

ICB Planning Meeting Minutes Sun., 17 Jan. 1999

NOTES AND PLANS

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AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

Review of Membership Initiatives Piloted at Feb. SkateJam!
Non-Profit Status & Incorporation
Insurance
Budgets and Finances
Sponsorship
PR Team Update
Welcome Wheels Team Concept and Updates
TNT/A2A Team Update
BM/JFW Team Update
"The Bearing" Team Update
Safety / Education Team Update
Racing Points Series Team Update
Other Team Updates (open to all to present team progress or question status of other teams)

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NOTES AND PLANS

Attendees: Tom Keane, Robin Travers, Neil Wetzler, Walter Wright, Karin Travers, Stefano Santoro, Jennifer Staller, Tim Clarke, Jon & Bette Scarlet, John Zarba, John & Mary Wardley, Mike Mercurio, Dorothy Clark, Joyce Buckley, Mark Stallard, Bob Arredondo.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be Sunday, Feb. 21, same time (10 a.m.), same place. This is a week after Valentine's Day and 8 days after the Feb. SkateJam!

Recap / Review Minutes of Dec.6 Meeting: Minutes were accepted as written with the following four items slated for further discussion:

1. Name of what formerly was called the ICB Race Training Program. We want to tone down the "race" part of the name to attract a broader audience, so we're looking for the right acronym. "Fitness and Inline Technique (FIT)" was suggested, as well as "Fitness & Speed Training (FAST)," among others (F&RT). Fitness & Speedskating Times (FASST) kinda has that one though.. What to do?

2. The Welcome Wheels team was formed in Dec.; does that mean we still need a separate volunteer czar, or is that part of Mike & Freddi's role? If we have a separate person, how do the 2 interact/where does one role start and the other stop? To be discussed at Feb. mtng.

3. Insurance? Jon Scarlet, Neil and Tom will look into Officers & Directors insurance and report at the next meeting.

4. Open note to all creating special event web pages -- please post written directions from major points in addition to links to MapBlast or other web-based programs. We know the area better than the mapping pgms.

Updating Planning Binders: We handed out the following updates and additions:

1. *List of Team Leaders.* (Add to ICB. Org. & Volunteers tab) Note that Mark Stallard now heads the ICB Table team, and Amy heads the Midweek on the Minuteman team. Amy is also working on PR with Jon and Tim, and continues to be our Membership Card maker in the membership fulfillment process. (btw, on the detailed list of activist info, which was not updated, Darrell's email should now be "dbibby@mediaone.net")

2. *The 1998 End-of-Year ICB Inventory (2nd Draft).* (Add to ICB. Org. & Volunteers tab) This lists who has stuff now, and where and when it was purchased, and at what price. As we grow, this will help us share stuff, not purchase stuff we already own, and track what happens to stuff. Tom (or the ICB Treasurer when that person makes him- or herself known) will make further corrections and updates as they become available, and will keep an updated copy on the ICB web site at www.sk8net.com/CorpDocs/Assets.htm (this location is not linked on the site, but has to be typed in by the user).

3. *Dec. 6th Minutes and Draft ICB 1999 Skate Calendar.* (Also distributed Tabs labeled Meeting Minutes & Calendar). Calendar discussed below.

4. *Draft ICB Vision statement.* (Add to Vision & Strategy tab). Discussed below.

Newsletter Schedule: Tom, John, and Sandy have agreed to revise the newsletter schedule for 1999. The 1998 schedule called for 7 newsletters and began with a Feb. 15 publication. The 1999 schedule will call for 6 newsletters, and begin with a March 15 publication. This allows us time to discuss sponsorship at the next meeting, and negotiate with sponsors, and will save money in the near term. It also positions our newsletters more effectively against the key dates we have, esp. the spring renewal. A more complete schedule will be discussed at the next meeting.

