

**Minutes of WMOA Committee Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 7-30 pm**

**via Zoom**

**Present:** Richard Lewis, Marian White, Ian Gamlen, Kirsten Strain, Carol Dredge, Barry Elkiington, Jim Cooke, James Thomas, Adam Bushnell

**1. Apologies:** Melanie Elkiington, John Leeson

**2. Declaration of Interest:** None

**3. Acceptance of Previous Minutes:** Accepted

**4. Matters Arising:** None

**5. Correspondence:** a) Email from Clive Richardson WRE- suggesting officials at WMOA League events should be given 100 points to be added to their scores.

After discussion it was decided that as League was already in progress no changes could be made this year. This matter will be discussed and voted on at the AGM.

b) A number of emails had been received about grants to Juniors for Interland and particularly whether this should include travel costs. It was agreed that where Juniors were making their own way this would be covered but not group travel. A limit of £100 per grant put in place with possible exceptions being JWOC and EYOC. WMOA Website to be updated on this and form to be completed attached.

c) Email from Mike Farrington about website hosting costs and options for this. Renewed for one year as Mike is planning to retire from this position within the next year.

d) Email from Andrew Weaver re points scoring in WMOA League. Matter resolved prior to meeting.

e) Email from Barry Elkiington re planned Very Short Green course at Bentley Woods. Agreed no WMOA League points awarded for this this year. To be reviewed at AGM.

f) Email from John Leeson re National Outdoor Exhibition at NEC. After contacting BOF and offering club support for this, offer declined by BOF. Clubs to canvas any members who are attending to see what is being promoted there and feedback as appropriate.

**6. Chairman's Report: RL**

Firstly congratulations must go to WCH for qualifying to compete at the final in the Compass Sport Trophy, well done. Unfortunately I was unable to go to Clumber Park but I note that WMOA clubs did very well in both the CST and the CSC with some excellent individual runs.

Some of our Club members also got to compete in The Interland Cup in the Netherlands, well done to all who qualified and competed some excellent results.

Nearer home we have had 2 rounds of the hotly contested WMOA league, Brandon Wood (OD) and Wrockwardine Wood (WRE), and following on from winning the Laurie Bradley score on New Year's Day, HOC have already taken a commanding lead and will be the Club to beat this year.

All of us are volunteers and when it comes to putting on events we willingly give our time up, for all of us to enjoy the sport, so it's sad when a competitor verbally abuses volunteers who have volunteered as Organisers and Controllers of events.

Recently at a WMOA League event this was the case and although the competitor did not put a formal complaint in they decided to take their frustrations out on the Organiser and Controller. I was asked to review this and took the matter up with BOF, who agreed with my thoughts that this was a safeguarding issue, and correctly advised that the event officials filled out the necessary forms.

From this point on BOF will discuss and talk to the individual concerned,

I will add that over 50 runners visited the control the competitor said was incorrect and found no issue.

I know we all do, but let's ensure we give all the volunteers the credit and thanks they deserve.

Looking forward we have some interesting events both locally and Nationally coming up, and I look forward this year to getting to more than last year, with the British M and L along with the JK already entered or in the diary, Then later in May we have our own local, 3 day event, Spring Time in Shropshire. Entries are already open and I look forward to seeing you all at some of these.

Can all club reps please ensure Carol has all the latest club officials names and emails especially as most clubs have held AGMs since our last meeting?

So we have quite a full interesting agenda for tonight so let's press on.

IG pointed out that HOC had also progressed to the Compass Sport Cup Final. RL apologised for having failed to mention this in his report.

**7. Treasurer's Report -IG**

WMJS account has now been transferred to Metro Bank as discussed and agreed at last meeting.

JK 2024 money showing in this year as only paid over after start of WMOA accounting year.

Both accounts showing healthy balances. SINS year and other WML events should produce good levies.

RL questioned whether there had been any follow up to EMOA request for larger proportion of JK profits- see minutes of last meeting. Matter had been resolved - equal split WMOA and EMOA.

**8. Fixtures Report- JT**

National Events Scheduling Meeting to be held tomorrow- 11<sup>th</sup> March.

WMOA League has 9 events scheduled- 2 of these already held. Hopefully one of these will incorporate the WM champs.

WMOA Urban League has 4 events scheduled.

In addition to these there are – WMOA Relays OD at Pooley Fields in October. WMOA Schools Champs POTOC at Apedale and 2 SINS Events.

Looking forward-

British Middles and Midland Champs – 18/19<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at Brown Clee. Officials mainly in place for this.

JIRC'S September 2027- no venue as yet. Beaudesert and Wyndley Leisure Centre suggested as potential accommodation.

British Champs and British Relays 2028 – discussion has taken place with Wales re potentially using some of their redundant areas for these- waiting for agreement on this.

Other suggestions for areas to use- Brown Clee- as being remapped for Middles next year. North Sherbrook- WCH- not used for a number of years.

British Nights Champs- 2029 – HOC to organise.

#### 9. **WMOA Website** –MW

Mike Farrington planning to retire from hosting in 2026 so need to look for alternative arrangements. MW to contact MF to establish what he wants to stop doing and when.

Next News Round Up planned to go out with minutes of this meeting.

MW suggested need for article on abuse of officials at events. Do clubs have policies about this?

RL stressed need that all clubs should have and review a Code of Conduct with clear expectations laid down. What are consequences for these actions?

