

**Minutes for OISRA Board Meeting
May 14, 2020
Zoom Meeting**

Present:

Ryan Rooper – Alpine Division (Past President, new Alpine Liaison)
Eric Martin – Nordic Division (Vice-President)
Mike McManus – Alpine Division (Past Alpine Liaison, new President)
John Collins – Nordic Division (Nordic Liaison)
Laura Gentry – Alpine Division
Dave Munson – OISRA Executive Director
Jinny Martin – OISRA Board Secretary

Meeting called to order at 7:10 p.m.

1. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

1.1. Welcome Laura Gentry, new board member.

1.2. Election of Officers

Ryan Rooper presents slate of new officers willing to accept positions: Mike McManus, President; Eric Martin, Vice-President; Ryan Rooper, Alpine Liaison; John Collins, Nordic Liaison.

VOTE: Unanimous approval of slate of new officers.

1.3 November 9, 2019 Meeting Minutes

MOTION: John Collins moves to accept the November 9th meeting minutes as presented
Eric Martin seconds.

VOTE: Unanimous approval.

2. NEW BUSINESS

2.1 OSAA's new "Emerging Sport/Activity" Policy (See [Appendix A](#) for the new OSAA rule 6.2.1, which was adopted by the OSAA Delegate Assembly on April 27, 2020)

MOTION: Laura Gentry moves for OISRA to complete a request and submit it to OSAA and start conversations, provided OISRA can withdraw request at any time. Eric Martin seconds.

VOTE: Unanimous approval.

ACTION! The Board directs Dave Munson to ask OSAA at least one preliminary question prior to OISRA submitting a request for OSAA to accept ski racing as an OSAA Emerging Sport/Activity. **NUMBER ONE CONCERN – losing teams if skiing becomes an OSAA sport/activity and school administrators choose not to take on skiing as an OSAA sport/activity.**

ACTION! Dave Munson and Jinny Martin will develop the request, addressing the criteria listed in OSAA Rule 6.5. (See [Appendix B](#) for OSAA Rule 6.5).

Discussion:

- Dave M. and Jinny M. had developed a report that addressed the criteria for OSAA Rule 6.5 when they were communicating with Peter Weber (OSAA) in July, 2019. Will use material from this report when developing current request.
 - ***[Post Meeting Information: Financial information about Alpine State Meet needs to be updated to more accurately account for expenses for Alpine State meet]***
- Mike McManus and Laura Gentry will be on a board committee that communicates with OSAA.
- Dave M. brings Board’s attention to his concern that the current OISRA business model is unsustainable. (**See Appendix C**)
- Some of the differences in OSAA and OISRA policies were discussed. (See **Appendix D** for full list of these differences.) Discussions left unanswered questions. What issues would be potential “show stoppers” and/or what things might OISRA have to give up?
- Many other unanswered questions were expressed:
 - Timeline?
 - Who makes decisions about whether a school accepts a new sport? (principal or superintendent?)
 - Can the process be stopped at any time?
 - How much school support would be guaranteed during the provisional period if a school adopts ski racing as an OSAA emerging sport/activity?
 - How much would OSAA change their regulations to accommodate ski racing?
 - Would OISRA end up disbanding or becoming another type of organization?
 - How quickly will OSAA work on a request we submit?
 - If all the schools that currently have ski teams do not accept ski racing as an OSAA emerging sport, would non-OSAA ski teams be allowed to compete with OSAA ski teams? What would be the conditions for allowing competitions with non-OSAA ski teams?
 - What about volunteer coaches?
 - At what stage of this process could we ask school administrators directly if they would take on ski racing?
 - Could OISRA coaches/board members campaign at schools to educate and encourage administrators to accept ski racing?
 - Would the “bad history” of school districts that pushed away ski racing remain a negative factor when these school districts are given the information that ski racing is accepted by OSAA?
 - Exactly which OISRA Bylaws and/or Policies need to be changed – and on what timeline - before ski racing could become an OSAA emerging sport on a provisional basis? Which changes would the board have the authority to make and which changes would require support from the membership (coaches) voting?
 - Would schools that now support OSSA alpine teams make the change to support OSAA ski teams? Could OSAA unify high school Alpine ski racing in the state?
 - Would OSAA categorize high school ski racing as “Alpine/Nordic Skiing” (meaning that when a school accepts this sport, it means the school could have an Alpine team, a Nordic team or both an Alpine team and a Nordic team) – or would OSAA accept only Alpine Skiing, because Alpine skiing is the only category that has the required number of schools?

