

# The British Flyball Association



## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

**Held on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 at Wythall Community Hall, Birmingham**

1. The Chair opened the meeting at 10.00 hrs, welcomed those present (82 in number) and thanked everyone for coming.

2. **Apologies** – were received from Nigel Bouckley (Webmaster), Howard & Jackie Campbell, Sue & Iain Barlow, Cath Locke, Ian & Maureen Hendry, Andy & Sam James, Dianne Halsted, Dave Bergelin, June & Dave Morrisroe, Mark Child, Andy Solomon, Ellen Stewart, Andy Bawden, Robyn Bawden, Jane Baker, Erica Steel, Jill Wigmore-Welsh, Chris Mace, Kim Sermon

3. **Minutes of last AGM – 10<sup>th</sup> April 2011** – Copies have been distributed to all Team Captains, Head Judges and Officers with the revised copy of the BFA Rules and Policies and have been made available on the BFA website for all interested parties. They were therefore approved as a true record without a further reading.

4. **Concise reports for the year 2011/2012 by:**

### **Chair's Report : Sharon Allcorn**

Welcome. I would like to open the 2012 British Flyball Association AGM here at Wythall. I would like to point out that the date is totally coincidental! Your efforts to attend are appreciated especially at this time with the perceived fuel crisis having an impact on our ability to travel freely.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to you all on behalf of myself and all of the committee. As chair, my role at the AGM has four elements:-

- To reflect and share my thoughts on the past year
- To thank people for all their hard work
- To look to the future
- To chair the debate on the rule changes that has been proposed by the membership.

As a sport, flyball in the UK continues to grow. You only need to look at the BFA diary to see that most weekends there are tournaments throughout the UK where we have the opportunity to race. It is not uncommon to be travelling up or down one of the motorways and seeing fellow flyballers with caravan bouncing along and their canine companions eagerly looking out of the car windows. The number of new teams rises yearly as does the membership as a whole, and this can only ensure that the future of our sport will continue to go from strength to strength. As with all large organisations and associations, there will always be occasions when things go wrong or not as we would wish. As a committee, we work hard to serve the membership and aim to make flyball as enjoyable for both dogs and handlers. To support the growth of our sport we do have to adapt the rules, where required, to ensure that we can all continue to enjoy a sport whose foundations are built on fairness, sportsmanship and healthy rivalry. If rule changes are deemed necessary (often these changes are as a result of correspondence from the membership), please be assured that the committee discuss at length (there are no wall flowers on this committee!!) with the aim of the common good representing the majority.

These changes are never aimed at any individual or are they a knee jerk response. We are a proactive not reactive committee. This leads nicely into communication. Communication is a two way process and you as the membership have your part to play in this too. Please make sure you are contacting the correct person to address your issue.

Look at the rules as very often the answer is there. Remember to speak with your team captain, where appropriate. We are always happy to help, these are just suggestions to streamline communication and make it more efficient.

As previously mentioned, as a committee we discuss all correspondence that requires a decision to be made. As you can see, we are very different personalities, we consist of those that are analytical, creative, thinkers, extraverted, perceptive and one or two who are like the dog with the proverbial bone. One thing we do have in common is that we are passionate about our sport, association and dog welfare. We always reach a majority having considered all of the facts and ensuring the best for the common good. So if you have not received a decision within two days, please do not think it's because we are not addressing your issue, the thinkers and the extraverts are probably hammering it out via email whilst the perceptive are trying to wrestle back the proverbial bone!!

We witnessed some great achievements last year with the British record being broken first by Extreme Racers with 16:42 and then by Live Wires who now hold the current record time of 16:35. Belle of Doncaster Bellestars was the first dog to reach 90,000 points, multibreed teams are running sub 17. The British Championships boasted 42 divisions, over 500 camping units and over 1000 competing dogs ( plus those who attended as spectators)

All of these highlight the progress that UK flyball has made, through improved training, shared knowledge and an increased awareness of dog safety and wellbeing. It is important we continue to race with the spirit of flyball upper most in our minds.

The increasingly easy access to the media has also had an impact on the improvements that we have seen within our sport. Facebook is a particularly popular medium and most of us use this as a way of not only keeping in touch but to share our achievements, disappointments, frustrations and humourous events. Unfortunately, the committee is receiving an increasing number of correspondence relating to members writing negative comments about other members on public forums. Although we cannot govern what is written by others on public forums, we would urge you to consider carefully comments that you post if they are of an inflammatory nature. Ask yourself if you would feel comfortable saying the comments you are happy to post, face to face with the person concerned. We would ask team captains to discourage members of their teams from participating in "forum battles"

Over the past few months, there has been much activity with Working Parties being formed and subsequently working on different subjects that we hope will assist the Association to move forward. These reports will be presented to you by Tony, Dave and Ray who I would like to thank for chairing the WPs. I would also like to thank the members who gave up their time and made invaluable contributions that have led to the findings. I hope that you find their reports informative and when considering the findings, think about BFA flyball in the future and what path you would like it to follow.

There are many volunteers who work tirelessly on a day to day basis, who are part of the infrastructure that enables us to enjoy flyball as we currently do. The membership team, stats team, webmaster, show secretary, awards secretary and height card administrator all provide an invaluable service to us all and I would like to thank them for their continued efforts.

A huge thank you goes to the committee for their support and contributions over the last 12 months. Rachel continues to do a sterling job as BFA secretary and is often the first point of contact for the membership. Her inbox is never empty and her phone never silent.

