

MACC – MICHIGAN ALPINE COMPETITION COUNCIL – CALL-IN MEETING 11-4-2024

Minutes of the meeting:

Drew Hilger called the meeting to order at 8:32 PM.

Attendance – Officers:

Drew Hilger – P	Shawn Hughes – P	Ginnie Uhley – A	Mike Hietbrink – A	Ryan Bloodworth – P
Kurt Adams – A	Jenessa Hilger – A	Mike Sayers – P	Nick Carrico – A	Dave Carrico – P
Grace Kerbrat – P	Bill Perlmutter – A	Dennis Parrott – P	Zach Jablonski – A	Alex Carrico – A
Chuck White – P				

Attendance – Team Racer Representatives:

Alan Osterdale AA – A	Gary Konsza SD – A	Chip Dayton SW – P	Gary Bloodworth SN – A	
Rick Van Houdt TR – P	Mike Jablonski TB – A	Sue Holmes RN – A	Denise Miller TR – A	Kathy Bauer TR – A

Old Business – Survey Results

Dennis – Before we start the meeting, Alfred reached out to let Dennis know that Foster Butler passed away over the weekend. Very sad, very sudden, still aren't sure of the cause, but think it was likely a heart attack. No details for any funeral arrangements but he will pass along that info when he gets it. Drew – Once that information is made public, we should send it out in a newsletter.

Drew – We are going to talk about making some changes to our class structure, but we won't be voting tonight. We will vote at our meeting on the 19th. Chuck – Two different proposals based on our previous meeting. Both proposals would include changes to the class naming structure, probably numbers. Racers would also no longer be able to self-bump, but they could downgrade if their handicap drops below the first quartile of the next lower class.

Proposal 1 would be to have handicap ranges that are fixed for each class. Starting from 0-8, then getting slightly bigger with each class. Second class 8-18, third would be 18-30, etc. Both women's and men's classes would have the same handicap range. The age for vet classes would be changed to 55 and older. Super vet classes would be removed. Minimum numbers would be required to have a vet class. To qualify for a vet class, a class would be required to have at least 12 racers and there would need to be at least 3 racers in each subclass after split. Racer inclusion in a vet class would not be voluntary, all 55+ racers would be put in vet.

If we apply the rules from this proposal to the registration data from 2023, we would have had 2 vet men's classes, and all other classes wouldn't have had a vet class. This would have made most class sizes 3-6 people, with some classes being larger. Using the 2024 registration data, the numbers would look similar, there would have been 2 vet classes. Most classes would have had 3-6 people. There would have been a couple of classes with 10 people, the largest class would have had 11 people.

Proposal 2 would be to set handicap ranges at the beginning of each season with the objective to balance class sizes. We would still want to keep reasonable handicap ranges in order to maintain competitiveness. The handicap ranges for men and women would be determined separately. Also, vet and super vet classes would be removed. Drew – If we adopt these, we will have to send out a roster to let people know what class they are in, who else is in their class, the handicap range of their class, etc.

If we apply the proposal 2 numbers to the registration data from 2023, all men's classes would have 8-9 people, until you get to the last couple of classes which would be 11 racers and 4 racers. The women's classes would all have 4-5 people. Using the 2024 numbers, men's classes would all have 6-9 racers, with 4 racers in the last class. Women's classes are mostly 3-4 racers, with one class having 6 racers.

There are also a couple of other changes we could make. One possible change would be to allow men and women to be combined into a single class when we don't have enough racers of a single sex in a certain handicap range. Another option would be to have age-based subclasses without a specific age cutoff, to split the numbers evenly over a handicap range with a lot of racers.

Mike Sayers – In order to do this, we will want something we can maintain over multiple years without a ton of work. Fixed handicap ranges are stable and easy, having variable ranges is harder when turnout isn't consistent. Drew – One of the benefits

to proposal 2 is that everyone is automatically assigned to a class. If we can put people in the right class, they might have more fun.

Grace – How did you determine the minimum class size before making a vet class? Chuck – Used a model to plug numbers into, so having 12 racers total and 3 in each class after splitting made the most sense with the numbers we have had in the past. Also, based roughly on the values from the survey results, where people said 8-10 was ideal and 12 was getting into the range of being too big. Grace – People might like to keep the class names the same, since they have earned their spots over time. Drew – Part of the reason for renaming the classes is that it simplifies things for new racers.

Dennis – I've been around forever and don't really care about the label of the class. Do worry about people being angry about the vet classes going away. Especially some of the women. Sayers – Looking at the survey, most women want to restructure the classes. Drew – We can't control people aging out, but we have also lost racers due to classes being too small. Ryan – We definitely need to balance the numbers to make the classes similar in sizes. Never understand why age needs to be a factor in class structures. A 30 handicap is a 30 handicap, whether you are 16 or 60. Also, there are racers like my sister that have essentially raced against themselves for the last 5 years, which isn't fun for anyone. It's hard to recruit new racers when it is very likely they will be racing in a class of one or two people.

Drew – I think the way we have evolved and added classes was largely based on listening to some small subgroups. Doing the survey helped us get a big picture overview of what racers might want. We should take a straw poll vote to see what the general feel is for each proposal. We have about 6 people in favor of proposal 1. We have 2 people that would prefer proposal 2.

Drew – Recommend that we vote to adopt proposal 1 in our next meeting. We should talk to our racers and see if we would lose any racers if we made these changes. Grace – If we are looking for that type of feedback and we are open to suggestions, would we be willing to share some info with the racers. Maybe not with specific numbers, but general ideas of what we are looking to change. Drew – We want to find the balance between simplicity and optimization. Sayers – We can always approve proposal 1 and then refine it in the future.

Rick – Afraid you might start losing some of the older racers if we remove the vet/super vet classes. As you get older, snow conditions and other factors tend to have more of an effect. Could there be a way to tweak handicap ranges to account for age? Drew – Handicap is calculated off the average of your races. So, if conditions are bad, younger races might have an advantage for that race. But under ideal conditions, the older racer might have the advantage. Handicaps are just math. Ryan – Typically, younger racers against older racers tends to happen the most in B/C, and typically the younger races move on quite quickly if they really are more skilled than the older racers.

Dennis – Ryan is right about something. Often times, people get dropped into B/C and then they get bumped up quickly. Typically, older racers have more stable handicaps, while younger racers tend to improve more. Chuck – That's why we have upgrades. Dennis – You are right, but they do screw up the points.

Grace – For new racers on the first weekend, what if we didn't assign them a class initially. For the first course of the day, we could have someone go over the rules with all the new racers, then have all the new racers race on course 2. Drew – I'm a big fan of treating our new racers and our guest racers as royalty. We could actually have them race both course 1 and 2. Another thing we could do is try to map Nastar handicaps to our system, in order to better assign them a class. Ryan – Fully support that, as it's pretty difficult to put new racers on the right course. Having them run both courses would simplify that. Sayers – Could do that for Boyne Nastar handicaps, but probably not national Nastar handicaps.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 PM. Next meeting will be Tuesday, November 19th at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Ryan Bloodworth, Secretary.