

Ontario Jiu-Jitsu Association 12-3-2022 Annual General Meeting (AGM) Minutes

In attendance:

Board of Directors:

Doug Knispel – President / Chairman – Japanese Jiu-Jitsu

Gary Pilon – Vice-President / Treasurer - Japanese Jiu-Jitsu

Shawn Rodie – Secretary - Japanese Jiu-Jitsu

David Doucette – Director - Education / Marketing / Grant Committee

Tony Isaacs – Director - Tournaments – Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu

Mike Pisano – Director - Technical Support / Membership Management – Japanese Jiu-Jitsu

Fernando Zulick – Director - Officials, Tournaments - Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu

Meeting called to order - by our Chairman Doug Knispel at 7:05 PM

The Annual General Meeting was held at the Niagara Falls Convention Centre located at 6815 Stanley Avenue, Niagara Falls, ON L2G 7B6

The Agenda for the evening was such:

1. Call to Order (Doug Knispel)
2. Welcome/President's Report (Doug Knispel)
3. Financials (Gary Pilon)
4. Directors Reports (Various)
5. New Business (Various)
6. Adjournment (Doug Knispel)

This meeting has hosted via in-person attendance and Zoom meeting for outside attendees. It was noted that personal attendance to this AGM was up from the last one, with 6 members attending.

Presidents Report (Attached) – Doug Knispel

Doug Knispel began the meeting by introducing the Board to the attendee's and thanking the Board for their hard work during 2021 - 2022.

Doug Knispel then presented his Report and took everyone thorough it. Below are the high-lights of the report:

It was noted that the OJA has experienced zero COVID related events at any of our sanctioned tournaments, which is a testament to the Board and Tournament Promotors diligence during 2022.

Safety and Respect in Sport. 2022 saw an increase in members taking the Respect in Sport course, which is also mandated for all OJA Referees and Coaches. In 2023 the OJA will begin mandating that all OJA Referees undertake a vulnerability screening by the Police in order to assure the general membership that the OJA takes safety in sport seriously.

Rowans Law, always promoted by the OJA, will be promoted with vigour by the OJA in 2023. Details on Rowans Law can be found on our Website as well as on communications that are sent out to the general membership. OJA Head Referees will be mandated to attend courses in 2023.

A Scholarship Fund for Linda Squires, who recently passed away, was approved by the OJA. Linda Squires was a past CJA President and OJA Committee member. Linda's past tireless efforts helped to position where the OJA is today and she will be much missed.

2022 also saw the passing of Stephen Reynolds, Kitsune Ryu Jiu-Jitsu Founder. Stephen Reynolds did a lot to promote Jiu-Jitsu in Canada, was well known, was Doug Knispel and Shawn Rodie's Instructor and will also be missed.

To finish the report, Doug Knispel gave his vision of an OJA National Training Center. This centre would be used to train competitors as well as to hold seminars and generally be used as a training / education centre for furthering Jiu-Jitsu in Canada.

Safety and Insurance Report (Attached) – Gary Pilon

Gary Pilon presented the report and took everyone through it. Of notable mention was that the OJA currently has 5 Million in insurance coverage and that we are strongly looking at increasing our coverage for 2023 to 10 Million in coverage. Of special note was there were NO ACCIDENTS to report during 2022.

Finance Report (Attached) – Gary Pilon

Gary Pilon addressed the attendees and presented the 2022 Finance Report.

The review showed that although the Association went through a difficult time the past two years with COVID, that we were well positioned financially at our year end to manage the upcoming tournament season for 2023. Our year end numbers were down in 2022, primarily due to COVID related issues, however the OJA is on a strong rebound 2023.

Motion was made by our Chairman to accept the Finance Report. This was seconded by: 1: Tony Isaacs and 2. David Doucette.

Membership Management – Mike Pisano

Mike Pisano was not asked to prepare a report, but was asked by the President to talk about some of the things that was being worked on by the Association.

Mike Pisano began by taking everyone through the OJA Membership breakdown for 2022. It was noted that the majority of our membership base is still within the GTA / Golden Horse-shoe area. We also have some clubs as far north as Thunder Bay. The OJA has approximately, at the time of the AGM, 6,400 members. It was noted that this is our largest member count ever.

Our new website at: ontariojiujitsuassociation.com, which is a very impressive website, as well as the hard work of the entire Team may be a contributing factor in this.

Education Marketing Report – David Doucette

David Doucette was not asked to prepare a report, but was asked by the President to talk about the recent video developments being worked on. David Doucette spoke about the recent Tournament action videos that he took and that these will be uploaded to our new website or possibly a dedicated OJA U-Tube Channel. The OJA is always looking for contact that can be posted and these will give the OJA some exposure, as well as let the general membership know about the latest “Goings-on” at the OJA.

