

EMPIRE RFU GU
MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD
May 5, 2013

The Executive Board met via conference call on Sunday, May 5, 2013, at 9:00 p.m.

Attendance of Voting Board Members: Renee Ovrut (President), Mike Crafton (VP), Kyle Antoian (VP), Ashley Belline (ED Women), Steve Molnar (ED Men), John Bradley (Colleges), Sean Horan (ED 7s), Brad Kleiner (ED Referees), J.C. Whipple (Administrator)

Absent: Oscar Prue (VP)

Attendance of Ad-Hoc Member: Gary Heavner (USAR Delegate)

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 p.m.

OLYMPIC DEVELOPMENT ACADEMIES

Sean Horan discussed the plan and a request for funds for a shared Olympic Development Academy between Empire GU and New England. The structure is meant to be feasible and sensible, and provide a pathway for Empire / New England Men's 7s athletes, aged 17 and above. There will be a combined team with shared training and coaching structure. Athletes will train with the individual club one (1) night a week with the ODA two (2) nights a week. The team will play in 5-6 7s tournaments over the course of 6-7 months and tryouts will be held in mid-June. This format has been approved by USA Rugby.

The funding request is for \$20,000. Mike Crafton said this level of funding was consistent with other areas around the country. He also said that part of the plan was for Coaches and Players to give back to the rugby community.

Sean echoed this sentiment and said that any coach could participate, that opportunity to try out was open to every male athlete within the Empire GU / New England and that there would be free camps and coaching clinics throughout the GU.

John Bradley asked what kind of impact a commitment would have financially on the GU. Mike Crafton detailed that the Board had previously earmarked funds from Men's Select Side, Women's Select Side, Colleges and a Misc. Select budget line. The \$20,000 would come from this lines.

Renee Ovrut made a motion to approve funding the Empire / New England ODA at the level of \$20,000. The motion was seconded by Kyle Antoian. The motion passed unanimously.

* The Empire GU Board will provide installments of funding on an as-needed basis, up to a total of \$20,000

SANCTIONS AGAINST BUFFALO RUGBY CLUB

Renee Ovrut explained that Buffalo Rugby Club (BRC) had appealed the enacted sanctions against the club. The counter-proposal included dropping their two entries down to Division 2 and Division 3.

Renee spoke this week with Dave Cieslik, BRC President. He indicated that this season was an anomaly for the club, with issues in numbers and the playoff forfeit. There was a feeling by BRC that dropping down to D3 would provide the second side a relief on travel as there was a North / South split and most of the D3 North clubs were in close proximity. He also said that preventing a second side from competing would negatively impact BRC.

Renee indicated that USA Rugby was awaiting word of the GU Board's decision, as it would be meeting early in the week to mediate if necessary. BRC has also written to USA Rugby, appealing all three enacted sanctions:

1. \$500 fine
2. BRC D2 side ineligible for all postseason competition for next two (2) years
3. BRC prevented from entering a second side into Empire GU for next two (2) years

There was much discussion surrounding whether to allow BRC to drop to D2 / D3, the impact this would have on BRC, other clubs and the GU. It was also discussed as to whether BRC should be allowed to enter a second side in Empire GU Division 4. It was determined that D4 did not have postseason competition and that any players competing at that level would be eligible to participate in D1 postseason.

Gary Heavner reminded the Board that it was necessary for a 2/3 majority to overturn any previously-enacted policies or votes.

Two motions were presented for consideration to amend Sanction #3 (BRC prevented from entering a second side to Empire GU for two years) against BRC:

1. Renee Ovrut made a motion to amend Sanction #3 and allow BRC to enter a second side into Empire GU Division 3. Ashley Belline seconded the motion.

Vote: Failed, In Favor (4) / Opposed (4)
2/3 Majority was not reached

2. Renee Ovrut made a motion to amend Sanction #3 and allow BRC to enter a second side into Empire GU Division 4. Ashley Belline seconded the motion.

Vote: Failed, In Favor (5) / Opposed (3)
2/3 Majority was not reached

SENIOR WOMEN

Ashley Belline reported that Tracy from NERFU was working on a D3 Round-Robin playoff structure.

SENIOR MEN

Steve Molnar reported that a draft of the Men's D1 schedule was in hand and a call was scheduled with NERFU to work out any final kinks. Work could now begin for scheduling the lower divisions.

A discussion took place regarding B-side matches / requirements. New England is pushing for a B-side requirement, though consideration would be given to Buffalo due to travel logistics. A question was raised about D2 and the numbers varying from club-to-club.

Renee Ovrut stated that something formal should be in place where the Home Team makes the offer of a B-side match and that defined time minimums be instituted (ie 30-minute halves), unless agreed upon between the clubs.

COLLEGES

John Bradley reported that NSCRO Downstate Women are moving to Tri State and that Downstate Men are adding six (6) clubs for the Fall. Upstate Men are possibly ready to move outside of GU as a plan is being put together by Annemarie Farrell from Ithaca. If that takes hold, it may be replicated for the Upstate Women.

There is a question as to whether Empire clubs should be competing at the D1 level, or drop to D2. Univ. at Buffalo's recent showing in the USA playoffs may indicate that D2 is a more appropriate level of competition.

UNIV. at BUFFALO WOMEN – FUNDING REQUEST

The Univ. at Buffalo Women have advance to the USA Rugby Championships in Palo Alto, CA. The club is requesting funding assistance. Renee Ovrut pointed out that the club had not-yet paid its previous dues invoice of \$400.

Mike Crafton made a motion to waive the \$400 dues invoice to Univ. at Buffalo Women and consider that a stipend for the USA Championships. Sean Horan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

J.C. Whipple
Administrator