

# OFA Competition Committee Report

December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020

## Committee Membership

Chair: Tim Stang

Member: Mark Jeffery

Member: William Kinney

Member: Vacant (Formerly Jonathan Rennick)

Member: Vacant (Formerly Marcia Lau)

## 2019-2020 Review

The 2019-2020 season started with a number of unexpected challenges many of which required considerable amount of time to provide support and interfered with the normal activities of the competitions committee.

- CFF membership system launch: The unexpected consequence of the late implementation and incomplete specification of the shift of the CFF membership system significantly increased the amount of support required to domestically ranked competitions. Many members resulted in duplicate licenses, new licenses and lost rankings. An incomplete validation list was not made available by Interpodia until mid-December 2019. As a result, secretariats were mostly unable to check membership status' other than demanding a registrant's receipt or a personal attestation.
- Domestic rankings – competition seeding: Tied to the issues surrounding the CFF membership system, the domestic rankings were largely unavailable for the season. The domestic ranking system relies on up to date validation data to match to the registrants at competition. Without validation data being checked at the local competition level upon registration, competition results were submitted with significant errors including, but not limited to: athletes fencing with other athlete's licenses, athletes of the incorrect age groups fencing outside their range, and athletes with no licenses whatsoever.

The inability to provide organizers with validation data and up to date rankings created a significant amount of frustration among participating athletes and organizational staff.

- COVID19: Due to the pandemic, a number of competitions, including the Ontario Provincial Championships, at the end of the 2019 season were forced to cancel. The OFA and its staff, most particularly Kristina Han, are to be commended with the immensely difficult and correct

decisions at that time.

It should be dually noted that the OFA staff and relevant committees received significant complaints and none too subtle personal attacks through social media. As a committee chair, and a member I found the incident disturbing.

Despite the challenges, participation numbers equalled previous season's levels, the competitions committee completed the sanction, and the committee provided consultation support to the OFA for the Ontario Winter Games. The competitions committee was not however consulted on the design and implementation of the Ontario Provincial Championships, or the call for bids from the CFF.

## 2020-2021 Current State

Given the current pandemic situation in Ontario, the opportunity for competition was not possible for the past few months and is highly unlikely for the remainder of the 2020-2021 season. As an organization, the OFA should regard this as an extended off-season and work on preparations for the following seasons with renewed energy and long-term vision.

Two members of the Competitions committee have decided to back away this season due to personal commitments. The committee is now seeking nominations for new members and we would like to invite a member of the medical and coaching committees to join and have a voice regarding competitions.

## Opportunities for 2021-2022

The pandemic will continue to challenge member club's abilities to host competitions. It is sufficient to say that a 'normal' season is some time off. Even with the advent of vaccines and reduced transmission rates, host venues may impose hosting constraints on organizers that may preclude the sizeable events of the past. Smaller, more weapon/age/LTAD stage specific events may be required in order to have a means of competition available.

Competition sanctioning in the coming seasons will involve documentation regarding compliance with provincial public health requirements. This will require significant consultation from the medical and OFA COVID committees.