



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF 2019

Date: Saturday 15 June 2019
Time: 13:00
Location: UK9 Dog Sports Centre, Melbourne Road, Lount, Leicestershire, LE65 1RS

MINUTES

1. President's Opening and Welcome

President welcomed everyone and thanked them for travelling to be there in person.

2. Apologies

Apologies received from: Mark Squires, Shelly Lawrence, Rob Millan, Ellyn Freitas Camacho, Mary Carter, Ashleigh Dean, Bethan Fitzgerald, Ems Hammersley, Matt Hammersley, Ross Proctor, Anna Williams, Natasha Susnik, Kim Mazzucca and Leon Ward.

3. Treasurer's Report

- 3.1.** VP for Finance reported that when Federation started we were processing £900 a year and now we are nearer to £20,000.
- 3.2.** This year the Profit & Loss Account was accompanied by a breakdown from the bank account and the PayPal account.
- 3.3.** Team kit was queried and VP for Finance reported that what we bought has been sold on with the exception of a few jackets which were sold at the AGM.
- 3.4.** Late payments were queried and members were advised that these were late invoices from last financial year.
- 3.5.** Only payment outstanding from this financial year was the SDAS payment for Eagle Brae (£1500).
- 3.6.** Agreed for next set of financial reports to be sent out to members at the same time as the AGM Agenda and supporting documentation.
- 3.7.** President proposed for accounts to go through and member Vince King seconded.

4. President's Report

- 4.1.** "I'd like to firstly welcome everyone to the 2018/19 season AGM, it's great to see so many people here. As you're all aware, it's been a turbulent 12 months, but we really think that things are on the up. I can't comment much on the season pre-December as I wasn't part of the decision processes and had no say over the actions that the BSSF took until that point. However, I can tell you about everything the BSSF and its members have achieved since that date."
- 4.2.** "Initially there were some changes to the Council, but I'm confident I've got a strong team behind me and we're looking forward to the future and continuing with how things have gone so far. We have heard many of your ideas and suggestions over the months/years and we've tried to change what we can in the short time we've been in control."



- 4.3. “We’ve now got clothing accessible to all with CrazyDog and this means that anyone is able to buy kit at any time and promote our hobby all year round, as well as feeling part of a community. We have also arranged a deal with Non-stop for official Team GB kit, please have a look at our sample at the end of the AGM if you haven’t yet seen it.”
- 4.4. “Seven clubs have become affiliated so far; they had to make no changes to the way they currently run, just ensure that they have insurance (or that all their members have 3rd party liability), a structure of who’s in charge and then send through membership quantities. This has pushed up the ever-growing total to 1000 members and we hope for at least double that next year.”
- 4.5. “The website was previously very dated and this has been amended and hopefully you’ll all agree that it looks really smart now. It’s allowed us to remove MemberMojo for membership and BookItZone for events, both of which had fees associated, saving us money in the long run to better spend on growing the sport.”
- 4.6. “We’ve also changed the fees for entries; multiple classes are now at a discounted price and the junior fee has been brought right down, making attending the national races more manageable.”
- 4.7. “Internationally, we’ve had another brilliant year. We were able to send representatives to the ICF World Championships in Poland, IFSS Dryland Championships in Sweden, and then the IFSS On-Snow Championships in France. We had a number of people in podium positions and we are proud of every single person that made the effort to represent their country and give it their all – thank you.”
- 4.8. “Looking to the future, we’ve already got the support of a number of organisations. Take2Events photography will be our official photographers for the season and we’re looking forward to seeing Gary at each of our events where you can buy pictures on site. Jason and the team from Non-stop will be providing our Team GB kit for international races and you can continue to receive your 15% online. Finally, we’ll once again have the backing from CSJ who we can’t thank enough for their on-going support with prizes and funding for timing equipment.”
- 4.9. “Our aim next year is to once again represent the country positively internationally, but really try to grow the sport. We’ve been working hard to increase participation, member numbers and club affiliation.”
- 4.10. “We now need all BSSF members and wider participants to actually get behind us. It’s demoralising and hard to strive for improvements when some people are very stuck in the past; we can’t change what has already been, but we can influence the future. There is often never-ending negativity on our social media pages; this needs to stop. When we’re applying for sponsorship or advertising, these non-dog sport organisations look at our Facebook page and they just see complaints, arguing and bad attitudes and don’t take us seriously. There are a number of avenues to contact us; be it via Facebook messenger, or each Council member has a personal email address which can be found on the website – please use this. This attitude is also putting off new members (and old). It’s very hard for people to take the steps to join up or attend races if they think we’re not welcoming. We want next season to be really positive; there’s a real possibility of being able to apply for Official Recognition if we hit the numbers required. This would mean the sport growing further, better advertising of the disciplines, funding for athletes and it would open a number of doorways.”