Val stepped into the treasurer role and having overcome some difficulties with the bank now has an effective system in place. She is currently exploring alternative banks to provide a more appropriate service for us.

The newer members have served half of their 2 year term and have experienced the good, the not so good and the not good at all.

As you are aware, two members of the current committee are standing down this year, Dave Long and Judy Parker. Both have vast experience and knowledge and their contribution to the association has been invaluable. Both will be greatly missed on the committee, but we are pleased to say that they are continuing with their roles as Lights co ordinator and show secretary respectively. We welcome Ellen Schofield and Dan Culley onto the committee and hope that they are looking forward to the times ahead.

As a committee we will continue to promote the sport of flyball, advocate fair play, champion dog welfare and lead the sport forward. We value your opinions and suggestions but again remind you that we make decisions that will benefit the majority of the membership. George Burns the USA comedian said "I look forward to the future as that is where I am going to spend the rest of my life" Sometimes change is inevitable if we want to continue to improve and achieve.

The committee are currently exploring electronic systems that will allow online payment for membership and other BFA fees. The cheque payment system is in the process of being phased out and we are aware that some banks no longer offer this method of payment. Therefore we are hoping to have an electronic system in place for membership renewal in time for next year, with the hope that the remainder will follow shortly after if not at the same time.

As we know the website is the major resource that members use to gain information and therefore it needs to be able to accommodate the growing membership and its needs. After much discussion and liaising with Nigel we are now actively investigating the options available to us that will enable us to have a website that will meet our requirements and be continually updated. This will be discussed later.

I am looking forward to hearing the proposals and the debates that will follow. Please can I ask that you show respect for members whilst they are talking and listen to their viewpoints. Everyone will have the opportunity to speak. Something said with a smile is often far more well received than something that is shouted.

May I wish you all a happy, successful flyball season filled with fun friendship and laughter and I look forward to seeing you on the circuit.

### **Secretary's Report : Rachel Child**

The committee have met on three occasions between the last AGM and 31st March 2012. As well as this we have discussed many issues via teleconferences. As a progressive association the committee have also introduced Skype Conference calls. We will continue to hold conferences by the multimedia means that are available to us and meet at shows across the country to discuss important matters that arise between meetings. We welcome your comments and points for discussion, please feel free to contact us or see us at shows for a chat.

As a committee we are continually looking for ways to improve communication both between ourselves and the membership. We are keen to offer a quick response to all correspondence received. I would like to take this opportunity to urge members to direct their enquiries to the correct person. In doing this you will help us to help you in a timelier manner, all the contact details for Committee members and officers are on the BFA website.

A revised copy of the BFA Rules and Policies were emailed to all team captains, Head Judges and Officers. They were also posted on the BFA website for the membership.

In 2011 we had 254 new members and 2380 renewing members. This is an increase of over 500 members from 2010 .We have 294 primary teams this is compared to 271 from the last AGM. Our association continues to grow rapidly as we welcome the many new members and their dogs into this great sport.

As Secretary it is my job to offer our appreciation to the many members who give their free time to making our association as great as it is. We have many roles within the association and we rely

heavily on volunteers to carry out these tasks. The committee are very grateful for their hard work and dedication.

Firstly to the Stats team. Ron and Vera have done a fabulous job over the past 12 months keeping the points up to date. They make a brilliant team and their formula is certainly working. Kim Sermon has completed her first year as awards Secretary and has done a sterling job. Thank you to Ron, Vera and Kim for all their hard work and commitment to the Stats Team.

Pat Wadby our Membership Secretary has done a tremendous job keeping our Membership information updated. Along with her helpers Samantha Clark and Jane Allen, A brilliant team effort, thank you very much Ladies, you are very much appreciated.

We are introducing a BFA Family Membership in 2012; more details on this will follow in the coming months.

Judy Parker has shown years of commitment and dedication to her role of Show Secretary. She has gained invaluable experience and continues to offer help and advice to both new and experienced tournament organisers. Thank you to Judy for her hard work over the past 12 months.

As members we enjoy receiving the Flyball record. This publication would not be possible without Val Currie. Val has been Editor of the Flyball record now for several years and it continues to provide us all with entertainment and information throughout the year. I love reading about our achievements, and sharing your stories brought to life on the pages. Thank you very much to Val for her hard work in getting the editions to print.

Donna Hagland took over as Height Card Administrator last year. She has done really well in her first 12 months and I would like to thank her for her efforts and hard work. Sam Bawden also took over the Junior Handler Administrators role. My thanks also go to Sam for her hard work.

Finally I would like to offer my thanks to Nigel Bouckley our Webmaster. As the Association grows so do the demands on our website, I would like to thank Nigel for his hard work in maintaining this invaluable tool and look forward to the changes that 2012 will bring.

Thank you to our team of volunteers who continue to offer their spare time freely and work very hard on behalf of us all. The committee are extremely grateful!!

2011 was another year of big achievements for British Flyball....

The British record was broken several times. Firstly by Extreme Racers in April at Acremead and the current record of 16.35 was achieved by Live Wires at Drax in October. British teams are getting faster every season as our training techniques improve.

Last year we also saw our first dog gain 90,000 points. This was achieved by Belle from Doncaster Belle Stars based in Doncaster. Congratulations to Debbie who must be so proud to have an award named after Belle. I am sure there will be a few Belle Star awards given out at shows this year.

