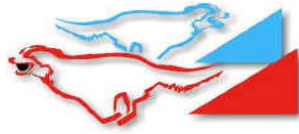


British Flyball Association



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Held on Sunday 29th March 2009 at Wythall Community Hall, Birmingham.

1. The Chairman opened the Meeting at 10.00hrs, welcomed those present (99 in number) and thanked everyone for coming.
2. **Apologies** - were received from Theresa Chamberlain, Sue Goddard, Rachel Roberts, Steph Rendall, Julie Wills, Ruth & Nick Dermont, Maria Brennan, June Smerle.
3. **Minutes of last AGM – 6th March 2008** - copies had been distributed to all Team Captains, Head Judges, Regional Representatives and Officers with the revised copy of the BFA Rules and Policies, and had been made available on the Website for all other interested parties at that time. They were therefore approved as a true record without a further reading.

Reports were then presented for 2008/2009 by:

Chairman's Report: Steve Leek

(Before I start, can I tell you – I hate Penny, I used to think she was my friend – but in my old life before embroidery when I used to stand up in front of people I would just have a few notes jotted down on a scrappy piece of paper, making most of it done as I went along ... but as she can't do shorthand she told me I actually had to write this speech, but no doubt it'll be nothing like the copy I've already given her)

I would like to extend a warm welcome from all of the committee to all of the members that have attended today, thank you very much. My role at an AGM is a four part affair:

1. To thank people for all their hard work over the last year
2. To reflect upon the year just gone
3. To look forward to the upcoming year, and lastly
4. To chair the debate on items raised by the most important people of all, the membership

So, let's start off with point 1!

I'd like to start off with Penny, who took over as secretary six years ago as a brand new member of the committee. Whatever the outcome of the postal vote, she is standing down as secretary, due to changed circumstances over the last couple of years. I think you will all agree that she has done a fantastic job so again thank you Penny and good luck to whoever takes over.

Ms Gladstone

Wow! I know you've had some help, but how you even vaguely keep the results and points up to date with the number of tournaments that we are having is beyond me. Suzanne (because she's shy) has asked me to give her thanks to Judy, Graham and Rachel – so on her behalf "Thanks". Moe, or should I really say Moe and Ian, membership seems to be a non-stop job. I can't believe how smoothly you keep it running. I also apologise if I've woken you up too often.

Chairman's Report (Continued)

As the Association has grown, training has been a vital part of this growth. Peter POD for many years has led this training and I would like to extend the thanks of all the committee for the work that he has done. Peter decided last year that he needed to stand down from this role, but I think that you all will agree that he has been bloody good. Following the theme with Moe and Ian, I think that Peter will also agree that some things are also a partnership, so a huge thank you to Delia as well.

I would also like to thank Judy Parker, as Show Secretary who seems to be constantly available for help and advice; Anne Alcock, as Treasurer; Anne Johnston for managing height cards; Val Currie, for our wonderful Flyball Record; Steph Rendell, Publicity Officer and Nigel Bouckley as Webmaster.

I would also like to thank every member of the Committee who have supported me over my first year as Chairman, without you it would have been much harder.

Finally (and this is only point 1. Remember) I would like to thank Bridget for having done 2 postal votes this year, plus being a sounding board for all my weird and wonderful ideas – I couldn't do this job without you.

Right let's cut the crap and get onto last year!

Three major things stick in my mind about the last year –

- The first being the horrendous crash of our BFA web-board showing us how much we rely on it. I believe it was brought on by the sheer volume of use that it now gets. Nigel has done a stunning job and, even with the difficulties of being 20,000 leagues under the sea managed to recover the situation magnificently
- The British Championships – who would have believed we could have had so much fun. To me this was the most amazing tribute to our sport – thanks to Anne and the Live Wires, plus the Committee for backing them up, for organising the day ... and especially to Moe and the Mutts for corrupting us all evening. The racing in all divisions from Div 1 to Div 22 was fantastic.
- I suppose the third big thing of last year has been the height change ... we had a 31% return with 87% voting for the change – I do wish we could hit the 90%+ that NAFA had on the same vote (and yes I know they do use a different system).

To sum the year up, I know I had huge amounts of fun and I bet you all did too!

What about this year

One thing that I can say for certain it's going to be bigger. Did you know that in 2004 there were 43 tournaments held ... in 2008 there were 70 tournaments held and in 2009 there are 84 booked already(my own method of counting with weekend tournaments counted as one), with 2 or 3 tournaments being held most weekends throughout the summer. On top of all of that the tournaments seem to have more divisions as well!

