



GENERAL MEETING

Date: Thursday 26th February 2009

Time: 08:00pm

Venue: Panteg House

Present: (Executive) Tony Smith, Don Jenkins, John Legge, Peter Westall, Derek Jones, Phil Bradshaw, Graham Attfield.

Representatives from the following clubs: Abergavenny, Brecon, Caerleon, Cardiff Bay, Monkstone, Panteg, Penarth, Wenvoe, Wheatsheaf, a total of 28 members.

Apologies: Claire Legge, John Prosser and Stewart Spencer.

Previous Minutes: The minutes of the general meeting held at Caerleon RFC on 17th July 2008 were approved, proposer Bob Pugh, seconded Roger Griffin.

Matters Arising: The issue of funding clubs playing in the European Cup for Clubs was debated, this has now been resolved in part as the CEP have changed the regulations so that each cup finds its own costs rather than the host club covering all costs.

President's Report: Tony Smith stated that he was pleased to see play under way with the Welsh Cup for Clubs, but the playing calendar needed to be fully confirmed with venues.

Tony emphasised that the WPA were hosting the Home Nations this year and asked for volunteers to assist in the organisation and running of the event.

Tony also reported that two members had stepped forward to help run the web site, training for this was to be arranged in the near future.

Following a series of communications with the insurers we are clearer about the circumstances where members are covered by the insurance. A Q&A has been published on the web site to provide members with guidance, the WPA will need to keep a register of approved competitions to ensure that members are insured (clubs need to inform the WPA in advance when members are travelling to non WPA competitions) and clubs need to keep a register of non WPA members attending or playing in events (players are allowed three trial sessions and are still covered by the insurance). These registers will need proper maintenance to support any claim against the insurance. The renewal forms had not been received at the time of the meeting.

With regard to the FIPJP the issue of coaching was being discussed, Claude Azema had asked what we wanted and we were putting a plan together. An enquiry had been received from Patrick Dumas (Switzerland) to coach the Wales team for international competitions, but he had asked for €400 per day plus expenses, approx. €1000 per weekend. But this would be coaching for only a limited number of the best players in the WPA and he would also want to be paid to travel as manager/coach to the team when they attend competitions. Membership of the CIEP was €510.



Tony read out a recent communication from the CEP, which invited associations to apply to host major competitions run by the CEP and we declined on the basis that they would be too expensive to host. Mike Pegg is our representative on the CEP executive and we need to notify the CEP of our representative in the European Cup for Clubs before the end of March.

Question: A lengthy discussion was initiated from the floor relating to the issue of insurance.

Tony assured the membership that the insurance provided the same cover as before and it was to cover liability rather than personal injury.

Steve Brace expressed disappointment that the insurance didn't appear to cover members playing casually when on holiday in France; Tony responded that if the members wanted a more comprehensive insurance then we would need to negotiate with the insurer.

Peter Clarke expressed the opinion that if the Abergavenny PC recognised a competition then their members were covered by the insurance for that competition. He also asked about the renewal cost; Tony stated that whilst we did not yet have the formal renewal notice we had been assured that the cost would rise by no more than 5%. Peter also suggested that both the WPA and clubs would need to carry out risk assessments of events; Tony stated that he would take this on board.

Dan Murphy requested a clear definition of the term "abroad"; this has been clarified as outside the UK. He also suggested that if a club recognised a non-affiliated event then the members of that club were covered by the insurance, this was with specific reference to the BiG league and he proposed a "catch all statement" to cover this scenario; Tony accepted this proposal and invited Dan to submit a "catch all statement" for consideration by the executive. In respect of the BiG league the WPA has now formally recognised this and members are covered by the WPA insurance when they play in this league.

Dave Canaan raised the issue of insurance for members playing in the Celtic Challenge, he was assured that this was covered as it was a WPA recognised event.

Gay Evans reiterated the point about coverage for members attending foreign events, but not as official WPA representatives, and suggested that the "cover all statement" could suffice.

Peter Clarke referred to the EPA and their "social" statement as a means of covering non WPA events.

Secretaries Report: Graham Atfield stated that communication with the FIPJP and CEP were covered by the President; that the email system used to communicate with the membership appeared to work successfully and be acceptable to the majority of members.

Peter Clarke complained that there was no published agenda for this meeting, that email did not get to all the membership and suggested that a newsletter would keep members engaged.

A member for Brecon stated that they were having difficulty changing their club details on the web site.

