



Northern Regional Rowing Council

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 18 Nov 2019 at Durham ARC

Draft for approval at 2020 AGM as issued 03-11-20

Present (40): Michael Laing, Charly Curtis, John Mulholland, Alan Granlund, Colin Percy, Richard Mortimer, Sarah Hodge, Mill Luangamornlert, Geoff Higgins, Pauline Higgins, Bob Young, Darren Smith, Patrick Seaton, Seb Bagley, Dan Silcock, David Squirell, Carol Croft, James Withers, Dominic Harley, Tom Eaton, Josie Baker, Jordan Wiseman, Colin Lawson, Katie Goode, Anna Gray, Sam Graham, Sam Hawes, Charlotte Carter, Mark Hyson, Katie O’Sullivan, Alan Puddick, Nick Boyne-Cross, John Bowery, Charlie Noel, Lauren Newbould, Theo Richenberg, Lucy Baker, Barnabas Zaman & Pyung-te-Kim.

1. Apologies for absence

None recorded.

2. Approval of minutes of AGM 26 November 2018

Agreed a correct record.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

None not otherwise covered.

4. Regional Chairman’s report for 2018-19

Michael Laing welcomed delegates to the meeting and thanked Durham ARC for their hospitality. He gave a brief verbal report on the busy year just past. He acknowledged the support of the Executive Committee during the year and in particular thanked Pam Walton, who was standing down as Secretary.

He highlighted the Club Development Conference on 27 January 2019 at DARC. It had gone very well and had been well supported. He thanked Ellie Hizzett, now departing the region, for her work in organising it and also volunteering to help again with the 2020 version.

He moved on to officers’ reports, saying that written reports had been available on the web site and he would take them as read, but officers could highlight key issues if they wished.

5. Officers’ reports for 2018-19

N.B. Written reports were at www.nerowing.com/nrcminutes.html before the meeting and were generally taken as read. They remain available there.

5.1 Regional Representative (Gill Houston, Talkin Tarn ARC)

Gill presented a short report on the NRC training grant scheme. £3103 had been agreed, down from £4428 in 2018. Training covered in applications included courses in of for Rowing Leader, RYA Level 2 launch driving, Level 2 rowing coaching, first aid and trailer driving.

5.2 Treasurer (Alan Granlund, Durham ARC)

Alan reported a deficit over the year of £6852, leaving £23628 in the account at year end (30-09-19). Conference costs had been a new item, the sum for support of JIRR was higher than before and equipment or kit had been purchased for the umpires. Actual payments out for the training grant scheme had been £2438. LDS net income had been about £3000. The Chair thanked Alan for his steadfast work.

5.3 Coaching Education Coordinator (Eddie Bryant, Durham School BC)

Eddie reported on the work of his team of eight tutors and assessors. Ability to provide Level 2 coaching courses had been made difficult by lack of available tutors and other issues, but hopefully would improve. The age for rowing Level 2 was coming down to 16. A schedule for courses in 2020 was imminent and three women's training days were planned.

5.4 Junior Rowing Coordinator (Pauline Higgins, Queen Elizabeth HS BC)

Pauline reported on a GB potential day that had been held in January. 11 athletes were currently registered for GB junior selection. The Club Development conference in January had had some well attended sessions just for juniors. Junior InterRegional Regatta prep had gone well, with thanks to Cambois RC for hosting the trials on 9 February. Selection for the eight proved complicated and was in place done, but the competition (to be at Peterborough) was cancelled due to forecast high winds. The sweatshirt produced specially by the NRC for the team was still much appreciated.

5.5 Regional Rowing Safety Adviser (John Mulholland, Tyne ARC)

John reminded clubs about the BR safety audit due soon. Incidents were up from 174 to 205 in the year, but only half the region's clubs reported any at all. He mentioned two hot spots for incidents, on the Wear at Durham and near the clubs on the Tyne at Newburn. Poor lookout was the main cause of collisions. He also mentioned boat maintenance and lights.

5.6 Long Distance Sculling Series Coordinator (Richard Mortimer, DARC)

Richard referred to his quite detailed written report. Entries had been healthy, with most competitions full before the official closing date (though all on waiting lists got a race in the end). Work had been done to maximise the capacity of each LDS competition in various ways to help this. All ran except Durham, cancelled due to high water. The Victor Ludorum system was strictly speaking not in operation as new methods of calculating points and winners were being looked at, but the 'winners' using the latest version at year end had been worked, being Durham UBC (Seniors), Durham ARC (Masters) and Chester-le-Street ARC (Juniors). Richard thanked his LDS core team and all the host club and volunteers for their help.

5.7 Events Coordinator (Colin Percy, Tyne ARC)

Colin looked forward to a busy year in 2020 with 27 affiliated competitions to look forward to. Setting dates was by rowing year (Apr-Mar), and dates had been fixed for the 2020-21 rowing year and were in the written report. A newcomer was to be Derwentwater Head to be run by Lakeland RC on 7 March 2020. Looking back, in 2020 (calendar year) the programme suffered quite few cancellations, due to poor weather forecast and low numbers in a couple of cases. The ever increasingly popular Rutherford Head was due in a week or two; he had his fingers crossed for that.

