

Meeting notes from the 2008 August meeting of the GA Division Board:

There was no secretary's report as Kathleen Ferrara was not present.

There was no report from the Vice Chair as Gene Gettler was not present.

Treasurer:

Tournament Committee Chair:

The tournament committee meeting is also today and the schedule will be set and distributed as soon as possible.

Compensation for Division run Tournaments: We discussed and voted to decide on a set policy for compensating host clubs for Division tournaments (JO qualifiers, Divisional qualifiers etc.)

The question is what should the standard compensation be for a Division run tournament? In the past there was a straight split of the proceeds according to the bid made by the individual club. The problem is that expenses for each tournament are increasing. Bringing in referees and armorers is expensive in the current high gas climate. The concern is that after the split with the club, the Division could potentially lose money.

Pete made a motion to make the policy that the division would have take out the necessary expenses first then split the rest of the proceeds 60% to the clubs and 40% to the Division with a minimum \$300 guarantee for the club.

There were no seconds. During discussion, Rudy pointed out that the need for the \$300 guarantee did not exist, and that \$300 did not make it worth running a large tournament over a weekend.

Rudy made a motion that the policy be that the division would take out the necessary expenses and split the rest of the proceeds 60% to the clubs and 40% to the division.

Pete seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Old Business: none

New Business:

The division championships schedule:

There is a desire for more saber and wheelchair events. Stuart pointed out that the saber events are routinely offered and are usually canceled because there are too few entrants. We should continue to offer them, but they will probably be canceled.

DJ said that the USFA passed a motion last year that stated that in a mixed able/wheelchair competition, anyone can obtain a wheelchair rating.

Pete pointed out that the problem was having an available apparatus. Shepherd is no longer lending their apparatus out.

Rudy asked which clubs have wheelchair fencers. Gary said that he had had an interested newcomer, and the rest of them are at Shepherd.

DJ said that the sport of wheelchair fencing was dying out nationwide because the existing fencers were retiring. She said that the grass roots training and developing of new fencers is critical. She also admitted that scheduling tournaments was extremely difficult because there were so few apparatus available for use. She is trying to put together a deal to bring 20 new wheelchair apparatus into the USA from abroad. This will triple the existing numbers.

Stuart asked if the division was serious about promoting wheelchair fencing. All agreed that it was. Stuart then pointed out that if the division was serious, it should consider purchasing an apparatus for use in tournaments.

Rudy pointed out that training could happen without an apparatus, and until there was a real demand, it was not necessary to invest in equipment.

Gary pointed out that the real problem was that most people had no idea that wheelchair fencing even existed

Frank pointed out that he had seen local tournaments where assistants in masks held folding chairs and/or wheelchairs steady. There was a general cry about liability issues by many people on that.

Rudy pointed out that the issue was discussed as much as we need it to be, and that coaches should encourage people to learn it as a way to get the word out and create a demand.

Referee training:

The need for trained referees in the division was discussed a great deal last year. Many of our better referees in the division are not rated.

Rudy pointed out that his experience showed that most clubs did not want to pay extra for trained referees, which continues to stunt the process of creating a base of trained referees through clinics etc.

Pete pointed out that if the division seriously wanted to get a training program going, they should be prepared to subsidize it. He recommended having one rated referee attend each tournament and be paid for by the division. This trained ref could then help train other refs at the tournament.

Rudy pointed out that the trained refs would be much too busy to do any training. Pete suggested that they only be there in the capacity of overseeing and teaching. Not actually refereeing.

Stuart asked if we were talking about all tournaments or just the division ones. Pete said that there should be a choice of various regional tournaments around the state so that locals in each region could be trained.

Gary expressed concern about complaints. People might begin to complain because there would be a training strip with better refereeing, and non-training strips.

DJ pointed out that there were no seriously rated referees in the area, so we are looking at a lot of gas money or airfare. Rudy said that Kara Sabin is in North Carolina which isn't far.

DJ also pointed out that most highly rated refs had busy schedules that filled up quickly and it would be difficult to fill this many dates.

Frank expressed a view that this might be better tabled and sent out to committee to work out the details.

DJ made a motion that a committee be formed to explore ways to have referee trainers come to the division and train interested members. Rudy seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Rudy asked who would be on the committee. Kathy Vail offered to be a member, but not the chair. There were no other volunteers. Rudy recommended that Gene appoint a committee as the Vice Chair, pointing out that his job made him a de facto member of committees anyway.

Rudy made a motion to always have this committee comprised of the Vice Chair, the Tournament Director, and one other volunteer. Gary seconded the motion. The motion passed.

This committee is officially comprised of Stuart, Gene and Kathy Vail. Frank said that he would discuss this with Gene.

The upcoming NAC in Atlanta:

Gary announced that the upcoming February 26th – March 2nd NAC would be held here in Atlanta. He asked Christine Simmons if the USFA wanted an LOC. She said yes and immediately sent him a contract.

Gary said that he had done a NAC as a club and through the division and said that it is difficult for clubs to do it alone. He asked if the division was interested in taking it on with himself and Kathleen as chairs.

DJ said she was firmly against the division taking it on because of the difficulty of getting the necessary volunteer force. She said that our experience was that our fencers and their families did not come forward and she would hate for the division to look bad. She pointed out that when we did Nationals, we had to have volunteers from Cheyenne Fencing Club help us out.

Gary said that he thought we had done well at the job before, and this was borne out by the fact that Christine was immediately willing to give us the contract.

Rudy said that the real problem was the set up and tear down days which happened during work and school hours. Gary said that the USFA was willing to hire staff from the Georgia World Congress Center to do the work. This would mean that the compensation for us would be \$1000 instead of \$1500.

DJ asked if \$1000 was even worth it.

Gary argued that it was good for the fencers in the division to get involved.

DJ also pointed out that the real problem with the World Congress center was the upstairs registration which required more runners and made their job critical. She reiterated that in her opinion the division simply didn't have the necessary work force to do a good job.

Rudy asked where the USFA was getting the money to pay, citing the example of an LOC who actually had to start a lawsuit to get paid.

The bottom line is that the division just doesn't think it can do a good job at this time.

Frank called for any new business. As there was none, Kathy Vail made a motion to adjourn. DJ seconded. The motion passed.