

Southeastern Rugby, Inc.

Annual General Meeting
Wednesday, April 8th, 2020

Open: 8:30 PM EST

Began: 9:25 PM EST

Roll Call

Commissioner – Marty Bradley

Secretary/Treasurer – James Farrar

Alabama – Cole Bahan

Georgia – Cameron DiLoreto

Georgia Tech – Jeremiah Russell

Kennesaw State – Randall Joseph / Muhammad Abdullah

Kentucky – Gary Anderson

Memphis – Dr. Richard Cole

Middle Tennessee State – Jody Hensley

Mississippi – Spencer Harris

South Carolina – Mark Morris / Mac Stiles

Tennessee – Patrick Beacom

Not Present: Auburn & Mississippi State

Opening remarks

Overview of agenda provided by Commissioner Marty Bradley

USA Rugby Bankruptcy Reorganization & COVID19

- Timeline
 - November 2019 - USA Rugby faces a liquidity crunch forcing the execution of borrowed funds from World Rugby and a commercial loan. A Task Force is formed to facilitate a reorganization of USA Rugby to right the ship and mitigate future losses.
 - January 2020 - Task force expands to include subgroups from each segment of USA Rugby. Commissioner Bradley is drafted to represent D1AA in the collegiate segment. First report is delivered to USA Rugby Board.
 - February 2020 - Second report is delivered to USA Rugby Board. New projections reveal that USA Rugby is \$4M in debt with a -\$5.2M negative equity. Anticipated that USA Rugby will be completely insolvent by May 2020 even after an infusion of cash from World Rugby.
 - March 2020 - COVID-19 arrives. Shutting down rugby means no spring registrations, so liquidity position worsens. USA Rugby files for Chapter 11 Bankruptcy on March 30.
- USA Rugby's Future
 - The goal of USA Rugby is to emerge from the bankruptcy proceedings as a much different yet functional national governing body providing selected services. These services include liability insurance for teams and participants, baseline coaching certification and a universal registration system. The rugby community should know if this is attainable by the middle of May.
- College Rugby's Future
 - There's a tremendous amount of movement in the collegiate world as conferences and teams attempt to find a home for a competitive structure and organization. SCRC is currently evaluating the options as they continue to form. Key factors for SCRC include:
 - A post season competition for both tiers of our conference that would be focused and designed for collegiate club rugby.
 - A proven infrastructure with shared values related to eligibility, disciplinary procedures, game management, competition management, and divisional characteristics.
 - Financial independence and autonomy in operations.
 - No conflicting interests that would diminish the importance or overall value of collegiate club rugby.
 - A connectional relationship with rugby's national governing body.

- Existing / Emerging Organizations
 - NSCRO / NCRO
 - The National Small College Rugby Organization has expanded operations to include conferences representing larger schools and teams. To date, the additions to this organization have mainly focused on Division II Men and Women conferences. They offer their own liability coverage and are acquiring a participant registration system.
 - USCRO
 - The United States Collegiate Rugby Organization is a new entity formed by the former Liberty Conference of D1A. The 21 teams of the Liberty have joined together with others to total over 35 teams now committed to this initiative. As of now these schools are all predominantly located in the Northeast with a few in the Mid Atlantic area. USCRO is committed to an ongoing connectional relationship with the national governing body and are using most of the organizational policies of USA Rugby.
 - D1A / CRAA
 - The College Rugby Association of America is the independent governing body of D1A Collegiate Men's Rugby. CRAA is offering any association of teams/conferences to work autonomously while providing services that aren't offered by the national governing body.
 - D1AA / TBD
 - There have been two conference calls involving D1AA conference commissioners focused on the idea of potentially forming a stand-alone organization with a connectional relationship with the national governing body. It would look very much like CRAA or USCRO in that there would be a requirement to build the infrastructure. They plan to leverage USA Rugby services post-bankruptcy should they exist.
- SCRC Next Steps
 - The future of our national governing body is TBD, though should USA Rugby return, it will be reduced to a shell of its former self, transitioning into a 'fees for service' type provider. With college and youth levels becoming more autonomous, its fate now rests in the hands of the senior clubs and how they decide to proceed. We will know more by mid-May.
 - The Conference is in need of a participant registration system, liability coverage, and coaching certification services. Should USA Rugby no longer be able to provide these services, newly established leagues (outlined above) would take the lead in offering them to their members.
 - The newly secured USA Rugby registration platform (pre bankruptcy) seems ideal.
 - Restructuring may allow for reduced player registration costs while also shifting conference fees to a per participant basis.
 - The postseason remains a sticking point, though the lack of participation in recent years (extensive travel and expenses, as well as player availability) speaks to our postseason priorities when deciding on a final affiliation/partnership.