5.8 Chairman of Regional Umpiring Committee (Peter Hoare, Hexham RC with Richard Mortimer, DARC, as Secretary)

Peter and Richard reported that there should be 31 umpires in the region on 1 January 2020. More were needed and clubs with events should be putting more names forward. Training courses were imminent. Competition documentation had been reviewed with host clubs and was much improved overall. In general competitions had run well from an umpiring point of view, though a number of cases of unsportsmanlike behaviour had been disappointing. In discussion Charly Curtis mentioned slower boats not giving way to faster crews in head races as a recurring complaint.

5.9 Masters Commissioner (Gabrielle Moore, DARC)

Gabrielle reported on various discussions at the national committee and the resulting Masters' workshop which had been rolled out in regions. Topics included how to boost the status (and numbers) of Masters in clubs, whether learn to courses should be adapted to suit older rowers, improvements (or not) in how the new competition framework was being applied and linked to that how the use of the new PRI/CRI information and the longstanding handicap tables in tandem might work out in structuring Masters' events within competitions.

5.10 Recreational Rowing (Colin Lawson, DARC)

Colin referred to his comprehensive report. He had lots of information on recreational rowing nationally, for example on tours and improving links between Masters and Recreational rowing interests. Locally he reported on the eighth season of the Sunday League (as it was again after being the Explore Series for a few years). Numbers of entries per round on average were holding up, but actual numbers of people rowing had fallen steadily in recent years. Efforts were underway to explore with clubs how to reinvigorate the series. Both trophies in 2029 had been won by Tyne ARC. The Great Tyne Row was also seeing a fall-off in entries (down to 17) and needed a similar reboot.

5.11 In addition to officer reports, there was a short discussion on rowing at Durham colleges with DCR Captain of Colleges, Seb Bagley

6. Discussion with Kate O'Sullivan

The Chair welcomed Kate O'Sullivan, member and coach at Tees RC, but also deputy Chairman of British Rowing since 2017. He invited her to give a short address and then answer questions. She said rather than speak at length she would prefer to answer questions and discuss issues raised by those present.

She said that big issues faced British Rowing, particularly financial, on top of major changes in organisation and personnel in recent years. The public perception of rowing was perhaps not very accurate and we needed to be a bit more up front. And good communication with those already in rowing, especially members of British Rowing, was obviously crucial as changes happened.

There was discussion on how to reduce the huge dropout as young rowers left college or 'settled down'; how to bring complete newcomers into rowing, either directly or through indoor rowing; promotion of high profile events such as the Power8 Sprints; how to broaden the range of competitive and not so competitive events and competitions on offer to non-elite rowers; communication between British Rowing and clubs and members; and British Rowing finances, structure and governance.

7. Election of officers for 2019-20

Kate O'Sullivan took the chair for the first election. She said that as there had only been one nomination, Michael Laing was re-elected as Chair of the NRC without a vote. Michael took the chair again.

Michael read out the nominations for other officer posts and for non-officer membership of the Executive Committee. There were two for Junior Rowing Coordinator. After discussion it was agreed that Pauline Higgins should remain in post and that Holly Young be elected as her Deputy. There were only single nominations for other posts, so post holders were elected for these without a vote. Peter Hoare as Chair of the Regional Umpiring Committee would be ex-officio on the Executive. The meeting agreed that it was therefore content with the following list of officers and others to make up the Executive Committee of the NRC:

Chairman - Michael Laing
Vice Chairman - Charly Curtis
Regional Representative - Gabrielle Moore
Secretary - Colin Percy
Treasurer - Alan Granlund
Coaching Education Coordinator - Eddie Bryant
Junior Rowing Coordinator - Pauline Higgins
Deputy Junior Rowing Coordinator - Holly Young
Regional Rowing Safety Adviser - John Mulholland
Para Rowing Coordinators - Gillian Lathan & Carol Croft
Long Distance Sculling Series Coordinator - Richard Mortimer
Events Coordinator - Catherine Bowman
Masters Coordinator - Gabrielle Moore
Recreational Rowing Coordinator - Colin Lawson
Member - Pam Walton
Ex-officio as Chair of the Regional Umpiring Committee - Peter Hoare

It was also agreed that the Captain of Boats at Durham College Rowing be invited to attend Executive Committee meetings. This was currently Seb Bagley.

8. Appointment of Honorary Auditor/Examiner for 2019-20

The Treasurer proposed that Ian Thompson be re-elected as Honorary Auditor/Examiner. This was agreed.

9. Club Development Conference 2020

The Chair said the next conference was due in January and that anyone with views on what to include should get in touch with Ellie Hizzett as soon as possible, as the programme was in the final stages of being fixed.

The meeting closed at 21.14.

Pamela Walton, outgoing Secretary

Colin Percy, incoming Secretary

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