

GREATER TAMPA BAY RACING PIGEON CONCOURSE, INC  
TO BE KNOWN AS GREATER TAMPA BAY RACING PIGEON COMBINE

BY-LAWS

**NAME:** This organization shall be known as the GREATER TAMPA BAY RACING PIGEON COMBINE. It will also be known by the short name as Tampa Bay Combine. (Incorporate as "Concourse" on 5/14/1975.)

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the Combine is to fly racing pigeons in competition, to advance and encourage the sport of pigeon racing, to award diplomas and other awards as decided by the Directors, to those entitled to them, and to extend a social and brotherly feeling to all honorable fanciers.

**AFFILIATION:** Every member club of this Combine shall be affiliated and chartered with either the American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc. (AU) or the International Federation of American Homing Pigeon Fanciers, Inc. (IF) and shall be bound by the rules for the time being in force of the Combine. Every decision or regulation of the Combine shall be subject to the provision of its by-laws and AU Race Rules unless otherwise listed.

**OFFICERS:** The officers shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Race Secretary who shall serve for a term of two years or until their successors have been elected and qualified. The President, Secretary, and Treasurer are to be elected on one year and the Vice-President, and Race Secretary on another year. Absence from three consecutive meetings by an officer shall be sufficient reason for a successor being elected or appointed by the President, and approved by a majority of the elected officers.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS:** The election of officers shall be held on the designated Annual Meeting in January of each year and the newly elected officers shall be installed immediately preceding adjournment of the meeting. All voting on the election of officers will be by open ballot unless the members decide to vote by closed ballot. The President may appoint a nominating committee and nominations can be made from the floor at the meeting.

**DUTIES OF OFFICERS:** The President shall preside at all meetings and shall exercise the functions usually belonging to the presiding officer of a deliberate body. The President may appoint a nominating committees for officers, race schedules; and for other purposes.

The Vice-President shall, in the absence of the President, perform the duties of that office. He/she may be appointed by the President to chair committees, special projects, and other activities.

The Secretary shall conduct the correspondence of the Combine; take minutes of meetings; and at the end of the term of office shall provide his/her successor with all the records of his/her office.

The Treasurer shall collect all monies and make payment of all bills incurred by the Combine. He/she shall prepare records so that a CPA can fill out a tax return. At the expiration of his/her term of office, all records of that officer will be provided to his/her successor.

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The Race Secretary shall be responsible for all things related to the races, including, but not limited to:

Keeping an up-to-date record of each fancier's GPS coordinates; figuring all concourse races; printing and posting race results, and printing Combine diplomas; chair the race release committee and make any final race release decisions; making a list of award winners to be used to post and to issue awards such as trophies.

The President may appoint a Race Statistician to assist the Race Secretary or due to unavailability to performance the duties of the Race Secretary.

**IMPEACHMENT OF OFFICERS:** An officer may be impeached after a petition signed by two-thirds of the active members is submitted to another officer and written notification is given to the entire membership 30 days prior to an impeachment vote. A quorum of 51% of the total membership must be present and upon a three-quarter majority vote of the members in attendance an officer will be removed from office. The Board of Directors shall meet within 30 days of the impeachment to appoint, by majority vote of the directors present, a Concourse member to complete the term of the impeached officer.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Club membership in the Combine shall be by invitation only. A two-third majority vote of the Directors present shall be needed for acceptance of a new club into the Combine.

**COMBINE DUES:** A new member pays a one-time amount of twenty-five dollars. Annual dues renewal is ten dollars per member. Dues are collected by each member club and sent to the Concourse Treasurer with a list with names, addresses, telephone numbers, AU ID numbers, and email addresses. Dues with the corresponding member list must be paid before the first Old Bird Race each year. Any new member who joins a member club after payment was made for its members shall send the new member's twenty-five dollars and the member's contact information listed above at that time throughout the calendar year.

**AMENDMENTS AND VOTING:** Voting by proxy shall not be allowed. Upon request of any member in attendance, a secret ballot shall be taken on any BY-LAW matter before the Combine.

(A) ALL paid members in attendance shall be entitled to vote on the election of officers, which shall take place only at the Annual Meeting in January of each year. A simple majority vote will decide matters.

(B) Only flying members shall be entitled to vote on race schedules, and on all matters related to racing. A flying member is defined as one who has flown at least one race series (old or young birds) in the past year.

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(C) The race schedule shall include the distance, the release station, the shipping and release dates, and the shipping limit, which is the maximum number of pigeons a member may enter.

**WITHDRAWAL:** Any member club wishing to withdraw from the Combine shall notify the secretary in writing, shall pay any monies due the Combine by the club, and forfeit all claims to Combine monies, property, and equipment. In the event that written notice isn't provided, the Combine will assume that a club has withdrawn by failure to pay dues, failing to follow or reply to written communications from the Combine or failure to race one race series with the Combine.

**EXPLUSION:** A member club accused of dishonorable conduct or unfitness, as defined by the Directors, shall be cited to appear before the Directors of the Combine, who shall investigate the accusation(s). A special meeting will be called not prior to a month following the close of the investigation. A two-thirds vote of the Directors shall be required for expulsion of the club. The expulsion shall be reported to the national organization with which the expelled club is affiliated.