2012 will be an exciting year... Will we see our first British Team go Sub 16 Seconds? Will we see our first Dog achieve 100,000 points? Only time will tell.

We have many events to look forward to..

Easter brings our first Camping for many of us and a great start to the 2012 outdoor season. Please continue to support the tournament organisers who organise the shows throughout the year. Without these dedicated teams we could not compete in this sport we love.

July brings the European Championships in Cambridgeshire; we look forward to welcoming many European teams to the UK and sharing our love of the sport with them.

August brings us the British Championships, where the Current British Champions, Live Wires along with all the other divisional winners try to retain their crowns.

I am proud to have been a member of the BFA for 10 years and a member of your committee for 4 years.

Let's make 2012 a year to remember for all the right reasons.....

Let's continue to show good sportsmanship,

Let's treat people as we would like to be treated.

Let's keep our dogs safe and Injury free , and above all let's have Fun with our dogs and enjoy the fabulous friendships we have together.

### **Treasurer's Report : Val Currie**

Before I start I would like to thank the past treasurer – Anne Alcock for the sterling work she did for the Association over the previous 6 years.

It was with some trepidation that I agreed to 'have a go' at being Treasurer and to be honest it's not a role that sits easily with me. It was not an easy time to take over the Treasurer's role due to the fact that all the previous signatories had either left the Committee during the previous year or stood down at the AGM. This meant that we were having to get cheques signed by previous Committee members while the change of signatories came into effect. It also meant that all bank correspondence was going to Anne and having to find its way to me. You would have been forgiven for thinking that this would have been a simple task. Not so – I won't go into the lurid details but as our Chairperson said to me one day it's easier to gain entry to this country than get bank signatories changed!!

We thought we had achieved our aim when, no, the bank told us the forms had gone missing in the system: I'm sure you can imagine our frustration, we had to start all over again!

We have put in place our own system of endeavouring to make sure that at least 2 of the present signatories remain on the following year's Committee.

As our Chairperson has said in her opening speech we are looking to making membership renewal easier as well as bringing the Association forward and this will mean changing our Bank as the present one will not allow us to do internet banking and that's just for starters!

I have received a lot of help and advice from Paul (thank you Paul for your time and effort) who was anxious to make sure the bank statements were reconciled, as he says 'If we don't do a decent job of reconciling to the bank then the accounts will always be a real nuisance to reconcile. He has helped me tidy up the payments and receipts files as they were but totalled properly. (Some items missing from accounts but on bank statements). One other problem was that during the signatory change over one bank statement went AWOL. (I'm endeavouring to retrieve this statement from the bank as I also haven't received the February statement for this year. I hope the 'fall out' will not be too disastrous!)

Part of our job as Committee is to 'give back' to the members and I'm aware that in the past there have been grumbles about how much there is in the bank account. The costs for the BFA Championships were part of our giving back, the venue and amenities cost much more than in previous years and the cost for Arbury Hall has gone up again for this year, so we are hoping to move the venue for next year and will try our best to give you a more level playing field.

Expenses for amenities are rising as fuel costs and postage go up, and along with that, other amenities that are provided at the Championships.

We also aim to give back to the membership by the provision of Ring Party Training courses and bear most of the cost of that provision.

You will have noticed that it appears that no insurance was paid this year. This has not actually been included in the accounts as I paid it myself in order to get the paperwork through to us in time for the Championships and cost £407.50. We moved to a different insurer when the renewal came

through with a big increase in premium. This year I will be contacting the insurer to 'bring forward' the renewal date so that is done and dusted in good time.

It has been a baptism by fire for me this year, and a very steep learning curve. I think I have more to learn and hope to continue to serve you all next year.

### **Webmaster's Report : Nigel Bouckley**

Please accept my sincere apologies for being unable to attend the AGM this year, having read the agenda, I was looking forward to the meeting and resultant discussions, alas Queen and Country have to come first I am afraid. Never the less, I have put together a short report to be read out on my behalf.

The last 12 months in the life of the BFA website have been relatively quiet compared with recent years.

The new BFA forum has been a hit with flyball community and has produced some meaty discussions on a diverse set of topics. Judy has taken on the role of moderator and has been vigilant in her efforts to approve registrations and eradicate any "nonsense" posting swiftly. So my thanks go out to Judy for her efforts over the year.

There are now a significant number of helpers involved in keeping the website information up-to-date, this has ensured results are available for perusal as soon as possible after the event, providing a timely and valuable service to the BFA membership. Thanks to Ron and all the team.

Back in 1996, when there were a handful of flyball teams, and not even one tournament per month, and despite reluctance, at the AGM, by some members to accept a need for a website. I designed the original BFA website, so members could track the progress of their dogs, awards and teams achievements. Over the years the website has had numerous revamps, each time catering for the identified needs at the time. The website has been in its current guise for sometime now, and overdue for a revamp. The growth of teams and number of tournaments have generated a massive amount of data, requiring constant updating, although the current servers can cope with the throughput, it's felt that a new site should be designed, hosted and managed by a professional company, who will cater not only for immediate requirement, but for the future needs. The committee are still in the consultation stage, however it is hoped to ensure the transition is seamless and I will endeavour to maintain the current site and servers until the change over date. No further details are available at the moment, however as more information becomes available it will be posted on the forum.

I wish you all a very successful and fun year ahead flyballing.