- General agreement coalesced around these ideas:
 - All unanswered questions do not need to be resolved at the beginning of the process, but the Board does need to get some of their questions answered before moving forward and approaching OISRA coaches.
 - If ski racing became accepted as an OSAA sport by a large majority of the schools, the outcome would be positive for the development of high school ski racing.
 - If ski racing did not become accepted by a large majority of schools, OISRA would need to work on another solution to the dilemma of maintaining a business model that is becoming unsustainable.
 - OISRA has had a good track record for 60 years.

2.2 Other

- 2.2.1 Received information that some coaches have been communicating with the United States Ski and Snowboard organization.
 - Are many unanswered questions
 - Could possibly be a second option if working with OSAA proves to be unproductive
- 2.2.2 Clarified role and authority of OISRA Board Members and voting rights of coaches (**See Appendix E**)
- 2.2.3 Clarified organizational structure of governing bodies for high school sports/activities (**See Appendix F**)

NEXT MEETING: Will pick a Thursday evening in the next few weeks.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Jinny Martin
OISRA Board Secretary

Appendix A: OSAA RULE 6.2 AMMENDED TO ADD AN EMERGING SPORT/ACTIVITY

6.2. Adding a Sport/Activity. The Delegate Assembly may consider adding a championship in a sport/activity where no championship is currently provided by the Association if the quantity of member schools participating in the sport/activity is equal to at least 50 schools.

6.2.1. Emerging Activities

The purpose of this rule is to grow meaningful interscholastic participation opportunities for student-athletes in sports and activities that have the potential to meet the required number of schools participating to be considered for official sanctioning by the OSAA.

Listed below are the steps required to request designation as an Emerging Sport/Activity and the timeline involved. Any sport/activity that meets these requirements must successfully complete a two-year provisional period before consideration for adoption as an officially sanctioned sport/activity. At the end of the two-year provisional period, the sport/activity committee shall report back to the Delegate Assembly to summarize the progress that has been achieved. The Delegate Assembly then has the option to vote to officially sanction the sport/activity, keep the sport/activity in provisional status, or remove it from the list of emerging sports/activities.

- (a) Have at least 25 member schools participating in the sport/activity and/or written indication from schools willing to offer the sport/activity on a provisional basis.*
- (b) Submit a request to the Delegate Assembly for approval under the same criteria listed in Rule 6.5. Contest limitations, individual player limitations and the applicable season of participation will be determined and specified in the approval by the Delegate Assembly.*
- (c) If approved, the sport/activity will be listed as an emerging sport/activity in the OSAA Handbook and registration in the sport/activity will be offered.*
- (d) If approved, a committee shall also be formed to help determine specific rules and any other necessary information for the sport/activity*
- (e) Emerging sports/activities approved on a provisional basis will be limited in the services they receive until they become officially sanctioned by the OSAA. The following OSAA administrative services will not be offered to emerging sports/activities:
 - (1) Assigned rules interpreters*
 - (2) Sport/Activity section on the OSAA website*
 - (3) State Championships administered by OSAA*
 - (4) OSAA Plan Book**
- (f) Emerging sports/activities approved on a provisional basis, along with member school student and coach participants, must abide by all OSAA Regulations.*

Appendix B: OSAA Rule 6.5

6.5. Criteria.

The following criteria (listed in no order of priority) are among those, which the Delegate Assembly may choose to consider when evaluating possible modifications in OSAA Championship offerings:

- 6.5.1.** Support by superintendents of member schools.
- 6.5.2.** Maintenance of comparable opportunities for boys and girls.
- 6.5.3.** Maintenance of equity of opportunity by student population *in* all classifications.
- 6.5.4.** Equitable treatment of all sports/activities.
- 6.5.5.** Avoidance of additional loss of class time.
- 6.5.6.** Financial impact upon member schools.
- 6.5.7.** Financial impact upon the association.
- 6.5.8.** Continued reimbursement at the current level provided by the OSAA.
- 6.5.9.** Effect on the length of the season.
- 6.5.10.** Scheduling in such a way as to produce maximum spectator attendance.
- 6.5.11.** Availability of appropriate site(s).
- 6.5.12.** Administration and management.
- 6.5.13.** In individual sports, an increase in the number of athletic districts or classifications.

Appendix C: An Organizational Crossroad Assessment by David Munson (May, 2019) Correction - May 2020

What has recently happened with OSAA is an interesting evolution. For many years, acceptance into OSAA realm required an activity to be in 75% of the schools. A while back, it was reduced to 50 schools. Regardless of the reduced benchmark, very few activities have been added over a long time.

While high school ski racing was not an OSAA sport, it enjoyed a very favorable status in most school districts for very long time. In some schools it was practically on equal status with OSAA activities. This began to change in 2012 when the Oregon State Board of Education stopped vetting schools' extra-curricular activities. The responsibility then fell to the schools. It is reasonable to say that few schools are likely performing a comprehensive vetting of their non-OSAA activities.

It is also reasonable to assume that many school districts are trusting OISRA's compliance with rules and regulations because of our reputation and record of annual approval by Oregon State Board of Education. Our standing in these schools is still very favorable but it is lacking in verified approval within the school system. While these relationships are currently positive and could continue to be so for a long time, there is little assurance. In contrast, some schools have already taken a much more conservative approach. Their lack of motivation and/or resources to perform vetting coupled with the recognition of the risks and liabilities inherent to that approach has led them to reduce their exposure and distance themselves from these activities. As you know we have teams that are no longer officially associated with a school.

We are also seeing long standing valuable relationships lost as turnover occurs with schools' leadership and athletic directors. Our reputation and record often has less meaning to their replacements and they have been charged with reducing liability exposure. Unfortunate but understandable.

It appears that OSAA recognizes that the current climate is not conducive to bringing on new programs. You have school districts holding activities at arm's length due to liability concerns which suppresses a program's growth which is coupled with a difficult to achieve benchmark. We believe OSAA has brought forward a good plan with the Emerging Sports ruling and it's Provisional Status. An unknown factor to all involved is to what degree the schools will embrace these "emerging" activities. And is very difficult to assess without giving them a chance to thrive; ergo, the provisional status.

While high school ski racing is hardly an emerging activity, it is stuck in the void that has been resulted from the aforementioned past events. Having survived our insurance scare and still enjoying good relationships in most schools, it would be nice to hope for smooth sailing for a while but there may be troubled waters ahead.

One of management's major obligations is planning for the future. To do that let's take a look back into how our society has changed over the last 50 plus years of OISRA's life. It was a much simpler time with fewer regulations and lawsuits. Organizational administration was a fraction of what is required now. Now every year there are new regulations and standards that need review for inclusion in our programs. Now multi-million dollars lawsuits are common. Now there are privacy laws, FERPA forms, cyber concerns, background checks, a laundry list of required training that grows every year and many more changes. At the top of these concerns is the insurance associated with all of these risks which we painfully experienced this past year.

A tremendous amount of work behind the scenes goes into managing all of this and anything left incomplete leaves OISRA open to additional liability. It might be surprising to know OISRA has not had

all of their coaches complete their required training for a number of years. The potential consequences for these types of shortcomings will only grow. The growing burden of this demanding administrative work load falls to our small and mostly volunteer staff.

