

OXFORDSHIRE AA

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD 11TH NOVEMBER 2019 AT EXETER HALL, KIDLINGTON

Present – John Sear, Lyn Hopkins, Hugh Morris, Alan Vincent, Mark Levy (ABI), Erica Woosey-Griffin (ABI), Noel Blatchford (ABI), Dave Martin (Rhondda), Dene Stringfellow (WHH), Will Atkinson (HRR), Kit Villers (HRR), Doug Scott (BAN), Joe Bibby (RAD), Kay Reynolds (RAD), Trevor Langrish (KID), Robert Kerr (ALC), Neil Preddy (WOOD), Jackie Breslin (RAD), Claire Lacey (RAD) and James Charles (BAN).

1. **Apologies** – Mike Shipway, Michael Collins, Sam Jonkers, Andrew Garner, Miranda Cook, Paula Walters, Richard Hart, Marina Barlow-Oakes and Ian Wakefield.
2. **Minutes of the previous AGM held in November 2018** – Agreed to be a true record of the meeting held. Proposed by NB and seconded by AV.
3. **Matters arising** – None.

4. **Chairman's Report** – JS reported –
Firstly, JS reminded all that a new Chairperson is required tonight as he is standing down after 9 years.
Is the Oxon AA healthy – JS thought that in some areas yes, it is, but there are areas where it is definitely not.
Rather than a review of the past year, JS decided to reflect on his 9 years in office and to point out some of the issues that he believes still need addressing. As a general thing he felt that the reporting of activities within the Oxon AA needs to be more formal, with more regular written reports.

- a) **Road Running** – in general JS felt it was healthy, as he is sure the AGM will verify.
- b) **Oxford Mail XC** – we need more clubs to be involved in the organisation, with an urgent need to find new venues with adequate parking.

Non-hosting clubs to provide officials for the duration of the event.

Non-hosting clubs should liaise with hosts to facilitate the overall organisation.

- c) **Sportshall** – by all accounts this is going well, but when did this committee receive a formal report of activities?
- d) **Local Athletics Network** – we have not received a full report for several months, we should receive them regularly.

All these subsidiaries of the Oxon AA should be asked to supply a written report of activities at least once per year. All receive funding through Oxon AA, and we need to know how this is managed and spent.

- e) **Inter-County Cross Country** – we are a small County; but have in recent times won awards for both individuals and team success. However, the main problem is that too many of the younger athletes are selected for their first Inter-County race, and find the standard far different from that of the local league. National success is only really achieved through athletes stretching themselves through competition at higher levels.

As a result, too many athletes find themselves at the tail end of fields in the SEAA and CAU events – often with a discouraging effect!
Clubs can help by encouraging their better athletes to compete in these higher competitions/leagues.

BUT the question remains, should the County always choose full teams (at the junior levels) as just these show trends able to compete at these larger regional and national competitions?

- f) **Track & Field** – while the number of junior athletes involved at County level with success is still low, most clubs have large numbers of children interested – indeed, some even have long waiting lists. However, there has not really been any attempt to overcome this problem!
 - Need for most clubs to have more coaches.
 - Need for involvement of volunteers to help the coaches
 - Is this an issue that the Oxon AA should be addressing?

Question – How can we as a County help to keep all these interested children in the sport? It is not necessarily by more clubs starting up, JS believes the established clubs need to reflect on how they can all facilitate the interests of these children.

Maybe we should separate off the U13 athletes from the Track & Field Championships, and combine with the U11s to have a separate Junior Championships?

EWG – Children on waiting lists – issues with number of coaches and track space. This is an issue with many clubs. Encouragement sessions held by clubs to enable more athletes to take part. Major issues with lack of coaches and the

commitment required of them to keep the younger ones in the sport. Parents are encouraged to assist. Coaches are doubling up as officials/athletes as well. Parents only stay for their own children a lot of the time.

Question – Is the current Track & Field structure asking too much of the athletes? Too many leagues? Should it be asked whether the Oxfordshire League is solely the domain of these athletes not selected for the Heart of England or Youth Development League? This might better encourage these less able athletes to improve through a greater enjoyment at a lower level of competition (without the same, more capable athletes always winning everything!)

