

**2005**  
**General Meeting of the Board of Directors**  
**August 20-21, 2005**  
**St. Louis, Missouri**  
**Marriott Hotel**  
**Record of Proceedings**

President Bill Sexton called the meeting to order at 8 a.m, Saturday, August 20, 2005 at the St. Louis Marriott Hotel, St. Louis, Missouri.

**Attendees**

Roll Call by Rich Cortez, Secretary: In attendance: Bill Sexton (President/Director USA), Paul Mabry (Director USA), David McPhail (Treasurer), David Jenkins (VP/Texas), Rich Cortez (Secretary), Dan Ward (MO), Joe Zevin (West Referees Association for Tom Coburn), Gene Nelson (GP), Kurt Torkelson (HOA) and Amy Rusert (Eastern Rockies). Proxies: Rio Grande, held by Rusert; Bob Latham (USA Director) held by Sexton. Guests were Alan Sharpley (West rep to USA Competitions Committee), Dan Lyle (Director of Operations, USA Rugby).

**Agenda (Tab A)**

The agenda was reviewed and approved with minor schedule changes to accommodate Dan Lyle.

**Minutes of the February 11, 2005 Meeting in Los Angeles (Tab B)**

Minutes of the Los Angeles Meeting were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was offered by Sexton, Torkelson second. Discussion determined the minutes did not reflect Dave Jenkins (Texas) proxy given to Mabry. The motions was amended to accept the corrected minutes and approved as amended. Voice vote was unanimous.

**Dan Lyle (USA Rugby) Presentation on IRB Grant and USA Strategy**

Dan is Director of Operations, USA Rugby. Dan began his report with a discussion about professionalism in the world game and its relevance to USA Rugby's own constituencies. He lauded West RFU USA Directors for their common sense and professional approach to management. Dan also cited his experience and involvement in English players' association negotiations. He perceives a need for more professionalism to look out for player welfare—regardless of level. He also discussed USA Rugby's new hires: business development manager (Chris Kaiser), a communications manager, event operations, game development administrator, high performance and game development personnel. USA Rugby is placing a high priority on governance and strategic evaluation. To that end, Dan also feels that USA Rugby has a critical need for independent directors. USA Rugby is undertaking a concerted effort to make presentations across country to explain this change in strategic direction. Atlantic Sports Management & Training, Ltd has been consulted on these issues. See [www.atlanticsport.ie](http://www.atlanticsport.ie) for information on the management consulting group.

Dan then turned the presentation to the concept of Elite Performance and the IRB Grant. Currently, 36% of USA Rugby members are under the age of 19. USA Rugby intends to cultivate these players with a restructuring of the process to get to the national team... Why this emphasis on the National Team? The National Team continues to be an aspiration target with 95% of money generated by the top 13 countries coming from their National Teams. The IRB also requires a national team for recognition among other criteria.

USA's High Performance Plan will include an academy to develop the 100 best U-19 High School players, plus the 100 top Collegiate/U21 players, non-rugby athletes, Rugby Super League, Senior A Programs, National Team. The Super League may be replaced by a National 6 competition comprised of area teams. The plan will also include the identification of top coaches and referees. USA Rugby will place a regional emphasis (East and West Coast, Regions 1 & 2) on coaching and competition. The other region will have tryouts. Most of the resources will be allocated to Regions 1 & 2.

The North American 6 Competition may include 3 regional teams from US and 3 from Canada. USA Rugby will hire development people for each region (Regional Performance Officers.) It is anticipated that intra-regional competition will pick regional teams for inter-regional competition: West Coast team, Chicago Team, East Coast Team. Player's expenses will be paid during a 10 week season. How does Region 3 get their players seen? Answer: virtual scouting online and invitations to camp.

The Churchill Cup Competition will include 6 teams with the goal in 2007 to expand to 8 teams.

The identification of players will be made with a move toward European model: age-grade based--U19, U21, etc.

The IRB Money is 2.7 million dollars through 2007 for tiers of development. One million dollars will be allocated for the North American 6 Competition, and support for coaches, referees, U19, U21. The dollars for the expanded Churchill Cup are still to be determined. IRB review will occur in 2007 to determine grant money for another four years.

