

2012 GRU AGM

Open Meeting: 1:01PM

GRU Officers in Attendance: Gary Kent & Danita Knox

I. Attendance:

In attendance: Emory Men, GA College & State University, GA Southern Men (via phone), GA Tech Men, Jacksonville State, North GA Men & Women, UGA Men, Clemson Women, Emory Women, GA Southern Women, GA Tech Women, UGA Women, Athens, Atlanta Bucks, Old White, High Country, Hilton Head (via phone), Macon, NARC, Golden Isles, Atlanta Harlequins.

Not In Attendance: Armstrong, GA State Men, Kennesaw State Women, Renegades, Columbus, Life, Savannah, Valdosta State.

II. Approval of Minutes of 2011 AGM:

NARC moves to accept 2011 minutes. Athens & Harlequins second. Minutes accepted.

III. President's Report:

Recap of report and background of Interim Presidency. Operating with 3 elected officers out of 5; lacking appointed positions as well. Need people, both in and out of this room, who are serious about moving GRU forward. Go back to your club and find people who are interested in doing things to keep anything you want available to you. Without those people doing things on your behalf, you will have no one fighting on your behalf. Need new blood & the more people we have getting a taste of higher-level responsibility, the better the union will be.

Request of turnover log and description of duties so that people can know what the duties and expectations are for GRU positions to see if they can fit it into their schedule.

IV. Request Acting Secretary to Take Meeting Minutes:

Harlequins are taking meeting minutes.

V. Treasurer's Report:

Before going through reports, encouraging members to ask questions. Treasurers Report: 1 club unable to pay GRU dues; no longer with the GRU: GA Perimeter. -\$500 for GRU. Plan ahead to pay GRU dues. Enables GRU to pay for things outside of the GRU budget and scope with reserves.

Started year out thinking about doing events and activities within the union. We budgeted for a lot more than we were actually able to pull off. Ended up not charging everyone (especially Senior clubs) nearly as much as expected. Weren't going to get services from those increased funds due to not having expected events.

Asked colleges to respond to conference issues (Looking to start? Need help? Still want to be part of GRU?). Got no feedback from any colleges.

Ended up being able to support All Star 7s as a union program (men). No college All-Star effort b/c there was no GRUCAS tourney to participate in. Need feedback to create opportunities if they are desired. Some interest in women's conferences (coming out of Florida).

Over budget by \$700; ~\$800 went to SERRS microphone/radios that were requested.

Request of how to receive South breakdown of funds after seeing \$13K going to South from GRU. Danita notes it is on South website.

VI & VII. Collegiate Report & All-Star 7s Report:

All colleges decided to stay within the GRU except Kennesaw State & Auburn. Decided on conference play instead. May be looking to be readmitted based on new dues structure.

GA Tech looking to join Southern Independence Rugby Conference due to travel issues. Some teams part of 2 conferences (7s part of one; 15s part of another). Atlantic Coast Rugby League Conference now mainly 7s structure.

Emory leaving Southern Independence Rugby Conference. Moving to Dixie League. Will be D2.

By belonging to the GRU, eligible for South All Stars.

NACRA tournament in Barbados. South All Stars took USA Rugby slot. USA Rugby will take their slot back in preparation for the Olympics.

Bermuda v. South match. 5 GRU players on roster.

GRU Select 7s: Almost every college represented. OW, Life SL, Renegades, Athens also represented.

Budgeted \$2,000 for GRU Select 7s last year. Cape Fear ate up about \$1,500.

Trying to get USA Rugby to hold a 7s coaching clinic in May in Atlanta area. Seems to have disappeared the last couple of years. Need to bring that back.

Question: Can we bring back GRU All Stars? Can do men's 7s. Not 15s. Can do men & women's combined to do a tour. Need input and budget to do it.

VIII. Youth Report:

Elementary and middle school programs going. 23 players accredited to coach Rookie Rugby. Fostered select rugby with the South tournament.

Want to propose to the GRU: Initiating and setting up a youth academy for development of players and coaches; include domestic & international guest coaches. A lot of talented youth aren't getting exposure to higher levels of rugby now that GRUCAS has disbanded. Mention of success of FL program, despite funding issues. Do fundraising campaigns/sponsorships to advance to a higher level.

Elementary & middle schools are interested. Mostly after-school programs. Maybe clubs in future.

