



United States Mondio Ring Association Board of Directors Meeting

Minutes from the March 16, 2015 Board Meeting

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Donald Lee at 2004 (or 8:04 P.M. CST). A quorum was present.

Members Present:

President	Donald Lee	Director	Jake Schneider
Vice President	Jill Fryling – absent	Director	Jennifer Marshall
Secretary	Michon Mills	Director	Lisa Lucero – joined meeting at 8:35 CST
Treasurer	David Broderick		

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the February 16, 2015 USMRA BOD Meeting were electronically approved unanimously on March 16, 2015.

Officer Reports

President – Trial season has started. We have had two trials so far, Carolina Dog Sports Club and Lone Star Mondio Ring Club. We have five upcoming trials and two Decoy Certifications scheduled. Our goals are to increase the availability of Decoys, both for training and for trials.

At our first two MR trials we tested (and made changes to) our electronic score sheets. They were created by Emma Svensson two years ago and have recently been updated by Nicholas Rempp. The advantages are the electronic score sheets will automatically add points, they will be able to be downloaded from our website, and we will be able to send them electronically. We hope to have them completely tested and available by May.

Don spoke with OJ about scheduling the Annual BOD Meeting at the Nationals. We want to make the Annual Meeting accessible to as many USMRA Members as possible.

Don stated he is proud of the work our BOD members are doing. The Committees are working hard and moving towards goals to better USMRA.

Vice President – No Report

Treasurer – David gave the financial report. The Wells Fargo account has a balance of \$33,173.79 and the PayPal account has a balance of \$2270.54. David will be contacting OJ regarding Nationals to make sure their needs are met. There is approximate \$4000.00 budgeted for Nationals.

Secretary – Michon reported that as of this date there are 207 total 2015 membership renewals, twenty seven total club renewals, and one new club request. Three of the twenty seven clubs are still not fully compliant with requirements.

Committee Reports

Judge's Committee – USMRA is growing and we want to stay ahead by training our Judge's to current International standards, as well as having an apprentice program that properly prepares new Judges. We are working on a Judges College with Margaret McKenna in California for the week of the Nationals. Our goal is to maintain consistency within the USMRA Judge's program, and to keep our Judge's up to date. We are evaluating the USMRA Judge's Program, taking a look at the proposed changes and clarifying requirements.

Decoy Committee – Our initial overall goals have been to develop new decoys and increase both the training and trial skills of our existing decoys. In order to develop new decoys, we would like to increase the availability of certifications and also try to ensure that we're flexible over the issue of decoys using multiple dogs in their certification, whenever possible.

We have certifications scheduled in March in DC, and in April in Pennsylvania. There's another one tentatively scheduled for Boston in the fall. To give our current decoys opportunities to improve their trial skills, as well as training techniques, we would like to see clubs hosting decoy camps, with the focus of these camps being on decoy trial work. The camps would be overseen by a judge and would allow decoys to receive feedback on their work, without the pressure of an actual trial. It was also proposed that hosting one of these training events might count towards a club's requirements for maintaining their status.

One other goal that we've discussed is to put together a video to demonstrate what's involved in a Mondio Ring certification. This would include demonstrations of the fitness test and would show examples of appropriate work for the different levels. We feel this would be very helpful for decoys that are looking to prepare for a certification.

Another topic that has been touched on is establishing some type of ranking system for decoys who are interested in being considered for Nationals. This might include the number of trials worked that year, ratings earned in those trials, etc. The goal of this would be to have some structured method of selecting the decoys for that event.

On the subject of Nationals, it's our recommendation that decoys selected for the trial should not participate as a handler at any level. Also, if a dog who they own is entered and handled by someone else, then that decoy should not be involved at that dog's level of competition. This subject was discussed and voted on electronically by the Board of Directors', with the Board of Directors agreeing unanimously with the Committees recommendation.

Education Committee – The Education Committee is redefining the 2015 grant criteria and goals. We believe suggestions from our membership could open new ideas for growth through education. Last year we had only 3 requests that met the criteria for education funding. We expect there will be more Clubs and more competition for the funding in this coming year. This year the opening of the Education Grants will be announced on the Official USMRA Face Book Page and on the USMRA Web Site. We intend to open the Application Submission Process on May 1st and close the Application Submission on June 30. We will announce the grant awards by August 15th. These Grants will be allowed for past and future events that meet the criteria in

2015. The Committee discussed the weighing of the grant awards and agreed that decisions should be equal and not determined by the size of the club or longevity of the club. There is \$3000.00 available this year for grants.

