

Avon Athletic Association

(Affiliated to England Athletics)

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

Held :- 1st October 2007.

At Civil Service Club, Filton Avenue, Bristol.

PRESENT : Peter GRIFFIN (President); Graham HOWELL (Chair); Mike DOWN (Vice Chair); Mike STRANGE (Sec); Mike ANDREWS (Treas); Ray GOODING (Officials Co-ordinator); Hilary NASH (Coaching Co-ordinator); Bill KINGSTON (Life Member); Barry SMART (Life Member); Mike WILLCOX (GWR); James MURPHY (Westbury Harriers); Lesley NUNN (Avon Schools AA); Stuart NUNN (Yate AC).

APOLOGIES : Gordon ROBBINS (Road Running Co-ordinator); Andy HEYES (Cross Country Co-ordinator); David TURNER (Sports:hall Co-ordinator); David COALES (Team Manager XC); Pam GOODING (Life Member); John ROBBINS (Life Member); Jim STRUDWICK (AXA AC & Life Member); Andy MULLETT (Team Bath AC). John CLAPP (Hogweed Trotters); Hugh BURCHARD (Environment Agency); Keith BRACKSTONE (Bristol University); Neil MILLER (Westbury H); Richard GWYN (England Athletics).

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Acceptance

The Minutes were accepted as a true record of the Meeting.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

SECRETARY

MACD

We have now received a reply (and apology for the delay) from Geoff Durbin in which he says "I have been assured that MACD funds have not been dispersed to the Regions. They are currently being used to support scholarship coaches and conferences. Four throws coaches are being sent to the World Throws Conference in Canada and a pole vault coach has been sent to the USA. The next conference is in Loughborough. Anyone can apply to be a scholarship coach as long as they fulfil the requirements to be added to the list."

County Budget

The Secretary regretted that this still was not complete. A draft budget had been sent to the Chair & Treas for fine tuning but no input had been received to date.

The Secretary stated that he would expect the 2007 to be in the order of £7,000 in this year which would be well within the expected £10,000 income from Unattached levies during the year. That would still leave us with circa £30,000 in our bank accounts for future budget consideration.

The consensus of the meeting was that an expected spend of £7,000 would be acceptable.

County Development Plan

The Secretary reported that he had received a good background on Sole Sisters (from Karen Walsh) that would enable their name to safely substitute for the references to WRN in the draft template document.

The Secretary remarked that the only other two responses had been received to the 'Plan' template – from Ray Gooding and Neil Miller.

Action – Secretary to present both completed documents to the Committee for approval.

Training Grants

Three Endurance Athletes

The Secretary informed that he had written to the athletes concerned and had no reply from the two living in Gloucestershire. Harry Webb had responded but due to injury had no record of achievements in 2007. The Secretary put the case that Harry is known to be a top athlete having been selected for the UK School Games in 2006 with an U17 pb of 1:56.85i to put him 4th in the South West and well within their SW standard. He suggest we pay £100 to him based on these past performances on a similar basis to the performance athletes we awarded grants to last year.

Proposed Mike Strange, Seconded Peter Griffin Passed unanimously – That we award a Grant of £100

North Somerset Club

Discussions on North Somerset Club have been delayed and the application with EA has not yet been approved

TREASURER

Unaffiliated Fees

Action from the last meeting to contact MCAA & Athletics Services to check when the next funds would be received by Avon AA

1/ Athletics Services - end of Sept is the end of the first period. We should receive our dues by Oct.

2/ MCAA – We should receive a cheque in next 2 weeks

Performance Grants

The Secretary required further clarifications to proposals and called for a little more time to allow Clubs to publicise the availability of these 'Individual Performance Grants'.

After discussion we agreed to further amend this proposal – To add “An athlete cannot receive two grants in any one athletic year.” & “Grants shall not be applicable to the U13 age group”

The secretary agreed to promote a wider understanding of this new Grant category with the clubs.

It was agreed that the criteria for awards were well defined and that the Secretary should proceed with a compilation of successful applicants and that in future years the consideration deadlines would be 30th Sept and 31st March.

Leslie Nunn reflected that many believed that BMC races promoted times which were not reflective of the true race condition capability of distance athletes due to pacing. Dissatisfaction on the equitability of comparison had been expressed by other event groups.

The Secretary also noted that a number of applicants listed Avon League as an Avon AA Competition?

Hardship Grant Form

A proposal from Gordon Robbins at the previous Avon Committee meeting, that a 'Grant Form' be adopted to cover Hardship cases that would not be covered under 'Performance grants' was endorsed by his presentation of that Form. This form has been circulated.

