

English Bowls Umpires Association

Minutes of an Executive Meeting held on 21 August 2016 at Leamington Spa

Present

Mavis Wellington – Chairman
Vernon Findell – Secretary/Treasurer
Phyl Jones – Deputy Chairman
Ray Keen – Area Secretary
John Davies – Area Secretary
Bob Penny Area Secretary
Carol Watt Sullivan – Area secretary

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks

Mavis welcomed everyone and thanked them for giving up their time to travel to Leamington. She especially thanked Val for not coming to the meeting, as she had agreed to 'cover' the umpires' office while the meeting took place.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Allan Thornhill (Development Officer), Jessie Clark (Deputy Secretary), Val Coldwell – Area Secretary, Malcolm Griffith – Area Secretary

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed as accurate by John Davies and seconded by Ray Keen and duly signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters Arising

- a) The information supplied by Allan concerning the various items was discussed and noted. It was agreed that some of the matters raised would be discussed at a later Executive meeting
- b) Phyl reported on her researches concerning the status of ITOs. It was agreed that no action be taken

5. Correspondence

Vernon had prepared and circulated a list of the correspondence he had received and how it had been dealt with. This was accepted by the committee

6. Secretary's Report

The following report from Vernon had already been circulated.

Since our last meeting we have not lost any members to Father Time, unless you know different?

Not really much to report this time, not many queries, this could be to do with most members of Bowls England staff being umpires, so not forwarding all the "silly" queries to us, at least it makes my life a little easier.

I would like to put on record the sterling work Andy Ewens has put in for the Association, he is now retiring at the end of this year to look after his wife Liz, who needs quite a bit of full time care.

I would also like to congratulate Allan Thornhill, who has been elected to the World Bowls body, on their Laws committee, maybe now some common sense will come out of their portals?

The EIBA have had a major re-structuring of their competition rules for the coming season,

I have sent you all a copy, and have arranged with Ken Bickley, our Web master to put it on the web-site. I will, on return from Leamington, E-mail all our members, and I am sure they will all read them, and take the information forward with them when they officiate in the new season.

There is another "rule" that has come from World Bowls about what you can or cannot do with your foot when trying to assess shots before the end is finished. I have asked Bowls England to ask them to clarify the position, and again who is to make the decision that a the law has been infringed, or as usual down to us poor souls, and we get the blame for their lack of forethought.

I would like to thank you all for turning up for this meeting, and would once again re-iterate what I have said before about all the good work you do for the Association.

7. Treasurer's Report

Vernon had previously circulated his report and supporting documents. (See Appendix A)

Copies enclosed of all the relevant accounts, no noticeable changes, with the exception of travelling, which seems to be quite a lot more, but this includes, as of today's date [1st August] £12000-00 for Leamington umpires & markers duties.

I have on 6 month deposit the sum of £30000-00 on 3/4%.

At the moment, unless the travel really rises I am not thinking of increasing the subs for next year.

8. Development Officer's Report

Allan had supplied the following report:-

Workshops

6 workshops have been held since the last Exec meeting.

Westlecot (Wilts), Leicester, Horsham (Sussex), Riverain (Essex), Dolphin (Dorset) and Exonia (Devon)

1 course in Hampshire had to be cancelled due to insufficient attendees to make it worthwhile.

There was some discussion last year about making the workshops more interactive. I did look in detail at the course content and I could not see many ways in which this could be Improved as each workshop I have hosted has been very interactive. Unfortunately, at the Leicester workshop the decision was taken by the tutor to introduce content that detracted from the required content and the feedback from this workshop was very poor. This cannot happen again as it did not maintain the standard content that is required. This dilution effect is the very reason why we should be limiting the number of Umpire Tutors in the country.

Assessments

Following some preliminary work on the assessment forms, progress has been slow. The general feeling with the team that have been working on this is that rolling this out across the country will be extremely difficult. Questions that remain unanswered are: who will do the assessing and will there be expenses for them, lack of numbers of assessors in some areas, it is hard to get umpires to actually do the duties let alone any assessing. So this really hasn't progressed much further. However, where it has been used, it has been successful and it would be a shame to not be able to

use this method of development for those that are unable to attend an examination for whatever reason.

Markers Courses

Since the last meeting there have been 17 markers course held throughout the country. Again these have been very well received and we have seen a number of individuals from the courses now attend the Umpire training workshops.

