

## **Draft Minutes – Subject to final approval at May 2010 Meeting**

### **Australian Flyball Association Inc. – Minutes of Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2010.**

Present: Ian Kendt, Brian Lindsay, Pat Byrne Leoney Pritchard, Jenny Millar, Eric van Zuyden, Lyn Clyde, Richard Mellon, Josh Ellen, Joanne Parkes, and Wayne Stoop.

Apologies Catherine Saberton, Kylie White, Ilona Van Gallen, Maureen Williamson and Penny Lloyd.

Meeting Opened at 7.43 pm.

#### **ITEM - Starred Items.**

The following Items were adoption without discussion:

- 1) Renewal of Membership (as per Treasurers Report)
- 2) Change of Clubs –Rosemary Lane CRN 2146 with Charlie (2146A) –requested approval to defer transfer to new Club Fast and Furious until Club ready to enter first competition. Approval granted.
- 3) Accounts for payment.

Moved and Seconded that starred Items be adopted CARRIED.

#### **ITEM – Check of Action Sheet for Outstanding Matters.**

The Committee noted there was no outstanding matter requiring action from earlier Meetings.

#### **ITEM – Treasurers Report**

**Committee noted bank balance as at end March of \$24,122.78, which included refund of Lights payment.**

#### **ITEM – Correspondence**

##### **OUT:**

- i) The Committee noted the letter of thanks sent to the past President.
- ii) The Committee noted the letter sent to member (CRN 1285) re his dogs need for reassessment prior to returning to AFA events.
- iii) The Committee noted the email sent to ANKC re the AFA / ANKC Agreement.

**IN:**

- i) Letters from Karen Bland and Ron Richardson re measuring and Height card Rules. (Matter dealt with under separate Agenda Items).
- ii) Email from Bellarine explaining circumstances leading to inclusion in Competition Draw of a team that had not entered the competition – (matter dealt with under General Business.)

**ITEM – Sanctioned Events.**

Demo – Qld. Clubs – Thursday 15th April - Channel 10 News – RSPCA Fairfield Qld.

Training Day/Demo – Norwest Thunderdogs – 21<sup>st</sup> April – Castle Hill Showground – (Dr.Harry T.V. Segment).

Demo – Tassie Flying Paws- 16<sup>th</sup> May – Million Paws Walk Tasmania

Comp – Bellarine 15<sup>th</sup> May – Proposed Veterans Class to be added to format.

Comp - Para District – 15<sup>th</sup> May – Come What May - PDODC Grounds

Comp- South Coast - Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May- Million Paws Walk Flyball – Reddal Reserve Warilla NSW.

Comp - Flyball Fanatics - Million Paws Flyball Comp – Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May – Uni. Qld - Wep Harris Oval, Sir William Macgregor Drive St.Lucia Qld.

Comp- Para District - 13th June 2010 – South East Flyball Challenge Cup – Nelson park Cnr Cape Nelson Rd and Berrinba St Portland S.A.

Comp – Belconnen Bullets – 13<sup>th</sup> June 2010 – Winter Classic – Belconnen Club Cnr Flemington Rd and Morriset Rd Mitchell ACT

Comp – 26<sup>th</sup> June 2010 – Pine Rivers Jumping in June – Rod Akers Reserve Bells pocket rd Strathpine QLD.

Comp – 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> July – Awesome Pawsome – Bounding on the Boarder- Camp Tailwaggers Carool Rd Carool.

Comp- 1<sup>st</sup> August 2010 – Pine Rivers Show Special – Pine Rivers Showground Gympie Rd Lawnton QLD

Comp – Fast and Furious – Fun in the Sun – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2010 Sunshine Coast Pet Expo Nambour Showground Coronation Ave Nambour Qld.

Comp – 27<sup>th</sup> November 2010 – Pine Rivers Annual Night at the Races - Rod Akers Reserve bells Pocket rd Strathpine QLD.

Comp – Royal National Ag Society – 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> Feb 2011 – Royal Canberra Show Flyball.

Moved and Seconded that all events are approved. CARRIED

### **ITEM - New Members**

Following new members approved: Rochelle Stevenson; Tanya Heycott; Jacki Jones; and Rachel Gibson.

### **ITEM - Dog Incident Sub Committee Report.**

**No Incidents to report.**

### **ITEM - Report from Rules Sub Committee**

The Rules Sub Committee submitted its Report containing a number of recommendations re Height Card Rules, box malfunctions during warm up periods, deliberate false starts to delay start of heats and false start Rule for teams that have forfeited.

#### **1) Height Cards and Measuring Rules.**

The review of the AFA Height Card Rules was instigated by the Sub Committee following receipt of a letter from a member expressing concern re a challenge to a dogs height where the dog held a valid height card and questioning whether the Rules allowed this to occur.

