

Meeting Minutes

WESTERN PA DIVISION / USA FENCING

Annual Meeting and Election – July 21, 2024

A.) Call meeting to order

- Meeting called to order at 4:35 pm.

B.) Roll call

- Attendees (alphabetical order by last name):

Erik Blank
Lucas Bolton
Harry Hardman
Andy Liu
Adam Marthens
Mike Opferman
Sarah Read
Olivia Weiss
Renee Weiss

C.) Adoption of minutes from last Annual Meeting on July 16, 2023

- Minutes from last annual meeting, held July 16, 2023, were adopted at this time.
- **Motion:** to accept Minutes; moved by Olivia Weiss, seconded by Sarah Read and Harry Hardman.

D.) Reports

1.) Treasurer's report: Harry Hardman provided the Treasurer's Report.

- As of 7/21/2024, the ending balance of the WPD bank account was \$6,555.03.
- Total income for the 8/1/2023-7/21/2024 period was \$1,233.00 (Meet fees: \$510.00; USA Fencing dues share rebates: \$723.00)
- Total expenses for the 8/1/2023-7/21/2024 period were \$2,778.54. (SafeSport policy partial rebates: \$300.00; storage facility rental: \$1,239.96; venue rental: \$150.00; operating and administrative: \$924.90; referee expenses: \$163.68)

- The increased expenses for storage facility rental were discussed: the primary storage facility location was no longer available mid-way through the 2023-2024 season, and the new storage facility was chosen based on location and availability rather than cost-effectiveness. Less expensive options are being investigated for the 2024-2025 season.
- **Motion:** to accept Treasurer's report: moved by Olivia Weiss, seconded by Renee Weiss and Adam Marthens.

2.) Secretary's Report: Renee Weiss provided the Secretary's Report. She summed up tournaments held and ratings awarded in the Division during the 2023-2024 season.

- There were 16 sanctioned tournaments during the 2023-2024 season, as well as the JO Qualifier and the SN Qualifier:
 - PFC: Season Kickoff 9/17
 - WPD: Fight Strong! 10/1
 - PFC: Fall Into a New Rating 10/8
 - Corsair: Corsair Nightmare D & Under 10/15
 - Tiger: Pittsburgh Steel Youth and D & Under 10/28
 - (PFC: Halloween Spookathon 10/29)
 - IUP: Shark Tank 11/4
 - PFC: Fall Fiesta 11/12
 - Corsair: "Fall Foilage" 11/18-19
 - PFC: Winter Invitational 12/3
 - WPD: JO Qualifier 12/9
 - Corsair: Women's Unrated and E & Under Foil 12/10
 - Corsair: Luau Open 1/28
 - PFC: For the Love of Fencing 2/11
 - Corsair: Irish City Open 3/23-24
 - Corsair: Bunny Daze Vet Saber 3/31
 - IUP: Solar Blade Showdown 4/6
 - (PFC: Spring Youth Challenge 4/7)
 - (CMU: Holy Grail 4/21)
 - WPD: SN Qualifier 4/27
 - PFC: Spring Celebration 5/11-12
- In addition, there was CMU's Holy Grail, as well as 2 unsanctioned youth tournaments at PFC.
- The 2024 Junior Olympics were held in Charlotte, NC in February. The WPD had 5 fencers competing across Junior and Cadet foil events.

- The 2024 Summer Nationals were held in Columbus, OH this summer. The WPD had a total of 34 fencers competing in a combination of 31 different events from Y10 through Vet 70 in foil, epee, and saber.
- Ratings awarded in the WPD during the 2023-2024 season:
 - Across the 16 sanctioned tournaments held in the WPD during the 2023-2024 season, there was a total of 39 ratings awarded.
 - Foil: 20 Es, 10 Ds, and 3 C; Epee: 4 Es, 2 D
- **Motion:** to accept Secretary's report: moved by Sarah Read, seconded by Olivia Weiss.

E.) Year End Review: Olivia Weiss briefly summed up memberships and clubs in the WPD for the 2023-2024 season:

- WPD Membership statistics:
 - According to the most recent USA Fencing membership spreadsheet, there are currently 366 members of the WPD, an increase from last season's 356 members.
 - Of these 366 members, 262 are under the age of 18.
 - The gender breakdown of members continues to be about twice as many men as women (238 men and 128 women).
 - There are 104 eligible voting members.
 - Across the 16 sanctioned tournaments held in the WPD during the 2023-2024 season, there was a total of 39 ratings awarded.
 - Foil: 20 Es, 10 Ds, and 3 C; Epee: 4 Es, 2 D
- WPD Club statistics:
 - There are currently 8 active clubs with USA Fencing Club Memberships in the WPD.

F.) Elections

- Elections were held for the positions of 2nd Vice Chair and Secretary.
- The Nominating Committee's Recommended Candidates were Erik Blank as 2nd Vice Chair and Renee Weiss as Secretary.
- There was much deliberation in re the elections.
- The final election results were as follows: Erik Blank as 2nd Vice Chair and Renee Weiss as Secretary.
- The current Executive Committee includes Olivia Weiss as Chair, Sarah Read as 1st Vice Chair, and Harry Hardman as Treasurer.

G.) Looking Ahead: 2024-2025 Season

1.) New membership category

- Starting with the 2024-2025 Season, USA Fencing has added a Parent membership category for \$19.99, which includes the ability to vote, invitations to parent-specific webinars, a special newsletter, and an exclusive bumper sticker, but does not include the ability to compete.

2.) WPD college club support

- College clubs in the WPD were discussed, as well as the recent initiative between USA Fencing and USACFC.
- Many college clubs no longer have club memberships or much presence in the WPD, so an effort should be made to reach out to them.

3.) Parafencing: gauging interest

- With the upcoming Olympics and Paralympics, and USA Fencing's increased focus on parafencing, there was discussion on gauging interest in parafencing in the WPD.
- Plans are being made to reach out to rehabilitation facilities and/or parafencing athletes to set up connections and possibly demonstrations.

4.) Tournament Planning meetings

- In accordance with the Division Operating Guide, the Executive Committee will hold an Executive Committee meeting directly after this meeting to set the Division calendar for the first half of the season.
- Clubs should indicate their interest in having tournaments by emailing the Division with the tournament sanctioning form found on the website.
- The Executive Committee will still accept sanctioning requests for available dates on a rolling basis.

H.) Adjournment of General Meeting

- Olivia Weiss made the motion to adjourn the general meeting, seconded by Sarah Read and Adam Marthens. Meeting was adjourned at 5:38 pm.