

Avon Athletic Association

Minutes of a Management Committee Meeting of the Avon Athletic Association, held on Monday September 16th 2013, in Room 2B015, Block B, UWE Frenchay Campus, Bristol, starting at 7.30pm.

Those Present: Keith Brackstone (CC Coordinator), John Deaton (Secretary), Rachael Fisher (Acting Chairperson, North Somerset AC), Pam Gooding (Life Member), Ray Gooding (Officials Secretary), Cy Knibb (Bristol & West AC), Hilary Nash (Treasurer / Bristol & West AC), John Robbins (President), Mike Willcox (GWR).

Apologies : Mike Down (Bristol & West AC), Tom Druce (Network Coordinator), Andy Heyes (Clevedon AC), Neil Newman (Emersons Green RC), Bob Lavis (Hogweed Trotters), Ian Macintosh (Trustee), Neil Miller (Westbury H. / SW Council), Ben Redwood (Yate & District AC, T&F Championships Organiser), Gordon Robbins (Road Running Coordinator), Mike Strange (Life Member), Gareth Thomas (Thornbury RC).

Statement from Rachael Fisher (Acting Chairperson) regarding resignation of Stuart Nunn:

"A few months ago a couple of e-mails were circulated to all members of the Avon Athletic Association that (in my opinion) should not have been written, let alone distributed for all to read. Subsequent to these e-mails, I understand that various other e-mails have been circulated to smaller sub-groups.

"All these communications have not been helpful to the Association, with clubs wondering what is going on within the Committee, and have distracted attention away from the Association's real purpose of promoting and enabling the sport of athletics in our region. It is important that we get back on track, we rebuild the reputation of the AAA among the member clubs, and we focus on achieving what we were established to deliver, within the rules and processes of the Association's Constitution.

"The immediate outcome of the e-mails was the resignation of the Chairperson, Stuart Nunn. Consequently I find myself stepping up and filling the role, which I am happy to do in the short term, but I would like to make it clear that I will only be in this role until the next AGM, when a Chair can be elected by all member clubs. In the meantime, I will do my best to ensure appropriate and timely discussion of relevant topics. Agendas will be agreed in advance, and where possible all supporting reports and papers will also be circulated in advance to enable attendees to come fully informed.

"I really appreciate your support over the coming months."

Minutes of Previous Meeting: (May 20th 2013): Accepted.

Matters Arising :

1. Insurance: JD had looked at the British Cycling website for information about their insurance provision. Their Bronze and Silver packages of optional benefits include third-party insurance; the Gold package includes accident insurance (plus two or three other extra benefits over Silver) but at a £28 increment. Maybe athletes should seek a Personal Accident policy on the open market which would meet their personal circumstances (e.g. would they have cover for non-sporting accidents such as an injury from DIY?). Detail of the insurance cover provided to affiliated athletes, officials etc. can be found on the British Athletics website: JD considered that it needed someone with greater knowledge of insurance matters than himself to progress this matter further.
2. Regional Council: nothing more heard yet.

3. Limited-experience running coaches setting up expensive running groups: it was agreed that there was probably nothing that we could do about this.

Treasurer's Report: Hilary supplied a Financial Report up to 9th September 2013 (copies available on request).

... Affiliation fees for 2012 were still outstanding from Bath University AC and Bristol University AC.

... Town and Country Harriers had asked whether, if they affiliate to ARC but not EA, they would be able to remain as members of the Avon AA. While the Constitution requires the Association to affiliate to EA, there is no requirement for individual members to do so. T&CH would therefore be welcome to continue as members of the Association.

... the Lloyds Bank Fixed Term Deposit bond matures shortly: the Bank had submitted no suggestions yet for a continuation investment.

... the meeting strongly recommended that any money taken in from any Avon AA promotion or other event should be banked at the first possible opportunity.

Officials Secretary's Report : Copies available on request.