The Rules Sub Committee noted that the existing AFA Rules were silent about challenges to dog's heights where they held height cards. The Sub Committee noted that NAFA had developed rules re such challenges. The Sub Committee recommended that the existing AFA Rules be amended to include the essential features of the NAFA Rule re challenges involving a dog with a height card. The amended Rule would need to be adopted as "On Trail" Rules pending next AGM. Committee **RESOLVED** that the Sub Committee recommendation be adopted. **CARRIED**. The Committee requested Rules Sub Committee to develop appropriate wording for the amended rules.

The Committee noted that the Rules Sub Committee had also recommended that all dogs that gained a height card based on any measure using the old measure system be required to be measured again, and if the measure was not same as existing height card the card be revoked. In discussion the view was expressed that this recommendation was somewhat draconian and would involve serious inconvenience to a great number of members who gained height cards involving one or more measures under the old system. Concern was also expressed re how the AFA would identify the members required to submit for re measure given the information was not readily available via the database. **Resolved** that the Sub Committee Recommendation requiring re measure be adopted. **Lost**. Existing height cards to stand subject only to new "Challenge Rule" yet to be drafted.

Rules Sub Committee Recommended that the existing Rule preventing a dog being issued with a second height card when a challenge has occurred and dog has measured differently from height card measurement be revoked. **Resolved** that recommendation be adopted with added proviso that second card be issued at no cost to member. **CARRIED**.

## **ii) Box malfunction during Warm up.**

Rules Sub Committee reported that on occasions a box malfunction had been reported to the Judge during the warm up period and this resulted in delay to start of first heat. The Sub Committee Recommended that the Rules be amended to reflect that a malfunction during warm up should be considered to be the first malfunction under Rule 9.2(d) – giving effect to the malfunction Rule being active from the time of entering the ring till the last heat is declared. **Resolved** that Recommendation be adopted. **CARRIED** - Rules Sub Committee requested to develop specific wording for “On trail” Rule.

## **iii) Deliberate false starting to delay start of heat where team is not ready.**

The Rules Sub Committee reported that whilst this was a difficult matter to prove there was some evidence that it is occurring where a team wanted to gain more set up time for non start dogs. The Sub Committee Recommended that all Judges and members be informed that this behavior constitutes “poor sportsmanship” and can be dealt with under Rule 9.2 (r). **Resolved** recommendation is adopted. **CARRIED**.

## **iv) False Start Rule in Forfeit Situation.**

The Rules Sub Committee recommended that where a team has forfeited a heat that it not be permitted a false start re run– giving the same result as for non-competitive teams. **Resolved** recommendation be adopted with Rules Sub Committee requested to draft specific wording for “On trial” Rule. **CARRIED**.

## **ITEM - Update re Sydney Royal and 2011 Nationals.**

Richard reported on the two Competitions and the 4 Demonstrations at Sydney Royal Show. All arrangements worked well. Flyball drew good crowds of spectators and the Demonstration in the main Arena in front of 10,000 people worked very well. Special thanks go to all of the people involved in the planning and organization of all of the events. Debrief Meeting with Take Two and Purina would be arranged shortly.

## **ITEM - Signature Lights Update**

Secretary reported that AFA had now received a full refund of the payment made for the set of Signature lights ordered in June 2008. The refund had come from Lyn Sayers in NZ who was an Agent for Signature Lights. Lyn had not been able to obtain a refund from Mark in US and had agreed to personally refund our payment given the unsatisfactory ongoing saga of non-delivery. The Committee noted that a letter of thanks had been sent to Lyn.

## **ITEM – Investigation into alternative Lights suppliers.**

Secretary reported that a number of initiatives had been started to explore alternative Timing light suppliers. Several members were exploring alternatives including the development of local software. Further report will be made at next meeting.

## **ITEM - Judges Exam Format Review.**

The Sub Committee had distributed drafts of the revised Judges program based on combination of experience and multiple-choice exams. Draft Exam papers for upgrade of Judges and for Provisional Judges had been produced together with marking templates. Whilst Committee had only just received the paperwork initial feedback was very positive both as to multiple-choice format and exam content and the requirement to show the appropriate Rule reference as part of answers.

Following points of clarification raised:

- The stated practical Judging requirement for Provisional Judges – was this a total of 10 races spread over 3 Competitions or 30 races (minimum of 10 per competition) spread over the 3 Competitions. Answer – a total of 30 races.
- Was it planned to “grandfather” existing Judges into the new system i.e. existing judges transferred at their current level and those who meet the new Judging experience levels then apply to sit upgrade exam to progress to new levels. Answer – general agreement that grandfathering was appropriate.
- Could a Judge apply to move straight from Level 2 to Senior Judge if they meet experience criteria – general agreement that this was acceptable given they sat and passed the upgrade Exam.
- Who would be responsible for marking exams? Answer – Supervisory Judge.

