

Draft – Subject to final approval at January 2010 Meeting

Australian Flyball Association Inc. – Minutes of Meeting held on 7th December 2009.

Present: Glenn Pritchard, Ian Kendt, Brian Lindsay, Pat Byrne, Leoney Pritchard, Jenny Millar, Eric van Zuyden, Lyn Clyde, Richard Mellon, Catherine Saberton, Wayne Stoop, Josh Ellen, and Penny Lloyd.

Apologies: Maureen Williamson, Kylie White, Ilona Van Galen, Joanne Parkes

Meeting Opened at 7.40 pm.

ITEM - Starred Items.

The following Items were “starred” for adoption without discussion:

- 1) Minutes of Meeting of 2nd November 2009;
- 2) Renewal of Membership (as per Treasurers Report)
- 3) Change of Clubs – Margaret Price to Sunshine Coast
- 4) Stewards Exam Passes – Ros Woods, David Klein and Ian Kendt

Moved and Seconded that starred Items be adopted CARRIED.

ITEM – Check of Action Sheet for Outstanding Matters.

The Committee noted there was one outstanding matter not on current Agenda and requiring action from earlier Meetings.

Arrange establishment of \$10,000 Fixed term Investment – (Treasurer and Secretary to follow up).

ITEM – Treasurers Report

Committee noted End Nov Bank Balance of \$ 19350 which was before the approved \$10,000 transfer to Investment Account and Payment of AFA 2010 Insurances of \$1317. Eric asked Treasurer for clarification why Accounts suggest some members are charged late fees for late dog registrations and others are not charged. Treasurer to investigate and report

ITEM – Sanctioned Events.

Following AFA Events Approved:

Competition – Norwest – Sunday 14th March 2010 – Hounds in the Hills – Castle Hills Showground Dog Section.

Competition – St.George Club – 20th March 2010 – Camden Show Flyball- Camden Showground – Restricted to 20 Teams and condition of Show – No Alcohol permitted outside licensed bars.

Competition – Sutherlands – 7th August 2010 – Southerly Muster – Waratah Park Sutherland.

Note - Request from Pine Rivers to sanction a non-standard race format discussed under General Business.

ITEM - New Members

Following new members approved:

Angelique Robinson

Melissa Friend

Kiah Mills

Vivienne Benham

Tanya Hill

Suzette Ryan

Wendy Donovan

**ITEM - 2009 AGM Follow up:
Junior Handler Scheme.**

Ilona had advised that due to work pressure she had been unable to find time to progress this matter and tendered her resignation as Sub Committee Chair. Lyn accepted Chair and indicated she would work with Kylie and report to January Committee Meeting.

ITEM - Dog Incident Sub Committee Report.

The Dog Incident Sub Committee had considered the Black Card Incident involving Flea (CRN 1007A) at the Dandy Drags Competition on 14th November.

The Sub Committee noted that this was Flea's third Black Card for aggression / suspected aggression and that at the time of the incident Flea was under a 9 month Probation following an incident at the Nationals in October 2009.

The incident at Dandy Drags was seen as similar to the Nationals Incident but in the Dandy Drags incident Flea was not carrying the ball in his mouth and all reports indicated she had barred her teeth and nipped at the other dog's hindquarters. Witness Reports differed as to whether any actual bite contact had been made – with two reports indicating some contact, two indicating shoulder contact only and one indicating considerable shoulder contact and saliva evident on other dogs coat.

The Sub Committee recommended that Flea be placed on a 12 month Suspension, commencing from the date of the incident i.e. 14th November 2009. The Suspension to be a Category 3 Suspension, which requires retraining and the submission of AFA Retraining, logs at the time of any re-instatement request. Reinstatement process to involve a review of the dog's behavior by an AFA appointed representative before re-instatement. CARRIED.

ITEM - Report from Rules Sub Committee

The Committee noted the report from the Rules Sub committee covering their examination of Interference caused by a ball rolling into the other teams racing lane and distracting a dog and Seed Times involving team changes.

The Sub Committee recommended that a Rule Clarification be issued regarding the appropriate action to follow an Interference resulting in a ball being propelled into the other teams racing lane and resulting in distraction of a dog. The existing Rules are quite clear that such a situation does result in Interference and the awarding of the heat to the non-offending team but is silent regarding the matter of issue of penalty cards. The Sub Committee concluded and recommends that where it is simply the ball that distracts (that is no dogs from the offending team has crossed the centre line) then no card should be issued. Matter to be advised to Judges, Club Co-coordinators and Members as a Rule Clarification. CARRIED.

