Board of Directors Meeting Teleconference

Unabridged Minutes August 6, 2009

Present via telephone were: Executive Director Lee Heighton

Board of Directors Nancy Garcia,

Leerie Jenkins, Dana Nichols, Kris Pickering, Alisa Romaine, Karen Oleson, Dale Smith, Scott Stein, Greg Stopay.

Chairman Scott Stein called the meeting to order at 8:10 PM CDT.

Chairman's Comments

Scott welcomed new Board member Leerie Jenkins. He reviewed rules applicable to Board meetings, including executive sessions.

Scott explained that the primary purpose of this teleconference was to start reviewing the pending Rules Committee items prior to the August 22, 2009 in person meeting. The August meeting is traditionally a very long meeting because of the need to have any rules changes completed before the new rulebook is published on October 1. This meeting has a particularly heavy agenda of rules items. He asked that the Rules Committee review these issues and make recommendations ahead of time. This would hopefully make the August meeting as efficient as possible and give everyone time to review proposed language.

Kris Pickering joined the meeting at 8:13 PM CDT

Judges Committee

Dana presented two pending requests for advancement in status:

- Danielle Beauregard, Woodlawn, ON provisional to approved. The Judges Committee unanimously recommended approval. Dana moved to approve the advancement. Kris seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- Jonathan Bescher, Clayton, NC provisional to approved. The Judges Committee unanimously recommended approval. Kris moved to approve the advancement. Leerie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Dana reported that the Judges Committee is working on an instructional video covering basic measuring skills. Initial filming has been completed and the first draft is in process. Voice over tracks will be done in the next few weeks. The Committee is hopeful that a finished product will be ready for loading on the webpage for public viewing sometime this fall.

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CanAm Classic Update

Lee reported that planning is progressing well. Nancy is finalizing awards. Karen will be overseeing scoring. Leerie has taken over coordinating volunteers.

Leerie shared several offers being extended for volunteers. Anyone interested should contact Leerie directly at leerie@triad.rr.com. More information will be posted on the NAFA® web page.

- <u>Club Sponsor/Work A Ring</u> for clubs willing to staff line and box judges for a ring, they will received two free entries per day per ring staffed. Clubs must fill all four chairs for the day. Two clubs may split the duties, as long as one contact person is responsible for making sure volunteers are in place for each race.
- <u>Dedicated Worker</u> for individuals able to commit to be full time volunteers for score table and other positions, they will receive \$100 towards travel expenses, reimbursement for ½ hotel each day they volunteer, and all meals.
- One-Team Worker for individuals running on only one team who are willing to volunteer when not racing, they will receive reimbursement for ½ hotel each day they volunteer and all lunches.

There will also be some local Boy Scouts who will be helping with tasks in exchange for a donation to their troop.

Scott Chamberlain, Brian Fay, Phil Getty, and Mike Smith have been hired as judges for the event. Board members who are judges will be filling in as relief judges.

Rules Committee

There was discussion about how the pending rules issues would be handled at the teleconference. Scott indicated that no votes would be taken on issues, only discussion for input to the Rules Committee. All issues would be formally voted on at the August 22, 2009 meeting. The hope was that by discussing as many issues as possible via teleconference that the August meeting would not be unduly long. This would also give the Rules Committee more time to craft language. Scott announced that he was limiting the teleconference to 90 minutes. He indicated that he did not expect to reach all of the agenda items, but that this would hopefully assist with the August meeting.

1. Request from Crystal Cappel to limit the number of points dogs can receive in one day:

I really wish there was some way to monitor the runs that individual dogs do. I realize this may be a record keeping nightmare, but there has to be some way to hold these people accountable and at least put something in place to protect the poor dogs that are being ran into the ground. IF it is not able to be monitored at the tournament level then maybe put something in place that when the points are calculated that they will lose all their points if the dogs run more than the maximum number of heats allowed. Maybe each dog can only get 875 points per day maximum that is 35 heats times 25 points.

The Rules Committee considered this request and does not recommend that the Board of Directors adopt this proposed rule change. We continue to believe that excessive double running of dogs is a serious

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issue, but had concerns that this proposal would not address many instances where it could still occur. For example, dogs whose teams earned less than 25 points per run could face much more racing then dogs whose teams earned 25 points per heat. This also did not seem to address the idea that some dogs may not be physically capable of completing races with this number of points. There was also discussion that based on a review of the database, this rule would apply to a very small numbers of dogs currently racing. We hope that dog owners know when their dogs are capable of safely double running. Many factors may go into this equation, including weight and condition of the dog, weather factors such as heat and humidity, and the age and experience of the dog. NAFA® expects flyball competitors to take care of their dogs, to realize the physical limitations of their individual dogs, and treat them humanely. At this point, the Committee was unable to draft a rule to address these concerns.

