

Minutes of WMOA Committee Meeting 14th March 2022 at 7-30pm

via Zoom

Present: Richard Lewis, Marian White, Barry Elkington, Ian Gamlen, Richard Rogers, Ray Collins, Rod Postlethwaite, Jonathan Howell, Kirsten Strain, Carol Dredge, Henry Morgan (from 8-20pm), Brenda Morgan (from 8-20pm), Rick Roberts (for item 8 on Agenda)

1. **Apologies:** Mel Elkington, Harriet Lawson

2. **Declaration of Interest:** None

3. **Acceptance of Previous Minutes:** Accepted

4. **Matters Arising:** None

5. **Correspondence:**

a. Email from J. Rostron (POTOC) questioning whether West Midland League winners received certificates. These had been awarded many years ago but not recently. RL suggested it was up to individual clubs to print own for their members if wanted to award them. MW reported that there were templates of certificates on WM website that could be adapted by clubs for this.

b. Email from BOF re problems gaining permission for events from Forestry England. RL replied but felt it was more for clubs to comment on.

c. John Leeson (HOC) re WMOA Coaching Coordinator- to be discussed Item 14.

6. **Chairman's Report - RL**

Whilst we are starting to get out more and enjoy our sport, mine and I'm sure your thoughts are with our friends and the country people of Ukraine, who are suffering with the ongoing conflict. I'm sure we all support them and hope and pray for peace soon.

We still have to take care with our own health whilst Covid is still around.

WMOA members from our regions clubs have been enjoying success in some of the bigger national events, congratulations to all especially those that competed at the British Nights, it looked a cold night with some tough courses. So well done to Kirsten Strain, Sheila Carey, and Alison Sloman HOC, you all did well in winning, perhaps we could have a report for the WMOA Midlander.

Congratulations to Eden Pigott, Alison Sloman and Will Gardner on becoming British Middle Distance Champs.

We have the JK and the British Sprints and Long Champs to look forward to and I wish all the competitors and organisers well.

The WMOA league is progressing well with some interesting results and our summer fixtures are starting to show dates. I would like to think that after the next fixtures meeting we will have been able to add some more regional events into this calendar throughout the year.

7. **Treasurer's Report -IG**

£1350 levy has been collected and £307 expenditure. Surplus of over £1,000.

WM squad have spent some money on kit. KS asked IG to explain figures on balance sheet. These were explained and IG offered to send KS more details on this.

IG suggested that WMOA had plenty of money to be spent.

8. **Fixtures Report- RR**

Leagues

As at 11th March, the WM league has 5 fully registered events and a further 2 in the pipeline. In the case of the Urban league, 3 are fully registered and 2 are in the pipeline. There is an opportunity to include more events if clubs have any others in preparation.

JK

With the West Mids agreeing to co-host JK 2024 with the East Mids, the previous rota would have put our next JK in 2028 which was considered as too soon. A change to 2031 has now been officially agreed.

Midlands Championships 2023

As reported previously, HOC / WRE have expressed concerns about the assumption that the WM turn for the Midlands Champs in 2023 would be included in the SinS event on 28th May. Mike Cope has apologised for making that assumption and asked that the clubs, please, consider including it on this occasion to prevent disruption to the programme.

To accommodate the various concerns expressed, several things were agreed at the Event Scheduling Group on 12th March:-

- Chris Phillips (chair of BO Events and Competitions Committee) agreed that the Mid Champs course list could be changed to fit the SinS format.

- To avoid the creation of precedence, the rota for the Midlands Champs was changed to avoid the following two SinS years. The next conjunction of the two events in the West Midlands will not occur until 2029.
- It was confirmed that embargoes were only required for the JK and the various British Championships. Other events were only at the discretion / request of organising clubs.

Elsewhere, other "weekend" events are also taking on national events due to the reduced number of options e.g. November Classic hosting the SHI's.

WRE have agreed that Midlands Champs to be part of SINS 2023. Needs a common sense approach eg with split courses if numbers too high on some of SINS courses. IG reported HOC had reluctantly accepted as part of SINS, for a final time. RR and RL to check again with Club Chairs, WRE and HOC.

RR pointed out that compromises/ modifications were needed at the moment to ensure events go ahead, this is the same all over the country. Event guidelines had been written when numbers of competitors were much higher.

JHI 2023

WMOA still has not identified a club(s) to host the 2023 JHI's despite several requests for volunteers. Given lead times on permissions etc this is becoming increasingly urgent. It has been agreed that there can be some flexibility with the dates if this opens opportunities in venues with limited windows. Currently, the event is scheduled for the weekend 7-8th October 2023. The weekend 15/10 is not possible but weekends 22/10 to 5/11 inclusive are all possible slots.

RR has a WM Fixtures Meeting on 24/3 where this needs finalising. IG suggested using Wyndley Leisure Centre for accommodation and Sutton Park for both events, with an open event held after the Relays. RL agreed to co-ordinate the weekend, liaising with the 4 countries.

Controllers

There is a developing national problem over access to high level controllers. Several regions have now requested the downgrading of some events to avoid the problem. This is a particular problem this October where a controller is still required for the Welsh Champs & VHI weekend due to the sudden ill health of a key individual.

HM expressed an interest in Controlling at this event. RR to pass details to him.

9. West Midlander - RP

There is some material for a new edition and it should be out sometime in April.

10. WMOA Website

RR- no technical changes have been made.

MW- fixtures have been updated. A link to WMJS fundraising has been added and WMJS report to be added after meeting.

