

2017 USATF Annual Meeting Report
Masters Track & Field
Monday, December 04, 2017

At the USATF Annual Meeting, held in Columbus, Ohio, last weekend a number of important decisions for the future of Masters track and field in the US were made. These included decisions about the 2020 indoor and outdoor championships, election of new members to the Masters Hall of Fame, announcement of the 2017 Athlete of the Year and Age Group Athletes of the Year, as well as the David Pain Distinguished Service Award, and Masters Track and Field Committee Chair **Rex Harvey's** plan to seek support for Team USATF to become the World's #1 Masters Team at the Malaga World Championships in September 2018. In addition, **Latashia Key** of Indiana was elected to a new one-year term as the Active Athlete Representative on the Masters Executive Committee, **Tina Klein** of Georgia led a field of six candidates for seats on the WMA and NCCWMA Women's Committees (there is now a list of the top five vote getters in the order of the votes received).

WHAT IS THE MTF COMMITTEE?

The Masters Track and Field (MTF) Committee consists of 98 members as laid out in USATF Governance Handbook. In addition to representatives of each of the 57 USATF associations, the four officers, representatives of outside groups and committees such as the National Senior Games Association, Road Runners Club of America, Officials Committee, etc., and five at large members, 20 of the members are active athletes engaged in masters track and field. Those 20 were selected through voting from the 47 active athletes in attendance in Columbus the others were alternates and voted whenever those in the 20 voting members were absent (in order of the number of votes received).

2020 INDOORS TO BATON ROUGE

After the lengthy process to establish the actual membership of the MTF Committee last Friday morning, that afternoon bids were presented to host the 2020 championships. **Baton Rouge, LA**, was the sole bidder for the indoor meet, which was unanimously approved and will be held March 13-15, 2020 at **Louisiana State University**. The facility will be the same one that was used as a warm up area and emergency track during the 2017 outdoor championships.

2020 OUTDOORS STAY TUNED

Two bids were received for the 2020 outdoor championships one from Greensboro, NC and the other from the Niagara Association in upstate New York. Originally the MTF Executive Committee had expressed an interest in having the 2020 outdoor national championships after the WMA Outdoor Championships, which will be held July 20-August 2, in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Both of the potential sites had difficulty securing facilities in August because of fall sports on the campuses that would host the meet **North Carolina A&T University in Greensboro** and **Brockport State in Brockport, NY**. After the presentations there was a lengthy discussion in the committee meeting and a substantial majority of the

delegates voted in favor of having the meet in July, prior to the WMA meet in Toronto, likely July 9-12, 2020, ending only eight days before the WMA meet begins. However, because of questions about the facilities in Greensboro and the lack of detail in the Niagara Association bid (and the fact that site visits had not been conducted prior to the Annual Meeting in either Greensboro or Brockport), the Committee decided to postpone the decision. In the next several weeks site visits will be conducted by the Championships Games Subcommittee, both bids will be resubmitted on up-to-date bid application forms (which the National Office has not yet finalized), the Executive Committee will examine the site visit reports and the formal bids and make a recommendation to the full MTF Committee. At that point, a full report will be sent to those who were delegates to the Committee in Columbus and a full MTF Committee vote of those eligible to vote in Columbus, will be taken electronically. The intent is to complete this process prior to the indoor nationals in Landover, MD in mid-March.

HALL OF FAME

MTF Hall of Fame Subcommittee Chair **Mary Trotto** presented the Class of 2017 for induction into the MTF Hall of Fame. The MTF Committee approved the list unanimously, and these are the newest members of the **MTF Hall of Fame**:

Dr. William Clark
Gloria Krug
Harry Nolan
Gary Patton
John Seto
Thaddeus Wilson, Sr.

Clark, Krug, Nolan, Patton, and Wilson are athletes, while Seto is being honored for his work as an administrator, including expanding and running mastersrankings.com.

