

Battle at Altitude 2023

USOA Lessons Learned

20-Feb-2023

Attendees: Megann Taylor-Largent (USOA UWH Chair), Karen Thullner (USOA President), Kurt Allen

Eric Straily (Denver Organizer), Chris Debrunner (Denver Organizer),

Tristan Debrunner (Denver Organizer), Phil Hickey (Denver Organizer)

John Kulsa (UWH Referee Director) Don Mathews (UWH Referee Development Director)

Notes taken by Kurt Allen.

1 Pretournament planning

1.1 What went well:

- Referee plans went well. Eric did a good job communicating with ref's, getting them well in advance. Started getting tickets and such out Nov.
- Schedule creation had no known hiccups. Was available early enough for Chris D. to create score sheets and other required scoring items.
Plans to automate score sheets, but currently used spreadsheet to create them.
- Dedicated ref schedule as available beforehand.

1.2 What didn't go well:

- Hybrid ref schedule was created on Friday (needed to know team play schedule). Eric had to miss some national team training games to finish the schedule.
Eric never wants to do more than 16 teams again for a 2 day, 2 court tournament.
8 teams make brackets easy.
- Concerns about extra two exhibition games (teams from CA). This made schedules more difficult.
- Some people bought plane tickets but had not purchased team admission when the tournament roster was full.
Extra teams were allowed to avoid people losing plane tickets.
Need better communication to avoid this in future.

Canadian teams didn't realize that schedule filled up so quickly.

Need to tell people to get team admission before buying plane tickets for future tournaments.

- When foreign refs are invited, USOA president needs to extend invite.
- Don M. did not see the notification for the captains notes. Make sure at least tournament and dedicated refs are given captain's notes.
- Captain's notes went out Friday. Sooner might be better (if feasible).
- Announcements and team building should go out earlier.

UWH Portal will facilitate doing this earlier (UWH portal was being completed week before B@A and not ready as soon as desired)

1.3 What might we do differently:

- On Captain's notes, separate the notes into those parts that will change (schedule and such) from those that are fixed.
Reference web site for changing parts.

2 Tournament execution

2.1 What went well:

- Several people said that this was the best referee'd tournament that they had been to.
- Having experienced chief refs really helped the process run smoothly.
- Refs liked being compensated for time and effort 😊 This includes being support for room and board if necessary.
Tried to make it so that refs don't have to pay anything out of pocket to be there.
- Timing and scorekeeping went well (often ignored in planning). Having dedicated timing and scorekeeping people worked better than the MN rule.
- The Denver tournament is well known and popular, making it possible to do extra stuff like refs. Something for smaller clubs to aspire to and emulate.

2.2 What didn't go well:

- Concerns about foreign refs instead of developing US refs.
Anyone who wanted to be a ref was able to. Players are encouraged to be hybrid ref's, even if their teams opt out.
E-Mails detailing this sent out to team organizers.
Team organizers not always passing these on to players, meaning that people don't hear about hybrid ref encouragement.
UWH Portal should help with this allowing players to directly access the communications.
- Referees and players had issues with chlorine. There was a problem with the facilities (power distribution unit went out) causing buildup of chlorine.
Indoor air quality tests?
Work better with facility (facility audit?) to find potential problems?
2017 Jr worlds made administrative change after a couple days from chlorine issues.
Made ref shifts as 4 hours on 4 off so refs left the building during their break and reduced exposure.
With shorter shifts referees stayed in building rather than leaving, longer shifts and longer breaks encourage refs to get out of the building and cut down on CL2 exposure.

- No printed-out publicly posted schedules that people could see complete schedule. UWH Portal didn't show schedule either.
There were printed out schedules at timer tables, and a couple on walls.
Make Schedule PDF available online?
Having a printed schedule posted near men's and women's lockers? Some people still want printed schedules.
Have a printed schedule that is manually updated for Sunday schedule may help. This is difficult if there are too many teams.
Difficult to keep Sunday schedule up to date because of rapid changes.
UWH Portal adding some of this to their web site.
- Make sure that Tournament ref and organizer listed in captains' notes, so people know who to talk to.

2.3 What might we do differently:

- Compensating ref's may be more difficult for smaller tournaments.
We don't want to make it harder for small clubs to put tournaments on by requiring compensation.
- Create a set of documents and support for putting on new tournaments.
Smaller clubs could have access to these documents to help guide them in putting on a tournament..

3 Post tournament issues

3.1 What went well:

- The banquet went well. There was still food two hours after the start.
Better room management at this banquet than previous one (room expanded better than previous Nationals banquet)
Late banquet signup was financially discouraged, allowing better early planning.

3.2 What didn't go well:

3.3 What might we do differently: