

Minutes
NAFA® Board of Directors Meeting – April 13, 2019 – 8:40 AM
Holiday Inn Express Atlanta Airport
4601 Best Road, College Park, GA 30337

Officers' Reports

Chair's Comments:

Welcome to the board from Steve Corona. This is the first in person meeting for new board member Kathy Haney.

Leerie moved, John 2nd holding the AGM in conjunction with No Speed Limit's January 2020 event in Maryland. The motion carried without opposition.

The next board meeting will be held September 7-8, 2019 at a place to be determined.

Executive Director's Comments:

New co-RD Linda May in region 19.

Leerie motioned to approve, John 2nd, Motion passed

Region 8 RD Cindy Gutwein has stepped down. Peter Wesdyk is covering the position until a new RD is appointed.

The new cases for shipping the CanAm trophies are now in place to allow shipping to the winners to enjoy the trophies.

Farm Tek lights are aged and there are few replacement parts for repairs.

RD handbook to help new RDs and general knowledge will be finalized soon.

A Q & A has been put together for TDs.

Treasurer's Report:

Tournament fees are down a bit YOY. Finalized financials will be available in the next few weeks.

Secretary's Report:

Dirk motioned to approve minutes of January 25, Leerie 2nd, motion passed

Dirk motioned to approve AGM Minutes, Leerie 2nd, motion passed

Election Committee:

No report

Standing Committee Reports

Judges Committee:

- James Scott Wilhelm – Silt, CO - New Novice
- Ally Boni – Dugald, MB - New Novice
- Paula Johnson – Hamilton, ON – New Apprentice

- Joan Weesies – Gulfport, FL – Provisional to Approved. The judges committee recommends the advancement of Joan Weesies from Provisional to Approved. Dirk motioned to approved, John 2nd, carried

Rules Committee:

1. "Sweater balls" - Ferne Browne

A letter was submitted to the Rules Committee by Ferne Browne asking whether the "sweater ball" she uses is permissible under the rules. By her description, these balls are hard rubber balls covered with tightly crocheted webbing. She has provided a prototype.

Rules Committee Comments: The Rules Committee is not comfortable with making a determination of whether a ball meets the requirements from the picture provided with Ferne Browne's letter. John Hendriks will be bringing a prototype to the meeting for the BoD to examine. There was discussion around whether changing the wording in 'Section 1.2 Balls' to create a type of checklist of the current requirements for balls, and adding clarification for the word 'round' would be helpful to competitors and judges. Most felt that the wording is sufficient, especially with the clarification provided by the recent ruling on "splash balls" and subsequent discussion with NAFA judges.

The board reviewed the wording in 1.2 Balls. There was not support from the board to change the wording. It was noted that the board had already addressed that balls need to be round and approved.

The ball presented was inspected and discussion ensued regarding its adherence to the rule. Multiple board members noted that though the ball rolls, it does not roll as a round ball would be expected to roll. A round ball should not stop suddenly. The ball presented for approval when rolled came to a sudden stop on multiple occasions. It was noted that it is possible the ball is designed to stop sooner, thus giving an unfair advantage to a dog who bobbles or misses catching the ball.

John moved, Aaron 2nd to deny approval of the ball submitted by Ferne Brown. The motion passed without opposition.

2. Green dog mat time during the racing day

At the last meeting the Rules Committee was tasked with coming up with some recommendations for guidelines for green dog mat time during the racing day. Over the past twelve months where requested, and when it would fit appropriately into the schedule, ED permission has been granted for hosts to provide this as an option to competitors.

a. Green dog mat time during the racing day: The RC advises that this stay an ED exception, since it is not the intention of NAFA to allow unsanctioned practice time to hold up racing during a sanctioned event. The ED wishes to be able to ensure that this practice time is done during natural breaks in the racing day, so there will need to be a determination on a case by case basis, based on the racing schedule and perhaps input from the RD. There was some discussion about adding wording to the rule book regarding the publication of major exceptions granted by the ED to keep competitors informed about options. There is some disagreement about whether guidelines should be added to the rule book, and in fact whether the EJS should be used during the green dog mat time at all. The following are guidelines which Neil has been using thus far. The board will need to discuss this further before guidelines can be finalized:

Rough Guidelines for ED Exception for Green Dog Mat Time During Racing Day

- will be considered unsanctioned practice time
- intended for small events for which natural breaks would occur anyway
- final permission will only be given after schedule has been set, and perhaps RD consultation
- host club is liable for any damage to the EJS during this time
- no more than two dogs are run in succession while using EJS
- use of EJS must be open to all dogs and handlers

Emma reported that Neil has granted permission 3 times to use the EJS during the racing day, twice for Alaska events and once for a Texas event. In each case, it made sense to allow the use of the lanes and EJS during extended breaks. Neil will send a list of guidelines to the RD list so they are aware of what type of event would be likely to be approved for this practice.

The exceptions granted have used the following stipulations

No dog using the lanes may be listed on a timesheet for the event.

If EJS is used, only two dogs may run in succession.

No CRN is required for a dog to use the lane.

Host clubs may add additional stipulations such as dogs must be able to run with other dogs.