There was discussion regarding this proposal. Several Board members pointed out that Judges already have the authority to excuse a dog and that the Code of Ethics would cover abusive conduct. Greg pointed out that it is hard to legislate brains and common sense. What might be an appropriate amount of running for one dog, might be way too much for others.

2. Request from Todd Beedle to allow open class to be combined with regular divisions for racing:

While enjoying the fact that I get to go to tournaments I would otherwise not, it is also not fun to have a team run 16 seconds and a team run 22 seconds. Also sometimes open cannot be run and is cancelled as there may not be enough entries in open class. Can NAFA look at maybe allowing teams to enter as an open team but place them with the regular divs based on seed time? This way if you don't have enough dogs to run regular you can still enter as open and not have to rely on open div entries being big enough. If there are quite a few open entries you could still have a separate open div but the events I have been to have only had 4 entries max and that was combined with vets so it wasn't the funnest racing we have ever done. We have just experienced this where we as a team don't have enough dogs to go and want to run open with another team, this event has no vets class so not enough entries for open alone and therefore no running for us. If we were able to enter as open and run in the reg div based on seed time we still get to run, and the racing is a lot closer making for an enjoyable weekend, more entries for the Host team and NAFA's bank account. This would make open truly a pickup team which is what everyone I have talked to wanted when this was brought in.

The Rules Committee has considered this request and does not recommend that the Board of Directors adopt this proposed rule change. Although we are not recommending this change, we would remind competitors that there is no minimum number of teams required to hold the Open class. The Open class can be combined with the Veterans class for racing, but even with only one Open entry, the class is permitted to be held. There is no need for a club to cancel the Open class based on a small number of entries. The Committee considered the request and was concerned about the possible conflicts of combining Open with Regular for racing. Given that dogs do not have to be declared until the morning of racing, there would be no way to avoid conflicts.

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Scott indicated that he has received a number of emails regarding this agenda item. Several clubs indicated they use open and regular to make sure teams close in seed time do not have to race each other. Permitting mixed racing would also present problems with dogs who are double listed between open and regular classes. Dogs might have to race back to back, or could even be listed on two teams who are racing each other. Because dogs do not have to be declared until the morning of the tournament, there would be no way to plan around those conflicts in a racing schedule.

3. Request from Dan Wood regarding errors with Hughes lights sets:

I would like you all to view the linked videos please. You may have to click on full size in order to get to see the EJS early pass light (top). These three videos clearly show an inbound dog triggering the early pass, not the outbound dog. Use the pause/play in full size to step through the frames. This has happened many times here in region 7 on the Hughes EJS sets. I would like the rules and judges committees to determine:

- 1. When this happens, and the team videotapes it, can the judge go to the tape right then to determine if there was a false early triggered?
- 2. If not, should the judge call for a rerun if he/she feels it was a false early? And how many in a row before you give up?
- 3. What other actions are there for the judge, TD, team in these cases?

The Rules Committee reviewed this request. In consultation with the Judges Committee, there was a joint response sent to Mr. Wood indicating that video tape footage should not be used to determine the winner of a heat, but that a judge may decide to use video footage to determine that the lights malfunctioned and re-run a heat. There is no limit to the number of times that a judge may choose to rerun heats due to EJS malfunctions.

The Rules Committee has determined it would be more appropriate for the Technology Committee to consider any issues regarding the status of these light sets.

The Rules Committee also determined that this issue should be sent to the Judges Committee to determine whether any rule changes are needed.

There was brief discussion regarding this issue. Technology will have a recommendation at the 8/22 meeting. Judges Committee will also have a recommendation at the 8/22 meeting.

4. Request from Dale Smith to change rule regarding no practicing in ring 30 minutes after racing to allow it immediately after racing has concluded.

The Rules Committee has considered this request and recommends that the Board of Directors modify the definition of the "racing day" in the glossary (page 14 of the current rulebook), to permit training in the ring after racing without requiring a 30 minute waiting period, as follows:

"Racing day – the racing day begins thirty minutes before the first scheduled race and ends thirty minutes after the conclusion of the last race of the day."

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There was discussion about the original purpose behind the 30 minute waiting period. Scott mentioned that he believed that it was to allow for run-offs.

Dale suggested including language that training in the ring after the conclusion of the racing day is at the discretion of the host club. There was also discussion about putting in language to clarify that the EJS may not be used during the after-hours training without permission of the Executive Director.

Language was proposed as follows:

"Racing day – the racing day begins thirty minutes before the first scheduled race and ends after the conclusion of the last race of the day and the Electronic Judging System has been removed (unless the Executive Director has granted permission for use of the EJS outside of racing)."

There was then discussion that this time limit was put in place because measuring could still occur because of a height challenge. Upon examination of the current rules, it does not specify that racing should be stopped when measuring a dog for a height challenge. There was a request for the Rules Committee to draft language to that effect.

