

WEST RFU BOARD MEETING
Hampton Inn & Suites, Austin, TX
August 20-21, 2004

DRAFT MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 PM.

Roll Call: performed by David Jenkins, Vice President, acting as Secretary.

Attendees: Bill Sexton [President], David Jenkins [Vice President; Texas], David McPhail [Treasurer; Saturday only], Bob Latham [Director], Paul Mabry [Director], Stephen Glentzer [Referees Association and also representing the Heart of America], Alec Klinghoffer [Ozark], Amy Rusert [Eastern Rockies], Gene Nelson [Great Plains], Dan Ward [Missouri], Bill Haffner [WRFU Administrator].

Absent: Rich Cortez [Secretary], Greg Smith [Rio Grande], and Kurt Torkelson [Heart of America].

Sexton welcomed all attendees to the meeting and noted that HOA would be represented by Glentzer. Motion by McPhail - second by Glentzer to accept the minutes from the previous meeting of the WRFU in January 2004, with revisions on pages 3 and 8. This motion was approved and the minutes accepted.

Meeting Agenda Review: The agenda was briefly reviewed and approved by the BOD.

Amy Rusert inquired as to the status of Women's Representative Team in Women's Division II National Championship Competition. It was pointed out that the West does not send a representative to this event.

Minutes of the Western Rugby Union 2004 Annual General Meeting in Houston, TX January 10-22, 2004 were approved.

Sexton briefly reviewed the action items from the January AGM, as contained in the approved minutes, and their status (*in italics*).

- The ad hoc committee to submit their recommendations on West Governance and LAU Chartering to be made at the West 2004 Summer Meeting. *Paul Mabry will address during this meeting*
- LAU Presidents to address the action items from the 2003 summer meeting in Denver, CO ASAP. *This had not been done and he requested that the LAUs address this ASAP.*
- The Board charged Jenkins with producing job description for the General Manager of the Select Sides within the next three months. *The job description of the Vice President had been submitted but may require a by-law change and this needs to be approved at the 2005 AGM.*
- All LAU Presidents were charged with reviewing the list of clubs within their LAU and to send a corrected list to Haffner as soon as possible. *This had not been done and the LAU Presidents need to send an e-mail Distribution list for their clubs in West to Bill Haffner.*
- LAU Presidents to ensure that all of their member clubs are aware of the changes in the competition eligibility regulations. *An e-mail had been sent out to the LAU Presidents by Sexton*

on the USA Rugby Eligibility paperwork requirements fro 2005. The LAU Presidents need to make sure that all of their clubs are very familiar with these requirements.

- New regulations on the regional leagues and procedures was presented but requires re-wording and this re-wording will be submitted to the Board within 3 days of the 2004 AGM for approval. *This was done.*
- The LAUs need to follow up on the dues arrears for 2003 and they have until February 15, 2004 to get these resolved or else the clubs concerned will be barred from the 2004 Championships. *This list had been sent by Bill Haffner, but there were still some dues owed for 2004.*
- It was requested that all LAUs submit the contact names of their Disciplinary Chairs to the West VP who will be in charge of the West disciplinary process and procedures. *Only Rio Grande had complied with is request.*
- It was recommended that [a] the elite database form be used as a player nomination form for club, collegiate and HS coaches and [b] the elite player database be accessible via password on the West Website for access by West Select Side Coaches only. *This was being used, but not probably to the extent originally envisaged.*
- The Board charged Cortez and Coates with producing a document by September 1 2004 outlining the purpose of the West Collegiate All-Star Championships. *In progress.*
- The Board charged Haffner with presenting a proposal for a Regional Women's Club and Collegiate Competitions to the clubs and colleges at the weekend of the Women's Championship. *This had been superceded by a USA Rugby proposal to move the Women's Club Championships to the fall.*
- The Board requested that the financial request by the Missouri LAU for the challenge match be resubmitted to the Secretary using the grant form. *Done.*
- The Board charged Messrs Cortez and Wolfe with developing a plan and budget for this proposed Development team and these documents need to be submitted no later than June 1, 2004. *Not done.*
- The Executive Committee will review all Select Side Coaching appointments by March 1, 2004 and will communicate their conclusions and recommendations to the current Select Side coaches and managers. *No changes were envisaged prior to the ITTs. Coaching appointments for several programs had been confirmed, while concerns about the Senior Men's staff was noted for their poor compliance with E.C. requests for reporting and planning. Cortez had asked to be re-appointed as coach of the Men's Collegiate All-Stars for another year and this approved.*
- The President will discuss with the Women's U-23 coach about the current conflict between the proposed U-23 camp and the Women's club Championships. *Done.*
- The Executive Committee will review the Membership of the Competitions Committee by March 1 2004 and will communicate their conclusions and recommendations to the current competitions committee members. *Done.*

- It was requested that the Senior Men's management team submit a plan for 2004 outlining proposed camps and competitions. Not Done.
- It was requested that the Senior Women's management team submit a plan for 2004 outlining proposed camps and competitions. Done.