With this growth one of the things that's been on my mind is judging and, having discussed this at Committee, we are putting forward a discussion document that will be circulated initially to Head Judges and then to other parties about the creation of a new role of Judge. The Judge will sit between Provisional Judge, requiring proper supervision, and Head Judge. We hope this will allow for additional training and a better line of communication to the guys that stand in the middle. In addition to this we are looking at creating the role of Official Measurer – helping to alleviate the pressure on Head Judges, who are currently the only people who can measure a dog.

We will continue training courses – this year we ran one in February in Markfield that was oversubscribed, but we managed to accommodate the extras. We are running another in a couple of weeks at Sutton Fields, which is hugely oversubscribed and we will be contacting team captains very soon about this. We plan to hold more, so if you have a suitable venue, please let us know. This should help with getting a better level of judging across the arena – a concern that was raised last year at the AGM.

Chairman's Report (Continued)

This year's British Championships should be fun, as everyone that came last year wants to come again and the vast majority of those that didn't also want to come – we may even need to deploy a third ring. The one thing I do know between us we can make it a fantastic celebration of our wonderful sport.

The last thing I'd like to say about this coming year is how proud I am of the response Britain has put forward for the European Championships – currently we seem to be taking 20 teams, equalling the host nation.

Lastly, a food for thought – I can't believe the amount of personal time that Moe, Suzanne and their helpers put in to doing membership and stats. As the sport continues to grow maybe we need to look at alternative ways of this getting done – I have my personal thoughts and if anybody feels they have any sensible thoughts, please contact me.

Again, thank you all for taking this day out of your lives and I strongly feel it is an important thing to do, let's get on with the more interesting people and discussions.

Secretary's Report: Penny Charlton.

I have just completed my sixth and final year as Secretary of the association, and you will be pleased to know this will be the last time I will be making a speech. (don't all cheers!) Although I have been persuaded to stand for election for another year, if elected I will be standing down in this position. I had to think long and hard before agreeing to stand for another year as I do not have as much free time to complete the job of Secretary as I may have had in the past. Knowing how hard it is to take over as secretary of the association, I have agreed that if elected, I will be on hand to give my successor all the help and support they need in order to continue the good work of the committee. I trust the membership will give the new committee time to get used to the jobs that they take on and are patient with the new secretary in his or her new role. Over the past six years, I have taken my share of flak from the membership, and trust you will support the new secretary as it is no easy task being the spokes person of the association and that you will remember the secretary's role is to act on behalf of the committee.

The Committee have met three times between the last AGM and the 1st February 2009; this is not including the numerous discussions that take place at shows around the country, between any committee members that have been present. Most problems that arose between meetings were dealt with by e-mail contact and we held our first teleconference this year. Due to the many shows that are now being hosted it is proving more difficult to hold meetings, especially during the summer months. With this in mind the committee may well be opting for more teleconference's in the future to discuss any problem that may occur throughout the year. A revised copy of the BFA rules and policies were emailed to all team Captains, Regional Reps, Head Judges and all other officers. They were also posted onto the website together with a copy of the 2008 AGM minutes.

Val Currie editor of the Flyball Record has compiled another four issues. The Committee would like to thank her for all her hard work.

The BFA has enjoyed another successful year with great racing and competitions and the diary is very full for this year, especially for the summer months. The Committee wish to thank all show organisers for their hard work making these shows possible.

Due to the success of the British Championships last year, the Committee are hoping that this year's championships will be even bigger and better and that many teams that did not attend last year will come and enjoy the best Flyball fix of the year. I am sure the High Flyers are looking forward to defending their title; I know the Bandits are looking forward to defending theirs, (if you don't know what that was then you missed a treat).

The European Championships which are being held in Belgium this year and will see many teams from the UK attending for the first time and the Committee would like to wish them all the best and we trust you will all do the BFA proud.

Secretary's Report (Continued)

As the membership renewals were changed to the 1st January each year I would like to thank Maureen for keeping all the membership renewals up to date and dealing with all your membership enquiries as quickly as possible. With an ever increasing membership, this is obviously a very time consuming and difficult job. The number of members who have renewed or joined as from 1st January 2009 currently stands at 1715 (against 1332 on the 1st April 2008) which is made up with 221 new members who have joined since the 1st January 09.

Since the last AGM we attracted 639 new members (last year 582). We currently have 207 Primary Teams, and 977 Secondary teams.

I would finally like to thank Steve in his first year as chairman for his hard work on the Committee, Nigel Bouckley, the webmaster, Anne Alcock as treasurer, Judy Parker for her role as Show Secretary. I would also like to thank Suzzanne for her many hours imputing the stats, Anne Johnson for the height card administration. All these jobs are very time consuming and without these volunteers the BFA could not function as it is today.