Treasurers Report: There were no accounts to present but the balance stood at £8173.

Publicity: It was agreed that further efforts need to be made to get greater coverage in the Echo.



Vice President (Playing): An email had been sent to clubs inviting them to apply to host events in 2009; the Grand Prix were to be held at Panteg, Wenvoe, Abergavenny and Brecon.

Qualification through the GP's will result in Wales 1 being offered the chance to represent Wales in the European Championship

W1 - W8 represent Wales in the Home Nations and Brean

W9 - W12 represent Wales at Brean in the Plate

W13 - W18 (plus a junior triple) represent Wales at Wales v. Marches

W1 - W6 will be offered invitation events

This year there will also be a Ladies GP and Ladies Doubles events. Juniors will be allowed to enter any triples event free of charge as they prepare for the Junior World Championship and there will be a Junior/Senior competition. The Inter Counties competition will need to be moved, as it is currently scheduled it clashes with the Hereford Open.

Paul Mayfield asked about mixed teams in the GP; the answer being that this is an issue to be dealt with as or when it happens. Further he asked why the play off at the end of the GP's would include W5 - W8; the rationale is that W5 & W6 will be offered invitation events; and also why the system allowed for the top teams to not meet; Phil Bradshaw responded that there was no perfect solution to the issue of playing the GP's; Gareth Spencer commented that the format of the GP's needed to be looked at again, for next year, and several other members commented that a change was wanted.

Peter Clarke raised the issue of hosting Celtic Challenge 2010; this was opened to the clubs and Wenvoe and Monkstone stated that they were prepared to host this event (subsequently Monkstone withdrew their offer and this event will be hosted by Wenvoe). Peter Clarke also commented that the cost of attending Brean in 2009 was a lot higher than previously.

Constitution: At the AGM a hole in the constitution had been identified, in relation to 14.1.2 and 14.1.3 - dealing with notice vacancy and nomination for post before the AGM and Presidential discretion over nominations on the day, and this required amendment. A draft amendment would be circulated prior to an future EGM to ratify the amendment. Peter Clarke commented that a proposal by himself, Dan Murphy and Jean-Yves Robic had received no support from the clubs or the Executive and was therefore abandoned.

Wales kit: Players representing Wales were provided with a shirt and any other shirts had to be purchased at a price of £19.95, this had a mark-up of £5.80 which should be regarded as merchandising as these were special shirts only available to qualified players. Other merchandise will be available at a later date, in the meantime the existing red sweatshirt etc. can be used until superseded. The issue of white trousers was discussed, this resulted in a straw poll with a result of 11 for change, 19 for no change and 3 abstentions. Diane Westall asked if the WPA could subsidise the cost of trousers; or look at the option of mass purchase or arrange for a discount with a preferred supplier. Don Jenkins suggested that the WPA finance the trousers to ensure consistency of style and colour.

AOB: The issue of Juniors was discussed, Jean-Yves Robic stated that there was now regular training sessions for the Juniors, but asked if they could be included in serious competition as part of their development, he specifically mentioned the GP's but this issue had been discussed at length in other



forums. Diane Westall asked about funding the Juniors for the World Championship; whilst the WPA might have to assist with the cost we are also looking at sponsorship. There was general agreement that we needed to do more for the Juniors; Matt Franks suggested that we should be more encouraging to Juniors; Dan Murphy that we should find some form of incentive for the Juniors to participate in events; Phil Bradshaw suggested that Senior players should take a greater responsibility in encouraging and playing/partnering Juniors; Rod Dobbins that we should look to getting invitations to EPA Junior events.

The meeting was informed that the SPA had withdrawn their request for a four person team in Celtic Challenge 2009.

It was suggested that the web site was not intuitive, that some data was not always readily available; not all pages have yet been designed and the existing pages are to be looked at in the future; that stats system from the email broadcast system was also explained.

The meeting was informed that draft minutes from the last AGM have been prepared and will be circulated prior to the next AGM.

Any Ladies team representing Wales in the Women's World Championship 2009 would have to organise their sponsorship.

Gareth Spencer raised the issue of where the monies raised by the WPA were to be used; this was referred to the next meeting for further discussion - what should the money be used for and transparency so that the membership understand. Gaye Evans asked why there were no fundraiser events at the beginning of the season any more; Diane Westall stated that there was no realistic amount of money raised for the effort expended in running the events.

The meeting closed at 9:50pm.