

## Minutes of WMOA Committee Meeting 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 7-30 pm

via Zoom

**Present:** Marian White, Ian Gamlen, Kirsten Strain, Carol Dredge, Jonathan Howell, Rick Roberts, John Leeson, Richard Rogers, Adrian Bailey, Marian Denham,

**1. Apologies:** Melanie Elkington, Barry Elkington, Jim Cooke, Henry Morgan, Dave Ellis

**2. Declaration of Interest:** None

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

**4. Matters Arising:** None

**5. Correspondence:** a) Email from Mike Smithard- DEE suggesting possibility of running Controller's Course jointly between NWOA and WMOA. Henry Morgan replied stating no plans to run such a course in WM in 2024. Committee felt there was a definite need for more Controllers in the region.

Action- Club reps to contact all their members to see demand for Controllers, Organisers, Planners and Coaching courses. Needs of clubs to be passed on to CD by end of January.

b) Mike Farrington needs updated list of committee members and posts for emails. WM Newsletter editor to be removed from list. Richard Lewis new WRE club rep. CD to email MF to update.

**6. Chairman's Report: AB**

The 2023 West Midlands League ended yesterday. The final league results are not up yet, but possibly congratulations to Wrekin! The Urban League has finished as well. I noticed among other things that Simon and Eloise from HOC were the Open winners. So congratulations to them.

We've had four regional events since the last meeting. Sutton Park (OD) yesterday, the HOC event at Burlish, the WM Relays organised by WCH and WRE's Woodside Urban. And of course there was the Junior Home Internationals in October, which was a great event. I want to talk about the relays in the fixtures discussion.

In the future we've got the Laurie Bradley score. I know these days there's competition because there's also events in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, but it'd be nice to see as many people as possible coming to take part at Pooley on the 1<sup>st</sup>.

Apart from the events coming up soon in the region, I noticed the British Night's is on the 10<sup>th</sup> February in the Lakes.

I want to say that I think I ought to step down as Chair because it's turned out that I'm just in no real position to do the job. And it's not very fair on the Association or on Carol at the moment. It's not supposed to be a sinecure. I'm supposed to be representing the Association and not just turning up. I don't mind chairing the meetings but I'm not really in a position to be the Chair of the Association if that makes any sense.

I'm happy to hang on until a replacement is found, if you can bear with me for a bit longer.

CD to notify all WMOA members, through club secretaries, of Adrian's resignation and ask for volunteers to fill the role.

**7. Treasurer's Report –IG**

Prior to the meeting IG circulated the Income and Expenditure for the WMOA and WMJS as well as the Income and Expenditure for the JHI. Accounts show movement of monies re JHI'S. Expenditure for JHI'S was £10,259 which resulted in a very small loss of £65 to the Association. Note some of the JHI expenses were paid out last financial year- deposits for Beaudesert and Ceilidh.

WMJS shows expenses of Finland trip, Junior Inter Regionals and Lake District trip.

Both the WMOA and WMJS accounts in a healthy position. On 9/12/23 WMOA Account has £8978.32 and WMJS Account has £1687.57

JK, British Sprints and Sprint Relays should add some money to WMOA account.

**8. Fixtures Report- R Roberts**

Since our last committee, the autumn meeting of the National Events Scheduling Group was held on October 16<sup>th</sup> and our own West Midlands group of club fixtures secretaries on November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Now for the Leagues: -

There have been 7 West Midlands League events in the 2023 calendar year, the results of which are all available via the WMOA website.

For 2024, there are currently 7 events registered and a further two events likely, making a potential 2024 league of 9 events, barring mishaps.

The Urban League has again been rather underpopulated this year with only four events. Scoring tables are on the West Mids Urban League webpage by following the link from the WMOA website. For those interested, the WM Urban League webpage also contains links to both the UK Urban League and all other regional tables for this and previous years.

For 2024, there are currently 2 registered events and a further one likely making a potential of 3 event – not exactly a league. However, the two events already registered are also in the UK Urban League and therefore should attract significant entry numbers. One of these events, HOC's on a new map of Worcester, is part of a UKUL weekend pairing with an NGOC event in Gloucester. Our Fixtures Secretaries Group raised the possibility of somehow incorporating this into our league to bring up the number of events. As you know EMOA rebuffed our previous approach, however, this is a South West event. Thus far I have undertaken to discuss the suggestion here before taking any other action. Comments?

In terms of other regional events for 2024, plans are in hand for OD to host the Laurie Bradley, HOC the Relays, Chasers the CSC/T Round 1, Wrekin the Yvette Baker first round, POTO the West Midlands Champs and HOC the Schools Champs.

In addition nationally, two days of JK 2024 will be based on the Chasers Beaudesert map and the annual BSC / BSRC weekend will be hosted by OD & HOC on the Birmingham & Warwick University Campuses over 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> June.

#### **Comments-**

AB- NGOC event now at Stroud not Gloucester. Idea of putting this event in WM League was discussed but no real outcome. WCH are possibly putting on an Urban in the Summer. WRE and POTO will discuss possibility of an Urban at next Committee meeting.

Discussion over how many Urban events to count in League – 4 with 3 to count or 4 with 2 to count ? This could be amended if more events were added.

Rick R to send lists of events for both Leagues to MW to add to website. MW sending out news roundup after this meeting.