The Committee has worked very hard this last year to keep the association up and running with fewer problems occurring than in the past, which is due to a good working relationship between 9 committee member from all around the country, of which I thank them all. I hope this will continue for many years to come and the membership will continue to help and support the committee where-ever possible. Anyway I will shut up now and as usual you won't hear another peep from me all meeting!!

Treasurer's Report: Anne Alcock

Last year we had a big surplus which increased our bank balance by just over £5000 and so we decided we'd give something back to you the members meaning free entry to the British Championships and to attend Ring Party & Judges Courses.

We quite expected that our Bank balance would drop substantially but in fact it hasn't turned out that way. This was most likely because the last financial year was only 11 months long and also crucially that we received two lots of rejoining fees - collected in April & when we changed the year end, again a large proportion of fees came in December.

This year may be different, as we expect less from membership fees and much less coming in over the rest of the year, until December. We'll have to see how this impacts on our funds for 2010.

Looking at our last year's Balance sheet. I'll start with the Bank balance (bottom left) which increased by £3,500 and as of 6th January stood at almost £31,000.

When I looked back to when I took over as treasurer in 2005 that figure was £11,000 meaning that in three years our balance has tripled yet in that time joining and rejoining fees have remained exactly the same. What has increased is the membership, steadily growing year by year and to keep up with this increasing numbers of competitions have been organised countrywide. This has meant we've gained increased income from this source ie. host teams booking shows, hiring BFA lights for them and race fees paid from each team that entered the events. Also in comparison we have tried to budget our expenses to leave something left to spend in case of emergencies.

In the light of the credit crunch, which hadn't been foreseen we have put ourselves in a good position, with plenty of room for making changes to take us to the next decade.

I'll go on to look very briefly at our income and expenses for last year. I know everyone switches off at this point so I don't intend to look at each item individually but summarise the main areas. Overall our income (left hand column) has increased by approximately £1,000 and our expenses by approx. £3,000 (right hand column) which meant from 2007, in real terms we had a slight loss of £2,000. We had set out to reduce our bank balance but it wasn't as much as expected.

Looking at the income column on the left for ease of explanation it is sub divided into three sections Subscriptions, Tournament and Other income and the main sources are from the first two.

Treasurer's Report (Continued)

Subscriptions received were one and a half times the equivalent for 2007 and so that explains the increase of 5 ½ K. In reality this would likely have been about £4,000 less, which was the additional amount collected in December.

Tournaments – excluding the Championships we gained roughly the same amount as last year, however I had several cheques which were only banked this year and would have increased this figure. They will enhance next years' figures instead. The Championships was £3,000 less than 2007 because of the free entry though we collected money from camping fees, fun events and a raffle. About £1,000 of this went to 3 charities The Dog's Trust, Border Collie Rescue & Jerry Green Group. The return from hiring lights was surprisingly less than last year but maybe the increase of teams using their own lights for shows has caused this figure to drop as it has, but we'll see what happens this coming year.

Other Income amounted to very little. Training, which usually is the bulk of this, we had free entry so overall it wasn't significant.

Moving on to the Expenditure, which again I've split into 3 areas to aid my explanation. These are from top Committee business of running the Association, Our show expenses and finally (at the bottom) our other expenses including the Flyball record, Costs of Training Courses & Insurances.

The Committee appears to have no website costs. The explanation is that even though we had a change of server for the site, which cost the Association around £2,000, the bill was paid this year so it will appear in next year's figures. Also the previous bill was paid in January 2008 so were in the 2007 accounts. Hence the figure shown! Otherwise we spent about £600 less than the previous year. The Committee met less last year which may have accounted for this lower expenditure.

The Show costs were up £4 ½ K, of this the British Championships cost us an extra £2,000 but it was a 3 day show with more teams, campers attending and so we had additional cost for hiring loos, a marquee etc. If we hadn't had a cancellation of one marquee, which we hastily had to replace at double the cost we probably would have been much closer to last year's figure, which would have been remarkable.

The equipment purchased and Lights incurred increased expenses from the previous year. The two sets of BFA (Millstream) lights had new sensors fitted. Equipment was all in relation to the new measuring hoops. One thing that has surprised me is the reduced costs of Trophies. With so many more dogs taking part now and able to gain milestone awards it was expected to significantly increase. However I can't see this being the same in future and will mean we'll see more noticeable increases to this type of expenditure. Being for the benefit of members, it is something that we don't mind spending money on.

