

Green Mountain Division 2008 Annual Meeting Minutes

June 1, 2008

Members present: *Dan Crocket, Wyatt Moreton, *Jason Evans, Adam Watson, *Viveka Fox, Pete Selby, *Ray Schuppe, Don Selby, * Leslie Damon, *Kelly Moreton, Deb Hogan, Chris Hogan, Ben Hogan (*voting members)

Meeting began at approximately 1:20 p.m.

1. On-line polling for election of GMD officers

Thirty two people participated in the on-line polling system for GMD officer elections. Of these 32, five were from anonymous e-mail addresses which provided no way to check if they were (or weren't) eligible voters. It was decided to include those votes in the results.

The election results were Viveka Fox for president (1st term of new tenure), Jason Evans for vice-president (1st term), Kelly Moreton for secretary (2nd consecutive term), Ray Schuppe for treasurer (2nd consecutive term).

Motion made to accept these polling results. Motion passed unanimously.

Suggestion was made that GMD should mention on-line polling in the by-laws if we are to continue to use it for future elections.

2. Improving Communication within the Division

Besides the obvious benefits of improving communication within the Division, it is also hoped that improved communication will enhance member participation within the Division.

Kelly will make it a priority this next fencing season to compile and maintain a master e-mail list of GMD members. Suggestion was made that we buy this list from the USFA, which will be looked into. If that option is not available, we will need a volunteer at each tournament this upcoming season to ask fencers for their e-mail address before they leave the registration table.

Along the lines of better communication, the webmaster will be working to change the current webpage entitled Division Officers to a new and improved page entitled Division Business. This project is already in the works and will be where annual meeting minutes will be posted, election announcements, etc. Suggestions were made regarding the use of the master e-mail list, once compiled, so that it would be reserved for official Division business only.

3. Division officers' roles, including their descriptions within the GMD by-laws

The following notes, from Viveka's meeting agenda summarized the history of the roles of the GMD officers.

As specified in our bylaws: The duty of the President is to chair meetings of the E.C. and general membership, to oversee management of the Division, to delegate responsibilities and to help the other officers fulfill their duties as needed.

The duty of the Vice-President is to help clubs and meet managers organize tournaments, to ensure compliance with USFA rules and requirements regarding competitions, and to report to the USFA and/or North Atlantic Section ratings changes, qualifiers, etc. that happen at Division tournaments.

The duty of the Secretary is to facilitate two-way communication between the E.C. and the general membership, including maintaining a Division website and e-mail list to keep the members up to date on the Division's activities and business, forwarding proposals and petitions to the E.C., and editing the Division Newsletter.

The duty of the Treasurer is to keep the Division's books, manage its bank account, inventory and order materiel as needed, and oversee the maintenance of its equipment.

Viveka's observations of 6 years of actual practice:

The president has chaired meetings, delegated and managed as described above. He/she also has taken on pretty much whatever needs to be done that nobody else is doing.

The vice president has not done a lot in an official capacity (although the person filling the role may be active in hosting tournaments, reffing, meet managing etc.)

The secretary has often taken responsibility for communication with the USFA (reporting rating changes, qualifiers, etc), but sometimes the pres or host club meet manager takes care of it. She has not been able to communicate easily with the general membership due to a lack of a master e-mail list (our current e-mail list requires voluntary sign up and only reaches a small portion of the membership). The master e-mail list should enable her to fill that role much better. We have relied on our website to fill the Newsletter function. The website is not managed by the secretary, who may not have the necessary computer skills. We have a volunteer (not elected) webmaster whose job is to aid the officers in maintaining the website. This works well except at times when the webmaster is too busy to attend to our website. I recommend the webmaster train one or two assistants to do website updates when he is busy.

The treasurer has kept the books and ordered supplies as described above. He has not taken primary responsibility for equipment maintenance. That has been done by whatever club uses the equipment on a daily basis or stores it for the division.

Discussion followed about many specific jobs, some not specified in these by-law job descriptions: Champlain Cup points, processing new memberships, armory responsibilities, money making decisions, etc. It was suggested that by refining the by-laws to accurately and fully describe the roles of each Division officer that it would help those officers who are newly elected to more quickly jump into their roles and fulfill their responsibilities. Perhaps the more complete job descriptions may also convince more of the many capable GMD members that they could easily fulfill these roles; encouraging new folks to volunteer for these positions.

Motion was made to form a committee of three or four GMD members to review and revise the current by-laws to accurately and fully describe the roles of the four Division officers and to have this proposed revision available for review before the next fencing season is over. Kelly volunteered to head this committee, Viveka volunteered to participate in the committee. The committee will begin work in September, via e-mail, and will welcome the input of all GMD members.

Motion passed unanimously.

4. Treasurer's Report

Ray gave a detailed report of the GMD's money issues. Cutting tournament costs and increasing revenue are the recommendations. Related topics of discussion included: rising venue costs and their effect on the ability of tournaments to produce income. Continuing to locate free or low-cost venues that are suitable for fencing tournaments is a priority for all clubs. Custom medals have been researched but are not currently economically feasible. The eventual transfer of ownership of fencing equipment from GMD to clubs was also commented on.

