**Presidents Report 2013-14**

Flyball in Australia has maintained interest with 679 financial and associate members and 737 registered dogs and 556 racing dogs. A total of 46 competitions were held this year with 4 cancellations similar to last year.

I would like to thank the committee for their contributions throughout the year. Every member of the committee made a worthwhile contribution and their input at committee meetings was impeccable. They are:

Jenny Millar (Vice President)

Brian Lindsay (Secretary and Sec. Dog incident sub-committee)

Pat Byrne (Treasurer and asst. webmaster)

Kylie White (Committee, Public Officer and Webmaster)

Richard Mellon (Committee and Sec. Rules sub-committee)

Julie Pamplin (Committee, database and seed times coordinator)

Phil Lea (Committee, Rules sub-committee)

Anne Coleman (Committee, and Awards/titles*)*

Ian Kendt (Committee and supervisory judge)

Rodney Gooch (Committee and newsletter editor)

Josh Ellen (Committee, Vic Regional rep.)

Frank Lux (Committee, NSW Regional rep.)

Catherine Saberton (Committee, SA Regional rep.)

Carolyn Shrives (Committee, ACT Regional rep.)

Jennifer Crane (Committee, Qld Regional rep.)

Ros Wood (Committee, Tas Regional rep.)

The new website was launched last year and provides members and visitors with all the information about flyball in Australia. The new website is much easier to update and enables better data management. Special thanks go to Pat Byrne, Julie Pamplin and Kylie White for their great effort with the translation of the old data.

Sponsorship with Purina Supercoat has continued this year. This has enabled major competitions to be sponsored and the committee has endeavoured to spread sponsored competitions across states while keeping in accordance with the agreement with Purina. Negotiations are currently being undertaken by Richard Mellon to secure further sponsorship as Purina are re-evaluating their current sponsorship arrangements.

A successful Nationals was held in Sydney at the Royal Easter Show this year despite increasingly difficult logistics with parking and transport of flyball equipment to the arena. The next Nationals will be held in Canberra at the Canberra Royal Show in February 2015 and I would encourage all teams to try and make it to Canberra. Planning is well advanced and it is proposed for an international judge to attend. The inclusion of an international judge gives a new dimension for all competing teams and local judges also get an insight into the methods used by renowned judges.

Flyball needs officials for competitions and it has been pleasing to see a number of members undertaking judging and stewarding tests during the year to enable them to become accredited. One provisional judge became accredited this year and we now have 24 accredited judges. I would encourage everyone to take the tests which enable a better understanding of the rules.

The rules of flyball racing have been in existence for many years now and our rules have evolved away from the rules of the North American Flyball Association to suit Australian conditions while still retaining the same philosophy. As such, only minor revisions were made during the year including refinements to the handicap racing rules to suit competitions with only a small number of entries, suspension of the crossing rule to reduce delays while still including the interference rule, and improving the quizzes for timekeepers and stewards.

The committee has been looking at sourcing additional EJS sets but unfortunately Farmtek who have supplied our sets in the past are not manufacturing new sets for flyball so we are searching for alternative systems.

During the year, the committee authorised the purchase of flyball matting for Queensland and Victoria with additional matting for NSW. This will reduce the need to transport matting interstate and enable more indoor competitions. Thanks go to Rodney Gooch and Steve Pitt for organising the supply of the new matting from the US.

In closing, I have decided to relinquish the role of President which I have undertaken for the past two years and have nominated Richard Mellon for the position. I have enjoyed the role and have received great support from the committee and will continue as a committee member. I would like to thank everyone for participating in the sport of flyball, and enjoying the competition as well as the enjoyment of seeing your dogs’ having a great time.

Ian Gauntlett

President