- Game Development Plans:
  - Coaches Development Program will include online work and pre-course work. Course work of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of four modules is linked to IRB coaching courses. Coaches may obtain multiple certifications through the CDP: USA Rugby/iRB cert., National Center for Sports Safety cert., and Positive Coaching Alliance certification. See: <http://www.usarugby.org/cdp/>. The first two modules are: Introducing Rugby and Developing Rugby Skills. Next: Analysis and Preparing Players and Game Planning.

- Referees: USARRA, full-time Referee Development Officer, recruitment and retention projects and HP (high performance) development. The IRB has stated the referees must be part of USA Rugby.
- Youth and College will have continued emphasis supported by full time college coordinator, full time youth coordinator, a new high school model, and will also include distribution of tools and resources (Fall 05). The women's NCAA issues will be examined.
- Competition Audit: A 12 person steering committee will review all competitions and eligibility.
- Questions: USA Rugby needs to improve advertising/functionality of their website. Also need additional your rugby resources.

### **Financial Reports (Tab C)**

David McPhail reviewed the budget, variances, and savings. The reserve account for the West has not increased in 4 years. Some discussion was held regarding the need to increase dues if payment to referees is implemented. That consensus of the Board is that a dues increase is not warranted at this time. Boulder RFC was granted \$1,000.00 for their efforts in hosting three USA Championship events this year for the benefit of many West players and clubs.

### **OLD BUSINESS FROM LOS ANGELES MEETING**

#### **Withdrawal of Referees Proposal**

The Executive Committee recommended setting aside the issue of implementation of the Sexton proposal as the board and referees move forward to resolve their issues. Sexton so moves. Mabry seconded. Voice vote approved.

#### **West Public Relations Perception**

An ad hoc committee, chaired by Paul Mabry, and including Bill Haffner, Dan Ward, John Via and Richard Morris will review and report to the Executive Committee by Dec 1 and Final Report Jan 1—address perceptions and make recommendations about good and bad. Focus group interviews may be conducted.

#### **Definition for Division I and Division II Clubs**

Jenkins and Ward will report in February. Additional issues are definitions and requirements for College DI and DII.

#### **Coaching Position Descriptions and Appointment:**

Sexton takes responsibility for delay in posting. **West will post the coaching applications deadline.** Uncertainty exists regarding the status of West Senior ITT's, Men's 7's, Women's 7's, All Americans. Discussion ensued about the viability of the All Star Competitions since they are no longer the primary selection vehicles for the US National Team. Mabry wanted a Board consensus if a vote comes before the USA Board to eliminate the ITT's. Board's consensus was to wait on the new competition model.

However, if new model renders ITT obsolete, Board would support re-allocating monies to other programs.

### **LAU Discipline Chairpersons**

The LAU Discipline Chairs are: ERRFU-Rick Carlson, Great Plains-Francois Van Zyl, HOA-Steve Caruso, MO-John Wolf, Texas-Eben Groenwald. RG and OZ chairs are unknown due to their absence at the meeting.

### **Logo and Playing Kits**

Both the West logo and playing kit decisions have been delayed due to difficulty in arriving at a consensus. Jenkins and McPhail will work it out. The urgency for new kit depends on the new competition model. Women need kit for December—money's in budget.

### **Competitions Committee:**

The Board agreed to drop Klinghoffer. Amy Rusert and Greg Smith are to name replacements. The Board would also like to add Tom Coburn and Rodger Lamb to the committee. A suggestion was also made to members of the committee to abstain from voting if uninformed about the issues presented.

### **General Manager of All Star Squads Description:**

The necessity for developing a general manager job description may be rendered moot if All Star Competitions no longer exist.

### **LAU Reports on current listing of member clubs:**

The Board has requested each LAU to get their member list to Bill Haffner AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

### **Dan Hartwig Award:**

The West requested last year that a player be nominated for the award. Responsibility for selection was to be shared by coaches, administrators and referees. Since a nomination was not received, the Board has recommended a change from a player award to a team award. By acclamation, David Jenkins has been appointed to nominate a committee to decide winner at the West men's club championship.