OFFICIALS

Change of Dates

Note please a delay will occur with the 8th Dec L2 Courses scheduled for YOSC. These will now be held in Jan/Feb 2008. L2 Courses will now be held on Dec 8th at Crypt School, Gloucester.

ROAD RUNNING & TRACK & FIELD

Clash of Dates

The Secretary had spoken to the Regional Manager as requested. In response it was indicated that decisions on dates for both event clashes were established by the Regional council not by the Regional Manager or her staff. They have no influence over decisions made by the Regional Council

The Secretary sent an e mail to Dave Coales (as Road Team Manager) to inform of discussions and of our approach to competing in the SW Road Running Champs.

TRACK & FIELD

EA - Competition Structure

The Committee are to reflect on proposals put by Lesley Nunn which she will further define in a paper to be issued later. Leslie asked that we particularly consider the competition pathway selected by EA within their paper.

Action – Committee to consider this issue before planning for the next Track season.

MAIN MEETING

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Facilities

Packers

Meetings are imminent between the BCC and the project team ref feasibilities studies. A follow up meeting will up date Bristol & West AC of progress. Changing Rooms (part of the Football Pitch project but to be used for Athletics) are currently being built.

Filton

Meetings are imminent between the BCC and the Filton College to explore Funding pathways and the way ahead. It is believed that this project will now become a much larger development from the College's point of view including extensive Classroom building.

Bath University

England Athletics are unhappy at the prospect of holding the UK School Games at Bath Univ in its present state. Bob Ivory is planning a visit in the next few weeks to inspect (with Barry Smart) and to report with due consideration of the needs of the School Games. We are advised by Wesport that Fast Track are responsible for facilities and Cherry Alexander is the contact point.

Building Schools for the Future - St Bede's School

A proposal has been submitted to provide a 4 lane straightaway track with jump facilities adjacent to a Multi Use games area that may be built at St Bede's School.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Current Balance's

Totals £26,633.28

HSBC Current - £6,204.99; HSBC Deposit – £10,428.29; HSBC Deposit Bond – £10,000.00.

Unaffiliated Fees

No monies were received from the unaffiliated levy in the period. Note the responses of MCAA & AS to this point in Matters Arising.

Affiliations – Avon AA

The Treasurer clarified the position on certain clubs and will now seek out payment of fees from those who have not yet paid. The payment of affiliation fees by Avon Schools was raised and we were assured that this matter was in hand.

Affiliations – England Athletics

A list of clubs to date now affiliated to England Athletics was handed to the Treasurer for comparison with those affiliated to Avon. Note this listing is now kept up to date and published on the EA website.

Grant – County Equipment

Gordon Robbins proposed by e mail that the County purchase for County & Club use, a PA System. Gordon wrote : "I would like to propose the purchase of sound equipment for the use of any club affiliated to Avon AA The equipment proposed will be capable of being used at a track meeting race or XC event. It will run off of a 12v battery pack or 240V mains. I know of a couple of events that hire equipment and this will save on cost at these events. This will clearly enhance events not currently using a communication system and will endorse safety issues. The equipment can be stored at Bitton Road Runners HQ and will be accessible at any time. The cost will be £750."

Proposed Bill Kingston; Seconded Mike Willcox; approved unanimously.

Action Gordon : Robbins to purchase

Performance Grants

13 applications received so far. See also matters arising.

Grant application

Received from Anthony Mattis - he requested consideration for costs incurred by participating in the South West representation match in Belgium. Anthony is still a student who is about to continue his Athletics Education at St Mary's College. He is still the number 1 Triple Jumper in the South West and was selected for the 200m in Belgium as the current South West Champion.

Mike Down for Bristol & West AC also agreed to pursue the South West in support of this grant issue.

Proposed Mike Strange; Seconded Mike Down; agreed unanimously.

Action : Granted £100.

Coaching / Officials Education Grants

The Secretary stated that it was becoming more difficult to keep abreast of people undertaking this training and of knowing their Club status. He undertook to attempt to catch up on past grants but felt that for the future all of these grants need to be applied for by Clubs (unless the Course is one which we put on and arrange to pay directly to England Athletics) eg The Endurance Officials Course and L1 Officials Course at YOSC in the near future.

Proposed Bill Kingston; Seconded Peter Griffin; agreed unanimously.

COACHING REPORT

Course / Workshop / Conference

The UKA Sprints Conference will be held at Bath University on Sat 6th Oct. Frank Dick will be the keynote speaker and Jason Gardner will commence his post competition career with a sprint starting workshop.