Officer Elections

- Commissioner
 - Gary Anderson (KY) nominated Marty Bradley
 - Richard Cole (Memp) seconded the motion
 - Richard Cole (Memp) motioned to close the floor of further nominations and accept the nomination of Marty Bradley by unanimous consent
 - Gary Anderson (KY) seconded the motion
 - With no objections, Marty Bradley retained his position as Commissioner
- Treasurer/Secretary
 - Gary Anderson (KY) nominated Jim Farrar
 - Mark Morris (SC) seconded the motion
 - Richard Cole (Memp) motioned to close the floor of further nominations and accept the nomination of Jim Farrar by unanimous consent
 - Mark Morris (SC) seconded the motion
 - With no objections, Jim Farrar retained his position as Treasurer/Secretary

- Both men will serve a term of 1 year.
- The Commissioner shall have the authority to appoint additional personnel or advisers to serve as directors and on committees to support the operations of the conference. Current personnel include the following:
 - Gary Anderson – Competitions / Performance
 - Charles Dube – Discipline
 - Dave Haines – Referees
 - Marty Bradley – High Performance

Membership

- Using an extensive vetting process that ensures compatibility and competitiveness, only two programs chose to complete the application process for consideration:
 - Louisiana State University (LSU)
 - Clemson University
- Commissioner Bradley fielded questions while providing a macro view of each applicant
 - Jody Hensley (MT) inquired on the head coaching status of Clemson. The Commissioner confirmed that Clemson was player coached this past season following the turnover of their previous coach, though they have recently appointed Troy Hall to the position.
 - Randall Joseph (KS) inquired on the sourcing for the updated conference mileage chart. The Commissioner confirmed Google Maps as the source, using town centers as his points of origin. The original mileage chart was completed in the same fashion in 2011 with the original 12 SEC schools, with new members added upon admittance.
- Clemson University
 - Jim Farrar (SCRC) motioned to close the floor of further discussion and accept Clemson's application by unanimous approval
 - Mark Morris (SC) seconded the motion
 - With no objections, Clemson University was added to the SCRC as a Full Member.
- Louisiana State University
 - Jim Farrar (SCRC) motioned to close the floor of further discussion and accept Louisiana State's application by unanimous approval
 - Cameron DiLoreto (GA) seconded the motion
 - With no objections, Louisiana State University was added to the SCRC as a Full Member.
- Commissioner Bradley will follow up with both programs.

2020 Fall 15s Season Proposal

- Tier 1: Alabama, Clemson, Georgia, Kennesaw State, Kentucky, Louisiana State, South Carolina, Tennessee
 - 8 teams divided into 2 brackets of 4 → play each within your bracket and 1-2 crossovers → top 2 in each bracket play in DI SCRC Semi & Final
- Tier 2: Auburn, Georgia Tech, Memphis, Middle Tennessee State, Mississippi, Mississippi State
 - 6 teams playing each other in round robin format → top 2 play in DII SCRC Final
- Allows for home & away, crossovers, & friendlies
- Postseason TBD based on final affiliation agreement
- System for promotion & relegation to be provided
- Survey for dates to be delivered before May – ONLY ONE submission per team
 - First Weekend – September 12
 - Last Weekend – October 31
 - SCRC Playoff – November 7/14
 - Postseason – November 21 / December 5
- Commissioner Bradley fielded questions regarding the competition structure

- Randall Joseph (KS) inquired on the initial tier placement for the newly added member teams. The Commissioner confirmed that based on their '19-'20 divisional status, roster size, and organization, both teams would be placed in Tier 1 for the '20-'21 season, though the opportunity for relegation and promotion exists for all.
- Mark Morris (SC) inquired on league policies following the possible dissolution of USA Rugby. The Commissioner confirmed that the emerging collegiate organizations would be forming its own policies and guidelines for competition, eligibility, discipline and team expectations, using World Rugby and neighboring associations as reference. Special attention would be paid towards junior colleges and consortium agreements. Several opportunities will be available for league participants, and outsiders, to serve.
- Cameron DiLoreto (GA) inquired on the divisional make-up of Tier 1 teams. The Commissioner confirmed that travel will be the top concern, though the official breakdown was placed on hold until membership levels were determined. Gary Anderson (Competitions) will now be moving on scheduling.

2021 Spring 7s Season Proposal

- Return to the original Sevens Series qualifiers with a SCRC Championship format (2015 & 2016)
 - Tournament 1 – TBA
 - Tournament 2 – TBA
 - Tournament 3 – TBA
 - Championship – TBA
- Standards and Requirements TBD
- Winner → Postseason Tournament (TBD)
 - If winner defers, finalist may apply for an At-Large bid
- Highest finishing SEC team → Collegiate Rugby Championship (Philadelphia, PA)
- The growth of the conference may require these to be two-day events

Financial Report

- 2019-2020 Fiscal Season
 - Beginning Balance = \$24,300
 - Revenue = **\$13,200**
 - 12 member teams @ \$1,100 each
 - Expenses = **\$5,600**
 - \$3,100 – 15's Playoffs & Championship
 - \$1,500 – Match Balls
 - \$1,000 – Administrative
 - \$0 – 7's Championship
 - \$0 – All Star Competition
 - \$0 – Awards
 - Ending Balance = \$32,000 (The lack of a spring season created a \$7,600 surplus for the year)
- 2020-2021 Fiscal Proposal
 - Jim Farrar (SCRC) recommended withholding a formal budget proposal until the organizational structure, services menu, and registration system have been finalized. We will know more by mid-May.

Other Business

- Website
 - SCRC website hosting fee increased to \$750. As a result, we have ended our service arrangement and are currently linking everything to the SCRC facebook account. There may be an opportunity to house our web domain with the new registration system, though, in the meantime, Richard Cole (Memp) has offered to provide web services during the transition.

- **Contacts**
 - Teams are encouraged to send their contact information (Coach / Officer / School Rep) to the Commissioner by the end of this week so that all updates may be reflected.
- **Next Meeting**
 - Mid-May following outcome of USA Rugby Bankruptcy
 - Will need to hold a vote prior to signing an affiliation agreement
 - '20-'21 budget and dues structure proposal

Being no further business before the group, the meeting was closed at 9:25 PM EST.