I would like to thank all the Marker tutors for their organisation and assistance. The programme is running smoothly in the majority of cases.

It was always going to be inevitable that the cascading of this course was going to dilute the content. It is simply not possible for one or two individuals to attend all of these courses to ensure they are being run consistently. One way of controlling the content is for a single point of distribution of the same material to those that wish to run markers courses. I am aware in some areas where this material has been passed on and used differently. The other control is for those wishing to run courses to attend at least two run by established tutors and help with one of them.

Umpiring issues

It is inevitable that umpires will make mistakes at times and it is for this very reason that continual training and development is important. We fully accept that individuals can attend a training workshop one day and do something completely different on another.

I would encourage ALL umpires to constantly keep up to date with the Laws of the Sport and the methods for measuring. Umpire Training Manuals and DVD's are available to help.

Finally

The time has come where I feel it is time for fresh blood to further develop the excellent training and development standards that we have in this country. Therefore, I would like to give notice to the Executive of the EBUA that I will not be standing for re-election as the National Development Officer at the next AGM in 2017. This notice should allow time for someone to be found.

Allan's report was accepted by the committee and it was noted that he was not willing to stand again As National Development Officer at the AGM next April. It was agreed that this would be put on the Agenda for the November for the committee to discuss and make arrangements for those wishing to be considered for the office to put themselves forward.

11 Area Secretaries Reports

Area 1 – Val Coldwell

Val reported as follows;-

In the North we are struggling to recruit new members. The members we have are saying that everything that happens down south. Unfortunately Stanley County Durham is no longer the venue for the televised test matches. However they are now to be held in Yorkshire at New Earswick.

There are a number of people waiting to re-qualify and I am hopeful that this will be addressed this autumn. Also there are several awaiting assessment for the first time. I am just in the process of negotiating venues where there will be no charge and hopeful that this will be achieved.

In Northumberland my co-ordinator is Jim Holmes

Cumbria is Anthony Little

Lancashire will be changing at the end of the year.

Durham at the moment is Pat Armstrong but she is hoping to do some serious traveling soon and

Yorkshire is vacant from the start of the indoor season due to the retirement of Maxine who has done a splendid job in the past. If anyone is interested in either of these positions will you please contact me to discuss the commitment that is required? Please wait until after September 6th when I will have more time to talk as I am busy at the national finals at Leamington Spa.

Area 2 –Malcom Griffith

We managed to cover 90% of duties upto now, but with the bad weather and rescheduling of competitions we have had to re shuffle some of the umpire's duties. One of our biggest problems is that a couple of the counties in my area are suffering with a lack of members, i.e. 2 per county. Unfortunately I am having to use members from adjoining counties to cover their duties. It seems that there is very little enthusiasm for people to take on umpiring in those counties. The other thing we have problems with is payment for duties especially from Midland Counties who seem to think that there payment of £100 to the association covers all competitions and they are complaining that they are paying twice for umpires. Unfortunately I believe the payment to the association only covers the semi-final and finals of their competitions, so this is holding back some of the umpires from doing these duties as they are not getting paid for their travelling. Also we have had problems with clubs that umpires are doing duties at are not being looked after, such as refreshments and in some cases the umpires have had to pay for their own refreshments which I think is unacceptable. I think this should be bought up with county bowling associations as some of the associations do look after the umpires but quite a few do not.

We are also looking at losing some of our senior members due to age, illness and disability in this coming year as they will not be taking their re tests when they become due at the end of 2017.

I am also having problems with some of the ladies competition secretaries that still contact umpires directly for competitions and also query why male umpires are given duties for ladies competitions. I have informed the persons involved that this is a combined association and equal opportunities are given to both male and female to umpire competitions whether male or female competitions.

I have has several queries about footwear worn by some of the bowlers as they seem to have gripped soles on shoes and I would like clarification of the type of footwear that is acceptable by Bowls England as it seems that the younger members of the bowling fraternity are using trainer type shoes which leave a foot print on soft bowling surfaces. According to laws the shoes should be of a flat sole. The definition of a flat sole is a shoe without a defined heel. Some of the soles of the shoes have a ridged sole and leave a defined foot print. When confronting players with these type shoes they have been bought as bowls shoes supplied by manufacturers. I would like some clarification of this please.

Area 3 – Bob Penny

A busy outdoor season with continuing requests for umpires to help officiate and support the effective delivery of the game.

