

USA Racewalking: Senior Women's Developmental Camp Proposal

To: USA Racewalking Executive Board, Women's National Racewalking Team, USATF Racewalking Elite Athletes Subcommittee

From: Susan Armenta, Jolene Moore, Loretta Schuellein-McGovern

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The senior women in attendance at the final Race Walking Committee meeting of the USA 2008 Track and Field Convention voiced their concerns regarding the lack of education and training opportunities available to racewalkers at the senior level. In accordance with these concerns, the senior women in attendance voiced their commitment to help the women in the event progress via performance and educational opportunities. One immediate goal is to create a developmental camp where our female racewalkers can train and learn together. We are requesting funding for the camp. Our proposal for a developmental camp is as follows:

- The **critical zone issue** for racewalking is to improve on the recent performances of our top-level senior racewalkers. There is a developmental plan currently in place to assist the junior-level racewalkers, but there is no such plan to help the senior-level women progress toward the Olympic A and B standards. We believe that, in order to fulfill our goal of sending a full and competitive team to the 2012 Olympics, the immediate goal must be to improve the performance of our top-level senior women.

With a strong senior program, we can motivate, empower, and support our junior-level racewalkers as they continue their athletic careers into their post-collegiate years. At this time, there is no direct educational or financial support to those junior athletes who move up to the senior level, and there is certainly no program in existence to help improve the performance of the existing senior-level women.

- Our **action plan** for a senior-level developmental camp is to invite and fund the top eight athletes (or those on the National Team). We have researched various venues and locations for a seven-day/seven-night camp and determined that the best fit for our current needs is available at Ian Whatley's 40-acre training complex in Greenville, South Carolina. The center offers a dormitory with room for six athletes, with inexpensive local hotels available for the remaining athletes. A kitchen is available on-site so the athletes may cook their own meals. The training camp will most likely occur in summer 2010; however, athlete input will be considered so that the dates are conducive for the greatest number of athletes.

The training camp would include twice-daily aerobic workouts on the site's 400-meter track, paved, and dirt trails, and on the roads around the center. The center also offers a four-camera, dual-monitor treadmill video display system for technique

analysis. Lactate threshold testing will be performed on each athlete to help determine the athlete's individual training paces. A strength expert will conduct sport-specific routines and give each athlete a strength-training plan to take home and implement into her training. A nutrition seminar—focusing specifically on the female endurance athlete—will be conducted, and each athlete will be sent home with sport-specific information. In addition, sport psychology sessions will be conducted for each athlete. Finally, a stretching/yoga clinic will be provided for the group, and each athlete will be sent home with sport-specific stretches.

- The **requested development funds** are as follows:

Expenses:

Costs:

I. Airfare

Costs will vary for each athlete, depending on her city of origin. However, Greenville-Spartanburg International (GSP) is a short flight from Atlanta, Charlotte, and Cincinnati, making this location fairly accessible to most athletes. Some athletes will be able to avoid airfare costs by driving to the camp, which is a half-day drive from much of the eastern seaboard. The racewalking complex is 1.5 miles off I-85, between Greenville and Spartanburg, SC.

Estimate of \$500/airplane ticket per athlete

II. Transportation to and from training site

Athletes will be picked up by the training center van and shuttled over to the training site, which is approximately ten minutes from GSP. Athletes will also be shuttled back to the airport upon completion of the camp.

\$ 15 total

III. Dorms/hotel

Up to six athletes will be housed in the dorm provided at the training site. In addition, Ian Whatley has stated that he would fill his house to capacity before placing athletes/experts in hotels. He has also suggested that, depending on the dates of the camp, we may have access to one room in the house of his sister-in-law who lives about 150 yards away from the complex. Ian is willing to work with us to keep lodging costs to a minimum.

\$100 per week donation to host for various housing expenses (i.e. electricity, water, etc.)

In addition, \$45/night for any expert/athlete who could not be accommodated at the facility.

IV. Food

Athletes would be responsible for their own meals. However, in order to keep costs to the athletes to a minimum, a kitchen is available for the athletes to cook their own meals. There is an extra refrigerator below the dorm so that athletes may store their personal snacks, energy drinks, etc. In addition, there are many local restaurants/fast-food chains where athletes may pick up a quick, cheap meal: *Subway*, a Mexican restaurant, a Korean restaurant, a Chinese buffet, *Ryan's*, *Hardees*, etc.

\$25 per day -covered by the athlete

V. Lactate Testing

Athletes would be responsible for bringing their own heart rate monitors for lactate testing. However, if an athlete does not own a monitor, the training facility has several monitors available for her use.

Lactate testing strips would be needed (approximately 8 per athlete at \$2/strip). Sterile lancets would also be needed.

\$25 per athlete

VI. Strength Coach, Strength Training, and Related Educational Materials

Racewalking-specific equipment for a weight/strength routine is available on site, and Ian Whatley will serve as a strength coach. Strength plan will be discussed and planned prior to camp.

\$25 (donation to Ian)

VII. Sports Psychologist

We are requesting the presence of Dave Yukelson, a sports psychologist who has worked with many of our top USA racewalkers. Expenses would include his airfare, as well as his hotel for one to two nights (if he could not be housed at the training site itself).

approximately \$75 per athlete to cover cost

VIII. Nutritionist and Related Materials

We will be looking for a nutritionist and arranging for him/her to visit the training facility.

\$ TBD

IX. Local yoga instructor

We will be looking for a yoga instructor and arranging for him/her to visit the training facility.

approximately \$20 per athlete to cover cost

X. Massage Therapy

Access to basic sports massage, ice, an altitude tent, ultrasound, electro-stim, hot/cold compression, etc. will all be available at no cost at the training site.

More professional massage therapy will be optional and funded by the athlete herself. The cost for a local massage therapist (John Bowerman) is \$65/hour, and the cost for local chiropractic care (provided by Dr. Brannen) is \$35/session. A group discount may be available.

\$100 (one session each per athlete)

- **Summary of expenditures per athlete:**

Basic camp costs per athlete would be approximately \$985 (includes airfare, food, and lactate testing). Costs for Dave Yukelson would be approximately \$600 (includes airfare, food, and hotel, if he cannot be accommodated at the training facility). However, if any of the athletes or experts have a free airplane ticket or can drive to the training site, this would help eliminate some expenses. Please note that this does not include the cost of a nutritionist (research is still being completed).

Total \$ approximately per athlete \$985

Total to fund 8 athletes: \$7,880

Conclusion:

It is our hope that, over the next Olympiad, our top-level US racewalkers will be provided with the training, technical, and educational opportunities needed to meet the International 'A' or 'B' standards. The immediate goal is to fund this training camp so that our senior women can begin training together—an opportunity not provided to our senior racewalking athletes. It is our hope that such training opportunities will allow all of our top-level female racewalkers to promote their talent so that they may successfully compete on the international level.

Future Training Camps and Education:

We hope to schedule a future training camp on the West coast (in conjunction with competition tbd) to further the development of our top-level Senior female racewalkers and continue to monitor the progress of USA Women's Racewalking.

It is our hope that future camps may be combined with the existing event-specific track and field camps to create a more cohesive track and field community.