



Georgia Rugby Union

2014 Annual General Meeting Agenda

Sunday, May 4, 2014

Open Meeting:

GRU Officers in Attendance: President - Brian Auerbach, Vice President Mike Haire, Treasurer - Gary Kent, Secretary - Lee Fudger,

Member at Large - Dustin Karr, absent

I. Attendance:

In attendance: Emory Men, Georgia College & State University Men, Georgia State Men, Georgia Tech Men, Clemson Women, Emory Women, Georgia Tech Women, Kennesaw State Women, N. Georgia Women, Athens, Old White, Columbus, High Country, Macon, NARC, Valdosta, Atlanta Harlequins, Phoenix Youth, and Kennesaw Youth, Georgia Southern Men, Jacksonville State Men, North Georgia Men, UGA Men, Georgia Southern Women, Armstrong Atlantic, Atlanta Bucks, Renegades, Gwinnett Griffins, GRITS

Not In Attendance: Golden Isles, Hilton Head, Life, Savannah

II. Quorum Decision

Gary Kent, to have a quorum at this meeting we have to move for teams in not currently in good standing with the GRU to be in good standing. GRITS move that the Griffins be made in good standing for the purposes and duration of the AGM meeting, Harlequins second. Griffins are made in good standing for the purposes of the AGM meeting with a verbal agreement to pay all owed dues soon.

III. Approval of Minutes of 2013 AGM: Harlequins move to waive reading and adopt 2013 minutes, GRITS seconds.

IV. Presidential recap of the year: Savannah Shamrocks Men's Club lost yesterday in the South playoffs.

Valdosta State is currently ranked 2nd in the South and 10th in the U.S.
Emory men have made the collegiate playoffs.

This year we helped put on the USA Men's Eagles first international test of 2014 World Cup Qualifier playoff for the Americas between USA Eagles and the Uruguayan National team at Kennesaw State University.

The GRU also supported the Harlequins in putting on the IRB Women's Sevens World Series, which will be an Olympic Qualifier next year.

The GRU is looking into hiring a paid administrator for the GRU-GU either for ourselves or with another GU such as Florida or the Carolinas.

- V. **Sr. Men's Report** We're still working on how to conduct matrix games with all the new teams in DIII and USA rugby regulations. Possibly some DIII teams will have to move to DII, so that Georgia has its own DII league. A Competition Chair and Committee are needed to determine the best way to resolve the issues.

USA rugby's system that we believed required 10 games last year actually requires 8 matrix games with 2 qualifiers counting.

GRITS felt that the Georgia Cup Division of DIII was a mess with many teams forfeiting causing disinterest in the other teams in the division. Griffins felt that the Georgia Cup division struggled with numbers, noting that Golden Isles forfeited most of their games.

Athens and High Country reported that the other half of DIII functioned fine.

Brian Auerbach appointed Ben Robinson from the GRITS as the DIII Competition Committee Chair which Ben accepted. Their goal will be to determine the best way to schedule next year's DIII competition so that the GRU presents the best team to go on to playoffs while allowing less established teams to get matrix game time.

Mike Haire brought up the issue he observed of DII players dropping down to DIII games when their DII teams don't have a match. Brian Auerbach for the GRU stated that we understood that the USA Rugby software would stop such behavior, but it doesn't seem to. Candice noted that the Harlequins keep an administrator on the sidelines watching both teams' substitutions and rosters. Brian Auerbach noted that the GRU can and will suspend Coaches or Captains for violations of the rules, but that USA Rugby rules do allow for some inter division play, and that the Competition Committee will look into the problem.

- VI. **Women's Sr. Division** Candace Hall, the Arc-Angels are in the south-east playoffs now, they lost yesterday and forfeited today. The Harlequins with 5 losses and 2 wins placed in the top of the lower half of the WPL.

Next year will be the Harlequins 30th Anniversary and they will be hosting multiple events May 16, 17 and 18th.

Many members of the Harlequins are assisting in coaching women's collegiate teams i.e. Tech, Emory, Life, UGA, and are talking with KS.

- VII. Collegiate** Tech had a disappointing 15s season, but did win the Bowl at the College Conference 7s. N. Georgia noted that they only had four teams in its division able to compete and that they had trouble with some of their assigned officials. Brian Auerbach noted that a Coaching course is scheduled to be held in Atlanta in August and that the GRU is always looking to develop referees. Mike Haire noted that there will be other teams joining the college side, so they should make for more and better games. The GRU is looking to add colleges back to its membership as 7s members at \$100, GRITS moves to accept the idea, Griffins second, approved.
- VIII. GRU Lifetime Achievement Award** Brian Auerbach took a break to take time to present Gary Kent with the GRU Lifetime Achievement Award for his years of service to the sport of rugby and especially rugby in Georgia.
- IX. Youth and High School League** Brian Auerbach asked if the GRU should get involved with the Atlanta Youth Rugby league in Grant Park which all agreed that the GRU should look into assisting the youth rugby league. Brian Auerbach explained that USA Rugby's master plan is to develop middle school rugby, so that players aren't lost between youth and high school. A discussion began about the Georgia State Games being the State Rugby Organization that governs the GRU and Youth Rugby, but that issue was tabled for further investigation. Everyone agreed that each club should reach out and associate with youth clubs in their area. Brian Auerbach moved to give money to assist Georgia Youth Rugby, GRITS seconds. Brian Auerbach appointed Mike Siano and Eric Pfeifer to be the committee chairmen on GRU Youth Rugby. Dave Conyers presented a proposal on a Georgia Youth Rugby Academy which was tabled for future discussion.
- X. 7s** Brian Auerbach appointed Jesse Posnansky as the Coach for the GRU 7s team and announced that tryouts would be May 17th at Southbend Park eligible to all GRU players over 18.
- XI. Georgia Games GRU 7s** They're set for June 7th open to GRU and Non-GRU teams. \$200 for non-member, \$100 for members. Hopefully this will solidify the relationship between the Georgia Games and Georgia rugby, so they might assist us in some organization.
- XII. 7s Sanctioned Tournaments & Process to Advance** Minn Cho from Old White asked if the GRU 7s would be a qualifier to advance in the national 7s. Brian Auerbach and Gary said that we were still working on that and would notify everyone as soon as possible.

