THE AUSTRALIAN FLYBALL ASSOCIATION INC.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

 SATURDAY 18th August 2018

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

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

**Growth:**

Tracking the growth of the Association, over the year since the last AGM our records show that:

* Member numbers increased by nearly 20%, which is good growth.
* The number of Junior Members and Junior Associate Members also increased quite significantly, by over 20%. This is encouraging for the future of the sport, but we would still like to see more.
* Dog numbers were fairly stable.
* The number of affiliated clubs rose significantly to 50. Again, a good result.
* The number of sanctioned race meetings and the number of completed race meetings both went up by 10%.
* We had a small increase in the number of Judges and ticketed Timekeepers and a more substantial increase in the number of ticketed stewards.

**In brief:**

* We have not held a National Flyball Championships since the last AGM so there’s nothing to report there. Our next Nationals will be next month at Kiama on the NSW South Coast. It’s promising to be our largest yet, with 48 Regular and 5 Open teams entered (43 & 2 in 2017, 47 & 3 in 2016). We wish Wollongong Wonder Woofs all the best for a successful Race Meeting.
* The Committee invested a lot of time and effort over the year into researching a replacement system for our Signature lights. The Signatures have been extremely effective, but the earliest sets are getting quite old, we are starting to see some failures, and we are concerned about how long they can last. There’s also a need to acquire more sets as the sport grows. We have looked internationally as well as at local development and production, but as yet we have not found anything satisfactory.

**Subcommittee activity:**

Our new Development and Promotions Subcommittee has been busy developing and proposing a State Premiership Title as a vehicle to promote and raise the profile of Flyball in Australia. The National Committee voted to accept the Subcommittee’s recommendation and implement the State Premiership Title in all Flyball states and the ACT. Because the concept is brand new to Flyball, the Title will be initially implemented as a trial to allow you, the membership, to experience it first hand and provide feedback to help us fine tune the details before deciding on its final form.

The Rules Subcommittee has again dealt with concerns about the Rules. We are aware that changes to the Rules can be a burden to keep up with, and we try to ensure that there is good reason for it before deciding on a change.

There have been major advances in our online systems as the Web Team have continued to bring us into the digital age by developing and implementing new Electronic forms, which are now the only way to process:

* Club Affiliation
* Application for an Event
* Application for a Race Meeting
* Entry to race meets.

In addition to the new forms, Seed times are now automatically updated as the results of each race meet are uploaded.

This investment both in time and money has been with the primary purpose of making it easier for those of our members who happily take on administrative roles critical to us all being able to participate in the game we love. It brings with it an improvement in both the timeliness of the information we require to run a race meeting and the accuracy of that information. Specific benefits that flow from these changes include:

* Race meet organisers can now download entry forms in a spreadsheet format and sort them by seed times for ease of calculating the division splits
* Race meet organisers no longer have to check CRNs, as the system will only accept financial CRNs.
* Details can be copied and pasted straight to the time sheets, eliminating CRN typo errors
* No turnaround delay in updating Web seed times as results are received by the AFA.
* Reduced burden on both the Association’s volunteer officers and Race Meet organisers
* Reduction or elimination of chronic problems such as use of out-of-date forms and wrong CRNs.

The advances made by the Web Team are moving AFA management processes into the 21st Century. The process represents the biggest technological advance in the Association’s history. The advances have only come to fruition as a result of the forward thinking of those responsible for identifying and implementing the projects to get us to where we are today

And work has not stopped there. Testing is currently well advanced on a new system of automatic generation of timesheets including Handicap timesheets, which continue to cause headaches for Comp Secretaries.

**Issues:**

* Concern has been raised by the Dog Incidents Subcommittee on the number of green dogs who are presenting with Black Cards. The concern is that some dogs are being introduced too early to the highly stimulating environment of a competitive ring and are not sufficiently trained or focused to be able to handle it. The impact of chasing or aggression on the non-offending dog can be very significant and receiving a Black Card is distressing to the offending dog’s handler, and both teams are affected. Club co-ordinators and trainers, please make use of Training in the Ring and Mock Comps when available to test-drive your green dogs before putting them into a racing team.

**Rule Changes**

A Postal Ballot was held on nine On Trial rules changes, results to be announced later in the meeting.

While this is a significant number of changes, in all cases the Committee was satisfied that they were necessary to eliminate a contradiction or misunderstanding in the previous Rule.

**Thank you’s**

At the close of this Committee year, I would like to thank every member of the 2017/18 National Committee for their contribution. Some roles are big and more than enough for one person. Other members serve on one or more of the subcommittees to the main Committee, which are:

* The Web Team, some of the hardest workers in the Association, who identify and drive improvement projects and maintain the Web site without which the Association could not run;
* The Rules subcommittee, responsible for investigating issues with the Rules and recommending clarifications or updates where a problem is identified;
* The Incidents Subcommittee, who review incidents, basically Black cards;
* The Development Subcommittee, which is charged with identifying ways to promote our sport and build its profile.

Our Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Regional Reps and the members of the 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. As such they deserve our thanks.

The 2017/18 Committee members are:

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| Richard Mellon | President; member Rules Subcommittee |
| Jenny Millar | Vice President; member Incidents Subcommittee |
| Brian Lindsay | Secretary |
| Patricia Byrne | Treasurer; Web Team  |
| Shireen Pitt | General Committee; Secretary Incidents Subcommittee; Member Rules Subcommittee |
| Julie Pamplin | General Committee; Web Team |
| Jennifer Crane | General Committee; Web Team: Points and seed times |
| Frank Lux | General Committee; Chair Rules Subcommittee; member Development Subcommittee |
| Steve Pitt | General Committee; Chair Development Subcommittee |
| Leah Dutch | General Committee; member Development Subcommittee  |
| Aline Sinclair | General Committee; member Incidents Subcommittee |
| Candice Leighton | Regional Representative, Queensland |
| Martin Watt | Regional Representative, South Australia; Chair Incidents Subcommittee |
| Carolyn Shrives | Regional Representative, ACT; Public Officer of the AFA |
| Josh Ellen | Regional Representative, Victoria; member Incidents Subcommittee; member Development Subcommittee |
| Louise Stephen | Regional Representative, NSW, member Rules Subcommittee |
| Helen Strong | Regional Representative, Tasmania; member Development Subcommittee |

I’d like to make special mention of two people not on Committee who still contribute their time and expertise: Phil Lea (member Rules Subcommittee) and Anne Coleman (Titles and Awards).

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

**And finally, how did the dogs go?**

And finally, 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, but before I announce them, I’d like to point something out. The list was based on points totals as at 30th June. At that time, a number of dogs were close to getting their next major title and may have achieved it between then and now. So apologies to anyone who was looking forward to an announcement tonight that doesn’t come, but rest assured, we will catch up with you next year.

Flyball Master Champion 1000 points: 24 (2017: 34, 2016: 28)

Onyx 1300 points: 20 (2017: 27, 2016: 22)

Flyball Dog Grand Champion 2000 points: 6 (2017: 7, 2016: 10)

Flyball Dog Grand Champion Jeddah 3000 points: 3 (2017: 6, 2016: 4)

* 1347B Blizzard, run by Louise Stephen
* 1104B Tommy, run by Kathryn Heber
* 419B Spunky, run by Kerry Andrew

Flyball Dog Grand Champion Ezri 4000 points: 1 (2017: 2; 2016: none).

* 854B Banjo, run by Karen Bland

In closing, I’d like to wish all the best to all Members, Officials and the new Committee for the year ahead, and thank you for your attention tonight,

Richard Mellon,

President Australian Flyball Association 2017/18.