**INCOME:** The Combine shall be supported financially through different sources of income such as the collection of dues, race shipping fees, hosting conventions, shows, auctions, percentage of special races, and other sources with the intent to provide the members with reasonable shipping fees, awards, website, equipment, etc.

**MEETINGS:** The Combine shall meet as called for by the President. There shall be an annual meeting in January and a Semi-Annual meeting in July. These meetings are open to all members. The primary purpose of the Annual Meeting is the election of officers and setting a Young Bird Race Schedule. The primary purpose of the July meeting is to set an Old Bird Race Series. A simple majority vote shall determine the outcome of matters at meetings where all members can vote unless it is a matter that requires a different percentage. The Secretary shall notify each member in writing as to the time and place of the Annual Meeting and of the Semi-Annual Meeting. At these meetings twenty-five percent of the average number flying members in the most recent Young and Old Birds series shall constitute a quorum.

It is intended that most of the business of the Concourse shall be conducted at Director Meetings. Two-thirds of the member clubs and thirty percent of the Directors shall constitute a quorum to conduct business. Clubs shall receive at least 48 hours prior notice to any meeting and each club is responsible for notifying its Directors about the meeting. Each club will be represented by three Directors.

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ORDER OF BUSINESS: Roll call, minutes of previous meeting, treasurer report, communications, committee reports, unfinished business, election of officers, new business, adjournment. The latest version of Roberts Rules of Order will serve as a guide for conducting meetings.

DISSOLUTION: The Combine shall be dissolved with the consent in writing of two-thirds of its members, obtained at one meeting and confirmed at another special meeting convened for the consideration of such dissolution, and on such dissolution the property of the Combine shall be disposed of to the best advantage of the member clubs and the surplus in the treasury be divided among the member clubs on the basis of percentage taken from the total members in good standing at that time in each member club.

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RACE RULES

1. No old birds may be entered in any young bird race or vice versa.
2. Young birds must be banded with the current year's bands.
3. All bands must be banded with a seamless band registered with any national or international racing pigeon organization to be eligible for competition.
4. All birds must home to the loft of the member in whose name they are entered. All birds must be timed at the point designated by the GPS coordinates for the loft of the member. A bird that doesn't home to the loft of the fancier entering it shall not be included in any race result.
5. The Race Committee for each member club shall reject all sick or unfit birds.
6. Since there is 100% or close to that percentage of members using an electronic timing system, if a member uses a timer and countermarks, then the AU rules governing their use will be followed. The club race secretary and race committee will make final decisions in accordance with the AU Rules. The AU Race Rules are published and mailed to every AU member. The rules are also on the AU Website at [www.pigeon.org](http://www.pigeon.org)
7. The Combine shall exercise reasonable care in the handling of the birds, but will not be held responsible by members for their safety after they leave their hands.
8. Electronic timers must have a factory seal affixed. Timers without the seal shall not be allowed.
9. Any evidence of a timer having been tampered with shall be sufficient cause to forfeit all claims for diplomas and prizes in that race. The Combine Race Committee shall investigate the evidence and if the evidence is upheld, the results shall be an automatic suspension for one year and then a review of the case of future completion.
10. The Combine Race Committee, composed of the Combine Race Secretary and the Club Race Secretaries or their delegates, shall be responsible for the accuracy of returns reported and may take any emergency measures they find necessary to insure accuracy.

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11. Any electronic timer that malfunctions or shows an incorrect time of more than 5 seconds during a race will be disqualified unless given club unit time by the race secretary when the race is being figured. Member timers and club units must be checked for accuracy at all times.
12. Liberation:
  - a) When bad weather or late transport arrival at the release point prevents a race liberation, the Combine Race Secretary and the liberation committee representing the member clubs will determine the release time and station, and all matters related to the race.
  - b) Only the Combine liberation committee can cancel a race or delay shipping a race 24 hours due to bad weather.
  - c) The Combine Race Secretary and liberation committee are expected to act in the best interest of all the members of the Combine and the best interest of the birds. No action should be taken that gives unfair advantage to anyone or any section of the Combine.
  - d) The Officers of the Combine must vote on who is hired to transport the birds. They also have the right to remove that person.
  - e) Under no circumstances may the transporter release the birds without first calling the Combine Race Secretary or designee.
13. Only the Combine Race Secretary, Combine President, or other designated person is to communicate with the driver who transporters the birds. The driver will be instructed to only communicate with authorized members only before and after the release.
14. The driver transporting the birds may not compete in races.
15. Time of liberation and arrival must be consistent. Birds released in the central zone must be figured in the eastern zone.
16. No time is allowed for circling at the release point.
17. Combine birds must be release before special race birds. Training birds are not allowed.
18. Each club is responsible to ensure that all crates are sealed. The driver shall be instructed to visually check that all crates are sealed on the trailer before leaving a pick-up point and again before releasing the birds. Before release, if a crate(s) is found that is not sealed, the Combine Race Secretary will be notified by the driver. The club will be identified and the Combine Race Secretary and the Combine Officers will settle the matter. If the investigation indicates that a bird(s) likely got out before the release, the club shall not be included in the Combine Race Results.
19. TIME OUT FOR DARKNESS: Closing of races each day is one-half hour after official local sunset. Starting time each morning is one –half hour before official sunrise. Birds timed after closing time will get credit as day birds, but will be figured as if clocked at the starting time the next morning, and will have no effect on the flying time of second-day bird

