	Brad Stevens
Area 1	Connie Morris	Area 8	Ken Cannon
Area 2	Larry Goodwin	Area 9	Barry Young
Area 3	Owen Letcher		

All candidates were thanked for running for office and for the contributions they make to the sport.

Summer Council meeting recap: TC summarized the Regional Council meeting of Sunday, July 24 including the motions carried:

1. Recommend rule change for ski width of 35% rather than 30%. And alternately encourage collegiate scoring method for wakeboard/trick ski scoring.
2. Try to slow the trend of AWSA pushing funding down to the regional level for national programs, interests, and special events.
3. Continue working toward dual Regional Championships (north and south) for 2008. To be done by January 2007; ask Rules Committee change Rule 1.01 to allow rules exceptions for Nationals.

4. Recommend to Speed Control committee to ask Perfect Pass to make their system menu scroll in reverse.
5. Increase sanction fee for Western Region tournaments by \$10 per tournament to cover increased regional expenses.

Competition Task Force: Barry Young presented the state of the Competition Task Force proposal and the online ranking system. The objectives of the CTF proposal included using a ranking system (rather than the EP) and the Regional Championships to establish eligibility to ski in the National Championship. This method of qualifying for the Nationals is designed to keep at least the same level of participation at Nationals and to increase participation at the local levels. It is being designed to take effect for the 2008 Nationals. A cut of level would be established three weeks prior to the Nationals. Skiers would be eligible by (1) being in the top group, (2) raising their average above the cut off level before the Nationals, or (3) by skiing better than the cut off level at Regionals. As always, skiing at the Regionals continues to be a requirement. All skiers were urged to attend the general membership meeting at the Nationals in Bakersfield to hear and participate in Jeff Surdej's presentation.

Greg Tate motioned to have ratings or ranking scores achieved between Regionals and Nationals count toward the current and the following year's Nationals qualification. Second by Eric Lee. General discussion was that this would further increase the importance of tournaments between Regionals and Nationals. For ratings, this would be an interim proposal but would also apply to the ranking system. Motion carried 33 to 5.

Eric Lee moved to oppose the CTF proposal as presented, recommending a cut-off date longer than three weeks and as much as 6 months prior to the Nationals. Second by Greg Tate. Eric said this was particularly important for tricks and that his son had EP's in trick and no longer ranked in the top group. (*This was later discovered to not be the case*) Forest Fisher added to the motion, suggesting combining CTF proposal with a certain level of performance that would be a definite qualification; second by John Horton. Motion carried 26 to 6.

Forest Fisher moved to have placement in Regionals qualify for Nationals regardless of rating. Second by John Horton. Motion carried 33 to 2.

Motion by Matt McCuddy and second by Kendall Theiman to have Open or Masters Men scores be usable for overall scores within the skiers age division. Matt amended the motion to additionally make Masters Men mandatory for those who qualify and remove the overall portion of the proposal. Motion failed

Treasure's Report: Tad Scharpf was introduced to the group as the new treasurer for the region, replacing Bob Cosby. Tad went over the budget, indicating sound practices and that the region was in excellent financial shape.

Dual Regionals: The issue of Dual Regionals for 2008 was discussed at length. T C explained that the council had been provided with survey information by Merle

Vasbinder (chairman of the dual regional committee) and had voted to continue to work toward holding dual Regionals for 2008. The council voted to work toward the 2008 tournament as a trial to see how well it would work for increasing participation and officials' expertise in the regionals. The proposal was initiated in January 2004 by John Goodman primarily due to the distances involved and was proposed as a preamble to separating the region. The council recognized that most members like the "big show" and fraternal aspect of a large regional tournament; at the same time they recognized the large tournament and number of skiers has become problematic for its long hours and number of days burning out officials and spreading family participation out over too many days. As the proposal has evolved, everyone residing north of the California border would ski in the northern Western Regionals. This would include Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and Alaska. Further, the council recommended to have the Rules Committee allow National rules exceptions for placement combinations from both tournaments to qualify for Nationals from both of the dual Regionals.

In Merle Vasbinder's absence, Tad Sharpf of Oregon, and a member of the dual regionals committee, read the results of Merle's survey, which indicated need and support for a dual regional. The survey was sent to all Western Region members with email (1529 members) and got back 181 responses. The reasons for the need for dual regionals were related to the huge size of our regionals and the geographic distances of our region. The Western Region has the only six day regional tournament, which makes it difficult for officials, families, and sponsoring sites. With a dual regionals we could relax our entry requirements a little. Families could afford the travel easier. Officials would be obligated for a shorter time frame.

Heavy discussion followed. As in the previous year's general meeting, most of those in attendance voiced opposition to the proposal for dual regional tournaments. TC requested the web master Phil Yastrow put a discussion forum on the web page so all members could discuss the pro's and con's of dual regional tournaments or even the idea of splitting the region. TC said he would ask Merle to make the survey information available on line for the discussion. Brad Stevenson moved to not have the survey put on the web because the members in attendance felt it was written in a biased or leading manner and that a new survey needed to be done that would be not so biased. Motion seconded by Brian Holm. Several people made the points that the survey was flawed by its leading structure, distribution, and limited response. Mark Roske said he did not respond to the survey because it led him to a conclusion he disagreed with; several others agreed with him. Motion passed 28 to 4.

Sally Mecham requested that the council approve the survey before it is sent out. TC reminded the group that their council representative's had voted to follow this path and all members need to make sure their councilperson has the feedback from the members he or she represents.

This needs to be an ongoing discussion and all council and dual regional committee members need your opinions and information. Email addresses for your council person in your area are available on the AWSA West website and in the regional guide.

Members of the Dual Regionals committee are Merle Vasbinder (co-chair), John Goodman (co-chair), Will Bush, Owen Letcher, Scott Vanderflute, Mike Hayes, Randy Hocking, Tad Scharpf, Brad Stevenson, and Connie Morris.

New Business: Phil Adams moved that we recommend to the Rules Committee that if a competitor skis outside the gates on the hard side on either end, the skier receives credit for the gate; second by Randy Walston. Motion amended to be presented as two separate issues. The motion to allow the hard side on the entrance gate carried 38 to 3. The motion to allow the hard side on the exit gate carried 18 to 9.

Kendell Theiman moved to propose a 58 KPH division for non open skiers over 35 years old; second by Richard Doane. They suggested it be called Amateur 36 MPH. Motion failed 15 to 11.

Greg Tate suggested Regionals be allowed to begin later in the week, run through Sunday and into the early part of the next week. His reason was to allow for more tournament activity at the local level on the weekend immediately before the Regionals. He so moved; second by Richard Doane. Frank Harrison pointed out that currently we could do just that, but the fiscal realities make that a bad choice for the LOC; there are housing and flying problems for all the officials as well as for the contestants. Motion carried.

Motion for adjournment. Meeting ended at 6:40 pm.