



GENERAL MEETING

Date: Thursday 11th June 2009

Time: 07:42pm

Venue: Wenvoe Arms

Present: (Executive) Tony Smith, Derek Jones, Phil Bradshaw, Scott Murray, Graham Attfield.

Representatives from the following clubs: Abergavenny, Cardiff Bay, Monkstone, Penarth, Wenvoe, a total of 9 members.

Apologies: Tansy Mayfield, Barbara Vaughan, Kon Tomczyk, Gill Brace, Stewart Spencer and Gareth Spencer.

Previous Minutes: The minutes of the general meeting held at Panteg House on 26th February 2009 were approved after two amendments were agreed, proposer Roger Griffin, seconded Jean-Yves Robic.

Matters Arising: The issue of trousers to be worn as part of the national playing uniform had been reviewed by Scott Murray, the best options appeared to be either bowls or cricket trousers. Although suitable trousers may be available from M&S the cost may be prohibitive to members. The Executive is to continue looking at the whole issue of trousers and will look at the possibility of a deal with a sports store in Cardiff.

Dan Murphy had been tasked to draft a statement relating to the insurance, this was no longer needed as an answer from the insurance provider had dealt with the issue.

President's Report: Tony Smith stated that he was pleased to see that the league season was underway. He offered congratulations to all the teams who had competed in the Grand Prix series, in particular to Wales 1 who would go on to represent Wales in the European Championship. There was also congratulations for the Ladies triple that would represent Wales in the Ladies World Championship later in the year. Events were being lined up for all the teams qualified from Wales 1 to Wales 6. A junior team was being prepared for the Junior World Championship, which would be supported by the WPA. And congratulations to the Monkstone club for qualifying for the Euro Cup for Clubs.

Roger Griffin would continue to deal with child protection for the WPA, and Tony asked clubs to invite Roger to their next meeting to give a presentation on this issue.

The WPA had received an invitation to send a team to the Euro Vets Championship (over 55's) in the Netherlands in September 2009, interested parties should notify the Vice President (Playing) and a qualification event may need to be organised.

Information from the CEP was brought to the membership's attention, this essentially related to a change in membership fee structure which would result in no change for the WPA. Europe would have 24 places in the next World Championship and qualification would be resolved through the next European Championship, to be held in July. The FIPJP were introducing an Espoirs World Cup, and also a Confederation Cup for those countries failing to qualify for the World Cup. A new level of umpire is to



be introduced – Continental.

Question: A discussion was then initiated from the floor relating to the issue of financing the Junior team for the Junior World Cup.

Tony assured the membership that the finances were in place, Dan Murphy raised the issue of accommodation, citing previous junior events which had resulted in large cost over-runs as the juniors had to be moved to more acceptable accommodation. Tony stated that this was a holiday destination and the accommodation was supposed to be in tourist hotels and should therefore be up to acceptable standard, but further enquiries would be made.

Secretaries Report: Graham Atfield was tasked with enquiring into the membership status of Rod Dobbins, it was believed that he had been given honorary member status and this was not reflected on the membership database.

Treasurers Report: The Treasurer was not available but Tony agreed to email copies of the accounts to interested members. The balance currently stands at £10690.49.

There was then a short discussion about the funding of the Home Nations, Tony Jellings querying why Wenvoe were not being offered funding to host the Celtic Challenge 2010. The response being that traditionally clubs host this event, including raising the funds and sponsorship to pay for the event, they then reap any financial benefits that may accrue rather than the WPA. However, the WPA do underwrite the event to ensure that the hosting club is not bankrupted.

Publicity: Phil Bradshaw apologised for describing the winning ladies team at the Ladies Grand Prix as Caerleon, he stated that newspapers will not publish reports with non-sense team names and so he has to guess where teams are from and give them geographic names, he stressed the need for team captains to give meaningful names to their teams when entering events that are likely to be reported.

Umpire: Derek Jones stated that it was difficult to develop an umpiring structure, as the WPA needed more umpires he was going to ask clubs for volunteers.