Noting that Sequoyah Middle School has asked Harlequins to start a girl's program.

Question: Any talk with Georgia parks and/or recreation to get rugby included in their sports program? Answer: Preliminary talks.

About 5 years ago, made a presentation to parks department. No more follow up from that. Restart?

IX. Discipline Report:

Gary reading Garrett's discipline report as Garrett is on the phone. Item of concern: Referee abuse. Lack of #s and quality refs hampering the advancement of the game. Major item of concern: Black Rose Tournament incident (see report). Feels this was too light a punishment (3-year ban). We don't need this type of behavior when attempting to mainstream rugby. It is a blight on the game w/ these types of incidents.

Any referee abuse will be dealt with in a strict manner. See linked IRB, USA Rugby South & GRU discipline documents.

Garrett making statement over speaker: As discipline chair, there is a no-nonsense approach when it comes to referee abuse. Can't deal with fans but will discipline clubs with unruly behavior on sidelines.

X. USARS Meeting Report:

South Territorial Union made up of several LAUs. Met for probably the last time last week. Geographical Union (GU) – Carolinas (N. Carolina & Palmetto); True South (Midsouth, Deep South) applied to be pilot GUs. Were approved. No longer part of the South as of next CIPP cycle. Will still compete through the South programs for select sides, All Stars, pathways to nationals. Will pay a contribution to South to participate in the programs they choose to compete in/be a part of. GRU and FLRU now only official LAUs of South left.

By August 15, 2014, the USA Rugby Board will make a final decision on whether the GU model is working as the future of USA Rugby. Not a done deal yet.

What to do about current assets? Dissolve? Still a work in progress. Some reserves we've agreed to not touch until USA Rugby makes a decision in 2014. We all need to be paying attention. Dues, how much money is paid to GRU and to South all matter.

Question: Pros & Cons of GU vs. LAU. GU is larger than LAU. More critical mass & size – large enough to run programs & be financially stable. Support programs better with a paid staff/administrator to help facilitate the GU. South too large to service properly. Make them smaller, more manageable GUs.

Pilot GUs that started previously are continuing on. Collecting more data to weigh pros and cons of having GUs.

2012–2013 CIPP cycle: Nothing changes for competitive structure.

2013–2014 competitive structure: Ask questions. Read & comment. We can still change minds and change some of that with raising of concerns. Danita will take emails and conference calls with clubs.

Paid Administrator is paid out of GU level. Pay CIPP & it will have something tacked on to pay them. Currently part-time administrators on 1099 basis for current pilot GUs. They go to USA Rugby for training.

College conferences set up as entities of their own. Not run by GRU (run by ACC/SEC-type entities). Men's designed to sell the game of rugby to the general public through the conference system. There's a push to get NCAA recognition for women's varsity rugby. Going on in tandem of conference structure. (Harvard has just gone varsity, for example.)

This next year is huge about transition, so make sure to pay attention and ask questions.

XI. SERRS Report:
SERRs not here. Report not given.

Gary mentions SERRs wants to have a ref certification event in October.

XII. New Memberships:
Gary mentions need for women's representative for GRU. Was Tia Doppenberg's position, but it is missing and concerning.

Georgia College & State University (Millidgeville) has been on board with GRU for almost a year. Need to ratify within general membership.

Started team last year. No football program. Lots coming in that played football that want to play an active contact sport. Coached by: Pete Redman (on paper) from Augusta. Looking to send Joel Seagrives (sp?) to coaching school (player/coach at GA Southern). Has school support as of this last year. Funding & fields. 35 or so currently (40 showed at recruiting event). Mostly full-time undergrad students. 8,000 student body, mostly undergrad. Looking to pursue and compete in collegiate level play. Macon is closest men's club (about 45 mins).

Georgia Youth Rugby Association – new entity within the state. Represented by Tim Turner. Walton & Alpharetta Phoenix joined to create this. Services middle and high school programs. Long-term idea is to drive rugby down to elementary-grade level. Looking to have other clubs join the organization. Nothing formal as this time to request to become a member of GRU. Looking to GRU to get guidance about how Association should be teamed up with GRU. Gary notes that GRU bylaws permit other organizations to come in as members. GRU will discuss with GYRA how best to think about best course of potential membership.

NARC motions to accept GA College & State as member of GRU as full member as Men's Collegiate (same division as Jacksonville State). Athens seconds. Motion carried unanimously. GA College & State University is ratified as full member of GRU.