This leads to another important factor of the present and future. OISRA has been blessed with an exceptional group of dedicated volunteers, but the times are a' changing. I am here instead of Richard is one example. We are all getting older and I'm sure there are folks on the Board that are wondering how long they will continue. I know I will not be here as long as Richard was. Not even close. While there are very capable people to take our places, it seems unrealistic to expect to find replacements that will take on the level of commitment and administrative workload requirements that is now needed. And certainly not at the compensation of the past.

One consideration is that OISRA anticipates higher costs for operational and administrative activities. That assumes finding qualified personnel that will ensure regulations compliance.

I would like to provide a different perspective. I feel Oregon high school ski racing is currently at crossroads for all of the reasons brought forward. It is also my opinion that our current business model is not sustainable for the long term. Anyone in business for the last 30-40 years knows the financial risks of the administration and liability of today's current environment. And it will likely continue to grow.

We can plan on dedicating additional funding in the future to accomplish our needs internally for staffing, legal support and insurance which is a likely fallback position. However, I think it is time to explore becoming part of a larger organization that has these resources already; a paid staff, legal counsel and more leverage in the insurance environment. OSAA by virtue of the respective school districts and US Ski and Snowboard are both legitimate options to consider.

With the current OSAA opportunity at hand, it is worthy of investigation. If we apply to OSAA, it is very hard to anticipate how all of this may play out. Obviously, it would be great if the school districts wholeheartedly embraced high school ski racing but there is no guarantee. Alpine is in a better position than Nordic in regards to current school relationships. The schools will have the power as the principals sign on for what OSAA activities they will support.

It would be a difficult situation if we ended up in some OSAA middle ground where some schools accepted us and others did not. We would have to maintain almost all aspects of the organization including administration, legal and insurance in this scenario. If that were to happen, US Ski and Snowboard would have to become a serious consideration if the desire is to be part of a larger organization.

Appendix D: DIFFERENCES IN REGULATIONS BETWEEN OSAA AND OISRA

REGULATIONS (May not be negotiable)	OSAA	OISRA
Accepting Awards	Awards cannot exceed \$500 in retail value in any association year.	Awards exceeding \$500 are allowed under certain circumstances
School Representation	² Under some situations a student can represent the public school of their residence even if they do not attend that school.	Every student must represent the school they attend
Coaches Certification Requirements	Heat Illness Prevention training; Anabolic Steroids and Performance-enhancing Substances training,	Neither of these courses are required.
Cooperative Sponsorships	Must be approved by the OSAA Executive Board or Executive Director	Are approved by the OISRA Executive Director
Practice Limitation Rule	Coach can work with only 2 students at a time outside of the designated participatory season. There is a specified Moratorium week in the summer.	No limitations for when coaches can work with students - except coaches are not insured outside of insurance policy dates (6-months).
Ejection Policies	Schools/teams can be penalized for a coach's misconduct	Schools cannot be penalized for a coach's misconduct
Foreign Exchange Students	If an OSAA coach hosts a foreign exchange student, that student cannot participate in OSAA activities.	If an OISRA coach hosts a foreign exchange student, that student can participate in skiing activities.

REGULATIONS (More likely to be negotiable)	OSAA	OISRA
Assignment of schools to classifications and districts	Has specific classifications of schools based on school enrollment. Has designated Districts	Has one classification of schools that includes 1A through 6A Has designated Leagues
Can a "common coach" coach students from more than one member school?	Must get permission from the OSAA office for a common coach to coach more than one team	Common coaching does not require getting permission
Participation of Provisional Skiers (younger than high school) in practices	Students from non-OSAA schools cannot participate in practices with member school students	Provisional skiers are allowed to participate in practices
Participation of Unattached teams or individuals in OSAA competitions	Generally, cannot compete with unattached teams (non-OSAA member school teams) or unattached individuals	Allow provisional skiers in OISRA competitions

Appendix E: Roles of organizations that contribute to high school sports

National Federation of High School Associations (NFHS)

