



1. Introductory Remarks

The aim of the USA Canoe Kayak National Development Program is to build *“a strong foundation for long term success”*.

At its core is our club based system. It is here where the strategies to generate the fundamentals inherent in a strong sustainable program are being targeted.

Our athlete development model has a club athlete centered approach in its program offerings but specifically rewards the athlete that demonstrates potential by his or her on water performance. Minimum time performance standards are at the heart of the National Development Program's disciplined approach in striving for international excellence. Athletes and our community at large are now beginning to understand that in order to be a member of Team USA in Sprint Canoe / Kayak it is an earned privilege based on time versus an inherent right based on their order of finish.

A coach development model, introduced in the summer of 2007, offers training to club coaches in USA Canoe Kayak's sport specific coaching education program. Practical in its assessment of coaching competence and economical in its delivery, seminars are being offered during training camps in which the coaches are invited to come along with their nominated athletes as well as at the request of member clubs during visitations by the NDD.

The Sprint Coaches Association (SCA), formed in the summer of '07, played a significant role in revamping the National Championships format along with the racing rules and regulations that govern our sport. This huge undertaking began in February of 2008 and was launched at the 2009 Nationals. An elected SCA Board of Directors have provided direction and support in instituting minimum time standards and providing feedback from regional club coaches. The 2010 Performance Standards are posted on the USA Canoe Kayak website on the National Development page.

A dedicated group of officials were brought together to form an Officials Committee early in 2008. This Committee has provided a focused forum for our highly capable volunteer group. Training of new officials, certification on a regional basis, providing uniforms, reviewing rules and regulations as well as identification of officials for major domestic and international events has been done behind the scenes by this body.

USA Canoe Kayak National Sprint Development Program has been working on a Long Term Athlete model (LTAD) to reflect principles guiding our approach to training and racing. At the core of most successful nations, this document is scheduled to be launched at OKC Coaching Symposium on February 20th, 2010.

Talent identification and monitoring protocols as well as talent transfer discussions are also in the works utilizing the USOC Performance Services staff, international talent ID contacts as well as other expert resources in a project to be available both at the club level and National level early in 2010.

While USA Canoe Kayak as an association has struggled with financing and organizational issues over the last quad, an integrated, planned, disciplined and sustained effort, under the leadership of our new NGB has begun the process of rebuilding the path to London.

Our new Board of Directors comes with welcomed fresh ideas and energy stemming from their varied professional backgrounds.

2. Mission Statement of the National Sprint Development Program

Mission

To support all USA Canoe Kayak affiliated clubs in their efforts to provide quality paddling programs to their members and communities.



3. Value Statements and Guiding Principles

Respect — each member of USA Canoe Kayak is valued and respected as an individual.

Fair Play — we foster the ideals of fair play and the highest level of sport ethics in our approach to training and competition.

Growth — we strive to create an environment that challenges the present capabilities of our member athletes and motivate them to achieve personal bests.

Wellness and Balance — we encourage an active healthy lifestyle that balances the individual within each member club with family, friends, education or career and community.

Pride — we demonstrate pride in being a member of USA Canoe Kayak and in ourselves by our commitment to the pursuit of excellence in training and competition and the support of our community through volunteering opportunities.

Environment — we promote a respect for the rivers and lakes we paddle as they give us memories to last a lifetime.

4. Situation Analysis — 2009 / 2010

USA Canoe Kayak's National Sprint Development program now has traction in a planned, sustainable and structured direction.

Its vision to "foster an environment in which the athletes, coaches, officials, directors, parents and volunteers are valued and respected in their efforts to support the growth of sprint canoe and kayak" has resulted in a more collaborative approach to decision making.

Communication is the center piece of our approach through a dedicated website where information on all of the National Development programs is readily available — www.usack.org — see Sprint National Development box on home page.

A focused club based philosophy resulted in a completely revised 2009 National Championships. With 60,000 + online viewer hits in August, the new format was a huge success as it showcased a vision for our Championships relevant to today's USA Canoe Kayak membership. Scheduled at a time in the calendar in which Junior and Senior National Team athletes are able to take part with their clubs following their respective World Championships, has resulted in full competitive finals throughout the regatta.

A showcase event was the 200m Knockout as evidenced by a spike in the online chat room conversations and a focused cheer in the assembled grandstand crowds. With the International Olympic Committee establishing the 200m as a new Olympic event in 2012, discussions have begun to consider adding this distance at the Junior level for 2010 Nationals.

This newly formatted 3 day event was organized in the Southeast region in August. The Lanier Canoe and Kayak Club was the host. This was a tremendous success for three main reasons:

- I. It modeled the benefits of a well structured club — LCKC demonstrated strong Board leadership, exceptional volunteerism, a variety of age group paddling programs and the benefits of a quality coaching staff.
- II. The Sprint Coaches Association (SCA) with a vision for a National Championships as being the focused domestic regatta of the year in which all member paddlers participate proudly wearing their club colors.
- III. A completely revamped set of rules and regulations under the guidance and leadership of a newly formed Officials Committee.