5. Request to review and modification of language in 6.1(k) Limited Classes to clarify that not all classes must be limited:

The Rules Committee was asked to look at the language in this rule and make a recommendation as to whether language was needed to clarify that tournaments may be sanctioned with some classes limited and other classes unlimited. The Rules Committee has reviewed this rule and recommends modification of the language to clarify any confusion. The recent rule change permitting expansion of the entries in limited classes may have left some confusion as to whether all classes are required to be limited when limits are imposed. The Rules Committee has drafted the following proposed changes and recommends the Board of Directors adopt the following rule change:

Section 6.1- Requirements

(k) Limited Classes: The host club may not limit entries to fewer than four. At sanctioning, the host club must designate the classes offered and the maximum number of teams per <u>limited</u> class to reflect a total number of teams permitted <u>in the limited classes</u>. A tournament may be sanctioned with some classes <u>limited and others unlimited</u>. The host club must accept all entries up to 6:00 p.m., local time of the tournament secretary, on the closing date. Seed times for teams are not needed until after the draw. Teams that get into the class are to be selected by random draw. If one or more <u>limited</u> classes fill, but the other <u>limited</u> classes do not, the size of the <u>limited</u> classes that filled will be expanded by the automated draw to add the excluded teams up to the maximum declared size of the <u>limited</u> classes.

There was discussion about the proposed language. Karen Oleson made several suggested modifications. The new proposed language is as follows:

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Section 6.1- Requirements

- (k) Limited Classes: The host club may not limit entries to fewer than four per class offered. At sanctioning, the host club must designate the classes offered and the maximum number of teams per limited class to reflect a total number of teams permitted in the limited classes. A tournament may be sanctioned with some classes limited and others unlimited. The host club must accept all entries up to 6:00 p.m., local time of the tournament secretary, on the closing date. Seed times for teams are not needed until after the draw. Teams that get into the class are to be selected by random draw. If one or more limited classes fill, but other limited classes do not, the size of the limited classes that filled will be expanded by the automated draw to add the excluded teams up to the maximum declared total number of teams permitted in the limited classes.
- 6. Request from Scott Stein to review tournament sanctioning language to determine whether language should be added to codify a prohibition against sanctioning tournaments with competing organizations.

The Rules Committee has reviewed this request, including input provided to the Board of Directors from competitors (both via email and from a Leadership Chat on Jun 9, 2009), from a Board teleconference on Jun 18, 2009, and from the Executive Director. After considering the issue, the Rules Committee does recommend an addition to the current sanctioning rules to clarify that NAFA® tournaments should not be sanctioned at the same venue on the same weekend as a flyball tournament from a competing organization. The Rules Committee has drafted proposed language and recommends the Board of Directors adopt the following rule change:

Section 6.1 – Requirements

(p) NAFA® will not sanction a tournament held at the same venue on the same weekend as a flyball event sanctioned by any other Flyball event-giving organization.

There was discussion about the language to be used. Dana indicated that the current Rules Committee proposal tracked the language from the Conflict of Interest policy. Several people expressed a desire to have broader language. There was further discussion regarding this issue.

Kris moved to adjourn due to the lateness of the hour. Alisa seconded. Dana asked for discussion on the motion to adjourn. Dana asked that she receive input regarding any other suggested language. Kris agreed and withdrew her motion.

Karen indicated she wanted broader language allowing NAFA® to withdraw sanctioning. Dana asked that she submit any proposed language to the Rules Committee.

Leerie proposed, "NAFA® reserves the right to deny sanctioning for a tournament held at the same venue on the same weekend as a Flyball event held by any other organization."

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Dana asked that any other proposed language be sent to the Rules Committee or circulated to BoD members before the August 22, 2009 meeting.

Scott indicated that the remainder of the Rules agenda would be handled at the August 22, 2009 meeting.

Executive Director Comments

Lee indicated that he is seeing a growing issue with scheduling in the regions. The appendices attached to the rulebook show how round robin racing will be scheduled. Some regional directors are enforcing this scheduling strictly. Other RDs and scheduling programs are more lenient in the order in which races are completed. Lee asked for Board members to consider this issue and give him some direction at the August 22, 2009 meeting as to how closely these formats should be followed. There is concern about uniformity throughout regions regarding this issue.

Annual General Meeting

Scott announced that we have received two offers from clubs to hold the Annual General Meeting with their tournaments in November. One offer is from Revolution Flyball in conjunction with their November 14-15, 2009 tournament in Downington, Pennsylvania. The other offer is from Dogz Rule in conjunction with their November 7-8, 2009 tournament in Belton, Texas. Nancy has done a preliminary cost analysis and determined the Pennsylvania location would have lower travel costs for Board members. There was some discussion regarding conflicts with the dates. Because of these conflicts, a final decision will be made at the August 22, 2009 meeting.

Karen moved to adjourn the meeting. Nancy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:27 p.m. CDT.