OFFICIALS REPORT

Level 1 Course – Organised by County

The L1 course requested by Yate AC is now confirmed for Sun 11th Nov 2007. Applications are invited from all Avon Clubs and a flier has been circulated. The County will pay for attendees at this course.

Level 1 Tidworth

This course had representatives from Avon and the Treasurer was notified.

Mentors

Barry Smart enquired the role of Officials mentors. The Officials Co-ordinator explained the ongoing role of Tutors to newly trained Officials under their Education responsibilities. Barry then queried the need for referees to sign off Officials under training at meetings and Ray also qualified this procedure.

First Aid Course

An all day course specifically designed for sport people is scheduled for UWE, Frenchay on Saturday 1st Dec 2007. The Secretary has circulated details.

ROAD RUNNING REPORT

Medals

Medals to competitors in the recent Avon Road Relays were distributed.

Bath Half Marathon

This important race is scheduled for Sunday 16th March 2008 and 'reserved' spaces for entries for Avon Clubs will be open until 18th Jan 2008. Elite places are similarly available on application.

Diary

Issue 27 is now in circulation.

Bristol Half Marathon

The 2008 race is planned for 14th Sept.. Please note that a regular annual date cannot be fixed due to inconsistencies in harbour bridge swings governed by the tides. A 10k event is also contemplated for the Spring. A provisional date is Sunday 4th May 2008.

ARC

This break away group now declares a membership of 104 Clubs.

SW Road running Forum

The Road Race Co-ordinator attend the SW Road Running meeting on 14th Sept. Comments and reflections of the meeting are as follows.

- The Permit system is not working efficiently since Athletic Services took it over. Returns are not coming back from race organisers to the permit secretaries they are being sent directly to Athletic Services. The confusion is caused by the address and instruction on the forms. To add to this Athletics Services does not seem to return anything back to permit secretaries. If an error occurs there is no double check on close out. There appears to be an attempt to make the permit application an on line process which would make the County Permit Secretaries superfluous. One wonders whether the computer can check if the race is organised properly?
- The 28th Oct Endurance Course now on course with 14 confirmed attendees and 8 where confirmation is awaited. Reminders have been sent.
- There could be another regional conference scheduled for 1st March 2008
- A proposal was outlined by the SW Chair Nigel Rowe on the organisation of Regional and National RR Champs. No further details on this are available at the moment.
- There was significant concern amongst the attendees about the lack of consultation and ability to influence anything the RRLG are proposing or doing. (Gordon says "I told you so"). The way forward on this is for a campaign that will make the leadership aware that smaller races do not need all the planned bureaucracy. It has to be remembered that we are volunteers.
- Despite event clash protests the SW RR champs is still going ahead on 18th Nov.
- In contrast to our Secretary's appraisal of the recent RRLG Meeting at Solihull, Nigel Rowe felt that the meeting went very well!

RRLG Update

In the latest amendment to proposals, received just before this Committee Meeting, RRLG have now restructured the Licence payment structure which may prove a little more beneficial to smaller races.

Proposal to the Road Running Leadership Group.

One of the primary aspects of proposals from the RLG is their endeavour to suffice the needs of Performance. Mike Strange encouraged that we indicate that the present Territorial Road Relays, leading to the National event provide one of the highest bases for competitive performance in this Country. Proposal 'That a proportion of monies from the Levy be channelled back to Regions, Territories and Counties toward support their Road Running activities. This we consider is an important cornerstone of performance athletics for Endurance Runners'.

Proposed Mike Strange, Seconded Peter Griffin, carried unanimously.

Action : Secretary : to respond to the RRLG with our reflections on that meeting at Solihull.

+ to comment that in our opinion Road Running clubs are generally financially comfortable due to their receipt of considerable entry fees from their races.

CROSS COUNTRY REPORT

South West Inter-Counties Champs

Mike Down informed that flyers on these Champs are to be distributed shortly from the SW Regional office.

Avon Champs

Neil Miller (who had hoped to attend this Meeting in person after Coaching) wrote : “The reasons that we have been holding the event alternately in Avon and Somerset were (a) because the separate championships were becoming poorly supported and below 'critical mass' for meaningful championships, and (b) in order to provide a direct comparison between Avon and Somerset athletes in order to select a joint team for the Inter-Counties XC Championships.

Since last year, both of these reasons have disappeared: (a) if the championships are held as part of another event such as a league race, then there will be good competition regardless; (b) the immediate concern is now to select separate Avon county and Somerset county teams for the South West Inter-County Champs, which will itself provide a meaningful comparison for the CAU Inter-Counties. This year, the Inter-Counties will be held in the middle of March, 3-4 months after any county championship, so pre-Christmas events will not be particularly relevant.