Neil noted that when the ring is empty for an extended period of time, he does not see a reason it cannot be used for green dog practice.

Neil will add this information to the RD Q/A section published on the website.

3. Choke Chains - Sharon Atkinson

The rule book states that slip collars are permissible, which could include choke chains. A request was made to add wording for the rule book to disallow choke chains while racing, and possibly outside of the ring as well.

The RC agreed that "slip collar" could technically include choke chains and that NAFA does not want dogs racing in that type of collar. There was some split around whether NAFA should expand this ban further to include entering the ring, i.e., whether they should be banned, as electronic, electronic dummy collars, and pinch/prong collars are, on the tournament grounds. The RC considered other safety issues surrounding collars, such as chains on martingales, and whether the use of retractable leads was adequately addressed in the rules. The following wording is the latest suggestion based on discussion thus far:

Section 1.3 - Collars and leads

Flat collars, martingales (w/o chains) and harnesses are the only accepted type of collar to be used in navigating the course during racing or warm-ups.

Head halters, including Haltees or Gentle Leaders are permitted in the ring, but may not be used in navigating the course during racing or warm-ups.

Competitors are forbidden to use electronic, electronic dummy collars, and pinch/prong collars on the tournament grounds. The tournament grounds include racing lanes, spectator areas, and the crating area.

Retractable leads are not permitted in the ring.

It is noted that it is impossible to control spectators with prong collars or other unapproved devices on their dogs who are not part of the tournament.

Leerie moved, John 2nd to approve the Rules Committee wording.

Discussion:

Leerie requested 'w/o' be changed to 'without'.

Dirk noted the addition of 'navigating the course' to part of the rule.

A board member expressed concern about how people would control their dogs outside of the ring without the use of slip collars. It was noted that some of our rules exist based on public perception. It was also noted that eliminating slip collars from the ring will prohibit people from using tugs as a collar/leash by forming a slip collar with the handle end of the tug. Multiple board members agree that we cannot ensure that people use their equipment properly.

Leerie withdrew his motion until new wording can be presented.

Concern was expressed over eliminating chains from martingale collars when dogs are entering the ring. Samples of martingale collars made of chain were distributed.

There was interest in sending the rule back to committee.

The chair recognized Karen. Karen requested the board provide the rules committee with specifically what types of collars and leashes they would or would not allow and where those collars and leashes would be allowed.

Leerie recommends polling the board regarding what would and would not be allowed in the ring, into the ring and on the grounds.

Type of Collar/Leash	Use	Navigating The Course	Into the Ring	On Grounds
Non-Slip (Flat)	Y	Y	Y	Y
Non-Restrictive Harness	Y	Y	Y	Y
Limited-Slip (Martingale no chain)	Y	Y	Y	Y
Limited-Slip (Martingale with Chain)	N	N	N	Y
Slip (choke)	N	N	N	Y
Pinch/Prong	N	N	N	N
Electric	N	N	N	N
Dummy	N	N	N	N
Retractable Leash	N	N	N	Y
Head Collars	N	Y	Y	Y

Karen presented the following wording.

Section 1.3 - Collars and leads

Non-slip collars (e.g. flat), limited slip collars (e.g. martingale) and non-restrictive harnesses without chain are the only accepted types of collars to be used in navigating the course during racing or warm-ups.

Head halters (e.g. Haltees or Gentle Leaders) are permitted in the ring, however, they may not be used in navigating the course during racing or warm-ups.

Limited slip and slip collars containing chain, and retractable leads are forbidden in the ring.

Competitors are forbidden to use electronic, electronic dummy collars, and pinch/prong collars on the tournament grounds. The tournament grounds include racing lanes, spectator areas, and the crating area.

It is noted that it is impossible to control spectators using prong collars or other unapproved devices on their dogs who are not part of the tournament.

Aaron moved, Lynda 2nd to accept the above wording. Motion carried with no opposition.

4. An error in figure 2.3 was noted to be updated regarding broken material being used to make jumps. An additional error in the caption of figure 2.3 involving the word 'equal' in the caption was noted. These will be corrected for the October 2019 rule book.

New Business:

Email from Terri Botsford, Region 13 to Neil Flood, regarding matting versus artificial turf.

1. There is a lot of controversy about running flyball on Turf. I'd like to request NAFA to do some sort of research and decide if turf is good or bad to run flyball on. I know the fast flyball teams don't like it, but the fast agility people/dogs love it. I've run my dogs on it years ago, they did their best times and I didn't see anyone who had any problems with it, other than it being more

difficult for some dogs to enter the lanes without the “runway” of the matting. (We ended up putting down tape to show them where to go). Is it truly not good to run dogs on turf? Logic tells me that if dogs slide into the box on matting and burn their paws on matting (which they then tape their dogs), that they would on turf too. But it seems like they would be able to grip the turf better than they can on matting. I've also seen and run on matting that was placed on top of the turf. That worked but it seems like a big waste of time and money having to use mats on top of turf when it would be just as good, if not better, to just run on turf. I'm concerned that the concern with turf is just an old wives' tale and not based on any scientific or medical information. Can NAFA do some research so we can put an end to this debate?