- 4.11. “The IFSS is meeting this month with the Olympic Committee and it would be great if we could be recognised in the UK and actually create a pathway to the Olympics if the IFSS is successful. Not only is this going to be a benefit to the top performers, but will make a difference to the overall attitude of ‘normal people’. As a small example, wouldn’t it be great if people didn’t suggest we’re cheating each time we run past them with a dog – we’d finally be taken seriously!”
- 4.12. 1650 members needed for apply for being recognised with UK Sport - currently around 1100.
- 4.13. Suggestions from the members for increasing numbers for Official recognition:
- Facebook groups to become official groups
 - Canicross groups
 - Permitted areas to become clubs
 - Dog owners who want to support our sports but not participate
 - Lower insurance for supporter members (£10 membership / £20 race license) or free/£1/£5 membership and £30 race license
 - Regional reps - ask members to step up & help
 - ICF rules to combine with BSSF local rules to cater for canicross
 - Partnership with forestry
 - DogsTrust offers £50 membership with insurance
 - Trevor Cooper Dog Law, SOS, membership £60 a year for all costs to be covered
 - Chicken & egg - we need numbers, become a sport, then benefits
 - Local dog shows for demonstrations/stands
 - Crufts next year a possibility, already looking at costs, demonstration would be fab but even just a stand, looking for members for demos
 - EGM to take place at the first race or via a secure online voting system to vote on membership/race license

5. Election of Officers

- 5.1. The President asked the audience if they would be happy to vote by a show of hands for the election of Officers, to reduce time counting paper votes, before continuing with the AGM. All were in agreement. All positions were successfully filled with the applicants who had applied:
- President – Jambo Smith
 - VP for Development – Jess Horth
 - VP for Sport – Mark Squires
 - Executive Director – Jenn Davis
 - Mono Sports Representative – Robert Pidgeon
 - Team Sports Representative – Ben Peters
- 5.2. The VP for Finance is still serving his term and remains in post
- 5.3. The Website Support is part of the Sub-Committee and will be voted in by the Council members.

(Post AGM) – Council voted in Jamie Davis as Website Support

6. ICF Report

- 6.1. The ICF Report by VP for Development was issued on Facebook before the AGM.
- 6.2. Comment was made that no mono sport rep at ICF – VP for Development explained that they were able to represent members as they only compete in mono sports. Furthermore, the Mono Sports Rep was unavailable to attend that weekend.
- 6.3. How many starts at race - we asked for 70, 82 at pre-registration, 65 slots given, 29 previously years, 3rd highest number of starts, didn't get list of how many starts each country got, max 800 starts.
- 6.4. This year the ICF want to open to all competitors, regardless of ranking.
- 6.5. One discipline per entrant at the start of the booking process, second entry to be looked at ranking & previous performance
- 6.6. Would it be possible to have unwanted starts from other countries - probably will go to Belgium
- 6.7. Distance from stake-out & start 1.5km - suggestion for shuttle buses.
- 6.8. No-one allowed on trail beforehand, auto disqualification, private land with barriers
- 6.9. No country "areas" - just hope enough space for everyone to be together
- 6.10. Team leader - to be voted in, UK now part of the technical committee (needs to be separate from team leader & team leader cannot race)
- 6.11. VP for Development is applying for technical committee
- 6.12. Paying expenses for team leader – to be confirmed by council
- 6.13. Mass start has been removed
- 6.14. Keeping the relay - BSSF will pay initially for 3 teams which will be reimbursed once relay competitors are finalised.

