

**Minutes of WMOA Committee Meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024 at 7-30 pm**

**via Zoom**

**Present:** Marian White, Kirsten Strain, Carol Dredge, Jonathan Howell, Rick Roberts, Barry Elkington, Richard Lewis, Jim Cooke, Ian Gamlen

**1. Apologies:** John Leeson, Dave Ellis, Mel Elkington

**2. Declaration of Interest:** None

**3. Acceptance of Previous Minutes:** Minutes of 11<sup>th</sup> March accepted

**4. Matters Arising:** None

**5. Correspondence:** a) Email from EOC re AGM- RL to attend

b) Email from BOK re invite to Planners and Organisers course they are holding – CD emailed to club reps.

c) Email from POTOC re cancellation of WM Champs due to army withdrawing permission.

**6. Acting Chairman's Report: RL**

Welcome to my second report

Well it's been a busy last few months for our WMOA clubs.

So well done to all those clubs involved with JK 2024 and all the members who volunteered and contributed to the success of the JK2024. None more so than WCH who provided the event area and the senior officials.

WMOA club members have enjoyed success further afield competing in the British Long, Middle and Relays, well done to you all. I didn't get to them all but those I did I really enjoyed the races and social side and look forward to more in 2024.

Nearer home we have had the WMOA relays organised by HOC at Baggeridge when I think everything feel into place, ideal assembly area, sunny weather, with challenging courses albeit a bit muddy in places, Congratulations to the winning teams especially the Junior Women not often 3 granddaughters run in the same team, and Granddad presents the trophy.

As we move forward we have the British Sprint Relays and individual sprints to look forward to. Most of our clubs have an active summer series of events to look forward to as well, most encouraging beginners to experts to have a go.

The WMOA is currently looking for volunteers to take on the role as Chairperson, and in addition to this we need to find a suitable Fixtures Secretary.

After making an amazing professional job of the role Rick Roberts is having to give up the role due to personal reasons.

Rick is helping to keep the fixtures going at present but it's really important we fill this role quickly.

We do have a Job specification of what this role involves and Rick will be available to handover and discuss what is involved.

I will be writing/emailing the Clubs chairs with the importance of recruiting these very important roles which I fully understand are only volunteers but essential to continuing our support of the sport both locally and on a National level.

Without volunteers we wouldn't have a sport, even if you only wish to do one of the above for a year it would help keep our sport and fixtures moving forward.

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

Both West Midlands accounts are very healthy at the moment.

£1,000 to be transferred to WMJS as agreed at the last committee meeting.

WMOA to receive approximately £8,000 as profit from JK 2024. This to be divided up between clubs that contributed to putting the events on.

Levy to EOC due at the end of the month. Regions pay based on number of adult members at the end of June. Roughly £1 per member so approximately £500 in total.

Requests for assistance for Junior tours- one received so far- 15% of total cost to be donated.

**8. Fixtures Secretary Update: RL**

RR needs to stand down from this position ASAP. Club reps asked to see if anyone in their clubs willing to take on the role. RR suggested that he would possibly come back to the role in the future – suggesting not too onerous a job!

Priority events that need to be sorted soon are 18/19<sup>th</sup> April 2026. HOC are hosting British Middles at Brown Clee on 18<sup>th</sup>. Brown Clee also booked for 19<sup>th</sup> for Midland Champs but HOC are looking for a host club from WMOA to take this on. Infrastructure for the events only needs

to be done once so looking for club to offer helpers on day and planner. BOF need the embargo for this in place ASAP and need Controller etc to be able to do this.

### **Fixtures Secretary Report: RR**

Since our last WMOA meeting, the spring meeting of the West Midlands group of club fixtures secretaries was held by zoom on March 21st.

There are several issues to report today.

Firstly, our Leagues:

In the West Midlands League itself there are now 7 events registered, barring mishaps. The first event of the season was held by HOC in January at Bodenham Arboretum & Shatterford Woods – a new area for the league – and the second by OD at Coombe Abbey on 24th March. This was also the West Midlands Yvette Baker round one.

In the Urban League for 2024, there are now 3 registered events, two of which are also in the UK Urban League. One of these events, HOC's on a new map of Worcester, is part of a UKUL weekend pairing with an NGOC event to be held in Stroud.

