

Extra Ordinary General Meeting
5th May, 2009
Fraternity Bowling Club – meeting commenced 7:40pm

46 members present with J Koster presiding.

The meeting was called after submission of a petition of ten members of the SCF to discuss a recent ballot of the members re basket numbers and a decision made by the committee on liberation times for 2009.

Secretary read out the petition and the names of the petitioners. Two of the petitioners, B Cavill and N Mangion, asked for their names to be removed from the petition as they felt that they had been misinformed as to the reasons for the petition. Alan Zahra also spoke that he was led to believe that the petition to discuss liberation times was something else rather than what the initiator of the petition had intended.

The chairman advised the meeting of the protocol to be followed the intent of the meeting and how he wanted to see an orderly debate and all statements and questions were to be directed through the chair.

Petitioners P Breeze, C Bell and W Glover all spoke on their reason for calling the meeting. They mentioned reasons in support of an early liberation and commented that they considered 22 birds in a basket too few. P Breeze also motioned that they had been informed that if the ballot on the basket numbers was lost and asked the chair “would the committee have overruled that decision?”

The chairman responded that the ballot had been run, the result declared and no further speculation or discussion was required.

Secretary responded and explained:

- that the basket limit was introduced without any objection in 2008
- that the committee had sought the support of the membership to ratify that change in our racing by-laws.
- The intent of the committee was always to consider the welfare of the birds and this was stressed.
- The secretary questioned the intent of the petitioners and their consideration to the welfare of the birds.
- It was stated that the 22 bird limit was readily accepted in 2008 but when it appeared that there may be some limit applied to member bird numbers then the objectors raised issues that would enable them to get more birds away.
- As it has turned out those doubts were baseless as all members have been able to send their initial nominated numbers in 2009.

W Glover suggested to the meeting that it would be much better to put more birds in a basket, have more spare baskets and use them as toss baskets and possibly generate more income for the Fed.

The secretary explained that there was no surplus in 2009 as this system used in previous years had been abused by some clubs by deliberately under nominating and then expecting to send more birds as surplus. It was also noted that there had never been a full truck sent away in previous years. Race bird numbers had rarely exceeded 2000 birds on this truck and there were only minimal (200-300) toss birds ever sent on the truck. With this new method of bird nominations the truck was full with 2500 race birds nominated for Friday night basketing. The cost per bird was also as cheap as it had ever been and in real terms (re inflation) it was the cheapest it had ever been.

The secretary commented that it would appear that the petitioner wanted to have 2000 birds crammed into 80 baskets and then hope that some members would want to send surplus.

C Linnet asked why the basket numbers had been reduced from an historical 32 bird limit then 28, then 25 and now 22.

The secretary explained that the 32 bird baskets on our old trailer were much bigger than the current basket, the front design of the current basket was different and we now had a food trough inside the basket all of which reduced the size of the basket and available room.

C Bell questioned the difference between Friday night and Thursday night basketing. It was explained that the committee's recommendation was made on a number of hours spent in the basket and not necessarily the time of basketing. C Bell contested this and stated that S Van Breeman's recommendations contradicted what the committee was recommending. The secretary pointed out that the primary source of information was from Dr Stam and that van Breeman's recommendations had also been considered.

D Monteleone commented that he did not initially support the reduced number of birds in a basket but that the ballot had been run and the members had made a decision. To further discuss the result of that ballot was a non-event and we should move on.

A letter of explanation by D Glover for his reasons on signing the petition was presented to the secretary prior to the meeting. The letter was read out to the membership. D Glover felt that the members should have the opportunity to discuss liberation times. His second point regarded the legality of how the SCF conducted ballots and what constitutes an acceptable majority for a decision. D Glover explained how he had had a very lengthy discussion with the Dept Fair Trading and that our process of a majority vote on our by-laws was in contravention of rule 31 and therefore invalid.

The secretary commented that it was D Glover as Fed President who, in 2005, had stated to the membership that he had investigated the voting procedure and had recommended that the voting procedure required a minimum of 75% participation of the membership in any ballot and that for a motion to be successful that a simple majority (over 50%) was required. The secretary also noted that in 2005 a motion to reinstate an omitted clause

requiring a two thirds majority for a motion to be successful was defeated and that therefore the procedure for a successful motion was a simple majority. (and has been accepted as the status quo since D Glover's ruling in 2005)

The secretary also noted that when the SCF became incorporated that the Model Rules were adopted and registered with only one inclusion, rule 37, regarding a requirement for a ballot. The secretary advised that the racing by-laws were not registered with the Dept Fair Trading. To have them registered required a cost and that to have them changed and re registered would require additional and substantial costs. Therefore they were never registered with the Dept Fair Trading, did not come under the Dept jurisdiction and could therefore be changed by the membership in accordance with the rules and regulations of those by-laws. It was also noted that the committee had followed this procedure since D Glover had advised the membership of that definition in 2005 and that if what he was implying was correct then how far would we need to retrospectively go back in our rules.

There was some discussion on the complexity of that process.

The chairman advised that this matter would require clarification by the Dept of Fair trading.

A Zahra spoke in support of the committee and noted how well managed the SCF was and how we were now far better off than in the past

Secretary spoke on the two items and the intent of the petitioners. Secretary stated that it appeared hypocritical that the petitioners could protest that the imposition of the basket limit, that affected no one, could not be introduced until the 2010 season yet a liberation time change that affected everyone should be accepted a few weeks before the 2009 season started.

The chairman then asked for comments re liberation times.

I Sunlay spoke and made a recommendation to the meeting that the birds should be released at 8:00am on the early races. He stated that this was done for the welfare of the birds as they would spend less time in the basket and that they would have more time to find their way home.

There was some discussion on liberation times and how it would affect people who had to work, worked shift-work or had other Saturday morning commitments.

The chairman asked if there were any further comments and as there were none, thanked people for attending and closed the meeting at 8:50pm

Stephen Saywell
Secretary,
SCF