7. IFSS Dryland WCh 2019

- 7.1. Vet classes now removed
- 7.2. Will take place in Sweden due to contract not being signed by Latvia
- 7.3. Vote of no confidence for current IFSS council will take place via email and will not hold AGM
- 7.4. The IFSS President has explained that there is no process in place following a vote of no confidence. Therefore there is no necessity for any IFSS Council members to step down.
- 7.5. AGM will be in USA next year
- 7.6. No word about Master Championship since first announcement
- 7.7. IFSS want numbers to go down, bigger stake-out areas for dog health, don't want to extend by days, venues cannot cater for numbers
- 7.8. Italy are looking at a legal route and Sport Accord to get involved
- 7.9. BSSF have merged Vet with normal classes and points re-adjusted. These are available for viewing at the AGM.
- 7.10. Invites for the IFSS will be sent out to ranking members this upcoming week

8. Appendix A - Social Media Policy

No comments were made and all attendees agreed happy with document, which is now fully implemented and available online.

9. Appendix B - Review of Constitution

- 9.1. For the amendment of the spelling of sled dog it was confirmed that it would remain as “sleddog” when un-abbreviating BSSF.
- 9.2. Agreed to re-word the “vision” and vote on the amended version:
“Working together to be the National Governing Body for all sled dog sports in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. To promote, develop and celebrate sled dog sports by building grass root foundations, providing quality racing opportunities and supporting national team endeavours underpinned with a strong commitment to welfare and integrity.”
- 9.3. Agreed to re-word the “maintaining the standard of the sport” and vote on the amended version:
“Maintaining the standard of the sport in Great Britain and Northern Ireland by aiming to align to the policies and guidelines as outlined by the IFSS (and ICF where appropriate).”
- 9.4. (1.c) amended to:
“Inform and educate fellow members in the proper care and handling of sled dog(s) to ensure their humane treatment and welfare.”
- 9.5. (3.d) – Request for age categories for IFSS to be compared to ICF
- 9.6. (3.e) amended to:
“A young person under the age of 19 and over the age of 7 is eligible for membership at a subscription of £10. Junior are ineligible to vote at meetings.”
- 9.7. (3.f) to be swapped around with point (3.e) so in a more logical order. Point made by a member for the parent/guardian waiver to include extra information about young person’s racing. Suggestion made for young persons to be a minimum of 8 years old on the date of the race.
- 9.8. (5.b) – A point was made that all sponsors should be welcome – all agreed.
- 9.9. (5.c) – It was queried if there was a “minimum discount” for vendors to offer. Council confirmed that this was all discussed at length with the vendors at the opening business meeting.
- 9.10. (6.b) – As discussed with the Treasurer’s Report, the financial records will be sent with the AGM at least 6 weeks before the meeting along with the rest of the supporting documentation.
- 9.11. (6.i) – A member asked for consistency when referring to either “Council” or “Committee” in documentation.
- 9.12. (7.j) – Request was made for the new council NDA to include a caveat about after leaving post.
- 9.13. (11.b) – The following to be added to the end of this point:
““However the BSSF will issue a brief press release following the guidelines of GDPR.”
- 9.14. (13) amended to:
“In the event of a grievance/dispute or disagreement, this needs to be reported as soon as possible, and no later than 6 months after the event. A clear, detailed description of the complaint along with any related documents or emails must be submitted together. Complaints will be sent directly to the Executive Director in the first instance.
The Executive Director will:
- *Acknowledge receipt of the complaint via email within 24 hours with a reference number for future correspondence;*
 - *Outline action to be taken;*
 - *Carry out an investigation and where necessary involve relevant members or personnel;*
 - *Reply within 21 days with the findings as to whether the complaint was justified.”*



