

Agenda

NAFA® Board of Directors Meeting - May 5, 2018 – Detroit, MI

Meeting was held at the La Quinta Inn & Suites Detroit Metro Airport, 30847 Flynn Drive Romulus, MI 48174.

Attending: Steve Corona, Kim Davis, Dirk Elber, Dana Hanson, Leerie Jenkins, Emma Mak, Lynda Mantler, Aaron Robbins and Neil Flood.

John Hendriks joined via telephone, as his flight was cancelled.

Officers' Reports

Steve opened the meeting at 8:15 am.

Chair's Comments:

Steve welcomed the new board members. Executive session protocol and scheduling of future meetings was discussed.

Executive Director's Comments:

Neil shared feedback from RDs about practice starts. Any tourney host is free to offer the practices started without needing Executive Director permission. This has also been posted on the NAFA website.

FCI World Cup: There are plans to get the committee back together soon. Representation will be important in supporting the FCI and helping forge a positive relationship as we move forward with them in future years. Fur Fun is planning on going to represent NAFA at the tournament. Leerie will function as the NAFA representative to bring back additional information to the NAFA FCI committee and board.

Treasurer's Report:

Dana presented the treasurer's report, which included an update on CanAm.

Tourney entry fees are up this year, compared to the same time last year. They are generally smaller tourneys, but more of them.

In future, we need to look at adjusting our most recent reduction in fees.

Dana also went over other revenue, such as plaques, pins, certificates and patches.

Expenses – Shipping costs are up. In the US, UPS costs are doubled this year. Dana will audit our UPS account. Neil suggested talking with Kelly Price as well about logistics.

There was additional discussion surrounding the parking of EJS equipment. Discussions also on missing and stolen EJS, and how to combat this issue.

Dana discussed the balance sheet. See attachments.

Statistics for tourneys: One day tourneys have had more entries than the two days. 1,064 teams on Sundays tournaments, 648 teams on weekend tournaments in the current year. In 2017, 722 teams entered two-day tournaments, one day tournaments had 731 entries.

Professional fees were up \$1,600. This includes a \$3,200 increase in fees to Big Pulse for elections management that is strictly a timing difference. No election fees are included in the prior year comparative because fees for the 2016 election were paid early – prior to the start of that fiscal year. Offsetting this increase of \$3,200 are savings of approximately \$500 in legal fees for trademark work done in the prior year and \$1,200 in consulting fees for the person record database project, also included in the prior year.

There was discussion surrounding the fees from banking, merchant services and PayPal, and we will be looking for alternatives.

Steve asked if we've investigated using our non-profit status to try and get banking fees down. Dana will research further.

Also, NAFA had some earlier IRS penalties for late filings from a few years ago. We are waiting to hear back from IRS to get those waived.

Secretary's Report:

January board and AGM minutes were posted March 6th.

Election Committee:

N/A

Standing Committee Reports

Finance: See Treasurer's report

Judges Committee:

- The following completed all their assignments and tests and have moved from novice to apprentice.
- Joan Weesies, Gulfport FL - Novice to Apprentice
- Jeff Wright, Tucson AZ - Novice to Apprentice
- Gwen Ahlbrecht, Phoenix AZ - Novice to Apprentice

Novice Exam – There were questions about World Records and Height Dogs. There are discussions ongoing with judges committee to clarify those questions.

Katie Altholz still has two remaining provisional assignments.

The board also discussed additional requirements for judges to maintain their status.

These included the submission of the C.15 form (some minimum number), required practice measures, and a conference call for judges to exchange ideas, concerns, etc. (frequency to be determined).

Rules Committee:

- 1. Creating a new (additional) type of Regional Champs – Neil Flood**
- 2. Cohosting clubs, made up of same people, using cohosting to double their votes – Emma Mak**
- 3. Review of Glossary in Rule Book – NAFA Board request from previous meeting**
- 4. Are props allowed in practice start? – Jayne McQuillen**
- 5. Clarification of requirements for a team to be Performance – Terri Botsford**
- 6. Adding striping to the jump slats as a safety measure – Lorraine Messier**

1. Creating a new (additional) type of Regional Champs – Neil Flood

NAFA's current Regional Championships/NAFA Championships are geared towards clubs that participate in division one. The goal is to introduce a new, additional kind of regional championship that provides incentive for participation in Regular and Multibreed classes for all clubs, across all divisions.

A proposal was put forward by Emma Mak:

1. For each region, calculate each club's FY average of team placements for all multibreed and regular divisions.
2. Use a weighting system to adjust averages based on the degree of participation in a region's tournaments. (multiply average team placements by number of tournaments in a region divided by number of tournaments in which club participated). *

These steps provide a regional ranking that favors those clubs that enter a good percentage of their region's tournaments, and place well in all their divisions.

* would need to take into account, similar to regional points, that clubs may be excluded from some tourneys by draws.

Alternative: Revise formula to be weight by '# of classes attended' (multibreed and regular only) rather than '# of tournaments attended'. Since, across all regions, there is usually only enough multibreed teams entered into a tournament to have one division, it is likely that the introduction of this incentive championship, could make slower teams re-think their entry into a multibreed division where they are entered with considerably faster teams, as they are likely to finish last, affecting their standings. By looking at classes attended, we increase the incentive to enter multibreed class.

Rules Committee was to consider the options, flesh out plans and determine next steps.

Recommendations:

The Rules Committee requests that the board review and summarize some clear objectives for what they would like to achieve through the implementation of this new, additional championship. For the proposed calculation, the committee suggests that the weighting be adjusted so that it is not unfair to clubs that might not have the means to travel to 100% of tournaments in a region. Possible options to consider are having the weighting cutoff at 80% participation of tournaments (similar to existing Regional Champs calculation), or perhaps allowing clubs to drop off some lower placements after a certain participation threshold.

There was a concern that this proposal could increase sandbagging. The committee suggests that, if this proposal is implemented, the three 3 B/O rule be made more restrictive, to curb this. The variation using number of classes, rather than tournaments, for calculation of weighting, is not recommended as it was seen as unfair to clubs that cannot field a multibreed team.

The Rules Committee recommends continuing to move this proposal forward.

During discussion, the following conclusions were drawn:

- The incentives created by the weighted regional placements idea were in line with what the board wants (increasing interest and participation in regular class).
- The decision was made to remove multibreed entirely from this, as usually only has one division anyway (and division 1 teams have the existing Regional Championships). Also, this gets rid of the problem of slower multi teams not wanting to enter because they are at the bottom of their division and might bring down their average placement.
- Breaking out three times will mean 0 placement, which will be excluded from calculation (still considering whether number of allowed B/Os should be decreased)
- All the conditions that exclude tournaments from existing Regional Champs will be the same for this regional placement (runback, #teams, results of limited draw, etc.)
- Top 80% of placements will be used (to allow for 'off days')
- The weighting will be maxed out at 80% participation (i.e. a club that participates in 80% of tournaments in a FY will have the same weighting as one that does 100%)
- The board liked the idea of dogs getting additional points based on placements.

- *The board is supportive of the committee's recommendations and requested the committee to finalize the idea and craft the appropriate language for next year's rulebook.*

2. Cohosting clubs, made up of same people, using cohosting to double their votes – Emma Mak

When hosting a NAFA event, the host club receives 1 vote per tournament. When Co-hosting the Co-host club also receives 1 vote per tournament. This doesn't seem like an issue unless the cohost clubs are owned by the same group of people. Essentially doubling up their votes by listing both their clubs for every tournament they host.

BOD suggested to add a sentence to clarify cohost intent.

Rules to create wording for a sentence to add to Article VII Section 2 (a) (i.e. Cohost clubs must participate in hosting tournaments in a meaningful way.)

Recommendations:

Ideally co-hosts should be recognizably separate groups of competitors. This is hard to define in a rule, and most on the committee felt everything suggested was too restrictive. NAFA doesn't want to lessen incentive for hosting clubs.

The Rules Committee's recommendation to the board is no rule changes at this time. If competitors have concerns that a club is abusing the declaring of cohosts for sanctioning in order to gain extra votes, they can bring it to the attention of the board, and each case will be reviewed individually.

- *Leerie motioned to accept the rules committee recommendation. Dirk seconded. Motion carried.*

3. Review of Glossary in Rule Book – NAFA Board request from previous meeting

Clarification needed for 'Training in the ring', but also full review of terms.

Recommendations:

The Rules Committee has been developing a better definition for 'Training in the Ring' (and will continue improving the rest of the Glossary this fiscal year). In order to finalize and get a fair and consistent definition for 'training in the ring' across regions, it was decided that judges be asked for input in compiling a list of examples of what they would consider training in the ring, as well as what they would NOT consider training in the ring (but have been asked about or considered carefully but excluded). Thank you to Leerie Jenkins for gathering and compiling the feedback.

Overall the feedback seemed to suggest that the term 'training in the ring' doesn't make sense, as a lot of what is done during flyball would be considered training in other dog sports. Suggestions were to call it instead 'illegal training in the ring' and/or define specific scenarios that would be considered infractions.

The following change to the rule book is recommended by the Rules Committee:

Chapter 7 Warm-Ups: Remove 7 b) There shall be no practice or training in the ring for the duration of the racing day, except for the warm-up as permitted prior to each race. Training in the ring during the competition will mean a forfeit of the heat.