The Sub Committee also considered whether there was a need to address issue of Seed Times situation where a team alters its composition after the draw is announced. It was noted this was normally caused by one of the original dogs withdrawing due to injury or other factors and a replacement dog being nominated, often on the morning of the competition. The Sub Committee indicated there was currently no evidence of manipulation to gain advantage from such a situation and accordingly saw no need for any AFA action. The Sub Committee would however keep a watching brief re this matter.

ITEM - Update re Sydney Royal and 2011 Nationals.

Richard reported Sub Committee scheduled to meet before Christmas to consider race format and other matters. Glenn advised that Phil Lea had agreed to join Sub Committee.

ITEM - World Dog Games Report.

President reported on event and indicated it had been a great success from a promotion viewpoint. Noted that the AFA had been advised that the one-hour TV special is scheduled for showing on Channel 7 on 19th December at 4 p.m. The AFA had also been given the Fatigue matting used in the Show, which had a value of \$8000. The organizers had requested that the AFA consider accepting an amended contribution of \$1 per ticket sold only on full price tickets (rather than on full price and Family concession tickets). The request was stated to be based on fact that family tickets were sold at below real cost and there was no profit to be shared. Acceptance would result in the AFA still receiving \$2359 in addition to matting and publicity. CARRIED with one abstention.

ITEM – Sydney Pet Expo Report.

Richard reported Event had gone well with thanks due to the Clubs who organized each Day – Southern Cross, St.George and Scallywags. Friday continued to be a problem getting volunteers but there were just enough to cover the 30-minute demos. AFA had received \$500 for the Demo.

ITEM – Melbourne Pet Expo Report

Eric advised that Pet Expo now clashed with a Saturday Competition in Melbourne and he was concerned as to whether enough dogs could be attracted to cover the 3 day Demo. He suggested that the Committee consider allocating the \$500 donation to participants as an attraction. Some members of Committee expressed concern that any such arrangement must be equitable to all dogs and handlers who take part. Suggestion made that Emma LeCras was already involved in attending Pet Expo with the Labrador Club and she may be willing to co-ordinate the flyball demos. Eric to follow up.

ITEM - Signature Lights Update

Secretary reported that he had made contact with the NZ Agent of Signature Lights (Lyn) and he had indicated a willingness to become involved in attempting to resolve the impasse with Mark in the US re supply of lights or refund of money paid. The Committee noted the most recent email which indicted Lyn would use all efforts to force resolution and if all else failed he would personally refund at least 50 % of AFA payment. Committee also noted advice from Secretary re his informal contact with a Solicitor for legal advice. Advice given indicated any legal action in USA could be difficult and costly and at this stage it was best to continue to seek a negotiated settlement. Committee agreed secretary to continue to follow up via Lyn in NZ.

ITEM - Judges Exam Format Review .

Ian indicated he had not yet received the US Multiple Question Exam format from Rosie. Leoney indicated she had a copy and agreed to on forward to Ian. Committee agreed that Ian, Jenny and Penny should jointly consider the US Format and report to the January Meeting.

ITEM - Proposal to hold State Championships each year.

The Committee noted that there did not appear to be any reason why under the current Rules any Club could not submit a Competition bearing the name of a State Championship. Normal Rules would apply and any “special conditions” would have to be nominated. Accordingly the Committee saw no real need to develop special conditions for State Championships.

ITEM - Purina Sponsorship Proposal

Deferred till January meeting in absence of Kylie.

ITEM –Web Listing of Dog Penalties.

The Secretary advised that he had been asked by a Regional Rep to look into whether the AFA should place a listing of all Dogs under Suspension and Probation on web so that Competition organizers could check entries against the list. He pointed out that dogs under Probation are quite entitled to race so no checking was really required.

Regarding Dogs on Suspension the current situation is that there is only one registered dog under Suspension. All other Suspensions over last 18 months have resulted in the owner retiring the dog.

In the circumstances the Committee concluded that the current process of recording penalties via the Minutes was appropriate and that at this time no web listing was required.

ITEM – Retraining log process

The Committee noted that to date the process for dealing with retraining logs was that logs for Suspended dogs were required to be submitted at time of application for reinstatement and formed part of the reinstatement assessment. Where a dog on Probation was required to have a Retraining log the process was that the owner was asked to submit logs monthly. This raised issue of what review action should occur and by whom. One suggestion was that the receipt of the Log should simply be acknowledged and placed in the Members file. The log would only be assessed at time of any subsequent behavior incident. Alternative view expressed that it seemed pointless to require monthly logs to be submitted unless someone was performing a review process. Following considerable debate it was agreed that Logs should be acknowledged when received and a copy sent to the Chair of the Dog Incidence Sub Committee.

ITEM – Query re requirement at some NSW Competitions for ball buckets to be placed behind backboards.