- State Sports/Activity Organizations are **members** of NFHS. (OSAA is a member of NFHS.) NFHS allows only one sports organization per state to be a member of NFHS.
- All NFHS member associations have “**Rational for Eligibility Rules**” for their associations: age eligibility, enrollment/attendance requirements, maximum participation, transfer/residency, academic, non-school participation, participation evaluation (physicals), restitution, amateur/awards, recruiting/undue influence)
- NFHS is the national authority on competition rules – standardizes rules used by high school sports throughout the United States. (Note: They do not have standard rules for ski racing, even though 12 of their member state associations sanction Alpine ski racing and 15 of their member state associations sanction Nordic ski racing.)
- NFHS provides online coaches’ training programs and also training programs for school administrators, students and parents.
- NFHS collects and provides data analysis for participation in high school sports in their member state associations.

Oregon Schools Athletic and Activities Association (OSAA)

- Schools are **members** of OSAA.
- Schools pay annual membership fees for being an OSAA member, and they pay additional annual fees per sport/activity for the OSAA sports the school supports. A school may not support all the sports/activities that OSAA sanctions.
- OSAA sponsors the state championship events for all the sports/activities that OSAA sanctions. They provide event insurance and have an assigned staff member who oversees each state championship event.
- OSAA is structured with
 - a **Delegate Assembly** that makes rules (comprised of members of regular athletic districts, Athletic Directors, school board representatives, and the Executive Director);
 - an **Executive Committee** that enforces the rules (comprised of superintendents, representatives for athletic directors and school boards, and coaches); and
 - a **paid staff** of an Executive Director and Assistant Executive Directors who carry out the operations of running the organization. Each of the Assistant Directors is in charge of several state championships as part of their workload. One of these Assistant Directors would be assigned to oversee the ski racing championships **after** the 2-year provisional period.
- OSAA Regulations cover all the “**Rational for Eligibility Rules**” defined above in the NFHS section, plus additional rules that comply with Oregon State laws. OSAA has rules for coaches’ training, dealing with gender identification, concussion awareness processes, etc.
- OSAA holds the **school** responsible for controlling “its athletics and activities programs in compliance with the rules and regulations of the Association. The high school principal is responsible for the administration of all aspects of the athletics and activities programs.”
- OSAA policies also define the **scope of responsibilities for the member school**. The defined responsibilities include the certification of student eligibility, athletic director and coach certification, and being responsible for the actions of school teams or individuals while on trips, or while participating in any such activity.

Appendix F: OISRA Organizational Structure

[Post Meeting Note: Some details have been added in the Appendix that were not expressed at the meeting – in order to give a more thorough explanation of the organizational structure.]

The organizational chart on the next page graphically illustrates the relationship of the OISRA Board of Directors, the OISRA Division Steering Committees, and the Division Leagues. [This 2015 chart is not updated to include a third Nordic League and does not show that Alpine has dropped the Freestyle division.]

- OISRA Bylaws assign voting rights to all coaches who have teams of 3 or more skiers of the same gender.
 - Coaches vote for all League decisions
 - Coaches vote for Steering Committee members
 - Coaches vote for Board of Directors members
 - Coaches vote for any changes to the Bylaws that “alter the powers, rights or obligations of the voting members, or that alters the process for the selection or removal of voting members or directors.”
 - Two examples of full membership voting in the past:
 - In 2005, full membership (all voting coaches) voted for OISRA to become a 501 (C) 3 organization
 - In 2017, full membership (all voting coaches) voted for OISRA to become a “member-coach” organization (had been a member-school organization)

- OISRA Board members have the following duties
 - Oversee financial affairs of the organization
 - Prepare and submit all required state and federal reports
 - Oversee the programs of the OISRA
 - Review all Alpine and Nordic Division policy and race rules changes
 - Review all Alpine and Nordic Division budgets and financial reports
 - Review and change Bylaws and Policies as necessary
 - The OISRA board members have written all the current OISRA Policies
 - The OISRA board members have changed the Bylaws in situations where the Bylaw changes did not affect the coaches’ rights to vote:
 - For example, amended term of board members to be a 2-year term

Appendix F: OISRA Organizational Structure (Continued)

