

USMRA 16 Sept BOD Minutes

Call to order by Pres. Lisa Geller 6:02 pm

PST Present: Lisa Geller, Kyle Sprague, Sharon Novak, Rich Damico, Aida Flick, OJ Knighten (6:15) Absent: Marki Barta

Motion to approve August Minutes Motion: Kyle, 2 nd Aida - Motion Carried Unanimously

Motion of Committee placements: Education Committee - Name Chair as Deb Hawkins, By-Laws Committee add Jeff Olsen, Maya Conrad, and David Wright Motion: Sharon, 2 nd Aida - Motion Carried Unanimously

Motion to approve new club, La Familia Motion: Aida, 2 nd Kyle - Motion Carried Unanimously

Decoy Certifications

OJ summarized the reasons for the hold on Decoy Certifications, some of the possible solutions and asked for input again from BOD >Policy of requirement that Decoys must be in an active club. Currently, to maintain their certification, a large portion of the decoys are in clubs that they don't actually train with. Possible solutions – require “independents to pay dues determining validity by decoys actually training a set # of times/yr w. club

- remove requirement of being in club for certified decoys

>Trial requirement to maintain certification. While the BOD voted in to not enforce the 1 trial/yr requirement and will change it to 1 trial every two years, there are several decoys who are have not worked a trial in almost two years and technically, need to be de-certified soon. Additionally, once the new certification process starts to bring in new decoys that will also be vying for limited trial decoy spots. >Past certifications have not followed procedures ie failing written test, then being allowed to do physical and do another written test. If this is going to be allowed, then it needs to have a consistent procedure. >Certifications where members of the certification jury felt “pressured” to pass decoys they did not feel were skilled enough. >Having the correct dogs for Certification – There have been multiple instances when certifications used dogs that did not have a finished MR3 program. For example, having a dog show object guard when it still needs a backline does not allow the decoy to really show their “moves,” and by not having dogs that can show a full force of the face/flee/accessory attacks, you can not see if the decoys are correct nor if they are safe for the dog and/or themselves. >Nutz and Boltz of Scoring system. Making new tests, adjusting point values to be more equitable. >Building a process for Level 3 Decoys, currently not something we do. Getting/translating info from Europe on this one. >Training People who will implement Certification Process. There has never been a training or manual for those who will be implementing Certification. Getting judges on same page. >How to MaintainStandards in the future

Additionally, OJ wanted to stress that this is not personal against any particular club or individual. Also wants the membership to know in the interim before the process is rolling again, he and the BOD want to support and encourage the clubs and membership. The current BOD has and will continue to offer “grants” to move decoys/subsidize/etc. for USMRA sanctioned trials and events.

As a member since 2000 and a past member of the decoy committee Sharon wanted to answer some of the questions about past requirements. “The process in the beginning was just following the lead with whoever the judge was. With judges from different countries and with different ideas of where we USA's should be, this resulted in inconsistent selections and decoys. USMRA started on it's new process headed by Isai and some others? It was then changed ~ '06 when Tim Bartlett headed the committee, w. myself, Jeremy Norton, Matt Moore. Some nutz & boltz were changed (ie it was MORE points if the decoy esquived the dog than if they jammed them up) and so on. As that times' BOD's wanted, we kept the requirements that trial decoys had to be in an active club. Decoys, Members, & Clubs had to pay their dues and either get a “waiver” or host a trial every two years. Come spring Ann and Tim would cross reference clubships/dues/trial requirements and there would be a “culling” of the list. Myself and many others were “culled” for various reasons. There was not a written policy or procedures on this or the notification process of such. Recommend there should be. When those of us “created” this process, we did not properly train the ones who we certified to certify others and I am sorry for that. Recommend that USMRA have some sort of training process for the Decoy Selection Jury.

Recommend that USMRA support a yearly decoy camp for education selection and using as trial "credit" to maintain Certification. "

OJ said he felt confident that enough of the above mentioned issues could be dealt with so that the new Certification Process up to Level 2 would be ready to be offered in 2014. Lisa requested that he have a rough draft of the new Cert Process in "edited" format (strike- thru of deleted, another color of add ons...) so that it could be voted on at the November BOD meeting.

The unanimous consensus of the BOD present was the agreement to give OJ and the decoy committee this time to make these changes so that our future decoys are properly prepared, educated and safe for the dogs and themselves. Also agreed that we were looking forward to exploring and finding solutions and welcome input from the membership.

Discussion -

Facebook/Yahoo list

The decoy process extended into discussion of the negative comments about the decoy cert upgrade and how the BOD is handling the process. This has included personal "calling out" of BOD's in general as well as specific persons, and implications that the BOD is being partial, not following the by-laws and not responsive. All the BOD present agreed and agrees to continue to be available via phone to the membership. Sadly, thus far none have been contacted and no BOD has time at present to follow and track every comment linked to Mondioring. Agreed to have Sharon work on blending the "beta" letter from Lisa w. the comments from OJ and a minute references/notes from Sharon. Doc will be sent to BOD yahoo list for edits/comments/approval before sending to membership.

Sharon stated that the yahoo list has not received any complaints for over a month since it has been "unmoderated."

National's – Lisa reported that Geoff B (Nationals Chair) said he had 3 clubs interested in hosting the 2014 National's. So far one club has submitted their paperwork and the deadline for submission is Sept 18 th .

Open Discussion

OJ wanted to get input/suggestions on how to handle the requirement that trial decoys MUST be in a club. Currently, there are several trial decoys who are affiliated with clubs that they are very far away from. Most have been "adopted" by this or that club so that they can maintain their certification status as active, and many do not even train with the club they are affiliated with. If this requirement is just eliminated, then, there will not be a problem. The down sides - could cost the organization income in membership and club fees, not having as many trials resentment w. the clubs that ARE doing/paying/hosting clubs, no way to define club decoys if needed for future regionals/national criteria. Voting majority said that they were willing to accept this change in the new decoy criteria. OJ will include this in his rough draft of the new Cert Process in "edited" format (strike- thru of deleted, another color of add ons...)

Meeting adjourned by Lisa at 7:41pm PST