### **Website Report : Committee**

Ray Lewis then gave an update on how the committee is planning to progress with the web site. The committee is looking at renovating and extending the website - and looking into allowing electronic payment of membership renewals. He explained that the committee is talking to commercial companies with a view to taking over the development and management of the web site, who are in the process of providing quotations for this. There would be a cost associated with the migration, but the on-going costs should be in-line with our current costs.

### **Lights Working Party : Dave Long**

After the last agm I e-mailed the lights working party to inform them that we had been tasked by the committee to come up with a BFA spec for lights. I only received one reply, so waited a few weeks. After which time no one else responded so I decided to have a go at the task myself.

Once I had done this I showed the document to Tony Cain and Bob Haworth, they proposed a couple of slight changes which I accepted. I then put the document to the committee, who asked for the change in the width of the gates to be included in the proposal, and accepted that document to be put to the AGM.



*Timing system specification for BFA sanctioned tournaments version 1.0*

## **Sensors Physical:**

- lowest beam no more than 8.5" from ground
- highest beam no lower than 28"
- maximum vertical beam spacing 6.5"
- passing fault sensors shall be no more than 6.5" from the start/finish line toward the first hurdle
- if two columns of beams are used the beams must be at the same heights
- able to span at least 5'
- **Gates to be set at 4' from sensor to reflector**
- nothing suspended within 5' above the racing lane surface (i.e. crossing over the top of the lane)

## **Light tree Physical:**

- must be visible by competitors and judges (line and head)
- bottom light shall be at least 2 feet above the ground
- must have a light used to indicate pass fault
- must have a light used to indicate false start
- there must be a sequence of at least three yellow lights directly above a green for the starting sequence. there must be identical false start and pass fault lights for each lane
- There must be 4 fault lights for each lane to indicate which dog is to be re-run. These can be switched on manually or automatic.
- All lights must be visible for a distance of at least 50' from the light tree / board

## **Accuracy/precision:**

- the timing system shall display the time down to at least the hundredth of a second (xxx.xx) to 2 decimal points
- the timing system must be precise to within 3ms (all system latencies combined)
- the timing system shall be accurate to within 3ms over 60 seconds (50 ppm)
- the timing system shall provide the same timing for both lanes to within 2ms over 60 seconds
- sensors electrical latency shall not exceed 2ms and if scanned, scan latency shall not exceed 1ms

## Other:

- a display shall be provided showing the elapsed time for each lane
- the timing system shall not be used for any other purpose during a race (sequence of heats)

## Operation:

- The system shall become ready and wait for the start of a heat
- The head judge or designate will indicate the countdown sequence to be started
- The system shall wait at least one second and then activate the sequence of yellow lights followed by the green light at 1.0 second intervals
- The green light shall signal the start of the timer
- If a beam is broken before the start of the timer, a false start shall be indicated
- For a system using two (or more) columns of beams:
  - The beam column on the start/finish line shall be the line beam
  - The beam column closest to the first hurdle shall be the passing beam
  - Each time the passing beam is broken or cleared, the line beam shall be "safe" for 2 seconds
  - If the line beam is broken while not "safe" a pass fault shall be indicated for at least 2 seconds
- Once a heat is complete, nothing will alter the displayed times (beam breaks are ignored)

## Verification:

- A picture, block diagram and video of the timing system shall be submitted along with a brief explanation of how the system meets each requirement
- Any change to the system shall require the above documentation (or those portions changed) to be resubmitted to the BFA

## Regional Representatives Working Party : Ray Lewis

The Regional Representatives Working Party was created after last year's AGM, where a motion called for the role of Regional Representative to be re-instated, following its abolition a few years ago.

Although the motion was defeated, it was agreed at that AGM that a working party be created to "clarify if regional reps are required and what purpose they would serve".

The members of the working party were selected by the Committee from current BFA members who had expressed an interest in taking part. They represented different Flyball teams from different parts of the UK, and with experience of different aspects of Flyball and the BFA.

I was asked to chair this working party.

The working party held a total of four meetings, two by teleconference and two face-to-face. There was also much discussion on-line.

The report I am reading today details the final outcome of the discussions of the Working Party, and describes its findings. I have also included some comments made by the committee when it received the report from the Working Party

As part of the discussions about what purpose the Regional Reps would serve, the Working Party discussed:

- what roles and responsibilities could be assigned to the Regional Reps;



- how the country could be divided into Regions – and so how many Regional Reps would be needed;
- what resources the Regional Reps would need in order to fulfill the role;
- how the Regional Reps could be selected.

So, are Regional Representatives required?

The Working Party has looked at the original regional representative role, the benefits that it brought to the BFA, and the issues which led to it being abolished.

After much discussion, the working party had a clear consensus that a new Regional Representative Role would be a major benefit to the BFA.

The BFA has grown considerably over the last few years, in terms of the number of teams now training and competing, the number of tournaments being hosted - and the number of members. The committee of nine members, supported by its officers, endeavours to be available to assist new members and newly registered teams. The working party has looked at how the increase in membership will affect the committee's capacity to provide this support.

The working party feels that a new Regional Representative role can assist the committee by being a point of contact for new members, members who wish to start new teams and teams that want to host tournaments for the first time. It will of course always remain the case that any current member can contact the committee directly at any time.

In order to maintain accountability of the activities of the Regional Representatives, a new committee role would be required: a Regional Representative Co-ordinator.