Finally the Other expenses. The Flyball Record, which members all enjoy receiving, thanks to the hard work of our editor Val, cost us slightly less, but this is an unrealistic figure because in fact we haven't paid some of the costs due to a bill that was queried and paid after the year end. It will be an addition to next year's figures.

Our Insurance Costs went up because we changed it before the Championships, so we had additional Member to Member cover. We could only claim back a small percentage of the other insurance cover we already had so meant we paid £83 more – however we get a lot higher and more comprehensive cover so it was worth it. If any team wants cover by the same company (Vantage), then they will get a small discount, providing they let them know they are members of the BFA.

So in summary for the 11 months we took in £34 ¼ k and paid out £30 ¾ k. Which meant we added £3 ½ k to last year's Bank Account. So once again it has been a good period for us. We'll need to watch carefully this year to see how our finances hold up – especially in the light of the current financial climate. We will be charging a nominal figure for the British Championships this time but entry to all training courses will remain free to members.

As a Committee we want the best for our members. We aim to keep in the red so you can benefit and standards of running shows continue to improve. As the fastest expanding dog sport in the UK I believe we need to look at and invest in new technology to move the Association forward to the next decade. We must look ahead, plan for our future and keep under review our systems of communication to make them as efficient as possible. The extra cash we have can also go towards improving or renewing our equipment which should be of good quality, low maintenance and long lasting. We have the means so lets do it!!

Webmaster Report: Nigel Bouckley

"Another year has passed by so quickly, it hardly seems like 5 minutes since the last AGM.

Once again, I apologise for my non attendance, duty calls, but rest assured, throughout the last 12 months the website has not stood still, in fact 2008 / 2009 has been the busiest year since the Website revamp and long may it continue.

As some will know the website started to slow down towards the end of July last year, this was mainly due to the servers running at close to 90 percent capacity, this is as a result of the huge amount of data that is almost constantly being accessed, updated and downloads to numerous to mention, in fairness the servers have served us well (no pun intended) for the past 8 years, so a decision was made to update the servers during the later part of August 2008.

In conjunction with the server upgrades, it was deemed necessary to increase security levels and new high security access areas were built for the various officers, this caused a small delay in data input, but as soon as the work was finalised all officer involved quickly updated their associated areas, and for that I am sure we are all very grateful.

The increased spam attacks to the web board was also a cause for concern, and the web board security and posting privileges were also updated, initially causing an issue for a few members, but resolved in most cases quickly and efficiently, and my thanks for the patience of those involved during the security uplift. The web board was also weeded through as there were numerous members with several web board accounts; I think you will agree the work on the web board discussion area has improved the speed of the utility dramatically.

With the server upgrade and security improved it was time to build the new facilities.

The first of the new facilities was in conjunction of the BFA's reorganisation of the Regional Representatives Network. A mapping facility was built for teams and clubs including contact information, to allow those new to the Sport to contact / witness Flyball teams and clubs in their area, this had a huge initial response and has continued to grow, with interest from Overseas Clubs and Teams. I can see this facility growing quite dramatically over the coming years.

The second of the new facilities built has been under development for the last couple of years and I am happy to report that the BFA Hall of Fame is now fully functional, and thanks to Chris Fulford who is the coordinating officer responsible for updating this area of the BFA website.

Once again the BFA Website has remained at the forefront of the Flyballing Community Worldwide, over a thousand teams now update their information on a regular basis from around the globe, and all the BFA data is maintained up to date by a small army of officers working behind the scenes to bring you, the membership the information, results and images from Flyball at home and Abroad. Therefore, please join me in expressing our thanks to Penny Charlton, Suzzanne Gladstone, Judy Parker, Maureen Hendry and Chris Fulford for their continuing efforts on the website.

I would like to thank all users of the website for their input, comments and requests over the last 12 months - this is what keeps the site being useful and appreciated.

4. Proposals - All proposals were discussed, amended as necessary and voted upon as follows

4.1 SECTION 1- Constitution and Officers

One item submitted by BFA Committee

4.1.1 Rule 1.3(C) Committee and Officers. Announcement of Committee members for the forthcoming year shall take place at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) following a postal ballot of the membership from nominations submitted. **(ADD) Any member wishing to be elected onto the BFA Committee must have at least 3 years experience in the association.**

Explanation: It was felt that a Committee member needs to have experience of the association rules and policies before being elected to serve the BFA.

