

Avon Athletic Association

Minutes of a Management Committee Meeting of the Avon Athletic Association, held on Monday January 21st 2013, at the Civil Service Sports and Social Club, Filton Road, Bristol,, starting at 7.30pm.

Those Present: Keith Brackstone (CC Coordinator), John Deaton (Secretary), Mike Down (Bristol & West AC), Rachael Fisher (Vice-Chairperson, North Somerset AC), Neil Miller (Westbury H. / SW Council), Lesley Nunn (Avon Schools AA), Stuart Nunn (Chairperson / Yate & District AC), John Robbins (President), Gareth Thomas (Thornbury RC).

Apologies : Pam Gooding (Life Member), Ray Gooding (Officials Secretary), Ian Macintosh (Trustee), James Murphy (Westbury H. / Welfare), Hilary Nash (Treasurer / Bristol & West AC), Ben Redwood (Yate & District AC, T&F Championships Organiser), Gordon Robbins (Road Running Co-ordinator), Tim Snowdon (Life Member), Mike Willcox (GWR).

Minutes of Previous Meeting: (November 18th 2012): Accepted.

Matters Arising:

1. Redesign of Avon AA Course Subsidy application form: continuing minute.
2. Local Track and Field calendar: the Secretary would send out an updated version shortly.
3. Stoke Gifford Stadium Ltd. Matters: although Keith Brackstone had officially stepped down as Company Secretary, he was still handling bookings for the time being.
- 4, There were still some Officials' Form 10's outstanding from last season.
5. Exchanges of Minutes with Gloucestershire AA, Wiltshire AA and Somerset AA : continuing minute.

Secretary's Report: Matters covered under other categories.

Treasurer's Report: Hilary Nash had circulated the Draft Accounts for the 2012 financial year (copies available on request). The accounts showed a significant surplus for the year, although there were several grant applications and reimbursements of fees for the November Level 2 Health and Safety course outstanding: Hilary hoped to have these cleared by early February. Affiliation fees for 2012 were still outstanding from Bath University AC, Bristol University AC and Sole Sisters.

Officials Secretary's Report (presented by the Secretary in Ray's absence):

1. England Athletics are considering the future of the role of County Officials Secretary, and also reportedly the future function of County Associations.
2. Rachael Fisher has been upgraded to Level 2(c) as a Field Judge.
3. Special Olympics August 2013: Ray Gooding urged all officials he had contacted about this meeting who had not yet replied to do so promptly, whether their response was yea or nay.
4. The Field Judge / Track Judge / Health & Safety courses planned for Cheltenham on January 19th had been called off because of the weather conditions, but they would hopefully be re-staged in February.

Avon Network Matters:

1. The most recent Network meeting was on November 28th 2012 (meeting notes available on request). Since then, Stuart Nunn had met with Chris Mallender: as well as the balance of the funds allocated to the Network for the period up to March 2013, EA had allocated certain other funds: expenditure included the purchase of four iPads (a Yate coach was regularly using one of these). Also, EA had set aside funding for three "Athletics Activators": interviews had been held but at least one applicant still had to hear the outcome. Members present were uncertain exactly what these Activators would be required to do, and whether their activities would cover the whole Avon area or just the Bristol urban area.

Stuart was due to meet Chris Mallender again on February 5th: the Avon Network would be funded beyond March 2013, but to what extent is not yet clear. The Network's "wish list" for use of such funding included:

- ... a paid part-time Network Coordinator
- ... Coach Development days
- ... the Network to act as sponsor to five Level 2 coaches for one year each
- ... funding for recruitment and development of officials
- ... part-funding of the purchase of some EDM equipment.

2. Course information: EA had held an Event Group Coach Workshop on December 8th: the Avon Network had been notified but the Avon AA Secretary had only heard about it by chance; he was now on the circulation list for such events.
3. The next Avon Network meeting will be held on Wednesday February 27th at UWE; Matt Foad plans to attend. By this time the extent of EA funding of the Network, and any restrictions imposed on the use of this funding, should be clearer.

Track and Field Matters:

1. Avon / West of England T&F Championships: the meeting approved the draft entry form for the Championships: the opening height for the lower pool of High Jumpers would be reduced to 1.00m.
2. Avon AA Open meetings are scheduled for Tuesdays May 14th and July 16th at the Kip Keino track.
3. The 2013 South-West Inter-Counties T&F Championships will be held on Sunday 11th August, presumably in a format similar to the 2012 event.

The meeting felt that the South-West Championships should be individual Championships (Summer) and Club/individual Championships (Winter), as in the MCAA Championships. Those present felt that the system of on-line individual entry did not allow Team Managers to guarantee a team sufficiently representative of the County's strength. The meeting resolved not to enter Avon teams in the 2013 Summer or 2013-4 Winter SW Inter-County events, but strongly to encourage affiliated clubs to persuade their athletes to enter the meetings.

Following the announcement in May 2012 of the new T&F event arrangements, Lesley Nunn had made informal contact with various activists from other SW counties: their views of the new structure had been generally unfavourable. However these views may not represent the current view of their County Associations. The Secretary was asked to draft a letter to the other six SW County Secretaries asking for their organisation's views on the structure of the two Championships.