In terms of other regional events for 2024, OD has hosted the Laurie Bradley, Chasers the Compass Sport Cup Round 1, HOC the Relays on 21st April, OD the Yvette Baker first round on 24th March and HOC the Schools Champs on 11th May. The POTOC hosted West Midlands Champs will now be held on 15th September.

In addition, nationally, the annual BSC / BSRC weekend will be hosted by OD & HOC on the Birmingham & Warwick University Campuses over 22nd & 23rd June.

Looking further forward, there are a number of major events allocated to the West Midlands over the next few years and we need to clarify the hosting arrangements for several of them in the near future to allow for appropriate preparation time.

In 2026, HOC have agreed to host the British Middle Champs on Saturday 18th April. This needs to be paired with the Midlands Champs on the 19th and Brown Cleve has been booked for the whole weekend. HOC are hoping that another WM Club can agree to partner and take the lead on the second day.

Then, in 2027 it is the West Midlands turn to host the JIRCs - over 25th & 26th September weekend. A host, or lead club still needs to be identified.

Then the largest issue. We are due to host BOC & BRC in 2028. It seems like a long time away but the earlier we identify hosts and venues the better –bearing in mind the need for embargoes etc.

RL- stressed the need to get holes in events filled in quickly. JIRC'S – Beaudesert accommodation worked well for JHI'S – area needs 1 year embargo.

2028- British Champs and British Relays need a 2 year embargo and need one of our best areas. BE suggested with the closure of MWOC there are some very good areas near Dolgelleau that could potentially be used. MWOC offering clubs chance to use their areas and keep maps updated. Would involve lots of travelling for Planners/ Controllers/ Organisers but not for helpers. Budget could be sorted for major officials to stay there when necessary. Hopefully result in a good turnout as good new area for many competitors.

### **9. WMOA Website: MW**

No updates. Thanks to MW for producing newsletters. New one planned soon.

### **10. Development –**

Henry Morgan is happy to continue to run courses for this year. Suggests Planners and Controllers course in October possibly at Pooley Fields . RL to possibly run an Organisers course. RL to speak to HM re dates and update CD next week.

Rod Postlethwaite is willing to run a course on how to update current maps, open to all clubs, when he has time.

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

DE has emailed results of the coaching survey and a lengthy report of possible ways forward. CD to circulate to committee to read through and look at recommendations and share with club coaches. RL suggested a Zoom meeting with DE and club coaches to discuss further. RL to arrange a suitable date with DE. KS requested to be included in meeting.

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

Squad activities since the last WMOA meeting have been focussing on race preparation for the major races. Technical Zoom trainings were held in advance of the Midland Champs, JK, British Long Champs, British Middle Champs and Northern Champs. One reason for this focus was the target of selection to JROS summer training camps for several juniors.

We are very pleased to have 6 juniors participating in JROS summer training camps this year. Eden Pigott and Fraser Stamp are on the Lagganlia camp (for M/W14s) and Jonah Hearn, Max Straube-Roth, Adam Landels and Craig Thompson are on the Deeside camp (for M/W15s).

Congratulations to those juniors, who earned their places through performance at the defined selection races. In addition, Eden Pigott has been selected to represent England at the Junior Home Internationals in October.

6 juniors participated in a pre-JK training camp in North Wales organised by Mark and Alice of the Welsh Junior Squad. Thanks to Simon Thompson (HOC) and Stuart Duckworth (WCH) for accompanying and driving the WM juniors.

Since the last meeting, we haven't had any specific WMJS in-person training days, due in part to congestion in the competition calendar. In the end, May turned out to have fewer events than originally planned, but unfortunately there was not sufficient time to arrange anything once this became clear. We are joining up with other regional squads next week on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> June at Nottingham University for sprint training.

We had a cake sale at OD's WML event in Coombe Abbey, which raised £205. We also had a fundraising cake stall at the West Midland Relays in April, which made £75.

We have reviewed the current availability of squad clothing and are making preparations for a new order of o tops / jackets.

Looking ahead to the autumn, the JIRCs are being hosted by the SW region, near Bristol, on 28/29 September, for M/W14, 16 and 18 classes. We are currently in the process of evaluating the juniors' availability and how we can maximise our team within the entry restrictions. Our small number of girls means we will inevitably be among the lower scoring regions overall.

