

## NAFA® Board of Directors Meeting

January 26-27, 2018 – Minneapolis, MN

Board meeting held at Chuck & Don's, 910 Wildwood Rd., Mahtomedi, MN 55115.

In attendance:

Steve Corona  
Kim Davis  
Dirk Elber  
Neil Flood  
Dana Hanson  
John Hendriks  
Leerie Jenkins  
Lynda Mantler  
Dale Smith

### Officers' Reports

#### ***Chair's Comments: 7:57 am***

Steve called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone to the board meeting and AGM, and thanked Animal Inn for hosting the AGM and Chuck and Don's for hosting our meeting space.

#### ***Executive Director's Comments:***

- FCI World Cup Update – The committee has met about a half a dozen times so far. The FCI committee is: Greg Stopay, Sam Ford, Sharon Anderson, Leerie Jenkins, Steve Corona, Dana Hanson, and Tammy Frank. Tammy has recently resigned due to other commitments.

We met with the finance committee and discussed what might be available for funds. One of the biggest complications is that it's being held in August in France. We have limited options for flying dogs during that time of year. There is a direct flight overnight, but it is pricey. Other particulars discussed: Is there enough revenue? How to select teams. Funds would be small at present. Can or should NAFA spend that much? With this being the first time of this World Cup kicking off, the organization that created flyball definitely needs to be represented.

The FCI committee has agreed that we are not recommending paying to send one or more teams at this time. Even if the board plans to financially back, we should look for sponsorships or establish an FCI budget fund, and the time of year is still an issue for travel. Perhaps we can suggest a time change for the event in future.

We've also got the 10<sup>th</sup> year of CanAm coming up, which is a bigger and more visible investment at this time, than being represented at FCI.

Eventually we are looking to send at least one team from both Canada and the USA. The CKC and AKC would represent each. For the most part, it appears participation will be from continental Europe. With NAFA joining in, it would be a big deal.

Dana suggested other fundraising possibilities, and other ways to donate funds will need to be investigated.

Discussions turned to possibly using qualifiers to qualify to go to the FCI event.

Dana will investigate how to possibly support this venture financially.

Neil asked for the board's support to go ahead with FCI conversation. Leerie moved to support the ED's request for continued World Cup Committee activity, with the goal of sending teams to the FCI World Cup 2020. Dale seconded. Motion carried.

Dale motioned to authorize the committee to send a representative to the upcoming FCI world cup. John seconded. Motion carried.

FCI uses a different height dog measuring device and NAFA is investigating the tool. So far, most NAFA dogs have measured to jump the same or a bit higher.

- Kennel clubs are splitting out the Parson Russell and the Jack Russell. Competitors can choose to change breed if wanted.

Dale motioned to change the existing NAFA breed list entry for "Jack/Parson Russell Terrier" to "Jack/Russell Terrier" and create a new NAFA breed list entry of "Parson Russell Terrier". Any dog present in the existing NAFA breed list, listed as "Jack/Parson Russell Terrier", can move to "Parson Russell Terrier" without penalty and without using up their one lifetime breed change. Dirk seconded. We consider the UKC's "Jack Russell Terrier" to be the same as the AKC's "Russell Terrier" and they will be treated as a single breed. Motion carried.

Additional discussion of the American Eskimo Dog resulted in the determination that the CKC recognized the American Eskimo as a single breed with three varieties/divisions. No other NAFA recognized kennel club appears to recognize more than one breed at this time.

- Metrics – Discussions about tournament attendance. Neil presented tournament participation statistics. Finance might need to reconsider recording fees.

- Review of different platforms to possibly replace Yahoo Groups for the NAFA discussion groups. Discussed how the groups are used. Also looking to find offloading existing attachments.

- Training in the ring. There was a complaint against teams holding back during racing. We acknowledge that teams do this, but does this mean there is an unfair advantage? Neil would like Rules to look at modifying/adding rulebook glossary items that might help clarify some issues for our competitors.

- Neil received a letter asking for an exception to the Iron Dog requirements. As with previous similar requests, we did not grant an exception.

#### ***Treasurer's Report:***

Dana presented the financial reports. Discussions included expenses and election fees.

***Secretary's Report:*** August minutes were approved and posted.

#### ***Election Committee:***

- Election Results

Dale asked to enter executive session.

Exited executive session.