In 2009, the Officials Committee and SCA demonstrated effective leadership during the lengthy and difficult discussions geared to revamping an outdated (2002) set of rules and regulations governing all aspects of USA Canoe Kayak competitions.



Coach training and certification continues to be offered within the National Sprint Development Program, giving development opportunities to its member coaches. Piloted to thirty club level enthusiasts in February 2009, the new Coach Level course is now in print with coaching facilitators trained and available to all six regions. This course targets coaches involved in club level programs.

High Performance One context courses continue to be offered to eligible coaching candidates — coaches working with athletes in training for Nationals. Presently USA Canoe Kayak has twenty trained and certified coaches at the HP1 level.

An effective relationship exists with the USOC Performance Services team in conducting High Performance Two seminars at the October (Chula Vista) and June/July (Lake Placid) camps — Michael Shannon, Krista Austin and the USA Drug Association have conducted five sessions to date since the summer of 2008. Dialogue continues with these experts and JT Kearney, High Performance Director, Sport Performance Team for future seminars.

Minimum performance standards are now published for both the National Development and the National Junior Teams. These standards have effectively demonstrated that if you give our athletes and coaches target times for team selections, they will achieve performances that two years ago would not have seemed possible. Based on relevant age class times from National Championships in Canada, USA and Britain, as well as international results achieved by Team USA athletes over the last three Junior World Championships the MPS has assisted in altering the culture of order of finish to performance based time selection.

The Lake Placid International regatta held annually on the July 4th weekend is currently the largest domestic regatta of the year where teams from all across Canada compete against the National Development and Junior Teams from USA. This competitive quality 2 day event is a key component to the National Sprint Development Program and highlights the international initiatives being undertaken by the National Sprint Development Program. A close positive relationship continues to be nurtured between the coaching leadership within both countries.

Three new projects that will raise the competitive level of Team USA athletes have resulted from this relationship:

- I. Training camp opportunities with Canadian athletes at the Canoe Kayak Canada spring training facilities in Melbourne Florida – club based initiative with support from NDD available in 2010.
- II. A training camp and regatta in Nova Scotia July 6 - 11, 2010 for selected National Junior Team athletes. Athletes will be billeted by Nova Scotia families — putting the National Sprint Development Program motto into reality — “friendship through paddling”
- III. The NW region will host the Western Canada Turkey Bowl — a long distance event — in November, 2010. This will bring the four western provincial teams from Canada to train and compete with our National Junior Team.

The National Sprint Development Program will launch its Long Term Development Model — LTAD — in February of 2010. This will outline the guiding principles suggested for training, racing and programming to our membership. Preliminary discussions were held in OKC in May '09, drawing upon the expertise of coaches that took part in similar sessions in both Britain and Canada. The launch will be part of the coaching seminars held in OKC on February 21, 2010 in conjunction with the 1st US Indoor Kayak Championships hosted by Chesapeake Boathouse and Kayak Pro, on February 20, 2010.

