



# WORLD SLEDDOG ASSOCIATION

Sleddoggraces since 1995

## MINUTES

WSA General Assembly

25<sup>th</sup> June 2022, 10:00 AM

Altes Rathaus (Old Town Hall) Buchen, Germany

### Topic 1: Welcome and reports of previous years

The Mayor of Buchen, Roland Burger, welcomes the WSA General Assembly (GA) to the Old Town Hall of Buchen and wishes the delegates a productive meeting.

Arno Steichler, Chairman of the WSA, thanks the Mayor and welcomes the delegates who have made their way to Germany ones again. After formally opening the General Assembly, he then continues to report on the activities of the past three years as the past two GAs had to be cancelled due to the Covid Pandemic.

The past three years have been challenging for all of us. The Dryland World Championship in Great Britain in 2019 seem a lifetime ago. We look back on an event in a fantastic location in the grounds of a castle and a trail with unforgettable bends but also on the challenges that Brexit and the never-ending rain posed. The following World Championships Sprint and Mid-Distance in Zuberec had to be cancelled due to the sudden onset of thaw. The Covid Pandemic then led to a string of cancellations of Championships as well as General Assemblies.

Finally, there was a glimmer of hope, when the WSA together with our Swedish organisers decided despite the looming threat of further Covid cancellations to go ahead with the Sprint, Mid- and Long-Distance World Championships in Sweden in 2022. Our sincere thanks go to Niklas Andersson, Anders Hörnlund and Karina Andreassen who together with their teams made these Championships happen. But even these Championships were not without their challenges. With the invasion of Ukraine and the lingering uncertainty around Covid, starter numbers in the Sprint and Mid-Distance Championship sadly did not meet expectations.

Aside from the Championships, the cooperation with the IFSS tied up a lot of resources. Time and again, unilateral decisions by the IFSS caused unrest and discussions at our end. All in all, there can be no talk of an exchange at eye level. At the IFSS GA on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022, the IFSS delegates voted in favour of continuing the cooperation for another 2 years, but no further joint events will take place during this time and the IFSS will reintroduce purebred classes at their championships. As part of topic 6 of today's agenda, we will discuss the cooperation with the IFSS in greater detail, but the WSA Board is of the opinion that we need to stand our ground and take appropriate action against these unilateral decisions of the IFSS.

Looking ahead, the following projects form the cornerstones of today's General Assembly:

- The continuation of the collaboration with the IFSS
- Given the recent decision of the IFSS that no further joint events will be held in the foreseeable future, it makes no sense for the WSA to introduce the DID. Therefore, the WSA Board withdraws its motion 11.1.
- Until joint Race Rules have been agreed by both organisations and approved by the WSA GA, the WSA Race Rules as they stand today are applicable to all WSA races. This also means that athletes from other international federations are welcome at WSA events, but they must be nominated through the national WSA member. Only one team leader per nation will be allowed.



The WSA Board withdraws motion 11.2.

- Instead, the WSA Board proposes in an urgent motion to introduce a charge for the WDL and in return commits to putting on a World Cup.
- And finally, this year, the WSA GA must elect the Board, the Extended Board and the Financial Controllers. All Board members who are present are available for re-election.

## **Topic 2: Acceptance of invitation and agenda as per WSA statutes**

The invitation and agenda of the GA is accepted unanimously.

## **Topic 3: Counting of delegates and votes & attendance list**

After the attendance list is checked, Arnold Petutschnig, Vice-Chairman of the WSA counts the votes that are represented at the GA in Buchen and confirms that 21 votes are present. The absolute majority is 11 votes.

Appendix 1: List of attendees

## **Topic 4: Report of the Treasurer and the Financial Controllers - Discharge of Board**

Cindy van den Brink, Treasurer of the WSA, reports on income and expenditures of the past three years. After two years with hardly any races due to weather challenges and the Covid Pandemic, the finances of the WSA are healthy despite significant expenditures for the WSA World Championships Sprint & Mid-Distance 2022 in Östersund/ Sweden.