10. Appendix C - BSSF Race Rules (1-27)

- 10.1.** (2) – discussion around minimum number of a class to run, both sides gave their comments.
- 10.2.** (5) amended to:
"The competitor should not be wearing shoes that could be dangerous for dogs. Shoes with hardened spikes or studs of 1mm height maximum are not allowed."
- 10.3.** (10) amended to:
"All dogs at race sites must be vaccinated initially against Hepatitis, Distemper, Parvovirus, and Leptospirosis. It is highly recommended to also vaccinate against non-life threatening diseases such as kennel cough to prevent highly populated areas of dogs becoming a chronic problem."
- 10.4.** (14) - Opinions very split, Lead dogs should be trained enough, dogs can still get tired and forget the course, given the choice to walk dogs around course if you wanted, horses allowed to see their jumps.
- 10.5.** (15) – Asked how the BSSF can prove if diseases are cleared, advised that we were unable to prove but we can only try to enforce this rule and hope that everyone follows for safety and welfare of all dogs on race sites.
- 10.6.** (16) – Comment was made that the decision of being unfit should be made by the Race Marshall only.
- 10.7.** (17) – Council advised that evidence of puppy ages can be asked for if age is in question.
- 10.8.** (19) – Question was asked what the difference was between wet and dry batteries, advised that most new batteries were not wet acid.
- 10.9.** (21) amended to:
"Starting position and time for each team shall be determined by the individual race organiser"
- 10.10.** (28) new rule agreed by all in attendance:
"Whelping bitches should not be taken to race sites and be given adequate time to recover before re-starting training."

11. Appendix D - Proposals (1-10)

- 11.1.** (1) Proposal amended to - Set up a "welfare sub-committee" to draw up a policy together and then welfare officer(s) to be selected/voted from those involved.
Members already volunteered to get it started: Vicki Pullin, Emily Thomas and Chantelle Goddard-Jones. Additional members will be advertised for via Facebook.
- 11.2.** (2) BSSF Council expressed an interest in seeing the results of NATB's sample data of a difference grading system at the next AGM. Members expressed concerns that temperatures, weather, trail conditions, trail lengths could all affect results. A point was made that the BSSF should not be promoting a "everyone wins" environment. Another point was made about concerns over dog welfare.
- 11.3.** (3) Proposal removed as Non-Stop already in place as the Team GB Clothing sponsor/provider and CrazyDog to provide other "BSSF" branded clothing and goods.
- 11.4.** (4) Points were discussed around affiliated clubs should have their photographs on the BSSF website and that all photographs were promoting the sport.
- 11.5.** (5) Proposal removed as TakeTwo Event already agreed to attend all future BSSF events to take and sell photographs.
- 11.6.** (6) Proposal removed as this is already in place.
- 11.7.** (7) Proposal removed as this was already discussed in new race rule 9.
- 11.8.** (8) It was queried if the BSSF really wanted to restrict the number of classes in case anything changed in the future. It was advised that it could be re-visited if required.



11.9. (9.a) amended to:

"Wheeled class for 8-12 (rig, scooter or bike) with an accompanying adult"

Concerns made again about potentially a 6 year old going out. Please see comments in minutes point (9.7).

11.10.(10) amended to:

"To include a non-IFSS 2-dog Bikejor Class and a 2-dog Canicross Class at the non-Championship events this next race season which will be evaluated at the AGM whether to include in the following year's Championship Races"

12. Club Affiliation

Already discussed in the President's report.

13. Any Other Business

No points were made.

14. President's Closing Remarks

President thanked everyone for a successful AGM and closed the meeting. As an additional note, he advised that voting results would be sent to members in emails by end of Monday 17th June and the minutes will be sent out the following weekend.