

Canoe Kayak Ontario Sprint: Programming & Competitions Review Meeting – December
7th/2023

AGENDA:

- Coach & Technical Leader Development
- Athlete Services & Development
- Organizational & Club Support
- Events & Competitions
- Open Discussion
- What's Next?

(1) – Coach & Technical Leader Development

- Coaches noted that salary expectations for summer coaching positions are bigger than what is affordable by most clubs.
- One of greatest areas of concern are those staff/potential staff in the “middle”, or the gap between head coaches/full time employees & summer camp staff.
 - This becomes a concern with university students who are looking for 4-month positions, clubs are losing staff due to not being able to employ certain staff for more than the summer months (July & August)
- Another identified area of concern is opportunities for “good” or quality summer coaching staff that do not conflict with high performance training – many coaches at clubs throughout Ontario are also athletes, managing both a work and an HP training schedule becomes difficult for some.
 - Programs like CPCC’s Healthy Living Program offers an HP schedule to those who are not able to attend 8-10 sessions per week, but still want to train at an increased intensity; however, programs like this offer their own set of challenges, namely keeping HP programming at the HP level.
 - It was also noted that it is difficult to engage quality staff members beyond athletes among most clubs.
- **COACH EDUCATION** – coaches identified gaps within the online delivery of coaching certification.
 - Biggest area for most clubs is with taking the next steps to become certified, majority of staff are completing the online training, but are not taking the next steps to become certified.
 - RCC increases pay for those staff who make the step to become certified (as incentive)
 - **Suggestion #1:** Have evaluation portion structured into the training program.
 - **Suggestion #2: Weekend of Evaluations:** concept is to have staff work at trained status through the summer and then throughout the fall or another time that may be suitable, coaches travel to one venue within EOD/WOD to complete their certification.
- Last suggestion from coaches RE: coach & technical leader development, is clubs introducing mandatory time off for more full-time staff (Head Coach, etc.) during the busy months, and introducing a benefits package of some kind.

FEEDBACK FROM SURVEY:

- More clinics/mentoring
- More in-person learning
- Webinars are good, more suitable time would be evenings & weekends.

(2) – Athlete Development & Services

- Team selection & the criteria for that were identified as being good, no changes to be discussed at this time.
- Coaches find that support within the Ontario Team is geared towards athletes in the U18 age category and below, U21+ athletes have no real space.
 - Identified examples were the Florida Training Camp – the feel is that it is for U16/U18 athletes.
 - Coaches identified the possibility of having two separate camps, a Development Camp & an HP Training Camp
 - Coaches find that U21+ athletes “stall” on the pathway.
 - Events like Canada Day Regatta work well to facilitate more opportunities for U21+ athletes to see development with the ability to compete against paddlers from other areas throughout Canada.
 - Coaches & CKO looking into the option of broadening Canada Cup possibilities.
- Coaches discussed U21+ athletes needing a place to develop/allow more opportunities for between National Team Trials and the National Championships
 - Developing/executing some type of event between there two major competitions could assist with the retention of athletes within this age category.
 - Coaches identified the previous “Shawinigan format” (week of training, followed by racing) as a good format, that athletes enjoyed.
- Coaches are looking for an opportunity for U21+ athletes to train at a level that allows them to push for the National Team
 - An opportunity needs to be provided to train at that level, to make the next step – as mentioned above, the development training camp versus high performance training camp.
- Suggestions were also made to reengage other countries at the Canada Day Regatta event.

OTHER NOTES:

- More workouts & team training opportunities
- More nutritional resources
- Earlier communications RE: team nominations and planned activities
- Improved focus on athlete health & well-being – resources for the student-athletes
- More funding for High Performance athletes with less financial means
- Better communications RE: team opportunities & obligations

(3) – Events & Competitions

- Florida Training Camp

- Coaches identified the “landscape change” of Florida Training Camp post-COVID.
- Coaches also indicated that there is a lack of clarity on the different needs of each athlete, and which category they belong in
- Coaches would like to see more targeted information, specifically with regards to Welland versus Florida Training Camp (more explanation on what type of athlete the camps are intended for)
 - Additionally, coaches identified that they would like to see more details on what each camp entails (more variety)
 - This can aid with reframing the perception of Welland Training Camp being a “step down” from the Florida Training Camp, need to investigate revamping the type of camp.
 - All of this, while also acknowledging there is a large mass of athletes with development needs but are not necessarily ready for the Florida Training Camp setting.
 - **SUGGESTION:** Host a meeting at Ontario Champs to discuss the different camp options, what they offer, how they differ, what is the suitable option for their athlete, etc.
- As mentioned above, coaches also asked for more support to the U21+ age category – how can the province help support clubs like MCC & RCC, who have athletes more prominently in this situation.

(4) – Organizational & Club Support

- Coaches mentioned the idea of developing resources from the province on how to run Paddle-ALL & Para Canoe/Kayak programs, etc.
- Coaches identified a need for more definition between the SO categories (touring versus pro)
 - Coaches would like to see more SO events, to give athletes more racing opportunities.
 - Coaches indicated that further categorizing SO events could provide more benefit to those athletes, as well as provide more options, opportunities, etc. (ex. Development of age categories, classifications, etc.)
- Coaches mentioned an opportunity to develop a “How To” Guide for programs like SO & Para Canoe/Kayak – ideas for what grants to apply for, resources to consult and how to access funding for program start-ups.
- Lastly, coaches indicated that Canoe/Kayak can do better on the EDI front.

What are we missing?

- More frequent communications
- Meetings with the Ontario Team and provincial coaches