(The committee agreed that a Regional Reps Co-ordinator is a good idea, but there is no need for the Co-ordinator to be on the committee – furthermore, the committee agreed that that the role should also be extended to include that of Tournament Advisor)

The Working Party felt that the primary purposes of the Regional Representatives will be to assist those who are new to flyball as a sport and those who may have some experience of flyball and wish to start new teams, host tournaments and so on.

The Working Party has suggested the following possible roles and responsibilities

- i) Advise on how to join a team, with introductions to teams that are accepting new starters within the region;
- ii) Advise on how to set up a team, including advice on equipment necessary, how to go about training
- iii) Advise on how to enter tournaments – including supplying seed times etc.
- iv) Advise on how to complete BFA paperwork – such as tournament entries, timesheets, dog height card forms and so on
- v) Advise on safe training methods (The committee preferred to use the word “appropriate”, rather than “safe”.)
- vi) Provide general advice for teams considering hosting a first tournament – and refer teams to the BFA Show Secretary
- vii) Endeavour where possible to attend BFA events within the region, and to represent the BFA should a committee member not be present (The committee noted, that this particular role is currently undertaken by the Tournament Head Judge, and felt that this should remain the case).
- viii) Help ensure that BFA committee communication reaches the membership and to pass any communication received from members back to the committee.
- ix) Keep a record of activities undertaken as a Regional Representative, including a specific record of referrals of new starters to existing teams, and report this to the Regional Representative Co-ordinator on a regular basis.

In addition the Regional Representatives can be available to fulfil other functions that the BFA committee may from time to time find useful.

Moving onto the regions - the Working party are suggesting the following 12 regions:

- Scotland
- North East
- North, West & East Yorkshire
- South Yorkshire & Lincolnshire
- East Midlands
- East Anglia South East
- South of England
- South Midlands & South West
- Midlands
- Cheshire, Staffordshire and North Wales
- North West England

These regions are irregularly sized geographically, but all have similar numbers of existing teams – averaging at 13 teams per region. When a new team is formed in another area, the Region Representative Co-ordinator will assign each new team to a suitable Regional Representative. (The Committee feels that some of these regions are rather too large, geographically and should be divided into additional regions)

The resources that the Regional Reps would need would include:

- an area on the BFA web site for each region
- an email address, which will forward email to the current representative
- contact details of the team captains in their region
- Documented full definition of the role

It would be the responsibility of the Regional Representative Co-ordinator (working with the committee) to produce and maintain this document.

Finally, the selection of Regional Representatives

The Working Party feels that the Regional Representatives should have a proven understanding of all aspects of Flyball – for example - a Team Captain, a Tournament Organiser, a Head Judge, a former committee member – or an active participant in Flyball for several years. Candidates must also be in good standing with the BFA.

The BFA Committee could invite applications for the posts, which should be accompanied by supporting information - including letters of recommendation. The Committee (or perhaps a selection sub-committee) would look at the applications on their merits, and make appointments as appropriate.

Should a Regional Representative fall short of the responsibilities of the role, the Regional Representative Coordinator, with the support of the committee could re-open the position.

The Working Party felt that the role could be for an initial two-year period. After which the Reps could be reappointed or democratically elected if there are multiple suitable applicants. (The committee felt that election would not be necessary).

The committee has accepted this report, and has agreed that (with some minor amendments reflecting the comments I have given) its suggestions should be implemented. The committee has determined that these suggestions can in fact be implemented without any changes to the rule-book, as the role would be fully documented by the Regional Rep Co-ordinator.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who took part in the working party - there was much lively discussion, and of course a lot of hard work. Thank you to Ellen, Nat, Joe, Dan, Terry, Rosemary, Katie, Hazell and of course Anne, who took the minutes at the meetings.

## **Measuring Device Working Party : Tony Cain**

After a proposal put forward at the 2011 BFA Annual General Meeting by Steve Leek, a working party was formed from volunteers.

Chair:- Tony Cain  
Sam Bawden  
Steve Leek  
Jason Baker  
Chris Mace  
David Flood

To save time it was decided that any discussion should be by either face to face meeting or conference call.

After the first conference call a site meeting was arranged to look at the first prototype which showed up some problems with board and the measuring poles. Alterations were made and a discounted price was negotiated with a supplier of the lasers.

The prototype was demonstrated at the BFA 2011 Championships and feed back was given by Head Judges. Alterations were again made and was demonstrated again at a number of Tournaments with feedback noted and acted upon.

Conclusion.

The working party believe that laser measuring is the way forward for the Association and is less invasive than anything that has gone before helping nervous dogs but Measuring Officials and Head Judges could stand further from the dogs.

Jason Baker has managed to locate and gain a discounted price of around £213+vat for the laser levels, we can buy cheaper but they are difficult if not impossible to see in bright sun light. Prices can vary depending when the levels are purchased.

The levels should be stationed with both BFA and Private light systems that are hired out regularly.

A level board should be supplied to tournament organisers which they keep and are required to keep in good order. Light custodians shouldn't be required to carry the boards. It is up to the BFA Committee to decide if the boards are free issue or paid for. Level boards are not required where a smooth, solid level floor is available e.g. Inside a building.

This new system should be rolled out over 12 months to make sure enough training is given.

## **Camping Requirements Report : Tony Cain**

After an incident at the British Championships where the Chair, Sharon and Secretary, Rachel were, for the want of better words, verbally abused, in contradiction to the code of ethics. This person, a self proclaim expert, accused the BFA of breaking the law in that we should have a 33 feet gap between caravans. This individual threatened to have the Champs closed by the local council. After some time this individual sent information to the Committee dated 1960 which he claimed proved the above point. The information provided was only a recommendation and not Law which requires an act of parliament.