CARRIED WITH FOLLOWING AMENDMENT

(ADD) and must have attended at least one AGM

One item submitted by BFA Committee

4.1.2 Rule 1.3(C) Committee and Officers. Announcement of Committee members for the forthcoming year shall take place at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) following a postal ballot of the membership from nominations submitted. At each AGM half the Committee members (rounded down where the Committee is made up of an uneven number) shall retire. These members together with any other nominations received in writing to the Secretary and seconded by at least one current BFA member, 30 days before the AGM will be eligible for election to the new Committee. No Committee member shall remain on the Committee for more than two years without re-election. Committee members will be expected to **(ADD) correspond by email on a regular basis and attend as many meetings as possible after prior notice has been given. (DELETE) attend 3 out of 4 Committee Meetings per year (AGM - AGM). (ADD) Committee members shall be expected to attend these meetings.** Should it be necessary, the BFA committee reserves the right to ask for the retirement, resignation or expulsion of Committee members who do not attend the required number of meetings, or have been found guilty under the disciplinary procedure of bringing Flyball into disrepute whilst a serving Committee Member. The Committee may co-opt members onto the Committee in the event of a position becoming vacant and the criteria previously stated is fulfilled. These co-opted members will hold office until the next AGM and any co-opted member will assume full voting rights on the committee.

Explanation: The Committee felt that more guidance was needed informing members what is expected of committee members before being elected. It was also felt as it is sometime difficult to fit in meetings throughout the summer months due to the number of shows being hosted. Much of the work is done via email and having to have 4 meetings in a short space of time when sometimes there isn't anything to discuss, seems a waste of the associations money.

CARRIED WITH FOLLOWING AMENDMENT

(ADD) correspond by email on a regular basis and attend as many meeting as required after prior notice has been given.

Rule Changes (Continued)

One item submitted by BFA Committee

4.1.3 Rule 1.3(f) Committee and Officers. The Committee may at its discretion amend the BFA Rules and Policies (except Sections 1, 2 and 3) Any such rule changes are to be published by the Committee and will be implemented on the 1st January each year, giving a minimum of 14 days and a maximum of 28 days notice to:

- (i) All BFA registered Primary Team Captains/Managers.
- (ii) All Head Judges.
- (iii) **DELETE All Regional Representatives**
- (iv) All other BFA officials (**This will become (iii) if voted upon**)

The only exceptions to the above timetable will be safety issues, **(ADD) and those items voted upon and carried at the AGM which may include items from sections 1, 2 and 3**, that can be implemented with immediate effect. **(ADD) This may be done at the discretion of the BFA Committee.**

The rest of this section to remain the same.

Explanation: As most rule changes come after an AGM it was felt that it was important to get them implemented as soon as possible.

CARRIED

One item submitted by BFA Committee

4.1.4 Rule 1.3(f) Committee and Officers. The Committee may at its discretion amend the BFA Rules and policies (Except Sections 1, 2 and 3). Any such rule changes are to be published by the committee and will be implemented on the 1st January each year, giving a minimum of 14 days and a maximum of 28 days notice to:

- (i) All BFA registered Primary Team captains/Managers.
- (ii) All BFA Head judges.
- (Delete) (iii) All BFA Regional Representatives.**
- (Delete) (iv) (Add) (iii) All other BFA officials.**

The only exceptions to the above timetable will be safety issues **(Add) and changes to sections 1, 2 and 3 voted upon and carried at the AGM**, that can be implemented with immediate effect.

Explanation: This is an alternative proposal to 5.1.3

No vote needed as 4.1.4 was voted and carried by the members present.

One item submitted by BFA Committee

4.1.5 Rule 1.13 Disciplinary Sub Committee (DSC)

The Disciplinary Sub Committee will be composed of any three current Committee Members. This should exclude the current Committee Chairperson and Secretary. **(ADD) If this is not possible due to a conflict of interest the Committee reserve the right to elect any current BFA member to stand on the Disciplinary Sub Committee.**

Explanation: As this could happen sometime in the future, it was felt this should be added to cover all eventualities.

CARRIED

Rule Changes (Continued)

5.1 SECTION 3. – Discipline

One item submitted by BFA Committee

5.1.1 Rule 3.1 Objective

(a) The objective shall be for all members of the Association to be aware of the Association's Rules and Policies and to observe its Code of Ethics.

(b) It is the Team Captain's responsibility to ensure that all team members are aware of and adhere at all times to the BFA Code of Ethics, as described in Section 1.2 of the Rules and Policies, in order not to bring the sport of Flyball into disrepute.

(c) Discipline procedures should only be used as a last resort. Arbitration and mediation should always be preferred as a way of settling disputes.

3.2 Misconduct

Misconduct shall include, but not be limited to abusive or foul language, demonstration of dissatisfaction with a judge's decision, inhumane treatment of a dog, demonstration of poor sportsmanship, wilful violation of the BFA rules, wilful intent to gain unfair advantage, *(Delete)* physical assault on any person, or any behaviour that would leave a spectator, competitor, host or sponsor with an unfavourable opinion of Flyball.