#### **Standing Committee Reports**

##### ***Judges Committee:***

- Fred Terryn, resigned 10/29/2017

- Chris Fairen, Oshawa ON, Provisional to Approved - The judges committee unanimously recommended to advance Chris to Approved. Dale motioned to accept the judges committee recommendation. John seconded. Discussion. Motion carried.

- Eloise Chateauf, ON, Provisional to Approved - The judges committee unanimously recommended to advance Eloise to Approved. Dale motioned to accept the judges committee recommendation. John seconded. Discussion. Motion carried.
- Patricia Howell, Linden VA, Provisional to Approved – Leerie motioned to advance to Approved. Dale seconded. Discussion. Motion carried.
- Bryan Roper, Sandston VA, Apprentice to Provisional - The judges committee unanimously recommended to advance Bryan to Provisional. Dale motioned to accept the judges committee recommendation. John seconded. Discussion. Motion carried.
- Mary McElligott, Fairport NY, new Novice
- Joan Weesies, Gulfport FL, new Novice
- Maryann Deschler, Jacksonville FL, new Novice
- Gwen Ahlbrecht, Phoenix AZ, new Novice
- Jeff Wright, Phoenix AZ, new Novice
- Benjamin Sykes, Greensboro NC, new Novice
- Katie Atholz, Westminster CO, Provisional assignments – Dale motioned to accept the recommendations of the judges committee to require Katie to complete two additional provisional assignments before the of the racing year. Dana seconded. Motion carried.
- \*C.9 Form tournament results data entry/tracking – Moved to new business

**Rules Committee:**

Items 1 and 2 were sent back to rules from last board meeting and still require more discussion

**Item #1.** Creating a new (additional) type of regional championships based on average placements for a club.

**Item #2.** Creating additional awards based purely on database stats or nominations; awards that focus on qualities other than speed.

John motioned to forward both items to rules for additional fleshing out of terminology. Dirk seconded. Motion carried.

**Item #3.** Email received from Dave Strauss regarding proposals for creating new classes of racing for NAFA tournaments (received October 24, 2017)

To: NAFA Board of Directors, Rules Committee Subject: Proposal for new racing class for NAFA tournaments

**BACKGROUND:**

As we all know, the process of measuring dogs to set a team's jump height can be problematic. There will always be some variability in a measurement that involves both humans and dogs, no matter how well trained the measuring judges may be and no matter how thoroughly the process is reviewed and refined. There is also the perception that the method NAFA uses to measure dogs is inherently less repeatable, and more subjective, than the method used by U-Fli - although there is no clear evidence that this is the case.

There *is* clear evidence that the U-Fli method results in jump heights that can be several inches lower than NAFA jump heights. At the same time, there is pressure from the fastest teams to jump at the lowest height possible. This can lead

to situations where very fast teams run at jump heights lower than the rules allow, more or less daring other teams to challenge their jump heights. This can be a very uncomfortable situation for the majority of people playing Flyball - mostly we're there to run our dogs and have fun and being confrontational about jump heights is not a part of that. On the other hand, we want everyone to agree on and observe the rules so that we feel that the racing is fair.

There is a wide spectrum of people and dogs that play Flyball. At one extreme we have those who are just happy to be there playing a game. They probably care more about getting their dogs to run the course cleanly than anything else. Getting points towards titles and (sometimes) winning races or placing well in a tournament are just icing on the cake. For these people, the existing rules and classes are probably adequate.

At the other extreme we have people (and clubs) who are more interested in setting records - they don't really care about winning races or getting first place in a tournament, as long they can be the fastest team in Flyball. These teams are placing the most pressure on the current height rules - for them, the difference between jumping 9 inches and jumping 10 inches, for example, is huge.

The challenge is to come up with a set of rules that can serve both extremes and everyone in between. This is not an easy thing to do and is getting harder with ever faster teams. There is a danger that the elite, record-breaking clubs will eventually split off into their own version of the sport and we'll then have "Flyball for Really Fast Teams" and "Flyball For The Rest Of Us" with different sets of rules and completely separate tournaments. To some extent this is already happening, and I for one am saddened by this - one of the things I have liked about Flyball was participating in tournaments that encompassed both my own admittedly-not-that-competitive teams and the ultra-fast record breaking teams.

Given that challenge, I think it's time to recognize the different requirements of the really fast teams and give them a way to continue to compete in NAFA Flyball. We need to recognize that these sub-15 second teams want a way to set jump heights in a way that is appropriate for teams running at those speeds.

