

SUSSEX COUNTY JUDO AGM
Worthing Leisure Centre

Minutes of Meeting of Annual General Meeting on 14th July

Present: Mark Denney (MD) – Chair
David Wright (DW) – Treasurer
Peter Seymour (PS) – Refereeing
Jeremy Luff (JL) - Competitions

In attendance: Stephanie Leigh (SL) – Acting Secretary
Karen French, Chichester Ronin JC
Ian Carter – Brighton Judo Club
Sue Carter – Brighton Judo Club
Mick Leigh – Kaigan Judo Club
Tony Newton, TNJC
Kay Pavlou, TNJC
Emma Brown, TNJC
Simon Mitchell, Mid Sussex MA Judo Club
Martin Rivers, Kin Ryu Judo club
Karen Howe, Kin Ryu Judo Club
Lesley Luff
Terry Bate, Uckfield Judo Club
Tara Hunter, Uckfield Judo Club
Derek Paxton, Horsham Judo Club
Marion Woodward, Southern Area Chair
Nicky Sexton – Competition Controller

The meeting opened at 10:40am.

Mick Leigh (ML) asked whether he could address the meeting. He asked when the last AGM took place and Mark Denney (MD) stated that it was four or five years ago. ML told the meeting that he was to his knowledge the only surviving founder member of the Southern Area and had a deep rooted interest in Sussex.

Stephanie Leigh (SL) offered to take minutes as nobody had been asked to do so and there were no objections to her doing so.

Chairman's Address

MD welcomed everybody to the meeting including esteemed guests. He thanked the present committee and others over past years and also those present who wish to join the committee. He spoke proudly about all the different styles of event the county had hosted over many years with great success and of Sussex officials who travel around the country to events. MD explained that he has decided not to stand for re-election. Judo, he said, has changed and is not as he would like it to be. He spoke of many positive changes that had been made in Sussex in recent times, including the CARE system, electronic scoring system and, with

Jeremy's help, the online system for competition entries. He is, he said, leaving the County financially stable.

ML asked how many clubs present were eligible to vote. There was a short discussion after which it was agreed that the following EIGHT clubs were present and were eligible to vote. It was confirmed that the Sussex affiliation fee had been discontinued some years ago.

Chichester Ronin

Horsham

Kaigan

Kin Ryu

Mid Sussex Martial Arts

Rising Sun

TNJC

Uckfield

Simon Mitchell (SM) agreed to forward evidence of his individual BJA membership to Dave Wright after the meeting as he was unable to log into the BJA portal "The Dojo".

Accounts

A balance sheet for the current financial year was included in the meeting papers. Dave Wright (DW) stated that he did not have any historical accounts information with him and also confirmed that the accounts since the last AGM have not been audited.

It was confirmed that there is currently £16,009.21 in the bank account.

DW confirmed that there is an error in the balance sheet, top left column, the date should read 1/4/19 - not 1/4/17.

ML asked about income and expenditure and DW explained that income is on the left of the spreadsheet and expenditure is on the right.

There was a discussion around grading income and Derek Paxton (DP) confirmed that the £318 and £192 figures represented profit from the Horsham Dan gradings.

Clubs refused to approve the accounts as what was presented to the meeting was not accounts and there was no way to establish what had happened over the past five years. As no papers from the last AGM were available, it was not possible to see what the bank balance had been five years ago. Martin Rivers (MR) said clubs should see the accounts for the missing years and there was general agreement with this view, from the floor. There was a discussion around what constituted "accounts" and what clubs should reasonably expect to see at an AGM in order to approve them.

It was agreed that DW would send out the accounts for the last five years (or since the last AGM) to all clubs present and eligible to vote at this AGM.

It was agreed that in future years the Treasurer's Report would include the most recent year end figure and a set of audited accounts for that year.