Motion was made to increase tournament fees to \$20 for a first event and \$10 for an additional event for any fencer who is not preregistered on AskFred five days in advance of the tournament. The fees for those fencers who preregister will remain \$10 for a first event and \$5 for an additional event. Discussion about the benefits of preregistration for meet managers when planning for refs and other tournament details. Discussion also followed regarding the effect of fee increases on college students, who have not generally used the preregistration discounts.

Motion passed.

5. Tournament Reports - our accounting method and proposed modifications

Much discussion has occurred these last weeks regarding the fact that two different tournament accounting methods were used this fencing season. This discussion resulted in an examination and proposal of an improved system which addresses some of the concerns of awarding and collecting GMD coupons. Viveka turned Ray's newly revised tournament report spreadsheet into a paper friendly template that incorporates the new suggestions. Suggestion was made that we again clarify that coupons are only awarded to 'skilled' labor: refs, armorers, Fencing Time operators, meet managers; and that the rate is \$10 for half day and \$20 for full day.

Motion was made that we accept Viveka's proposed Tournament Report Form and that it be used exclusively by all GMD clubs.

Motion passed, with one abstention.

Suggestion was made that we thoroughly evaluate the use of this new form at the next annual meeting.

6. Adjustment to Champlain Cup point system

Summary was given of how we award Champlain Cup bonus points. Champlain Cup points are designed for several outcomes: to encourage season long participation in GMD tournaments, to encourage novice fencers to participate in challenging tournaments and to reward skilled fencers for winning difficult events. Proposal is that we give more bonus points for stronger open events now that the GMD finds itself hosting these stronger events on occasion.

The proposed new points system gives

32 bonus points in A3 or B3 events

24 bonus points in A2, B2 or C3 events

20 bonus points in B1 events

16 bonus points in C1 or C2 events

12 bonus points in D1 events

6 bonus points in E1 events

The above bonus points apply to Unrestricted Mixed Open events only. Also, bonus points will be given to the top 80% of the finishers only.

There are no changes to the current bonus points for any restricted events (GMD qualifiers, D-under, E-under, U events, Novice/beginner, age-specific, gender-specific, etc.)

Motion was made to accept these revisions to the Champlain Cup point system for Unrestricted Mixed Opens.

Motion passed unanimously.

Announcement was made that AskFred will take on the calculation of our Champlain Cup points beginning next season. Jason will work with AskFred over the summer to get this system in place.

7. 2008-09 Competition Calendar

Fourteen weekends of competition are proposed for next season's calendar. As not every club was represented at the annual meeting, the calendar was not finalized. Proposals were made and some discussion occurred regarding cost of venues. The Charlotte school has significantly increased its charges. The Middlebury town gym is the most affordable venue now in Middlebury. UVM tennis courts are free but they are difficult to schedule. WSC would like to host youth events. MAF will not be hosting any events next season. Perhaps the annual ref. course could be moved to the Upper Valley area in order to increase participation and encourage more GMD refs. A Yoga for Fencers workshop with the theme of "Performing under Pressure" was proposed for Development Day. Each club will be contacted regarding the proposed schedule. Once approved, it will be posted on the website. Viveka encourages all clubs to get their venues confirmed as soon as possible.

8. Open Discussion

Kelly commented briefly that last year's Development Day successfully trained two competent meet manager/registration table volunteers who jumped right into this season yet that more GMD members still need to be encouraged to help out at the registration table. Usually, a third person can be used at the registration table to check USFA memberships or to help in some way and folks should feel free to ask if they can help. And, if someone volunteers to help, don't say no. Use the opportunity to teach them how the computer/registration table is run. We need to cultivate more competent meet manager types. Along those lines, she suggested that each Club Rep. on the Executive Committee be required to become competent in running Fencing Time and running the registration table. Comment was made that the current by-laws actually address this issue and state that any club hosting a tournament is supposed to supply a meet manager, or trainee.

Club representatives, who are members of the Executive Committee (appointed by their clubs to represent them in GMD decisions) for the 2008-09 season were clarified:

Paul Horak for Upper Valley Fencing, Amanda Granizo for Les Filibustiers of Hanover, Marc Jijina for Salle Catamount, Dan Crocket for Queen City Fencing Club, Lin Wade for Arlington, Trevor Taite for Montpelier Area Fencers (to be confirmed), VFA (to be confirmed?)

Dan gave an appeal to those who may not have yet voted in the USFA election to support the nominating committee's candidates. He also briefly mentioned that the GMD should be represented at the Annual Meeting of the USFA Congress. This meeting occurs sometime during the Summer Nationals tournament and he is usually unable to attend as he is reffing while the meeting takes place.

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:30 p.m.

Family picnic/potluck/party followed.