Problems for Track & Field – the timing of national events is not dictated by Oxon AA, but we have trouble in raising full teams for many fixtures.

- Set up countywide training groups?
 - Need for more people to be involved in the management and organisation of teams at County level, otherwise there is the chance that County competitions will cease!
- g) **Track & Field senior athletes** – The County has a problem retaining athletes so that they will compete at senior level. This is never going to be easy, but asking athletes to compete on a Saturday for their club and Sunday for the County raises real issues! (Club v County)
- Need for all clubs in the County to encourage and help all officials to progress.
 - Need for all clubs to make sure that athletic welfare is the 1st consideration of the club.

Inter-County Fixtures –

- U13 event always popular.
- U15/20 although the fixture has been in September (first week) for many years, these is an increasing issue of persuading athletes to make themselves available, why?
- Senior men and senior women – the County have not raised a full team for County competitions for more than 10 years. There is often poor support and encouragement from the ‘senior clubs’ – why? This is surely higher-level competition that will help the athletes?

Should the County interview for consideration in this fixture?

Track & Field overall – there is a need for greater involvement of some clubs in the County’s activities.

Should clubs take it in turn to be involved in the organisation of County events (like the Championships and running teams) despite the championships usually being held in one venue in conjunction with Bucks?

THIS IS AN IMPORTANT QUESTION – as many of the past organisers/leaders are heading towards their 70s (and more), can the County find the experienced people to take their places?

KR has team managed County Senior teams and felt poorly supported by the County, she had to get information herself, more support should be given by the County. The County has high expectations of clubs, these events are a County responsibility. There are not many senior athletes in the County.

- h) **Schools** – Sadly the communication between the latter and the County is poor, they depend on us for officials at the Track & Field event – but can we persuade a delegate to join the Oxon AA Committee?

JS said despite all of the above concerns, thank you for allowing him to be the County Chairman for the past 9 years.

5. Secretary’s Report & Correspondence received -

LH said there had not been much correspondence received since the last meeting.

SEAA/UKA/EA/OAA –

- Email from Will Atkinson – 13th Round of the Grand Prix results posted on website.
- BBO XC Championships reminder entries due by 3rd November
- BBO XC AGM – 28th October 2019.
- SEAA Newsletter – October 2019 – Cross Country Championships dates, Indoor Track & Field Championships dates, Prospectus for both and important news for athletes and team managers.
- HM has received a letter from Richard Weston Ltd – Cyber Risk Insurance – JB to look at. **ACTION** – JB
- JS – major postal strike before Christmas, December 3rd / 4th, 23rd and 27th. May course issues for the Cross Country

6. England Athletics/UKA Matters to report – AV reported –

AV has continued to stand on the Regional Council as a co-opted member, but is planning to stand down next Spring. He has posted a piece on the website, explaining what is involved and inviting expressions of interest.

The new Regional Chairman, Julian Starkey, seems to be taking the County down a slightly different path, perhaps seeing it more as a conduit between the grassroots and professional staff.

7. **Local Athletics Network** – KR reported –

Not a lot happening at the moment. Composite team did not run.

Only four clubs involved now, only four organising. Future of LAN to be reviewed at the next meeting.

Finances – very little in or out. Will provide further resources for activities. Could encourage more clubs to take part and get involved, clubs are busy with their own activities, coaching, officials etc.

There is no County Coaching Co-ordinator – LAN has arranged local courses and squad days.

8. **Website** – JB reported –

There has been a steady stream of content all year from AV and JS. JB welcomes more entries from others.

He has set up email forwarders for Committee members, others can contact people if needed. JS thanked JB for all his hard work over the year.

9. **Schools Report** – JB has been involved in schools.

English Schools same each year, local championships dished out to schools each year and no contact with English Schools and County. Very fragmented.

County Schools Track & Field – Saturday 6th June 2020 – Millie Bartholomew is the best person to do a report.

Multi-event – 28/29th June – Nuneaton.

England Schools – Track & Field – 10/11th July – Manchester, clarification needed.

10. **Treasurers Report** – HM tabled the accounts as at the year end.

Firstly, HM thanked Kate Worrall for her help since taking over the role from her. Mike Shipway has audited the accounts and is happy to continue next year.