Committee agreed that the approval of the new formats would be placed on the Agenda for the next meeting to allow the Committee time to consider Exam drafts in more detail.

## **ITEM - Purina Sponsorship Proposal.**

Richard reported that Purina were yet to submit the updated Agreement for consideration by the AFA. Now that the Royal was over he had time to follow this up. Richard indicated he would arrange a face-to-face meeting involving AFA, Take Two and Purina. Early resolution of this matter was seen as important for planning of the 2010 Nationals. Secretary pointed out Purina had sponsored both Canberra Royal and Sydney Royal prior to finalisation of the Agreement and they still fully supportive of 2010 Nationals.

## **ITEM – 2012 Nationals Bid.**

The Committee noted that the sole bid for the 2012 Nationals had been submitted by Mudd on the Paws in association with RNCAS with Nationals to be held as part of the 2012 Canberra Royal Show with dates of February 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24.

The Committee noted the bid indicated RNCAS was committed to ensuring a good racing surface and planned to lay turf and start watering the rings 6 weeks prior to Nationals. Concern was expressed that the racing surface at Canberra Royal had been substandard for last two years due to impact of Summer Nats. use of rings area in January. Committee agreed that a specific undertaking was needed from RNCAs regarding their commitment to the preparation of the two well-grassed rings for the Nationals. Subject to receipt of this

specific undertaking the Committee was in agreement to the approval of the Canberra Royal as the Nationals Venue in 2012. Secretary to advise Kylie White of decision.

#### **ITEM – Concern expressed re 60-second changeover.**

The Committee noted the concerns expressed via the NSW Rep by a very experienced box loader as to the application of 60-second change over, particularly at Canberra Royal. The box loader pointed out that at Canberra he found on many occasions he could not set his box on entry to the ring as the earlier team was still waiting for assistance to remove their box. This resulted in a significant reduction in warm up time. He also pointed out the safety danger if Judges proceeded to start races when one team was still in the process of warming up and all dogs were not behind the start line.

The Committee noted that there seemed to be a growing frequency when changeovers were reduced from 90 seconds to 60 seconds at lunchtime. The view was put that Competition organisers should be asked to seriously consider time availability when proposing Competition formats and race Schedules so that the need to move to 60 second change overs only arose when difficulties were encountered (lights malfunctions or delay due to accident) and not because of an overly ambitious program. Committee agreed that this should be drawn to attention of all Clubs, Judges and Competition organizers.

#### **ITEM Measuring Rules –Query re challenge to height card process and other matters.**

The Committee noted the correspondence from a member expressing concern over a dog with a height card being required to be re measured based on a challenge of the dogs height by an opposing team captain. The complaint involved issues of interpretation of current Rules; the arrangements associated with the measure and the decision taken at the competition to forfeit the teams AFA points gained up until the challenge and measure. The member suggested the AFA adopt the NAFA approach – claiming that NAFA does not allow height cards to be challenged. The Committee noted that NAFA does allow height cards to be challenged and had established comprehensive rules for such challenges. The member requested clarification of the existing AFA Rules and suggested that all dogs with current height cards now be required to be re measured by 3 different judges at 3 competitions and that they also be required to be measured again at two yearly intervals.

The Committee also noted letters from one of 3 AFA Judges involved in this re measure. The letters expressed concern re the accuracy of the AFA wicket; questioned the method of reading of the wicket applied by another Judge and questioning the non application of the “benefit of the doubt” where a dog was boarder line in jump height.

The Committee noted that the dog in question had now been subject to 3 recent measures by 3 separate judges and all had concluded that the dogs height was one inch more than shown on the dogs height card.

The Committee noted that the entire matter of height challenges and height cards had already been referred to the Rules Sub Committee and that a series of recommendations had been adopted earlier in the Meeting and the Rules Sub Committee was now required to

redraft the Rules to reflect these decisions. The Committee concluded that the member's request for rule clarification had been dealt with via the minutes.

With respect to the matter of the forfeited AFA points for the team in its races before the measure - the Committee determined that the forfeited points should be reinstated.

Finally the Committee considered the claim made by the Judge that the AFA wicket was inaccurate by 1/16<sup>th</sup> at the time of the measure. The Committee noted however that the dog in question had not been measured as being at boarder line height in its last 3 measure. Even if a 1/16 calibration error were present this would not have altered the measured jump height. The Committee agreed that the wicket calibration should be checked before the next competition. Judges will also be reminded to read of the top of the wicket and deduct 5 inches (as is stated in the measuring instructions set down on the AFA Web).

### **ITEM – Veterans Format – use of handicap format where limited entries and wide gap in seed times applies.**

Committee noted that a number of Clubs had signaled interest in holding Veterans Format. One issued regarding the rules for the format had been raised, namely how to deal with a situation where there were only a small number of veterans teams entered (requiring a single Division) and there was a significant span of seed times in the entered teams.