(Add) 3.3 Gross Misconduct

Gross Misconduct shall include, but are not limited to theft, fraud, disorderly and indecent conduct, physical assault or threatening physical violence on any person, drunk and disorderly conduct, the use of illegal drugs, deliberate damage to BFA property or that of any other BFA member or any other person. All the above will mostly apply at a BFA Sanctioned Show which will include outside racing times.

3.*(Add)* 4 Misconduct / *(Add)* Gross Misconduct Charge

(a) Any current BFA member may report another member or group of members for misconduct *(Add)* / **gross misconduct**. Misconduct *(Add)* / **Gross Misconduct** charges should be forwarded to the BFA Secretary in writing in the first instance, within 14 days of the alleged incident. The BFA Secretary will pass the matter to *(Delete)* the DSC *(Add)* the committee. An administration fee of £50.00 should accompany each misconduct *(Add)* / **gross misconduct charge**. This fee will be forfeited if the misconduct *(Add)* / **gross misconduct** charge is not upheld or the fee returned if the charge could not be proceeded with due to the criteria not being fulfilled.

(b) The BFA Committee may prefer charges against any member or group of members within 6 months of any alleged incident of misconduct *(Add)* / **gross misconduct**. In this instance any administration fee will be waived.

***(Add)* (c) In a case of Gross Misconduct the BFA Committee reserves the right to immediately suspend the membership of person(s) suspected of being responsible for a complaint deemed to be of this nature, pending further enquiries by an appointed impartial investigating officer wherever possible.**

Disciplinary Rule Changes (Continued)

3. (Add) 5 Disciplinary Procedure

- (a) Once the BFA Committee has received a complaint of misconduct **(add) / gross misconduct** they shall carry out a preliminary investigation by appointing an impartial investigating officer wherever possible, ~~(delete) who will~~ **(add) who should make initial enquiries and report back to the BFA Committee within three days, and then** gather evidence and statements in writing from the complainants, defendant members and all witnesses to the alleged incident and to ensure the relevant Tournament Organiser is aware of the said incident.
- (b) The investigating officer will **(Add) then** report back to the BFA Committee within 6 weeks of his / her appointment ~~(Delete) with a recommendation as to the strength of the evidence in~~ **(Add) having gathered the evidence to support** the case. ~~(Delete) and whether it merits the setting up of a Disciplinary Sub Committee, or it is deemed not appropriate of further investigation~~ **(Add) A Disciplinary Sub Committee will then be set up to decide if the complaint is deemed not appropriate / appropriate of further investigation,** or whether arbitration and mediation can settle the dispute.
- (c) The defendant member(s) will be given the opportunity to make oral representation(s) if they so wish.
- (d) Once set up the DSC will then consider the misconduct **(Add) / gross misconduct** charge(s) and either uphold or dismiss them. If the DSC upholds the charges against a member or member(s) they shall be empowered to suspend from membership any member or member(s) found guilty of misconduct **(Add) / gross misconduct** for an appropriate length of time. In considering the length of suspension, the DSC shall have regard to the member's record and in particular any previous findings of misconduct **(Add) / gross misconduct. The terms of the suspension shall be determined by the DSC, judged on the merits of each individual case.**
- (e) The complainant(s) and defendant member(s) shall be informed within 14 days of the DSC arriving at a decision.
- (f) A report will be sent to the BFA Secretary detailing the DSC findings and recommendations. The findings will be posted in official BFA publications if the complaint is upheld, and if no appeal is received within 21 days.

3. (Add) 6 Disciplinary Sub Committee (DSC)

In the event of a charge of misconduct **(Add) / gross misconduct** the committee will appoint a Disciplinary Sub Committee (DSC) to ~~(Delete) investigate~~ **(Add) deliberate on the evidence relating to** the matter. **(Add) The DSC** ~~(Delete) which~~ shall comprise of **(Add) at least three current** ~~(Delete) Committee~~ **(Add) BFA member's, (Add) who may or may not be committee members,** excluding the Chairperson and the Secretary.

3. (Add) 7 Appeal

- (a) The defendant member(s) may appeal against the DSC's decision. The appeal should be in writing and sent to the BFA Secretary within 21 days of the date of the notification of the DSC's decision.
- (b) The BFA Committee will consider the appeal.