Break @ 2:32pm

Reconvened at: 2:49pm

XIII. Constituencies Discussion Groups:
SENIOR CLUB

How to deal with OW forfeiture of D3 matches last season. OW has decided not to put in a D3 team this year.

Wants to have a 100% charity tournament for UGA veteran graduate (Samuel Walley) for medical expenses after IED injury in Afghanistan. November 10 potentially, but also same day as Battleship. Held at UGA.

NARC talks to clubs regarding starting HS and women's clubs alongside or in support with their men's club.

Clubs want schedules to come out quicker to plan traveling with club further in advance.

Men's D3 geographics will still be relatively the same. Some extensions. Not 100% set in stone. Need feedback.

Women's DI – 2013–2014 will look to eradicate WPL and push them back into DI, DII will

get bigger, and potential creation of women's DIII. Not 100% set in stone. Need feedback.

Concern about people needing a break from season to season. Required # of Senior games don't have to be spread out over one entire year. It can be in one season, if you can get them all in. May need to expand rosters to accommodate that.

Recruitment: Senior clubs need to hold clinics to allow collegiate players to see your face and know who you and your club are, so that upon graduation, they'll be interested in still playing. Need to have club old boys/girls and retired players stay involved and continue with coaching. Learn to ask in a finite way (specifics – business plan).

IXX. Budget Discussion & Adoption of New Budget:

Currently \$6,000 for programs. Looking to budget \$8,000. Looking to bump collegiate up to \$450 (shows \$350 on budget). Keeping Senior level @ \$500.

Potential programs: New 7s program for collegiate women (\$2,000). Men's collegiate & club combined program (bigger pot of \$\$). Possible 15s collegiate tournament (\$2,000). Senior clubs need to tell GRU what programs they want to see. Never be afraid to ask for funding, but ask as far in advance as possible. Plan for success.

South adding \$17/head, which explains the lowering of GRU dues.

NARC moves to accept budget and accept new dues structure. GA College & State University seconds. All clubs vote yes, except 3 nos (Athens, Bucks, Golden Isles). Motion carries. Budget passes. Dues invoices expected in about a week.

Senior clubs can agree to change for themselves to do per-head GRU dues structure.

XX. Executive Committee Elections:

President Nominations: Brian Auerbach (NARC), Bucks second that nomination. Gary Kent moves to close nominations. Jacksonville State seconds. Emory seconds.

Secretary Nominations: Lee Fudger (High Country), Athens seconds that nomination. Gary Kent moves to close nominations.

Treasurer Nominations: Gary Kent, Athens seconds that nomination.

At-Large Member Nominations: Rene Daniel, High Country seconds that nomination. Dustin Karr (NARC), Georgia College & State Univ. seconds. Rene declines in favor of new blood.

Electron process is closed w/ new President: Brian Auerbach, VP: Mike Ryan, Treasurer: Gary Kent, At-Large Member: Dustin Karr.

XXI. Old Business:

None.

XXII. New Business:

Eric Pheifer (Georgia Games) – Do you want to continue to Georgia Rugby Games? Rene and others suggest returning to 10s and not 7s. Georgia Games is a non-funded State Agency charged with developing sports in Georgia. Basically the United States Olympic Committee for the State of Georgia. Award physical fitness grants to middle and high schools around the state. Needs to not compete with Beerfoot & Pitch-A-Tent. May move to 2nd week in July to not compete. Hotlanta is moving to June.

Harlequins hosting Women's Division I Elite 8 Playoffs. October 27 & 28. Looking to have support from as many Georgia clubs as possible.

BOAR (Business Organization of Atlanta Ruggers) – Monday, August 27, 7PM, at Brewhouse in Atlanta. Designed to network and reach out professionally to keep people employed.

Dustin Karr – Veterans Tournament. See item XIII above for more details. More info will be sent.

Dave Conyers moves to establish the sub-committee to establish the Georgia Youth Academy, under the control of the GRU. Seeking a \$2,000 loan to establish it and repay once sponsorship is found. Gary Kent thinks it should be a great topic of discussion for next Executive Committee Meeting.

Jacksonville State doing a camp. \$20/person or \$100/school (5 minimum). Info will be sent out via GRU email.

XXIII. Adjourned at 4:55pm