2. Meanwhile, to try and compromise on this debate would it be possible for us to:
 - a. Just run matting down the middle of the lane and not on each side?
 - b. Just run matting from the 1st jump to the box?

Follow-up to original e-mail between Neil Flood and Terri Botsford:

1 - You are asking the board to research, which is fine, but what is the question you need answered? I say that because matting is allowed. The flyball community as a whole can debate if they like it, or not, but at this point we do allow, as long as it is safe. **I would like to know if turf is safe. To my knowledge there has been no research as to if turf is more harmful than matting. I'm asking if NAFA would somehow do a research study on the difference between matting and turf in doing flyball.**

2 - for your two-part question in the original email.

a) a number of factors on whether or not you need to put matting on the sides will be related to both what is underneath, and the height. So, if you are laying turf on top of concrete, then yes, you have to lay turf on the sides as the rulebook outlines. **No, this is not the case.** If it is on top of tuff spun matting, then you may not need to, however, I would have serious safety concerns due to the uneven surface. This would impact both people transitioning from the side to racing mats, but also dogs as the run back jumping from one to other. I am inclined to want the surface, and texture, the same for the dogs. **In our case, we are putting turf on top of matting, the whole 3/4s of the building will be like this. The flyball area will be only on half this area. Specifically, I'm asking if we could put the matting on top of the turf, tape it down like we do now, but only have one long area of 3' by over 60' rather than 9' by over 60'.**

b) are you asking just from the jump closest to the box? **Yes, the jump closest to the box.** I've seen people number the jumps totally different. In my mind, I think of jump 1 as the closest to the start line. So, we are talking the same way, I would label the jumps 1,2,3,4 from start line to box, then 5, 6, 7, and 8 returning from box to start line. Are you talking about matting jump 4/5 to box? **Yes**

Two board members from differing regions note that there has been no controversy regarding the artificial non-mat surfaces used in their areas. Two other board members note that in Agility, competitors who do not like a surface on which a trial is held do not compete at the event. One member noted that there are clubs who decline to attend specific tournaments because of the type of mats used. People have the choice to or not to run at an event, at a venue, on a surface.

The board does not consider it feasible to conduct a study based on the wide variety of surfaces and the constant change in availability of new surfaces.

If there is question about the safety of a racing surface, the RD and judge can be asked to inspect the surface.

The current rule regarding the matting of the racing lanes was reviewed.

Steve will respond to Terri.

Finance:

Quarterly P&L Review

Nominating Committee:

No report

Marketing Committee:

Junior handler pin and T-shirt design competition will start in May with a June 30 closing date.

Suggestion from competitor. Could we have an online store for the purchase of NAFA branded merchandise. The committee will look into this.

ROCC plaques are needed. Will go with our current supplier and format.

Marketing will find out who supplies the artwork and who the contact person is for the award production.

Disciplinary Committee:

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	8/22/2011
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

Review Panel:

- Gordie – CRN 170591 - Aggression Excusal upheld
- Sadi – CRN 170551 – Aggression Excusal upheld

Special Committee Reports

Technology Committee:

- Update on current project to cover the existing 20 sets of Farmtek EJS.

A new call will be scheduled to provide direction and realignment of priorities.

Communications Committee:

No report

CanAm Steering Committee:

New ring set up lead for CanAm this year. The other major job leads will remain the same.

CanAm needs additional sponsors.

Old Business:

- Measuring methodology and additional analysis of measuring data collected on October 12-13, 2018 during CanAm.

Ulna and withers measurement data gathered at CanAm 2018 and its statistical analysis is attached

At least one board member feels that after reviewing the data, none of the ulna measuring options gives us what we were looking for and there is no reason to change to an ulna measurement just for the sake of making a change.

Aaron moved, Lynda 2nd to switch to a measurement of the ulna to determine minimum jump height.

Discussion –

Neil notified the board that a ¾ majority is needed in order to pass this motion.

The board discussed the statistical results of the ulna measurement data obtained at CanAm at length.

The goal in changing the way we measure is to make measuring easier on dogs while ensuring a fair and level playing field, unfortunately, the results do not show a clear correlation between ulna length and withers height.

There was extensive discussion on the advantages and disadvantages to changing the way we measure and the ramifications of that.

Options mentioned during the discussion: Use straight rounding to determine withers height, change the jump height to six inches less than the withers height, lower the maximum jump height.

The board discussed the results of the ulna measurement data at length. After reviewing the data and having discussed the results multiple times prior to the board meeting, a majority of the board felt a move to ulna measuring would impact too many dogs in an undesired manner. The board was disappointed that the ulna measurement data did not more closely coincide with withers measurements.

Leerie called the question.

A roll call vote was taken:

3 for, 5 against, chair abstained

The motion fails.

The board will hold teleconferences in the next few weeks to consider the proposal from Leerie (attached).

Commented [KO1]: Attach Ulna measurement report to end of document

Steve took the board into executive session at 3:20pm

Steve took the board out of Executive Session at 3:34pm

Dirk moved, Kathy 2nd to adjourn, the motion passed by acclamation.
The meeting adjourned at 4:33pm