

## **National Presidents Report**

### ***WPA Annual General Meeting***

**6<sup>th</sup> December 2008**

On January 1<sup>st</sup> 2008 the WPA became the internationally recognised governing body for our sport in Wales. The WPA as a member of the BPF together with the other two founding associations agreed to formally close the BPF, this process was formally completed when the final accounts were approved and adopted on the 16<sup>th</sup> August this year. The assets of the BPF, after clearing any debts and reimbursing both the WPA and EPA junior contributions which were not used, have been distributed between the 3 associations based on 2007 membership figures.

As always the Associations responsibilities are to look after the interests of the members, to devote time to the needs of the grass root players, provide coaching and umpiring to those members wishing to follow this path, but also these responsibilities now also includes the qualification of teams to represent the WPA and Wales at European and World Championships.

Over the past 12 months the Executive has worked hard, just some of the things we have and continue to accomplish on your behalf are:

- International Membership
- Civil Liability Insurance
- A full Events Calendar.
- Informative website.
- WPA National Tournaments.
- International Representation for qualified teams.
- Welsh/European Cup for Clubs Qualifier knockout competition.
- Umpire and Coach Training.
- Attendance of an Umpire at National & Grand Prix Events.
- A new Welsh playing top.
- A membership pin.
- Continued CRB screening.
- Beginning a dialogue with Schools through the 5x60 officers.
- The WPA continues to grow financially.

It has been my great pleasure to be the President of the WPA during this first year of international recognition and I am very grateful to the Executive for all their support and encouragement throughout the year and much of the above would not have happened without their hard endeavours.

There have also been disappointments notably coaching. This failed to materialise, with little or no coaching occurring in 2008. This situation must be resolved and I ask all those members who have qualified as a coach to make themselves known to the executive and again become proactive in turning this situation around. This also has to be a primary task for the new executive to provide a sustainable coaching structure for the future.

I am sure you will join me in congratulating all the WPA members who have been added to our "Roll of Honour" this year, these are:

Singles Champion:	Tansy Mayfield
Shooting Champion:	Jean-Yves Robic
Doubles Champions:	Phil Bradshaw & Neil Dobbins
Mixed Doubles Champions:	Bérengère Demay & Gareth Spencer
Triples Champions:	Glyn Attely, Phil Bradshaw & Neil Dobbins
Welsh Cup for Clubs:	The Monkstone PC
Stuart Clarke Cup:	Matthew Franks & Phil Bradshaw
Presidents Cup:	Ian Bailey & Neil Dobbins

**2008 Celtic Challenge Winning Team:**

Don Jenkins, Coral Jenkins, Ian Bailey, Neil Dobbins, Jeff Ball, Rod Dobbins, Paul Mayfield, Tansy Mayfield, Gay Evans, Dave Cannan, Nigel Mason, Julie Bailey and Mike Jacques.

I would also like to thank all the members who took part in the Home Nations Championship and the EPA Inter-Regional Championships. I would like to mention a special thanks to the Junior Team who kept me very busy that weekend.

This list of accomplishments would not be complete without adding to it our members who have represented the WPA and Wales at International events this year:

**Invitation Tournaments:**

Switzerland – Matthew Franks, Phil Bradshaw & Neil Dobbins.

France – Ian Bailey, Don Jenkins & Peter Westall.

Lithuania – Tansy Mayfield, Paul Mayfield, Roger Griffin & John Barnes.

Czech Republic – Jake Caston, John Legge & Chris Brown

Senior World Championship in Dakar, Senegal David Elston, Derek Jones & Peter Westall.

We have to remember that many members of our Association do not aspire or wish to play at such a high level, but who enjoy taking part and are critical to the future of the association through their continued membership and their participation in club, league and open competitions. They have my sincere thanks and that of the Executive for their continued support.

This year for the first time as President of the WPA I have attended both the Confédération Européenne de Pétanque (CEP) Congress held in Holland during the Junior European Championships and the Fédération Internationale de Pétanque et Jeu Provençal (FIPJP) World Congress held during the recent World Championships in Senegal.

Attending these two congresses has allowed us as an Association to understand the workings of these two very important institutions and also more importantly to be seen to be taking an active role in the sport both in Europe and Internationally. We have also begun to open lines of communication to other Federations and more importantly to make new friends.

There have been a number of changes at the international level this year which will have some impact on our future events.

The FIPJP World Congress agreed to hold the "Senior" World Championship every 2 years starting in 2010. It is my understanding that the competition in 2010 will be open, but subsequent competitions will be Male only. The World Congress also agreed that in future only 48 nations should compete at the Senior World Championships.

To achieve the 48 nations the current plan is for qualification through their Confederations, in our case the CEP. I understand that the suggested provisional quotas are for example between 16 to 20 nations to qualify through the European Confederation, 4 through the Asian Confederation, 2 through the Oceanic and so on. These figures have not been formally agreed and are to be heatedly debated by the various Confederations during the coming months.

In 2009 the only World Championship currently scheduled is for Juniors and is planned to be held in Tunisia. If a host can be found before April 2009, there will be Women's World Championship however, after 2009 the Women's and Junior World Championship will be held every other year commencing in 2011 and alternating with the European Championships.

A number of modifications to the playing rules were agreed during the World Congress which will require the publication of a new rule book. I am currently awaiting a revised copy of the rules from Mike Pegg, once this has been received this will be disseminated to existing umpires and WPA members.

In 2008 the FIPJP appointed a medical officer to oversee drug and alcohol testing under the World Anti Drug Agency guidelines. The first step in this process has now been taken as this year the FIPJP carried out random breath testing of players at both

World Championships. The limit of alcohol in the blood is set at 0.35mg much lower than it is to drive a car in the UK. A player who fails the breath test is suspended from play until such time as they can pass the test. Therefore players intending to qualify for European and World Championship competitions should be fully conversant with these new regulations.

Finally, I would like to thank the following Executive members who through personal circumstances resigned during 2008 and also those members who have decided not to stand for re-election this year, they are:

Alison Walton  
Richard Trego  
Roger Griffin and  
Bob Pugh

I would especially like to thank Bob Pugh for his total commitment as Vice President Playing throughout 2008.

The WPA exists to serve its members by providing the opportunity to play at all levels, we all come together to play and enjoy this wonderful simple if not at times frustrating sport. It is this spirit that is at the core of the WPA making it a successful organisation for the sport in Wales.



Tony Smith  
National President