At the same time, we need to recognize that the current rules are perfectly adequate for the vast majority of people playing Flyball (especially with the new height rules for the Open class).

To meet this challenge, I propose that NAFA create a new racing class or classes that are aimed specifically at the high-performance record setting teams. These proposals are just suggestions, and I'm sure there are many aspects of this that I haven't covered and would still need to be worked out. I hope that these proposals will provide the basis for a serious discussion by the Board and the Rules Committee.

Note that I'm proposing that NAFA adopt only one of these proposals.

### **PROPOSAL 1: "Elite" racing class**

The Elite class has the same rules as the Regular class except for the following:

1. The jump height will be set at 9 inches.
2. Elite class teams are not eligible for regional championships.
3. To the extent possible based on tournament entries, tournaments will be organized to have Elite teams race each other.
4. Elite class teams and Regular class teams may be mixed in a tournament; in any race involving an Elite team and a Regular team the Regular team will automatically be declared the winner of any completed heats.
5. NAFA would maintain a separate Elite Class world record. Normal world record rules would apply except for the height dog measurement requirement.

## Discussion:

1. (a) Note that (unlike the Open class), club affiliation rules apply.
2. (b) There is precedence for running all teams in a class at a fixed jump height - for example the Veterans and Open classes in NAFA and the Crufts Flyball rules.
3. (c) Crufts Flyball has an "Anything But Collie" (ABC) rule. I don't think we need that here - if a team wants to try running 4 whippets or 4 border staffies on an Elite team, why not let them?
4. (d) Why 9"? Why not 8" or 10" or 7"? I think mostly because 9 inches seems to be the sweet spot for elite teams. I don't think 7" is appropriate because we already have that for Open (assuming the rule change remains). I also think the jump height should be high enough that it means something. The NAFA community should probably be consulted about this aspect.
5. (e) We could also have an Elite-Multi class - same thing but with the multibreed requirement.
6. (f) For CanAm, I believe all CanAm races on Sunday should be under the Elite rules. I'm not sure what we would do about Saturday races - we might require that teams declare that they're Elite teams and only Elite teams could go to the CanAm elim rounds. Clearly this requires some thought.
7. (g) We might want to add a requirement that a Tournament Director may not disclose which clubs have entered Elite teams prior to the tournament closing.
8. (h) Elite teams racing Regular teams is similar to Open teams racing Veterans teams.

The proposal failed to advance for lack of second. The board appreciated the imagination and details put into the proposal. We would welcome similarly well-thought-out proposals in the future. With the new rules for open, we feel the possibility of misuse outweigh the benefits of this new format at this time.

## PROPOSAL 2: Jump Height Specific classes

The Jump Height Specific (JHS) classes have the same rules as the Regular class except for the following:

1. When entering a tournament, a team *declares* the jump height they will use during the tournament. They are then entered into the class for that jump height - for example the 7 inch class, the 8 inch class, and so on. During the tournament they may set the jumps *only* to this jump height, regardless of the height measurement of any of their dogs.
2. JHS class teams are not eligible for regional championships.
3. To the extent possible based on tournament entries, tournaments will be organized to have JHS teams race each other.
4. JHS teams and Regular class teams may be mixed in a tournament; in any race involving a JHS team and a Regular team the Regular team will automatically be declared the winner of any completed heats.
5. JHS teams with different jump heights may be mixed in a tournament; in any race involving two JHS teams the team with the higher declared jump height will automatically be declared the winner of any completed heats. If two JHS teams have the same declared jump heights then normal racing rules apply.
6. NAFA would maintain separate JHS records for each jump height. Normal world record rules would apply except for the height dog measurement requirement.

## Discussion:

1. (a) This is definitely a more complicated proposal than the Elite class proposal, but on the other hand it's more flexible.
2. (b) We could also have height-specific classes for Multi - same thing but with the multibreed requirement.
3. (c) I'm not sure what we would do for CanAm. It wouldn't be fair to have teams with two different declared heights race each other. Perhaps the teams would have to race at the higher of the two heights.
4. (d) We might want to add a requirement that a Tournament Director may not disclose which clubs have entered JHS teams prior to the tournament closing.
5. (e) JHS teams racing Regular teams is similar to Open teams racing Veterans teams.

6. (f) Imagine being the first club to set the 14-inch class speed record.

Rules committee has had some discussion on this with no clear consensus.

Recommend sending it back to Rules for more discussion.