Instead of a proposal to approve the accounts, the proposal was that five years' worth of accounts (or since the last AGM) would be externally audited and that this would be actioned by the new committee and organised by the Treasurer. Subsequently this would be circulated by post to all Sussex clubs affiliated to the BJA.

Proposed by DP (Horsham)

Seconded by KF (Chichester Ronin)

DP offered to do the auditing as he was in the past Sussex Treasurer and more than happy to help. Jeremy Luff (JL) thanked DP and said perhaps we can take up this offer in the future. For now though JL said we should go for complete transparency and engage the services of an external auditor. JL said this will allow us to move forward and correct the processes for future years.

Competitions Report

A Competition Report was attached to the meeting papers.

JL addressed the meeting and read through his report, speaking briefly about the past two years during which he had moved into the role following the sad loss of his father Roy Luff who held this committee position. Sussex competitions, JL said, were very successful and he thanked Nicky and Paul Sexton for their support, plus all the referees, coaches, judoka and parents without which events could not run.

DP asked about a 2019 junior event where juniors were allowed to coach mat-side. He asked whether this was true and whether JL could explain the reasoning behind it. JL confirmed that the idea of the initiative was to develop young coaches, giving them a chance to try this important role with young low graded juniors whilst being mentored by qualified coaches during the event. JL said we needed to move judo into the modern age and develop attributes other than just competing. JL confirmed that he had made the decision to try this out as part of his role organising events. Nicky Sexton (NS) confirmed that she had been fully aware of this, as Competition Controller at the event in question, and 100% supportive of this at a developmental event where we are growing young officials. She explained that the young coaches were not allowed to challenge refereeing decisions. NS and JL apologised that MD as Referee in Charge had not been consulted and had not known it was happening until the day in question. They both confirmed that this had been an oversight. Karen French (KF) asked whether the communication oversight might have been because of a lack of committee meetings, but MD confirmed that there had been two meetings before that event where it could have been discussed. MD said he had fielded a complaint from one club who had not known in advance that youngsters would be in the coaching chair at the event. JL agreed that it would go on forms from now on.

SL said, as a bystander who is not linked to a club but who regularly goes to Sussex events, she believes JL's ideas and input have made a great deal of difference over the last two years and that the atmosphere is back to something like it was years ago when she was a junior.

Tony Newton (TN) said that grass roots judo is what is important.

Marion Woodard (MW) also spoke favourably about Sussex events and new ideas such as her involvement in January on the microphone - "The Lady in the Tabard" and how much positive feedback she had received from parents.

Approval of the Competitions Report

Proposed by DP (Horsham)

Seconded KF (Chichester Ronin)

Refereeing Report

A refereeing report was attached to the meeting papers.

MD confirmed that refereeing numbers have been pretty static.

ML wished to record thanks to MD for many years of refereeing.

ML asked when the last table officials' course took place. MD said the last one in Sussex was a couple of years ago. JL said most courses are area driven now. In January 2019 there was a SA course held at Dartford where parents were there for REDS training anyway and it gave them a chance to try table officiating.

ML asked where they are advertised. JL confirmed, SA website.

Approval of the Refereeing Report

Proposed Tara Hunter (TH) (Uckfield)

Seconded ML (Kaigan)

Squad Reports

No squad reports had been submitted.

A discussion took place regarding recent squad issues which appeared to have been caused by a variety of factors.

JL confirmed that the need for Squad Managers suddenly came up, very close to the Trials and that MD had appealed to Sussex County Judo Facebook followers on 14th March to see if anybody knew of an appropriate coach for the job.

MW said that unless things are in writing they will be open to misinterpretation, poor communication and poor service to volunteers.

TH asked whether there had been anybody else interested in the squad positions, other than those who had temporarily stood in at the Trials and Inter Counties, and MD replied that nobody else had come forward.

SL asked that the new committee consider how best to advertise vacancies in the future and that if someone stood down mid-year, to let clubs know so that someone appropriate could perhaps stand in until the next AGM. She suggested that this was potentially better than someone who already has a committee job, doing another one.