Tournament Events Report (Attached) – Tony Isaacs

Tony Isaacs went through his report showing, that despite Covid, the OJA put on an impressive 24 events in 2022. Next year, for 2023 we already have 25 events booked.

Tony Isaacs spoke about the 2022 World Tournament he attended in Abu Dabi and how awareness of the OJA is increasing there, especially now that The Canadian Women’s Team took home 3 Gold Medals and placed 2nd overall in the JJIF World Tournament. We also had 4 Team Canada in the Masters Division and they brought home 2 Gold medals and 1 Silver medal. Out of 29th athletes, Team Canada brought home a total of 16 medals. Everyone in attendance at the AGM agreed that this was an impressive feat and hopefully next year’s results will be even better.

Tony Isaacs further advised that Patrick Barton, OJA Board Member, also saw the Abu Dabi Tournament and he would like to set up a clinic on JJIFF rules so that Referees in Canada can become more familiar with these rules in the event we may be able to host a World event in Canada.

Tournament Superfight Report (Attached) – Tony Isaacs

Tony Isaacs reviewed his report with those in attendance and advised there are plans to have 5 Superfight shows in 2023 and that he would like to grow these types of events.

Tournament Officials Report (Attached) – Tony Isaacs

Tony Isaacs showed us that during 2022 there were 3 Tournament Referee Courses and 4 Tournament Rules Clinics conducted. There was also 2 Referee Conferences conducted. This shows that the OJA is committed to both fairness and safety in sport. This also includes the spectators as well, not only the competitors.

All OJA qualified Referees undergo graduated levels of training and this training is on-going. Tony Isaacs personally certifies each Referee and assigns them a division that he feels they are competent to referee at.

For 2022 Tony Isaacs advised he has gathered 10 new Referees and he is in the process of training them.

Tony Isaacs also introduced Roger Tang, who is being trained by Tony Isaacs to oversee and assist with referee Training for future events.

Tony Isaacs also clearly stated that one of the most important qualities of being an OJA referee is to ensure that there are NO BIASES when on the OJA Tournament Floor. That all Clubs and competitors are treated the same, regardless of style, club or affiliation. Any Referee showing any form of favoritism to any particular competitor or school (while refereeing at an OJA Tournament) or behaving in a manner unbecoming of an OJA Referee will be asked to leave the Tournament.

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END of REPORTS - Attached

New Business (OPEN) – Doug Knispel

Doug Knispel opened the floor for discussion surrounding new business.

Quebec Jiu-Jitsu - Tony Isaacs advised he was working to expand the OJA into Quebec as well as other Provinces as there is an opportunity to conduct Tournaments there.

Tournament Barricades – Tony Isaacs presented to the attendees a list of barricades that he feels would work at the OJA Tournaments, in order to gain feedback from the attendees as to which ones they might prefer. These barricades would be rented from the OJA by the Tournament Promotors, along with the OJA mats as part of a “Tournament Package”, and would provide them with a cost effective, yet highly professional looking mats and barricades for their Tournament. The new barricades would also enhance safety for both the competitors and attendees at the Tournament. The brands being considered are Uline – look nice and are inexpensive, Movit brand – look really nice and are really expensive and a brand called Blockader which look really nice and come at a median price. Most of the attendees liked the Blockader

brand, which are blue in color and Tony Isaacs to finalize the pricing, including the shipping for these barricades.

Athlete Recognition – Janine Mutton – 2 time Jiu-Jitsu World Champion and Head Female Coach at Action Reaction MMA stated that she would like to see the OJA do more to promote the amateur athletes on their websites and possibly look at promoting them via social media.

Instagram accounts could be set up and possibly a social media committee could be set up to help further recognition of the OJA amateur athletes that attend the events and also represent Canada abroad. .

Fernando Zulick also agreed that this was a move in the right direction and that the OJA should begin to look at social media as a way to promote the athletes and events.

It was noted that several attendees at the AGM volunteered to form a committee to provide suggestions to the OJA as to how we should approach the issue

Private Funding – Ninad Desi – who's son competes in the OJA events said he would like to see more funding brought in to assist amateur athletes financially to attend events, some of which are quite costly to do so. Ninad Desi also stated he would volunteer to be on a committee to begin the process.

A motion was made by our Chairman to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by: 1. Mike Pisano and 2. David Doucette.

The AGM was adjourned – by our Chairman Doug Knispel at 9 PM.

DK/SR