THE AUSTRALIAN FLYBALL ASSOCIATION INC. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SATURDAY 12th August 2017

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Here we are at the end of another Flyball year, and we take this opportunity to review how we’ve gone over the year.

**Growth:**

One way to judge how we are performing is to see if the Association is growing. Over the year since the last AGM:

* Total Member numbers have increased by 7%, which is good steady growth.
* Total dog numbers have increased by over 30%, which is a big rise. This number is mainly made up of active dogs earning title points.
* However, even with the growth in member numbers, the number of affiliated clubs has fallen, down 4 this year to 39.
* The number of sanctioned race meetings was up slightly on 2015-16, but the number of cancellations rose even more, so the number of race meetings actually completed fell by 3 to 50.
* The numbers of ticketed stewards and timekeepers was up by over 10%, which is encouraging, but the number of judges fell by 1, which is not.

**In brief:**

* Two Nationals have been held since the last AGM;
  + 2016 at Hawkesbury NSW, which was significantly rain affected but still a success, and was our first Nationals with three rings. The current National Record was set during this meet.
  + 2017 at Hastings, excellent grounds with plenty of space and good weather made for a successful meeting.
* Australia’s first purpose-built Flyball undercover facility was built in the RSPCA property at Waco, Queensland. It was a great pleasure for me to be able to attend the opening and the first race meeting in July. We hope it sees a lot of use.
* Discussions have been held with a potential new overall sponsor for Flyball nationally. This is at a very early stage, and there is nothing more to report as yet.

**Committee activity:**

The Rules Subcommittee carried out a major review of the Measurement and Height Card rules.

Our latest Subcommittee, the Development Subcommittee, was formed because members wanted a greater focus on promoting and developing the sport. As a new Subcommittee they are still finding their feet, and while their efforts in 2016/17 were not rewarded with much success, we anticipate more in the future.

Research was conducted on online race meeting entry systems including an existing system in use overseas. This proved to be unsuitable, with concern about the ability to integrate it to our current systems and how to maintain it. Going forward, a submission will be put to the new Committee to develop and implement Stage 1 of a purpose-built Online Entry System for Race Meetings.

Other improvements the Web team is planning for 2017- 2018 will be putting more Forms online. This includes the Race Meeting Sanction, Club Affiliation and Demo Sanction forms.

The Web Team has asked me to congratulate and thank the race meeting organisers who email scans of the entry forms and team timesheets along with the title points workbooks to them quickly after the meet. It allows them to upload the points a lot earlier than when the paperwork is mailed in.

And the Treasurer has asked me to thank all the members who renewed on time and avoided the last-minute rush which causes her a lot of stress.

**Issues:**

* Use of out-of-date forms is causing problems. Forms are updated for various reasons and as needed, so the one you’ve had stored in your PC for a few years may not be current. Please download the latest form from the Web every time you need to use one.
* Social media trouble raised its head again. The Committee only intervenes when it feels it has to and reluctantly; its role is not to impose manners or morals, but it needs to protect the sport’s public image. Written words can often be interpreted by a reader entirely differently from what the writer intended, and the more readers, the more interpretations. Please be mindful of this when taking part in a public exchange of views.
* Unreferenced deposits into the AFA’s bank account. At the start of every financial year, many hundreds of deposits of the same value flow into the account, and those without a reference create confusion and extra work at a busy time, which means they get pushed to the end of the queue. Please don’t just deposit money; we have an online system for renewals, and members must login to do their renewal. If you’re having trouble using the system, contact the Web Team, they are there to help.
* Points are still being awarded to the wrong dogs because of mistakes in timesheets. While people think it’s trivially easy to correct, it isn’t; our administrators have to get confirmation that the mistake has been made, after the event when memories may be hazy, correct the written records, and fix up the web records. This is why it’s AFA policy not to make changes after the race meeting. It is much easier to prevent the problem in the first place, which is why team captains are required to check the timesheets and specifically the CRNs at the end of the day. If you’re a team captain, please do the checks carefully. We suggest doing it at the start of the day when everyone is fresh.

**Rule Changes**

The On Trial period for a proposed Rule change has finished and it has been voted on via Postal ballot. The Rule is:

* To eliminate the Inbound Steward position.

Results of the voting will be announced shortly.

**Thank you’s**

At the close of this Committee year, I would like to thank every member of the 2016/17 National Committee for their contribution. Some members have a pretty big job anyway, while others serve on one or more of the subcommittees that report to the Committee. These are:

* The Rules subcommittee, responsible for investigating issues and recommending clarifications and updates where a problem is found;
* The Web Team, who maintain the data on the web page without which the Association could not run;
* The Incidents Subcommittee, who review incidents, basically Black cards, and who we always hope will have a light workload;
* And our latest subcommittee, the Development Subcommittee, which is charged with working out ways to promote our sport and build its profile.

Our Treasurer, our Secretary, our Regional Reps and the members of these subcommittees are all volunteers who put in a lot of time to ensure that the Association can run and that everyone can enjoy the sport.

The 2016/17 Committee members are:

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| Richard Mellon | President |
| Jenny Millar | Vice President and member Incidents Subcommittee |
| Brian Lindsay | Secretary |
| Patricia Byrne | Treasurer and Web team |
| Shireen Pitt | Secretary Incidents Subcommittee and Member Rules Subcommittee |
| Julie Pamplin | Web Team: Points and seed times |
| Phillip Lea | Supervisory Judge and member Rules Subcommittee |
| Steve Pitt | Chair of Development Subcommittee |
| Anne Coleman | Titles and Awards |
| Jennifer Crane | Web Team, Chair of Incidents Subcommittee and Promotion and Publicity |
| Frank Lux | Member Rules Subcommittee |
| Candice Leighton | Regional Representative, Queensland and member Development Subcommittee |
| Catherine Stroop | Regional Representative, South Australia and member Incidents Subcommittee |
| Carolyn Shrives | Regional Representative, ACT, Secretary/Chair of Rules Subcommittee and Public Officer of the AFA |
| Josh Ellen | Regional Representative, Victoria and member Development Subcommittee |
| Robyn Ferguson | Regional Representative, NSW |
| Jo Grant | Regional Representative, Tasmania |

Committee elections will be held shortly, all the best to the candidates who are facing a vote.

**How did the canine athletes go?**

Congratulations to all of our dogs and their handlers, from beginners getting it all together for the first time and achieving their Flyball Dog title all the way to the top achievers. We had a good year with dogs passing major milestones:

Flyball Master Champion 1000 points: 34 (2016: 28, 2015: 25)

Onyx 1300 points: 27 (2016: 22, 2015: 15)

Flyball Dog Grand Champion 2000 points: 7 (2016: 10, 2015: 14)

Flyball Dog Grand Champion Jeddah 3000 points: 6 (2016: 4, 2015: 4)

* 444B Tarlee, run by Jane Trezise
* 531B Milo, run by Christian Markham
* 544C Harry, run by Pat Byrne
* 1180A Mitch, run by Donald Brockett
* 1266B Ash (height dog), run by Ann Harlond
* 1347A Cookie Monster (height dog), run by Louise Stephen

Flyball Dog Grand Champion Ezri 4000 points: 2 (2016 – nil, 2015: 1).

* 535C Bundy, run by Brian Lindsay
* 844A Jackson (height dog), run by Amanda Pennecuik

All the best to you all for the year ahead and to the new Committee, and thank you for your attention,

Richard Mellon,

President Australian Flyball Association 2016/17.