

APBA OFFSHORE ANNUAL MEETING DAY 2
01/24/2020

CALL TO ORDER 09:14AM PST

ROLL CALL

JIM SIMMONS – Simmons Marine
LARRY BLIEL - RWO
RICH DANSION - RWO
ROGER CONLEY - RWO
STEVE CURTIS- OTA – Class One, Super Cat and SSTK
RICH LUHR- APBA Offshore Commissioner
MICHELLE PETRO – P1
MARTIN RABY – P1
ED “SMITTY” SMITH - OPA
NICK SMITH - OPA
STUART HALLEY – Mercury
RICK FELSEN – Insurance
CHRIS FAIRCHILD (IN AND OUT OF THE MEETING) – APBA Chair

KEYNOTE – LUHRS – Basic history on Offshore. Clubs and weakened sport due to many clubs splintering. The only way forward is unity. There are 2 constituencies – racers and promoters.

Present OPA, represents a large group of racers

P1, represents a marketing group and our own racers

OTA represents Class One, Super Cats and Superstock
and RWO who represents venues mainly Key West.

APBA is 100 years old and was established prior to the UIM

CHRIS – UIM WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP – APBA - The standard rule is application needs to be sent in 18 months ahead. APBA has been given the opportunity to sometimes bend the rules. Discussion for 2020 needs to happen now. Chris’ opinion is that UIM does not want to play nice so we should have an APBA World Championship. Not sure that can be pulled off for 2020 but 2021 would be the solid target date for awarding a UIM World championship.

ISSUES ON THE TABLE - Larry – Would like to talk about schedules and venues.

Steve – Teams want a good championship, venues and be able to bring sponsorships in. We want an organized APBA Championship.

MICHELLE – P1 wants to just bring the sport together. We have proven that we can work and are willing to work with other sanctioning bodies for the good of the sport. Example RWO and P1 came together to work on Sarasota but RWO withdrew. Now we are working with OPA.

SMITTY - There is a long way to go. 2 years ago, Smitty called Azam and asked how OPA can get into Sarasota. The two entities came together, and we work. OPA has been around for a long time. P1 has been around a long time. The issue came up when Clearwater was added to the APBA schedule midseason. Competition is good. Mentioned that P1 and OPA approached RWO to assist with Key West but the plans changed, and it didn’t happen. Smitty was willing to add Dunkirk on his schedule if it had worked out. The only way can build strong events is to go where the money goes. Paying venues.

LUHRS - Poker Runs – have grown because the offshore was weakened.

Generational change – Younger people have a lot of other things to interest them – Gaming etc. There are no back stories for the racers needed to grow fan base. Need to push the race teams to do this. OPA and RWO needs to take a back seat to the racers.

RWO seems to want to be its own sanctioning body. If the goal of RWO is to piggyback off APBA and then become its own body like SBI did. Luhrs can not support that.

Larry said that RWO is not going to branch off.

We need to have a single rulebook that we go to. Not an OPA or APBA rulebook, one rulebook.

SMITTY– the Rulebook has been merged into one.

LARRY – Too many classes and too many races in one day. The main attraction is the big boats. The smaller boats need to go elsewhere and race regional events.

SMITTY – disagreed. 70% of the boats in our events are bracket classes. If promoters go canopy boat only what happens when they drop off there will be nothing left of the event. The bracket boats are feeder classes and we need them. It is possible we can race 5 races in one day. We have done it this past season.

DANSION – Inspections - how can you inspect 75 boats in a short time, it is not possible.

SMITTY – we have pre-teched the boats before events. – Dynos etc.

Deviation from discussion –

NICK – The small boats guys have feelings the big boats guys have egos. All the smaller boat guys want to grow into the bigger boat teams. For example – Pit space. The big boats have the best spots and the small boat guys are put in the field across the street. They do not want to be in the smaller pits out of the way.

DANSION – what if they run on Sat

LUHRS – the small boats need to be included and the offshore events.

SMITTY – Cocoa Beach will have smaller boats race on Sat with AquaX. Smaller boats are ok with Sat.

CURTIS – Big boats are going for big sponsors which changes the dynamic of the event as the big sponsors will have demands. Such as racing times. Events need to be consistent. Consistent race times. It is important the events are prestigious events.

LUHRS – The right for a class to exist. There should be a minimum number of boats for a class to exist. 1 or 2 boats does not make a class. UIM is putting pressure on us to have a minimum number of boats in one class for a world championship.

LUHRS- Last year's dynamic in the middle of the season Clearwater popped up. What is the vision of RWO?

