

Avon Athletic Association

Minutes of a Management Committee meeting, held on Monday November 29th 2010, at the Civil Service Sports Club, Filton Avenue, Bristol, starting at 7.30pm.

Those Present: Keith Brackstone (CC Coordinator), John Deaton (Secretary), Mike Down (Bristol & West AC), Pam Gooding (Life Member), Ray Gooding (Officials Secretary), David Hughes (Life Member), Cy Knibb (Bristol & West AC), Hilary Nash (Treasurer / Bristol & West AC), Lesley Nunn (Avon Schools AA), Stuart Nunn (Yate & District AC), John Robbins (President), Mike Strange (Life Member), Mike Willcox (GWR).

Apologies : Rachael Fisher (NSAC), Jim Murphy (Westbury H. /Welfare), Gordon Robbins (Chair, Road Running Co-ordinator, Bitton RR); Tim Snowdon (Avon Network), Gareth Thomas (Thornbury RC) [additional apology: Andy Heyes (Clevedon)]. In the absence of Gordon Robbins, Stuart Nunn chaired the meeting.

Minutes of Previous Meeting (October 4th 2010): Accepted.

Matters Arising not covered elsewhere in the Minutes:

1. Presentations Evening: John Robbins made the presentation of Life Member mementoes to four of those who had been unable to attend the presentations evening (David Hughes, Hilary Nash, Lesley and Stuart Nunn); the award to Tim Snowdon would be presented at some later date.
2. Proposed composite NJAL team: the team had been accepted by UKA and by the League. The operation of the team would from now be regarded as a matter for the composite team clubs.
3. The South-West Council's "Open Meeting" on December 8th had been replaced by a Presentations Evening at which four of our activists would receive EA South-West Volunteer awards (Mike Strange: Official of the Year; Ray and Pam Gooding: Services to Officiating; Neil Miller: Services to Athletics). Gordon Robbins would be unable to attend, so John Deaton would be going down in his place. Neither the current or previous Secretary were receiving any Minutes from South West Council meetings.

Secretary's Report: The Secretary had been advised of the affiliation of a Swindon-based club calling itself Great Western Running Club (or GW Running Club). Those present were concerned about the possible confusion with Great Western Runners (GWR) in race results, and were dismayed that EA had allowed such an obvious clash of names. John Deaton to write a letter of complaint to the appropriate person.

Treasurer's Report: The account balances immediately prior to the meeting were: Current Account £1,440-54; Deposit Account £19,611.93. Tim Snowdon had paid in £255 from the Network's Development Days; Hilary had some coach subsidies still to be paid out and some affiliation fees still to come in.

Officials Secretary's Report:

1. EA's new Officials Coordinator for the Midlands and South-West (Michael Cox) is apparently only employed part-time.
2. Ray Gooding had travelled to Solihull to be instructed on UKA's TRINITY database. He now has access to UKA's records of Avon officials, and will in time have access to the officials lists for neighbouring counties. The database will eventually be extended to hold records of coaches, athletes and other volunteers: such people will be able to update their personal details (addresses etc.) but not data such as their qualifications.
3. The attempts of Ray and other County Officials Secretaries at the Solihull meeting to request financial compensation for their work had been rebuffed: UKA had not even offered travel expenses to the Solihull meeting (the Avon AA had recompensed Ray). John Deaton to write a letter to the appropriate person within UKA complaining about this.

4. Officials will be issued with new licences from January 2011 onwards: these will now carry a 9-digit licence number [subsequent correction: 7 digits].
5. Level 2 Officials Courses: Ray Gooding had had an enquiry from North Somerset AC about staging a Level 2 Officials course: if there was sufficient demand from other clubs, he would organise one.

Road Running Matters: There had been no news of any South-West Road Running Championship during 2010. The Secretary asked that member clubs should inform him (as webmaster) of any of their races which are cancelled or for which entries have closed early.

Track and Field Matters:

1. Mike Strange had not yet completed his paper on the financing of the county's Track and Field athletics activity. Both Mike and Graham Howell felt that the Avon/West of England Championships format should be left as before, although an increase in entry fees may be needed. The meeting agreed to the Wiltshire AA's request that the West of England Championships could be used as the Wiltshire Championships for Under-20's and Seniors, subject to suitable arrangements for medals presentation.
2. Proposed Avon AA Open Track and Field meetings: the meeting's suggested dates were the second Wednesdays in June, July and August: Cy Knibb would circulate dates once the wider competition calendar was clearer.