Membership Dates, Annual Dues Etc.: There was some confusion expressed at the meeting as to what the current policy was. When explaining it, I also got the cutoff date wrong. It's not Oct. 31, but Oct. 1. Here's the text we mailed to all members in March 1998:

Dear ICB Members -- (March 1998)

We're re-engineering our membership process! We brainstormed, benchmarked other clubs, and thought about how we the membership team could best serve our fellow club members. We concluded that we could run the membership process -- especially sending out T-shirts and membership cards/update labels -- better if we batched the bulk of the effort. It's then more of a team process -- and more fun! It means you'll get the new 1998 T-Shirt faster! And, you'll get your membership cards quicker too! It'll also help us with budgeting and planning.

Our new approach has an initial first season membership fee, then annual dues. We use an April-October season. New members that join before Oct. 1, 1998 will pay \$25 as a first year fee, then will need to pay annual dues beginning in March/April 1999. New members joining after 10/1/98 will expire 3/31/00 (if our software is Y2K compatible).

[End]

Note also that we have been planning (Darrell, Amy, John, Joyce, and I) to not do new membership cards for renewals this year -- we plan to send "year" stickers out instead. This will cut costs and be faster. The stickers should somehow fit over the expiration date on the card. These stickers are not yet designed or printed.

SkateJam! Major Success: We had approx. 116 people attend the Jan. SkateJam!, the most in my memory. We took in \$580 at the door, and the rink runs us \$300. (We also got 4 new members.) The growth of this function over time has really been a pleasure to see. Kudos to Jen and Darrell for having the dedication and perseverance to make believers of all of us! Thanks to Ma Nature for icing up Thursday, instead of Saturday like she did last year at this time! And thanks to our DJ Mike, from the "Boston Superskaters," a very avid network of roller skaters, who stood in for our usual DJ Dee.

MAJOR DISCUSSION TOPICS

ICB 1999 Skate Calendar:

Reviewed draft calendar. We have a very full set of weekly and monthly skates planned --

- 30 Sunday Morning City Skates
- 20 Midweek on the Minuteman Skates
- 30 Night Skates
- 8 Monthly Social Skates
- 1 (maybe 2) Trips
- 3 Non-Race Fundraisers (1 hosted by Empire in NYC)
- 8 Advanced Touring Skates
- 5 Fitness & Inline Technique Workshops
- 2 Matzger Workshops
- 3 Points Series Races (maybe 4) (ICB consults on organizing, but doesn't play lead role)
- 3 Other Races (publicized but not organized by ICB)
- 2 Epic Events (not organized by ICB, but attended as club)

So, if someone attended every event, they would have 115 opportunities to skate in organized group events with fellow ICB members!!! (Of course, they can't.. the Advanced Tours and Sunday Morning City Skates overlap.. so the possible max. is 107.) (Hmm. we should probably also not hog the August Matzger workshop with people who've already gone once..., so say 106). Should we have an award for largest number of events attended?

May 1999 Matzger Workshop:

Here's the note I sent out (w/ a small edit) when first circulating the draft skate calendar Dec. 13:

[The May Matzger workshop will be opened to ICB Activists, with priority to those interested in training together throughout the year to do A2A. If spaces are left \(max 20\) after those folks sign up, they can be taken by other ICB Activists and ICB members interested in A2A, then by anyone. Please email me to indicate your interest in a space. It's about \\$175 for the weekend \(Fri May 21 evening, Sat 5/22 & Sun 5/23\). There will be a 2nd workshop in August. \[end\]](#)

We took some names at the meeting of those who were willing to commit to the WS and to A2A as a goal, and I sent out some email following the meeting to try to create a more complete list.

ICB Vision:

We presented the following draft:

Grow the leading inline skating club in the Greater Boston Area by enhancing members' love of skating through shared positive skating experiences.

We edited that to:

Grow the leading inline skating club in the Greater Boston Area by nurturing members' love of skating through shared positive skating experiences and group hugs.

Value Survey -- Membership Cost:

We asked 1/16/99 SkateJam! attendees if they would help us assess how people (both members and non-members) value various club benefits, including

- T-Shirt
- Discounts at Retailers
- Discounts at Events
- Newsletter Mailed to You

- Access to Email List
- Access to Web Site
- Access to Phone Hotline
- Belonging to the best inline skating club in New England
- Knowing that you are helping support inline skating in Greater Boston

56 people answered the survey.