Move this to CHAPTER 8 - RULES OF RACING Section 8.3 - The Heat (after (l) Intervention, and before (m) The Finish).

m) Training in the Ring. Training in the ring will mean a forfeit of the heat.

- *The board accepted the recommended rule book changes and approved of the rules committee's proposed approach of defining individual infractions to replace the 'training in the ring' definition. The board recommended the rules committee redefine terminology concerning the ring and course definitions to help with this process and made some rough drafts of these definitions.*

4. Are props allowed in practice start? – Jayne McQuillen

Recommendations:

The Rules Committee concluded that a practice start is considered part of the warm up period, and as such, props are permitted. The committee will be making recommendations to the board for new rule book language covering the results of the Delegate vote for the next fiscal year and will ensure that this question is covered.

5. Clarification of requirements for a team to be Performance – Terri Botsford

"I understand Performance Teams, but would it be possible to make it less confusing?"

The way I understand it, if a team can't run Multi like they signed up for, Performance lets them get another breed from another team without the 87-day issue.

Regarding this part of the rule:

(ii) When a team in the Multibreed Class declares performance, the requirement of four different breeds set forth in Section 6.2(d) does not apply,

Does this mean it's okay then for the team to run any 4 breeds, even from their own team?

I'd like to see a team be able to go performance when:

1. They were all signed up for a Regular division or Multi, but then they lose their height dog or their height dog they ended up with can't run full time, and for the safety of the rest of their dogs, they don't feel they can run their other dogs at a higher jump height. During the last couple tournaments I've been to, this has happened so the team ended up not coming to the tournament.

This is an issue for teams that are very small, just starting out or are very new and don't have the depth to have enough back-ups. Plus, a small/new team might not have any height dogs, so they have to run Open, but then when they get enough dogs for just two teams, they don't have the back-ups because you can't have a dog on two Open teams. Broadening the scope of Performance teams could help Multi and Regular teams because worse case scenario, they just declare Performance and they don't have to drop out of Multi or Regular."

...

"How about this situation?

We only have one height dog and he's been injured, some soft mussel injury, and we don't know how much of a tournament he could do. He seems fine, but this injury could resurface again. His Vet thinks he'll be fine, but we need to watch him carefully. We need to submit our entries next week, so you would think another 4 weeks and he would be even better. So, what we'd like to do is one Open team and then one Regular or Multi team. You can't declare performance after the tournament starts, right? So, if he becomes lame during the tournament, we'd have to forfeit the rest of the tournament, right?

If we're considering making changes to performance, how about considering making another change so we could be allowed to change to performance at any time during the tournament, rather than having to forfeit the rest of the tournament. Things happen between the time you enter a tournament and when it begins, the same things can happen after a tournament begins. It's back to being a small team with just enough dogs to field 2 teams, but does not have a back-up height dog (or if running Multi, not having a back-up dog that is a different breed). And for some dogs/teams, it wouldn't be safe to run without a height dog. This change could be a win-win for everyone. Certainly the other teams in the division aren't hurt by another team declaring performance during a tournament. Well, I guess it might not be fair if the team goes performance after beating (or losing) to 2 out of 4 or 5 teams, so we could have all the previous heats changed to loses, just like if they had gone performance before the tournament starts?'

Recommendations:

In summary, here is the Rules Committee's explanation:

- A. Can a performance team run any four breeds, even from their own team?

Yes – performance team must comply with all NAFA rules except 87-day rule and 4 breeds for multi. This is stated in Section 7.5 – Changing Clubs (c)

- B. A multibreed or regular team has entered a tournament, but prior to the tournament starting, their height dog can't run (injury, for example), can they declare performance and jump the original height they intended to jump (for the safety of their dogs)?

No – must jump height of smallest dog or go to For Exhibition Only (FEO).

- C. Can we allow performance teams to be declared once a tournament starts? For example, a dog has the go-ahead to run flyball after an injury, but the owner has been told to observe carefully for signs of the injury resurfacing. If he becomes lame during the tournament, could he be declared performance?

No - anything after the beginning of racing goes to FEO.

Running as performance shouldn't be a regular occurrence. NAFA's allowance to declare a team performance, and so still be able to earn dog points, was done to help those teams that have a genuine incident happen from the time they enter to the tournament start date. The TD has the right to refuse the request if it is not for a valid reason. The Rules Committee feels expanding the cases where performance, rather than FEO, can be declared could invite abuse.

The Rules Committee sympathizes with Terri's concerns and would counsel those small clubs with unreliable height dogs, to stay in open until they have two solid height dogs. Then run a regular OR multibreed team and an open team. This way they have a backup height dog. The Rules Committee thanks Terri Botsford for her question.