I was given the task of finding as much information as possible with regard to Health and Safety at the British Championships in relation to camping.

I have found several documents, one dated 1999, from the Health and Safety Executive for recommendations for camping at music festivals and a European document, dated 2009, for fire safety.

## OUTLINE

There are no laws or regulations for camp sites that are used less than 28 days per year, only recommendations or guidelines. Arbury Hall was a camp site for only 4 days. If the Arbury was used as a camp site for more than 28 days it would be up to Arbury to gain planning permission.

Natural England will provide a exemption certificate free of charge but this can be rescinded by any council.

2011 Champs. had an events licence and was risk assessed for the first time ever and logged.

Recommendations ask for 1 fire extinguisher, we had 33.

Recommendations ask for 6 metres between caravans. Plots were 9x7 metres

Recommendations ask for 3 metres between car or awning. Europeans ask for 1.8 metres

Recommendations ask for 6 metre wide roads. Ours were 8 metres.

The only time we had an issue was when an individual, who couldn't follow simple instructions and camped in his and half of someone else's plot with the other team sign in front of him.

We had 24 toilets, increased elson cubes, doubled the number of showers and had to increase the number of skips.

If we wish to have more space at the British Champs we will have to reduce the numbers camping. If anyone wants to reduce the numbers say so and the Committee will.

The links to the documents will be available on line as soon as we can get them there.

## Proposals

### **ALL PROPOSALS WRITTEN AS RECEIVED AND LISTED IN RULE NUMBER ORDER**

## Rule Changes

### **5.1 SECTION 1 – Constitution and Officers**

#### **Two items submitted by the BFA Committee**

**5.1.1 Rule 1.3(b)** The Committee shall be responsible for the enforcement of the Rules and Policies, promoting co-operation and good sportsmanship, discipline, setting and amending of the rules and guidelines for Tournaments, addressing any protest or complaint, interpreting the rules and other special activities as well as communicate with the membership and carry out their actions in a fair, even-handed and timely manner. Announcement of Committee members for the forthcoming year shall take place at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) following a postal *insert or secure electronic* ballot of the membership from nominations submitted. Any member wishing to be elected onto the BFA Committee must have at least 3 years experience in the association and must have attended at least one BFA AGM. 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 correspond by email on a regular basis and attend as many meetings as required, after prior notice has been given. Committee members shall be expected to attend these meetings.

Explanation - Plans are in place to procure systems to allow secure access to member services including electronic voting. Timescales are not yet known, however the inclusion in the section 1 to 3 of the rules at this time will ensure that delays to introducing e-voting do not occur once the functionality is available. It is not intended that electronic voting or balloting will remove the members right to a postal vote. Members who require to vote by post will still have the option to.

**CARRIED**

**5.1.1 Rule 1.3(b)** The Committee shall be responsible for the enforcement of the Rules and Policies, promoting co-operation and good sportsmanship, discipline, setting and amending of the rules and guidelines for Tournaments, addressing any protest or complaint, interpreting the rules and other special activities as well as communicate with the membership and carry out their actions in a fair, even-handed and timely manner. 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. Any member wishing to be elected onto the BFA Committee must have at least 3 years experience in the association and must have attended at least one BFA AGM. 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 *insert standing* for re-election. Committee members will be expected to correspond by email on a regular basis and attend as many meetings as required, after prior notice has been given. Committee members shall be expected to attend these meetings. *Insert If the number of members standing for election or re-election to the Committee is no greater than the number of vacancies on the Committee, then the election will be considered uncontested , and no ballot will be required.*

Explanation – To clarify what happens when nominations to the Committee are uncontested.

**CARRIED**

## **6.1 SECTION 2 – General Meetings**

### **One item submitted by The BFA Committee**

**6.1.1 Rule 2.3** In general those current BFA members present at the AGM will decide all proposals that require a vote. All members should be actively encouraged to attend such meetings. However, if in the opinion of the Committee, a proposal is considered of sufficient importance that it should be decided by the whole membership, the Committee reserve the right to hold a postal *insert or secure electronic vote* of ALL current BFA members, except where the proposal has already been voted upon at the AGM.

Explanation – Cross reference for 5.1.1

**CARRIED**

## **7.1 SECTION 4 – Sanctioned Competition**

### **One item submitted by The BFA Committee**

**7.1.1 Rule 4.1(a)** .....A Tournament schedule for all Open or Limited Sanctioned Tournaments should be submitted to the BFA Show Secretary, for approval prior to distribution, no later than *amend to* 30 days prior to the closing date for entries of the Tournament

Explanation. - Change 40 days to 30 days as in certain circumstances, tournaments may be approved up to 30 days before the closing date. This just brings the schedule date into line with this.