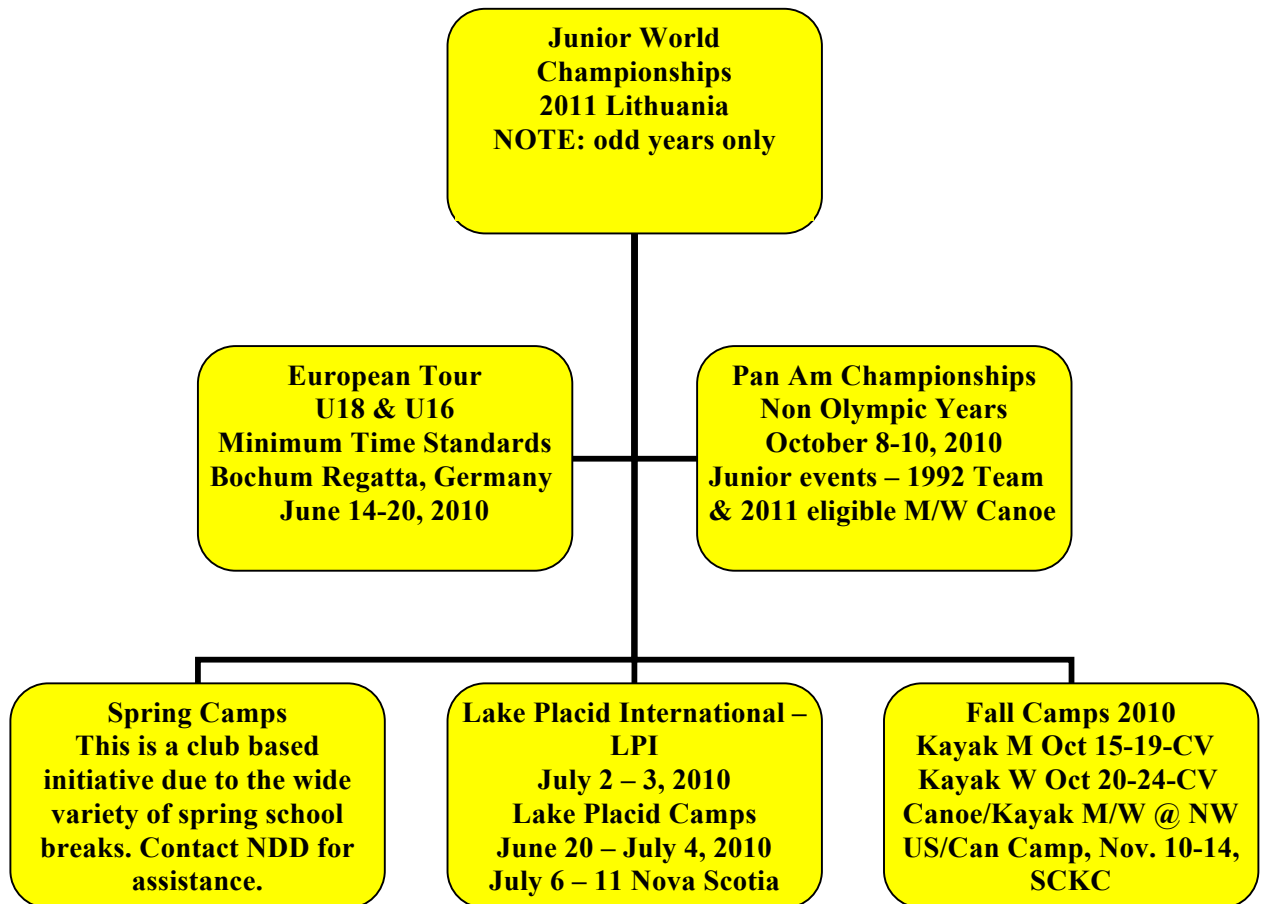
Club/region visitations by the National Sprint Development Director in 2009 included: HCKT in January; LCKC in February; San Diego in April; Rochester, Seattle and OKC in May.

Along the way training camps were held in Florida in April; Lake Placid in June and July; Moscow in July; San Diego in October; Toronto in November.

Confirmed plans for 2010 club visitations include — January, HCKT; February, San Diego, OKC & Seattle area; March, WCC & LCKC. Clubs wishing to have the National Development Director visit are asked to get in touch with me to arrange details.



5. Annual International Competitive Model for National Sprint Development Program



6. New Initiatives for 2010

- I. Expanding international relationships with Canoe Kayak Canada through joint camp, competition and coaching education ventures
 - a) Coaching seminars in OKC during the 1st US Indoor Kayak Championships hosted by Chesapeake Boathouse and Kayak Pro, February 20 & 21, 2010 - confirmed keynote speaker is Frank Garner, Chair, Canoe Sprint Committee, ICF.
 - b) Spring training camps — club based initiated — in Florida — late February to early April 2010 — clubs' are encouraged to contact the National Development Director for Canoe Kayak Canada contacts and camp assistance.
 - c) July 7 to July 12, 2010 camp and two day competition in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
- II. European Tour for a small group of top USA U23, U18 and U16 athletes – based on selection criteria using new Minimum Time Standards – Bochum, Germany, June 14 to 20th, 2010.
- III. Talent ID and Monitoring (TIM) protocols developed by National Sprint Development Program for clubs to use in community recruiting initiatives – to be piloted by OKC in 2010 and outlined by NPD early in new year during club visitations.



7. USOC Performance Services Requests for 2010

OTC CAMPS

- I. OTC LP — June 20 – July 4 — National Development Camp – 12 - 16 athletes / 4 coaches
- II. OTC LP — June 20 – July 4 — National Junior Camp – 12 - 16 athletes / 4 coaches
- III. OTC CV — October 15 – 19 Kayak Men Camp — 18 men and 4 coaches
- IV. OTC CV — October 20 – 24 Kayak Women camp — 18 women and 5 coaches

8. Partnerships for 2010

The National Development Program is grateful for the support received each year from its sponsors. It is hard to imagine how this program could function without the generous backing of all of its partners. Presently, William Irving, National Teams Director and Joe Jacobi, Executive Director, USA Canoe Kayak are actively engaged in support of a renewal of existing sponsorship agreements and the forming of new partnerships for 2010.

Submitted by:
Mac Hickox, National Sprint Development Director, December 2009
Updated January, 2010