The JROS Hawkshead weekend for M/W16s is happening as usual at the end of November. We have a large number of juniors in that age group this year so will have to negotiate with the organisers to see if there are enough spaces for everyone. A decision has not yet been made about any other residential training camp, such as the EMJOS/WMJS weekend we had in the Lake District last November. The O Foundation training day this year clashes with the JROS Hawkshead weekend so that will not help us.

Another reason for the lower-than-usual number of squad training dates this term, besides the difficulty finding dates that don't clash with competitions, is the capacity of the squad coaches and coordinators. A big help would be a volunteer to take responsibility for agreeing on suitable dates and then liaising with clubs to obtain permission for suitable areas on those dates. If anyone can help with that, please get in touch.

RL- asked MW to put job description of role to be filled on the website. KS stressed the need for it to be someone who knows the areas in WM suitable for squad training.

### **13. 60 years of WMOA – IG**

Commemorative pens have now been produced and will be given out at WM Champs at Bathpool Park.

### **14. Outdoor Classroom –RL**

RL had received email from Josh Jenner re Outdoor Classroom and asked for thoughts on this. CD circulated to committee prior to meeting.

ME has known him for many years. Orienteering background and coach on some tours. Does schools mapping and set up OC around Covid. Perhaps more useful for schools than clubs. Orienteering For Schools – DVO based is more reasonably priced.

BE- clubs don't have resources/ time to map/ coach in schools so good idea in that way.

It was agreed that club reps would mention OC to their clubs and explain what it had to offer.

### **15. EOC Report: RL**

The WMOA was invited to attend the above AGM which is chaired by Barry Elkington OD. Approx 16 members attended.

A full and comprehensive Agenda followed and covered the positive outcome of the previous AGM actions requiring attention.

The full and detailed minutes from this year's AGM will be available to view on the web site [orienteeringengland.org.uk](http://orienteeringengland.org.uk)

A comprehensive detailed treasurer's report was given and will also be available to view as above.

A proposal was offered by the treasurer for a policy to be actioned regarding Travel, accommodation and expenses incurred for internationals like the Interland. A lengthy debate followed and no definitive decision was finalised yet.

The EOC will have the following role requiring a volunteer to fill before the next AGM- a finance reviewer, job description available from Barry Elkington.

The current EOC secretary would also like to stand down at the next AGM.

The date of the next AGM was proposed as June 1<sup>st</sup> 2025.

BE- commented that there had been a good set of results for England in the last year. It provides a good opportunity for Juniors to run for their country and travel abroad. Similarly for some 50's and 60's who experience the first time representing their country.

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

#### **OD-BE**

Continuing to put on a mixture of WM League/ Saturday/ Wednesday evening events.

Big focus on Sprint Champs.

Set up a development group aimed at moving club forward and growing numbers – Development Officer considered.

#### **HOC – IG**

Big focus on British Mixed Sprint Relays at Birmingham University. 130+ teams entered. Female runner needed in each team puts constraint on numbers. Potential issue with Pro Palestinian camp at University but currently in an OOB area.

Simon Thompson – coordinator for SINS next year .

WM Schools Champs went well but only about 50 competitors.

Putting on a Summer series of events.

#### **WRE- RL**

Wrekin members marshalled a Junior Park run and then invited Juniors from Park Run to orienteer around the park an hour later – v encouraging take up.

Series of Summer events put on. Shrewsbury Sports Village was well attended.

Whitchurch Urban event now July 7<sup>th</sup> not June 16<sup>th</sup>.

Some members involved in putting on Schools Orienteering Champs – Cardingmill Valley – 16 schools – 140+ children. Some schools v interested in going forward with this.

#### **WCH – JH**

Very quiet at the moment- - recovering from putting on the JK. Small Summer programme of events.

#### **POTOC- JC**

WM Champs at Morridge had to be cancelled as army withdrew all permissions until end of August. September onwards unable to use Farmer's field. WML event to be held there next year on Sunday May 4<sup>th</sup>.

WM Champs to be held at Bathpool this year instead.

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

CD- confirmed date for AGM- Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October at Great Barr Hotel- also by Zoom. Notice to members beginning of September.

16. **Date of Next Meeting-** Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September at 7-30pm by Zoom.

Meeting finished at 9-15pm

Thanks to Kirsten Strain for coordinating Zoom Meeting.