**CARRIED**

**One item submitted by Ron Edge**

**7.1.2 Rule 4.2 *delete***

Explanation. – Already in 6.1 and will keep all points information together

**CARRIED**

**8.1 SECTION 5 – Rules for Competition**

**One item submitted by The BFA Committee**

**8.1.1 Rule 5.5 (b) .....** unreasonable behaviour by any member that is in breach of the Code of Ethics *amend to* [see section 1.2]

Explanation - Correction of typing error

**CARRIED**

**Three items submitted by Steve Leek**

**8.1.2 Rule 5.5(b) *Amend*** Rule 5.5b " The Judge's responsibility also extends to the exhibitors, to the host team, or organisation, to the spectators and sponsors. A Judge must be arbiter and diplomat .A Judge must leave exhibitors and spectators with the feeling that each team was given an equal opportunity and no team was given an unfair advantage. Therefore all Provisional , QJ's and HJ's have the responsibility to bring any rule anomalies to the attention of the Committee and may not use a discrepancy for gain. Failure to report anomalies may result in disciplinary action. (See Section 3.2)" to remove "Failure to report anomalies may result in disciplinary action. (See Section 3.2)"

Explanation - This is adding additional things that the BFA can discipline members for, if this is the case then it should be in section 3 not within this section. Plus I feel disciplinary procedures for not informing the committee of anomalies is far over the top unless it is done for the reasons mentioned under section 3.2 Misconduct. In that case it is already covered in the rules and should not be in this section.

**CARRIED**

**8.1.3 Rule 5.7(c) *Amend*** rule 5.7c "The Time Sheet (BFA Form C.2) shall be completed and returned for checking before the division, in which the team is running, starts and include the team name and registration number, the team captain's name, address and telephone number, each dog's name, BFA number, breed, and jump height, together with each handlers name and BFA number. It shall also record the relevant teams 'break-out' time (if applicable). Forfeiting teams may be declared NFC or be excluded from the tournament by the Head Judge/Tournament Organiser and may be subject to further discipline." to remove "and may be subject to further discipline"

Explanation - This is adding additional things that the BFA can discipline members for, if this is the case then it should be in section 3 not within this section. Plus I feel disciplinary procedures for not filling in time sheets properly is far over the top unless it is done for the reasons mentioned under section 3.2 Misconduct. In that case it is already covered in the rules and should not be in this section.

**CARRIED**

**8.1.4 Rule 5.7(d) Amend** rule 5.7d - "Dogs may not be entered onto more than one time sheet at a tournament"

Explanation - This basically says that if I had teams in div 8, 1 and 2, Div 8 was on Saturday and Div 1 and 2 on Sunday once that first team has run I can not swap any team dogs between my div 1 and 2 teams if for instance I had an injury.

The only way that this could work is if all team paperwork was handed into admin prior to racing started on Saturday for both Saturday and Sunday (I do not want that either).

**CARRIED WITH AMENDED WORDING**

**One item submitted by The BFA Committee**

**8.1.5 Rule 5.19(g)** Litters of puppies may not be *amend to* purchased or sold at a BFA tournament

Explanation - Previous wording of bought caused some confusion with some members reading it a **brought**. Using the word purchased should clarify this

**CARRIED**

**One item submitted by Steve Leek**

**8.1.6 Rule 5.7(d) Amend** Rule 5.21 to remove the section "Times recorded by BFA registered teams competing at certain other tournaments may also be recognised as record breaking times, provided that the conditions can be verified by two officials from the BFA or other governing body (for example; head judge or tournament organiser), to be equivalent to those at a BFA sanctioned tournament."

Explanation - This is far too vague as it currently stands. If this was meant to cover teams competing in Europe then in my opinion it should say so. Plus I do not believe that records broken in Europe should count as:

- The jump heights are different, ie measured to nearest cm rather than inch. These differences are small but I do not think this is relevant.
- Dogs are allowed to run at 15 months rather than 18 months.
- The Dogs running in a team in Europe (even if the name is the same as a registered BFA Team) may not wholly made up of Dogs from a registered BFA Team. This could encourage scratch teams to go to Europe to break the UK record.

**CARRIED**

**9.1 SECTION 6 – Flyball Points**

**One item submitted by The BFA Committee**

**9.1.1 Rule 6.1** Membership applications or renewals must be received by the membership secretary within 14 days of competing in a Sanctioned Tournament. Failure to do so will result in the loss of all points. *Delete and tournament placings for that team.*

Explanation - By the time it has been discovered that some members in a team have not renewed, results have already been entered onto the website and the seed list updated.

These times may have been used for upcoming shows and it would also mean that TOs would have to retrieve rosettes and prizes and give them out to other teams.

**CARRIED**

#### **Four items submitted by Ron Edge**

**9.1.2 Rule 6.1(a)** *insert* If the team number and team name on the time sheet are incorrect or do not match, the points for that team may be lost.

#### **CARRIED WITH AMENDED WORDING**

**9.1.3 Rule 6.1(b)** *insert* If the dogs are not circled, the points for that leg are lost.

#### **CARRIED**

**9.1.4 Rule 6.1(c)** *insert* the dogs name and number are incorrect or do not match, the points may be lost for that dog.

#### **CARRIED WITH AMENDED WORDING**

**9.1.5 Rule 6.1(d)** *insert* ) If the handler number and name are incorrect or incomplete, not valid or do not match, the points for that dog may be lost.

#### **CARRIED WITH AMENDED WORDING**

Explanation - The proposals are not all changes to the rules but are giving clarification to the rules as originally intended. It may also ease the workload on the various members of the statistics team and give some incentive to make team members, captains, and show organisers aware of the careless way some teams complete their paperwork.

The only way I can think of to bring the continual errors to the attention of the perpetrators is to withhold points. If, as some members say, they do not care about points and awards, then they are welcome to put that on the time sheets and all that team can lose them.

It is, and always has been, the team captain's responsibility to ensure that the time sheets are filled in correctly.