HM said that total funds stand at £38,084.40, the unrestricted funds had increased by £606 and the restricted fund by £6091, therefore more money in the accounts by more than £6k. It has been agreed that an extra £1,000 will be put into the Barrie Strange Fund.

A - Unrestricted funds (ours to spend as we wish) £16,019

B – LAN ringfenced funds

£6,822

C – EA Technical fund

£1,500

D – Other ringfenced funds

£13,744

Photo Finish had another successful year, up by £3,300.

General funds running as in previous years.

We appear to have issued more medals than in stock or purchased.

Affiliation fees HM would like to set for the next 2 years – no need for any increase. Therefore, the fees will stay the same for 1 / 2 years.

Grand Prix fees can remain the same also, as we have extra teams to help with costs.

After the election of Officers, it was agreed that Will Atkinson and Claire Lacey would be new signatories for the bank. John Sear would be removed as he will no longer be Chairman.

11. **Track & Field Task Group-**

a) **Inter-County Meetings** – CAU at Preswold Park, Leicestershire 7th March 2020.

b) **County Championships** – 30th / 31st May 2020.

c) **Officials** – AV reported –

Oxfordshire database – as of last month, Oxfordshire had 122 active officials. 5 of these are Endurance only (one of whom may shortly be unregistered because of not doing the online H&S course). There are therefore 117 qualified registered Track & Field officials or trainees. He believes this includes some but not all our County people registered for the Level 1 courses being held at Horspath Road today and tomorrow. There are currently 25 people signed up for these courses.

SEAOA Conference – The Conference and AGM are taking place on Sunday 24th November in Chertsey, Surrey. All details are on the SEAOA Website, and attendance is free for members or a nominal charge for non-members.

Record of experience form – AV has had these for only 15 Track & Field officials for last season, a very poor level of return. He would still be happy to receive others that have missed the formal deadline and remind people who may be filling in their RoE online that they should export a copy and send to him.

2020 season – All clubs are invited to send details of their home track and field fixtures for the 2020 season to him ASAP.

- d) **Photo Finish** – Our joint County system was used 31 days this year, with other bookings we could not accept, due to the unavailability of either of our two technical operators.

JS thanked AV.

- e) **Inter-Counties U13s – Kingston** – report from Sam Jonkers Team Manager - added after the AGM –

This year's Inter-County meeting took place in the cold and damp on Saturday 27th July at Kingston.

Both boys' and girls' teams were full, with athletes selected from seven local clubs. All bar one of the gold medal winners from the County Champs were present and there were some excellent results and many PBs on the day. The athletes worked well as a team, were polite, enthusiastic and a credit to their clubs and County.

The girls finished the competition in 7th place, with only 12 points separating them from 4th place. The boys' team finished in 8th place, just 0.5 off 7th position.

Both teams boasted athletes wearing County vests for the first time, many of them from the lower year of the U13 age group, which bodes well for next year. The experience gained at an event of this calibre was invaluable and hopefully will pay dividends for the athletes and County in future.

Thanks to all the parents who supported and helped out, to Carl Pinder who coached the relay teams, to Surrey Athletics who hosted the event and to Oxfordshire AA for their support.

12. **Road & Cross-Country Task Group** -

- a) **Cross Country** – DS reported -

The first fixture went well, a lot of administration was needed to organise. DS was disappointed that people wandered across a 'live airfield' repeatedly! Just a few causing the problem.

On the whole a very positive feedback. Long term goal to have two venues for each month to be able to rotate and also co-hosting to alleviate demand on each club involved. Entries were up by 11% on last year.

Venues – it would help if all clubs could look around for possible new venues, as DS has looked at over 30 places.

Car sharing is a must for future fixtures as car parking is always a problem, 624 at the first fixture, car park marshals did a great job.

Suggestion of asking the universities and Farmoor – parking would be good.

Suggestion that the U9s and U11s could run as a separate fixture as the numbers are high.

Anyone misbehaving should be advised that they could be suspended – athlete/family/club from future events, and it should be reported to the relevant club. Misbehaving can be verbal abuse or disobeying instructions and needs to be dealt with by the league.