LARRY – We got Key West which is the top race site in world. I see RWO as a professional organization. We tried to work with Smitty and that went sideways. We have some good race sites. Orange Beach, AL. Dunkirk is a different animal. It needs the bracket classes.

DANSION – Our race sites have money – Dunkirk has money, it has a grant from NY.

LARRY – Smitty seems that you just bring the fleet but not the groundwork to put on the events. I have quit my construction job for this. I do all the work. Key West cannot support 75 boats. 40 maybe.

SMITTY – I do Englewood for the guys who could not afford to race Key West.

LARRY – We need to look at the sites we have and decide what sites are best for what class.

SMITTY – Teams will go where they want to go. You can not tell teams where to go. Billy Mauf will not go where he is told to go.

LARRY – How can we tell who is going where. APBA needs to help

CURTIS – APBA is there to look after its members. Race teams look at sanctioning bodies as a service provider to teams to race. Teams do not want to be told where to go. They do not want to go to a site

that is in the middle of nowhere. We should be talking about 2021 now not 2020. The organization needs to get the “stuff” together. P1 OPA Schedule for 2020 was out in November 2019. Racing is our livelihood for some of us.

LUHRS- How do we take these good intentions and turn them into something that we can count on.

LARRY – we need to get Smitty, Azam and myself in a room for discussion. My goal is to make racing popular. We are all working on one common goal.

DANSION – We cannot review each other as a threat.

NICK – Everyone is close to the chest with everything.

LUHRS – I can see there is an intent to do the right thing. Key West not being able to support 100+ boats is there long-term viability can it sustain a WC.

LARRY -probably 60-65 boats can be accommodated in Key west.

LUHRS – what about hotels, are there enough rooms for heads in beds –

LARRY – Yes there are 4 resorts that were down which is why there was a capacity problem in 2019

I needed 38 rooms for staff. He got them all donated. He would like to give each team a room for 2020

Can the 6 round series add more rounds

CURTIS – At the moment, the big boat teams want 6 rounds only.

SMITTY – There is room to talk to add another. When Azam is back let’s talk.

DANSION – We are not making head way. If we can not have an additional race for the 6-round series, there is no point in continuing.

Are the rumors about the venue’s financial instability true?

MICHELLE – What rumors have you heard.

SMITTY – All contracts have been signed and deposits are in.

DANSION – If a venue drops out can we add one.

NICK - We need Azam here for that conversation.

LARRY – When does Azam come back

MARTIN – February

SMITTY – I apologized for Dunkirk, but that event was bad and made us all look bad. I suggest moving the event dates because it clashes. There are so many races. Some teams have asked for a North East division which includes Dunkirk. There are 14 new teams coming this year. It doesn’t help to gloat over someone else’s failure. The bigger boats have picked their races so the smaller boats should be able to go to Dunkirk. Bracket boats tend to race in their area.

SMITTY – We can work together on Dunkirk site. P1 and OPA work together but I would not decide without Azam.

BREAK: 10:50 AM

RECONVENE: 11:00AM

Meeting with Azam Feb 7th Location GEICO location.

STUART – Since I have been involved mercury, business is mostly local retail. – Mercury wants to be a part of a professional series. We all need each other. I have always heard that offshore is fragmented but I think that now is a good time to decide on 2021. How many races will be involved in 2021?

Mercury is here to help. We are a supplier, but I am passionate about offshore racing.

LUHRS – Rules.

The commitment made to the referees is that this will be sent out asap.

We all need to review each other’s rules. We will revisit on Feb 7th for the finalization of rules.

CURTIS - Super Cat has no technical rule changes. motors, drives, headers and fuel. Class one will be submitting as soon as gone through UIM

SMITTY – class name changes Vee Extreme -VX, Stock V and Modified V. There are some technical changes which will be implemented over time.

Superstocks – Need to pick up weight limit 250lbs. Skater is building 2 new SSTK but needs weight increase in order to put a legitimate canopy on the boat.

LUHRS Some boats are going to race the 300R

HALLEY - The 300R outperforms the 300xs by about 25hp

LARRY - has told a racer not allowed to race the 300R

DANSION is the length of the boat the same

SMITTY – yes.

LARRY – I vote to not allow 300R this season.

NICK - What is the difference in torque

HALLEY - will provide when possible

SMITTY – to Roger with Data logger – how do you get around the wiring. Vecce has a system that includes video. We would like to transmit the data to live stream. Current system option is too expensive.

ROGER – The wire must be accessible.