### **10.1 SECTION 6 – Annual Awards**

#### **One item submitted by The BFA Committee**

**10.1.1 Rule 8.3** *delete, with immediate effect*; 8.3 BFA Special Team Award

This award is presented by the BFA as a thank-you to the Team or group of Teams (PTN -Primary Team Number), that have contributed the most to the sport during the year. This is calculated by:

- (a) The number of Tournaments Hosted 25 Points per Tournament.
- (b) The number of Tournaments entered 10 Points for the first team entered and
  - (i) (ii) 2 Points for subsequent teams.
  - (c) The Number of Qualified Head Judges within the Team 5 Points per Judge.

Explanation - BFA primary teams now number in excess of 280, many regularly competing with primary and multiple secondary teams, and with more and more teams regularly hosting the calculations required to give this award are time consuming and complex for the statistics officials within the BFA.

Also; the introduction of this award in the Association's early years was set to act as an encouragement to teams to host tournaments thereby filling the BFA Diary and for appropriate judges to seek advancement and become Head Judge. We believe this incentive is no longer required with numbers of Head Judges on the increase and a very full diary meaning teams wishing to host now having difficulties to find available dates.

#### **CARRIED**



## **11.1 - Miscellaneous**

### **One item submitted by David Flood**

**11.1.1** Seven day scheduling - BFA Schedule is available on the BFA web board on a Tuesday Evening at 9pm The host team must take all entries into account that come either electronically or by post up to and including Saturday. Only if the competition is oversubscribed then all teams will go into the draw irrelevant of when or how their entry arrived between Tuesday night and Saturdays post. The host will then make a draw on or before the following Monday and notify all teams on the BFA forum before 9pm the following Tuesday.

This will mean all teams that wish to enter get to be in any draw and don't miss out because of a slow postal service. It also means that teams that don't get entry still have time to enter another competition that has been under subscribed before the closing date, or enter a competition for the following week that they may not have entered had they been successful

Explanation - With more and more competitions becoming oversubscribed, especially over the winter months, it seems that the first race of any competition is to get your entry in. This is heavily reliant on the postal service as very few competitions have electronic entry. And as entry recipients are not necessarily home during the day on a Thursday, sending by special delivery means that your entry could actually be delayed further.

in order to make the entry system fairer to all teams and especially on teams that live in an area where the postal service is less than reliable I propose a clarification in the rules regarding deadlines, to enable hosts to deal with an oversubscribed competition and so all hosts follow the same criteria.

## **SPLIT VOTE, NEITHER CARRIED OR DEFEATED, PASSED BACK TO COMMITTEE**

### **One item submitted by Donna Hagland**

**11.1.2** All tournament organiser should have to provide water at outdoor tournaments by the ring for drinking and cooling the dogs down.

Explanation – I've been to shows where water hasn't been provided and I feel as part of dog welfare water should be available for them.

## **CARRIED WITH AMENDED WORDING**

**10. 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:

**Sharon Allcorn** (High Flyers)

**Sam Bawden** (Mad Mutts)

**Tony Cain** (Cheshire Set)

**Jo Crosswell** (Ready 2 Fly)

**Ray Lewis** (Lightening Strikes)

TWO Members have decided to retire and are not seeking re-election

**Judy Parker** (Molten Magnets)

**Dave Long** (Nuneaton Flyers)

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

**Rachel Child** (Alpha Dogz) Seeking re-election - ELECTED

Proposed by Sharon Allcorn

Seconded By Tony Cain

**Dan Culley** (Water Orton Wonderdogs) seeking election for the first time - ELECTED

Proposed by Sam Bawden

Seconded by Maureen Hendry

**Val Currie** (Red Rose) seeking re-election - ELECTED

Proposed by Tony Cain

Seconded by Sharon Allcorn

**Ellen Schofield** (Cambridgeshire Canines) seeking election for the first time - ELECTED

Proposed by Ray Lewis

Seconded by Debbie Holding

### **Presentations of Annual Awards for 2011**

Team of the Year – Open	1 <sup>st</sup>	Live Wires	16.35
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Extreme Racers	16.42
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Bristol Ball-istics	16.49
Team of the Year – Multibreed	1 <sup>st</sup>	The Extremists	16.96
BFA Special Award	1 <sup>st</sup>	Lightening Strikes	632 Points
Claire Gristwood Award	1 <sup>st</sup>	Bo-Diddley, Deva Dogmatix	7680 Points
Junior Handler Award 7-11 age	1 <sup>st</sup>	Sophie Mills	
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Jessica Short	
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Rebecca Foster	
Junior Handler Award 12-16 age	1 <sup>st</sup>	Shannon Mills	
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Daisy Harrop	
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Daniel Barnard	

### **Chair's closing speech: Sharon Allcorn**

Thank you for coming to the AGM and I hope that you have found it to be informative. It is important that as an association we move forward with the times without losing sight of the spirit of flyball. Fast times, divisional winners, trophy winners, championship winners are great but without the spirit of flyball being present, these are far less meaningful. If sportsmanship, respect, dog welfare and tolerance of each other are not the foundations of our sport, we have nothing. Let's not forget to applaud our opposition, thank our judges and praise our dogs. The sport is evolving so we must ensure that we move forward taking the spirit of flyball with us.

Presents were given to Judy Parker and Dave Long in thanks for all their hard work on the Committee

Meeting Closed 17.35pm