



Minutes of the Thames Regional Rowing Council AGM held at London Rowing Club on Sunday November 21st at 3pm.

Present Margaret Adams (Div Rep / St George's LRC/ Chairman); Martin Humphrys (London), Alan Hawes (Thames); Nina Padwick (MAABC); Richard Philips (London / Div Rep); Tony Evans (Marlow Regatta); J Chapman (Marlow); Andrew Ruddle (HARR); Pauline Churcher (Vice President); Stan Collingwood (Umpires Commission); Bill Mitchell (TTRC); Vicky Foad (ARA); Graham Redman (Sons of the Thames RC); Sarah Birch (ARA); Michael Jones (Henley); Richard West (Div Rep / Kingston RC); John Turnbull (Weybridge/Weyfarers); Peter Moore (Div Rep / Reading); Chris Harrison (Vesta) ; Ted Bates (Molesey); Rod Murray (Henley T & V Regatta); Nigel Smith (Metropolitan Regatta); Hans Neher (London); C D Riches (Div Rep / Westminster School BC); A Kapica (Vets Commission); David Biddulph (SC); Mark Ruscoe (Furnivall SC); Chris George (Thames TC).

The meeting being Quorate the Chairman opened the meeting.

Action

1. Apologies were received from Barbara Wilson, Anne Southey, Dave Taylor, Richard Stanhope, Liz Nixon, Mark Nixon, Edward Rees, Judith Packer, Richard Packer, Chris Sprague, Richard Rowlands, Caroline Turnbull and Harold Blogg.

2. The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read approved and signed as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising – there were no matters arising.

4. Chairman's remarks – The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and hoped that the meeting would not take too long.

5. Reports.

(a) CDO's – Vicky Foad explained that there had been a number of changes in the team following the re-arranging of responsibilities last September. The CDO's were assisting with the Young Peoples Programme working with Volunteers. There are 10 project oarsome clubs within the region. 21 clubs are going for club mark accreditation. They were assisting with the legacy programme for Youth Development. The J16 Training Day and the Go Race Indoor events. They were attending meetings with Sport England, County Sport Partnerships, Local Development Officers and the River Thames Alliance.

In regard to Education and Training we have seen 145 members achieve their IA which is 86 up on the previous year. A residential IA course had been held in August. Ideally we would like to plan the whole IA courses a year in advance. It was hoped there would be a Bronze Course in 2005. There have been six seminars with some 60 coaches attending. We would like to have the seminars both ends of the region if possible. We now have 17 Coach assessors which is up from 9 in previous years. It was also hoped there would be a British Rowing Technique Training Day in 2005.

The Chairman confirmed that the region assists with 50% of the costs for successful completion of a number of the courses and those seeking our support should seek confirmation from the Treasurer that financial support is possible and certainly they should not just assume it will be forthcoming.

(b) RCDO – Richard felt that the CDO's had said it all. He confirmed that the Bronze award is to be spread over a period and the entire coaching



structure is to be tweaked to come into line with the Government guidelines across the sports.

(c) Umpires – In the absence of Chris Sprague Stan Collingwood gave the report. There are 120 umpires on the current list. There had been a dozen trainees and seven had passed. At the end of the year with retirements etc the list now stands at 125. There have been a number applying for next year and it looks like they are all of good quality and that is essential for we have a number leaving at the other end. Ian Cruickshank had stepped down from the Commission and John Duff had joined it. The Commission attend every event and if anyone has any comment to make about an event they should not hesitate to talk to the Commission member.

Members of the Commission had been involved with the Junior Officials Programme and Project Oarsome.

Our Commission has also been instrumental in developing a National Standard in the umpires programme and this will be piloted in the West Country and West Midlands next year and then go country wide the year after.

(d) Safety Advisor – Alan Hawes indicated that in the last year weather conditions had affected a number of the Head Races. The decisions to cancel the Tideway Head and Scullers' Head had been justified. In the Case of the Vesta Veterans Head the weather had deteriorated around the start of the race but he felt the safety plan had worked and the one crew which did get into trouble had supposedly broken all of the rules.

Alan had written to the PLA formally requesting a Navigation Advisory Panel. The result has been the Salvage Association re-examining the rules of Navigation and the "rowing rules". There has been a significant improvement in the reporting of incidents and it is essential that ALL incidents are recorded. Reportable incidents are those where there is a suggestion of personal injury or if either vessel is unable to complete its journey.

A large number of complaints are about lights and abusive language. The ARA has requested Clubs to undertake a safety audit and we are now some 70% complete. The next submissions are due in January and will be a pre-requisite of registration for those who have failed to submit – some 40 clubs. Host and Lodger Clubs must determine between them who is ACTUALLY in charge of the boathouse in regard to safety.

