



Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: 7th November 2021 9am – 12.15pm

Location: Zoom

Present: Carl Morris (CM), Nicola Hull (NH), Paul Baillache (PB), Lucy Wright (LCW), Graham Paul (GP), Lindsay Watkiss (LEW), Nick Fihosy (NF),

Apologies: Kola Ayanwale (KA), Beth Davidson (BD)

1) EGM – CM

- The EGM had a successful outcome. The new constitution has been agreed and the committee can move ahead. There was an issue with the connection quality at the beginning of the zoom meeting and noise from the hosting venue. It was recommended that we improve this before our next online AGM.
- As we are planning to do our AGM online, we need to ensure we have the right type of Zoom licence.

Action:

- LCW will investigate what licence we will need to accommodate numbers of participants and host the AGM over zoom.

2) AGM - CM

- The committee debated when to hold the next AGM, to be in line with the new constitution and give PB enough time to get the accounts prepared.
- Date decided Saturday 19th February 6pm.
- NH to give notice 22 days prior with agenda and posts up for re-election.
- Nomination forms for election to be issued no later than 14 days before AGM.
- LEW is standing down as from the Committee.

Action:

- NH to prepare agenda, and give notice to members no later than the 28th January.
- NH to ask if BD and KA are intending to stand again and to decide whose posts will be up for re-election. Under our constitution 3 positions will be made available each year.

3) New Members – NH

- NH has sent a welcoming email to new members directing them to the website and explaining about events. She will also introduce new members in the newsletter so each Nation and the Winton Cup captains are aware of new fencers entering their region.
- GP mentioned that we used to welcome new members at our competitions.

Action:

- NH will continue to welcome new members.
- The committee agreed it would be good to welcome new members at competitions – this needs to be co-ordinated with the event manager for the next event.

4) Surveys/ Feedback forms - NH

- NH is keen to give our members a voice so as a committee we keep ourselves up to date with how our members are feeling and enable them to have a say in how we can improve our events.
- Whilst there were some reservations it was agreed we should proceed, and a subcommittee would be assembled to compile a survey.
- Initial focus to be on competition feedback. PB wishes to ask if members value getting medals.
- We also thought survey forms should include the member's name so we could personally respond to certain matters if we felt appropriate.

Action: NH to set up subcommittee with LCW and NF with the aim for a feedback form to be ready for the Guildford International.

4) BVF championships - LEW

- Reports received from Marcia Stretch and Mike Robinson.
- Feedback on the venue and actual running of the competition was deemed positive.
- LEW apologised that the medals were forgotten for the Saturday and explained that he went home to collect them for the next two events!
- Limitations on the venue were cited as parking and number of pistes available
- There were issues with the event manager not actioning concerns about the start times of some events which led to CM and KA calling fencers at short notice to re-arrange start times a few days before the competition. Whilst the amended event times did lead to successful and smooth running of the competition it was deemed unfortunate that this took place and sadly resulted in a couple of fencers not participating.

- Reference was made to Peter Huggins and the referee team who helped the event run smoothly
- The ventilation at the venue was a source of concern due to COVID. GP has CO2 meter and readings were far higher than experienced at the Guildford. Mike Swiffin has looked into the costs of placing fans in windows but the funds are not available at the moment. LCW suggested we could help with the funding of this.
- The turnout in numbers was good.
- PB very concerned at some of the expenses that came through from the event manager. There were unexpected invoices in respect to referee costs and catering costs. We were all disappointed to learn that these costs may have meant that the event made a loss of around £2000.
- There was a medical incident so once more Bill Berkley's presence was invaluable. Lyn Robinson dealt with the reporting efficiently, however we do have an BVF accident report book which was not available on the day and needs to be back in possession of the committee.
- In respect to the medical incident involving a fencer who collapsed, some felt that fencers should take full responsibility for their own wellbeing and should only attend events if fit and well.
- One lady epeeist reported a positive COVID test a few days after the event. LCW and PB acted quickly and with the help of NH all lady epeeists, referees and organisers were informed. Thankfully no one reported any positive tests.

Action:

- CM to oversee the drawing up of a job spec for whoever is responsible for overseeing this event, which will probably involve the selection of the event manager and DT
- LCW There will be a disclaimer on the entry form that all who enter deem themselves fit enough to fence.
- PB - To confirm referee costs up front, mainly by paying them a set amount.