1. Special Olympics: Ten Avon officials took part in this meeting (roughly ¼ of the athletics officials): the general opinion was that it had been a highly satisfying experience.
2. The inconsistencies in the TRINITY database of Avon Officials' details have been cleared up.
3. Ray had been trying for some time to have a Health and Safety course set up in the locality. EA had persuaded him to drop his own plans in favour of a course being staged in Cheltenham soon – the Secretary will circulate details once they appear on the EA website.
4. The EA staff member dealing with Officials for the Midlands and South-West is now Tina Beresford.
5. The meeting discussed Ray Gooding's proposals for an "Introduction to Officiating" course (document available on request). The meeting felt that a practically-based course would be preferable to straight lectures, with participants able to try each of the disciplines: since no qualifications were being given, it did not need to fit in with the Level 1 Officiating course format. The preferred time of year would be late March or early April. The session should be free to participants: the apportionment of costs between Avon AA / Avon Network / EA would need to be discussed. As well as contacting Avon clubs (and possibly neighbouring County Associations), we should contact the young people involved in athletics via Wesport.

Ray Gooding would go ahead with more detailed planning of the event, and would attempt to get hold of some of EA / UKA's introductory material for officials.

Avon Network Matters: The most recent meeting of the Network was on Wednesday September 4th (no meeting notes available yet). Tom Druce has taken up his post as part-time Network Coordinator. The implementation of the Network Plan is built around various projects:

1. Sportshall: Two Development competitions are being held at Bristol Grammar School: these are on October 19th (for Under-13's) and November 16th (Under-15's). Further details will be circulated shortly. While the Network may help to set up events like these, it is not within their remit to act as ongoing competition providers.

2. Satellite Clubs: there are five initiatives in various stages of development: at Bradley Stoke (through Yate AC), Abbey Wood (through Bristol & West AC), Nailsea School (North Somerset), Keynsham (?) and Mangotsfield (Yate AC). EA require that these are new initiatives, not simply continuations of existing club training groups or after-school clubs. There is a potential involvement by Bristol Rovers FC at Bradley Stoke.
3. Coaching: there is funding available to support 4 Coaches and 10 Assistant Coaches (spread across all disciplines) in their development, in return for their help at Event Development Days and the like. For example, the Network might be prepared to subsidise an Endurance Coach's attendance at the European Endurance Conference at Nottingham on 9th/10th November, or to support an Assistant Coach in their advancement to Coach status.
4. Officials: the Avon Network had responded enthusiastically to Ray's suggestion of an Introduction to Officiating session (see Officials' Secretary's report for more details). The exact nature of the support to officials was still under discussion. There was also an urgent need for extra Endurance officials as well as T&F officials: perhaps an EA Level 2 Endurance Officials course? Continuing minute.

It was felt that the Network should liaise with local clubs to identify their needs for Coaching and Officiating courses, and the most suitable times of the year for such courses, and to press EA for a suitable reaction: EA has been criticized for planning too many courses which were cancelled because of apparent lack of demand.

The next Avon Network meeting is scheduled for Wednesday November 6th.

Track and Field / Sportshall Matters:

1. Avon / West of England T&F Championships: these went ahead successfully, with entries at a similar level to last year. Two minor comments on Field Events: we should revert to a single pool for Triple Jump (unless entry numbers are excessive), and that 1½ hours between the first two groups of Field Events was possibly too long.

Ben plans to spend three weeks in the USA in May 2014: depending on the BA / UKA approved date for the County Championships, we may need to find an organiser or joint-organiser for next year's event.
2. Avon AA Open Meetings: the July 16th event was held in far better weather than the May 14th meeting, so unsurprisingly attracted a far better attendance. John Robbins considered that there was scope for expansion of the Avon Open meetings, but it would require extra commitment from the area's officials to ensure appropriate event coverage. The provision of electronic timing would undoubtedly attract more athletes, but we need to assess whether the hire of the equipment would be cost-effective. The meeting felt that Tuesdays was the best (or least-worst) day to hold the meetings: dates for 2014 could only be fixed once the BA/UKA Fixtures Calendar was known and when requirements for football fixtures was clearer.
3. South-West Inter-Counties T&F Championships (Sunday 11th August): these went ahead successfully, although the entries in some of the Senior Men's / Women's events were sparse. Avon finished 4th overall; the County again had no official team management but strongly encouraged local athletes to enter (Somerset AA took a similar position).
4. UK CAU Track and Field Championships (August 24th/25th, Bedford): the Avon and Somerset team had five athletes competing, all of whom performed well enough finish in the top 8 and so gain team points. John Deaton had forwarded to Ken Holmes e-mails regarding two athletes interested in competing at Bedford; however neither appeared in the eventual results.