The demographics of survey respondents are as follows:

Just a side note -- these demographics are different than those of racers -- certainly in the number of events attended, e.g., and the number of events with an entry fee, as well as \$ planned to spend on gear. The data needs to be interpreted for what it is...

Member:

Y 23
N 33

Gender:

M 29
F 27

Age:

20-29 13
30-39 25
40-49 12
50-59 6

Approximate \$ you guess you'll spend on skates/wheels/ bearings/protective pads in 1999:

\$0-50 24
\$50-100 13
\$100-200 10
\$200+ 7
N/A 2

Total Number ICB events attended in 1998:

0-5 44
5-10 6
10+ 6

ICB events attended in 1998 that had entry fee:

0-5 54
5-10 2
10+ 0

Please check the amount that best represents your feeling for what each of the following benefits of ICB membership are worth:

	Tshirt	Disc Rtl	Disc Evnt	N-let	Email	Web	Phone	BestClub	Spt Sk8ng	Tot Value
Count	49	49	49	49	49	49	49	49	49	49
Average:	6.33	6.48	5.87	4.39	3.47	3.27	1.99	13.11	10.97	55.87
Median:	5.00	5.00	5.00	2.50	2.50	-	-	15.00	10.00	60.00
Mode:	10.00	-	5.00	-	-	-	-	20.00	20.00	67.50
Distribution:										

0	11	14	7	14	24	25	35	8	9
2.5	3	3	9	14	7	6	4	2	5
5	12	10	15	10	9	10	3	4	4
7.5	4	3	2	2	1	2	3	1	3
10	14	13	14	6	6	4	3	4	6
12.5	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
15	4	1	1	1	0	0	0	6	2
20	0	4	1	2	2	2	1	24	19
Total:	49	49	49	49	49	49	49	49	49

Findings:

1. The M/F split at the event was almost even 29/27.
2. Two-thirds of the respondents say they will spend less than \$100 on skate gear in 1999.
3. Three-quarters of the respondents say they attended fewer than 5 ICB events last year.
4. The average total value people see in the *listed* ICB member benefits is \$56 (\$32 in hard benefits, \$24 in "soft" benefits).
5. The phone Hotline is the least valued of the stated benefits -- 35 of 49 respondents see it as worthless; however, 10 people (20%) think it is worth \$5/yr. or more.
6. Similarly, half of the respondents say the email list and web are worthless -- it may be that these are taken for granted.
7. There are strong dichotomies on the Tshirt value and on the retailer Discounts value -- 1/4 to 1/3 of the people see these as worthless at the same time that 1/3 see them as worth \$10 or more.
8. About half of the respondents say it's worth \$20 to belong to the best skate club; half say it's worth \$10 or more to support inline skating in Greater Boston.

Now, we can start to cut the data -- e.g., by member vs. non-member.

[This following data was not available at the time of the meeting.]

Member:

Y 23
N 33

Gender:	Members	Non-Members
M 29	M 12	M 17
F 27	F 11	F 16

Age:

	Total	Members	Non-Members
20-29	13	0	13
30-39	25	12	13
40-49	12	8	4
50-59	6	3	3

Approximate \$ you guess you'll spend on skates/wheels/ bearings/protective pads in 1999:

	Total	Members	Non-Members
\$0-50	24	5	19
\$50-100	13	7	6
\$100-200	10	7	3
\$200+	7	3	4
N/A	2	1	1

Total Number ICB events attended in 1998:

	Total	Members	Non-Members
0-5	44	12	32
5-10	6	5	1

Findings:

1. The M/F split was the same for members and non-members.
2. All 20-29 year olds that filled out surveys were non-members! Above 30 yrs, the numbers were more evenly matched.
3. About 2/3 of members plan to spend between \$50 and \$200 on skate gear in 1999; 2/3 of non-members plan to spend less than \$50. 20% of non-members, however, plan to spend more than \$100.
4. Members had attended more events than non-members. Only one non-member attended more than 5 events, Dave Brown (Skate Patrol).

