

NAFA® Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Teleconference - June 7, 2020

In attendance:

Jonathan Bescher

Kathy Haney

Cindy Henderson

Lynda Mantler

Emma Mak

Dana Hanson

Kurt Johnson

Steve Corona

Leerie Jenkins

ED Neil Flood

Chairman's Comments

Steve welcomed the board and called the meeting to order at 6:11 pm CST

Executive Director's Comments

Neil thanked the board for attending the meeting. A lot has changed since our last meeting and with some jurisdictions opening up, it remains to be seen how COVID rates will be impacted in the coming weeks.

1. Review of CanAm poll sent to club owners.
 - Response showed that the expected number of teams to enter on Saturday would be 80. Last year, the Saturday entries were 180.
 - The responses were not positive as it relates to being able to host the event in a cost-effective manner.
 - There were 143 responses in total. 68.5% responded that their club would not attend and 31.5 percent would attend.
 - The clubs that indicated they would attend were anticipating to attend with fewer teams than in previous years.
 - Reasons given for non-attendance were, financial reasons, not feeling comfortable congregating in a large group, dogs not being in good physical condition and teams crossing the border concerned about being quarantined upon their return to Canada.

- The Indiana State Fair scheduled for August at the Indiana State Fairgrounds, the venue where CanAm takes place, has been cancelled for 2020.
2. Discussion regarding feasibility of NAFA to host CanAm 2020.
- We do not yet know if it will be safe to host an event of that size.
 - The response from judges regarding their availability was that there would be enough judges to hold CanAm.

Cindy moved that we cancel CanAm this year. Jonathon seconded. Motion carried with no opposition.

Neil and Cindy will contact the fairgrounds to discuss the rental contract and reserving dates for next year.

Vendors will be notified that CanAm will not be held. Neil will take on that action item.

Leerie joined the meeting.

3. Regional tournament timetable.

Discussion took place about when NAFA should allow tournament sanctioning.

- Every state and province is different regarding the recommendations and rules for public gatherings. The situation is changing daily.
- Major outdoor events are cancelled in most areas
- The rules of some venues make it difficult to hold an event that is officially sanctioned.
- Discussion took place about what, if any, conditions NAFA should put on tournament hosts to safeguard the competitors and public. For example; wearing masks, social distancing, limited draw tournaments and crating dogs in vehicles or outdoors which could be dangerous in extreme weather.
- Some other dog sports have cancelled events for the next few months and some that are not team sports have resumed. Flyball is not a sport that lends itself to social distancing. Many competitors have voiced that they do not feel comfortable going to large gatherings of the size that a host club would need to make a tournament financially feasible.
- With the ROCC, Regional Champion and NAFA Champion awards already being cancelled for 2020, any tournaments held in FY2020 would not earn points towards those awards.

- Depending on travel restrictions when sanctioning resumes, special considerations for Region 7; BC, Oregon, Washington may need to be given. Travel across international boundaries may not be permitted or participants would likely not travel to the other country if they needed to quarantine upon return home.

Leerie moved that NAFA extends suspension of sanctioning of events through September 30, 2020. Kathy seconded. Motion carried with no opposition.

Steve and Cindy will work on a communication regarding CanAm and regional tournament cancellations.

A virtual flyball tournament proposal was sent to the board by Ally Stern-Kolesnikow.

I realize NAFA flyball is not a priority during a pandemic however our dogs live for such a short period of time. Taking years off from tournaments is a long period of our dog's lives and unfortunately it's very possible that we won't be able to host tournaments for a very long time. Other dog sport associations have found a way to host virtual events and I hope that NAFA can offer something similar. I am proposing that NAFA hosts virtual flyball. It's an opportunity to add a little "normalcy" in our lives.

Participants would submit videos. In order to assure that the video is current you could tell the participants to hold up a sign with the dog's CRN and the current date. There would be no way to check if the ring measurements were exactly correct so I think it should be the honour system. Since team racing doesn't encourage us to social distance I recommend that you only offer singles and double classes. Timing systems would not be necessary. This is for points only. If the singles dog completes the run correctly and carries the ball over the start/finish line he would be awarded NAFA points (25??). If the doubles pair completes the run correctly and carries their balls over the start/finish line both dogs would be awarded NAFA points (50??). Dogs would only be able to earn a max of 500?? points a month. I will leave the points breakdown up you. You could also offer a class for those that don't have space for four jumps. They would earn less points and only be required to set up two jumps. No head to head racing would be offered- again that does not encourage social distancing. NAFA fees would be collected because video reviewers should be compensated for their time and you have to cover your cost for plaques. This is just temporary and the program could end when social distancing ends in North America.

Thanks!

Ally Stern-Kolesnikow

DogZworth (452)

Ally's other suggestion of having actual tournaments offering only singles and doubles for points was also raised (as a stepping stone to resuming full tournaments).

The proposal was discussed and while the board wants to keep flyball competitors engaged and the concept is interesting, the overall feeling was that the variances from how we play flyball are too great. It was decided to not officially encourage any gatherings/practices/scrimmages or to rent EJS for this purpose.

A meeting will be held in August to evaluate tournament sanctioning at that time.

Meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm