

British Flyball Association

AGM Minutes Sunday 6th April 25

Committee Members in Attendance

Nicky James – Chairperson

Karen Marks – Vice Chairperson

Kelly Murdoch – Treasurer

Maureen Hendry – Secretary

Avril Wilson, Hilary Larkham, Donna Boddison

1. Opening Address by our Chairperson Nicky James *
2. Apologies received from Sandra Long and Vera Sermon
3. Minutes from last AGM signed by our Chairperson
4. Secretary's Speech by Maureen Hendry *
5. Treasurer Report PDF Slides *
6. Webmasters Report *

- All speeches and Reports have been uploaded to the BFA Website separately.

Moving on to the Proposals.

PROPOSAL NUMBER 1

Proposed Change to Constitution - Section 2.1 Committee

Proposer: Hilary Larkham - 7180

Proposed Change

2. Committee

2.1 The BFA is overseen by an elected selection of members (the “Committee”), which includes The Chairperson, The Treasurer and The Secretary. ~~These roles are appointed by the Committee ‘s majority vote. (Remove).~~ These roles are appointed by the Committee as a majority vote of the committee members at the first committee meeting following the AGM. (ADD)

Rationale for Change

This change is proposed to implement advice provided to the committee in the legal report on the constitution produced by Chadwick Lawrence in June 2024 and published in the Blog in the same month.

The proposal covers Section 2 Committee.

Extract From the Report

Our interpretation, assuming correct, is that the Committee must be made up of the Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary and whilst this paragraph confirms that their appointment will take place by a ‘majority vote’ it is not clear in what setting this will take place eg, at an AGM, EGM , committee meeting or simply at a general meeting.

We advise that you consider make this clear at paragraph 2.1

Comments and Questions

Implementing some legal advice that we took, because if you can remember back to last year, the Constitution was updated, that was reviewed by legal and they came back to us with some questions and some points that we needed to look at in terms of clarity and making sure that it was as good as we could get it. And this is the first one of those points. And as you would have read from the proposal, basically it says their interpretation was that the committee should be made-up of a chairperson, a treasurer and a secretary. And whilst the paragraph did confirm that their appointment would take place by a majority vote, we weren't clear in what setting that would take place, so they didn't know whether we were going to be doing that at an AGM and EGM or somewhere in the corridor basically. So we've just changed the wording or we're suggesting to change the wording to 2.1 to make that absolutely clear.

Those three key roles are appointed by majority vote of the committee members at the very first Committee meeting following the AGM, which as Moe has already said, will take place on Monday, which is tomorrow.

PROPOSAL NUMBER 2

Proposed Change to the Constitution - Co-opting of Committee Members Section 2.2

Proposer: Hilary Larkham - 7180

Proposed Change

2.2 The Committee will **be comprised of [REMOVE] comprise [ADD]** not **[REMOVE]** more than nine Committee Members, and as far as is reasonably possible, not **[REMOVE]** less than six Committee Members. In the event that the Committee **is comprised of [REMOVE] comprises [ADD]** less than nine Committee Members, those Committee Members may co-opt any Adult Member **of good conduct on to the Committee [REMOVE] to become a Committee Member.[ADD]** *All adult members of the association will be given the opportunity to apply for the role. [ADD] These [REMOVE] Co-opted members will hold office until the next AGM. (Remove) must meet all the standards in section 4.1 (excluding part a).[ADD]*

If the committee believes it requires a particular skill set to fulfil its obligations to members they may add this as an additional requirement. The committee will select the successful candidate/s at a committee meeting by a majority vote of the committee members and they will hold office until the next AGM. [ADD]

Rationale for Change

This change is proposed to implement advice provided to the committee in the legal report on the constitution produced by Chadwick Lawrence in June 2024 and published in the Blog in the same month.

The proposal covers Section 2.2 Co-opting of committee members .

Extract From the Report

Paragraph 2.2: whilst this paragraph attempts to set out the eventuality where there are less than 6 Committee Members there is the possibility of co-opting Adult Members, it is also silent on how such a co-option is to be carried out and any formalities surrounding the same..

Comments and Questions This one is for proposing changes to the Co opting paragraph in 2.2 and for the Constitution, whereby the legal advice was basically what do we do in terms of when there are less than 6 Members.

There's a possibility of co-opting adult members. It was also silent on how we carry out that Co opting and the formalities that surround how we go about Co opting people. So having thought about that in the Constitution working party and in line with how this committee has been functioning, we really wanted to make some changes. That said, we need to be very transparent and we need to be very open about how Co opting takes place..

The paragraph is really to reflect those changes, and if you look at it basically what we're saying is that we will move forward if this proposal goes through, when there is a need or a want to Co opt, we will advertise that we are Co opting.

We will ask people to put themselves forward. Maybe they haven't done so at AGM time.

Maybe they're in a position to do so now, but we will make that very clear and we've also put into the Constitution the fact that we may well when we're in this position, and we want to Co opt, we might be looking for a particular skill set as well, because you know, we have to have people with certain skills within the association, and if that's the case, we also would

like the opportunity to just recruit from that section of the membership.

PROPOSAL NUMBER 3

Proposed Change to Constitution - Section 2 Committee

Proposer: David Anderson on behalf of the CWP

Proposed Change

Change of wording in 2.5, add a new section 2.6 and re number 2.7/2.8

2. Committee

2.1 The BFA is overseen by an elected selection of members (the “Committee”), which includes The Chairperson, The Treasurer and The Secretary. These roles are appointed by the Committee’s majority vote.

The responsibilities of these three roles are outlined in Appendix 1 - Role Descriptors for BFA Committee members and Officers of the Committee

2.2 The Committee ~~will be comprised [REMOVE]~~ ~~comprises [ADD]~~ of not more than nine Committee Members, and as far as is reasonably possible, not less than six Committee Members. In the event that the Committee ~~is comprised of less [REMOVE]~~ ~~comprises less [ADD]~~ than nine Committee Members, those Committee Members may co-opt any Adult Member of good conduct on to the Committee to be a Committee Member. These co-opted members will hold office until the next AGM.

2.3 The Committee is responsible for the running of the Association within the existing rules, policies and procedures and the implementation of any changes following an AGM/EGM.

2.4 Any changes arising from rule 2.3 will take effect within a maximum of six months from the AGM/EGM. This timescale can be varied by the Committee for matters relating to dog welfare, legislative changes and health and safety.

2.5 The Committee will adhere to, enforce and implement the BFA’s Constitution, Code of Conduct, Rules of Racing, and all of the BFA’s published ~~Policies/[REMOVE]~~ ~~Policies, Procedures & Appendices [ADD]~~ while consulting with the Membership, Working Parties or other professionals when necessary and in accordance with the Descriptors of the Committee.

2.6 The Committee is responsible for updating the Policies, Procedures and Appendices between AGM’s. This is to enable the Committee to take into account any changes in legislation, guidance in the Health and Safety of both humans and dogs and urgent matters that will not wait until the next AGM. They will inform the membership by issuing a new version of the affected Policy/Procedure or Appendix by updating the website, putting a notice on social media and emailing team captains. [ADD]

2.6 2.7 When communicating with the membership, working parties or other professionals, the Committee will use the necessary digital media platforms to deliver their information.

2.7 2.8 The Committee will communicate all unrestricted minutes of meetings to the membership within a month of any meeting. In the case of an EGM all minutes should be shared within six weeks.

Rationale

The Committee needs to react to changing circumstances within the year, to protect the Association and its members both financially and legally. The above change gives them both the power and responsibility to do so.

In order for this proposal to go ahead it would require the creation of a Policies and Procedures folder. All Policies and Procedures would be removed from the Appendices. Policies and Procedures would sit outside of the rules but would be used by all members in conjunction with the rules.

The Appendices would be an extension to the rules, they will contain additional information which supports the rules.

Comments and Questions

Hilary Larkham (on behalf of the Constitution Working Party) explained the need for this change.

We need to be able to react to changing circumstances like any organisation, whether that's for a private organisation, public or not-for-profit, we most definitely need the opportunity to react to changing circumstances within the year.

To be able to protect the association and its members, both financially and legally.

The above proposal gives us as a committee the power and responsibility to make those changes. In order for the proposal to go ahead, it would require the creation of a policies and procedures folder.

All policies and procedures would be removed from the appendices and the policies and procedures would sit outside of the rules but will be used by all Members in conjunction with the rules.

The appendices, therefore, would be an extension to the rules. They will contain additional information which supports the rules, sounds a bit complex, but really when you look at it, if you're looking at the current document that we have and we call it rules of racing loosely, but it's made-up of different documents.

Document one is the Constitution, document 2 is all of your rules of racing about, you know, boxes and triggers and layouts and all of those types of things then currently we have sitting at the back of that document the 14 appendices are all trying to deal with different things. Membership fees, Data protection, safeguarding, social media etc etc ,Now we need to make it really clear that those types of appendices are dealing with things that may change throughout the year.

Health and safety. Things may change. Data protection may change. Social media rules may change. We cannot really wait until an AGM to get those things put into place, because if we do, we could end up in a position where the Association is non-compliant with legal requirements, which doesn't seem to be very sensible. Most of us, I'm sure, in organisations

are very well used to seeing a policies and procedures manual where all of these things change on a day-to-day basis.

So that's really what this proposal is about. It's about putting those areas that really need the ability to change, if circumstances change, take them out of the rules and put them into a policies and procedures manual.

PROPOSAL NUMBER 4

Rule Change Proposal

Proposer : Hilary Larkham - 7180

4. Committee Members and other positions (4.1)

Each Committee Member must:

- a. be elected on to the Committee through a majority vote unless an election is not necessary as the number of those seeking election on to the Committee does not exceed the number of vacant posts. In the event of a tie for the final Committee Member vacancy, a further vote will be conducted at the AGM and will only be voted upon by BFA members in attendance. If this vote is a tie, the Chairperson will have the casting vote.
- b. be an active and current member of the BFA and regularly attend BFA sanctioned tournaments within the preceding 12 months of their application.
- c. not have been found guilty of a disciplinary offence under BFA rules for a minimum of three years preceding their election.
- d. not be a Board Member/Committee Member of another UK flyball Association/League
- e. be independent of every other Committee Member and must not be:
 - related by way of being their child or step-child, parent or step-parent, uncle/aunt or cousin to another Committee Member;
 - the spouse, civil partner, partner or long-term girl/boyfriend of another Committee Member; and/or
 - a member of the same BFA registered club and/or team
- e. (remove) f. (ADD) be a UK, Isle of Man, Channel Islands permanent resident.

Rationale for Change

To amend the Constitution Document to rectify an administrative error following the AGM process in 2024. In Section 4, Committee Members and Other Positions by replacing duplicate e with f

Comments and Questions

No comments or discussion, just a simple change.

PROPOSAL NUMBER 5

Proposer Hilary Larkham - 7180

Proposed Change to Constitution

RULE NUMBER 4.4 of the Constitution - Officials and Working Groups,

4. Committee Members and other positions

4.4 The Committee will appoint, [ADD] by quorum volunteer officers from the membership in to [REMOVE] into [ADD] the following roles. These officers are appointed at the discretion of the Committee and [ADD] report to the Committee as and when required:

- Records and Statistics Team
- Membership Secretary
- Show Secretary
- Judges Board
- Height Card Administrator
- Accessibility Advisor [REMOVE] and safeguarding team [ADD]
- Safeguarding Leads [REMOVE]
- Young Member Coaches
- Taskforces
- Constitutional Working Party [ADD]
- Champs Working Party [ADD]
- Complaints Officer (s) (if proposal on complaints is accepted) [ADD]
- Webmaster
- Regional Representatives
- Media Team
- Awards Secretary
- Veterinary Team
- Working Party Liaisons
- Training Team [ADD]
- Rules Working Party [ADD]

Rationale for Change

To amend the Associations Constitution Document to publish the existing mechanism used by the committee for appointment to a volunteer officer role and to bring the list of the appointed volunteer officers and groups up to date to reflect the current situation within the association and the working labels used.

Comments and Questions

Hilary Larkham explained the reason why the above changes are needed. This is really simple. It's basically to bring up to date the Constitution document to reflect the existing mechanism that the committee uses when we are appointing people into the volunteer roles that we were talking about earlier.

PROPOSAL NUMBER 6

PROPOSERS Ray Lewis BFA NO:2686

Proposal: Create a new BFA role of EFC Council Representative

Affects: Constitution, Section 4. Committee members and other positions, and Appendix 1 Role Descriptors for BFA Committee Members and Officers of the Committee

Add - to the list of volunteer officers in paragraph 4.4:

- EFC Council Representative

Add – to Appendix 1 new paragraph 17:

0. **EFC Council Representative** who will perform the role of a Country Representative for the UK on the European Flyball Championships Council, and act as a liaison between that Council and the BFA Committee on matters which are relevant to the BFA and its BFA members who may wish to compete at the European Flyball Championship.

1. Rationale

- a. The European Flyball Championships (EFC) is an annual event. Since 1998, it has been hosted by Flyball teams in Belgium, Germany, France, Poland, Czechia, Hungary, as well as in the UK in 2007, 2012 and 2016.

Entry is open to any team from any country, although as flyball has grown, a limit on the total number of teams now generally needs to be set.

The EFC is governed by the EFC Council, whose purpose is to ensure that the event is competitive and fair to all participants and is well organised in general. This includes:

b.

- Maintaining the EFC rulebook
- Considering tenders from prospective future host teams
- Maintaining a database of EFC-measured height dogs
- Appointing a team of Tournament Head Judges for the event
- Assisting the host team, as required

The EFC Council consists of representatives from each country. At present the list of countries represented is: Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, France, Poland, Czechia, Hungary, Finland and the UK. Although initially there was a single representative for each country, in 2018 the EFC Council decided that, since a country might have more than one governing body, that this be increased to two representatives per country.

The EFC Council communicates using online messaging tools and meets by video-conference two or three times a year, as well as face-to-face at the EFC event. All business is conducted in English.

It is now the practice that representatives are selected on the recommendation of the country's flyball governing body, or failing that - by invitation.

Through adding this role to the list of roles in our Constitution, it will ensure that (a) the BFA's and its members interests will remain represented on the EFC council, in the event that the current BFA representative stands down, and (b) that the BFA Committee can decide whom it chooses to represent the Association at the EFC Council.

Comments and Questions

Ray Lewis explained his proposal further

The European Flyball Championships is an event which I would imagine quite a few of those present have attended at some point over the years. It's an annual event held somewhere in Europe, and has been held in the UK on three separate occasions now.

It's a completely open event, open to teams from anywhere in Europe.

They can be existing teams or they can be teams formed specifically for the purpose, and it's a very inclusive tournament.

This is an event that doesn't have its own specific set of rules and regulations

This is necessary because different countries have different governing bodies.

With differences in rules, it is required that we have a single set of rules for the European Flyball Championships. These rules are set by the EFC Council.

And the Council consists of two members from each of the countries that participate.

The UK being one of those countries, there are two UK Council members at present.

Now it just so happens that of those two Council members, there's one each from the two different governing bodies that exist in the UK at the time being.

The situation at the moment is that the Council will invite council members on the recommendation of the governing body, if there is any.

My concern is that should the existing UK representative, who happens to be a BFA member chooses to stand down from the council the BFA is open to not being represented at all. I don't think that's a good thing for BFA members who may wish to participate at the EFC. So I am proposing that in the BFA Constitution under the list of volunteer officers and EFC Council representatives who can be selected by the committee as the committee sees fit to represent the BFA, as a UK representative on the EFC Council.

The kinds of things we're talking about are amendments to the rule book, to consider tenders from future prospective host teams around Europe, including the UK and maintaining a database of EFC measured height dogs. Appointing tournament head judges for the event and assisting the host team as required. The responsibility of the representative appointed by the BFA Committee would be to attend. The two or three EFC Council meetings, which are held online each year and if present at the championships, to attend the in person meeting, should there be one other than that, it's just a question of electronic communication representing the BFA. The other part of it is to feed information back from the EFC Council to the BFA.

I've put two parts of this. One is to add EFC Council representative to the list of volunteer officers and add a new paragraph 17 to the Appendix 1.

There have been one or two questions on Facebook leading up to this. One is particularly relating to any financial burden on the BFA for this, and my view is that there would be no

financial burden on the BFA whatsoever because there is no necessity for the Council representative to actually travel to the championships if they weren't going to be doing so anyway to compete.

The only other question on Facebook was there were a couple of comments asking for confirmation how members are currently chosen.

Ray Lewis answers

So currently members are chosen by invitation where there are no rules in the governing body that determine how they should be chosen.

So without this rule change, the EFC Council could invite any UK flyball competitor they saw fit to be a Council member, should there be a vacancy and with this rule, they would have to refer to the BFA in order to appoint a new Council member.

Question from Tina Hatcher

If this does go through and it goes into position, are you going to remain on the council as it stands and if the rule does go in, do the BFA have to remove you to then appoint someone?

Ray Lewis: OK, my own position on the Council, one of the reasons why I put this forward is because I don't see myself as being on the Council indefinitely and I would like it to be the case that the BFA is represented on the Council.

Question from Keith Marshall

While I can completely see the benefit of having a BFA member on the EFC Council. It was just more of a semantics thing. What should because obviously it's all dependent on the Council themselves inviting and having their rules to say that they're going to invite a member according to our rules, should that change and they decide not to do it that way obviously we still have a rule in place that says we have to provide one and come to our rules. What would happen in that scenario? It may never happen, but.

Answer from Ray

Well, that's unlikely because pretty much every other governing body in Europe has got rules in place that says the governing body appoints the council members.

PROPOSAL NUMBER 7

Proposed Rule Change

Proposer: Hilary Larkham - 7180

Proposed Change

7 General Meetings

7.3 An Adult Member **or group of members (Add)** may place an item of business on the agenda including any proposed rule change for a forthcoming Annual General Meeting by submitting the same in writing to the Secretary and the Secretary receiving the same not less than 30 days before the Annual General Meeting. **Where the group is a formal BFA Group i.e.. the Committee, the Judges Board or a Working Party, all members of the group must agree to the proposal. Where the majority of a formal group wish to proceed with a proposal they may do so as a group of individual members.(Add)**

Any person who has proposed a rule change should, if they are able, attend the Annual General Meeting in order to clarify the proposed rule change and/or comment on any suggested amendment(s). If the proposer is unable to attend an additional proposer is to be nominated to present the proposal on their behalf. In the absence of any proposer at the Annual General Meeting the proposed rule change will not be put to a vote and will not be implemented.

Rationale for Change

This is a housekeeping issue flagged to the Committee by the Constitution Working Party.

The current constitution wording states that proposed rule changes can be put forward to members at AGM by an Adult Member of the Association. Historically however proposals have also been submitted on behalf of the Committee and indeed the judges board. The wording in the Constitution therefore needs to be updated to reflect what has, and is, already happening in practice.

Comments and Questions

Hilary Larkham on behalf of the Constitutional Working Party.

This one again a very simple one, it's a housekeeping issue that was flagged to the committee by the Constitution working party and it's to do with the wording of the Constitution where it states that proposed rule changes can be put forward to Members. At AGM by an adult member of the association.

Historically, however, proposals have also been submitted on behalf of the committee and the Judges Board, for example.

The wording in the Constitution therefore needs to be updated to reflect what has and is already happening in practice. It's been happening for a number of years and we therefore need that to be put into the Constitution very clearly.

But it's not just an adult member that can put forward a proposal. It's also a group of members and that's really the wording that you'll see in 7.3. We've also made it even clearer there that where the group is a formal BFA group, IE the committee, the judging sport or in this instance, the Constitution working party all members of the group must agree to the proposal.

So if just the majority of a formal group wish to proceed with the proposal they may do so as a group of individual members. OK, So what we're saying here, it gives people who are on a

working party or a committee or a judges board an option if they all agree, great, it can come in then as a proposal under their title. If however, only a majority of that group agree, then it would come in as a group of people or individual names, because then the membership can see very clearly whether it's on behalf of a formal working group or just a group of individual people. And I hope that makes sense.

No questions on Facebook on this one. So does anybody have any questions on this?

Question from Rachel Short

Just an observation on this one, actually. Obviously, groups of people, whether there be a committee, a judges board or rules working party, constitution, working party aren't all there to completely agree we get changes because people do have their own opinions like you've obviously mentioned at the beginning of this meeting and they have to be respected. But I'm not sure that by saying every single member has to agree for that group to put it forward.

Is necessarily correct as a committee of seven of you at the moment. I'm sure you don't all agree. But that's why we have a quorum, you know? So it's like a majority to ensure that then things can move forward, otherwise nothing would move forward. You could potentially end up with say two different opinions, five and two. Well, indeed, you've got a quorum. So you're going to say, well, actually, no, we can't put that forward as a committee proposal because two of us don't agree. You know, I think pushing this to make sure that everybody agrees is just a little bit of a step too far. You could end up with three or four proposals on the same topic, just because there were three or four different opinions on the matter.

Hilary answered the points Rachel raised.

Yeah. In terms of the committee, we do have to agree by quorum. That's fair enough. I think therefore it could go under as if we don't all agree, it goes under quorum anyway. So it's a committee proposal. I think when the Constitution working party was putting this forward. I know that Dave's around and Karina's around this

At this point the meeting took a 15 minute break which allowed the Constitutional working party to come up with a suggested rewording to be voted upon by members present at the AGM.

Rewording was agreed and voted upon by the members present. The reworded proposal is what you see above.

PROPOSAL NUMBER 8

Proposal Withdrawn By Proposer Sarah Prentice - 9461

PROPOSAL NUMBER 9

Proposer Sarah Prentice - 9461

RULES OF FLYBALL RACING

A.1. Sanctioned Tournaments

4. Tournament Seeding/Running Order

4.4 Where speed trials (ST) are used as a preliminary round at a tournament, the results from that ST can be used to re-seed the teams in those divisions into new divisions for the double elimination (DE) or round robin (RR) part of the event at that tournament. [\[ADD\] If a team fails to post a time equal to or faster than its seed time during the ST it can request that its seed time be used in the following rounds of the competition. This request must be made to the Head Judge within 15 minutes of the end of the racing day.](#) In the event that.....

Rationale

Currently if a team is unable to post a seed time during speed trials they will not be able to continue racing competitively at Champs. This is extremely frustrating for the team as they will have paid a lot of money and travelled a considerable distance to take part in what is the pinnacle of the racing year.

In the past few years the committee has allowed the teams who did not post a seed time to race in an NFC division, which is a nice gesture, but I feel it would be a better experience for everyone if teams could revert to seed times if they are FASTER than the speed trial times. Under this proposal a team will NOT be allowed to revert to its seed time if it has run faster than its seed time in the speed trials.

Similarly, if a team is unable to race to its full potential during speed trials due to the weather (e.g. Whippets don't run in the rain!!) then they can revert to their seed time to ensure that they are placed in the correct division for racing.

I think by allowing people to revert to seed time we will see people pushing for their fastest times and nose to nose crosses (as they should already be doing anyway) without the fear of not posting a time and being excluded from continuing in the competition.

Comments and Questions

The Rationale is currently if a team is unable to post the seed time during speed trials, they will not be able to continue racing competitively at Champs. This is extremely frustrating for the teams as they will not have paid a lot of money and travelled a considerable distance to take part in, what is the pinnacle of the racing year. In the past few years, the committee has allowed the teams who did not post a seed time to race in an NFC division.

Which is a nice gesture, but I would feel it would be a better experience for everyone if the team could revert to seed times.

If they are faster than the speed trial times under this proposal, a team will not be allowed to revert to its seed time if it has run faster than its seed time in speed trials. Similarly, if a team is unable to race to its full potential during a speed trial due to the weather, e.g. whippets don't run in the rain, then they can revert to their seed time to ensure that they are placed in the correct division for racing.

I think by allowing people to revert to seed time, it will be it. We will see people pushing for their faster times and nose crosses as they should already be doing anyway without the fear of not posting the time and being excluded from continuing in the competition.

So in this one it's 4.4 and she would like to add in after part of the event at the tournament. If a team fails to post the time equal to or faster than its seed time during the speed trial, it can request that the seed time be used in the following rounds of the competition. The request must be made to the head judge within 15 minutes of the end of racing.

Sarah answered a lot of questions on facebook regarding this proposal.

She put a rationale together to answer those, and she would like to put in an addition after the racing day. "If a team has used a declared time to enter a competition and fails to post a time during the speed trials, they will not be allowed to continue to compete using their declared time. However, they will be allowed to participate in an NFC division if the tournament organiser decides it is appropriate to run one."

Nicky James explained that is too much of a change. Minor changes of wording are permitted to be put forward and voted on at the AGM. However, that is quite a major change.

The Committee spoke privately and all agreed this was too major a change and could not be allowed. So the proposal would go through with the wording agreed before the AGM.

Keith Marshall & Pete Bell raise the same point that these two proposals conflict with each other slightly. As Sarah was not present at the AGM we could not discuss rewording her proposals.

It was agreed when the voting form goes out that this would be made clear on the form.

PROPOSAL NUMBER 10

PROPOSERS TINA HATCHER 6759

RULE NUMBER A.2 Rules for Competition, 5. Teams

Subsequent Rule numbers: 6 Time Sheets, 6.4
Judging and Ring Party, Section B B.5

RULE CONTENT (please put in red which part you would like to remove and in blue which part you would like to add)

5. Teams

5.1 All Teams will appoint a 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.

5.2 Dogs may not be entered for racing in more than one team at an open/multi-breed BFA Sanctioned Tournament. Dogs may not take part in Flyball Foundation or fun events on the same day as they are entered in open/multi-breed.

Please note teams registered as Open teams may only compete in Open competitions.

Teams

registered as Multi-breed teams may only compete in Multi-breed competitions. Use of any team

for a class of racing other than for that which it is registered will result in the loss of all points, times and placing for the competition(s) where it has been used out of class.

5.3 Pick 'n' Mix Teams [ADD]

A Pick 'n' Mix team is a transient team that has been formed to race because of a particular circumstance.

- a. Where a small or developing team has insufficient dogs to field an open team, but would still like to compete.

- a. Where an established BFA member, with a good conduct record, does not currently have a Primary Team.
- a. Where a team experiences an incident on the day (e.g. accident enroute, lame dog etc), that would otherwise cause that team to withdraw. A Pick 'n' Mix team can then be formed before the start of racing.
 - a. The Pick 'n' Mix dog will be a 'spare' dog that isn't racing within another open team at that tournament

5.3.1

- a. Races against Pick 'n' Mix teams will be played out as if the team was an open team.
- b. Dogs and participants must be BFA members.
- c. A Pick 'n' Mix team must be annotated on the C2 before the start of the division in which the team is racing.
- d. Pick 'n' Mix teams can be placed within a division based on a reasonable declared time and each dog can gain points as per the BFA rules.
- e. Pick 'n' Mix teams cannot set a seed time and whilst they can physically beat a record time, they cannot set an official time or be designated as record holders.
- f. Pick 'n' Mix teams can convert to a WFC team during racing should it become necessary.
- g. At least one of the dogs in the team must be from a different club or have no club and must run in at least one heat throughout the day's racing.
- i. Pick 'n' Mix teams can win races, but will not be ranked in the BFA seed List.
- j. Dogs that run in a Pick 'n' Mix team will be exempt from rule 5.4 for that particular tournament and they will remain with their primary team.

5.3 [REMOVE] 5.4 [ADD] A dog may change teams at any time to compete with another BFA registered primary team, but after this change it may not change teams again for a period of 6 months (e.g. a dog races with Team A on 1st April 2016 so it is free to race with Team B on 1st October 2016). The owner/handler must inform the membership secretary of any such change.

The only exceptions are:

- a. A dog prohibited from competing with an existing Team. Proof must be provided to the committee for consideration.
- b. The handler/dog has moved to another area and their previous Team accepts the transfer.
- c. Their previous Team has dissolved, and the Membership Secretary has been informed.
- d. 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.
- e. Dogs that are associated with Pick 'n' Mix Teams are exempt from this ruling for that particular tournament. [ADD]

All requests to move a dog from one primary team to another within 6 months shall be emailed to the BFA secretary with reasons for the request to move.

5.4 [REMOVE] 5.5 [ADD] At a tournament, each team entered in open or multibreed shall consist of a minimum of four dogs and a maximum of six dogs; a current BFA member responsible for each dog; and a current BFA member as box loader. The dogs must be eligible to run for that team. Each team is to have four dogs running in each heat, with a maximum of two alternates as standbys close at hand. The alternates may be used at the team's discretion or in the case of injury. Singles is an entry for a single dog, pairs is a maximum of 2 dogs (no standby).

5.5 [REMOVE] 5.6 [ADD] Overseas Guest Teams must only include non-UK resident dogs.

5.6 [REMOVE] 5.7 [ADD] In multi-breed only competitions, teams must consist of all different breeds recognised by the BFA.

Any new breed requests should be sent to the Membership secretary for approval along with any Documentation.

5.7 [REMOVE] 5.8 [ADD] In addition to the handlers/holders and the box-loader a team may at their discretion be accompanied by team members to pick up loose balls, set up knocked down jumps, collect times, record changeovers and any other relevant jobs to the team, provided doing so does not interfere

with the Judges, or the opposing team. A racing team may be assisted by up to five additional

members and seven members during the warm up. Teams that require more than five assistants,

e.g. to facilitate a Disabled Handler or to supervise a young member under the age of 14 working

towards their young members award must notify the Head Judge and Divisional Judge prior to

racing. Members may be asked to leave the ring by the Divisional or Head Judge if causing a

distraction or in any way impeding racing or warm up.

5.8 [REMOVE] 5.9 [ADD] For multiple entries of the same team once any of their teams has started racing in the tournament there will be no switching of dogs from one team to another once the division begins.

5.9 [REMOVE] 5.10 [ADD] Forfeiting teams may be declared WFC or be excluded from the tournament by the Head Judge/Tournament Organiser

6 Time Sheets

6.4 The following information shall be recorded on the C2 timesheet, all information shall match the information held on the BFA website:

- Team's name and number (TRN)
- The captain's name and BFA number
- Each dog's name, BFA number, registered breed and height
- Each handler's name and BFA number (Handlers must be current BFA members and can be from any primary team)
- Box loader's name and BFA number (Boxloaders must be current BFA members and can be from any primary team)
- Pick 'n' Mix Teams must be annotated on the C2 [ADD]

JUDGING AND RING PARTY

Section B

B 5 Ring Party

1. The Divisional Judge is assisted by ring party as follows:

1. Line judge (and scribe) Duties and Responsibilities

Line Judges (who may have scribes to assist them with their duties) shall:

a. Inform the Judge when a Pick 'n' Mix Team enters the ring.[ADD]

a. Check jump heights are correctly set for the dogs running.

a. Using the BFA Time Sheet (Form C.2) record for each heat which dogs participate, the team's time and whether they won, lost or tied and if the heat was completed by 4 dogs without faults.

a. When appropriate, instead of a time, one of the following may be entered:

- No time= NT; In the case of interference for the offending team= NT Int, for the non offending team = Ave Int.; Where Ave is recorded (for whatever reason) the number of dogs that ran to complete should be shown (e.g. 4 dogs or 5 dogs etc.)
- If a team breaks out, BO should be entered alongside the time. A loss for both teams may be recorded.

a. Should the EJS fail during racing and alternative means of timing the race are endorsed by the Head Judge, this is to be clearly marked on the C2, heat by heat, as these times will be disregarded for the **purposed [REMOVE] purposes [ADD]** of fastest times and seeding times.

a. Indicate with a signal for a false start.

a. Indicate with a signal:

- When a dog is to run again (early pass, missing a jump, crossing the start/finish line without the ball)
- If the handler crosses the start/finish line during the heat (other than to set up a knocked down jump or retrieve a loose ball)
- Other rule violations for which a dog must run again

a. It is the handler's responsibility to note the signal and re-run their dog

a. Advise the Divisional Judge if a Team runs a 'break-out' time in a heat

a. In the event of a close heat, the Divisional Judge shall consult with their ring party. If no clear winner is identified, then that **race [REMOVE] heat [ADD]** shall be declared a tie.

RATIONALE:

A proposal for Pool Teams was submitted 2 years ago at the AGM, after no working party was put together, I offered to submit a proposal to go into the rule book, which I did last year at the AGM. Last year's results showed 40 votes between the proposal going through, throughout this year I have had several members contact me asking me to put this proposal forward again this year, therefore I have completed their wishes.

It is up to the individual and Team Captain to decide whether their dogs could participate in this type of team. If you feel your dog could not cope in this scenario then you reserve the right to decline. It is purely an option for dogs that are capable and individuals and Team Captains that would feel comfortable putting their dog in this scenario.

Some concerns were raised last year regarding the following and here are my reasonings why I feel that these concerns can be overcome:

Kennel Cough - People are really careful these days regarding being around the ring with your dogs, drinking from their own water bowls only etc - Kennel Cough still comes around even though we are as careful as we can be, if dogs are going to catch it then they will. We all know when Kennel Cough becomes rife therefore if you feel that you are putting your dog at risk by possibly joining another team then it is your right to decline.

Flyball Boxes - People join other teams for foundation, multi-breed and form teams for the prestige of Crufts. If you join a foundation team or multi-breed team then the majority of the time it would be a spur of the moment joint team. You might not have used their box before but it doesn't stop people from continuing with joining teams. This type of team would fall under this category for the majority of the time it would be used. Again if you feel this isn't right for your dog then you have the right to decline.

The majority of teams now run on similar boxes and therefore feel that their dog can easily cope with the slight change. Some people have the same types of boxes for example Rebellion boxes are very popular and a lot of teams have these. In this instance there would be minimal risk.

Some teams are really friendly with each other and might train together or have similar techniques therefore if for whatever reason that team was short of a dog they would probably go to the team that they know along with knowing the temperament of their dogs.

To enable the relevant officials to determine who is a Pick 'n' Mix team this must be annotated on the C2, this can be simply writing this on the C2 or if easily adaptable a tick box could be added to the C2.

When uploading results to the website the team will keep their placing but their fastest time throughout the day will not be awarded, instead a time of 99.99 will be uploaded.

The Scribe must inform the judge of a Pick 'n' Mix team when they enter the ring, this is to enable the judge to determine if a record is broken by an Open team and not a Pick 'n' Mix team. If it's broken by a Pick 'n' Mix team then celebrations can take place for that team, but a Judge would not need to follow the BFA Rules for when a record is broken.

Comments and Questions

This was submitted a couple of years ago at the AGM for a working party to be put together for this to be worked on to go into the rule book if everybody agreed.

Obviously that didn't happen, and last year I was asked if I would write something to go into the rule book on this proposal and their idea, which is what I did last year. It obviously didn't go through by 40 votes. So again, this year I've had quite a lot of members contact me and ask me if I'll put the proposal forward again. I have made some slight amendments off the back of last year's proposal and that being mainly for the Champs to be removed from the proposal, so basically we're going into Section 5 of teams, 5.3, pick and mix teams. I'd like to add that there's a transition team that has been formed to race on a single occasion because of a particular circumstance.

A small or developing team has sufficient dogs to field an open team but would still like to compete B where an established BFA member with a good conduct record does not currently

have a primary team.
All the questions on the chat group, so if there's any other questions.

Question from Keith Marshall

You've mentioned several members have asked you to put in the proposal again after last year given we've got a membership of over 2000. Could you just give us a rough idea of you know what kind of numbers we're asking you to put this in please?

Answered by Tina

There were several teams. I'm not going to name or give any information out, but a lot of people want this and have been requesting it so asked me to put it in again, that's as far as I am going to go.

Question from Kerena Merchant

Running a dog both days and that's what concerns me ?

Answered by Tina

5.3 D I have stated that they are not allowed to run in another open team at that tournament.

Slight wording change was put forward by Tina and voted through by people in attendance at the AGM. The reworded proposal is what you see above.

PROPOSAL NUMBER 11

PROPOSERS NAME - Sarah Prentice 9461

**RULE NUMBER
A.2. Rules for Competition**

5.3 A dog may change teams at any time to compete with another BFA registered primary team, but after this change, it may not change teams again for a period of 6 months (e.g. a dog races [ADD]from Team A to race withTeam [REMOVE] A [ADD] B on 1st April [REMOVE] 2016 [ADD]YYYY so it will not be [REMOVE] so it is free to race with Team [ADD] C [REMOVE] B on [ADD]until 1st October [REMOVE] 2016 [ADD]YYYY). The owner/handler must inform the membership secretary of any such change.

RATIONALE: To remove ambiguity in the rule

PROPOSAL NUMBER 12

Proposer: Paul Astbury - 6769

A.2 Rules for Competition.

7.1 Team Equipment.

d) the ball, when released, must have a free unobstructed flight, of not less than ~~24"~~ [ADD] 12" from the box cup in a forward direction.

Rationale

I believe this rule dates back to the 1980s and was brought into BFA from NAFA rules to create a standard. Back then this may have had more of a purpose but now in 2025 with box technology, trigger technology, training techniques much improved and the fact we allow different types of balls of different weight and structure, I now believe this is no longer required. For safety of ball collection teams can adjust triggers to help smaller breeds that really struggle with a trigger set with such force to fire 2 feet, also as mentioned the balls allowed now also bring the need for change in I feel as weights and density of balls can act differently when fired. Also teams can set triggers to fire as much as necessary to help dogs safely collect the ball (of all types allowed) whether the dog is a 3.5s dog that really needs the fire power or the 7 second 6" height dog that has struggled to catch a ball with such force for years.

A lot of discussion around Box turns and speed of flight of the ball. The main point being that there is no evidence as to why this distance of 24" is relevant.

Nicky James -There is no set standard for the angle of a box the more upright boxes if the ball only fired 2" then the ball would simply drop out of the box.

Maxine Marshall - it was more just to sort of answer Nicky's point a bit that she's made about how the ball would only have to move a little bit, but with different boxes on different angles firing the two feet is still, it's still different as it is different boxes are making it different already because it's still 2 foot from clear in the front of the box. So you know the ball firing into the lane, it's still further than it is now.

And this is just about making it easier for dogs to catch. And I know Paul has said that it's smaller dogs. To be honest, my lurcher sketch would turn better when the ball doesn't fire as hard as he can't catch, whereas he's got a safer turn when he's collecting a ball that isn't firing at his face quite so hard. It was just that point that it is. It wouldn't just benefit those dogs, but obviously no one is going to set this up to challenge a dog that can catch it will be about setting it the best for this whole team.

.

It's just bringing a little bit more into the other end to allow for a safer ball collection.

Nicky James there needs to be a set standard for the boxes. That's why I would like to see a measurement.

Paul Astbury - I was thinking of an amendment and hoping that maybe through this we can discuss it more you know, would it be 6 inches? Would it be 12? I just don't. There's no reason that I can find anywhere why it's 24. Apart from the fact of when it goes back to the

old pedigree boxes that we've used across years ago that flip over the top. So yeah, it needed to go a certain distance. Now most dogs collect the ball an inch or two from the box.

Ray Lewis - I'm really not clear on this. I understand that we need to have a standard which makes sense. The standard has always been 24 inches. I don't think it's since the days of the catapult boxes, but it's certainly been since the days of the flat fronted boxes. I'm not sure why we need to change this. Are we saying that we want to make it easier for some dogs? Or, you know, is flyball meant to be an easy sport for dogs to do or do we need to train our dogs to cope with the equipment as they need to be set up? I'm not quite sure where this one's actually going. Surely it's a training issue that we get the dogs to collect the ball with the box that's set up according to competition regulations.

Reply from Paul Astbury

I see what you're saying, to have a standard and again that's why I was thinking of possibly amending it slightly.

But from my own experience of only not as long as a lot of you. But I'm 14 years in now, and from my experience of having dogs and our training sessions, we've still got two now that no matter what we do and have been training for a couple of years and they train a lot and sensibly but with the ball firing as it is, they still really, really struggle to collect that ball.

Yes, I use the example of small dogs or slower dogs, but it isn't, as Max says, it isn't only those dogs that do it, and it's not so much about making it easier for people, but it just seems that we are allowing people. Personally, I've had a person come to training for a couple of years now that no matter what they do, they won't get into open because the box firing is too much for their dog to cope with.

I also thought about putting in the proposal that maybe it was only to ask the head judge on the day for one particular dog or one particular, but it just becomes a bit over complicated. I just think that the last thing I want is any dog smashing its face into a box and I understand some of the people who are worried about that. That's the last thing I want and I would hope that nobody, no team captain or anybody who sets up the boxes for any team would even consider doing that, if it was going to cause a problem. But if you've got a four hole box and you've got one dog that particularly is on one of those holes that, you know, by slowing that down, you can help that dog safely turn and get it while the others are still set as they were before or even further. I don't see that as an issue.

You can train and train and train, but some dogs will just not catch that ball under such force a set 2 feet.

One comment put in the Teams Chat by Andrew Short

Unfortunately, common sense is not an enforceable rule. We should specify a minimum distance such as 6 inches. This would also assist the box judges in determining whether the box was triggered or the ball rolled out or was stolen.

Several comments all coming back to the same point. No one can clarify why the standard distance for a ball to fire from the box would be 24". We understand the need for a standard but why is the standard 24"

Nicky James Asks "Paul would you consider putting in a distance on your proposal ?

Paul Astbury answers

Yes again, that's my slight worry because of the different angles of the boxes. I say if we do it from the cup or do we do it from the front of the plate?

I don't pretend to be the world expert on this. I'm after other people's opinions and things too. Currently we do measure it from the cup, but like you said, if you've got a 60 degree angle or even lower 50 odd degree angle box, or you're running off an 84° angle box it's totally different from firing. So we need to have a standard, we need to set that parameter too. Do you agree?

Nicky James - Given the different shapes of boxes, etcetera. Would you be happy to amend it to 12 inches from the cup?

Paul Astbury

To be honest, it's not ideally what I wanted, I think making a start on this and just getting that 24 inch for no reason I have and then yes . So I would be happy to do it at 12. But I do think somehow we as an association need to look at this a little bit as well.

Amendment to the wording of the proposal was voted on by those present at the AGM.

The committee agreed to ask the Box Working Party to look into the rationale behind this measurement.

PROPOSAL NUMBER 13

PROPOSERS NAME - Sarah Prentice 9461

A.2. Rules for Competition

5. Teams

5.7 In addition to the handlers/holders and the box-loader, [ADD] a team may,[ADD] at their discretion,[ADD] be accompanied by team members to pick up loose balls, set up knocked down jumps, collect times, record changeovers and [Remove] or [Add] any other relevant jobs to the team, provided doing so does not interfere with the Judges, or the opposing team. A racing team may be assisted by up to five additional members and seven members during the warm up. Teams that require more than five assistants, e.g. to facilitate a Disabled Handler or to supervise a young member under the age of 14 working towards there [REMOVE] their [ADD] young members award, [ADD] must notify the Head Judge and

Divisional Judge prior to racing. Members may be asked to leave the ring by the Divisional or Head Judge if causing a distraction or in any way impeding racing or warm up.

If a handler wishes to use an additional team member as a runner during their heat of the race, the runner must run toward the lights on the right hand side of the dog. The runner must not run further than the start line or this will be classed as a fault. [ADD]

If the runner is being used in the **blue** lane, once the runner reaches the lights, and the dog has passed them, they **must** cross the lane and either

- Stand out of the way of all dogs to the left
- Cross the lane to the left and run toward where the dog will be rewarded [ADD]

If the runner is being used in the **red** lane, once the runner reaches the lights, and the dog has passed them, they can either

- Stop at the line and step out of the way to the right
- Cross the lane to the left and run toward where the dog will be rewarded [ADD]

Rationale:

This is to ensure that when a runner is used in any other position than start they are not impeding any exiting dog by being on the wrong side and giving the exiting dog nowhere to go and causing a potential collision situation.

It also prevents any runner in the red lane from being classed as a training aid to stop the dog running out or causing interference.

Comments and Questions

Keith Marshall

If you have a runner, the runner, and this was discussed with the judges board. The runner needs to be run on the outside for dog safety. So in the red lane it would run to the right hand side in the blue lane to the left hand side because otherwise in the blue lane you're having a runner running directly in front of the judge towards the lights and obstructing vision and also runners, when do we have runners for dogs 2-3 and four?

Because I mean, I personally wouldn't. Why would you have somebody running towards your dog coming out? But I'm not quite sure where she's going with this proposal.

Tina - Just clarifying what the judges board said and the judges board came back to her and agreed that the wording was correct and that's what they've said. So I agree with you, Keith. I was in the same conversation with you.

Nicky James -

I just want to clarify from the judges board point of view, we have seen teams that have used runners for dogs 234.

If you are racing in the red lane and you have somebody running as a runner for dog 2-3 or four running on the outside is running directly at the dog coming out at you. Hence the reason why you should be running closest to the judge in that lane.

Say that you then crossover as you would as a normal handler.

Katrina Paton -

So I agree with what you're saying about running, not running into the dog, but again, I think

it makes more sense to be on the outside because you're also potentially stopping interference if you're running between the dog and the other lane, because otherwise they may run across into that other lane and also just a question about the wording. It says the dog has passed, then they must cross the lane and either stand out of the way or cross the lane to the left. You're kind of repeating across the lane.

Nicky James -

Yeah, we can't do anything about the change to the wording because Sarah's not here.

Questions from the meeting chat

Are these runners for open dogs? Open dogs should not need a runner. Runners should always be on the right hand side of the dogs. Same as you. If, as you were the handler running with your dog.

Sometimes you have to have a runner because you can't actually run yourself.

PROPOSAL NUMBER 14

Proposer: Will Whiteley - 1433

A.3. Rules of Racing

3. The Start

Dogs may start from a stationary or running start. When using a manual start, if any part of the dog's or handler's body is over the line before the race is started, it will be an infringement, to be called by the Line or Division Judge. When electronic starting lights are used, any part of the dogs' or handler's body breaking the beam will cause an infringement to be called by the Line or Division Judge **and the dog must run again. [ADD] The heat is to be restarted. If a second such infringement is called against the same team (for that race) the dog must run again. If a second false start is called coincidental with the opposing teams first false start the heat is to be restarted. [REMOVE] If a team wishes they can request a practice run on lights during the warm up period. They must make the request to the divisional judge prior to the start of the race. [ADD]**

Rationale

My reason for it is that I don't feel we need it. Why does dog 1 get a free fault when dogs 2,3 or 4 don't?

Dog 1 also has the potential to run 10 more legs than the other dogs and I don't think that's considered at times.

It was a close vote a few years ago and I felt it was time to see if people would agree this is a step forward for the Association to remove false starts.

It is custom and practice that teams wish they can request a practice run on lights, I feel this should be covered in the rules.

Comments and Questions

Proposal Read out by Dave Anderson as Will Whiteley is not available. If you get a light on your first dog, your first dog is an automatic fault and you just have to run it again as you would for dogs 2-3 and four.

He has also put in there and if a team wishes they can request a practice run on lights during the warm up period, they must make the request to the divisional judge prior to the start of the race.

There were a few of quite a few comments on Facebook on this one. There are quite a few people that said they would like the proposal.

There's a few that asked how it would work. How would the request for start sequence work? Would this lead to teams holding back on the start and so they wouldn't get a fault?

Could the warm up request be the same as they do at the worlds in that the team requests to the line and the line puts the start dog light on so that the whole ring and the judge know that it's required? And small teams may struggle to get everything done in time to still have time for a lights warm up.

I think the world's position on it was that the warm up period, whatever it might be. So I mean in certain circumstances, it might be two minutes and then it may well go down to one minute but, frankly, what you do in a warm up is down to the team captain to make a mind up and to actually state what they need. So if they consider that the a start dog requires a starter sequence, then whether it's a one minute or a two-minute doesn't really matter. They would have to prioritise that.

Question from Bhav Patel

A lot of times teams will put dogs in as like start dogs to, you know, if a dog's got a great. If you've got a green dog and a green handler coming in, and also you can't practice starts at training, not many people have the ability to have lights. So how are we going to get around the fact that this could potentially just create a problem of people not actually being able to train for this element that you go to at a show?

David Anderson

I don't think it's any different to if you remember back when the rule changed to that we had a fault on you had the second go on every start and it changed to come to this present rule and everybody was up in arms and saying we won't be able to manage it and within a couple of weeks we're all managing it perfectly well.

I can understand you might find a problem when you first get going but essentially it's just a start, isn't it?

You learn. I think people are saying you might go back. Well, you tend if you've got a if you've got a light now and then you're restarting and you've already got a fault on you're holding back anyway, aren't you?

You're not gonna go for a 00. You're gonna go for a 01. If it was me personally.

Reply from Bhav

I agree, Dave. But there's no way of anybody being able to practise this unless you have a set of lights in your team, whereas you can practise change overs at training events. So if your team is training, you can practice for a show and practice your change over. Whereas unless you have a set of actual lights in your team you have no way of actually starting a start sequence for somebody to practise on.

Tina Hatcher

Hi so we went to the Euro's this last year and this ruling was brought into place and we actually found that teams were actually pushing for better starts and I think because the Europeans have been racing on it for quite a while, if you didn't actually push on your starts, you were then at a disadvantage. So our start dogs were benefiting from this and being in it was a lot more closer racing.

Yes, we did get some lights on false starts and we had to rerun, but at the same time the other teams were getting lights because they were pushing crosses and getting false lights on that aspect as well. So it was no different from normal racing. It was just the fact that the start dog was getting a fault light for an early.

As per Bhav stated on the lights and having the opportunity to practise this.

A lot more teams are getting the training lights like the watchdog lights or the new sets of lights that have just come out, so a lot more teams have the opportunity at training to use those training lights and practise on starts. But at the end of the day, in Will's proposal, he's not actually saying you can't have a start sequence. He's saying that you can have a practise run and you can have it all day. It's not.

Just for set races, like at the EUR, you can only have it in the first two races.

So in Europe, when you're racing over there, you can only request a start sequence in the first few races, whereas here he's actually saying you can have a start sequence all day. So if your start dog needs that extra practice then you've got it there all day.

PROPOSAL 15

Proposer David Anderson - 5034

A.3. Rules of Racing

5. Knocked down jumps/Broken boards

5.1 Knocked Down Jumps - A dog that knocks down a jump or jump(s) during its run shall not be penalised, provided the following dog(s) clear the jump(s) as if it/they were standing. A 'runner' or handler may set up knocked down jump(s) if so doing does not interfere with, or guide the dog(s) in any way.

5.2 Broken Boards - The heat may be stopped for broken boards or knocked down jumps if, in the opinion of the Division Judge and ring party in the ring, the dog(s) may be subject to injury. If the Division Judge stops the heat to prevent a possible injury, it is to be

restarted. [ADD] In the event that a judge stops a heat any fault lights held by either team will be left on and carried forward to the rerun. Teams will have to rerun the dogs which have faults to complete the heat.

Rationale:

As a team we find it pretty annoying when a race is stopped and the opposing team has fault lights. I'm sure other team/s probably feel the same way.

Comments and Questions

So my proposal is for the rules of Racing Section 5, which is the knockdown jumps and I'm basically wanting to add in 5.2 that in the event that a judge stops the heat, any fault lights held by either team will be left on and carried forward to the rerun. Teams will have to rerun the dogs, which have fault lights to complete the heat.

My rationale is basically that from my point of view it is pretty annoying when you find yourself losing out on races where the other team might have two lights and then the same dog over and over again knocks down or bends a top slat and the race is stopped and all the lights are cleared.

Nicky James - OK, so there were a few questions on this one on Facebook. There were a lot of questions asking you how the reruns would work and how the faults are carried.

And then there are comments of rerun because the race could not be continued. So there's a completely new race and also reruns are usually because of welfare issues. So no fault should be carried over.

Answered by Dave

I think I answered them on Facebook.

Bhav Patel - As a judge, if you blow your whistle, the whistle is to indicate the end of that race. So you can't carry over a fault from the previous race if you've ended the race, it just completely conflicts the rule as we have it as to what the judges whistle indicates.

I don't really see how we can even make that work. You can't. You can't carry a fault on once you've ended a race.

Dave Adnerson Reply - You haven't actually ended the race, you've just stopped it and restarted it. It's not a new race.

Bhav - It's a rerun of that race. So you've ended that race to restart it, you don't start it with Dog 3 running, you start it with Dog 1 running again. I just don't understand how you could make this work.

Reply from Dave Anderson – Just leave the lights on

Nicky James - You can see where he's coming from. Because those dogs have already rerun.

David Anderson - That would be an awesome way to work that what you're suggesting is an automatic loss if the jump is knocked down.

Bhav Patel - Yeah. Well, so that's what I'm saying. So you're essentially saying it would be an automatic given loss regardless, because one team is starting on a deficit, in which case you're running dogs for no reason.

Nicky James - OK, I think I get where you're coming from, Bhav. So if dogs one and two have a light and dog 3 knocks a jump over and it's stopped on dog 3. When you restart, if dogs one and two run clean, they have already rerun their lights. Then that's outside the rules because they haven't known 3 and 4.

David Anderson - But they haven't rerun the dogs because you didn't restart.

Rachel Short - I think one question, Dave, is why is this only been put in for broken or knock down jumps? There are other reasons why races are restarted or re-run. So for example if there's a box fault called which is an actual box fault, obviously that leg is restarted and rerun. You know there is interference, not interference, that's the wrong word. So with distractions like if a dog gets distracted by a ball that's rolled over from another lane, you know.

What's been happening recently is that the heats have been rerun. So number one, it's why have you just picked this scenario?

For keeping fault lights on. Personally I don't agree with doing that because like everyone's saying you know it's we are restarting that heat so a restart is literally you start from scratch like you would with anything.

In your rationale, you mentioned that you find it pretty annoying when the races stop and the opposing team has fault lights, so it could be that the race is stopped and restarted, and your team has fault lights. So this could be beneficial or detrimental either way.

David Anderson Yes.

Rachel Short - I think that's why it's fair to restart, you know, completely from scratch as a judge and a head judge. I've previously given advice. Yes, it does get really frustrating when teams have a dog that constantly knocks a jump. I have been known to go to that team, and it was actually when I was supervising a provisional judge and asked that team if there's any reason, whether that dog could go in a different position because, yeah, you're right, it does get annoying when a team is constantly doing it, I think it would be very harsh to do it for a dog that's stride accidentally knocks a jump once in a competition, I think. But if a dog is doing it repeatedly, the team and the divisional judge or head judge should be working with that team to try and find a solution to the problem.

David Anderson - I didn't include anything else because I honestly considered that was within a normal judges remit and I didn't really want to start trying to put together a rule that in the sort of you know for instance on distractions or if there's a box malfunction that's already covered within the rules I think to try and rewrite the whole all of those areas would have been too long. You're gonna miss some things out regardless. So what I'm trying to say is the judges already have a way of handling those situations, and I don't think those should change necessarily.

I take your point on how you feel. I don't. I have to say that I find it annoying both ways. So if the race is stopped because of a knock down jump continually, it doesn't matter whether it was my dog. But obviously be a little bit upset about it, but if it's our team that's doing it, then if I don't it makes any difference. It's the same on both sides.

If this came in, you would hope that it would then force the team to actually say, hang on a second. We need to do something about this because we're continually losing legs because of knock down jumps, whereas at the moment nothing happens. It just continues the same dogs over and over again. Keep knocking jumps down.

Tina Hatcher - If the dogs are re-running because they've got a fault in the first race, then the same dog gets a fault as they've started the race. Again, the same dog gets another fault. So that means the dog's got two fault lights. If the other team gets a fault and they're rerunning, they have to rerun the dog and rerun the dog again. So it's rerunning twice on the trot. How is that dog welfare? That dog's gonna run that race 4 four or five times. Where's the welfare of the dog welfare coming into it?

David Anderson - I don't seem to ask any different to what's going on now. Tina, people are continually running their dogs over and over again to get her to clear her light and win a race.

Tina's - Judges, judges have the right to stop it. If it's all people flagging a dog and running.

PROPOSAL 16

Proposer Keith Marshall - 1520

A.3 Rules of Racing

6. Box Malfunction

The box loader shall indicate to the Box Judge and Divisional Judge when there is a box malfunction by raising both arms above the head, crossed at the wrists and the heat shall be stopped. No one may tamper with the box after a malfunction, until the Divisional Judge has checked it. This Judge is to examine the box and if in their opinion, the box has malfunctioned, the heat shall be run again. If the box is found to be working, the heat shall be forfeited. If another box is not available and the original cannot be repaired in a reasonable time, the heat and any remaining heats of the race are to be forfeited. If the box malfunctions a second time (or the spare box malfunctions) in the same race the heat and all remaining heats in that race shall be forfeited [If the box is adjusted following a box fault, the](#)

divisional judge shall check that any adjusted triggers fire a ball the required distance as per rule 7.1.d [ADD]

Rationale

As the rule stands there is no requirement that a box, once adjusted, still meets the firing distance as set out in rule 7.1.d. Adding this to rule A.3.6 Rules of Racing ensures that the box will still meet requirements following adjustment.

Comments and Questions

Bhavnes Patel: Who would do that checking? Is it the divisional judge that will check that? Or would it be a Head Judge?

Keith Marshall: Just to be checked by the judge at the time, so the divisional judge in my proposal.

Question on Chat: Does a judge need to take a tape measure into the ring?

Keith: Not necessarily, because if the admin has a tape measure, you can just call for one from the admin.

Proposal 17

Proposal Withdrawn by Proposer - Ray Lewis, on behalf of the Judges Board

**PROPOSAL NUMBER 18
PROPOSERS Dave Anderson BFA No: 5034**

A.3 Rules of racing

10. The Finish

The first team to have all dogs successfully complete a run wins the heat. The finish shall be when the last dog reaches the finish line with any part of its body and the Divisional Judge has declared the winner of the heat. A heat may be won due to default by the opposing team according to the rules of racing. A Judge at his discretion can stop a race to allocate a win to a team that has not completed a heat. A loss for both teams may be recorded. BO times will not be used for team placing's in the event of a tie.

[Add] In the event of a tie between two teams, the result of their race will determine places. In cases where more than two teams tie for a place the fastest times will be used to determine places. In cases where teams have the same fastest time the second fastest time will be used, should this also be the same the third, fourth etc fastest times will be used.

In the event of 2 BO's or a team going WFC, all earlier heats for that team will be recorded as losses and wins will be recorded for their opponents, where the opponent has completed the heat. If a situation arises where two secondary teams from the same primary team are drawn to race each other and declare that they are unable to do so, a loss shall be recorded for both teams for that race. Both teams

must still run four dogs each, though this can be separately and for a minimum of three heats. Teams that run less than four dogs in this scenario will be considered withdrawn from racing.

Rationale:

I have been to a number of competitions where the division has ended in a tie. There always seems to be some confusion around how the tie should be decided with Tournament Organisers handling it in different ways. I believe that the above addition to the will give a consistent approach to dealing with ties.

Katrina Patton: Is it the fastest overall time or the fastest time excluding breakouts? I have seen both applied at competitions.

David Anderson: It normally excludes breakouts.

Keith Marshall: The rules state that breakouts cannot be used in the event of a tie

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PROPOSAL NUMBER 19

Proposer Keith Marshall - 1520

JUDGING AND RING PARTY

Section B

2. Duties and responsibilities

2.1 Prior to the scheduled time for competition the Tournament Head Judge must inspect the ring. It should meet all the requirements of the regulations and be considered safe for competitors and dogs. Jump placement, jump heights, backstops, barriers and box location should be measured to make sure they meet these regulations. A deviation of a 1/4" on the jump heights is considered minor and acceptable. **Each box may be inspected by the Tournament Head Judge or nominated Qualified Judges who are experienced and capable of carrying out the required checks. [REMOVE] All boxes to be used that day are to be presented at the ring a time designated by the Tournament Organiser prior to the start of racing to be inspected by members nominated by the Tournament Organiser and Head Judge. These members may be Head Judges, Judges and/or experienced BFA members. [ADD] If, in the opinion of the Judge [REMOVE] designated box checking persons, [ADD] the box has been constructed or altered in a manner that does not meet the box specifications the team will not be allowed to use the box and will be referred to the Head Judge. [ADD] The Tournament Head Judges decision is final.**

Rationale

The current rule states that the HJ or nominated persons "may" check flyball boxes. In the interest of fair play, all boxes should be checked at every show. However, as a HJ I often find

that either time does not allow (especially if the show has 2 or more rings) and/or that not all boxes are presented at the rings before racing This change would allow the TO and HJ to nominate enough individuals, including the HJ as necessary, to check ALL boxes prior to racing and to flag up any issues to team captains either before or at pre race briefing.

On a side note as a TO myself, I would suggest that, if the rule comes in, TO's offer a small gift (as currently often done for measurers) to the designated box checking team members.

Questions & Comments

Keith Marshall

OK, this proposal has to do with box checking.

As we already see, the Champs especially Box checking is rigorously done by head judges in the morning. Boxes are stickered up and to make sure they're all within required parameters. However, this doesn't necessarily happen at just every other competition.

There's no rule to say it does, and the current order says that head judges may check boxes before racing.

This proposal is basically to to add a period of time where the all box boxes to be checked during that day's racing as all boxes to be used during that day's racing are to be checked by a designated team nominated by the Head Judges and the TO so that everybody is basically got a fair playing field as per boxes that are being used.

There were questions which I did answer but obviously if there are any others.

Chairperson:

There were quite a few questions on this one.

Most of them were, but were regarding the timescale of how long it had to be there before racing.

There were questions that could be done throughout the course of the day. Could it be done on a Friday night to cover the weekend? Would there be concessions for someone that gets stuck in traffic and can't be there an hour before?

And would it put additional pressure on those that are day tripping and may not be racing until the third division of the day to get there?

Keith Marshall:

Yeah, I think I answered a lot of them online. I think the biggest one was the fact that I put in an hour prior to racing and I did put in one of the comments that I'd be quite happy to make a minor and minor amendment that it could be at a time as designated by the TO much like we do with dog measuring.

But again, as we do with the Champs, all the boxes are checked before racing that day and everybody manages to get in there then. So why not every other weekend?

Tina Hatcher:

I asked this question in the chat and it is a bit of a concern for me. So like.

You kind of answered it, but I just wanted to clarify a bit more. So if for example you got day trippers, there's a major accident on the road, they've been diverted, they're going to be late. With this rule proposal going in and saying it's got to be whatever time scale you put to it, that's the box has got to be there before then. If they can't get there, this rule proposal is stopping that person from turning up late and then racing. And I know you said in the chat

that you would hope that the head judge will allow for that. But this report rule proposal is stopping that from happening.

Keith Marshall

Yeah, I think in that case Tina and I tried to, I did try to answer on chat. It'll be much a similar situation potentially if you've had an accident, not actually been involved in an accident. The team can't be there. There could be a height dog in your team that cannot get to measuring for whatever reason. And again, if that's explained to the TO and the head judge, that contact is made for teams arriving late for whatever reason.

Tina

I just wanted to clarify how you get around that.

Keith Marshall

I don't see any reason why they can't make special provision with the extenuating circumstances. Why can't it be done. That's, you know, that's only fair. You're not planning on being late. You haven't planned the accident to happen, or whatever the situation may be. So you know, in that kind of circumstances, there's no reason why you can't be done a bit later in the day for the odd occasion. I mean, but if you miss the start of the division, you've missed it anyway.

Ray Lewis: Keith, would you be happy with saying presented at the ring as required by the tournament organiser?

Keith Marshall

Yes, Ray, I would.

That would be my suggested change would be to remove a minimum of one hour prior to the start of racing.

And replace it with something like a time designated by the TO prior to the start of racing.

Committee: if the boxes hadn't been checked before racing started, that team would not be allowed to race. But nowhere in your rule change does that actually state that that could be the case.

Keith Marshall

Correct.

But also in our rules, it says paperwork must be given to the TO prior to the start of the division. It doesn't say if you don't do it, you can't race. It's assumed because you say it must happen, it must happen.

Committee: Are you putting the change in Keith?

Keith Marshall

I'm yeah, I'm up to go with that change. Yes. If we remove a minimum of one hour and replace it with a time designated by the tournament organiser.

Amendment to the wording of the proposal was voted on by those present at the AGM.

PROPOSAL NUMBER 20

PROPOSER Ray Lewis – 2686 (on behalf of Judges Board)

Proposal: Rewording of the qualification process for Qualified Judges, for clarity.

JUDGING AND RING PARTY

Section B

B.4 Divisional Judge

[REMOVE] 1. Qualifying process

1.1 To become a Qualified Judge, individuals must:

- a. Be 18 Years of age
- b. Must be in good standing with the BFA for the 36 months preceding their application. The Judges Board reserves the right to waive this time limit in exceptional circumstances, such as for growth areas (eg. Scotland, Wales, IOM).
- c. Pass a Novice Judge exam on the BFA Rules of Flyball Racing. Evidence of completion of the above criteria is to be recorded on the approved BFA Form.
- d. Have completed a minimum of 5 assignments as Line Judge, Box Judge and Scribe for a minimum of 12 races, or a whole division where the division consists of less than 12 races. Only one assignment of Box Judge, Line Judge and Scribe can be signed off by a judge from your own team. At least 2 of each assignment shall be directly supervised by a Head Judge or Judges' Board Member. If a candidate is considered "Not Ready" for "Provisional Judge" status, further ring party assignments can be requested.
- e. Completed at least 10 Division Judge Assignments as a Provisional Judge and have a report completed by a supervising judge or Head Judge (at least 3 by a Head Judge), with a minimum of 5 different judges providing reports. If a candidate is considered "Not Ready" for "Qualified Judge" status, further provisional judging assignments can be requested.
- f. Experienced, qualified judges from other flyball organisations must pass the novice judges exam before qualifying. They must also be supervised once for a full division on each of the ring party duties, and twice for a full division judging whilst being supervised by a head judge. Evidence of judging experience will be required on application. Page 21 of 50

1.2 Provisional Judges judging BFA sanctioned Flyball competitions shall be supervised, at all times, by a Qualified or Head Judge. Supervising Judges must be within the ring and cannot be undertaking ring party duties at the same time. Minimum age for divisional judging is 16, individuals under the age of 18 must be supervised from within the ring.

1.3 Once a Provisional Judge has completed their logbook and been accepted as a Qualified Judge, they shall not supervise any Provisional Judges for a minimum period of 12 months and need to have completed 10 Judging assignments. 2. Duties and responsibilities 2.1 Shall be positioned between the racing lanes in an area where they have a

1. [ADD]Qualifying process

1. The standard qualification process is:

1. Applications for the status of Qualified Judge are accepted from members who are over the age of 18 and have been in good standing with the BFA for the 36 months preceding their application. However, in exceptional circumstances, such as for growth areas (e.g. Scotland, Wales, the Isle of Man etc), the Judges Board may entertain applications from newer adult members.
2. Once the application has been accepted, the candidate must pass a Novice Judge exam on the BFA Rules of Flyball Racing. Evidence of completion of the above criteria is to be recorded on the approved BFA Form.
3. The candidate is then issued with a Novice Judge log book to record Ring Party assignments. The Novice Judge must complete a minimum of 5 assignments as each of Line Judge, Box Judge and Scribe for a minimum

of 12 races, or a whole division where the division consists of less than 12 races. Each assignment is assessed and signed off by the Divisional Judge (or Supervising Judge). Of the five assignments, only one assignment of any of Box Judge, Line Judge and Scribe may be signed off by a judge from the candidate's own team. Furthermore, at least two of each assignment shall be directly supervised by a Head Judge or Judges' Board Member. If at the end of this process the candidate is not yet considered to be ready to be a Provisional Judge, then further assignments may be required.

4. Once the Novice Judge log book is completed and has been approved by the Judges' Board. The candidate is issued with a Provisional Judge log book. They must complete at least 10 Divisional Judge Assignments as a Provisional Judge, supervised by a Qualified Judge or Head Judges. Each assignment must be assessed and a report completed by the Supervising Judge or Head Judge. There must be a minimum of 5 different judges providing reports, of which at least three must be a Head Judge. If at the end of this process the candidate is not yet considered to be ready to be a Qualified Judge status, then further provisional judging may be required.
5. Once the Provisional Judge's log book is completed and has been approved by the Judge's Board, the candidate has the status of a Qualified Judge.

0. There is also a special qualifying process for experienced judges from other flyball organisations (whether in the UK or elsewhere) whose application is supported by evidence of judging experience and qualification. This process is:
 1. The candidate sits the Novice Judges' exam, as described in 1.1.2 above. A successful outcome allows the candidate to act as a Novice Judge.
 2. The candidate is supervised for one full division for each of the ring party duties, which are described within 1.1.3 above. A satisfactory outcome allows the candidate to act as a Provisional Judge.
 3. The candidate is supervised for two full divisions, acting as a Provisional Judge, supervised by a Head Judge. A satisfactory outcome allows the candidate to be given the status of a Qualified Judge, upon the approval of the Judges' Board.

Rationale

It has come to the Judges' Board's attention that the current wording does not provide a clear description of the process, for example, it does not define the role of a "Novice Judge". The intention of this proposal is to bring the wording into line with the existing process, and not to change the process in any way.

PROPOSAL NUMBER 21

Proposer Keith Marshall - 1520

JUDGING AND RING PARTY

Section B

B.4 Divisional Judge

1. Qualifying process

1.1 To become a Qualified Judge, individuals must:

f. Experienced, qualified judges from other flyball organisations [or BFA judges whose status has lapsed](#), [ADD] must pass the novice judges exam before qualifying. They must also be supervised once for a full division on each of the ring party duties, and twice for a full division judging whilst being supervised by a head judge. Evidence of judging experience will be required on application.

B.4 Divisional Judge

2.16 To retain their status, Head Judges and Qualified Judges must be current BFA Members [and \[REMOVE\]](#), [ADD] attend at least one Head Judges' and Qualified Judges' Seminar provided by the BFA in the last two years [and complete 3 divisional judging assignments per calendar year](#). [ADD]

Rationale

There is no current requirement within the rules that states that a Judge or Head Judge should be regularly judging divisions, they only need to attend a seminar once every two years to keep their status. However, the BFA rules change annually, so any judge who has not judged for a period of time e.g. illness, time away from the sport etc. may not be up to scratch with rules and judging procedures. As the association is low on judges, judges who regularly attend shows will not have difficulty in meeting the requirement.

The amendment to Rule B.4.1.1.f allows lapsed judges to re-qualify as per judges from another organisation and so update the qualification in doing so.

Questions & Comments:

Keith Marshall: This came about because of the rule change we had last year to allow judges from other organisations who are experienced and we could reduce their qualifying periods. Got me to thinking this could also apply to judges within our own association who have maybe had because our rules change regularly, as in every year. If there are judges who are not judging for a period of time and need help getting back into having the confidence or whatever behind judging.

That, firstly judges should be judging at least three times in a year, and secondly, that if they have been out for the year to give them a well supported pathway back into becoming qualified judges again.

So basically, the proposal is that judges should attend a seminar every two years, which is currently the case and should also complete the three divisions of judging assignments per calendar year and then to allow for judges whose qualification may lapse because of that or for not attending seminars. They can also fall under the other rule that allows Qualified, experienced, qualified judges from other organisations.

To come in on like a short qualification, as it were, before judging again.

Division of judging assignment and as far as I was concerned, it's a division assignment, so whether you're doing an open division, a foundation division, or even supervising a divisional judge, I would personally count them all as divisional assignments. That's why we wanted it that way just to clear any confusion on that.

Bhav Patel

So if you're sitting at the side of the ring overseeing a provisional judge.

I think personally you are more of a mentor role or a supporting role. You are not actively

judging, so you are overseeing that not as a divisional judge or the provisional judge has your support.

If you're saying that you have to do 3 judging assignments to show that you are up to date with the rules. How does that actually demonstrate that? I'm just checking because obviously you're there in a supportive nature rather than an actual divisional judge standing in the middle.

Keith Marshall

Yeah. Fair question, Bhav, I mean, as far as I'm concerned, what I'm supervising I'm watching the racing as much as I can as well as the judge to check the rules of racing have been upheld. So I'm in effect secondary judging that division. So as far as I'm concerned, to be supervising a judge's judging, you need to be as up to date with the rules of race and as you do to be a judge.

I appreciate it's a slightly different role, but you've still got to be the idea, the idea of the proposals that the judges are up to date with, how the rules are working and how the rules are being changed. So they are, you know, continuing up to date. So if your supervisor, somebody, you've got to in fact, you've probably got to be more up to date than them, I would suggest.

Bhav I completely agree, but if you're not standing in the middle of the ring and you get it wrong, you're not actually, you know, there's no way of saying, oh, well, that person got that wrong. In the Midlands, we've had quite a lot of provisional judges coming through. I think last year I supervised more than I did, actually standing in the middle of the ring, which is great to get people through.

Keith Marshall 38:14

Yeah, Fairpoint. I mean, I suppose the other thing is that the judges' boards could take into consideration what judging assignment means, if so desired that it was just judging an open division. They could go that way.

Keith Marshall 38:31

I mean, personally, my beliefs as a judge should probably be doing way more than three to keep you current, but obviously we've got to start somewhere and I'm fully aware that in some areas the country Scotland was one that was brought up. It is difficult to do a lot of judging assignments in one year purely because of the number of competitions and number of divisions.

PROPOSAL NUMBER 22

Proposer Damian Hunt - 7438 (on behalf of the Judges Board)

Introduce a Judge's Survey Questionnaire

Section B - Judging and Ring Party

B.4 Divisional Judge

2.16 [REMOVE] To retain their status, Head Judges and Qualified Judges must be current BFA Members and attend at least one Head Judges' and Qualified Judges' Seminar provided by the BFA in the last two years.

[ADD] To retain their status, Head Judges and Qualified Judges must meet all of the following requirements:

- be a current BFA Member;
- have attended at least one Head Judges' and Qualified Judges' Seminar provided by the BFA in the last two years;
- and to have submitted a response to an online Judges' Survey Questionnaire published by the Judges Board. Judges Survey questionnaires will be published following new rule-changes. Responses must be submitted within the time-frame specified on the questionnaire. For a newly-qualified Judge, this requirement starts from the first Judges Survey Questionnaire published after Qualification.

Rationale:

In many sports and industries, people performing an important, critical or skilled role are regularly asked to ensure that they have the knowledge to perform that role in a way that is safe, consistent, and following the current best practices.

The Judges Board is tasked with improving the standard of judging at the BFA.

To improve the standard of judging, we would like to understand where we have inconsistencies across Judges and Judges' decisions. We would, therefore, like to ask them to complete and submit a simple questionnaire once a year, shortly after rule-changes come into force, to gauge the general understanding of the interpretation of the rules after changes have occurred.

The Judges Survey Questionnaire is not an exam – there is no pass-mark. It is just to ensure that Judges are up to date on the rules.

We will analyse the responses to identify the areas where inconsistencies across Judges occur, and we can then take those subject areas, and use them as a basis to provide ad-hoc advice or guidance, judges training material and/or content for discussion at the annual Judges Seminar, for the benefit of all Judges.

Questions & Comments:

Damian Hunt:

OK, so this is to introduce a judges Survey questionnaire and the rationale was that in many sports and industries, people performing important critical or skilled roles are regularly asked to ensure that they have the knowledge to perform that role in a way that's safe, consistent and following the current best practices. The judges Board is tasked with improving the standard of judging at the BFA to improve the standard of judging. We would like to understand where we have inconsistencies across judges and judges' decisions.

You would therefore like to ask them to complete and submit a simple questionnaire once a year, shortly after rule changes come into force to gauge the general understanding of the interpretation of the rules after those changes have occurred and in fact in some cases of existing rules as well. The judges' survey questionnaires are not an exam. There is no pass mark. We're not testing them. It is just simply to ensure that judges are up to date on the rules.

What we plan to do is to analyse those responses to identify the areas which are inconsistent.

Cross judges occur and we can take those subject areas and use them as the basis to provide ad hoc advice or guidance. Judges, training material and or content for discussion of the annual judges seminar for the benefit of all judges. Now we could say, well, we could just

ask the judges for what they think, and we have tried that. And we did that for the last judges seminar. And I think only about 60% of the judges.

What we'd really like is to get the judges that we almost never hear from or almost never hear their view on certain situations and what they would, what they would choose in particular scenarios, you know which decision they would take given either way, we'd really like to hear from the rest of them. So we simply wanted to make this.

Answering this questionnaire, it is a questionnaire we just wanted to make it part of the requirement for a judge to maintain their status.

PROPOSAL NUMBER 23

PROPOSER - Damian Hunt 7438

Section C

C.1 Dog master height list requirements

1.1 All dogs jumping less than 12" , or at least three separate BFA Sanctioned Tournaments or at any gathering/meeting/event agreed by the Committee or at any day of a flyball tournament.[REMOVE] Any dog that is used to justify a jump height of less than the maximum for a team must either: have been measured at that same competition following the rules below and have an entry on that Tournament's BFA Form C.9; or already appear on the Dog Heights Master List. [ADD]

1.2 A dog must be 18 months old prior to its first recorded measurement and at least 24 months old at its final measurement.

1.3 A dog must have a minimum of [ADD] three measures recorded at the same height, by either Method1 or Method 2 [REMOVE] the same method, [ADD] one of which must be its final measure, with each measure being recorded at different BFA Sanctioned Tournaments or gatherings / meetings / events agreed by the Committee,[ADD] before an Official height on the Dog Height Master Sheet can be recorded and a height card will be issued. One of these measures may be video recorded and then submitted to the Judges' Board, for future reference.

RATIONALE: Grammar changes

Questions & Comments:

Damian Hunt: So this is just to correct a rule that currently doesn't even read as an English sentence. So C11.1 currently says all dogs jumping less than 12 inches, all at least three separate BFA sanctioned tournaments, or at any gathering event meeting agreed by the committee. "Every day of the flyball tournament" and then finishes. So there's not even a verb in that current sentence, right?

So this came about when Ulna measuring was introduced. There was a section of the measuring rules where we took out all the references to withers measuring in parts where it kind of didn't apply or where it could apply to both Withers and older, and that seems to have been done quite clumsily.

For this particular sentence. So what I'm trying to do is rewrite it to turn it back into an English sentence, and in doing so realise that a bit of it needs to be in another rule. So that's it, it's just to turn a rule back into English.

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PROPOSAL NUMBER 24

PROPOSER - Damian Hunt 7438

Section C

C.1 Dog master height list requirements

Change C.1, 1.5 to read:

"All height measurements must be recorded on BFA Form C.9 and signed by both officials who have measured the dog(s).

At all BFA Sanctioned Tournaments or gatherings/meetings/events arranged or approved by the Committee, all measures, including test measures must be recorded."

RATIONALE : Clarification around the fact that no test measures are allowed at sanctioned tournaments

Questions & Comments:

Damian Hunt: We already tell our measuring officials when I had judges that all measurements at competitions and so on must be recorded. But it's kind of not actually explicitly in the rules right at the moment.

It doesn't use the word all and so on. So what this rule is trying to do is to explicitly say that all measurements for whatever purpose at competitions or any event or whatever should be recorded.

Now I did get some feedback on Facebook on this one and I would like to reword it to make it kind of even clearer. So what I'm going to do is I am just going to paste that into the chat, so I'm changing the last sentence. So the last sentence that I originally proposed said no one recorded or test measurements allowed, blah blah blah blah blah. I'd like to change that last sentence to say as I've written in the chat.

At all, BFA sanctioned tournaments or gatherings, meetings, events arranged or approved by the committee, all measures including test measures, must be recorded that uses a bit of a sentence.

Amendment to the wording of the proposal was voted on by those present at the AGM.

PROPOSAL NUMBER 25

PROPOSER - Gillian Fotherby 9429

POINTS AND AWARDS

Section E

E.3. Young Members Award Scheme

3.5 Points are awarded for;

- a. judging half a division at a Sanctioned open, multibreed, singles or pairs Tournament (minimum 16 years of age) or half a division at a Starters Tournament.
- b. Handling a dog at a Sanctioned open, multibreed, foundation, singles or pairs and foundation Tournament (for half a division or a minimum of 2 races in staggered format).
- c. Box loading at a Sanctioned multibreed, foundation, singles or pairs and foundation Tournament (for half a division or a minimum of 2 races in staggered format).
- d. Ring Party duties i.e. Line Judge, Scribe and Box Judge at a Sanctioned multibreed, foundation, singles or pairs and foundation Tournament (for half a division, or a minimum of 7 races in staggered format)
- e. Ball collecting duties at a Sanctioned open, multibreed, foundation, singles or pairs and foundation Tournament (for half a division or a minimum of 2 races in staggered format). Points will be awarded for foundation, singles and pairs competitions held alongside a BFA sanctioned tournament but not for stand-alone foundation, singles and pairs competitions
- f. [Team Paperwork, Watching team line/changeovers, foundation prop duties at a sanctioned open, multibreed, foundation, singles or pairs tournament \(for half a division or a minimum of 2 races in a staggered format\) \(ADD\)](#)

Rationale:

With an ever increasing number of young members wanting to be actively involved in jobs there is an increase in jobs they are doing for teams that get no recognition on the awards scheme. Many teams I have spoken with agree that as the young members get older they want to be involved in props, changeovers etc rather and let younger members continue ball collecting. We also have children who due to disabilities are not able to ball collect or run dogs but want to be involved. Things like team paperwork which 90% of teams have and a judge can still observe them doing for a division, is something accessible to all abilities. Most teams have foundation props or paperwork/changeover people, I believe we should be appealing to our YM's natural proclivities and helping them to excel in all areas by allowing them to do all jobs for the same recognition. Most YM's would rather be involved than sit doing nothing so we should encourage them by rewarding them for doing all ring jobs.

Proposal 26A

Proposed Change to the Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures Section F

Proposer: Hilary Larkham BFA No 7180

Proposed Change

Remove the whole of Section F - Complaints Process
Remove the whole of Section G - Disciplinary Process

Replace with

Section F

[The Association has Complaints and Disciplinary procedures.](#)

[Members are referred to Appendix xxxxxx - Discussing and Resolving Issues where full details can be found.](#)

Rationale for Change

The rationale for this change is detailed in the *“Complaints and Disciplinary Proposal”* as submitted to the committee by the Constitution Working Party and published in the British Flyball Associations Members Only Facebook Group week commencing 24th March 2024...

However it is just worth re-stating the objective and drivers for change in this summary rule change document. .

Objective behind the proposed procedures

To design a complaints and disciplinary procedure free from complexity, that is easy to access and implement and that allows for each issue to be dealt with by the appropriate area of the association.

Drivers for Change

The need to make a change being based on the following factors:

- The current processes were cited, and a fundamental part of, the two EGMs called by members of the Association in the last 7 years.
- From April to date, a disproportionate amount of time has been spent by Committee members dealing with written complaints, either as witnesses, respondents or administrators of the processes, complaints that in many instances could have/should have been managed and potentially resolved through informal processes.
- Feedback from those who have been involved in existing processes (complainants, respondents, committee members, investigating officers), citing dissatisfaction with both the complexity of the processes and the timescales involved to get to conclusions.
- An overall feeling from the current committee that the current processes place too much emphasis on the detail of the procedures themselves, and the need to “dot I’s and cross T’s” when dealing with issues, rather than focusing on the main aims of such procedures i.e. seeking problem resolution and performance improvement.
- The Association is not an employer. The committee therefore feels that using procedures that are designed to reflect employment relationships and to comply with employment legislation is neither required nor desirable when dealing with complaints/disciplinary issues in an unincorporated association.

The proposal covers Section F - Complaints Process and Section G - Disciplinary Process.

NB...Members should note that this is an all or nothing proposal. There is no “pick and mix” option.

Proposal 26B



Complaints and Disciplinary Proposal

Introduction and Background

The Constitution Working Party was asked by the Committee to put forward their recommendations for changes to the Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures currently in place within the Association in order to improve their effectiveness.

This request was driven by the following factors:

- The current processes were cited, and a fundamental part of, the two EGMs called by members of the Association in the last 7 years.
- From April to date, a disproportionate amount of time has been spent by Committee members dealing with written complaints, either as witnesses, respondents or administrators of the processes, complaints that in many instances could have/should have been managed and potentially resolved through informal processes.
- Feedback from those who have been involved in existing processes (complainants, respondents, committee members, investigating officers), citing dissatisfaction with both the complexity of the processes and the timescales involved to get to conclusions.
- An overall feeling from the current committee that the current processes place too much emphasis on the detail of the procedures themselves, and the need to “dot I’s and cross T’s” when dealing with issues, rather than focusing on the main aims of such procedures i.e. seeking problem resolution and performance improvement. The Association is not an employer. The committee therefore feels that using procedures that are designed to reflect employment relationships and to comply with employment legislation is neither required nor desirable when dealing with complaints/disciplinary issues in an unincorporated association.

The following proposal is therefore designed to address the factors as detailed above.

OBJECTIVE

To design a complaints and disciplinary procedure free from complexity, that is easy to access and implement and that allows for each issue to be dealt with by the appropriate area of the association.

PROPOSAL

1. Remove the procedural aspects of the Complaints and Disciplinary from the Constitution

Removing the current Complaints and Disciplinary procedures from the Constitution and replacing them with a policy document that contains updated simplistic procedures would ensure that members could be dealt with fairly and with transparency whilst at the same time providing the Association with the flexibility required to manage the procedures appropriately to meet the situations and challenges of each individual case.

A further benefit that could be realised by taking this step would be the ability of the Association to amend/change/update the procedures at any time should there be a legislative or operational reason to do so.

The Constitution would confirm for members the fact that the Association has Complaints and Disciplinary procedures and inform them of where the detail may be found.

For Example

“Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures

Members are referred to the Complaints and Disciplinary Policy where full details may be found.”

2. Rebrand to help support a change of culture

Rebrand the processes to help to communicate the Associations wish to move away from formal and punitive procedures, which are perceived to be combative and unhelpful, to procedures that support and promote problem resolution, transparency and where appropriate collaboration.

Suggested overarching title for these procedures
“Discussing and Resolving Issues”

3. Create a new Complaints Function within the Association

Complaints and disciplinary procedures are currently directly managed from receipt to conclusion by the committee. This has some real disadvantages both for the committee and for members.

- A significant amount of time is taken from the committee purely on the administrative tasks/communications required for these situations, taking committee members away from their other duties and responsibilities.
- Involving the committee in the administration of the complaint, will lead to some committee members having knowledge of the case from start to finish, particularly if they are involved in the appointment of and liaison with **Investigating Officers, this** may lead to members not being available to get involved with disciplinary decision making and/or appeals.
- Cases may take longer to manage given the limited availability of Committee Members
- Although it is the role of the Committee, ultimately to ensure that procedures are managed appropriately and fairly it is not, and should not be, their role to manage each individual case.
- The current procedures also place committee members at risk of being charged with unfair decision making due to pre-knowledge leading to potential conflict of interest.
- Committee Members may not have the relevant skills or experience of managing complaints and disciplinary investigations and processes.

The view of the CWP is that these disadvantages could be removed or significantly reduced by the introduction of a complaints team. This team would manage complaints and disciplinary procedures and appeals from start to conclusion.

To ensure that the workload is at a manageable level to prevent risk of conflict of interest and to ensure coverage across the year, it is suggested that this team would comprise two Complaints Officers.

Below is a description of the duties and responsibilities of this position.

Complaints Officer

The role of a Complaints Officer is to manage all complaints lodged with the Association (via the Online Complaints Form) from start through to conclusion in a timely, effective and efficient way in accordance with the Associations Complaints and Disciplinary processes to ensure consistency and fairness of treatment.

This role will include:-

- Completing all administrative tasks, including letters of communication for respondents, complainants and all involved in the case.
- Developing relationships which instill trust and confidence with all involved in the case.
- Providing advice on the association's processes to all involved.
- Advising on the format and content of investigation reports and on occasion supporting I/Os in the production of reports.
- Producing information and reports, both ad hoc and routine, for the committee.

4. Suggested Complaints procedure

NB As the majority of issues that give rise to the committee receiving complaints happen at competitions, the CWP recommends that more is done here to try and resolve the situations on the ground at the time, whilst at the same time making sure that complaints and their outcomes at this stage are captured in one place.

In order that the Association can follow the right processes and when required, take the correct actions, it is essential that members understand the difference between a Complaint and an Incident. It is therefore suggested that the following communication is added to the current Online Incident Form to make this absolutely clear.

“The Online Incident Form is to be used to report any accidents, and non complaint based incidents that occur at a BFA Sanctioned Tournament.

It is therefore the Tournament Organisers responsibility to ensure that all incidents reported to them, no matter from what source, are reported using this form.

All incident forms are logged, reviewed by the Committee and relevant appointed officials or working groups, and filed for future reference if required.

Incident forms of a similar or recurring nature may be open to combined further investigation.”

The British Flyball Association



**Discussing and Resolving Issues
Complaints and Disciplinary Policy and Procedures**

The Complaints Procedure

The Association encourages members to try and resolve issues informally in the first instance. Should these efforts not resolve the issue, then members can raise the matter by using the following process.

Any member (*for avoidance of doubt this includes Committee Members*) can raise a complaint, against another member/members when they believe a breach of the *Associations Code of Conduct, Constitution, Rules of Racing or Policies* has occurred.

The Association wants to make sure that members are able to raise such complaints quickly and easily and that these issues are then directed, and managed through to conclusion by the relevant people within the Association.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The Association believes that all complaints and appeals must be dealt with in a timely manner and have therefore set timescales for these procedures.

It is however important that members note that whilst every effort will be made to manage within the published timescales, sometimes circumstances may mean that this will not be possible. Being prepared to be flexible in this aspect is important here, as it should be remembered that all committee members and appointed officials are volunteers and therefore carry out their duties and responsibilities in their spare time. When such circumstances occur, these will be specified and disclosed to all parties involved and a new deadline for resolution communicated.

The Association will aim to ensure that Online complaint forms are reviewed within 48 hours of the form being submitted. This review will be undertaken by a Complaints Officer who will consider whether any of the initial evidence/information provided in the complaint includes allegations that are at a level where they could be classified as Gross Misconduct under the Associations Disciplinary Procedure. Should this be the case, to protect all members, the Association reserves the right to immediately suspend the membership of the respondent/respondents cited in the complaint. This action would be confirmed in writing by a Complaints Officer.

The Associations Complaints procedure is implemented using a summary process. This means that investigations are conducted, and decisions are subsequently taken based on written evidence submitted by Complainants, Respondents and Witnesses. There is no exchange of evidence or cross-examination of parties involved.

Any member who submits a Complaint Form must ensure confidentiality is adhered to and must only discuss the situation with The Head Judge/Deputy Head Judge involved in managing and lodging a complaint at a competition (if the complaint occurs at a competition), their own supporting witnesses and the Complaints Officer appointed to manage the case. Breaching confidentiality in these situations may lead to a **Complaint** being lodged against the member by a Complaints Officer or the Committee.

Information supplied by other parties involved in the complaints procedure will be dealt with sensitively and only disclosed on a need to know basis. Members should be aware that to allow members to defend themselves all information on the complaints form and in all witness statements will be made available to the member/members who the complaint is about. However, the following information will remain confidential:

- Names of witnesses.
- Names of young members
- Names of vulnerable members.

Complaints that, following review by a Complaints Officer, are considered to be vexatious or malicious may be rejected.

Complaints that, following review by a Complaints Officer, are considered to be broadly or substantively the same as a previous complaint or of a similar nature will only be considered on production of new or additional evidence.

It is important to note that the BFA Committee reserves the right to raise complaints against a member or group of members and that an extended timescale of up to six months from the date of the incident/events occurring is allowed for these complaints. This extension of timescale is felt necessary in order to be able to manage complaints that may only come to light after a lengthy period of time.

Complaints arising at a competition.

Step 1 - 'There and then'

Complaints should be raised verbally with the Head Judge/Deputy Head Judge as soon as possible after the situation/issue has occurred.

If a member wishes to make a complaint which involves either

- both the Head Judge and the Deputy Head Judge

or

- the Head Judge where there is no Deputy Head Judge in attendance

they should follow the Outside of Competition Pathway

The Head Judge/Deputy Head Judge will explore the situation with the member and all other parties involved, decide on and then implement the best course of action with a view to bringing about a resolution.

The member raising the complaint must then, together with the Head Judge/Deputy Head Judge, complete and submit the online Complaints Form describing the issue/s encountered, the actions taken and outcomes realised.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1lvcFFSok9k85ebqvGDW7GH_fgN2Wn8REQnyeCtfjvAI/edit#itdescribing

The form **MUST** be completed and submitted before the end of the competition.

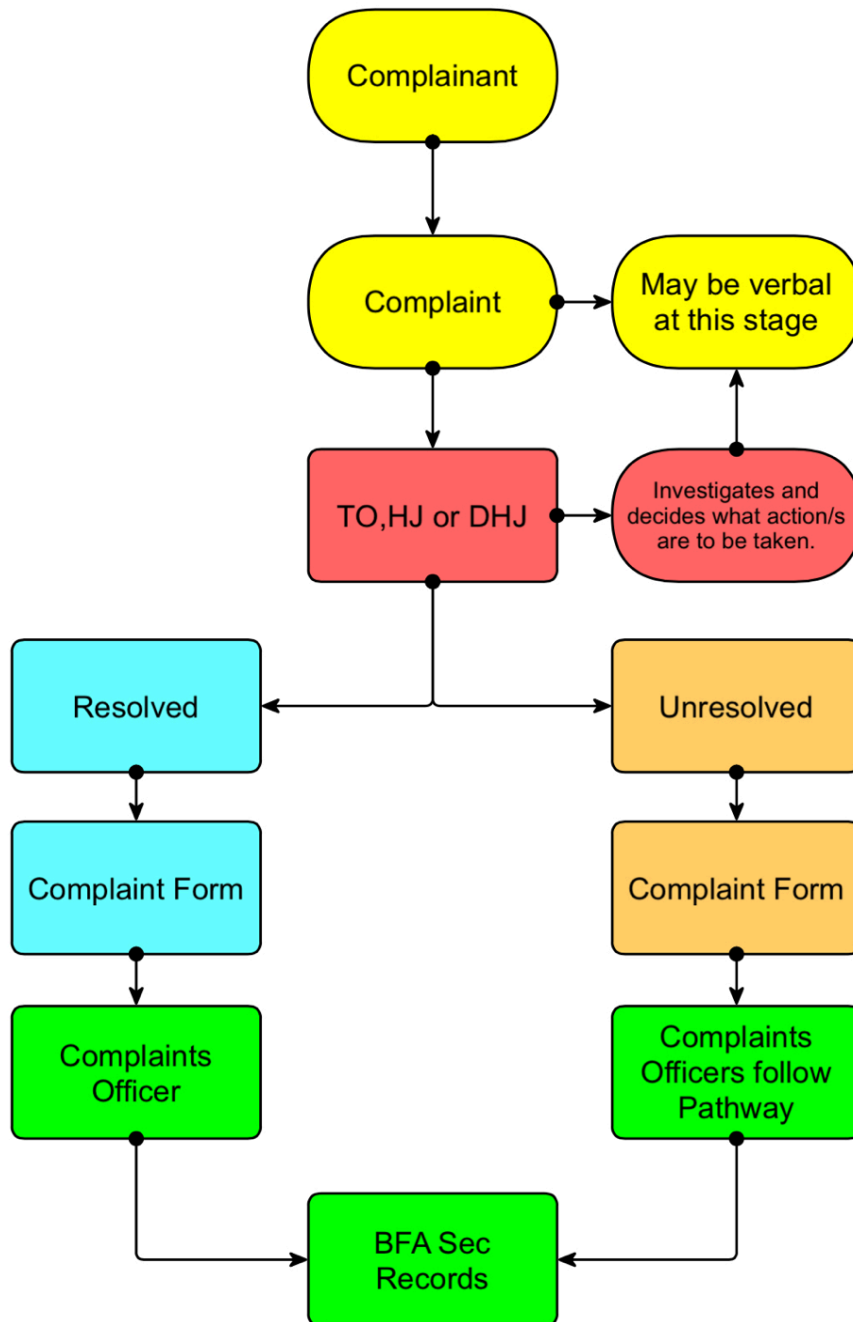
Where a member feels their issue has been satisfactorily resolved, then the matter will be considered closed and no further action on their part is required.

Online Complaint Forms are submitted directly to both the BFA Complaints Team and the BFA Secretary and the details from the forms populate a working spreadsheet.

The BFA Complaints Team then manages each complaint through to conclusion whilst the BFA Secretary monitors work is completed according to timescales.

.NB - A complaint form submitted by a member relating to a matter arising at a competition that has not been managed in accordance with Step 1 will not be considered.

Complaint Management at a Competition.



Step 2 - The Complaints Pathway

Where Step 1 does not result in a member's complaint being resolved a Complaints Officer will take ownership of the process.

A Complaints Officer, having reviewed the Online Complaints Form, will share the complaint with the appropriate officers or groups within the association relevant to the matter to be considered.

As complaints will be related to potential breaches of the **Associations Code of Conduct, Constitution, Rules of Racing or Policies** they may broadly fall into the following categories:

- Accessibility
- Judging decisions
- Dog Welfare - Vets Team/Trainers
- Safe Guarding
- Misconduct offences

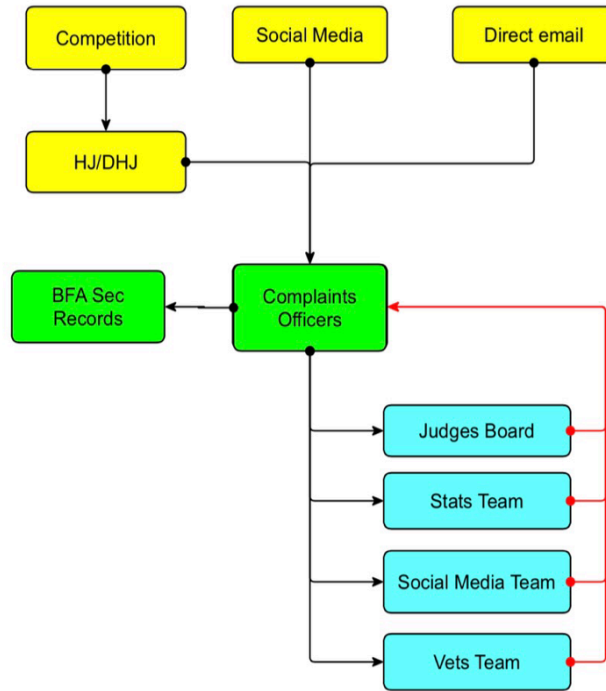
A Complaints Officer will consult the officers and groups relevant to the complaint being considered and where necessary will carry out any further investigations required (this may include contacting the complainant, other relevant parties detailed on the complaint form or any other member of the association who may have relevant information), in order that a decision can be reached on the course of action to be taken.

The actions available at this point are:

- Complaint to be upheld
- Complaint to be dismissed
- Complaint identified as a potential breach of the Associations Code of Conduct to be managed through the Association's misconduct process.

The outcome of this step will be communicated to the member, in writing, by a Complaints Officer within 14 working days of the online complaint form having been received.

The Complaints Pathway



Step 3 - Appeal

Members whose complaints are dismissed at Step 2 may lodge an appeal against the decision.

Any such appeal must be put in writing and sent by email to the BFA Secretary within 14 days of the date on the outcome letter. The appeal must include the grounds on which the “verdict” taken at Step 2 is challenged.

Issues not reported on the complaint form will not be considered at appeal. However, new evidence relevant to the complaint can be submitted if this was not considered, or available, at the time.

Appeals received outside of this timescale will be deemed out of time and will not be considered.

Appeals are considered and decided upon by 3 members of the Committee who have had no involvement in the complaint.

The appeal decision will be communicated in writing to the member within 14 days of the appointed committee members reaching their decision.

This decision will be final.

Complaints arising outside of competitions

Step 1 - 'Tell us about it'

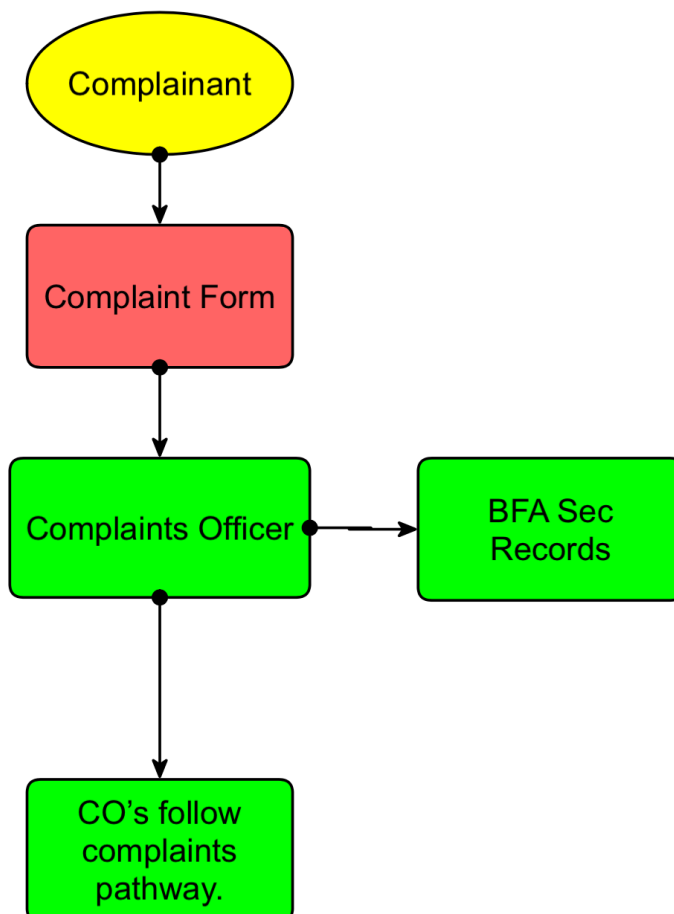
A member wishing to raise a complaint regarding situations/incidents that occur outside of competitions should complete and submit the online Complaints Form.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1vcFFSok9k85ebqvGDW7GH_fgN2Wn8REQnyeCtfjvAI/editdescribing

To be considered, the completed form must be submitted within 14 days of the situation/incident occurring. Complaints received outside of this timescale will be considered "out of time" and will not be investigated.

Online Complaint Forms are submitted directly to both the BFA Complaints Team and the BFA Secretary and the details from the forms populate a working spreadsheet.

The BFA Complaints Team then manages each complaint through to conclusion whilst the BFA Secretary monitors work is completed according to timescales.



Step 2 - The Complaints Pathway

A Complaints Officer, having reviewed the Online Complaints Form, will share the complaint with the appropriate officers or groups within the association relevant to the matter to be considered.

As complaints will be related to potential breaches of the **Associations Code of Conduct, Constitution, Rules of Racing or Policies** they may broadly fall into the following categories:

- Accessibility
- Judging decisions
- Dog Welfare - Vets Team/Trainers
- Safe Guarding
- Misconduct offences

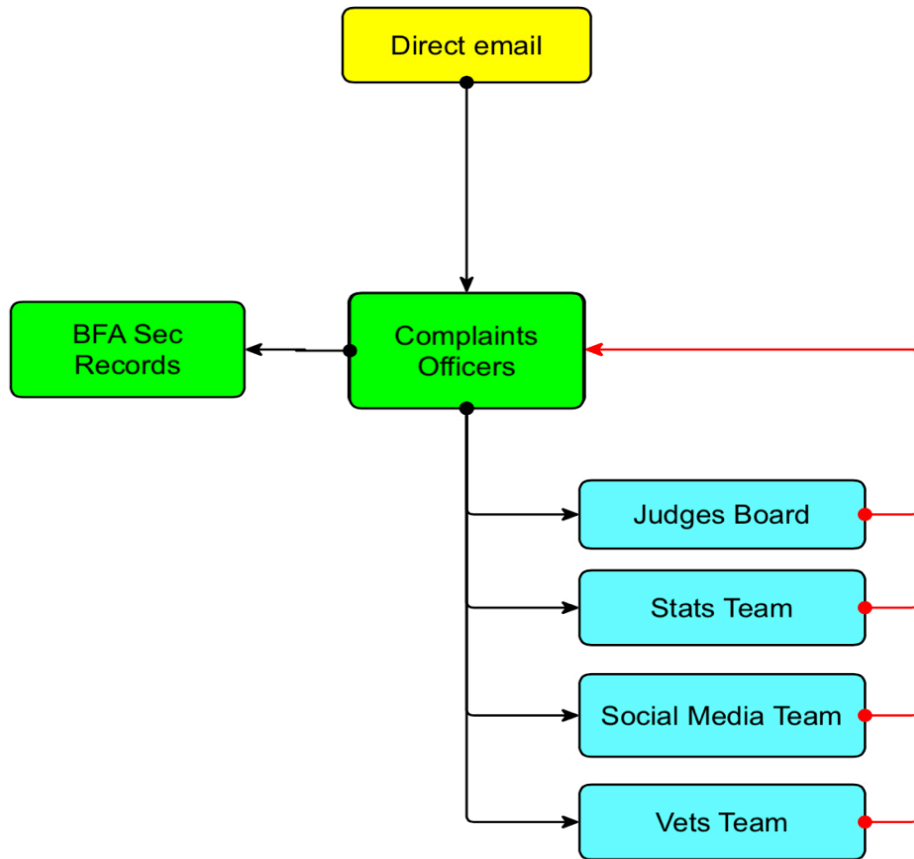
A Complaints Officer will consult the officers and groups relevant to the complaint being considered and where necessary will carry out any further investigations required (this may include contacting the complainant, other relevant parties detailed on the complaint form or any other member of the association who may have relevant information), in order that a decision can be reached on the course of action to be taken.

The actions available at this point are:

- Complaint to be upheld
- Complaint to be dismissed
- Complaint identified as a potential breach of the Associations Code of Conduct to be managed through the Association's misconduct process.

The outcome of this step will be communicated to the member, in writing, by a Complaints Officer within 14 working days of the online complaint form having been received.

The Complaint Pathway



Step 3 - Appeal

Members whose complaints are dismissed at Step 2 may lodge an appeal against the decision.

Any such appeal must be put in writing and sent by email to the BFA Secretary within 14 days of the date on the outcome letter. The appeal must include the grounds on which the “verdict” taken at Step 2 is challenged.

Issues not reported on the complaint form will not be considered at appeal. However, new evidence relevant to the complaint can be submitted if this was not considered, or available, at the time.

Appeals received outside of this timescale will be deemed out of time and will not be considered.

Appeals are considered and decided upon by members of the Committee who have had no involvement in the complaint.

The appeal decision will be communicated in writing to the member within 14 days of the appointed committee members reaching their decision.

This decision will be final.

The Disciplinary Procedure

The Associations Disciplinary procedure will be used to manage complaints that fall under the category of Misconduct.

Standards Of Behaviour

The Associations Constitution, Code of Conduct, Rules of Racing, Policies and Procedures are in place to ensure that all members can take part in their hobby in a safe and positive environment. In summary, it is these documents that provide guidance on the rules to be followed and the standards of behaviour required by members of the Association.

The Code of Conduct, is of particular importance. This states that members must:

- Always conduct themselves in an appropriate manner in flyball contexts. For example (not an exhaustive list), when at flyball events such as competitions, demonstrations, and training sessions, in flyball related events such as AGMs and EGMs and also when using social media and other forms of communication. This always includes respectful communications verbally, electronically and in any written communication.
- Always exhibit appropriate behaviour towards others (both children and adults).
- Follow the BFA Constitution and Rules of Racing and interpret them in the spirit of promoting and supporting the flyball community and the sport.
- Follow all BFA policies and procedures published on the BFA website, ensuring they are familiar with them and that they comply with these policies. (Social Media, Data Protection, Disability Discrimination, Safeguarding).

It is the Team Captains responsibility to ensure that all team members are aware of and adhere to these standards at all times.

Misconduct

Misconduct shall include but not be limited to:

- Minor breaches of the Associations Code of Conduct, Constitution, Rules of Racing, Policies and Procedures.
- Abusive or foul language,
- Demonstration of dissatisfaction with a judge's decision.
- Demonstration of poor sportsmanship.
- Wilful intent to gain an unfair advantage.

Or any behaviour that would leave a spectator, competitor, host or sponsor with an unfavourable opinion of Flyball.

Possible sanctions for Findings of Misconduct

These will include but shall not be limited to:

- a. A Formal Written Warning. This warning will provide the rationale behind the decision taken and, where appropriate, detail any improvements or changes required by the member going forward.
- b. Supervision.

c. Suspension from racing/judging or official duties.

Gross Misconduct

In a case of Gross Misconduct, to protect all members, the Association reserves the right to immediately suspend the membership of the respondent/respondents cited in the complaint. This action would be confirmed in writing by a Complaints Officer.

Gross Misconduct shall include, but not be limited to:

- Major breaches of the Associations Code of Conduct, Constitution, Rules of Racing, Policies and procedures.
- Inhumane treatment of a dog.
- 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 apply at BFA Sanctioned Competitions including outside racing times, and at any other time when gross misconduct is deemed to have been committed by a member.

Possible findings for Gross Misconduct

- a. Suspension from the Association for a set period of time.
- b. Expulsion from the Association.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

The Association believes that all complaints and appeals must be dealt with in a timely manner and have therefore set timescales for these procedures.

It is however important that members note that whilst every effort will be made to manage within the published timescales, sometimes circumstances may mean that this will not be possible. Being prepared to be flexible in this aspect is important here as it should be remembered that all committee members and appointed officials are volunteers and therefore carry out their duties and responsibilities in their spare time.

When such circumstances occur, these will be specified and disclosed to all parties involved and a new deadline for resolution communicated.

The Association will aim to ensure that Online complaint forms are reviewed within 48 hours of the form being submitted. This review will be undertaken by a Complaints Officer who will consider whether any of the initial evidence/information provided in the complaint includes allegations that are at a level that could be classified as Gross Misconduct under the Associations Disciplinary Procedure. Should this be the case, to protect all members, the Association reserves the right to immediately suspend the membership of the respondent/respondents cited in the complaint. This action would be confirmed in writing by a Complaints Officer.

The Associations Disciplinary procedure is implemented using a summary process. This means that investigations are conducted, and decisions are subsequently taken based on written evidence submitted by Complainants, Respondents and Witnesses. There is no exchange of evidence or cross-examination of parties involved.

Any member who lodges an Online Complaint Form must ensure confidentiality is adhered to and must only discuss the situation with The Head Judge/Deputy Head Judge involved in managing and lodging a complaint at a competition (if the complaint occurs at a competition), their own supporting witnesses and the Complaints Officer appointed to the manage the case. Breaching confidentiality in these situations may lead to a Complaint being lodged against the member by a Complaints Officer or the Committee.

Information supplied by other parties involved in the disciplinary procedure will be dealt with sensitively and only disclosed on a need to know basis. Members should though be aware that to allow members to defend themselves all information on the complaints form and in all witness statements will be made available to the member/members who the complaint is about. However, the following information will remain confidential:

- Names of witnesses.
- Names of young members
- Names of vulnerable members.

Complaints that, following review by a Complaints Officer, are considered to be vexatious or malicious may be rejected.

Complaints that, following review by a Complaints Officer, are considered to be broadly or substantively the same as a previous complaint of a similar nature will only be considered on production of new or additional evidence.

It is important to note that the BFA Committee reserves the right to raise complaints against a member or group of members and that an extended timescale of up to six months from the date of the incident/events occurring is allowed for these complaints. This extension of timescale is felt necessary in order to be able to manage complaints that may only come to light after a lengthy period of time.

The Disciplinary Procedure

Step 1 - 'A Case to Answer'

All complaints raised within the Association via the Online Complaint Form are firstly managed through the Complaint Pathway steps 1 and 2.

The investigation completed by a Complaints Officer would therefore have established that there was a "prima facie" case, relating to misconduct requiring further investigation.

Step 2 - 'The Investigation'

An Investigating Officer will be appointed by the Complaints Team to conduct a full investigation into the matter.

To ensure fairness and impartiality an Investigating Officer will NOT BE:

- related to the complainant/s, respondent/s, or witnesses in the case,
- a member of the complainant/s or respondent/s Flyball Club,
- involved in any way with the substance of the complaint.

To ensure competence, investigating officers will have a clear understanding of the Associations Rules, Policies and Procedures and wherever possible have experience in conducting investigations and producing reports of findings and recommendations.

Having been appointed to the case, the Investigating Officer will:

- Carry out a review of the information and evidence detailed in the Online Complaints Form together with any other documentation produced through Steps 1 and 2 of the Complaints procedure.
- Contact, by email, both the complainant and respondents in the case to inform them of their appointment, confirm the allegation under investigation and share contact details.
- Where required, contact by email, claimant/s, respondent/s and any witnesses identified in the case in order to clarify points or seek further information/evidence.

On completion of their investigations the Investigating Officer will produce a written Report of Findings and Recommendations and submit this, together with all supporting documentation gathered in the case, to the Complaints Team.

The targeted timescale for completion of investigations is set at 6 weeks from receipt of the Online Complaint Form.

Step 3 - 'The Decision'

The Complaints Team will convene a Disciplinary Decision Making Panel (DDMP).

The role of the DDMP will be to review and consider the Report of Findings and Recommendations produced by the Investigating Officer to reach a decision on the complaint.

The (DDMP) will consist of 1 committee member and 2 other members appointed to the case.

All members of a DDMP, will meet the following criteria:

- be impartial and independent of the Complainant/s and Respondent/s,
- not be linked by Team (including ex members), family or perceived friendship,
- where possible, have qualifications and/or experience which would be helpful and relevant to the case to be considered. e.g. Judge, Measuring Official, Vet, Safeguarding, IT, Social Media, experience of managing and/or deciding on HR/Individual/legal disputes.

Potential Outcomes

Where the DDMP concludes there has been no breach of the Associations Code of Conduct, Constitution, Rules of Racing or Polices the complaint will not be upheld and the case will be closed.

Where the DDMP concludes that there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct, Constitution, Rules of Racing or Polices, their role is to decide on the level of sanction to be applied given the facts of the case.

The sanctions available to the DDMP are detailed in the Misconduct and Gross Misconduct section of this procedure.

Decisions of the DDMP will be communicated to the Complainant, the Respondent and the Committee by the Complaints team in writing.

The target date for completion is within 8 weeks of the Online Complaint Form being received.

Step 4 - 'The Appeal'

Both Claimants and Respondent members may appeal DDMP decisions.

The respondent may appeal any sanction applied by the DDMP.

The complainant may appeal where the decision of the DDMP was to take no action against the respondent.

An appeal must be sent by email to the Complaints Team within 14 days of the date on the DDMP's written decision.

The appeal must provide full details of the grounds of appeal.

Appeal Procedure

The Complaints team will inform the BFA Secretary that an appeal has been received and provide all documents relating to the case.

The BFA Secretary will call a meeting of committee members eligible to decide on the case. For avoidance of doubt this will exclude the committee member on the DDMP and any others in conflict with the case.

The committee members appointed to hear the case shall review the documents considered by the DDMP in reaching their decision, 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 DDMP's decision.

The BFA Secretary shall immediately notify the appellant(s) of the Committee's decision, then close the case, and file all records relating to it.

The BFA Committee reserves the right to publish findings of disciplinary cases in certain situations and only when necessary to maintain transparency and accountability, while still respecting the privacy of the members involved.

Questions & Comments:

Hilary Larkham: Thank you. Again, this comes from myself, but the constitutional working party.

I think it's very clear in terms of the rationale as to why we're putting forward what we are suggesting.

The 26 is done in two parts because 26A a just clearly tells you what would be coming out of the rules. The two sentences and what it would be replaced with. That's the simple part of the proposal.

So the rationale for the change is detailed in the complaints and disciplinary proposal as was submitted to the committee by the Constitution and Working Party and published in the BF as associations members only Facebook group.

On the week commencing 24th of March 2024 I did put in this rationale it's really important

just restating the objectives and drivers for change behind this summary rule change document.

I think it's probably fair to say and the people that have been around in the association for some time will know that it's always been a bit of a thorny bush to grapple with this disciplinary complaints process.

When we looked at it as a constitutional working party, it was really clear to see that it was something that really did need to be changed and does need to be changed for the reasons that we've put forward in the drivers for change. And I'm not going to make any apologies for just rereading these because it is really important that we get this across.

So.

The amount of time spent dealing with complaints discipline on the committee is disproportionate.

The committee, yes, is responsible for it, but the time taken in trying to resolve some of these issues is really as it says here, disproportionate in terms of what needs to be done.

There are plenty of examples around, and of course these things we can't share, but because they are private and confidential, the feedback from those that have been involved in processes across the years, either as witnesses, respondents, people that have to undertake an investigation all citing their dissatisfaction with what is currently in the rules for one reason or another, complexity of the time scales, you name it, and we've had a lot of feedback about how it doesn't work.

The overall feeling from a current committee when they were given the task of looking at rewriting this was that the current process indeed placed so much emphasis on people having to dot the i's and cross T's to stay within the rules rather than focusing on what these processes should be all about, which is resolving the actual issues in the right way to suit individual circumstance. So looking for solutions to the problems rather than looking for ways in which we just have to comply with the rule to get through the process, that's not what this should be about. It should be about problem resolution and making sure that we're dealing with people fairly.

The other thing that's popped up over many years is the fact that the existing process doesn't comply with Acas or we don't do this as an Acas procedure. We don't need to. We're not an employer. We are an association. We are volunteers. We have to have a process and we must have a process that is fair to everybody and we need to do that in a way that works for us. We don't need to be guided by an employment-led process, although if you read the proposal, it's very much in line with what you would expect to see as an employee anyway. So I wanted to spend the time just reiterating that because it is a really important issue.

And the other thing I wanted to just reiterate was the fact that this is an all or nothing proposal.

There is no pick and mix option. You can't go. Oh, I like this bit, but I don't like that bit. You're either going to vote on the whole lot or you get nothing and it stays the same basically.

The other thing I wanted to just make a point about is that we're pretty sure that you know this isn't going to be 100% , by putting it into this process, putting it into a policies and procedures manual allows us the opportunity to make sure we've constantly got this under review. So if we find a part of this isn't working for whatever reason we can look at that. We

can amend that and we can make sure that Members are then updated in a way that makes it work efficiently, effectively for all of us.

Facebook Comments:

So we had questions as to whether the complaint had to be raised at the competition or if it could be done afterwards? Yeah. Will it make it easier to handle complaints?

And is it a team captain's responsibility to ensure that all Members are aware of and adhere to standards? And does it mean that a team captain will be held responsible for the actions of their team members?

Hilary Larkham:

We did try as a constitutional working party on Facebook, we answered all of those questions. We got together as a group and those answers are from the Constitution working party completely. So they should be answered there. One of the ones that we need to amend and we do need to amend a bit of this proposal and I'm going to do a

One of the ones that came in was from Melissa Shearing and it was a good spot. We haven't put the fact that there might be an unlikely event at a competition where the complaint was about either both the head judge and the deputy head judge, or in fact it was about the head judge and there was no deputy head judge there either and we hadn't caught that.

So we really need to make sure that that goes into the proposal because of course we can't have, you know, putting a member in a situation where they have to complain to the person that it's about.

Complaints should be raised verbally with the head judge. Is that your first thing? I think it'll slot in then after that.

This part would actually go in on the document under complaints arising at a competition, and it's just to clarify what would happen if the head judge and deputy head judge were involved.

Or there was no deputy head judge and it was a head judge involved.

Ray Lewis

So I'm just looking at the list of things that should be construed as gross misconduct, I do appreciate it says shall include, but not limited to, however, there is one important thing which has been omitted from this list which is a safeguarding issue and I think it should include. "A situation where a police disclosure has been made about A member"

Nicky James:

We are just having a quick conversation in that situation, legal precedents would overtake our rules anyway. We would have to go with the legal precedents rather than whatever's written in our rules under misconduct and gross misconduct.

Ray Lewis

Yes, but the legal precedent wouldn't require us to remove such a person as a member, and our rules would have to do that.

Nicky James: But if it's a legal issue under safeguarding, it would come under gross misconduct anyway

Ray Lewis

Why would it come under safeguarding? Why would a safeguarding issue come down under

gross misconduct anyway?

Hilary Larkham:

It could do. I mean, I know Kerena is here today and I know that Dave's here today.

Ray Lewis

I completely understand that, I think the reason why I'm bringing this up now is because of previous experience in the past.

Kerena Marchant

Yes, I was just going to say that, Ray, I have what you have in mind at the back of my mind when we were working on this and I actually thought it was covered under major breaching of the Association of Code of Conduct, Constitution, rules of racing, et cetera, because they do the major breach. And another reason why I didn't push for putting, safeguarding separately.

I think this year there will be a lot of work being done on the safeguarding policy, which I think will then dovetail into that.

Keith Marshall :

Yeah, it's a question on the amendment, please. Hillary, obviously. You've put in there that it has to divert to the Member wishing to compete outside of competitions. If it's for a head judge or a deputy head judge, but in that case, because you then have 14 days to make the complaint on that pathway, that means that a complaint made against a head judge where there's no deputy or both. That you're actually given 14 more days to complain about them whereas everybody else has to complain at the competition?

Hilary Larkham:

Yep, actually that's a good point, Keith. You see, that's one make one change and you get another change, right?

Keith Marshall

I assume you put the point in that has to be complained about at the competition for a reason for fair play etcetera. But this pathway doesn't give you that fair judgement. That seems a little unfair.

Hilary Larkham:

Yeah, it's a good point.

It's actually a very Fairpoint, Keith, so.

Is there a way of doing the outside there? And then there's an e-mail option though.

We could expand the wording that we've just put through, which we're trying to vote on somehow that says.

You could follow the outside of competition pathway, yeah by emailing but it has to be done by whatever it might be by the end of the tournament or something.

Would that do? Would that cover it? I'm not suggesting the wording is right, Keith, but are we suggesting that we could perhaps then?

Keith Marshall

That covers the principle. Yeah, it makes sense. Yeah. Yeah. It's how you do it on this.

Hilary Larkham:

Yeah, we could go. The principle is you can e-mail it, but you follow the outside pathway, but you still must have done that e-mail by the end of the competition. What's classed as the end of the competition. When you leave, when you're gone home? You could just say 12:00 on the day of close, couldn't you?

Some people want to travel home to do it. Would that sort that?

Kerena Marchant

If it's a complaint about the head judge or deputy head judge, it should be in the incident book because anything that is out of a normal, it should be and it should be done before it. I think before the end of the presentation.

Because the problem is when people leave the site, you can't deal with things. That is the whole problem.

Committee: We do have a question in the chat. What if there was a way to do that if there is no reception to send an e-mail, so like there wasn't at Statfold.

We had no Internet.

In answer to that we did think about, you know, the fact that there may not be, we would have one of these things that says there may not be good Wi-Fi or 4G whenever competition you're at.

David Anderson

They should be actually going using the complaints form. It's just it would go directly into the complaints officer rather than from the head judge, the deputy head judge. So the form is still there, it's accessible by members.

That they simply wouldn't go to the head judge or the deputy head judge if it was about both of them, they would fill the form out and state that on the form.

Does that make sense? And in that way it would fall in, it could fall into the 48 hour pathway with the complaints officer and will be treated the same, so they won't be treated any differently. That would be my feeling anyway.

Tina

So, taking into consideration the comment and the fact that you might have an issue with the head judge, deputy head judge, instead of saying at the end of the tournament, why don't you say within 12 hours or something like that? So that person's got time to get home and get Internet access to be able to submit it, put a time scale in.

Hilary Larkham: We could have loads of different scenarios which I'm sure we will have over the coming year of people trying to complete & implement this process, which means that complaints should be managed.

At sites where most of our complaints happen and investigated and looked towards resolution on site at the time, but with the online form alerting everybody to what's going on and what's happening.

Amendment to the wording of the proposal was voted on by those present at the AGM.

Proposal 27

PROPOSERS TINA HATCHER 6759 on behalf of Foundation Working Party

Rule Number: A.1 Sanctioned Tournaments

A.9 Add

Remove the whole of Appendix 8 and replace with the following:

A.1 Sanctioned Tournaments A.9 Flyball Foundation Events & Ring-Time Training [Add]

A.9 FLYBALL FOUNDATION EVENTS & RING-TIME TRAINING

Flyball Foundation Events and Ring-Time training are conducted under conditions sanctioned by the BFA and which are governed by the BFA Constitution and Rules of Flyball Events.

The BFA standards for flyball must be met by all members taking part in flyball foundation events. Foundation Flyball is about developing the dog and handler to achieve the BFA standard safely.

The BFA Standard. The minimum standard required of dogs and handlers to be able to safely race or train under BFA sanctioned conditions is the BFA Standard which is defined as:

Handler – For both Flyball Foundation events and ring-time training, a handler must be able to safely release a dog into the racing lane and retrieve their dog under control.

Dog – To compete in a Flyball Foundation event a dog must also be able to go over 4 jumps and safely retrieve a ball from a flyball box/chute and return back over 4 jumps to their handler.

Safe Flyball - The over-riding principle is that dogs and handlers can compete or train safely. Should a judge have any safety concerns they are to consult with the HJ and Team Captain in the first instance. Dogs or handlers deemed unsafe may be withdrawn from racing or training. The HJ's decision is final.

Flyball Box/Chute - Any box used is to meet the specifications of the BFA Constitution and Rules of Flyball Racing. A chute is defined as an adequately padded single-piece board that can either be self-supporting or placed in front of a Flyball box (a chute needs to be safe and fit-for-purpose, the HJ's decision on what is safe and fit-for-purpose is final).

A.9.1 Flyball Foundation Events.

- a. Dogs must be 12 months or older at the time of the event
- b. Jumps are to be set at a minimum height of 6 inches and a maximum height of 8 inches. If all competing dogs are over the age of 18 months and this is verified in advance of the competition, use of higher jumps may be approved by the QJ.
- c. The use of flyball props are allowed but must be safe and fit for purpose, these can include striders, wings, & jump boards (the HJ's decision on what is safe and fit-for-purpose is final). Team members are allowed between the 4th jump and the box/chute but there should be no movement between the start gate and the 4th jump.
- d. The flyball box does not need to trigger but the dog is required to take a recognisable ball from a flyball box or a chute (not rolled or picked from the floor). The dog should be attempting to turn in a safe manner, not "stealing" the

- ball from the box or chute with its mouth.
- e. Centre netting (or suitable barrier) is to be run down the centre of the racing lanes and in the run back area. Jumps are not to be netted, although wings are allowed.
 - f. False starts – Not required in Foundation racing. Start light sequence should be used to start the race but racing continues if one or both sides false starts. If the dog runs clean this is not recorded as a fault.
 - g. Dogs and handlers competing in the same Flyball Foundation team do not need to be from the same primary Team. A foundation racing team can be 1-4 dogs, a team does not need to be 4 dogs to compete
 - h. Flyball Foundation teams shall race no more than 4 races of 3 heats in the event (most dogs in Flyball Foundations will be too young or too old for open, returning from injury or requiring retraining).
 - i. Placings can be determined by the team that has achieved the highest percentage of clean runs.
 - j. TOs are encouraged to supply all competitors with a suitable token of achievement
 - k. Retired dogs are not eligible to take part in Flyball Foundation events for welfare reasons as physical demands on the dog are the same as open competition

A.9.2 Dogs Returning to Flyball Foundation Activities After Competing in Open.

Returning a dog to Flyball Foundation activity is often a sensible approach and for the long-term benefit of the dog concerned. Any dog can return to Flyball Foundation Events for the purpose of injury or re-training at the discretion of the handler/team captain, without having to inform the BFA Committee. A dog may also be instructed to return to Flyball Foundation by the BFA Committee.

A handler/team captain must notify the BFA Committee of any dog returning to open racing, so the return is recorded. When the Committee has directed the return to Flyball Foundation, the handler will require written permission from the Committee to entitle this dog to return to open racing. A returning dog may require assessment by a BFA HJ, Vet or BFA Committee member before final approval is given.

A.9.3 Ring-Time Training. Must be supervised by a BFA HJ or QJ, taking place throughout the day, within the BFA sanctioned ring. This time can either be used individually or as a team. The BFA Rules of Flyball Racing do not apply as it is non-competitive.

The following rules apply:

- a. Dogs must be 12 months or older at the time of the event
- b. If jumps are to be used, they are to be set at a minimum height of 6 inches and a maximum height of 8 inches. If all competing dogs are over the age of 18 months and this is verified in advance of the competition, use of higher jumps may be approved by the QJ.
- c. The use of flyball props is allowed but must be fit for purpose, these can include striders, wings & jump boards.
- d. Set time limits are to be determined by the TO prior to the event and training slots are to be annotated on the racing schedule. Timings are to be strictly adhered to and enforced by the QJ and TO so as not to interfere with sanctioned racing.
- e. Teams are not to bring any single dog out for more than 4 training sessions in one day.

- f. A single ring-time training slot will be no longer than a standard race (8 minutes, timed by the supervising judge, starting from the box being placed in position
- g. Retired dogs can take part in ring time training for the purpose of being a stooge dog.

Participants. All people entering a BFA sanctioned ring need to be BFA members, or for the purposes of Foundation Flyball competitions or ring-time training, if not members, must be pre-registered with the BFA.

A.9.4 Fun events. Any other flyball related activity that is not governed by the BFA Constitution and Rules of Flyball Racing e.g. Have-a-go, flyball runs without a box/chute, inter-team training events are classified as fun events. Retired dogs are eligible to do Fun Events

Rationale:

To bring flyball foundation and ring time into the BFA rule book. This is to enable more clarity for competitors and more autonomy for judges to be able to enforce the BFA standard during foundation events.

Questions & Comments:

Tina Hatcher:

So we were asked to form a foundation working party to bring the foundation rules out of Appendix 8 and into the rule book. This was to enable more clarity for competitions and the competitors and for autonomy for judges to be able to enforce the FA standard during foundation events. So the working party has rewritten quite a bit of the foundation rules.

To be able to bring those into the rule book, we are proposing removing the whole of Appendix 8 and replacing it completely.

Ray Lewis

Just a couple of queries about wording. Under safe fly ball, it talks about a supervising judge but what do we mean by supervising judge in this instance? Do we mean qualified judges?

And secondly, it refers to a club captain in that paragraph and I think one other, which Club captain is not defined in the rules. We have a team captain in the rules and I think maybe we should be consistent.

Keith Marshall

If we're going to bring the foundation rules into the rule book itself.

Should everybody in the ring not be full members rather than just pre registered members?

Kelly Murdoch: We knew that there'd be things that we'd want to change over the time when we did it, and it's little things like that we wanted to keep it as simple as possible and not change too much. And then like everything else, we can then adapt it.

Maxine Marshall. Can you just confirm that it is believed to be safe for dogs to run on a chute that doesn't trigger by the foundation working party just because obviously this links to Paul's proposal regarding reducing how far the ball fires?

Reply in the chat states that we would be happy for the chute to be used and is safe.

Bhav Patel: Max, do you mean are you asking if it is safe for a dog to run at a chute or are you asking about retrieving a ball from a chute?

Reply: Just to clarify what you said, but we have said that all like everything would be classed safe for the head judge to obviously chute has to conform to that as well.

Anne Alderman: How are you defining retired dogs? Eg Verbal use of retired or officially through the BFA? And if they can be a stooge dog in ring time, would that mean that they would be able to do complete full runs they would in foundation or open?

Bhav

So this all came down to dog welfare. Again, when we were looking at this, this all came into dog welfare. So rather than having to jump over jumps in ring time, you can do run backs on just a flat ground so you don't have to have jumps in. You don't have to do anything. So if you want to put a stooge dog in the ring, that's just moving around or even just being there, you can during ring time.

It doesn't have to actually perform any act of a flyball in ring time.

Chris Cronin: Could the foundation rules be changed so that there are light faults to prepare teams for open racing?

Avril Wilson: So there's no false starts in foundation. Obviously, if that changes, if the rule proposal goes through for open racing, there's no false starts. It would obviously stay the same. There's still no false starts for foundation.

You don't actually get a fault for a false start as long as the dog runs clean, bringing a ball back over all four jumps.

Andrew Short: Even if not re-starting on a false start, it would be useful for teams to know that they had, in fact, false started (especially for those teams without training lights).

Tina Hatcher: You can ask the judge and ring party to put the lights on for you.

Amendment to the wording of the proposal was voted on by those present at the AGM. The amended proposal is shown above.

PROPOSAL NO. 28

Proposer Kevin Sutton 7155

Appendix 8

FLYBALL FOUNDATION COMPETITIONS & RING-TIME TRAINING

Flyball Foundation Racing. This is competitive racing with the use of props allowed:

k. Flyball Foundation races are 3 heats, run all 3; the winner of a Flyball Foundation competition is determined by the team that has achieved the highest percentage of clean runs (no faults) available to each team during the event. [However, teams running less than 4 dogs at any time during the competition will receive a penalty of 25% off their final score.](#)

[ADD] Clean runs are recorded per dog (2 dogs running clean and 1 dog faulting equals 2

clean runs for that team for that race). Foundation Flyball is focused on dog and handler achieving the BFA standard safely, not about speed.

Rationale

Flyball is, at its heart, a team sport.

Although we've had the introduction of singles and pairs in recent years, the core of flyball, the spectacle, the gripping edge-of-the-seat action that non-flyballers watch on television, is still 4 dogs racing their hearts out against 4 other dogs racing their hearts out.

The scoring system has, this last year, made a mockery of the team spirit. How can it be that a single dog with 12 clean runs can be positioned higher than a team of 4 with 47 out of 48? 3 of those dogs have had 12 clean runs, achieving the same standard as the single dog AND run in a team with 3 other dogs, but one may have missed a clean run because of a handler error, or something else that wasn't the dog's fault, and yet they are pushed down by the single dog.

Although some hosts seem to have taken the competition out of Foundation Flyball, by having uniformity in their awards instead of having placement awards, and by reading results out in alphabetical or other orders, and rule k itself says that "Foundation Flyball is focused on dog and handler achieving the BFA standard safely", it's also stated in the section heading that "This is competitive racing with the use of props allowed".

To some, Flyball Foundations may be the pinnacle of their dog's flyball career, and despite working as hard, if not harder, on training their dog, they may never reach open-standards, for whatever reason that wasn't theirs or anyone else's fault. Foundation Flyball needs to be recognised as being as important AND as fair as open racing...and an open team with less than 4 dogs would be disqualified, not receiving unfair advantages.

This change to the scoring would make the system far more equitable, instead of penalising those teams with 4 dogs, but it would still allow smaller teams to enter Foundation Flyball competitions with less than 4 dogs, and they would still be able to position higher than other teams that had less than 4 dogs, or teams with 4 dogs that had a problematic day, and with rule L (TOs are encouraged to supply all competitors with a suitable token of achievement) ensuring that they receive something to celebrate their achievements.

Questions & Comments

Kevin Sutton:

So I would like to add into Rule K in Appendix 8 or wherever that gets moved to if the foundation working parties proposal goes through.

In a foundation competition heats are run over heats. The winner of the foundation competition is determined by a team that has achieved the highest percentage of clean runs available to each team during the event. Then I'd like to add, "However, teams running less than 4 dogs at any time during the competition will receive a penalty of 25% off their final score". My rationale is that:

Flyball is a team sport and with the way the percentage rule has run over the last couple of

years, over the last year it's not equitable when a team of four is running against a single dog, although each individual dog in the team has the same chance of getting twelve runs. The chance of a team of four all getting 12 clean runs is lower so the current percentage way of working out the final score is an equitable mathematically.

I hope everybody's read the rationale to save me from reading out word for word, but basically I tried to think of some way of making it more equitable.

Whilst not being too complicated, the tournament organisers at the end of the day, as somebody pointed out on Facebook, there are mathematical formulas that can be applied that would make it completely fair, but that that formula is just too much for for organisers to to try and deal with at the end of a long competition day. So I tried to think of something that was simple but still made it more fair to everybody that was involved in the foundation competition.

Committee: There were some comments on Facebook's there lots of comments about teams not always having four dogs for foundation and it's penalising a team because they haven't many dogs to put dogs in that are not ready for ring environment or make more teams join up just to have four dogs.

And why a fixed amount of 25%?

They answered on Facebook.

Bhav Patel: What in my opinion foundation is about an opportunity to bring young dogs or novice dogs into the racing environment in a constructive manner.

Which shouldn't really be about a race. It's more about allowing those dogs to experience the environment that is so different to what you might have at training.

Et cetera. Foundation is not about pushing for dogs into a race environment because if they're racing, there should be an open, surely.

Kevin Sutton:

Racing implies that as an element of timing is involved, which there isn't currently in foundation, and I agree that the Clean run method of scoring is the right way to go. Foundation ideally is about giving ring experience to new dogs, but there are also dogs out there, certainly in our team, and I know that there are lots of other teams that have forever foundation dogs who, for whatever reason, can't cope with the open environment.

One in our team is terrified of the box. She'll never go into open because she's absolutely terrified whenever the box fires. But she loves foundation and her mum loves doing foundation.

The foundation should be and it is even in the rules the current rule states that foundation is competitive racing with the use of props allowed. That's the section heading in Appendix 8.

So it's not just about bringing dogs through to compete in open. It should also be about giving a nice fair equitable way of Forever foundation dogs being able to compete and have fun. Otherwise it becomes discriminatory. If you, if you're not allowing dogs that can't compete in open and to have fun then the sport becomes discriminatory.

And at the moment the scoring system isn't equitable, so I'm hoping that this at least

makes the scoring system a little bit more equitable, so that all dogs can have fun in fly ball regardless of what standard they're able to achieve.

Claire Hardy: I think it needs to be fairer. The number of dogs included, the percentage removed needs to be graded dependent on the number of dogs in the team, 25% removed from all teams regardless of number of dogs will be unfair to some teams.

PROPOSAL NUMBER 29

PROPOSERS NAME & BFA NUMBER - Sarah Prentice 9461

RULE NUMBER Various

RULE CONTENT

Constitution

2.2 Change **is comprised of** to **comprises**

4.4 **in to** should be **into**

Taskforces should be **Task Forces**

8.12 Change **attendances** to **attendance**

Rules of Racing

A.1

1.1 **Excess of 50** should be **excess of a 50**

3.1 Change **schedule release of** to **schedule release date for**

7.3 Change **nor less** to **or less**

A.2.

4.1 Change **tournaments they** to **tournaments; they**

5.7 Change **there** young to **their** young

7.2 Change **of Faux** to **or Faux** in Balls section

10 Change **is to satisfy** to **, to satisfy**

A.3.

2.1 Change **timewasting** to **time wasting**

4. Change **equally the** to **equally to the**

5.1 Change **so doing** to **doing so**

8.1 Change **completing it's** to **completing its**

Change **have** fully to **has** fully

8.2 Change **next leg** to **next heat**

10. Change **placing's** to **placings**

11. Change **other fail** to **other fails**

11. Change **However if the other team have completed and has clearly won and there is for example an older** to **However, if the other team has completed and has clearly won, and there is, for example, an older**

B.4.

2.9 ...to 100th should be to within 100th

B.5.

1d Change nonoffending to non offending

B.6.

1.1 Change months proceeding to months preceding

C.2.

2.4 Change dogs to dog's

D.6.

6.1 Change Pruritis to Pruritus

6.2 Change reserve to reserves

E.1

1.1

.... Each of the 4 dogs contributing to a clean run heat (a run heat without any faults)

E.3.

3.2 ... to team should be ..to the team

... indepth should be in depth

3.6 under rule teams A.2.5.7....under rule Teams A.2.5.7

E.4.

4.1 Change the Team,that with 4 dogs to the Team that, with 4 dogs,

4.2 Change the Team that with 4 dogs to the Team that, with 4 dogs,

G.1.

1.2 Change at al times to at all times

G.4.

4.3 Change reserve to reserves

G.8.

8.1 Change over-rule to overrule

8.3 The BFA Secretary needs to be a new point and later points need to be renumbered

Appendix 8

Safe Flyball Change over-riding to overriding

Update dates to 2025 in table contained in
Appendix 7

RATIONALE: Various grammar and spelling errors needing correction

Comments & Questions

It is literally just a tidy up on things that have been picked up by the rules working party while they've been going through the whole rule book.

.....

Any Other Business

Moving on to any other business and this is going over to Hillary for health and safety policy and procedures.

To say that a big project this year for the association will be to make sure that we've got a health and safety policy in place which we haven't already got and the associated rules processes risk assessments that need to have to happen to to implement such a policy. So just really a heads up that that will be something that will be a project and we will be getting a health and safety policy. And if the rule proposal goes through about having a policies and procedures manual information will sit in there.

Annual Awards for 2024

Open Team of the year

1st Place - Raptors Alpha - Potter, Ping, Ciel, Psych - Time 14.43

2nd Place - FOCUS - Danger, Hendry, Graffiti, Bernard - Time 14.72

3rd Place - Finesse A - Defy, Vesta, Carbon, Worm - Time 14.82

Multibreed team of the year

Eclipse Bright Stars - Teddy, Dotty, Bella, Indie - Time 16.24

Claire Gristwood Award

Whizzy - Lomond Raiders - Total points 7220

Introduction of New Committee Members

Next on the agenda is introducing new committee members.

This year we had myself, Nicky James, who's standing down and Hazel Miller, as I said earlier on, has stepped down for personal reasons.

We had two Members step forward to join the committee. Donna is elected to come on board officially after being co-opted last year. So welcome, Donna.

Thank you for continuing to support the BFA

And we'd also like to welcome Keith Marshall. Keith is joining the committee, stepping forward as well. So thank you, Keith. I wish you all the best.

Closing words from Nicky James & Committee

I'd just like to say thank you to everybody for attending as I said earlier this morning, this association doesn't run without its membership.

We cannot do this without your input and taking the time out today to have the discussions on the rule proposals etcetera helps the association move forward and grow. So thank you to everybody for taking their time out today.

Echoing what Moe said earlier to all the volunteers that we have in the association, regardless of what position they're in, whether it's judge, head judge, measuring officials, lights, right the

way through to all the working parties, it doesn't work without you.

Moe - On behalf of the rest of the committee, we're all going to miss you, Nicky. We want to say thank you for everything, your knowledge of the rule book is amazing. So from all of us to you, enjoy your free time. You will be missed.

Nicky - I think that's everything from everybody. So just like to thank everybody once again for attending and enjoy your flyball year.
Thank you.