Discussions were underway regarding ensuring that all boats on the Tideway were carrying their three digit name to identify them as necessary. This would then be rolled out nationally. Hopefully Tideway clubs would be undertaking this within the next few months.

The Chairman thanked Alan for all of his efforts on behalf of the region over a long number of years and the meeting concurred.

(e) Competitions/Rowing Calendar There are now some 90 events with only 52 weekends to fit them into. In the last year we were unfortunate to lose some such as Docklands. The years ahead will also be difficult with the World Cup etc taking up valuable weekends in the region. Docklands have decided this year to share the weekend with Poplar. There is now almost a fortnightly sequence of multi lane events and although everyone cannot be satisfied hopefully we can fit most in but as yet some of the calendar is still up in the air.



(f) Treasurer's report

The Communications and Equipment Fund had seen an income of £1473 but expenditure for new equipment of £1570, Travel of £176 and repairs etc totalling £441 Thus a deficit on that account for the year of £714 compared with £1350 the previous year.

On the General Account we have seen an income of £5788 but expenditure of £6166 and thus a deficit on the year of £378 but it must be noted that this is inclusive of the Centenary expenses which were £3340.

Thus the equipment Fund has a current balance of £2789 and the General Account a Current Balance of £39,757 and this figure includes the amounts transferred to the account following the closing down and liquidation of assets of the Capital and Women's' Rowing Centre.

Questions were raised over the rate of interest being achieved with the sums of money and whether the Treasurer could look into a more positive rate of interest. It was agreed that this should be investigated.

The accounts were proposed and seconded and duly approved nem con.

6. Election Of Officers.

The Chairman indicated that she had received only one nomination for each of the following posts and thus the persons concerned were duly elected:

President – Chris Sprague

Chairman – Margaret Adams

Up River Representative – Judith Packer

Down River Representative Edward Rees

Hon Secretary – Martin Humphrys

Hon Treasurer – John Chapman

Auditor/Examiner – John Bateman

Competitions Commissioner – Jemma Fearnside-Kittoe

Regatta Calendar – Tony Evans

Umpires Commission – Chris Sprague

Junior Commission – No Nomination

Veterans Commission – No Nomination

Recreational – No Nomination

Safety Adviser – Chris George

Women's' Commission – The Chairman indicated that this had now been wound up.

Equipment Officer – Richard West agreed to undertake this for one more year only and was tasked with finding an assistant to take over.

Website Sub-Committee Chairman – Edward Rees

PR/Marketing – It was suggested that we speak with Liz Wray as to whether she would consider taking on this role on behalf of the Region.

Courses Administrative Officer – No Nomination

7. Draft Forward Plan

The Chairman indicated that the Draft Forward Plan was available in brief format and been put together by a small committee of herself, Martin Humphrys and Edward Rees and asked for any comments and additions that were necessary and indeed for anyone else who was willing to help put the plan to bed – the small committee also included Barbara Wilson from OUBC but Barbara had not been able to be present for the initial discussion.

There were no comments or suggestions from the meeting and the



Chairman indicated that the Committee would now finalise the proposals.

8. Any Other Business

(a) River Closures (Upstream) Considerable discussion took place on the situation with regard to river closures upstream and that the Environment Agency were now somewhat reluctant to close the river completely for the rowing events which asked for it to be done. There are now only six events which call for river closure upstream and in future it is expected we will only see partial closure. It was felt by the meeting that this is really a matter for the individual events and they should deal directly with the EA on this.

(b) Elmbridge Rowing Tank

The problems of the loss of this tank were discussed – some 15 Clubs use the tank and 5/6 schools and it was felt that as the Thames is more likely to flood in the region that it would see a greater rather than lesser need. The Council recognises the sport of rowing is essential and would like to talk to see what can be done. It was felt that if the Regional Rowing Council agreed to join the discussions it would give more impetus. Also whether there might be a possibility of looking at funding a rowing tank elsewhere within the region.

It was proposed that this was a matter for the Executive and not the AGM and one should not forget that tanks were needed before the emergence of dry rowing which today has seen the need for a tank lessen somewhat. The Secretary agreed to represent the Regional Rowing Council in any discussions as having himself served on a Borough Council and as a member of the Board of a Leisure Centre he would hopefully be able to give some solid input.

(c) Coach of the Year awards – these need to be in very shortly and as yet there were still few nominations for the region. The Chairman asked that nominations be sent to either her or Richard Philips ASAP.

(d) Junior Training Day – this would take place at Dorney on Sunday November 28th.

(e) World Events at Dorney – obviously the region needs to look at the Legacy that these events will leave for the region and what needs to be done to maximise that legacy – to that end the Chairman and the Secretary are attending meetings with the representatives of the World Cup and the ARA to see what can be achieved and will report back to the Executive.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5.10 p.m.

Martin Humphrys
Hon Secretary.