Peter Clarke asked if the Executive intended to develop a Welsh umpiring structure, for training and developing our own members, Derek responded that we were. He further asked if we were still part of the British Petanque Umpires Board (BPUB) and would it be better to separate from this organisation, Derek stated that we were part of the BPUB and there were difficulties with going it alone at the moment, but development of a WPA umpire structure may lead in that direction. Peter Clarke and Dan Murphy argued for Wales going it alone, but Derek stressed that the lack of interest from the membership to become umpires precluded this as an option at the moment. Jean-Yves Robic argued that the WPA should follow the line of rugby and football clubs, and require all member clubs with a membership above a certain level to have both a qualified coach and a qualified umpire, this was supported by other members at the meeting.

Youth Development: Scott Murray reported that he had two primary schools in the Vale interested in being coached in petanque, also the 5x60 officers in the Vale were interested in petanque coaching being delivered to children in years 7 and 8 (first two years of secondary schooling). However no coaches had



volunteered to do this and schools required coaches with formal WPA coaching qualifications and CRB checks, which seriously limited the number of members currently capable of carrying out this task.

Peter Clarke raised the issue of Boys and Girls Clubs of Wales, and suggested this as an avenue for getting the game to the younger audience. It was also suggested that it could be introduced as an activity for the Duke of Edinburghs Award, but this would have to be investigated.

WPA Funds: Tony Smith assured the membership that funds raised would be used for the benefit of the sport of petanque in Wales, and would be used by the Executive with the agreement of and after consultation with the membership. There is no plan to spend the funds currently in the bank, other than for the Home Nations. The only major planned spend was for the support of the WPA Home Nations teams going to Scotland and England, an “off the cuff” suggestion was for £300 per team, which equated to £2700 per squad or £5400 over two years in every three (as the funding was not required when the event was held in Wales).

Coaching was another aspect that was being looked into for the overall development of the sport in Wales, this was being offered by the FIPJP but the costs would have to be investigated and whether it would provide benefit for the membership at large. It was suggested that the clubs should inform the WPA Executive what they wanted and then a suitable structure could be put in place. Dan Murphy argued that the initiative should come from the WPA rather than the clubs.

Peter Clarke argued that a planned structure for spending should be put in place so that the membership could be kept informed of where the money is going. Phil Bradshaw stated that the WPA had a recruitment and retention problem, with no growth in the membership in recent times, he suggested that funding could be allocated to this issue with members actually going out of our traditional area to promote the sport and encourage clubs. Gay Evans asked whether it would be possible to find places close to existing clubs which are twinned with French towns to arrange for exchange visits which would help to promote the sport. Dan Murphy stated that the Inter Counties Competition was originally started to encourage players from outside the South East of Wales to participate in the sport, but this had failed to really get going.

WPA policy regarding commercial sponsorship of teams representing the WPA: A proposal is to be prepared for the members to consider.

National Sponsorship: Tony Smith stated that the WPA needs a National Sponsorship Officer to coordinate efforts and target potential sponsors, a document will be prepared detailing the requirements and asking for volunteers.

AoB: Jean-Yves Robic stated that there was now regular training sessions for the Juniors, but was disappointed that letters he had sent asking questions about the junior development had gone unanswered.

Attendance at this meeting was poor with only five constituent clubs being represented, this is an issue that needs to be investigated and addressed.

The Preliminary Cup Round match between Wenvoe Dragoons and Panteg Phoenix was discussed, Panteg had failed to turn up as they had mistaken the date, Wenvoe wanted to claim the match. Phil Bradshaw stated that the rules were published and accepted by all team captains and they all knew the



consequences of failing to fulfil fixtures. As the VP(P) is a member of Panteg Phoenix, and therefore there is a conflict of interest, the issue was passed to the National Umpire for determination.

Peter Clarke referred to an “International” event being organised by Abergavenny PC and a failure to respond on the part of the Executive. (This has since been resolved)

There was discussion over the rescheduling of the Celtic Challenge Qualifier event from August to October, it was explained that the action had been taken as most of the better players would be away at other events through August and it was regarded as better to move this event. The Executive would look at this issue again.

The meeting closed at 10:00pm.