AB – WMOA Relays- need to reformulate these. Committee could change rules and classes. AB suggested changing to just 7 classes. Discussion about these raised some issues. KS suggested looking at Scottish Relays Champs for ideas- handicap system and mass start for everyone except Juniors. KS to circulate notes on this to discuss at a future meeting.

WMOA Relays 21<sup>st</sup> April 2024 organised by HOC to retain current classes.

#### **9. WMOA Website**

MW- Henry Morgan to be put back on website as Development Officer.

#### **10. Development - None**

11. **Coaching Co-ordinator-** Dave Ellis not at meeting.

Coaching survey has not been sent out to clubs. IG agreed to send out a coaching survey to each club asking what their needs were, what they would like put on and how they coach younger juniors- prior to Squad membership.

#### **12. West Midlands Junior Squad –KS**

Since the AGM, squad day trainings have been held Hartshill Hayes in October and Lickey Hills in December, and we have had two of our monthly technical Zoom trainings.

We had a successful weekend trip to the Lake District at the start of November, enjoyed by 10 WM juniors and 4 EM juniors, with various adults. The O Foundation training was moved to Great Tower Wood at the last minute, which was a good alternative. Thanks to Toni O'Donovan for re-planning the exercises at short notice, and to Ann-Marie Duckworth for coordinating the food.

In late November, two juniors (Rupert and Olivia) attended the JROS Hawkshead weekend, accompanied by two adults (Alistair and Kirsten). Training was on three different areas (Tarn Hows, Esthwaite Intake and Great Tower Wood) and accommodation and the famous night sprint race were at Hawkshead YHA. It was very enjoyable and beneficial for both juniors and coaches.

We had a successful fundraising cake stall at Sutton Park yesterday. We'll be looking at other events to have stalls at in the coming months.

Kirsten and Karen represented WM at the JROS AGM last week. Feedback points from this include the following: A new auditor/reviewer is required for the accounts, a new volunteer is sought to lead fundraising efforts (it takes £5k per year to subsidise junior tours to the current level), there will be a presence at next year's JK (tent, display board, raffle etc), EM are inviting other squads to a training weekend in early March.

WMJS invited several new juniors to the last two training sessions and most of those juniors will be invited to full squad membership in the new year. It does feel like the only way we can get an intake of juniors is to drop the required standard and coach at a lower level. Ideally regional junior squads coach at TD4 and TD5 level, with club training being available to support young athletes up to that standard. Can clubs look at the development pathway that they are offering to their juniors and feed back to here if there are barriers to providing coaching that could be overcome with the support of the region? For example, WMJS can support coach development in providing opportunities for coach qualification practice or assessment sessions. In the meantime, if there are any juniors able to confidently complete orange courses, please tell them about WMJS and help us to contact them.

#### **Comments-**

IG asked if Lickey Hills map was up to date as planning to hold a Schools/ Families/ Beginners event there. KS- path network difficult to interpret so not great for beginners.

JL asked about WMJS helping clubs develop coaches. KS- Potential coaches can lead sessions at training either individually or with support to develop skills. Joint squad/ club sessions could be run if there are not many younger juniors in a club.

#### **13. 60 years of WMOA**

After discussion it was agreed that we would give Commemorative pens at WMOA Champs on the 12<sup>th</sup> May. IG to order pens- WMOA 60 Years.

#### **14. Publicity for WMOA events**

JH- lots of requests to publicise other clubs events. Agreed happy to publicise main / league events, these need to go through club reps not just anyone, but not small local events. May be Ok to ask neighbouring club to advertise Level D events.

MW- News round up will mention O event sites for people to look up nearby events.

#### **15. Safeguarding**

IG gave an update after carrying out a Safeguarding survey of all WMOA club websites and WMJS and WMOA sites.

All clubs, bar one, are now compliant with BOF requirements. JH- WCH working towards this.

IG to recheck sites before March meeting and update as necessary.

#### **16. Club Round-Up**

OD- BE not at meeting. KS updated (but not on committee.)

Club Party on Wednesday. 1<sup>st</sup> January Laurie Bradley Score. 24<sup>th</sup> March- Coombe Abbey event. Sutton Park event well attended.

#### **HOC – JL**

Been a busy year. Have put on as many events as any other club in England. WM League event Wyre Forest in January. WM Relays in April. British Sprint Relays – Birmingham University will need a large volunteer effort. Trying to encourage new volunteers.

#### **WRE- R Rogers**

Agreed to provide equipment for JK but in dark about help needed.

January – Club Champs and AGM. YBT and WM League event still looking for a date – congested time. Window is between 24<sup>th</sup> March and 19<sup>th</sup> May for YBT but could possibly be extended slightly. JL- clubs can swap events if needed. Possibility of using OD event at Coombe Abbey for YBT.

#### **WCH – JH**

WM Relays held but disappointing entry numbers – club made a loss. Preparing for CSC round – no Controller as yet. Lots of volunteers needed for CSC and JK. New committee members.

#### **POTOC- MD**

WM Champs at Leek - large access fee will mean high entry costs- in excess of £10.

Evening events are using stickers on lamp posts rather than Map Run. Local events sorted for next year.

POTOC helpers found for JK but want to know what they are needed to do.

#### **15. Any Other Business**

None

**16. Date of Next Meeting-** Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March at 7-30pm by Zoom.

Meeting finished at 9-20pm.

Thanks to Barry Elkington and Kirsten Strain for coordinating Zoom Meeting.