



Minutes of NEOA Annual Delegate Conference 2008 at Van Mildert College, Durham on 14th June 2009

Present: Patrick Smyth (Chairman), Peter Firth (Treasurer), Linda Thornton (Coaching Co-ordinator), Paul Taylor (Technical Co-ordinator), Martin Adamson (CLOK Delegate), Paul Boyles (NATO Delegate), Boris Spence (NN Delegate), Bob Cooper NN, Rob McKenna NN, Wendy Taylor CLOK, Cat Taylor CLOK, Paul Thornton CLOK.

Apologies received from: Mike Hardy, Duncan Archer, Andrew Nichol, John Crosby and Carole Firth.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Minutes of the last meeting were not available, although it was thought that they had been taken by Barry Young. In the light of this, there were no matters arising from the minutes.

Officer reports

Chairman's Report

Patrick Smyth reported that he had continued to examine the issue of a lack of communication between the NEOA and British Orienteering. There is now a new director with responsibility for this communication, but the problem remains and he will carry on pressing for improvements in this area.

Treasurer's Report

Peter Firth presented two sheets of accounts (for the period August 2007-August 2008 and August 2008-June 2009). The year end figures for 2008 had been audited by Richard Field. He noted the NEOA account had remained stable, with little expenditure, whilst the SportIdent account was more active.

Money still left over from the British Championships in 2004 is being spent on October Odyssey prizes and replacing some of the trophies for this race.

It was pointed out that the NEJS account contained £25 unclaimed expenditure from a residential training weekend.

Regarding the most recent set of accounts, it was noted that a payment to the English Orienteering Council will soon be made, adding to the expenditure shown.

The most recent figures for the NEJS account showed it to be fairly empty. Linda Thornton mentioned that the listed expenditure includes an accommodation deposit for a future trip to Speyside in August.

It was proposed that as the Association's expenditure is low (the main payments being made to the English Orienteering Council and for maintenance of the NEOA answer-phone) no money is needed from the region's clubs for the current year. This was agreed.

Peter Firth also presented participation figures for the same two periods. There were no matters arising from these.

NEJS Coaching Report

Linda Thornton reports that during 2008, the most significant event was hosting the Junior Inter-regional Championships, which were a success.

British Orienteering have discontinued organising the M/W16 training weekend in Lakeside, with a view to focusing resources on a smaller number of selected juniors. However, last November regional squads donated £100 each for a similar weekend for these juniors. This was a success and there are plans to repeat the process, with additional weekends for M/W12s, 14 and 18s.

NEJS has shared training weekends with the YHJS and NWJS, aiming for an integrated and inclusive approach. This can be more expensive in terms of travel, but the result is a better experience.

Eleven days of contact time have been planned for 2009, an increase on last year.

At present there is no lead coach for the NEJS, although there are a number of people who help and advise with coaching. It was noted that finding a suitable lead coach is difficult owing to other commitments for most people and its voluntary nature. It would also be helpful to have more helpers willing to accept some of the organizational tasks to support Linda, in case she is unavailable.

Linda has begun developing a five-year plan and budget for NEJS, to be discussed at a future meeting. In the meantime, money is needed to cover the cost of new kit due to arrive at the end of the summer. An exchange with Norway is planned for next summer and JIRC is being held in Northern Ireland this year, adding to expenditure.

Linda requested that the Squad receive the same funding as last year which would cover the proposed activities until the end of the year (August 2008). She was hopeful that she might obtain more funding through grant applications. This was agreed - Peter Firth will write to request £400 each from CLOK and NATO and £200 from NN to cover these costs.

SportIdent Report

Andrew Nichol reported that some SI equipment had been acquired sing the JK budget and various maintenance tasks had also been performed during the JK. The need to acquire kit for the JK had delayed plans on purchasing more equipment for NEOA.

It was noted that the SI fund was being built up to create two complete sets of equipment for small 'colour coded events'. While the need to maintain funds to replace equipment especially as failures were now occurring more often it was felt the profit from the JK could be used to cover this and purchase could take place sooner.

Peter Firth reminded officials that any new equipment needed to be added to the insurance details.

It was agreed that SI hire fees would remain the same for this year. It was also agreed that the Treasurer could have authority to make decisions on requests to waive charges for charity events etc and to deal with out minor interpretations of the rules without recourse to the Committee.

Fixtures Report

No report was received, although concerns were voiced about how fixtures were organised as at the moment they sometimes clash with nearby or similar races.

There was no final decision on which race is holding the North East Championships this autumn, in view of the traditional date (the second day of the October Odyssey) being an urban race in Northallerton.

For purposes of arranging NEJS fixtures, the second NEOA access code for the British Orienteering database needs to be found and allocated to the NEJS.

Appointment of Officers

Coaching and NEJS Co-ordinator: Linda Thornton was nominated and approved to continue her role.

Technical Co-ordinator and Rules Group contact: Paul Taylor was willing to carry on this position and was unopposed.

SI Co-ordinator: Andrew Nichol was reportedly happy to continue, working with Alastair MacKenzie and was unopposed.

Fixtures secretary: there has been no correspondence from Barry Young, so this position will be further discussed in October, with Barry continuing until then. .

Treasurer: Peter Firth was re-elected.

Chairman/secretary: Patrick Smyth was nominated and seconded to continue with this positions

Any Other Business

NEOA is hosting the British Schools Championships on 21st/22nd November 2009. Main officials have already been allocated but many helpers will be needed for the weekend itself. People working alone with children will need a CRB check. Clubs are asked to publish this request and ask volunteers to contact John Crosby/Paul Boyles.

Up to £9000 is expected to come back to the region from the JK, although it could be a year before a final agreement on the total of the profit. Various suggestions were made at the meeting:

Paul Taylor suggested that some funds could be used to pay for the mapping and/or updating of the North East's best orienteering terrain in anticipation of major races in the future, to avoid problems like those experienced with the Kyloe maps at this year's JK. It was also suggested that such a process would be co-ordinated by the NEOA, rather than divided between each club and occur alongside more long-term planning of fixtures.

The replacement of the SI Fund's contingency money has already been minuted. This would allow expansion of the equipment pool to progress. This expansion would however create its own need to increase the contingency – this needed to be discussed more fully.

The allocation of some of the money to the Junior Squad would allow the development of a five year plan to be made with a firmer financial footing.

There was some confusion as to who currently had the region's OCAD discs and how the program would be updated. It was suggested that, at the next meeting, someone could be appointed to monitor the region's OCAD software.

Boris Spence expressed his view (based on the JK2009 experience) that for major events, officials need to be appointed well in advance of the date of the race, using the five-year major event plan that Barry Young should have access to. People were slow in taking on major jobs ahead of the JK; in future, we should push for support earlier rather than waiting until 'crisis point'. Improved communication is key for this, so that potential volunteers know which major races will be happening from an early stage.

There is a new system for coaching awards. Phill Batts will be organising a new-style UKCC Level 1 course in September and Level 2 courses will also be piloted in the Lake District, Scotland and the South of England in the Autumn. The region or clubs could cover the cost of attending these.

The next meeting will take place at the beginning of October, with the exact date yet to be decided. The decision to hold today's meeting after an event was felt to be a worthwhile exercise and the Secretary should look at the October Odyssey as a possibility.