HALLEY – adjust the crack position sensor

ROGER – that would not matter. I have a different proposal. The dials are inaccurate. Builders asked why we are not using 626? which was designed for racing. They used highest quality dials. Would propose to use the new boxes. It is cheaper and better for the sport.

CURTIS – will it read the spike or the electronics.

ROGER – Electronics.

LUHRS – Points.

Double points for the 6 rounds.

SMITTY – it would mess up the racers for the hall of champions. Some of the smaller racers do not go to all the 6 rounds and so it would mess up the HOC

LUHRS – If an event comes up after March 1st it can not be a points round.

CURTIS - 2021 series needs to be released by Nov 2020

LUHRS - 2021 we will have a UIM championship which will be cast in stone

LUHRS – Sponsor and marketing

Michelle – We are on the verge of signing with some major companies. NBC Sports for Class One.

Discussions continuing with FOX sports and CBS. We are getting the information we need to present to the companies. We have quality TV and Live feed. Character and back stories need to be developed but race teams also must help and promote themselves. We have TV crews and newspapers call us for interviews on event so we direct them to the racers who are positive and who will promote the sport. Appearance is important. Race suits preferred over board shorts and flip flops.

Final comments – Commitment in Feb meeting.

DANSION – Class one page 51. Who was the UIM tech commissioner present?

CURTIS – Jean Marie Van Lancker was the UIM representative who attended the series.

DANSION - Class names – Unlimited has no rules. Do they require a canopy?

SMITTY – anyone over class 2 needs a canopy

CURTIS – Class one will not have an unlimited boat race with Class One.

SMITTY – does not want to overshadow class one. The goal is to build class one.

DANSION – Where are the unlimited racing.

CURTIS – We had an agreement with Alex and Ani and allowed to race. Detune engines. Etc.

DANSION – Where does Lucas fit.

LUHRS – We do not want to dilute Class one or any other class.

SMITTY - it will take time.

LUHRS – we need to nail down the classes

CURTIS – these boats can go into the bracket classes.

LUHRS – Bracket rules will come from Smitty. Rule books will consolidate and need to be cleaned up because of contradictory rules.

SMITTY – the rules are written by the classes. The classes vote on it.

LUHRS – Shawn Serenty do we allow or not.

LARRY – No

SAFETY DEMANDS – from “extreme Class owners” group.

Sea Tow – sent Larry a \$4200 bill for the 3 crashes in Key West. It is important to resolve the salvage fees.

DANSION - \$35,000 paid for David Harshfield’s team and travel.

LUHRS – Reaction time is important.

CURTIS – Helicopters are do not help

LUHRS - will look into the liability and will put together a minimum standard. Response times is the main issue.

SMITTY – the issue is volunteer boats could leave if the water is too rough.

DANSION – Race stoppage. When would you restart the race? Ballough had a bad restart after being way in the lead.

SMITTY – if there a boat over it would depend on the situation if the race is restarted.

CURTIS - Class one does a single file start and it works.

DANSION – Agrees

SMITTY – disagree need to line up. Described the Sarasota event Geico and Victory situation.

NICK – Immediate red flag with a wet racer situation.

CURTIS - per rules if 70% of the race is over the race is not restarted

LARRY – Key west a restart should not have happened.

Suggestion - Red light on dashboard on each boat which will go on if there is a red flag situation.

DANSION – Social media – we need to quell the social media disparaging.

Michelle – AquaX rule in place to prevent disparaging remarks on social media. Penalized for disparaging the sport. There is a protocol that the rider needs to follow to resolve the issue.

LUHRS – contact in the turns. Needs to be addressed rubbing is racing comments is not the correct nature of the racing.

SMITTY – Pole boat sits off the pace boat.

LUHRS– holding lanes and penalties.

CURTIS – We all know who the offenders are.

LUHRS – That’s the point. These guys are not penalized so they will continue that behavior.

FELSEN – Which rule book are we running under.

SMITTY – I have my own insurance because it does not have an aggregate.

FELSEN – The rule book needs to be identical. APBA has a per event aggregate. K and K has an unlimited aggregate.

SIMMONS – The club states can change the rules. One year, a mid-season rule change took the rest of the class by surprise. They found out on Speed on the water.

SMITTY – if there is a need for a parity adjustment, there can be a change. Sometimes there are some event specific rules that need to be stated in the drivers briefing.

CURTIS – Bulletins need to be posted.

SMITTY – example missing a buoy cannot pick up was not updated on the rule book by mistake.

DANSION – weight rules

LUHRS – great steps have been taken. There are some things that are set that needs to be left. 6 round series for example. Will be at the meeting in Florida. Thank you

LUHRS - Meeting adjourned 01:13PM PST.