

Draft Minutes - Subject to approval at May Committee Meeting

**AUSTRALIAN FLYBALL ASSOCIATION - MINUTES OF MEETING HELD
ON 7th APRIL 2008 BY TELEPHONE HOOKUP.**

Present: Glenn Pritchard, Leoney Pritchard, Jenny Millar, Terry Hunter, Dot Baverstock, Brian Lindsay, Eric van Zuyden, Lyn Clyde, Rosie Milton, Richard Mellon, Amy Holmes, Pat Byrne, and Justin Allen

Apologies: Clare Ellis, Catherine Saberton and Kylie White

Meeting Opened at 7.30 pm.

ITEM - "Starred" Items.

The following Items were 'starred' for adoption without discussion:

- 1) Minutes of Meeting of 3^d March 2008**
- 2) Correspondence; (Schedule of all correspondence in and out)**
- 3) Treasurers Report**
- 4) 7 Accounts for Payment totaling \$774.96**
- 5) Sanctioned Events as per list below**
- 6) Membership renewals**

Moved and Seconded that the above Agenda Items be adopted. CARRIED

ITEM - Sanctioned Events

Following Events Approved:

**Competition –CDC– 18 May 08 – Million Paws Walk Cwlth. Park Canberra
Competition –K-9 Crusaders – 5th October 2008 Boorowa Irish Woolfest
Demo – Albury/Wodonga – 6th April Willow Park Wodonga
Demo – Pine Rivers – 19 and 20th July – Farm Fantastic Pumicestone Rd
Caboolture**

ITEM _ New Members

Following new Members admitted:

**Sandra Lawrence, Michelle Timperley, Katrina Collins, Lyn Walsh, Daniel Geltch,
Aaron Gardner, Elise Murphy, Sarah Plant.**

ITEM - Administrative Matters.

Treasurer reported she had set up and tested two email groups with approx. half AFA Membership in each to keep Groups to manageable size. Test had been successful. Agreed that Treasurer should send out email reminders for membership renewals and also Club Affiliations in early May.

- **Stewards and Timekeepers Exams.** Rosie reported that the following members had passed Stewards Exam – Sue Norton, Richard Mellon, Les Scott, Karen Shields, Eric van Zuyden, Michelle Lewer and that Karen Shields had also passed Timekeeper Exam. Webmaster to add names to list.
- **Rule Book print problem.** Printer had agreed to reprint incorrect copies and to make minor text amendments free of charge.
- **Membership Cards.** Treasurer had confirmed quote of \$1760 plus GST for 1000 Cards and sought approval to order with existing logo on reverse side. Cards needed by May for renewals. Agreed to approve order of cards at cost of \$1760 + GST.
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ITEM - Matters arising from AGM discussions.

- **Dog measuring Sub Committee Report update** - Report had been placed on Web and members requested to comment. At this time no member comments or re-actions had been received.
- **Noted that Committee would need to consider what action/recommendation it should consider putting to next AGM.** Leoney pointed out that NAFA were now due to consider the amendment of Jump measure heights to 5 inches below shoulder and perhaps AFA should hold off any recommendation till outcome of NAFA decision is known.
- **Eric raised matter of AFA purchase of U.S. measuring wicket, which had been approved at last meeting.** Leoney reported that advice had been received that the proposed new wicket was not available but that the current NAFA wicket was available to purchase at about same price. Agreed AFA should acquire one wicket as used by NAFA to test. President requested to order wicket.
- **Engraving of equipment – arrangements discussed for Terry to access Victorian Signature lights before Albury comp and engrave.** Once done this would become the model for other engraving. Agreed that objective was to have all sets engraved before AGM.

ITEM - General Business

a) Report from Dog incidents Sub Committee.