The proposal failed to advance for lack of a second. While this proposal was more complex, once again, the detail and forethought were appreciated. The challenge in finding teams in the same speed range, while limited by jump height, was seen as unworkable at this time.

**Item #4.** An item was brought to John's attention as a possible concern:

When hosting a NAFA event host club receives 1 vote per tournament.

When cohosting 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.

This Item has previously been discussed by the Board in 2011. The report is attached (Attachment – 2011DelegateCommitteeReport1108.pdf). There has been some discussion of possible amendments but no clear consensus.

The board asked the rules committee to formulate language reminding competitors, based on previous board policy, that teams cohosting tournaments, need to make appreciable contributions to the event to be considered cohosts. However, the board continues to encourage cohosting to ensure that enough people are available to make events workable for hosting clubs.

There will be more potential changes coming out of our delegate vote depending on results of the vote.

**Finance:** N/A

**Nominating Committee:** N/A

**Marketing Committee:**

- CanAm logo design to incorporate CanAm's 10th year. Design contest will open earlier than usual.

- Judges – Possibly create a new longevity pin. 5 – 10 – 15 year

- Schedule junior pin contest date

- 10<sup>th</sup> year CanAm marketing

- LinkedIn account

- Leerie requested the chair establish a special communications committee, which would be comprised of board and non-board members, tasked with proactive communication between the NAFA board and NAFA participants. Leerie also suggested Cindy Henderson as Chair.

**Disciplinary Committee:**

Rugby – CRN 130100 – Request to remove aggression excusal

Disciplinary committee recommends removing. Leerie motioned to accept the committee's recommendation. John seconded. Motion carried.

Kim motioned to remove dogs under suspension from the Disciplinary Committee Report, after 15 years or if they have passed. Steve seconded. Motion carried.

## Unsportsmanlike Conduct Charges Review

Steve asked to enter executive session.

Exited executive session.

The board discussed DC2017001. The hearing is tentatively scheduled for the next in-person board meeting.

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

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

### **Review Panel:**

- Buzz – CRN 090662 - Aggression Excusal Upheld on Appeal
- Whisper – CRN 110704 – Aggression Excusal
- Maverick – CRN 170065 – Aggression Excusal Upheld on Appeal
- Mighty – CRN 170351 – Aggression Excusal
- Rio – CRN 160120 – Aggression Excusal

### **Special Committee Reports**

#### **Technology Committee:**

- Technology continues to look toward the next generation of EJS. Discussions revolved around replacement parts, future designs, and shipping costs.

**NAFA/Flyball History Committee:** N/A

#### **CanAm Steering Committee:**

Neil has received emails from Cory Norbin from Eukanuba and possibly looking to be a sponsor at CanAm.

Discussion going forward with plans for this year's event and possible duties for all attending board members and returning workers.

#### **Old Business:**

- Leerie motioned to extend the open class trial period rules through the 9/30/18. This includes authorization to offer the practice start between warm up and first heat of the race. John seconded. Discussion. Motion carried.

- Leerie motioned that pursuant to the delegate vote, effective 10/1/2018, the rules for the open class be modified to include no false starts, pick a jump height between the minimum and maximum heights, and for an optional practice start between the warm-up and the first heat. Kim seconded. Motion carried.

- Leerie motioned that pursuant to the delegate vote, effective 10/1/2018, the rules for the regular, multibreed and non-regular classes be modified to include no false starts and an optional practice start. Kim seconded. Discussion. Dale called the question.

- Roll call:

- Kim - A
- Dirk - Y
- Dana - Y
- John - Y
- Leerie - Y
- Lynda - Y
- Dale - Y

Motion carried.

Dale motioned to table the jump height reduction discussion to the next board meeting. Leerie seconded. Motion carried.

***New Business:***

- \*C.9 Form tournament results data entry/tracking. Leerie would like to integrate these into NAFAScore tournament results. Would also like to ask other independent software developers to integrate into their programs as well. Priorities for NAFA technology development include: automated account maintenance, C9 integration into NAFAScore, self-service management, and allowing owners or team owners to opt out of awards and print their own certificates.

- The board received a request to recognize the German Kennel Club as an approved breed registry to the NAFA list. This item failed to receive a second. Discussion reiterated that all NAFA recognized kennel clubs are North America based.

- Dana suggested looking at the tournament schedule around CanAm this year.

Dale motioned to suspend the meeting. Lynda seconded. Motion carried.