### **Reports**

- **USA Rugby Coaching and YDO:** Paul Mabry reiterated that a new program for coaching assessment is being implemented by USA Rugby. Current accreditation for coaches is valid until 2008. Amy Rusert inquired if there would be any reciprocity for foreign accreditation programs. Those accreditation requests will be handled on a case by case appeal to USA Rugby.
- **USA Rugby Executive Committee and Direction of USA Rugby Re-Organization.** Paul Mabry also reported on the following items: USA LA Sevens suffered an approximate \$100,000 loss. A corporate partner is needed for sponsorship of the event. The USA Rugby Board also downsized by elimination of special interest directors and two international athletes. Currently 26 members

remain on the board of directors. He expressed hope that USA Rugby will move to a business-based board rather than a constituency based board. USA Rugby President Neal Brendel not standing for re-election. He also announced that Bob Latham is considering running for President of USA Rugby

- **Designation of Clubs Not in Good Standing as listed on USA CIPP database:** Motion by Sexton that all teams must rectify listing prior to playing any game subject to further West disciplinary action. Background check takes 7 days. Second by Jenkins. Vote 7 to 4.

### **All Star Squad Reports**

- **Men's Collegiate Squad:** Rich Cortez reported on the team's victory over MARFU and its loss to the Pacific Coast. The West finished second in Tier A. However, only one player for the squad was selected to tour: Sean Foley of Truman State. Cris Sanford of LSU was selected as an All American, Honorable Mention. The Board thanked Cortez for his efforts as Head Coach for five years. Under Cortez, the West Collegiates had two third place finishes, two seconds, and one national championship. Prior to his assumption of the coaching position, the West finished 8<sup>th</sup> in the competition.
- **Women's Under 23:** The Women's report, prepared by Dustin George was read by Bill Sexton. The Women's team lost the #1 seed, Midwest, and then defeated the Northeast for third place. The West remains in Tier A.
- **Men's Sevens Squad:** David McPhail gave the report. He noted more out of territory teams came to West to play this year. The Denver Barbarians, Aspen, and Dallas represented the West at the Club Nationals. For 2006, the local qualifier system is to be eliminated. Super regional system then becomes more important.
- **Women's Sevens:** No formal report was given. An email from Karen Monson was included in the board members' notebooks. Rusert said the women claimed there is no money available from West for the All Star Competition. McPhail noted the women spent all money provided by the West on the Cape Cod tournament prior to the ITT's.

A motion to accept reports as presented was offered by Sexton with Torkelson second. On a voice vote the motion passed

### **Open Fines:**

All open fines must be paid by September 1. This message was disseminated to the LAU Presidents in attendance. Alan Sharpley inquired about the referees' fines. Haffner noted the referees have made improvement in meeting their reporting obligations since March 2004. Sexton suggested forgiving the old fines. Haffner preferred to use the issue

of fines and referees' obligations in the current negotiations with referees. The HOA high school's fine was forgiven after a review of the circumstances.

### **Current Discipline Activities/Process Review:**

The current items are posted on the web site. Plano high school has been put on probation. The Denver Barbarians have appealed to USA Rugby. There is a pending disciplinary action against a LSU assistant coach. Also Texas will suspend another player for five years. Another high school coach has been suspended for 14 months. (Coach not CIPP enrolled.)

### **Status of Seeding and Venues for 2006:**

Rusert asked if there was a bid process for championship site selections. Haffner replied there is none. Rusert made reference to the autocratic selection method (mutton and crown!) She also suggested the while Texas is incredibly likable, the lack of bid process makes other unions dislike Texas. The Board decided that a posting on the web site for soliciting interest in hosting a West event and a deadline for application no later than the summer meeting prior to championships (must meet facility details, contact details, qualifications host responsibilities) should be implemented.

### **USA Rugby Competition Committee:**

Alan Sharpley reported on the USA Competitions Committee seeding process. The Committee specifically looks if any TU deserves to lose a seed as a result of the competitions AND if any TU deserves an additional seed.

### **Dues Arrears:**

The Board decided that much, if not all, of the dues arrears money is unrecoverable. A motion by Sexton was offered to write off the 2001-2003 dues arrears. The motion was seconded by Torkelson. On a voice vote the motion passed.