(continued)

Cross-Country Matters: Keith Brackstone had circulated his Report in advance (copies available on request):

1. Tri-County Cross-Country Championships: the event went ahead successfully on December 9th: Keith had been flexible over late entries. The meeting was dismayed to hear that someone had tried to submit an entry at 10.40pm. on the evening before the meeting: the Association resolved to take a harder line in future about late entries, even accepting potential loss of revenue: this would be particularly necessary if (as Keith hoped) on-line entry was adopted. [Extra item: 2013-4 event already scheduled for Sunday 8th December 2013; venue etc. already booked]
2. UK CAU Inter-Counties Cross-Country Championships: Keith Brackstone and Mike Down would be meeting on Sunday 27th January with representatives of Somerset AA and the Avon clubs active in Cross-Country to select the Avon & Somerset teams and nominated reserves: these names would be published on the Avon AA website.
3. South-West Cross-Country Championships: The event went ahead successfully on Sunday 6th January. In line with the decision taken at the November committee meeting there were no Avon teams involved. Various athletes from Avon-AA affiliated clubs took part as individuals. Regarding the lack of potential managers for the young athletes: Keith Brackstone had been told that "there are keen parents in the clubs who would take on these roles", but no specific names had been supplied. [Extra note: SW County Cross-Country Coordinators are meeting in early April]

For the discussion on the potential Avon AA approach to the 2013-4 South-West Championships, see paragraph 3 of the Track and Field section of these Minutes.

Road Running / MT matters:

1. Gordon Robbins had arrangements well in hand for the Rodway Easy Runner race on Sunday March 17th, but would appreciate offers of more help with officiating.
2. Thornbury RC's Riverside Rollick race scheduled for January 20th was postponed due to course conditions, and has been rearranged for Sunday April 14th. The race had sold out; a few extra entries will be accepted to replace runners who cannot make it on April 14th.

Avon Schools AA Matters: Lesley Nunn thanked again the Avon officials who helped at the Avon Schools Cross-Country Championships on January 12th; the South-West Schools Cross-Country Championships will be held at Blaise Castle on February 2nd. The ESAA was replacing the Junior Boys 400m event with the 300m (for the Schools Cup, the Intermediate Boys will run 300m instead of 400m).

Sportshall matters:

1. The Avon Schools Finals / County Trials will be held on Saturday February 9th at Bristol Grammar School, from which teams will be selected for the South-West Finals (Paignton, March 2nd).
2. Dean Garrett reported that the Avon Primary Schools Sportshall trials had gone ahead successfully at Downend Sports Centre, but was disappointed that some Avon AA-affiliated clubs with young athletes have not participated in this event for several years.

England Athletics SW / MCAA / EA / UKA matters:

1. EA are seeking nominations for places on the South-West Regional Council: SW Council Chairman Nigel Rowe and (reportedly) two other members are standing down. Nominations close on February 11th, with the ballot (if necessary) closing on March 20th.

2. Neil Miller will be representing Nigel Rowe at the next EA National Council meeting, and will be raising (among other points) the disquiet about the way the Affiliation Fee issue was handled, and the role and voice of the Regional Councils.

[Post-Meeting note: UKA has now rebranded itself as British Athletics. The new URL for the website is <http://www.britishathletics.org.uk> , although the previous URL should be available for some time].

Matters To Be Raised at AGM: Three or four years ago an updated version of the Association's Constitution was produced, but the Secretary could find no evidence that it was ever formally adopted. The updated version would be submitted to the AGM for confirmation.

Club News:

1. Bristol & West AC had established a running group called WISE Runners, based at the Kip Keino track.
2. The clubs comprising Team Avon will shortly be holding a meeting to discuss arrangements for running the team under the new Youth Development League structure.

Any Other Business: Some clubs had had problems with the EA Membership portal, including with athletes who had recently changed clubs. If any club had an athlete taking a "year out" they should declare them as non-competitive rather than leaving them off their registration list.

Date of Next Meeting: The AGM and subsequent abbreviated Committee Meeting will be held on Monday March 18th, in Room 2B065, Block B, UWE Frenchay Campus.

Meeting Closed at about 9.30pm.

APPENDIX: EA Statement on Sport Charter

"England Athletics have signed the Government's Charter to tackle homophobia and transphobia in sport because they are committed to standing up to discrimination and building a more family friendly environment within clubs with no room for abuse.

"EA believe that everyone should be able to take part in and enjoy sport whoever they are and whatever their background is. In their view sport is about fairness, equality, respect and dignity and serves to bring people together with a common goal. Participating in sport teaches individuals how to strive and succeed and handle both success and disappointment. EA affirm that these values must be made a reality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and they are committed to working together and individually to rid the sport of homophobia and transphobia.

"Athletics, they maintain, should be made a welcome haven for participants, those attending events and those working or volunteering at any level. All groups should be given a voice to ensure that unacceptable behaviour is challenged. As part of this commitment clubs are encouraged to sign up to this charter and use the resources available within club newsletters, on Facebook and through twitter accounts to reinforce this code. More details are available from England Athletics".

(lifted from the Oxfordshire AA Newsletter)