Cross-Country Matters:

1. Arrangements for the Tri-County Championships were in hand, although Keith Brackstone still needed more on-the-day volunteers. Entries from Avon were still rather sparse. We had been assured that the problems which caused the cancellation of the Gwent League fixture on November 14th would not recur. Rob Thomas (Wiltshire) would be handling all the results.
2. South-West Cross-Country Championships: Mike Down was dismayed that these seem to have been transformed from a county-oriented to a club-oriented event without consultation. MCAA were handling entries: their approach was that athletes should enter via their clubs or individually by December 15th, specifying their county affiliation on the form; after that date, counties would be advised who had entered for them and would be given the chance to submit additional entries. Mike Down considered this approach impractical; Stuart Nunn considered it would be unfair if some team members would have paid their own entry fee and some would not, and that the entry fee was in any case lower than that asked for most road races or area / national T&F Championships. John Deaton considered that it was probably too late to change the arrangements for this season's event. Athletes competing in county teams would be expected to wear county vests even if competing for a club team: this would present logistical problems. It was agreed that Avon would not make use of the additional entries facility (while making clear that the Avon teams would be at less than optimum strength), and not to provide county vests: if the Avon team performances went unrecognised because of the non-wearing of county vests, then so be it. Keith Brackstone would liaise with Neil Miller.
3. The Avon AA Mob Match This had gone ahead as part of the Mike Sully / Gemma Butler meeting on Sunday November 21st, but with only three clubs supplying teams.

Sportshall Matters: nothing to report.

Avon Network Matters: The Avon Network met on Wednesday 17th November: John Deaton had not yet received any minutes [post-meeting note: matter now resolved].

Financial cutbacks: The meeting's understanding of the local situation was that Wesport would continue, but that Competition Managers would cease work on March 31st and that Schools Sports Partnership jobs would

cease in July 2011. On the agenda for the next Avon AA meeting: the future of local athletics in view of the Government's financial cutbacks (Wesport to be invited to send a representative).

John Deaton asked that all member clubs include on their websites a link to the Avon Network website.

Avon Schools AA Matters: Lesley Nunn stated that for 2010-2011 the Avon Schools AA expected a maximum income from affiliations of about £2,500 and expected costs of about £6,700: this could mean English Schools athletes being expected to pay around £100 each for the privilege, and she asked for support from the Avon AA. The meeting decided that the best course of action would be cooperative fund-raising activities involving both organisations: Cy Knibb would convene a joint meeting of the Avon AA Development Sub-Committee and representatives of the Avon Schools AA; he would also get in touch with a contact from the East Midlands to find how the schools in that area were dealing with the finance issue [Post-meeting note: Sub-committee meeting convened for Monday 13th December but cancelled].

MCAA / EA / UKA Matters: The MCAA AGM was scheduled for Monday 6th December; there was no news of any contentious issues.

Stoke Gifford Athletics Stadium Limited: The Filton track official opening had gone ahead, and the track is now in operation; there was particularly heavy demand on Tuesdays and Thursdays; sharing of facilities, or encouraging users to book the less popular times, may be the answer. The Packers track was now in use, although some work was still needed to be done to improve the infield drainage. The official opening had been deferred until the Spring.

Club News: Graham Howell has retired as Chair of Yate and District AC, to be succeeded by Stuart Nunn: official business for the club should be channelled through Tony Jefferies (tonyandpat07@googlemail.com).

Any Other Business: John Deaton proposed an additional condition for those clubs seeking coaching course subsidies: that from the 2012-13 season grants would only be awarded if the club concerned had been represented at two or more of the business meetings of the Association (to include the AGM) in the previous year. This was agreed.

Date of Next Meetings: These could not be confirmed, as Bill Kingston was not present. Preferred dates would be the last Mondays in January and March 2011. **Meeting Closed** at 9.50pm.

APPENDIX A

Changes of Eligibility affecting Avon clubs (September and October)

Dorothea	Cockerell	Bristol & West AC to Thames Hare & Hounds	e.d. 01/10/2010
Ben	Coghlan	Bristol & West AC to North Somerset AC	e.d. 01/11/2010
Laura	Croker	Portishead RC to Clevedon AC	e.d. 01/10/2010
Jodie	Kelly (U15)	Bitton RR to Bristol & West AC	e.d. 01/01/2010
Tom	Marley	Bristol & West AC to Cardiff AAC	e.d. 01/11/2010
Suzanne	Richards	Bristol & West AC to Herne Hill Harriers	e.d. 01/11/2010
Marcia	Vowles	GWR to Southville RC	e.d. 01/11/2010
Claire	Woods	Frome RC to Team Bath AC	e.d. 01/11/2010