Gudrun van de Mortel, Financial Controller since 2019, confirms that she and Mary Carter checked the bookkeeping of the WSA ahead of the GA and found it to be in good order. She asks the Assembly to discharge the Treasurer. Arno Steichler then asks the Assembly to discharge the entire Board.

The General Assembly unanimously discharges the Treasurer and the Board.

## **Topic 5a: Election of Board and Extended Board for a period of 3 years**

Gudrun van de Mortel (NLD) and Atilla Kiss (ROU) are unanimously elected to preside over the Board elections. The Board is elected by secret ballot. The Extended Board will only be elected by secret ballot on request. The entire Board is elected for a term of 3 years.

The Assembly agrees unanimously to destroy the ballot papers following the elections.

## **Results Board elections**

- Chairman: Arno Steichler (GER)  
18 yes      3 no      0 abstentions
- Vice-Chairman: Arnold Petutschnig (AUT)  
21 yes      0 no      0 abstentions
- Secretary: Irene Valenkamp (GBR)  
18 yes      3 no      0 abstentions
- Treasurer: Cindy van den Brink (NLD)  
18 yes      1 no      2 abstentions



## Results Extended Board elections

- Director Dryland: John Carter (SCT)  
21 yes      0 no      0 abstentions
- Director Sprint: Christof Diehl (GER)  
20 yes      0 no      1 abstention
- Director Distance: Michael Landau (GER)  
20 yes      0 no      1 abstention
- Director Veterinary Affairs: Karsten Hesse (GER)  
21 yes      0 no      0 abstentions
- Director Media/Sponsoring (in a secret ballot)  
Thierry Lutter (FRA): 10      Manuela Petutschnig-Gruber (AUT): 10      Abstentions: 1

The WSA Statutes state that in case of a tie, the Chairman has the casting vote and Arno Steichler confirms that Manuela Petutschnig-Gruber has duly been elected to the role of Director Media/Sponsoring.

John Carter is elected Director Sport by the Directors Sprint, Distance and Dryland.

## Topic 5b: Election of 2 Financial Controllers for a period of 2 years

The two Financial Controllers are also due for election this year. The previous Financial Controller Gudrun van de Mortel (NLD) is available for another term. Mary Carter (SCT) is standing down. Attila Kiss (ROU) was proposed for the role.

Gudrun van de Mortel and Attila Kiss are confirmed as Financial Controllers for the next two years.

The Chairman thanks Gudrun van de Mortel and Attila Kiss for the professional conduct of the elections.

## Topic 6: Update on collaboration between WSA and IFSS & extension of trial period by 2 years

In 2019, the WSA GA agreed to a 'try-out' collaboration with the IFSS. The Chairman reports on what has been achieved in the past two years, the highlight being the joint WSA/IFSS Sprint, Mid- and Long-Distance Championships in Sweden in 2022.

However, in the past two years, also a lot of energy has been wasted with the IFSS leadership failing to meet the WSA at eye level, often making unilateral decisions and interpreting them to their advantage.

At the IFSS GA on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022, 90% of IFSS delegates voted to continue the 'try-out' collaboration with the WSA for a further two years but as proposed by the IFSS Council no further joint events will be held.

The WSA Board proposes to the WSA GA to extend the cooperation by a further two years and use this time to work on a common set of race rules. Once these have been agreed with the IFSS, the WSA GA will have the final say on these rules and their introduction.

Finally, the WSA Board proposes that starters with purebred teams of other organisations continue to be welcome at WSA Championships. However, these starters must be nominated by the WSA Member in the country for which the musher would like to compete.

The WSA GA agrees unanimously to the extension of the 'try-out' collaboration with the IFSS for a further two years.



## **Topic 7: Changes to WSA Statutes & WSA Race Rules**

In October 2021, the FCI recognised Yakutian Laikas as FCI recognised sled dogs. The WSA Statutes and Race Rules must be amended to reflect this. The WSA Board proposes to add Yakutian Laikas to Category 2 (freighting dogs) together with Alaskan Malamutes, Greenland Dogs, Samoyeds and Canadian Eskimo Dogs.