Rosie advised that there had been no aggression incidents requiring investigation in the period since the last meeting. Noted.

b) AFA Logo update. Treasurer advised that suggestions for a new Logo had been referred to a Graphic Designer who was a Member of Norwest Club for input. Given the decision to order Membership Cards with existing Logo matter was not pressing.

c) Report on Nationals observations offered by the visiting US Judges. The two visiting NAFA Judges had provided a number of comments on their observations at the National Championships. The Committee noted the summary of these inputs prepared by the President. There were 25 areas of comment ranging from suggestions to improve consistency of Judge's signals, ways to speed up time between races, ring layout, measuring of dogs. Whilst the Committee noted that quite a few of the comments were helpful they needed to be considered from viewpoint of actual implementation. Following general discussion **AGREED** that a Sub Committee should be formed to consider the list and how best to proceed to implement some of the more helpful comments. Sub Committee Members – Rosie, Glenn, Eric, Richard and Brian.

d) Sydney Royal – Issues requiring Committee consideration. The Committee noted that two matters had arisen at the Sydney Royal Competition that required clarification of interpretation of Rules.

The first matter involved the decision by the Judge to disqualify the Southern Cross Comets team from the Competition when the team failed to run all 4 dogs in a heat late in the days racing.

An incident had occurred during the race where one member of the team (third handler) had fallen and the fourth handler decided not to release her dog given the circumstances. The Judge interpreted this to be a “forfeit without just cause” and accordingly decided to excuse the Team from the competition under Rule 7(c). The Team had protested this decision on the day indicating that the dog had not been released on safety grounds (concern for fallen handler and her dog). The AFA Representative indicated he had made decision to support the Judges ruling.

The Comets Team Captain had submitted a written protest over what was seen as a draconian penalty for simply not running all 4 dogs. The Protest expressed the view that the AFA Rules were silent on any penalty for failing to run all 4 dogs and that there was no reference anywhere in rules to disqualification for failure to run a dog. The Committee also noted it had received 9 Witness Statements (from the

Judge, the AFA Rep, a line steward, the Comets Boxloader, members of the Comets Team and Members of other teams.

The President advised that he had also been provided with a Video of the race, which showed the incident.

The Committee noted that both the Chief Instructor and Secretary reported that they had carefully reviewed the AFA Rules and could find no wording that covered any penalty for the non release of a dog. The Committee noted and accepted the view that the question of whether the decision not to release the dog was as a result of safety concerns was irrelevant. The Rules were silent irrespective of the motivation for not running the dog. Statements offering comments on whether in this case it was or was not a safety issue were accordingly put to one side.

Consideration was given to Rule 7 (c) and it was noted that this Rule was under the Section heading “ Reporting for Races” and the wording supported the view that the Rule related to teams reporting for a race and indicating that they wished to forfeit for a specified reason. Rule 7 (c) was not seen as relevant to circumstances that arose during a heat. The Committee accepted that nowhere in the Rules was their any reference to disqualifying a team for failure to run all 4 dogs or finish a heat.

The Chief Instructor observed that in her opinion where a team did not run all 4 dogs the correct interpretation was that the Team “ did not finish’ and that they should simply loose the heat. All members of the Committee supported this view.

In considering the Comets protest the Committee concluded that it could not reverse a decision already made by officials on the day but that it could recommend that in future the correct interpretation of this situation was to award a DNF to the team which failed to run all 4 dogs – irrespective of the reason.

The Committee also asked that this decision be relayed in writing to the Judge who made the disqualification interpretation and that the clarification be then posted to the Judges list .

The Committee also noted that there had been a need for another interpretation of the Rules at Sydney Royal with respect to the treatment of competition points for teams racing a team that had broken out. Issue was whether teams competing against the breakout team should be awarded competition points in the round robin.

Rosie indicated that the Breakout Policy (one of the on trial policies) stated that no team in the Division racing the breakout team should get competition points. In effect this meant that from a Division viewpoint the breakout team simply did not exist (i.e. it was treated as if it had been in incorrect Division and no team racing against it got competition points).

Several other members of the Committee expressed strong disagreement with this Rule. Two alternatives were put forward – all teams racing the breakout team should gain competition points for wins or ties OR competitions points won by teams racing the breakout team before the 3rd breakout should stand. The latter

interpretation was not strongly supported as it was seen as potentially inequitable depending where in the round robin the 3rd breakout occurred. Given the fact that disagreement was obvious the Chairman asked the Committee to vote on the following motion “ That where a team breaks out and is eliminated from a round robin competition all teams racing the breakout team (before and after the breakout) will be awarded competition points for wins or ties against the breakout team. Voting - 8 for the motion, 5 against. Motion APPROVED.