Championships 5th January at Bo Peep Caravan Park, money with entry, forms being sent out for entries, closing date 18th December, details of any medical requirements to be given.

Gender – male, female and binary, last gender not eligible for prizes.

- b) **Road** – WA reported –

37 road race licences will have been issued by the end of this year, the same as last year. Unlike last year none of the races had to be cancelled because of the snow.

The major change to the programme this year has been the way the County Championships have been organised, with just three events plus the road relays. The short course Championships were hosted by the Headington 5, the long course by the Cotswold Classic and the marathon by Abingdon. Many thanks to the clubs who staged those races.

One of our aims in reducing the number of events was to raise the profile of the County Championships. WA finally got the results organised on the County web page, so they can be viewed together and he will aim to make sure the results are available there year by year. One thing we discussed at the Road AGM last year was to delay the presentation of

County plaques and medals until a ceremony at the end of the year. The idea was to avoid some of the problems with medals awarded to the wrong people we had in previous years. However, we continued to award

medals at the event this year and again had problems, so he proposes that we have a County awards ceremony at the end of the year in 2020.

The County Road Relays at Abingdon Rugby Club, organised by Abingdon AC were again a great success, with good numbers competing in the senior events. Sadly, a clash of fixtures cut the number of junior teams significantly. Many thanks to Abingdon AC, and to Rose Webb and Dene Stringfellow who dealt with the entries and results.

The licencing process seems to be working well. WA has not heard of races having problems getting licence this year.

The Grand Prix men's team competition has been decided with one fixture remaining. Witney have won the men's trophy for the third time. Sadly, for WA for the race for the women's trophy is neck and neck, so he will be calculating furiously at the end of the Eynsham 10k.

13. **Election of Officers and General Committee for 2019/20-**

President	Eileen Kear
Life Vice- Presidents	Alan Corfield
	Eileen Kear Jill Slatter Alan Vincent
Chairman	Will Atkinson
Vice Chairman	Claire Lacey
Secretary	Lyn Hopkins
Treasurer	Hugh Morris
Officials Secretary (T&F)	Alan Vincent
Website	Joe Bibby
Road Race Co-ordinator	Will Atkinson
XC Champs Co-ordinator	Dene Stringfellow assisted by John Sear – entries to be co-ordinated by DS
T&F Co-ordinators	Kay Reynolds Jackie Breslin James Charles Claire Lacey
Schools Reps	Alan Vincent John Sear Joe Bibby
Welfare Officer	Miranda Cook
General Committee	Andrew Garner Dene Stringfellow Dave Martin Gary Warland

Non-Committee Roles –

Sportshall Co-ordinators	Clive Goodwin Ann Workman Mike Miles
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All were confirmed on bloc.

LH notified the Committee that this would be her last year standing as County Secretary, as she has carried out the role for about 17 years.

14. **Provisional date for the AGM 2020** – 13th November 2020, 7.30pm at Exeter Hall, Kidlington.
15. **Date for first Committee Meeting** – 31st January 2020, 7.30pm at Exeter Hall, Kidlington.
16. **A.O.B.** –
 - a) JS mentioned that he has trophies in his loft that are no longer used and wishes to be rid of them. What do we do with them? General feeling that we should not order new ones, as these are no longer used. JS will bring to the next Committee meeting. **ACTION** – JS
 - b) HM said that some emails sent to clubs were still bouncing back to him undeliverable. Affiliation forms to include a section for the current contacts at clubs and their contact details.
 - c) HM – engraving of medals – could the centre piece be tailored for each event, therefore no engraving? XC costs minimum of 50. HM to carry forward to first Committee meeting. **ACTION** – HM
 - d) JC - on the affiliation form we could ask for contact of coaches and officials at clubs.
 - e) JS has 1500+ medals, where should they be held? He will hold until decision made.
 - f) Congratulations to Noel Blatchford on her Masters Race Walk Athlete of the Year award.

Thanks were given to John Sear for all his hard work over the years.

Meeting closed at 9.24 pm.

Committee dates have been confirmed –

- 31st January 2020
- 3rd April 2020
- 5th June 2020
- 4th September 2020 – maybe changed to 11th
- 13th November 2020 – AGM

All will be held at Exeter Hall, Kidlington at 7.30pm.