AWARDS

MTF Awards Subcommittee Co-Chairs **Rachel Guest** and **Mary Trotto** presented the list of honorees for 2017. As previously announced, the Male Athlete of the Year is M81 sprinter **Bob Lida** and the Female Athlete of the Year is W65 distance runner **Kathy Martin**. In addition, the following were honored as Age Group Athletes of the Year:

30-39

Sean Burnett
Walter Dix

40-49

Eric Cole
Latrica Dendy
Antwon Dussett
Sonja Friend-Uhl
Derek Pye

Jeferson Souza
Allen Woodard

50-59

Khalid Mulazim
Lorraine Jasper
Joy Upshaw
Antonio Palacios
Oneithea Lewis

60-69

Charles Allie
William Collins
Carol Finsrud
Rita Hanscom
Myrle Mensey
Noel Ruebel
Doug Torbert
Thaddeus Wilson, Sr.

79-79

Kathy Bergen
Joanne Marriott
Larry Hart
Gary Patton

80+

William Bell
Robert Culling
Jeanne Daprano
Gloria Krug
Ian Reed

Jeff Watry, Co-Chair of the Combined Events Subcommittee received the **David Pain Award for Distinguished Service** to the Masters Track and Field Community. Watry has organized the stand-alone combined events championships for many years, now focusing on the indoor meet held annually in Kenosha, WI. The Combined Events Subcommittee also announced that it had reinstated its combined event athlete of the year awards, now known as the **Rex Harvey Award** to honor long time masters decathlete Rex Harvey, one of the greatest masters combined event athletes of all time. This year's winners were **Jeferson Souza** among the men and **Vicki Fox** among the women.

At the Jesse Owens Banquet on Saturday night **Sabra Harvey** was honored by USATF as Masters Athlete of the Year based on her nomination by the Masters Long Distance Running (MLDR) Committee. This recognition alternates between MLDR and MTF, with MTF's Athlete of the Year honored in even numbered years and MLDR's Athlete of the Year in odd numbered years. Both committees are seeking to have both athletes recognized by USATF each year in the future.

WORLD #1

At the initial Executive Committee meeting on Thursday, November 30 and at one of the MTF General Sessions on Saturday, December 2, MTF Chair Rex Harvey discussed the plan to move Team USATF to the top of the medal table at the 2018 WMA Championships in Malaga, Spain next September. The premise of the plan is that the US has the best talent in the world but getting our best athletes to the World Championships inhibits our overall success there. The plan has three components Championships Facilitators, financial support for those ranking in the top six in the world in an event, and awards for medals. The role of the facilitators is to work with athletes likely to be competitive for medals to help ease their way to Malaga by demystifying the championships and international travel. Financial support for athletes ranking in the top six in the world is proposed to be \$400, \$350, \$300, \$250, \$200, and \$100 depending on the ranking with a maximum total per athlete of \$1500. Financial awards for medals is proposed to be \$400 for gold, \$200 for silver, and \$100 for bronze, again with a \$1500 maximum per athlete. The World #1 plan has been presented to top USATF staff and they have endorsed it but are unable to fund it within the organization's current budget. However, they have pledged to work with the MTF leadership to seek outside sponsors to fund the plan, which has a price tag of approximately \$200,000.

OPERATING PROCEDURES REVISION

The MTF Committee operates under a set of Operating Procedures first adopted in 1994 and updated/revised annually or bi-annually from then until 2007. For the last ten years, however, the MTF Operating Procedures have not changed at all. Therefore, the task before the MTF leadership was to update them, make them clearer and more precise, bring them into compliance with current USATF policies and procedures, and create a living document that can be used as the MTF Committee charts a course for the future. The 2007 version was 11 pages long; the draft revision presented in Columbus is 32 pages! However, most of the additional verbiage merely brings more precision to the document.

