

June 3, 2007

Minutes of the Green Mountain Division annual meeting

Members present:

Dan Crocket, Don Selby, Ray Schuppe, Leslie Damon, Lisa Calitri, Tim Dartt, Joe Flynn, Melly Flynn, and a little later, Viveka Fox, Gretchen Dartt, Deb Hogan, Doug Woos, Ben Hogan, and Roland Radius

1. President's report

We had a good year. The youth series was successful. Our fencers represented the state well on the national and international level. We have an upcoming group of young fencers who will be aging into the tournament circuit next year, and the adult population continues to be a strong part of the fencing scene.

Discussion: Don pointed out our USFA membership numbers are down. However, youth tournaments don't reflect USFA memberships, and our youth tournament series encouraged a greater turnout there. We are trying to encourage new clubs to be more actively involved in the tournament circuit. Gene Gyori has started a Monday night fence for fun opportunity with the Rutland Recreation Dept. and is inviting anyone interested to join them. We haven't traveled as much this year to out of state tournaments and haven't had as great a number of out of state fencers joining us. Ray and Tim will work on the possibility of a web blog with our website to create a way for VT fencers to connect to go to out of state tournaments and keep each other posted on fencing opportunities elsewhere. As we travel, we can get the word out about our upcoming tournaments. We also considered using AskFred for tournament registrations. Dan will look into this for at least qualifier events. We voted to accept the president's report.

2. No Vice-president's report

3. Treasurer's report

Our overall budget reflected less income this year and it was notable that our entry fees were down in particular. Factors that could have influenced this were gas prices affecting travel more seriously, the fact that we had fewer out of state competitors this year, and that venue costs were considerably higher.

Discussion: We considered the possibility of raising entry fees, but wondered how this would affect fencers who enter multiple events or who have more than one family member fencing. Family rates and flat rates for entry were considered. Don and Ray will analyze why there is a difference in income and present a proposal by Aug. 31, so that adequate time is available if changes need to be made before the first tournament in the fall. Tim also pointed out that there will be no fees for the cost of the website next year.

We discussed what amounts we would have available for grants and scholarships next year and consensus was reached that \$1500 would be the designated amount.

We voted to accept the treasurer's report.

4. Secretary's report

Thanks to everyone who stepped into run tournaments, and correspond with the USFA for me, and especially Dan Crocket for taking over the point standings and single-handedly organizing many of the tournaments this year. This division is unique in its cooperative effort, and I want to thank all of you who have given many hours of your time to promote fencing throughout Vermont.

We had a good year of tournaments with many new faces and venues picking up where other venues became unavailable.

Two points I'd like to raise for discussion:

Ways to better present the point standings, and the use of coupons.

Discussion: Our current method of tabulating points only reflects the totals after each tournament and can leave room for error after a long, tiring day of running a tournament. We've been vigilant about this, but need a better system. Dan has developed a new spreadsheet that shows the total of each tournament separately with seasonal totals in a final column. Leslie requested a clear designation of vet, rookie, and youth status. Dan has that also factored into the new spreadsheet. We will adopt this new format with the upcoming season.

Dan asked us to consider raising the point totals to 20 for the winner of a B

tournament and 24 to the winner of an A. Don made the motion that this is a great idea, and that we should consider it for one year to see what impact it will have, and raise it for a vote next year. The motion was accepted.

Moved the coupon discussion to a separate item later in the agenda.

We voted to accept the secretary's report.

5. Review of the tournament schedule for 2007-2008.

Revisions were made to reflect requests from various clubs and we are waiting for confirmation from other clubs concerning the availability of venues. Some dates also need to be confirmed.

6. Senior Sectionals to be held in Vermont in May 2008:

Dan will work on securing UVM as a venue. A committee was formed of Viveka, Don, Dan, Melly, and Ruth Parker as the initial group to get things started for organizing. We look forward to working with Wayne Jenness who ran an excellent tournament this year at Sectionals.

7. Coupons

Melly reviewed the history of the use of coupons to encourage more volunteerism on the part of youth fencers and to reward those volunteers who went above and beyond the norm. This worked very well when there were a limited number of clubs. Now that we have grown as a division, we have the recurrent problem that smaller clubs and clubs hosting tournaments at the end of the season tend to lose financially. This is especially true with clubs that have more expensive venues. Melly proposed eliminating the coupon system in trade for paying cash for jobs a club cannot provide on its own, such as referees or armory. The current fee schedule is \$10 for a half day and \$20 for a full day. For those who currently have coupons in hand, we could offer a grace period to phase the coupons out.

This generated a lot of discussion with Viveka pointing out that coupons encouraged fencers to return for more events or tournaments, whereas cash would not necessarily go back into fencing. Several people pointed out the difficulty of accounting for coupons in the tournament reports and whether to

treat them as income or expense. The system was confusing and inconsistent. Smaller clubs with fewer experienced refs ended up with greater expenses whether the cost came in the form of cash or coupons. There also was an inconsistent standard of who got coupons.

Dan has developed a spreadsheet program that would replace the current tournament report with fill-in-the-blank components that would simplify and consistently account for income/expense and coupons in or out.

A motion was made to continue the use of coupons, using Dan's new system and revisit this system next year. The motion was accepted.

Discussion came up that perhaps skilled referees, armorers, and meet managers would get one rate of pay and trainees another. There was no decision made about this. Viveka volunteered to develop a standardized system for who gets coupons.

8. Division Motto

Doug Woos and Ben Hogan were invited to present their suggestion of changing the division motto to "Welcome to the Jungle", since we are no longer the USFA's newest division. Discussion was made as to how this might be perceived by those who do not know our particular sense of humor and whether jungle represented the Green Mountain State. A few alternatives were proposed. A motion was made and accepted that we would have this motto for T-shirts and that we would continue to work on a new motto to post on the website.

9. There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made and accepted to adjourn.