WSA Statutes: §2.1 and §4.1

WSA Dryland Race Rules: Definitions – Sled Dog

WSA Race Rules: 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 3.1.2, 4.1.1, 5.1.2 and 6.2.2

The WSA GA agrees unanimously to the proposed change to the WSA Statutes and Race Rules.

The WSA's financial year currently runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April – 31<sup>st</sup> March. As often the final invoices of a season have not yet come in by the end of March, the WSA Treasurer proposes to move the financial year to 1<sup>st</sup> May until 30<sup>th</sup> April.

WSA Statutes: §5

The WSA GA agrees unanimously to the proposed change to the WSA Statutes.

Appendix 2: Rewritten Statutes and Race Rules

## **Topic 8: New membership applications**

New membership applications were received from the Sled Dog Federation of Kazakhstan and FIDASC, the Italian umbrella sports association.

### Sled Dog Federation of Kazakhstan (KSFSD)

The WSA Board has checked the admission documents and recommends approving the membership application of the Sled Dog Federation of Kazakhstan (KSFSD). Questions are raised on whether KSFSD is a federation that is recognized by the State as the name suggests. The Board will check this. The WSA GA votes on the membership application contingent on all documents being in order.

The WSA GA agrees unanimously to the membership application of KSFSD.

### FIDASC

The WSA Statutes don't allow for a third Italian member, but the current Italian WSA member Antartica, who is also a member of the umbrella organisation FIDASC, agrees to turn their WSA membership into a dormant membership in favour of FIDASC.

The WSA GA agrees unanimously.

No single membership applications have been received.

## **Topic 9: Applications and Appointments of new Race Marshals and Race Judges**

- WSA Race Marshal: Rudiger de Pauw (BEL) - unanimous
- WSA Race Judge: Melis de Heus (NLD) - unanimous
- WSA Race Judge Aspirant: Giulia Rossetto (ITA) - unanimous
- WSA Race Judge Aspirant: Ellie Camacho (GBR) – 18 yes, 3 abstentions



## **Topic 10: Future Championships**

Rudiger de Pauw (BEL) provides an update on the **WSA Dryland World Championship 2022** in Houthalen-Helchteren (Pampa)/Belgium on 12/13 November 2022.

Fabrizio Filoni and Lucca Quartullo (ITA) introduce the **WSA World Championships Sprint & Mid-Distance 2023** in Vermiglio/Italy from 9-11 February 2023.

Michael Landau (GER) presents the **WSA Dryland World Championship 2023** in Mühlberg/Germany from 8-10 December 2023.

## **Topic 11: Proposals WSA Board**

Topics 11.1 (Introduction of the DID at the WSA) and 11.2 (Guidelines for entering participants in WSA/RNB Championships) are withdrawn as they are superseded by the decisions taken at the IFSS General Assembly on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

Instead, the WSA Board requests to be allowed to put forward an urgent motion regarding the introduction of a chargeable WDL.

The urgent motion is allowed (21 yes/ 0 no/ 0 abstentions).

### Urgent motion: Introduction of a chargeable WDL

The WSA Board proposes to introduce a charge for its WDL (WSA Driver Licence). Starting with the 2022/23 season, the WDL is a prerequisite for entering WSA Championships and World Cup races. The WDL is valid during the WSA's financial year (1<sup>st</sup> May – 30<sup>th</sup> April). The cost of the WDL is in line with the cost of the IFSS DID (currently €45). Juniors will not have to pay for their WDL. To avoid adding to the financial burden mushers are facing, the WSA Board will propose to the IFSS Council that both organisations should recognize each other's licence. The WSA World Cup Calendar will be published in early October.

The WSA GA agrees to the urgent motion unanimously.