Disciplinary Rule Change (Continued)

3.(Add) 8 Appeal Hearing

- (a) The committee shall review the DSC's investigations, reports and deliberations together with the appeal submission. After deliberation and by majority vote the Committee shall determine from the evidence available whether to ratify or over-rule the DSC's decision, or amend the length/increase the length of suspension.
- (b) The BFA Secretary shall immediately notify the appellant(s) of the Committee's decision.
- (c) The BFA Committee will prepare a report of the proceedings for record purposes.
- (d) The findings will be posted in official BFA publications.

THIS IS BASED ON THE NEW RULES AS FROM 1st JANUARY 2009

Explanation: With a membership base now standing at nearly 2000 the committee take the view that the chances of members mis-behaving are increased and the reason for this proposal is to give the committee a more sturdy Section in order to deal more efficiently and promptly with matters of this nature. The committee are not seeking to encourage complaints but are duty bound to be prepared in such instances.

If voted on these changes should be implemented with immediate effect.

THE WHOLE OF THIS SECTION WAS VOTED AND CARRIED WITH ADDITIONAL CHANGE

3.3 All the above will apply at BFA Sanctioned Shows, including outside racing times, and also at any other time when gross misconduct is deemed to have been committed by a BFA member.

6.1 SECTION 4 – Sanctioned Competition

One item submitted by Debbie Holding

6.1.1 Rule 4.4 Layout and 5.13 Set Up – Proposal (ADD) All indoor tournaments using rubber matting for the lanes to cover a slippery surface, e.g A sports hall floor, must put rubber matting or another suitable non slip surface to cover the entire back board area and also between the lanes from the box line for a distance of at least 15 feet back towards the start line. i.e from the box line to the first jump in front of the box.

Explanation: On the occasions that dogs miss a ball or it springs from a box sharply it inevitably goes on the slippery floor causing dogs to scabble slip and slide in their attempt to collect the ball. This can result in injury to the dogs, i.e. pulled muscles and also increases the chance of interference between the lanes. This non slip surface can be ANYTHING, not necessarily rubber matting and is NOT intended to cover the entire arena.

CARRIED

Rule Changes (Continued)

7.1 SECTION 5 – Rules For Competition

One item submitted by BFA Committee

7.1 Rule 5.2 Teams

(a) All Teams will appoint a Manager/Captain who must be a current BFA member and who will submit the Team name (and Secondary names if applicable) to the Membership Secretary for approval. If acceptable this name will be registered with the BFA and no other Team will be permitted to use it or derivatives thereof.

(b) Dogs may not compete on more than one team at a BFA Sanctioned Tournament except where special or non-regular classes are offered, i.e. fun classes, etc.

(c) Team members shall not be prohibited from training with other teams.

(d) **(DELETE) If a dog has raced with one Team in a BFA Sanctioned Tournament it may not race with another Team for 4 months.**

(ADD) A dog may change teams at any time to compete with another Team, but after this change it may not change teams again for a period of 6 months.

The only exceptions are:

(i) Multiple entries of the same Team Registration Number.

(ii) A dog prohibited from competing with an existing Team.

(iii) The handler/dog has moved to another area and their previous Team accepts the transfer.

(iv) Their previous Team has dissolved.

(v) **(DELETE) A new Team is formed - this new Team may race dogs from other teams in their first BFA Sanctioned Tournament without penalty. Once the Team has run its first Sanctioned Tournament race, the dogs involved may not run with another Team, new or existing, for a period of 4 months.**

(vi) **(DELETE) A dog may be released by the registered Custodian/Manager of its current Primary Team at any time to compete with another Team. Written authority for such a release must be sent to the Membership Secretary. A dog so released from one Team to run with another Team may not be released again from the second Team for a period of 4 months.**

(ADD) If a new team is formed and dogs are transferred to this team then these dogs may not be released from this team for a period of 6 months.

Explanation: The four month rule does not work as members who do not want to stay with a team just start a new team and move their dogs and sometimes dogs from the team they eventually wish to join to the new team run under the new name for 4 months then transfer to the team that they originally wanted to leave. We feel by changing the rules to allow a dog to be transferred once and making it harder to transfer it again the system will work out better and prevent all the defunct team names on the BFA database.

CARRIED WITH ADDITIONAL CHANGE

A dog may change teams at any time to compete with another Team, but after this change it may not change teams again for a period of 6 months. The owner/handler must inform the membership secretary of any such change.

Rule Changes (Continued)

One item submitted by Ray Lewis

8.1 New Rule -- Proposal -- The BFA Committee appoint a Working Group whose purpose is to develop a new method for measuring dogs. This Working Group would ideally be composed of BFA members who have good experience of Flyball, and BFA members who are qualified in veterinary medicine or other relevant sciences. The Working Group will report back to the BFA Committee with one or more proposals, which can then be taken to a vote by the membership.