5) Guildford International - GP

- Due to changes of the EVF rules pertaining to the running of EVF events, the organising team had initially sent out an entry form with an entry fee that was higher than the EVF stipulation of a standard fee of 40 euros. This resulted in protracted discussions with EVF, based around the significantly higher venue hire charges in the UK as opposed to Europe, and concessions were made here and there but ultimately led to the fee being reduced and a memo going out to BVF members.
- Concern was voiced by PB as to if we can make the event break even, so we are looking at ways to reduce costs. The financial results of this event will dictate whether or not it will be possible for us to host it in the same format in the future.

Action:

- GP to report on BF insurance costs for fencers
- LEW to share a list of referees with GP

6) Age groups CM

- Lyn Robinson has arranged for BVF to have the use of Sophia Gardens on the 13th March. The Welsh National sports centre allocates Welsh Fencing days when they can use the venue at a reduced fee. It's a large venue with 20 pistes so ideal for our usage.
- It was suggested that epee could be held in Wales as it was felt easier to secure foil and sabre referees in London *
- This means that we will have to hold the age groups over different weekends for different weapons. The foil and sabre age groups would be held at Leon Paul centre either on the 26/27th or just on the 27th depending on availability and costings *
- LEW mentioned the Scots had mentioned that they could host an age group event.
- LEW suggested that a DT team should be put together with the view that they could commit to running our 4 competitions. It was reported that Lyn and Mike Robinson and Phil Palmer were very competent. It was also mentioned that others have also expressed an interest/ willingness to be of help including Richard Sage and Jacquie Lever.
LEW suggested that the next domestic fencing officer should consider being the event manager.
- The format of the age group competition needs to be decided. The committee, following on from the previous discussion at the September meeting, discussed the best format for the Age Groups. Running it like Guildford had support. CM pointed out that a poule unique system can also be a good way of ensuring best fencers get selected as it can reduce the possibility of one of the two top seeds knocking the other out in DE. A lot depends on the numbers who enter in each category. The format still needs to be decided on.
- NH felt selection format and dates for competitions should be made much sooner and clearer. Dates of our third competition and format still needs to be decided on. NH suggested asking BVF members via a survey as to a selection format they prefer.

Action:

- CM to speak to Lyn and Mike about organising DT for both events and discussing the right order for holding the different weapons.
- CM to appoint events managers for both events as LEW is stepping down and will not therefore be available to organise the event.
- GP to check availability and costings of hiring LP for 20th/27th *
- CM to ensure that a DT responsible for selecting venues, and referees is in place for the Age Groups.

- Mention was made that if funds allow, we should contribute to Welsh fencing – PB to action as appropriate.
- CM also mentioned that, should we be in a financial position to do so, we should explore the possibility of making funding available to the Home Countries for training days.
- The committee need to agree on event format and if they want to engage with the BVF members that compete at these events.

LCW left the meeting.

7) Hardship fund NH

- NH proposed that a fund should be available and accessible to BVF members who are claiming credits ie pension credits, unemployment credits etc.
- It was agreed that we could support BVF members who fall into these categories by paying entry fees for BVF competitions for these members.
- PB mentioned an amount would need to be put aside for the fund.
- PB mentioned that requests for the fund would need to be handled in strict confidence.
- NH suggested we could ask members when they pay their entry fees if they want to donate to the fund – perhaps a tick box ie donate a £1 or another amount.
- Mention was made that we could consider this fund being started with contributions made by members in memory of Dennis Hunt and named after him

Action:

- NH to arrange Subcommittee to include CM PB and draw up particulars of fund
- CM to enquire about the appropriateness of a memorial event for Dennis Hunt or perhaps even naming the fund after him.

8) Website tutorials / information KA/ CM

- KA requested that information on a recent tutorial he'd attended on banned drugs should be made available on the website and also a recent on line seminar on sports psychology. The committee had no objections.

Action:

- KA to arrange with LCW

9) Competition Welfare Officer and First Aid Reporting PB

- PB felt we should have a welfare officer for our competitions who was independent from the committee.
- LEW mentioned that the Accident Log book should always be at the competition venue.

Action:

- PB to see which members of BVF are on the welfare list and appoint someone along with the domestic fencing officer approval
- CM to request the Accident report book from Marcia Stretch
- CM to approach Lyn Robinson to see if she would be willing to fulfil that role.

12) AOB

- CM mentioned that he would like to organise another team competition, as feels the Winton is so popular
- GP mentioned having a competition named after Dennis Hunt as an alternative to the hardship fund.

* Post meeting note: It was decided after the meeting by the committee to hold the Epee Age Groups in London at the Leon Paul Centre on 6 March and the Foil and Sabre in Cardiff at Sophia Gardens on 13 March.