Query - as to where in the AFA Rules it stated that ball buckets had to be placed behind backing boards. Comment made that this was stated as a requirement at the recent National Championships in NSW and was announced at Team briefings. Point made this was not a requirement in Victoria or S.A.(requirement was for buckets to be placed behind Box Loader with no balls visible) and was not mentioned in the Rules. Point made that the requirement might have started in NSW as some dogs could be attracted to cross when they saw a bucket as they knew balls were kept in bucket. Concern expressed that the AFA had to have common Rules across Australia and that people should not “make up Rules” without official sanction. After discussion matter referred to Rules Sub Committee for consideration and report.

ITEM – S.A. EJS Problems

At the recent S.A. Competition the S.A. EJS has been damaged by a power surge. The surge had damaged the units Power Supply. Wayne had repaired the light tree, which was also damaged, but the power supply may need replacement. Agreed Wayne to obtain quotes to replace. Catherine raised issue of whether the normal Lights levy should be charged given the lights could not be used for more than half of the Competition. Moved and seconded that Lights Levy not be paid. CARRIED.

ITEM – Definition of Interference – can interference be within own team.

Reported that at a recent competition a judge had stopped a race and carded a dog for “Interference” with another dog in its own team. The Committee noted that Rule Book definition of Interference (9.2 (i)) clearly indicates Interference must involve the opposing

team and whilst aggression/suspected aggression can be between dogs within a team Interference cannot be called (given no disadvantage flows to other team). Moved and Seconded that this be issued as a Rule Clarification. CARRIED.

ITEM – Request for AFA to approve a “Non Standard Race format for use at March 2010 Pine Rivers Competition.

The Committee noted the request submitted by Sue Norton of Pine Rivers to hold a “handicap format” Competition as their March 2010 Competition and the proposed racing rules to be applied. The request also sought to restrict entries to maximum of 6 teams to allow for “Time Trial heats “ which would establish handicaps for all teams. President indicted that Committee had already dealt with the matter of full handicap racing (as opposed to Champion Trophy format which only involved the winners of each Division racing under handicap) and made decision not to approve format due to safety concerns of slower dogs crossing over against much faster dogs.

Suggestion made that Committee should be willing to approve an “on trail” test of format and the Pine Rivers proposal with limited teams would be an opportunity. After considerable discussion Moved and Seconded that earlier decision not to approve Handicap racing as a Competition format be upheld. CARRIED by majority vote.

Following decision several members of Committee expressed concern that we did not seem to have a sound process for dealing with new race formats and the development of associated racing rules – for example there were no rules in place for “Pee Wee or Veterans classes which were specifically mentioned in the Rules and that the Rules envisaged that other types of formats might emerge as evidenced by the “etc” in rule 1.1g). Secretary indicted he would bring this matter forward to January Committee Meeting.

ITEM – Consideration of new Title Award.

Eric pointed out that two dogs in Victoria were now approaching 4000 points and a new title name would be required. After discussion it was Moved and Seconded that a Motion be placed before the next AGM indicating that the AFA name the 4000 and 5000 Points Titles after the first dog to achieve that number of points. CARRIED.

ITEM – Reconsideration of non-officiating Judges power to issue cards.

Eric reported on an incident at a recent Victorian Competition where a Member had inappropriately disciplined his dog in the ring during the warm up period and the officiating Judge had not seen the incident. He pointed out that he as AFA Representative had spoken to the member and issued a warning but felt that it would have been simpler to have the power to simply issue the member with a yellow card. The Committee discussed the matter and it was pointed out that the previous ruling was that the officiating Judge in the ring was the only person who could “ card” members or dogs in the ring and that the AFA Rep. had the power to deal with matters of discipline outside of the ring. Any member (including non officiating Judges) could report matter to the Officiating Judge or AFA Rep for investigation at time of incident or could, subsequent to incident, report to Committee via the Secretary on inappropriate behavior witness by them. The Committee concluded that the above process was appropriate and should be confirmed.

General Business

ITEM - 20/20 Cricket Demo.

Richard reported that the enquiry re a possible AFA Flyball Demo at a NSW 20/20 cricket match had not gone ahead.

ITEM – Use of 6 inch base Boards.

The matter of Clubs using 6 inch base Boards and then a 1 inch Board to give 7 inch dogs the added protection of only hitting a 1 inch board which would flex was raised from viewpoint of the Rules. Committee confirmed this was acceptable under Rule 3.3 c) as long as it was made clear at the Captains briefing that the Base Boards were actually 6 inch boards.

Next meeting scheduled for 7.30 pm Monday 11th January 2010 (one week later than normal due to holiday period). There being no further business the Meeting was closed at 10.05 pm.

Signed as a true record.

President.