- *Leerie motioned to accept rules committee recommendation. Dirk seconded. Motion carried.*

6. Adding striping to the jump slats as a safety measure – Lorraine Messier

"Hi Cindy,

I'd like to address a question to the NAFA board regarding the potential issue with using white jumps without any color pattern in the breaker board & whether NAFA would consider a similar striping that is used with agility jumps.

The study attached along with a number of similar studies would support the rationale for considering this change. Additionally, it would be an insignificant cost to implement. We see a number of dogs misjudge the jumps or struggle with striding - could this indeed be the result of an improper visual aid to the dog?

I believe this small change could improve the safety of this sport & support proper training for dogs at all levels.

Thank you (NAFA)for considering.

Regards,
Lorraine Messier

<https://www.animotionagility.ca/dogs-eye-view/>”

Recommendations:

After reviewing the article provided and applying the knowledge to flyball jumps, the Rules Committee notes the following:

- agility jumps are in completely different locations for every course, flyball jumps are consistently spaced
- approaches to agility jumps (and visual background) can be different for every course, while for flyball it is consistently white slats and board against black/grey mats
- agility jumps are most often a single horizontal pole (i.e. a 2” thick target) while flyball has a solid visual "wall" from baseboard/ground through top slat (i.e. dog looking at a 24" x 7" + target
- in agility, dogs jump much closer to their actual height at the withers, whereas for flyball the vast majority of dogs are jumping considerably lower than this measurement

The Rules Committee thanks Lorraine Messier for submitting her suggestion. After reviewing the differences between agility and flyball jumps, the committee doesn't feel there is evidence that white top slats being unmarked contributes any risk to safety for flyball jumps, or that adding striping reduces risk.

- *Leerie motioned to accept the rules committee recommendation. Dirk seconded. Motion carried.*

Nominating Committee:

Announced Terry McClean as Nominating Chairperson

Marketing Committee:

CanAm t-shirt design competition to be announced.

Junior handler pin design competition to be announced.

Judges longevity pins being discussed.

Disciplinary Committee:

Entered Executive Session at 11:55 am

Exited Executive Session at 12:50 pm.

DC2017-001 was dismissed.

Addie – CRN 080713 – Request to remove aggression excusal.

Disciplinary committee has recommended to remove excusal.

- *Leerie motioned to accept the committee's recommendation. Dana seconded. Motion carried.*

Disciplinary Committee Report:			Effective Date(s)
Cash, 140545	Suspension	Two aggression excusals	04/25/2015
Tommie, 100016	Suspension	Two aggression excusals	06/08/2014
Taj, 090259	Suspension	Two aggression excusals	05/04/2014
Tux, 100191	Suspension	Two aggression excusals	10/29/2013
Roxie, 051102	Suspension	Two aggression excusals	08/22/2011
Gimli, 040608	Suspension	Two aggression excusals	11/17/2008
Marion Brinkman	Suspension	Conduct prejudicial to the sport of NAFA flyball	Indefinitely
Mike Mattos	Suspension	Conduct prejudicial to the sport of NAFA flyball	Indefinitely
Janet Nelson Morris	Suspension	Conduct prejudicial to the sport of NAFA flyball	Indefinitely
Dave Mueller	Suspension	Conduct prejudicial to the sport of NAFA flyball	Indefinitely
Cheryl Mueller	Suspension	Conduct prejudicial to the sport of NAFA flyball	Indefinitely
Jennifer Nelson	Suspension	Conduct prejudicial to the sport of NAFA flyball	Indefinitely

*Dogs under suspension will be listed for maximum 15 years or if they have passed.

Review Panel:

- Brutus – CRN 170380 - Aggression Excusal
- Max – CRN 160224 – Aggression Excusal
- Scout – CRN 160440 – Aggression Excusal
- Fairlane – CRN 130337 – Aggression Excusal

Special Committee Reports

Technology Committee:

- Iron Dog Calculator – Emma Mak introduced the Iron Dog Calculator. And it has been added to racing dog's "Dog Points Detail" page in the NAFA Database. This new feature will allow competitors to track their dog's eligibility for this award.
- Developing conversation around the next generation of EJS, estimates on cost and functionality. The committee and ED would like to see possible prototypes and their features. Neil will contact.

Communications Committee:

- The announcement of the new communications committee received positive reviews.

CanAm Steering Committee:

- Plans are being discussed for the 10th CanAm. Recognition for clubs and dogs for attending all events. Emily and Lorie will be taking care of awards again. Also, looking towards this year's judges and expenses. Discussed ring set up, sponsors, Wi-Fi, vendors, livestream, FB Live and workers.

Old Business:

New Business:

- Date and location for the next board meeting was tentatively set for August 25th in Denver, Colorado.

Emma motioned to adjourn the meeting. Lynda seconded. Motion carried.

Meeting closed at 4:00 pm.