Noted that this will require an amendment to Break out Policy on trial.

e) Application for Reinstatement – Sprocketee CRN 752A

The Committee noted the application for reinstatement of Sprocketee following the conclusion of a 12 month suspension period for aggression at Canberra Royal in 2007. The application was supported by Statements submitted by both the Belconnen Bullets Club Coach and the Clubs Senior Obedience and Agility Instructor. Both outlined the remedial training that had been undertaken by Sprocketee in Obedience, Agility and Flyball. The statements indicated Sprocketee had been back in flyball team training within the Club for approx 6 months without any incident or sign of aggression. The Club Instructors supported the request for reinstatement.

The Committee, following discussion, AGREED that Sprocketee's suspension should be provisionally lifted to allow the dog to demonstrate in a Competition environment that it had been suitably retrained. Belconnen Club to be asked to advise AFA Secretary of Sprocketees first competition and AFA would appoint a observer to watch and report on Sprocketee behavior. Subject to a satisfactory report Sprocketee would then be permanently cleared to return to racing. Secretary to advise member and Club of decision.

f) Clarification of Rules

The Committee noted a number of identified areas of the Rules that seemed to need clarification. Following discussion the following Rule areas produced general agreement regarding interpretation:

- 1) Arena Set up - Centre line should be marked by either solid or broken paint line from box to end of arena and Not left as an imaginary line. Rosie to inform all Judges.
- 2) In Champion Trophy format there should be No false starts – where early start the dog is required to rerun; Light system sound system should be turned off so both teams had same start format (no sound); and Rules should require Team Captains to be requested to check Round Robin points and AFA Representative to confirm before start of Elimination format. (Secretary to ask Kylie to add these decisions to Champion Trophy Format and then Webmaster to post to Web.

The following areas of the Rules were referred to the newly established Sub Committee for discussion and report back to Committee:

- Treatment of title points and competition points in a combined Division format.
- Requirement for competition organisers to submit for approval the basis for deciding tied Divisional results and development of standard wording for alternatives.
- Wording of Guideline B4 where it refers to use of “weighted average – best two out of three races”
- Forfeit Rules (including consideration of Paper submitted by Secretary).
- Development of Rules for handicap racing format.
- Amendments identified by Judge Sue North and submitted to Rosie.

ITEM - Other Business

a) 2010 National Championship Host Club

The Committee noted the bid submitted by Berwick Flyball to host the 2010 Championships in Melbourne as part of Dandanong Show on 13th and 14th November 2010. The Berwick Bid was seen as covering all requirements and accordingly was approved by the Committee. Secretary to so notify Berwick and extend congratulations. Leoney advised the Committee there was a draft check list prepared by kylie re things to be considered when bidding for a National Championship. List to be circulated to Committee for review at next Meeting.

b) ANKC Sub Committee report

Sub Committee had meet however report had yet to be circulated to full Committee. Agreed president would circulate and report would be dealt with at next Meeting.

c) Ringwood Competition

Eric extended thanks to Lyn Clyde for attending and stewarding. Also congratulations to Tassie Flying Paws for attendance at their first competition.

d) Flying Times

Justin advised close of date for next Flying times was 20th April. President enquired as to what had happened to the February Flying Times as it was still to be issued. Justin to follow up with Clare.

e) Possible new Clubs in Queensland

Amy reported that there was interest in forming Clubs/Teams in Bundaberg and Townsville.

f) Judges Accreditation

Rosie advised that Sue Norton had completed her Level 1 accreditation at Nationals and that Rosie was now recommending Sue for advancement to Level 1 status. Committee endorsed decision. Rosie would advise Secretary of several comments that she would like included in the advice letter to Sue.

g) Web Redesign update

Leoney reported that she had now been in touch with the Web Designer and he had started the limited work for phase one of the redevelopment of the web.

h) Milton Ulladulla Club - Link to AFA site.

Rosie indicated that the new Milton/Ulladulla Club would like approval to establish a link to the AFA Web site. AGREED.

Next Meeting scheduled for 7.30 pm Monday 5th May

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.05 pm

Signed as a true record

President.