## RACE RULES

20. RACE TIME LIMITS: 100 miles through 400 miles – 2 days; 500 to 600 miles – 3 days. A day is 24 hours from the time of release. Birds returning after the above limits will not place.
21. The deadline for clubs to email the results to the Combine Race Secretary is 8:00 pm on the 3rd day after the first bird is timed in each club. (ex. Bird timed on Saturday, the club results are due by 8:00 PM Tuesday.)
22. All speeds will be figured to the third decimal. The AU program shall be used to figure all races.
23. Diplomas will be awarded on the basis of one for each five lofts or fraction thereof competing per race.
24. Average speed shall be awarded for the first three places for in each category. Old birds: short, long, overall. Young bird: overall. Short average is up to 300 mile races. Long Average is 400 miles and longer. Overall average speed is all races. The same awards will be given for Champion Bird and Champion Loft.
25. There is no limit as to the number of birds timed in a race.
26. Special races do not count toward average speed and cannot be included with any awards.
27. The birds will be watered on all races and feed will be available on the transporter.
28. SHIPPING FEES: If a member ships one race in a series he must pay for all races in the series whether he ships all races or not. The exception is for new members racing pigeons for the first time ever who will only have to pay for the races shipped. This exception applies only to the first series whether young or old birds that the new member is competing in.
29. If a member switches clubs during the race series he does not have to pay shipping costs in both clubs. He must pay for the entire series.
30. No individual shall be allowed to complete in the Combine unless he has met, to the satisfaction of the club(s) concerned all of his financial responsibilities with all other racing pigeon organizations to which he has previously or currently belongs.
31. Protests in connection with any race must be filed in writing with the Combine Race Secretary within 48 hours after the results are released.
32. The Combine Race Secretary may demand any member to immediately produce the bird(s) which placed in any race. Failure to produce the bird(s) will disqualify the member on that race. Birds must be available for tossing within 72 hours after the race is figured.
33. Proof of ownership of any bird in a members loft(s) must be provided upon request to the Combine Race Secretary.
34. The Combine will pick-up race birds from clubs at convenient locations for the Combine and the clubs considering the time constraints and costs. The shipping fee will take into consideration pick-up costs. The President, and if called upon the Combine Officers, will designate the pick-up locations. The Combine equipment may be used by member clubs to ship special races under

the following conditions: Space is available; open to all Concourse members; must be released at least 30 minutes after the Combine release from the same location; the club pays the fee set by the Combine officers; written request must be submitted to the Combine Race Secretary.

35. The Combine Race Secretary shall receive as payment for his duties \$1.50 per flyer who shipped the race collected by the club and paid directly to the Race Secretary.
36. Combine Officers may ship free if finances allow or other amount, if any, as set by Directors.
37. Since 3 members are required to obtain a charter, no less than 3 flying members are permitted to ship Combine races as an individual club. There must be a minimum of 3 club members who are not partners present to figure the race or it must be figured at another club.
38. Partners can send one entry of birds to a race from one loft at the same address. To encourage the maximum number of shippers, different shippers can send separate entries from the same address if the lofts are 25 feet apart with separate entrances, separate timers, measurements, and separate birds returning to each loft. Each shipper from the same address must submit a list of their birds by shipping of the first race of a series of the birds at will be timed to which loft at the address.
39. The Race Secretary or statistician shall be paid \$1.50 per flyer in each race. This amount is separate from the shipping fee and is paid directly to the race secretary at the time of shipping. This amount shall be paid for every race sponsored by the Combine and figured by the race secretary. (ex. Races flown under the FLORIDA FEDERATION)
40. All Combine shippers must have paid dues, be in good standing, and loft coordinates submitted to the Combine Race Secretary before birds may be entered in a race.
41. The Combine Race Secretary, can direct a member to turn over his timer immediately for inspection, the loft can be inspected, and a winning pigeon can be tossed within 72 hours of the race in question. A member who refuses will be suspended immediately until further notice.
42. If a Combine member is shipping birds to the same race from different clubs, that member can only ship one total of the Concourse limit.
43. The Combine Directors can accept to transport non-member club(s) birds and set the terms and conditions.
44. Illegal drugs and performance enhancing substances (PES) are strictly prohibited in the pigeons by the Combine. Members are responsible to provide for the care of their pigeons without use of "PES". The Combine shall provide directives through its Officers and Directors to ensure fair competition without the use of "drugs" and /or as defined by the AU, IF, or other organization. The use of "PES" is well documented in human and animal sport competition, and changes and are updates must be made to remain relevant. Penalties will be established by the Combine Directors as needed.