## **Topic 12: Proposals Members**

### Dutch Sleddog Organisation (DSO)

1. Points to consider when choosing the location of a championship.  
This motion is withdrawn.
2. Better compliance with rules such as not speaking negatively on social media and request from event organisers.  
This motion has been filed to bring these issues to members' attention.
3. Making sure that the WSA maintains its identity in the collaboration with the IFSS.  
This motion is withdrawn in the light of the decisions taken at the IFSS GA.
4. Registration process of IFSS members for WSA events in countries where the WSA member is different to the IFSS member.  
This motion is withdrawn in the light of the decisions taken at the IFSS GA.



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## Mushing Belgium

1. Vaccination rules to accept the RapidSTATUS™ titer test (Biotech, a lateral flow serological test) as an alternative for the revaccination with the core vaccines against CAV-1 (canine adeno virus-type 1), CDV (canine distemper virus) and CPV (canine parvo virus type-2).

This motion is withdrawn in anticipation of the new vaccination rules that will be discussed at the 2023 WSA GA.

2. Introduction of a Mid-Distance Dryland Championship: Mushing Belgium is proposing a mid-distance category Mid 6 and Mid 8 in Dryland Championships. The distance will not exceed 25 km per stage and a maximum of two stages will be run.

The motion is rejected with 17 votes against and 4 abstentions.

## **Topic 13: Any Other Business (AOB)**

### Communication

Ideas are discussed on how the WSA can be made more attractive to potential sponsors. One idea is to give the sport more of a face by portraying mushers who participate in championships. Manuela Petutschnig-Gruber is asked to give this more thought as part of her new role as Director Media & Sponsoring.

### Attracting more young people into the sport

The idea of creating a trophy for juniors to attract more young people into the sport is discussed.

### Split Sprint & MD Championships

It is suggested that more race sites might come forward offering to organise a sprint championship if the requirement of also having to organise a mid-distance championship is dropped. This is rejected on the grounds that a stand-alone mid-distance championship is not viable for any organiser. If race organisers would like to offer a venue to the international mushing community but don't have the trail lengths to stage a mid-distance championship, they can now propose to host one of the WSA World Cup races.

The Chairman thanked the delegates for attending the General Assembly and closed the meeting at 15:05.

Minutes:

Irene Valenkamp/ Secretary

Approved by:

Arno Steichler/ Chairman



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## Appendix 1: List of Attendees

Club	Country	Delegate Name	Number of Votes
WSA	Austria	Arnold Petutschnig	1
WSA	Austria	Manuela Petutschnig-Gruber	0*
WSA	Germany	Christof Diehl	1
WSA	Germany	Michael Landau	1
WSA	Germany	Arno Steichler	1
WSA	Great Britain	Irene Valenkamp	1
WSA	Netherlands	Cindy van den Brink	1
WSA	Scotland	John Carter	1
		<b>Total Number of Votes Board</b>	<b>7</b>
RSSC	Austria	Manuela Petutschnig-Gruber	2
MBEL	Belgium	Rudiger de Pauw	2
VDSV	Germany	Michael Landau Christof Diehl Arno Steichler	1 1 1
AMWA	Great Britain	Irene Valenkamp	1
Antartica	Italy 1	Luca Quartullo Fabrizio Filoni	1 1
Lucky Sleddog	Italy 2	Andreas Bordiga	2
DSO	Netherlands	Gudrun van de Mortel Lonneke Bom	0 1
CSSBN	Romania	Kiss Attila	1
RJ	Netherlands	Melis de Heus	Guest
SSC NL	Netherlands	Marjolein Bil	Guest
		<b>Total Number of Votes Members</b>	<b>14</b>
		<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF VOTES</b>	<b>21</b>

\* Voting rights from Topic 5b; does not impact the number of votes as Manuela Petutschnig-Gruber already represents the maximum of 2 votes for RSCC Austria.

## Appendix 2: Rewritten Statutes & Race Rules

[https://www.wsa-sleddog.com/images/Downloads/Rennregeln/Satzung\\_WSA\\_EN\\_final\\_221.pdf](https://www.wsa-sleddog.com/images/Downloads/Rennregeln/Satzung_WSA_EN_final_221.pdf)

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