11. Development- HM

No feedback had been received from clubs as to what courses they wanted.

Agreed to hold Planners Course at end of year and Controllers Course possibly end of October. Discussion as to whether Organisers Course was best left to clubs to organise or to region. HM suggested run by region, so ideas between clubs could be shared, also Event Safety course could be held on same afternoon.

12. Update Events and Competition Committee - BE

This committee no longer meets so item will be taken off future agendas.

13. West Midlands Junior Squad- KS

Squad membership is currently 13 juniors. Club contribution is: 3 x HOC, 3 x WCH, 2 x WRE, 2 x POTOC, 3 x OD. Good to have a relatively even spread from almost all clubs across the region. Age split is: 1 x M18, 1 x M16, 6 x M14, 3 x W14, 1 x W12. Any other juniors (M/W12-M/W18) who are successfully completing orange courses or above should get in touch if they'd like to join us.

In 2022 so far we have had two training days. On 27th February we had a training on Hednesford Camp, Cannock Chase (WCH), which had 10 junior participants. The training was led by Neil Adams, WCH, along with Kirsten and several parents. On 12th March we had a training on Rough Close, near Coventry (OD), which had 8 junior participants. The training was led by Harriet along with Kirsten and several parents. Thanks for WCH and OD, respectively, for the use of their areas including organising permissions, BO registration and provision of the map. Upcoming trainings include Clent Hills (HOC) in April and Park Hall (POTOC) in May.

It has been positive having guest coaches coming alongside the regular WMJS coaches for recent training sessions. The benefits are mutual – the guest coach gets the opportunity to gain experience and informal mentoring, especially if they are on the way to becoming a qualified coach, while the squad's juniors benefit from a different face and fresh ideas and the regular coaches have more time to spend on preparation for other training sessions. If any other qualified or nearly-qualified coaches wish to get involved, please get in touch.

Provisional plans to have a weekend trip in May for juniors and their families have been postponed due to low availability on the proposed dates. The idea will be revisited later in the year.

Zoom trainings have continued twice a month – one technical and one physical. This is planned to continue throughout the spring/summer term.

Fundraising activities have resumed in the form of successful cake sales at the Postensplain CSC heat and the Hartshill Hayes WML event. Thanks to HOC and OD for inviting us and being very accommodating. In each case, the funds raised have been over £100. If there are any other suitable events coming up then let us know.

A grant application has been made to the Poundland Foundation “Kit for Kids” fund, for £750 to cover an order of squad lightweight running jackets. Thanks to Julia Allinson who found out about it and did the majority of the work preparing the application. We expect to hear the result at the start of April. If successful, we will work with a supplier and the juniors to agree a design. It is a condition of the funding that the Poundland Foundation logo appears on the clothing.

14. WMOA Coaching Co-ordinator

RL- written some ideas for an advert to go on WMOA website - what is the role? Co-ordinating clubs coaches not the WM Juniors. Individual clubs should have their own coaches- not expect co-ordinator to do this.

HM- POTO does not have much coaching for adults - need fine tuning. Coach co-ordinator could maybe help improve skills of these -1 or 2 sessions a year.

MW- HOC- all clubs need to have active coaches but difficult to find out how to become a coach. Help needed to find coaching courses.

RL- Hilary Palmer - NOC- willing to start people off on coaching side - co-ordinator could arrange this.

Difficult to navigate BOF site to find out how to achieve qualifications for coaching.

JH-WCH- actively encouraging more club coaches - 2 new ones recently qualified, although one has now left area.

KS- would co-ordinator be on committee?

On list of officers so a committee member- need to give updates at meetings.

KS- questioned wording - club coach ie coach on club committee, co-ordinator needs to support all coaches in a club not just the one on the committee. In advert should be supporting all coaches in clubs not just the named club coach.

RL- to send out thoughts on the job role description, and proposed WMOA web page advert for committee to comment on. (Although advert may not be needed as someone interested in the role)

15. Clubs Round Up

COBOC IG

Beginners/ Families/ Schools events were being held with a very good turn out

WM Schools Champs - Saturday 14th May - Sandwell Valley

PP Relays - September- Sutton Park

Also involved in Euro City Races

WCH JH

Urban night MapRuns being held. Very competitive with some newcomers and competitors from other clubs.

Baude desert event earlier in year faced problems due to new fenced areas around Scout Camp. If area to be used for JK 2024 will need to find new parking/ assembly area.

POTOC BM

New series of Come And Try It events begun. Park League beginning soon.

Becoming an elderly club- 2 juniors in WM Squad , can't attract 21/30 year olds.

WRE RR

Saturday Series underway - beginner friendly.

League event hopefully in October / November.

WM Relays - nothing known about.

HOC No report

OD BE

Saturday events - local people and newcomers.

Hartshill Hayes- 200+ entries - lost some due to COVID.

Ted Norrish one of founders of OD in 1967 has died.

16. Any Other Business

IG- Neil Cameron, ex Chair Of BOF, head of Orienteering Foundation, reported that all clubs trying to attract newcomers were facing an uphill task. All Club Websites have been scored for being beginner friendly by Orienteering Foundation, results sent to Club Secretaries.

POTOC have tried to amend website following feedback.

HM and BM not receiving WM Committee emails - CD to follow this up with Mike Farrington.

17. Date of Next Meeting- Monday 13th June at 7-30pm by Zoom.

The meeting closed at 9-15pm.

Thanks to Barry Elkington for coordinating Zoom Meeting.