### **Perceptions of the West (Part Two).**

As an exercise, the Board and guests divided into two focus groups to discuss perceptions of the West by its constituents. McPhail, Sharpley, Ward & Rusert formed one group. Cortez, Zevin, Jenkins, and Torkelson constituted the second. Some of the comments from the focus groups indicated there is a perception the West is disconnected from LAU's; there is a poor interpretation of what is said and how it's said (message structure) by the West; the West has poor tone in their communications; information from the West is poorly communicated to the clubs. Other suggestions were for the West to obtain LAU email lists and transmit information directly—even if the information is redundant. This would help alleviate the pressure on LAU program directors. Some opined that much of the decision-making is conducted in a void and is bias based on LAU size or board make-up (i.e. Texas). In other words, some feel that if all things are equal, preference goes to Texas, ERRFU, and/or HOA and their vested interests. There is a sense that the West makes rules, collects dues and does little else. The dues structure could be altered to include more social memberships when clubs do not want to compete

in a West or national competition. The West's bid process is non-existent. Some also feel the website must be improved with a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page.

The West does some things well, according to the groups: event management is better than other TU's; the West does a very good job in managing their finances; and the championships are generally without peer. A better explanation for the reserve account would help the LAU's perceptions. To that end, a suggestion was made for the West to send a member of EC to LAU meetings.

LAU AGM Meetings are scheduled as follows: GP, Sunday, Sept 18, Sioux City, IA; HOA, second Sat of July/Dec, Westport; MO, Aug 29, second Mon in Aug and Jan; ERRFU, second Sat in December; TX unknown; OZ unknown.

**Draft on Basic Responsibilities of LAU (ERRFU, HOA, TX):**

**ERRFU's presentation by Amy Rusert:**

The West document that was distributed to ERRFU board for comment and review was a good baseline tool for discussion. Rusert questioned whether it will be implemented or voted on as policy. ER had strategic planning retreat with external facilitator for the purpose of establishing priorities and consensus-building. ER seeks to expand its community and education programs (YMCA, schools, Police Athletic Leagues, Colorado High School Athletic Association, & Colorado Youth Rugby). CYR has adopted CHSAA policies and has communicated same to CHSAA. ER also is focusing on its coaching and referee development. They are currently fundraising and exploring resource development for dedicated facility with 6 to 10 contiguous fields and have had discussions with the Kronke group at owns the Colorado Rapids. Rusert has established a committee to define ER assets. In addition, ER is conducting a market research survey to establish ER's constituencies' demographics for presentation to benefactors. ER would also like to improve their customer service, meaning ERU values its membership and wants to return value for dues. As a result, they are exploring a new dues structure (team vs. individual) and establishing a grants program (grass roots, coach and referee scholarship/stipend; equipment for start-ups; field usage funding; all star funding review; elite athlete hardship program; frequent flyer.)

ER sees its deficiencies in the following areas: unwieldy web site; unable to track coaches/athletes; needs better member communication; inconsistent CIPP report review; needs improved coaching and player development; needs to play better for elite player development—why and how much; needs to review finances and dues structures, including publishing its budget information. ER is concerned about CYR attrition and wants to hold meetings with club sports staff at its member colleges.

Haffner suggested Terry Fleener and Joe Garrity should be contacted about Kronke. McPhail wondered how a hardship grants would be determined if the criteria for grant application changes.

**Heart of America Report:** Kurt Torkelson provided a handout that was reviewed by the Board.

**Texas Report:** Dave Jenkins also provided a handout. Texas is exploring sending its promising youth players to foreign rugby academies for improved instruction. It is also making a mandatory “coaching the coaches” program for high school coaches.

At the conclusion of the reports, Bill Haffner responded to some early question. He reminded people the West document is not intended to be policy but rather used as a guideline. Sexton added the document was meant to create broad stroke, help focus, facilitate LAU’s. Jenkins added he will forward Texas dues structures to the West. Haffner asked that all LAU’s send dues structure to other members for comparative purposes.

**West Referees Report:**

Joe Zevin provided the report to the Board. He said he has reviewed the financials, addressed personality issues, and is now more comfortable dealing with the West. The West Referees will maintain the current system for the remainder of 2005 where the Referees’ Treasurer submits budget, the West approves, and a check is sent. The West Referees society is also okay with using this system for the future. Zevin will work with Dave McPhail on reports.

Graham Bullen from Texas was assigned to referee a full international game at the Super Powers Cup.