Requests for umpires have been met by the commitment of what is a reducing pool of umpires and it is disappointing that even in counties where there are reasonable numbers of umpires and markers (we could always do with more) there are some

members who do not put their names forward. One wonders why they continue to be members of the Association if they do not want to support the game.

I am very grateful for the time and effort made by the County Co-ordinators in considering and allocating umpires for local and county games in spite of the reduction in numbers who are prepared to come forward.

Area 3 continues to be without County Coordinators for Beds and Herts. I am pleased that a representative of Herts County Association, although not an EBUA member has come forward to assist in the county allocations and this arrangement has worked reasonably well.

Tony Hatch of Essex continues to be very active in arranging Markers seminars and these have been well supported by other umpires and well attended by players leading to the membership of several new marker members.

A sincere note of appreciation for all Tony's efforts. Details about forthcoming seminars are available on the EBUA website including Markers seminars in Havering and Harpenden in the next few months

A successful training and development workshop was held at Riverain IBC and I am making enquiries with Cambridge Chesterton IBC to see if dates can be found for a further training and development in 2016. If a date can be found it will be included in the EBUA website and all umpires (particularly those in Area 3 are asked to check the expiry dates of their certificates.

Uniforms still cause something of an issue. As the uniform is the identification of the Association there are some umpires who are no longer members who are acting in the capacity of a competent person who choose to wear the umpire's uniform. This is not acceptable if they are no longer members of the Association. Any poor performance by those persons is automatically linked to the Association which brings down the reputation of the Association. I also suggest the EBUA needs to reconsider its position regarding the sale of uniforms to new markers. For the same reason of protecting the Association's reputation, Markers should be wearing the uniform once they have received their Certificate of Competence and not once they have attended a seminar, obtained a Certificate of Attendance and become an EBUA member.

I am very grateful to those who come forward and make themselves available to assist at games. We are all volunteers who have a love for the sport of bowls. We are there to support the players and make it enjoyable for all.

Area 4 – Carol Watt Sullivan

Yet again a busy schedule within all counties in South East and I am grateful for all the team pulling together to assist the County Co-ordinators to meet all the scheduled requirements for umpires, particularly in Kent where the team have kindly volunteered their services to complete a heavy schedule across all the 4 large divisions in the county (when we have still to replace the hard work done by Neville Bedford before he retired, and still deal with a large 'sick list'). Replacements for Division 4 and Division 3 in Kent for the Men have somewhat stalled, but it does not stop us trying to recruit to take the pressure off Alex D.

Congratulations go to the Life Membership awarded to Alex Duckworth at the AGM. Congratulations also go to Allan Thornhill on his recent appointment with World Bowls.

In Sussex, we now have a working team allowing Angela Barker to retire as Sussex County Co-ordinator. She has set the bar high in terms of management and fairness in allocation of duties and she will be missed (though still around on a consultation

basis, having had several handover meetings). She has, from 8 August formally handed over her duties in the County to Robin Machell to deal with the administration and allocation of duties etc (and be lead contact point) and Denise Staton who will deal mainly with training aspects. Congratulations are also in order to them both as they both upgraded to National status at the assessment centre at end of April/ early May! As is usual with Angela, she has already liaised with ALL the county officials!

Congratulations also to those renewing and those joining as new Regionals at the April/ May assessment centre at Horsham with Area 4 again with 100% pass rate. My thanks to the examiners for giving their time to make this possible!

I am now chasing those with outstanding licenses and is very likely that we will have an assessment centre at Bromley on 22/23 October courtesy of Alex Duckworth when a lot of the backlog will be cleared, we will (hopefully) upgrade a number of umpires and also quality new regional umpires. I am also pleased to report that amongst this number we will welcome back one of our previous young lady markers who had to 'retire' to raise a young family and support family members. As soon as all formally confirmed this will be advertised on the web-site, chasers sent out and even at Leamington from conversations we will have attendees from other areas. However, consideration must also be given to the cost to attendees etc of travelling (sometimes with long distances some with overnight accommodation costs, or in the case of one person, finding him a bolt-hole for his campavan).

As ever, it is the newbies and those who work through the manual and take full advantage of the workshop who always perform best and those who think they know it all who don't, particularly those requalifying. Any ongoing development of our assessment procedures must bear this in mind.

I am still getting retirees, some quoting age, and still a number citing the old carrot of 'uniform' change, even though it is now some 6 years since it was introduced!