Members:

	Tshirt	Disc Rtl	Disc Evnt	N-let	Email	Web	Phone	BestClub	Spt Sk8ng	Tot Value
Count	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23
Average:	7.28	7.17	5.54	6.20	4.89	4.57	2.07	16.30	11.85	65.87
Median:	7.50	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	-	20.00	12.50	67.50
Mode:	5.00	10.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	-	20.00	20.00	65.00
Distribution:										
0	3	6	3	2	7	7	15	1	4	
2.5	1	1	5	5	2	2	2	0	1	
5	7	5	7	8	8	9	2	3	3	
7.5	2	0	2	2	1	2	3	0	1	
10	7	7	5	4	4	2	1	1	2	
12.5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
15	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	2	1	
20	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	16	10	
Total:	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23

Non-Members: (7 did not complete any data in this section)

	Tshirt	Disc Rtl	Disc Evnt	N-let	Email	Web	Phone	BestClub	Spt Sk8ng	Tot Value
Count	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26
Average:	5.48	5.87	6.15	2.79	2.21	2.12	1.92	10.29	10.19	47.02
Median:	5.00	5.00	5.00	2.50	-	-	-	10.00	10.00	42.50
Mode:	-	-	10.00	-	-	-	-	20.00	20.00	7.50
Distribution:										
0	8	8	4	12	17	18	20	7	5	
2.5	2	2	4	9	5	4	2	2	4	
5	5	5	8	2	1	1	1	1	1	
7.5	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	
10	7	6	9	2	2	2	2	3	4	
12.5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
15	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	
20	0	2	1	1	1	1	1	8	9	
Total:	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26

Findings:

5. The average total value people see in the *listed* ICB member benefits is
 - \$66 for members (\$38 in hard benefits, \$28 in "soft" benefits).
 - \$47 for non-members (\$27 in hard benefits, \$20 in "soft" benefits).

6. Using rounded numbers, Members see each of the following benefits as worth \$5 or more: Tshirt, Discounts at Retailers, Discounts at Events, Newsletter, Email, Web. Non-Members value the Tshirt and the discounts, but not the communication.
7. Members see the newsletter as worth \$6 on average, non-members \$3.
8. Members see the email and web benefits together as worth about \$10; non-members see them worth less than \$5.
9. Members value belonging to the best club in New England at \$16, non-members only at \$10. However, both members and non-members think it's worth at least \$10 to support inline skating in Greater Boston!

FROM THESE FINDINGS, WHAT CONCLUSIONS WOULD YOU DRAW?

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Associate Member Idea:

Idea: Many non-members (at SkateJam!) seem to feel that \$25 is too much to pay annually for membership. [This idea was developed prior to the value survey discussed above.]

There are two clear strategic options (**IF we want these people to join**):

- A) Do a better job of selling non-members on the benefits of joining.
- B) Lower the cost threshold.

The Associate Member idea is aimed at option B.

Associate Members would be a new category of member that costs less than \$25 (perhaps \$15). It would include a membership card, and discounts at retailers and at events. Associate members would also (as does the general public currently) have access to our phone hotline, email list and web site. Associate Members would not be sent newsletters or a T-shirt.

Issue: Is the concept of Associate Membership inconsistent with our goal of a high-involvement membership? Does it "cheapen" membership?

Meeting Discussion: The group seemed to feel that this idea was a risk in that it could weaken current members' willingness to pay the full membership fee of \$25. It was also argued that peoples' opinions of the ICB and member benefits would be adversely impacted by this lower price. The natural extension of this argument was that, if we think there's so much value in the club, perhaps we should keep the price at \$25, but make the T-Shirt an optional, incremental \$10 cost. It was in the end voted to try other alternatives for increasing membership prior to trying this idea.

Other Ideas to Expand Membership:

Several other ideas were proposed as alternatives to the Associate Member idea:

1. Taking credit cards on the web.
2. Marketing towards more affluent skaters.
3. Using the "NPR" approach.
4. Marketing better by stressing the value of what we already offer. (Communicating our "Value Proposition").