Explanation: The 2008 Postal Vote, which the BFA Committee put to the members regarding the change of the rules relating to measuring dogs and calculating jump heights, generated much discussion on the BFA Web forum and other places. The vote was, of course, carried by an overwhelming majority of those who voted, so the new rule is now in place.

The background to this rule-change stems from the US, where the alternative Flyball governing body, U-FLI, introduced a new method of measuring dogs. This method involves using a special device to take a measurement of the length of the dog's forelimb. U-FLI publishes in its rule-book a conversion table which is then used to convert the forelimb measurement into a jump height. This is seen by many as a big improvement as the length of the foreleg is a better indication of how high a dog can comfortably jump than the dog's height at the withers. For many dogs this resulted in a lower jump height under U-FLI rules than under NAFA rules. This method of measuring and the device used by U-FLI is Patent Pending (US Patent Application 20070245583) and the conversion table is, of course, Copyright. It has therefore not been possible for NAFA to adopt this method, at least not directly. The Patent Application claims that the method gives more consistent results because it does not rely on the dog's stance, and that it is a less stressful method of measurement. The differences in jump heights between U-FLI and NAFA tournaments led to a petition to NAFA from its members to reduce the jump-heights by 1" for many dogs. The petition demanded that the jump heights are calculated by deducting 5" rather than 4" from the dog's height, measured at the withers. This was voted on and carried by a 97% majority.

In turn, this NAFA rule-change triggered the BFA Committee's decision to put the same rule-change to its membership in the postal vote. The same rule appears to have since been adopted by the BFB and other Flyball bodies in Europe and also the AFA in Australia.

The new BFA height rule is not without its problems, however. It still does not take into account the dogs' overall build and skeletal geometry. The length of the legs and the length of the back in proportion to the overall height all play an important part in a dog's ability to clear a set of Flyball jumps at a given height safely.

As the governing body of the largest Flyball community outside the US, the BFA are in a unique position to take the lead on this. The proposal is that the BFA should develop and test a new method for measuring dogs and calculating jump heights for Flyball, with a view to adopting it when ready, and to invite other Flyball governing bodies in the rest of the world to adopt it too.

The development should be done with reference to veterinary and sports medicine, and take into account as far as is possible the dog's shape and build as well as size. It should also take into account practical considerations such as: the limited time available for measuring at tournaments; the amount of stress for the dog and the reliability and reproducibility of the results.

DEFEATED

9. Election of the BFA Committee - Having been elected to the Committee at the last AGM, the following current members have expressed a willingness to remain on the Committee for a further year:

Steve Leek (Dolphins)

Judy Parker (Molten Magnets)

Tony Cain (Cheshire Set)

Rachel Child (Alpha Dogz)

ONE Member has decided to retire and is not seeking re-election

William Whiteley (Yorkshire Bouncers)

The nominations for the remaining **FIVE** places on the Committee are as follows

Anne Alcock (Live Wires) seeking re-election -- ELECTED

Sharon Allcorn (High Flyers) seeking election for the first time -- ELECTED

Howard Campbell (Greetland Grasshoppers) seeking re-election --ELECTED

Penny Charlton (Barkshire Bandits) seeking re-election-- ELECTED

Maureen Hendry (Mansfield Marnicks) seeking re-election --ELECTED

Natalie Holtappel (Demon Dogz) seeking election for the first time – NOT ELECTED

John Percivaldi (Hotshots) seeking election for the first time -- NOT ELECTED

Rachel Roberts (Tyne Tailwaggers) seeking election for the first time – NOT ELECTED

1662 Postal slips were sent out of which 515 were returned

Presentations of Annual Awards for 2008

The 2008 Annual Awards are listed below. These Awards were presented to the recipients or their colleagues who were in attendance after the business side of the meeting. Outstanding Awards would be distributed in the near future.

Team of the Year-Open	1st	Shooting Stars	16.89
	2nd	High Flyers	17.13
	3rd	Molten Magnets	17.28
Team of the Year-Multibreed	1st	Doncaster Team Pow Wow	17.95
BFA Special Award	1st	Live Wires	571 pts
Claire Gristwood Award	Kayo	Crazy Cannons	9015 pts
Junior Handler Award 7-11 age	1st	Shannon Mills	
	2nd	Alex Payne	
	3rd	Sophie Mills	
Junior Handler Award 12-16 age	1st	Ashley Jennison	
	2nd	Jessica Norman	
	3rd	Keiron Knott	

A Present was presented to Peter Roberts for all his work as training officer.

Chairman's closing speech.

The Chairman thanked all those present for their attendance and contributions and formally closed the Meeting at 14.00hrs.