TREASURER'S REPORT

McPhail reported on the financial situation of the West RFU for the year to date (see written report and documentation).

Action Item: *The West Secretary [Cortez] was charged with writing an article to Goff on Rugby and Rugby Magazine about the amount money that the West has spent on player grants and development grants.*

Some checks that have been issued have not been cleared and McPhail will follow up with the respective people to clarify this.

Action Item: *McPhail requested clarification as to criteria whereby the host meets the WRFU Championship award criteria so that the Treasurer can pay the host in a timely manner.*

Motion by Nelson and Latham to approve the financial report and this motion was approved.

McPhail requested that he be permitted to use his 2004 travel allocation as an officer of the West RFU to purchase air tickets to the LA Sevens Coaching clinic in advance in order to save money. This request was approved by the Board.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Sexton noted the following:

- He encouraged the LAUs to participate more in the West RFU issues.
- He noted that in 2005 there will be online CIPP registration with USA Rugby, however it is very likely that USA Rugby will not permit payment of West dues with the USA Rugby CIPP dues, as done in 2004. This new system may require the clubs to handle the individual player waiver forms, but this has not been finalized yet. As a result the West is considering a flat fee for clubs based on their competitive level and the number of players they have CIPP registered the prior year.

Action Item: *A working group will be established by the West Executive Committee to prepare a recommendation that will be forthcoming shortly*

- Susan Stabler has replaced Mary Graham as the Manager of the Women's Select Side Manager.
- During the past two months the West and Missouri RFU have lost two prominent figures with the passing of Bill Brandt on the coaching side (St. Louis University and Druids Youth) and Dan Hartwig (St. Louis Bombers) on the playing side. The West is considering the establishment of a "Dan Hartwig Fair Play Memorial Award" at the 2005 West Men's Club Championships.
- In regards to the West Senior Men's Select Side, it was noted that the current coaching staff should see the team through the 2004 ITTs.

Action Item: *An advertisement will be distributed for the Men's Senior All-Star Coach (with the assumption that the coach would recommend candidates for assistant coach(es) and manager) after conclusion of the NASC event the first weekend in December. The present incumbents will be allowed to apply. It was recommended that the successful applicants be required to attend this year's NASC as observers. It was commented that the West Board should give better direction as*

to whether the West Senior men's team for the NASC is selected to win the competition or is used for development of players. In addition it is felt that the lack of tours has had a negative impact on the pool of players that are available for selection.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Both Mabry and Latham gave reports on various aspects of USA Rugby's business. There is currently an initiative underway to revise the governance of USA Rugby whereby the Board will be reduced to a lesser number. The Eligibility Committee is looking at various eligibility issues as result of the recent problems within the Rugby Super League. The USA has been invited to send a sevens team to the 2005 World games. Bob Latham has been re-elected as the VP of USA Rugby. There will no be longer a 22 day moratorium on registration before National Championship Events. Instead all players must be registered at the start of the competitive season and/or before they compete in any matches leading to a national championship. All other eligibility rules will be applied (i.e., the two game minimum).

ADMINSTRATOR'S REPORT

Haffner gave a review of current West Membership. He requested that all LAUs review their club listing on the USA Rugby CIPP listing to determine what clubs exist (or not) and then inform Haffner and Sexton of any changes. A spreadsheet has been sent to LAU Presidents informing them of which clubs still owe 2004 West dues and these dues need to be paid as soon as possible. There is a report on the West website covering the 2004 Competitions and a long-term calendar. Overall the West results in the 2004 National Competitions were very poor and it is likely that we will lose some seeds in the 2005 Competitions. The scheduling for the 2005 West Men's Division I Club and Division I Collegiate sub-regional leagues are not yet completed. The West and Texas Div I Club and Collegiate League schedules are posted on the West website.

It was noted that at the 2004 USA Men's Sweet 16s, the USA Rugby official insisted on each club nominating their 22 man starting roster which is in conflict with the regulations which state that the clubs need only announce their 15 man roster. This needs to be communicated to USA Rugby to ensure that such a conflict do not happen in the future. Haffner also added that at the West Championship events, the match roster was not required until after the match had been played to permit accurate reporting of who played form the team's 28-man roster, and the reason for the substitution.

Action Item: *In order to qualify for the 2005 West Men's Division III Championship, HOA and Missouri would be required to merge their competitions in order to have an automatic slot. This was approved by the Board.*

REFEREE'S ASSOCIATION REPORT

Glentzer gave the referee's report that included a substantial written report of the WRFURA Development Meeting last January. It was requested that the listing of all the West referees that was presented include the C3 referees as well. Glentzer reported that the re-training required by the IRB will have a negative impact on training new referees and touch judges.