Membership Committee – The Membership Committee has worked on the following three projects this month:

Mondioring 3 Club and List

A revised form has been sent to the BOD for approval, which will be used to solicit names and photographs of all dog teams that have accomplished a MR3 in USMRA. The MR3 Club will be reserved for dogs that are Handler Owner Trained. However, all MR 3 teams will be included on the list on the website. In addition, the requirement for current membership in USMRA has been removed.

The Board discussed recognition for dogs that were titled in other venues but felt that if the dog was to be recognized as part of the Mondioring 3 club, they must go through all levels of USMRA to qualify.

Sportsmanship Award

The application for the Sportsmanship award for 2015 has been posted in several areas. Applications are coming in. The deadline is 3/17 in order to give the committee, and then BOD, time to process the applications and to have a plaque made. This will be presented at the Annual Meeting at the Championships.

Electronic Score sheets

The electronic score sheets generated by Emma Svensson several years ago have been updated. They were tested experimentally in North Carolina, with revisions made afterwards. The score sheets were used again at the LSMRC trial, and more revisions were made. West Penn Club will use them in April, and after that time we will make a recommendation that these be used instead of the three ply handwritten copies that have been used to date. Nick Rempp has worked tirelessly on this project. His Excel skills will allow us to move forward with this project, making it user friendly for clubs.

Auditing Committee – The Auditing Committee is complete. Emily plans to have the Annual Audit completed for the Annual BOD Meeting at the Nationals.

Nationals Committee - The Nationals Committee is discussing future requirements for attending Nationals. The Board of Directors discussed the following:

If Nationals were a requirement, a benefit for the organization is that people may be more active for hosting. There was further discussion about the teams that participate in Nationals getting the first bid for Worlds. There was also discussion about the possibly of doing a Regional trial that would be weighed higher than a club trial. Don discussed the possibility of the country being divided into 3 regions and having the 3 directors voted as regional directors. They would have to be voted in by the region they were in. They would be required to put on a Regional Championship and 2 decoy training seminars. This would give the simulation of a Championship trial. This may give more interest to attend Nationals.

Business

Discuss / Approve New Clubs

Club Approval - It was moved by Michon, second by Jake to “approve Heartland Mondioring Club status for USMRA”. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussed Wicked Smart Mondio Club. Don reported that he spoke with Scott Dunmore and their bylaws should be submitted soon as they are being worked on.

Discussed Black Diamond Working Dog Club. They currently do not have any Mondioring dogs competing. Lisa stated that they are planning on co-hosting a trial with 5280 Performance in September.

It was moved by Jake, second by Jennifer to “approve a trial waiver extension for Black Diamond Working Dog Club until December 31, 2015. Motion carried unanimously.

New Business

The Annual BOD Meeting at Nationals was discussed with some discussion about who from the Board was planning on attending.

Monitoring Activity on the USMRA Facebook Page

There was extensive discussion about monitoring the activity on the USMRA Official FB Page. Rules and Conduct for Use of the Facebook page have been posted on the Facebook page with all members being expected to follow these rules. A USMRA Code of Conduct is also being developed. Discussion ensued about rules regarding conduct, blocking or controlling what members’ post, verification that FB members are current USMRA members and members using their actual name.

There was discussion about not all members being members on the Facebook page. If it was required to contact all members, a blast email would probably need to take place since some members are not on the Facebook group. It was further discussed that the USMRA website hosts the Board meeting minutes so members can keep up to date via the website. The Yahoo email group was also discussed as a possibility for use as another form of contact.

Member’s Concerns

Cuing of Dogs

There was discussion about “cuing” of dogs during Defense of Handler. The BOD would like to get a clear understanding of what is acceptable and not acceptable as there is no black and white rule. It was discussed that giving an actual command or gesture to bite is not acceptable. Don will take this issue to the Judges Committee for further clarification.

Independent Status on the USMRA Website

It was discussed and moved by Jake, second by Lisa to “allow Independents to list any Working Dog Organizations they are affiliated with on the USMRA website”. The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Jake, second by David to “approve Adam Wallworth’s Independent Status on the USMRA website”. The motion carried unanimously.

Handler’s Document on website

There was discussion that some of the information listed on the document is not accurate and not consistent with MR Rules. Jake will scan through the document to ensure that things are clear and accurate. Once this is corrected, a new version will be placed on the website.

Announcements

Next Regular BOD Meeting – April 20, 2015 at 8:00 PM Central Time

Adjournment

It was moved by Jake, second by David to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 2232 hours (10:32 P.M. CST)

Michon M. Mills,
USMRA Secretary

**Approved (Approved as Corrected)
BOD Electronic approval**

Michon M. Mills
USMRA Secretary
April 8, 2015