In the short term, we agreed to test how well we could implement a combination of ideas 3 and 4 at the February SkateJam! We also agreed to a "special promotion" -- Non-members get free entry if they join that night. It was felt that this special offer would not have any adverse fallout from current members.

John Wardley had some recent experience with credit cards on the web that we should tap if we eventually move in that direction, but that is not a short-term goal.

February SkateJam!:

Our test for increasing membership will involve:

- Free entry to non-members who join (and the 4 who joined on 1/16/99)
- Bold depiction of benefits and fun -- posters, blown up photos -- on tables positioned *prior* to table at which one pays. (PR and ICB Table Teams to create displays).
- Tshirts available on the spot. (Joyce to bring)
- Membership cards available on the spot. (TK printer and laptop? New member gets card at end of evening. Other ideas?) (Amy bring cards and laminating machine and pouches).

Sponsorship:

Tom noted that Blades is interested in a major "package" arrangement involving newsletter ads, web-site ads, event sponsorship, etc. Ran out of time to discuss -- deferred until next meeting.

ICB PR:

Jon S. noted that he had a strong, well-qualified list of media contacts, and asked the group to consider what larger event could be used to draw media attention to skating. This "hook" event would then be an "entree" to coverage of the ICB, and would preferably be in the Spring. Memorial Drive opening, and the ICB table and safety clinics was mentioned as a possibility. (Note the article from the Globe from Sunday Sept. 27th, 1998).

Other ideas? We also briefly discussed creating an ICB video, based on accumulated footage, including A2A, Matzger Workshop, SportsChannel, On Your Left Press Conference, Inline Against AIDS coverage, etc. Jon S. to follow up; Jen Staller took a class in video production at school.

Another idea was to approach other area Roller rinks for joint marketing initiatives. There are rinks in Hudson, Milford, Tyngsboro, and Saugus.

-----Original Message-----

From: Sandy Tavilla [SMTP:sandy@ties.org]
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 1999 5:41 PM
To: Tom Keane; Jzskates@mediaone.net; smix@bu.edu
Subject: Re: Minutes of ICB Planning mtng Jan 17

>Findings:

>Non-Members value the Tshirt and the discounts, but not the communication.

>8. Members see the email and web benefits together as worth about \$10;

>non-members see them worth less than \$5.

>FROM THESE FINDINGS, WHAT CONCLUSIONS WOULD YOU DRAW?

Well, strictly from the findings, one might be a bit disheartened. But on the other hand, I am quite sure that, at every single ICB event I attended this past season, at least one non-member said they found out about the event from the website calendar. This fall, we put an event on the calendar 36 hrs before the event took place (a last minute Sat. Morning on the Minuteman), and we had 2 people show up who saw the website listing.

And, staffing the hotline this past year, without keeping track, I'm sure I sent out 40-50 membership/info packets (at *least* that...I'll try and keep track this yr) and returned twice that number of calls. The value of having a central phone number that can be listed when listing events is quite evident after manning that line for the past x many months. Until EVERYone has the web and/or email (and many people I returned calls to still didn't), I think the phone line has value, even if not for the survey respondents.

I dunno about that Bearing rag though.....kidding!!! Only kidding!! :)

Miz T.

Ah! Sandy with your comments I realize that without the benefit of being at the meeting, the numbers may seem cold.

We at the meeting talked about value to us vs. what people are willing to pay for. They are two quite different things, and we are all agreed.

What that could mean is that we need to support the phone line and web site with ads, rather than member dues! And keep the member dues headed toward stuff people are used to paying for.. like T shirts and discounts.

tom

p.s. we'll come back to this next mtng.. there's a lot of value to these discussions -- they make us think in a bigger picture about how "non-believers" perceive ICB membership.

Not to mention, the universal thinking about the Web is that everything on it *should* be free... after all, if I don't have to pay for a totally cool site like Yahoo, why should I have to pay anything for the ICB site?

I think the fact that members actually value email/web to the tune of \$10 is actually encouraging...

my .0002,
susan