I therefore suggest that we aim to pick an event that is meaningful to as many Avon athletes as possible that can be nominated as the Avon County XC Championships. I think that the Gwent League match at Bath would be the most appropriate occasion for this season.”

A consensus from the ensuing discussion was that decisions had been made for the 2007/8 season so it was too late to make changes but it could be reviewed for next year. There was no great feeling that splitting with Somerset would be advantageous in fact the point of view made was as broad as it was long.

TRACK & FIELD REPORT

South West Inter-Counties - Event

Hilary Nash felt that the timetable for this event was far too tight and was totally unrealistic to work to. This opinion was shared by everyone involved who attended this Committee Meeting.

Action : Secretary to make this opinion known to the South West administration.

South West Inter-Counties – Performances

The Avon Teams acquitted themselves well on a long very hot day in Exeter finishing 4th overall.

South West Representation – Belgium

Avon athletes Anthony Mattis, Jamie Brock, Emma Heath & Christina Jones were selected for this South West match in Belgium (Christina withdrew due to lack of a current passport). Despite an open invitation no Avon Officials attended this meeting for various reasons one being the contribution to costs of (£100).

SPORTS:HALL REPORT

Dates for 2008

The only fixtures that are defined to date are those organised by Sports:hall Athletics and set by the national organisers:

Fun in Athletics - South West (North Counties) 12 January 2008 at Uni of West of England. This is for Primary School pupils, U11.

Sports:hall U13 and U15 South West Championships at Torbay Leisure centre on Sunday 10 February 2008. U13 (school years 7/8) and U15 (school years 9/10).

Sports:hall National Final - venue and date TBC

AVON SCHOOLS AA

UK School Games - Coventry

Lesley Nunn was included as a Team Manager for the first time this year and 9 Avon athletes competed for the South West Team.

SOUTH WEST REGION REPORT

Club:mark Workshop 17th September 2007

Neil Parsley (ably assisted by Sarah Hawkins from Wesport) presented an excellent Workshop to launch the Club:mark 2 accreditation objective of England Athletics. This accreditation is aimed at Running Clubs without junior responsibilities and it was pleasing to see Thornbury Running club & Great Western Runners in attendance. A disc giving helpful templates for various sections of activity was made available.

Funding Workshop 17th September 2007

A follow on Workshop exposing some novel routes to acquiring funding was held and this was additionally attended by Yate AC & the emerging North Somerset AC. Workshop papers were made available to attendees and are to be put on circulation. .

Avon Representation

Neil Miller also wrote (in his note about the Avon XC Champs) - that he could offer his services (further to Mike Down's comments on Avon representation) as the 'Avon Representative' at the South West (*Council*) Association. Neil works in Exeter so this would be convenient for him. Neil had however misinterpreted the (elected) representation issue to the Council. He was thanked for his offer but informed that the system did not allow for an interchange of representatives.

WESPORT REPORT

UK School Games

The 'Local Organising Committee' has been established and 'Fast Track' are responsible for all Athletics matters.

Officials

The Secretary has written to Cherry Alexander at Fast Track requesting that Local qualified Officials be included in those appointed to this Meeting even if they are always overlooked on invitations to participate in events organised by MCAA and UKA.

Competition Managers

Two new Competition Managers have been appointed to develop a coordinated competition structure in schools. This is in addition to the two existing competition managers already appointed and is supported by the activities to be undertaken for the 2008 UK School Games. The four appointees will operate separately in each of the unitary authorities of the West of England partnership (Avon).

Disability Coaches

Two new Disability Coaches have been appointed and both are known local athletes, Martin Flook & Jayne Hinam. Athletics is one of the sports that they are majoring in.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Avon Inter-Counties (CAU Champs) representation

The President, Peter Griffin having virtually completed a record of Avon Champions announced that he would now concentrate on compiling a list of Avon Medalists in the CAU Championships. Peter presented a draft list to the meeting and asked for clarifications to certain outstanding questions.

CLUB NEWS

Clevedon AC

Contrary to rumours Clevedon's 'junior' section will continue but under new guidance since the departure of Mike Nolan.

MEETING CLOSED

At 9.48 pm

Next Meeting Date – Mon 3rd December 2007.

APPENDIX

FIRST CLAIM CHANGES

MCAA, Meeting 23rd July 2007

Applicable from 01/08/07

No applicable Avon movements.

MCAA, Meeting 20th August 2007

Applicable from 01/10/07

From Bristol & West AC to Exeter H – Royston GREEN