XIII. SERRS Not present. The Athens vs. Savannah playoff match was discussed. It was determined that the referee assigned only had one year of experience and wasn't assigned ARs which took a lot away from a championship game. Brian Auerbach stated that the GRU would require certified referees, ARs, leadsets, the presence of a GRU officer and if we can a camera for such future games. Brian Auerbach moves that we buy another set of leadsets for SERRS, which was tabled to look at the cost.

XIV. Treasurer's Report Gary Kent, we're not happy with clubs ignoring dues invoice notices. That we fine teams that ignore dues payment dates. Gary suggests that we need to find new ways to collect dues and to entice college and women's teams back to the GRU.

Currently there's \$4,500 outstanding in dues, probably the highest Gary has ever seen. The GRU did receive a onetime financial windfall from USA Rugby South's dissolution of about \$11,000. The GRU officers elected to use a portion of that money to support the South's Men and U-19 programs.

We are close to budget numbers if we can collect what is currently owed.

XV. Budget for 2014-15:

a. Paid Administrator

Brian Auerbach proposed that we employ a paid administrator for the GRU. Ideally we'd split payment with another GU. Many other GU's use this type of system or employ an administrator themselves. Brian Auerbach will investigate further with the surrounding GUs and costs to the GRU. At this time options of the GRU merging with a surrounding GU were brought up, possibly either True South or The Carolinas. GRITS move for Brian Auerbach to investigate further with the surrounding GUs, Harlequins second.

b. Proposed Budget

Gary Kent suggested that we keep the same dues structure as 2013.

This year's Georgia Games GRU 7s is exploratory since it's the first time we're teaming up with the Georgia Games. We expect the numbers to be the same, so we'll keep the budget the same as 2013.

Men's All-star 7s has been budgeted \$4,500 to assist with entrance fees and travel.

Brian Auerbach reminded the meeting that the Bucks will be traveling to play in the Bingham Cup this year and may ask for the GRU's assistance with funds, but no request has been made yet.

Gary pointed out that \$800 has been dedicated to sending someone to the USA Rugby Congress.

Dave Conyers asked if \$500 could be set aside as seed money for his proposed Rugby Academy. Brian Auerbach suggested that once the Academy is more solidified the GRU would dedicate funds for it, so that request was tabled.

Brian Auerbach moved that the 2014 proposed budget be accepted, GRITS seconded and the budget was adopted.

XVI. Elections:

- a. President**-Uncontested, Brian Auerbach was conscripted to the position
- b. Treasurer**- Uncontested, Gary Kent accepts the position, but requests an Assistant Treasurer. Brandon Smith from the GRITS is nominated by GRITS and accepted the position as Assistant Treasurer.
- c. Member at Large**- Andrew Cruz representative from Athens conveyed that Dustin Karr would accept the position again and nominated Dustin for Athens, seconded by SERRS. Columbus nominated Keith Strellis, seconded by the Griffins. It was attempted to reach Dustin by phone, but no connection was ever made. Keith Strellis spoke of his history with Georgia rugby and why he would like the position. A vote was taken of all attending teams and proxies and Keith Strellis was elected GRU Member at Large for 2014-15.
- d. Georgia nomination for USA Rugby Congress member for the South East**-Brian Auerbach explained that we would nominate a proposed representative along with a nomination from True South, Florida and The Carolinas to fill two positions at the USA Rugby Congress for the South East. Lee Fudger nominated himself for High Country, seconded by GRITS and Griffins. Gary Kent for Columbus nominated Candace Hall from the Harlequins, seconded by Minn Cho for Old White. Minn Cho nominated himself for Old White, seconded Mike Haire for Kennesaw Youth. All three nominees gave spoke about what they could do in the position and why they would be good for it, a vote was taken and Candace Hall was elected to be the Georgia nomination for the Southeastern Representative to the USA Rugby Congress.
- e. Coaching Advisor**- Brian Auerbach appointed Dave Conyers as Coaching Advisor for the GRU.

XVII. New Memberships:

No new teams requested membership this year.

XVIII. Adjourned