Joe opined the Conference on the Game has run its course. He also noted that he was informed at the USARRA Annual General Meeting in 2005 that USARRA lost \$39,000 due to travel, kit, printing, USA rugby checking. He indicated there was no referee coaching report or plan. USARRA’s new officers are: John McConnell, president, Charlie Haupt, secretary, Tom Feeney, treasurer; appointments chair is open.

USARRA will have a Strategic planning session in Arlington, TX with Don Morrison chair and the focus will be domestic issues vs. international.

The West Ref’s Society needs a plan to identify and recruit new referees. The West needs greater numbers. Zevin suggested one of the problems was no direction from above. The plan is supposed to address that and the local societies must do leg work. The West referee association has less influence. The referees have self-imposed a deadline in November to finish plan. One suggestion was for the Referees Society to follow Harry Laws’ plan to make the clubs provide referees with a three year phase in program. Additionally, a mentor/protégé system is used.

Turning to the issue of paying the referees, Zevin stated a pay scale has not been determined. Therefore he is not sure of numbers. He suggest as a discussion item that for West competitions a surcharge for referees be included in the budget so that out of area referees be brought in to eliminate the appearance of bias. Sexton said he had a discussion with Tom Coburn on a number of issues. The EC has concerns with the initial interactions with the West scheduler (Ron Weatherall): he has not been in touch due to his lack of access to computers. Emails are sent and no replies are received. There is a need to resolve issues due to impending league matches for the Colleges and the West All Star College Competition. Joe Zevin said he doesn’t know Weatherall well enough to assess. Haffner noted there has been no response to the Draft Position Description for Referee Appointments Secretary.

**Pay Scale:** The EC approved a pay scale in principle subject to 14 day deadline. The EC is also committed to help staff Western events, help in recruitment, and will commit time and resources to that end. The Board has also added referee administration budget line to explain use of money to members. The Board hopes the referees will present a plan to board and EC like other West programs with detailed costs figures. The West will reimburse costs under the current system but will not allocate discretionary monies. Zevin felt a discretionary fund is needed. Sexton replied the West will support the referees and will pay its bills on time.

Jenkins noted that the feedback he has received from referees is that only assessors can provide input to referees. Zevin replied the USA plan will address that issue. Jenkins then asked if the referees are members of a LAU? Sexton added the iRB has no plan for independent referees. McPhail also noted that clubs must provide qualified touch judges but not referees from each club. Haffner would like a time line for all the items discussed.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **2005-2006 Calendar FIO**

The women's clubs championship will be moved to the fall next year, although they may have an event in Austin in April.

**Expectations from West for LAU's running own competitions:** The West is following USA's lead in expectations for league competitions. Four clubs are needed in each league to qualify for a West championships slot. LAU's may use the West rules for guidelines. LAU's must get the results posted on web site for local leagues.

### **Texas RFU Proposal on Requirements for Men's DII and DIII Clubs and LAU's:**

Sexton made a motion to revise the Texas proposal that clubs must have 26 members CIPP enrolled by April 15 to compete and a minimum of two competitive matches to be eligible. Sexton's revision reduced the number to 22. Cortez seconded. Jenkins agreed to change. On a vote of 6-3-1, the motion passes.

### **Required Match Day Processes for West and LAU league matches (Tab N).**

Will be posted on the West website.

### **ER Grant Program:**

Rusert will submit a grant request to the West.

### **By Law Proposal by Missouri to eliminate USA Directors vote at West Board Meetings.**

Ward noted three unions control 8 votes from USA Board of Directors, LAU vote, and Executive Committee and therefore have the potential to pass legislation without a majority of LAU's vote. Haffner suggested that procedure be followed. Therefore the proposal will be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

**Opinions:**

Rusert sees a need for an outside facilitator to re-evaluate operations of the West.

**Summer Meeting:**

Sexton suggested a move to last weekend in July in Denver, hosted by ERRFU.

**Annual General Meeting:**

The Board agreed to hold the AGM in LA during February before the LA USA Sevens Tournament after a discussion about perception of the West by its members. The budget deadline will come by email from McPhail.

**Thanks to Dan Ward:**

The Board expressed its gratitude to Dan Ward for all the meeting arrangements on behalf of the West.

**Adjournment:**

A Motion to Adjourn was entertained at 12:10 p.m. with Torkelson seconding.