There were, however, a handful of substantive changes. Perhaps the most substantive was the creation of a new **Communications Subcommittee** to include the functions previously overseen by the Media and Organizational Advancement and Promotion Subcommittees and by the social media and website coordinators. The thrust of the new subcommittee will be to bring all of these elements together in a coherent and coordinated way so that MTF presents itself both to masters athletes and the world at large with a common look and feel. During the annual meeting Media Subcommittee Chair **Bob Weiner** and Communications Task Force Chair **Sandy Lee Triolo** made presentations of their visions for MTF Communications (Triolo had been appointed by MTF Chair in August to head up a Task Force to envision a new approach). Now that the revised Operating Procedures have been adopted the next step in the process will be to solicit applications for the chair position of the Communications Subcommittee.

The Inclusion Subcommittee replaces the Diversity Subcommittee and is charged with undertaking activities to establish and maintain an inclusive culture that fosters equitable participation for athletes, officials, volunteers and spectators. To empower athletic development, competition, fitness, friendship, sportsmanship, and volunteerism, the Inclusion Subcommittee is to provide or enable education and advocacy for MTF policies

that sustain foundations of a diverse and inclusive culture across all dimensions of diversity including but not limited to age, race, sex, gender, gender expression, class, geographical location, national origin, educational background, marital status, parental status, disability, income, sexual orientation, creed, and levels of athletic ability. It is chaired by **George Melichar**.

The new Operating Procedures were adopted on Saturday, December 2, and took effect at the close of the Annual Meeting on Sunday. Some additional proposals for changes will be taken up next year and forwarded to the USATF Law & Legislation Committee in 2019 (the next time USATF's Operating Regulations can be amended). Among those changes will be an increase in the number of Active Athletes on the MTF Committee (currently 20).

OTHER BUSINESS

In other news from the Annual Meeting, the MTF Committee adopted a resolution calling for creation of a task force to examine club practices recruiting athletes from other clubs and another calling for a task force to look at the role of coaches during MTF championship meets. MTF Chair Rex Harvey will be appointing those task forces in the near future.

Former MTF Chair **Gary Snyder** asked for the Committee's endorsement to run for President of WMA. By unanimous vote the Committee endorsed him and will nominate him for election at the WMA General Assembly in Malaga next September.

In addition to the formal business of the annual meeting, USATF President **Vin Lananna** spent about 20 minutes speaking and taking questions and stayed to watch the World #1 presentation. USATF CEO and COO **Max Siegel** and **Renee Washington** also visited with the Committee and Siegel spoke and took questions for about 15 minutes. He reiterated his commitment to working with the MTF Committee to find funding for the World #1 project and noted that he had added \$50,000 to the MTF budget, allowing MTF to eliminate the \$25 surcharge on entries for national championships. MTF Chair **Rex Harvey** expressed the thanks of the masters community to Siegel for following through on the commitment to outfit Team USATF Masters in Toronto in the latest national uniforms a sentiment that was echoed by many of the athletes in attendance.

Finally, while Treasurer **Carroll DeWeese** did not have a 2018 proposed budget to present because it is still being negotiated with the National Office, he did announce that it appears the total figure will be significantly higher than in the past, above \$200,000, nearly a 50% increase over 2017. A motion was adopted empowering the Executive Committee to approve the 2018 budget as soon as it can be presented.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

With a very large agenda, it was inevitable that some business would not be finished in Columbus. The major item of unfinished business is the adoption of the revised All-American Standards. The Executive Committee will be tackling that issue early in the new year!

THANK YOU TO BILL SHELTON

MTF is represented on the USATF Board of Directors by **Bill Shelton**, a masters athlete whose career is with Deutsche Bank on Wall Street. He has been enormously helpful to the MTF Officers in their interactions with the National Office, assisted greatly with creation of a very professional PowerPoint presentation outlining the World #1 Project, and spent hours and hours in the MTF meetings in Columbus. He is a tremendous asset to MTF and we are very fortunate to have him as our representative on the Board.