5. Sportshall: there was no news yet of what would happen to the South-West and National Championships following the end of Aviva's sponsorship.

Cross-Country Matters:

1. Keith Brackstone reported that arrangements for the Tri-County Cross-Country were in hand: on-line entry would probably be available. However negotiations with the Gwent League over the operation of a joint meeting had not gone well, and the event may well proceed without Gwent League participation [now confirmed: Gwent League have withdrawn from negotiations].
2. The UK Cross Challenge (including the meeting at Bristol on Sunday October 27th) will go ahead despite the end of the main sponsorship deal: the prize money pool would remain the same, but local organizers would need to pick up the infrastructure costs. Contenders for the overall awards would now only need to take part in two meetings plus the Final (incorporated in the UK CAU Championships).

Road Running / MT matters: The Association's 10-Mile Championships are being held in conjunction with the Oldbury on Severn 10 Miles event on September 29th. JD was asked to confirm with Gordon Robbins that arrangements for medal supply are in hand [post-meeting note: Gordon confirms that they are]. The North Somerset Relays on September 8th were cancelled because of pressures arising from the organisers' employment (Clevedon AC hopes to revive the event in 2014); the Clevedon Midsummer 10km went ahead but with no Avon medals being presented [post-meeting note: the supplier's error meant that the medals were delivered too late].

Information from Outside Bodies:

1. The England Athletics AGM is being held in Birmingham on Saturday October 5th. The registration fee for individual athletes for 2014-5 will remain at £10, but the club / association fee increases from £50 to £75.
2. Athletics activists receiving a DBS clearance certificate must now send it to Athletics Welfare at UKA to be ratified; new applicants (if not issued with a DBS form at their education course) must obtain a form from BA / UKA now, not from DBS itself (see Appendix A for more details).

Information from Member Clubs / Associations:

1. Bristol & West AC's men's team won promotion to BAL Division 2, and their Women's team to UKWL Division 2. North Somerset AC had won promotion from their division of the YDL Lower Age Group competition.
2. Weston Super Mare Juniors AC has ceased operation, with most of its remaining athletes and volunteers being absorbed into North Somerset AC.

Any Other Business: None.

Date of Next Meeting: Monday November 25th 2013, at UWE subject to room availability.

Meeting Closed at about 9.40pm.

APPENDIX A

Changes to DBS (formerly CRB) Procedures

Changes to Government legislation have led to changes in the area of safeguarding checks across all sports. It is important that clubs and people such as coaches and officials who require a DBS (formerly CRB) check are aware of these changes.

Changes to the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 mean that from the 17th June 2013 the Disclosure and Barring Service will only issue one certificate which will be sent to the applicant.

This change is important as it means that UKA now longer receives a copy of your DBS certificate. This means that you, should you wish to proceed, need to send your DBS certificate to UKA so they can see it and take the next steps in the process.

What you need to do if you undertake a DBS check:

Once you have the certificate, check its accuracy, and if you accept it is correct send it to Athletics Welfare, PO Box 332, Sale, Manchester M33 6XL.

If you dispute the content of your certificate you should contact the DBS immediately on 0870 9090844 to discuss the disputed matters.

What UKA will do:

UKA will complete their risk assessment, enter your certificate details on Trinity, arrange your licence issue and send the certificate back to you. Should UKA have any issues with the information on the certificate we will contact you prior to any decisions being taken.

UKA would recommend that you make a note of your disclosure certificate number and issue date before sending it to them.

In the unlikely event that UKA do not have sight of your disclosure certificate your licence and insurance cover will lapse.

You can see the latest information on the full processes for DBS checks at www.englandathletics.org/dbs. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact UKA Welfare at dbs@uka.org.uk.

New Officials/Coaches will need a DBS check before qualifying: they should receive a DBS form at the end of their EA Coach / Officials course. Anyone who doesn't receive one, or is a volunteer such as a Team Manager who has been asked to go through a DBS check, should now not contact DBS direct but should e-mail dbs@uka.org.uk with their name and full postal address and they will receive the form by post within a few days.