AD HOC GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair, Mabry reviewed the status of the Governance review for the West RFU. He is seeking a number of people to serve on the committee who have different backgrounds (e.g., LAU Administrator, Select Player, Youth Person and a Financial Person). An e-mail will be sent within the next 10 days seeking candidates. Mabry indicated that a chartering process for the LAUs will probably result from this committee and this charter will outline the minimum requirements for a LAU. This LAU Charter may require a possible by-law change and he would investigate this requirement. Mabry floated the concept of

the charter commission having some teeth and that their recommendations should only be overruled by a super majority of the WRFU Board.

WRFU LOGO

The new logo for the West RFU is in progress and it is hoped that this can be agreed upon shortly. Once the new logo is agreed on, the new jersey design for the West will be selected and a sponsorship package sent out to the various vendors.

REFEREE ASSOCIATION PROPOSALS

Glentzer summarized the recommendations from the January WRFURA meeting of which the most important was that the referees are recommending that for all rugby matches in the West, the referee will receive a match fee from the clubs.

Action Item: *Bill Haffner agreed to provide data to the referees in order to determine the actual cost of the officials for games played in the Western and Central regional leagues.*

Action Item: *Haffner requested that the referees provide a current status of each of the items on their PowerPoint Slides.*

During discussions, the Board agreed that, "Conceptually, the West will pay travel expenses for referees for the competitive region matches", and that "Conceptually, the West will pay referees on a territory-wide pay scale." Concerns were expressed about tax implications of paying referees and liability issues. More information needs to be gained on both accounts.

MOTION: The Mabry / Jenkins proposal that the WRFU Board support the concept of direct compensation to match officials at all levels and encourage each of its LAU members to work with their respective referee associations to develop such a system. Additionally, each LAU is directed to communicate to their membership the intent of the WRFU to implement such a compensation system throughout the territory by the fall of 2005. The motion was approved unanimously by the Board.

Action Item: *Glentzer was instructed to work with the referees associations and to submit a revised and re-worded pay scale for the referees with in the next fourteen days so that the WRFU could approve the pay scale.*

The remaining recommendations from the referees report were tabled for further comment by the Board Members during the next few months.

OTHER ISSUES

It was noted that the Gentlemen of Aspen RFC had enquired about leaving Rugby Super League and possibly re-joining the Division One competition. Whereas there has been no formal request by the club, this issue was tabled.

Haffner was requested permission to represent the West at the forthcoming USA rugby meeting on territorial union Competitive issues. Haffner was appointed the Western Rugby Union representative to this meeting, and will report to the Executive Committee and Board following the meeting.

In response to a query from the Missouri RFU, Sexton explained that the West HS Championship was not a rotational event amongst the LAUs, but that the venue was selected on the quality of the pitches at the

venue. Sexton was asked to determine when USA Rugby would make a decision on the future of the National HS Championships.

The standing disciplinary issue involving the Kansas Jayhawks and Kansas University was discussed. They wish to play Men's Division I rugby but has dissolved their no collegiate team (reportedly temporarily) to support the club team. This is an on-going matter involving disciplinary actions and overdue fines from spring 2004. The team will be contacted, and terms for resolution discussed.

MOTION

The Sexton / Ward motion that all fines arising from competitive play issues and/or disciplinary action must be resolved before the start of the next competitive season (either September 1 or February 1), and that failure to resolve will result in expulsion of the club from the respective competitive league. The motion passed. [A one-time caveat for fall 2004 delays the deadline to September 15 or the first league game, whichever is sooner.]

MOTION

The Sexton / Mabry motion that to be eligible to play in any competitive league, all youth and college teams must have a designated coach(es) as registered with USA Rugby and who have undergone a background check. The motion passed.

Additional Action Items

- *It was requested that the listing of Statutory Fines for not submitting rosters and match results, etc. on the West website be kept separate from the disciplinary measures and fines.*
- *It was requested that in 2005 the Sevens Championships include a Super Regional and/or regional event in the HOA - Missouri area. McPhail indicated that he would work to include an additional event in this region.*
- *The West All-Star teams are required to have their 2005 budget plans submitted no later than October 1, 2004.*
- *The Board requested that Jenkins and Ward work together to produce a definition for the West Men's Competitions by defining the criteria to determine a Men's Division I, II and III club.*

2005 WEST MEETINGS

It was recommended that the 2005 West Annual General Meeting be held in conjunction with the USA Sevens Tournament on February 12-13, 2005. It was agreed that the BOD would meet during the day on Friday, February 11 prior to the USA 7s.

The 2005 summer meeting will be held August 20-21 in St Louis, MO.

The meeting was adjourned at 1.15 pm on Sunday, August 22, 2004.

These minutes are submitted jointly by David Jenkins and William Sexton on February 1, 2005.