In such a situation the Committee agreed that a handicap format was the only equitable solution. Recognising that veteran teams were likely to be made up of experienced dogs concern re risk of cross - over accidents where faster teams were racing much slower teams was seen as being reduced.

The Committee considered options for determining seed times and concluded that teams should nominate a seedtime based on the assed time of the 4 fastest dogs in the team. All teams to be given a break out time 1 second faster than their declared time. It was noted that under this arrangement teams might be encouraged to sandbag to avoid breakouts if their declared seedtime proved to be to slow. It was considered that Officials could deal with any suggestion of deliberate sandbagging under existing sportsmanship Rules.

Secretary to draft racing rules for handicap format in Veterans classes and these rules to be trialed at initial Competitions involving Veterans classes.

### **ITEM – Nationals 2010 Judges recommendations from Host Club.**

The Committee noted that Berwick had surveyed all AFA Judges re their availability for Judging at Nationals.. 8 Judges had indicated they were available, with 4 advising they would also be running dogs. Berwick proposed to have 3 Judges per ring, with two in each ring not running a dog. Committee noted that in addition to the 6 Judges it would be advisable for Berwick to consider appointing a supervising judge, who could oversee judges in both rings and that two AFA Reps would also be needed. Matter referred back to Berwick for consideration with recommendation re all appointments to come to May Meeting.

## General Business

- i) Eric proposed that in addition to the new Judges Exams we consider developing an appropriate exam for AFA Reps given the import of their role. Suggestion made that the Judges upgrade exam be used as the start format for AFA Rep exam and that specific questions be added re responsibilities of AFA Rep. Sub Committee agreed to draft a AFA Rep exam for consideration at next meeting.
- ii) Pat suggested that the AFA consider setting a standard payment for Judges based on one Competition entry fee as payment. View expressed that reimbursement of Judges should be left to Competition Organisers who could take into account money available and travel costs of Judges- for example an interstate or “traveling” Judge should receive more than a local Judge to reflect costs. Committee agreed to leave matter to organizing Clubs.
- iii) Jenny asked if Committee would approve addition of a Champion Trophy format to her Clubs Competition scheduled for 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> April. Approved.
- iv) The Committee noted the email response from Bellarine Competition Organisers regarding the request from the Committee to explain the circumstance resulting in a team from Croydon being included in a Competition draw when the team never submitted an entry form for the Competition. The Committee noted the response, which confirmed that the Croydon team had been included in the Competition on the bases of “hope they will attend” rather than based on any entry form. The Committee noted that it had to have been the Bellarine Competition organizers that submitted a typed entry form for Croydon . The Committee also noted the advice from Croydon that they had verbally advised the Competition Organiser one week before the competition that they were not going to send a team. The Committee noted that there was ample time for the Organisers to redo the draw that included Croydon. This did not occur, resulting in a Bellarine team and a Hastings team racing without opponents at the Competition. The Committee viewed this matter as a serious break of protocol especially given its potential to damage Croydon's reputation in the eyes of other members not fully aware of circumstances. The result of the decision to include a team that never entered for the Competition in the draw resulted in “gift” AFA win points going to the teams that ran without opponent. It was only the recognition that the teams in question who benefited had no part in the decision not to amend the draw that stopped the Committee deciding to forfeit the bonus points involved in all these races. The Committee agreed that the Bellarine Competition Organisers should be formally reprimanded for their inappropriate actions and required to provide written apologies to both Croydon and the Hasting Clubs. The Committee further resolved that failure to offer apologies within 30 days of receipt of AFA letter may result in AFA implementing discipline action for poor sportsmanship.
- v) Josh indicated that he had been advised that at least one Club was not correctly applying the seed time rules related to using the web time involving the 4 fastest dogs in a team over the last 4 months. The Club had changed the name of the Team yet it still involved 4 dogs that had run several faster times than that

declared on the entry form. This had happened on several occasions. The Committee agreed that the Club should be written to and advised that it has to comply with the Rules re web seed times. The Secretary to also draft a notice to all Clubs and Members reminding them that seed times have to be based on the time of the 4 fastest dogs in any team – not average times or times allowing for slower dogs in the team.

- vi) Richard indicated he had developed a work sheet to assist timekeepers to work out handicaps for Champion Trophy format. He pointed out that the calculation of handicap and breakout times was somewhat complex and took time after each race but that the worksheet assisted in ensuring correct calculation. He indicated he would submit the Worksheet to the Webmaster for upload to Forms section on web.
- vii) Ian pointed out that Page 39 of Rules dealing with dog Behaviour Policy needed to be updated at next reprint to reflect the recent decision that aggression incidents outside the ring are to be dealt with by the AFA Rep not the Judge.

There being no further business Meeting closed at 10.35 pm.

Signed as a true record.

President.