#### 10. **Development** –

HM willing to put on a Controller's Course but due to other commitments probably not until Autumn. Also need for Organiser's Course.

Need for an updated list of Controllers – club reps asked to source this from own clubs and have list with grades for next meeting.

#### 11. **Coaching Co-ordinator**- Dave Ellis not at meeting.

Dave Ellis has sent report from Coaching Meeting to all committee members. He is moving to Scotland shortly. RL thanked DE for work he has done on this.

RL suggested that role needs reviewing – what are we looking for?

#### 12. **West Midlands Junior Squad** –KS

A few new juniors have joined at the start of this year, so squad membership is currently as follows: 3xM18, 1xW18, 7xM16, 3xW16, 3xM14 and 1xW14 – totalling 18. A further two juniors (1xM12 and 1xW12) are 'associate' members, who can join in with squad activities if supported by a dedicated adult while they remain below the normal standard required of a regional squad. Two more juniors have been invited to try joining in with a squad training session to see if squad membership is for them.

Since the last WMOA meeting, we have had three day trainings. In December we trained at Outwoods (LEI), in January we trained at Sherwood Forest (NOC) and this weekend we trained on Stanton Moor (DVO). Each of these were joint with EMJOS and the latter was also combined with YHJS. Thanks have been expressed to the various coaches and clubs involved in putting on these trainings. It's been great to have the support of Isla Foffa (HOC) and Aimee Darley (SN&LUOC) to help coach the WMJS juniors recently.

Looking ahead, we plan to have a training on 6<sup>th</sup> April (pending permissions) and 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> June, probably also combined with EMJOS.

We have had three Zoom trainings so far in 2025, with a series planned through the competition season with a focus on race preparation for the major/selection races.

We had a cake stall at the rescheduled Brandon Wood WML event, making just under £100 and also made nearly £60 from the sale of cakes and pudding at the Wrekin annual dinner. Our next cake sale is planned for the Bentley Wood WML event on 30<sup>th</sup> March. Also in March, Barry Elkington is once again organising a quiz in Kenilworth, from which we will receive the proceeds from entries and the raffle.

Three of our juniors participated in the Interland competition, Seb and Olivia representing England in M14 and W20 respectively and Jonah running as a reserve in M16.

A number of our juniors are aiming for selection to JROS training camps and GB teams. As a squad we are supporting them towards these goals and wish them good luck in the selection process.

We will soon be starting to think about the JIRCs, which are in September, for M/W14, 16 and 18 classes. This year is it being held in the NW region as part of the same weekend as the SHIs. We will aim to take as full a team as possible, while sticking within the abilities of the juniors and the entry constraints of the competition. Max 4 runners per class may be entered in the individual, and relay teams comprise W14+W16+W18 or M14+M16+M18.

To help with squad communications and admin, we have started using Spond which is a phone app and online platform designed for youth sports squads. It is recommended by UK Coaching and already in use by at least one other regional junior squad. It makes it quick and easy for parents to respond to availability requests for juniors and adult helpers for squad activities, including training days, zoom trainings and cake sales. Thanks to Steve Blackmore and Karen Thompson for working to set this all up.

The new bank account with Metro Bank was set up and became ready to use in January. There were initial teething problems with everyone getting online access to work but by mid-February we were all up and running and the switch from Lloyds was complete. Thanks to Mel Elkington for leading this process.

RL thanked KS for her report and continual work with Squad.

### **13. Club Round-Up**

#### **OD-BE**

Rescheduled Brandon Wood event in January had a good turnout.

Saturday morning events had been well attended.

OD had not enough competitors to score in either Laurie Bradley New Year Event or Compass Sport Cup round.

No Development Officer appointed yet despite funding being available.

#### **POTOC- JC**

Continuing with monthly local events counting towards a local league.

Staffordshire School Champs in March.

West Midlands School Champs in May.

MorrIDGE event hopefully on.

#### **WCH – AB**

Chasers through to CSC Final and had three members selected for Interland.

Laurie Bradley New Year's Day event was well attended and successful. Forestry charges were very high and resulted in a loss for

Chasers. Jonathan Howell has taken this up with BOF. RL asked if JH could send him a brief summary of costs and actions taken - AB to facilitate this.

Small local event held at Oldacre. Next local event 22/3 at Milford – have to stay on paths so beginners event. Possibility of red and purple courses.

Need to build on success of Winter MapRuns and transition newcomers to weekend orienteering.

Any feedback on courses/ numbers etc for CSC/T to be sent by club reps to Andrew Kelly.

Discussion on Non BOF members being covered by insurance – after 3 events own risk. BOF has sent out a consultation document to clubs on this.

#### **HOC- JT/IG**

Winter leagues now finished – well attended.

Forthcoming Arrow Valley event car parking is challenging.

SINS in hand

Summer League Events- evenings and Saturdays.

Qualified for CSC Final.

Coaching session 29<sup>th</sup> March Sutton Park.

#### **WRE-RL**

Couple of successful events been held.

Shropshire Schools events being held on 27/3 and 3/4 and then a final later.

22/3- Double Sprint at Lilleshall.

6/4- CATI at Shrewsbury Quarry

August WRE 50<sup>th</sup> Celebration.

### **14. Any Other Business**

None

**15. Date of Next Meeting-** Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June at 7-30pm by Zoom.

Meeting finished at 9-30pm.

Thanks to Barry Elkington for coordinating Zoom Meeting.