Markers courses still prove popular with a number (as also reported by our web-master) taking place in the Area throughout most of the counties. Thankfully we have been able to rearrange a course at Dartford for 1 October, originally timetabled for last spring which had to be postponed due to staffing difficulties, and for which all places are all taken without being promoted on our web-site through local demand. Our challenge now is now to promote umpiring in this area of Kent (we have always been historically weak on numbers - ladies as well as men) and encourage more to start training. Hopefully this will be a start and with Allan T's help we can try and market ourselves. Marking courses were also held in Sussex in late July and others are planned for early in the new year (Feb 2017 at Grattons), as well as courses in Middlesex. Arrangements have also to be made for a course(s) in the Far East of Kent (location, date and numbers still to be worked out).

Some inroads are gradually being made to promote the use of our marker members at county level (with them being used at inter-area level indoors) and also outdoors, but more needs to be done to encourage their visibility!

I would also like recorded now nice it is to see members of Area 4 of all grades coming up to work at the nationals and also volunteering their services to the Top Club event later in the summer – well done all!

As the summer draws to a close, thoughts reluctantly move to staffing the indoor requirements on our members with the announcement of the dates for the club events – Denny, Yetton etc and the demands on our members as well as the

demands for county events and intercounty competitions as published on the EIBA web-site

Area 5 –Ray Keen

Ray reported that he had arranged a workshop for February 2017 at Westlecott, and Markers courses were still being held, unfortunately with the exception of Oxford where he had not been successful in arranging any.

He was very short of umpires in Hereford as the numbers there had dwindled to one who it was hoped would re-qualify.

Area 6 – John Davies

The Area has been able to meet the needs of the Counties during the busy summer months. For this a huge thank you must go to the County Coordinators, the hub of our Association.

We have conducted Training Seminars in Devon and Dorset, and numerous Markers Courses. The days when Clubs were only too pleased to let have the use of their facilities for free to conduct training has, alas, become a thing of the past. In most cases it is a case of “how much”.

10. Matters arising from AGM

- a) Vernon agreed to consult the suppliers of the shirts if they could supply long-sleeved shirts and report back to the next meeting
- b) Date of AGM – it was agreed to consider both the timing in the year (i.e. whether to move the date of the AGM to within the Leamington Championship period to increase the numbers attending) and the number of members needed for there to be a quorum at the next Executive Meeting

11. Any other business

- a) Uniform for markers. Bob said that some markers were buying their uniform before they had obtained their ‘Certificate of Competence’ because an order form was issued with the ‘Certificate of Attendance’ after the course. It was agreed that in future an order form would only be issued with the Certificate of Competence.
- b) Vernon proposed that he change the basis of paying expenses to either £10 or travel mileage for appointed duties. This was agreed and Vernon undertook to get this put on the Web site as soon as possible.
- c) It was noted that for umpires coming forward for requalification had been failing because of their equipment. Ray undertook to investigate this
- d) Vernon said that he had had several people mention to him that umpires may be officiating for their own county. He pointed out that the programme of duties was worked out long before the participants were known.

12 Next meeting

It was agreed that the next meetings would be as follows;-

Sunday 27 November 2016 11.00 at Oxford

Sunday 19 February 2017 11.00 at Oxford

AGM – Sunday 23 April 2017 at Leamington

Mavis thanked everyone for their hard work and for attending the meeting. There being no further business she closed the meeting at 15.00, wished everyone a safe journey home and looked forward to seeing them at the next meeting.

M Wellington
Chairman

Appendix A
Profit & Loss

Sales

Blazers, General, Manuals & training DVDs	4,549.65	
Course/Exam Fees	3,460.95	
Subscriptions Received	4,648.00	
Grants – EBA/EIBA	9,000.00	
Donations Received	162.40	
		21,821.00

Purchases

Purchases	1,141.43	
Course/Exam Expenses	2,725.51	
		<u>3,866.94</u>
Gross Profit/(Loss)		17,954.06

Overheads

Training Costs	596.88	
Postage & Telephone	1,061.15	
Travelling	(7,563.06)	
Printing & Stationary	974.50	
Computer Costs	228.18	
Accountancy & Insurance	111.00	
Flowers & Donations Paid	50.00	
Bank Charges & Interest	(0.78)	
		<u>(4,542.13)</u>
Net Profit/(Loss)		22,496.19