MD suggested that the only way to communicate is using the BJA list.

DW said communication is difficult as emails bounce back. DW was asked how he addresses issues of emails bouncing back. For example, does he go onto club websites and look at the "contact us" page. DW confirmed that he does not.

JL suggested a standard letter through the post would be effective in conjunction with a cloud-based system (accessible only to clubs) and this would be discussed by the new committee.

SL suggested a prominent noticeboard at events with anything interesting or newsworthy for clubs, players and parents.

Nominations for Officers

Chairman

Jeremy Luff had been nominated by Kin Ryu and seconded by Chichester and had circulated his manifesto in advance of the meeting.

No other individuals had been nominated.

KF asked that we minute thanks to MD who has given long service as Chairman, had in fact left and had then come back when he had a lot on his plate. A round of applause from those present was given, in appreciation for years of service on the committee by MD.

Treasurer

No nominations had been received.

Nobody from the floor expressed an interest.

Current post-holder DW stated that he is happy to continue with this role.

Proposed by TH (Uckfield)

Seconded by Simon Mitchell (SM) (MSMA)

Secretary

No nominations had been received.

Karen Howe put herself forward. Karen is from Kin Ryu, her children train there and she said she has a BJA membership.

Proposed by Peter Seymour (PS) (Kin Ryu)

Seconded KF (Chichester)

Newsletter/Web Editor

No nominations had been received.

Nobody from the floor expressed an interest.

Current post holder - JL stated that he is happy to continue with this role. Proposed by PS (Kin Ryu)

Seconded ML (Kaigan)

President

No nominations had been received.

KF nominated MD but he respectfully declined.

KF nominated TN.

Proposed by KF (Chichester Ronin)

Seconded by SM (MSMA)

Sussex Events 2020

JL gave a brief update on the events in 2020.

The January event will be moved to the last weekend in January (26/1/20). It will be grouped by age and grade with a pool to pool system for maximum number of contests.

There will be a Senior Veterans Open on the first weekend of March (1/3/20).

The Sussex Trials will be at the end of March (29/3/20) followed by the Inter-Counties (10/5/20).

In June the Yellow and under will turn into an Open team event with small teams, giving lower grades a chance to learn teamwork (7/6/20)

In November there will be an Open event (15/11/20) in preparation for National Trials.

JL said he will need and seek support around the county in terms of media and judo festivals, taster sessions for officials and other ideas.

DW confirmed a technical 2 and technical 3 day with Chris Doherty will take place in Sussex on 15/9/19 from 10am - 2pm.

Any Other Business

ML asked the new committee to consider voting cards for those eligible to vote at future meetings.

ML asked the new committee to consider a more appropriate venue for future meetings.

JL confirmed that future AGMs will have a completely different structure.

DP said there were eleven dan gradings in the Southern Area, five at Dartford, three in Sussex and three in Hampshire. He said the support from Sussex clubs

for the Sussex-hosted gradings has been poor. Upcoming dan gradings at Southwater Leisure Centre are on 13th October and 8th December 2019. DP explained that he is a trainer for the Examiner Awards system. He also told the meeting that he has built up a list of around sixty players who are notified of the gradings and some people have come from as far as York and Taunton.

KF asked for clarification about pink slips being sent to the area when clubs do gradings. Graham Turner (GT) confirmed that no pink slips are required in the area any longer. The only thing he sees is dan grading sheets.

TN asked about support for players who have been selected for events like the Commonwealth Games. JL said part of his manifesto included a plan for Sussex to consider supporting players in this way, with an application system. DP said there is an option on the SA website where you can apply for financial support to be considered. SM said the SA website was difficult to navigate. SL said she believed that both nominees for SA Chair had in their manifestos plans to improve their websites and communication to members and so this should improve.

There was no other business therefore MD thanked everybody for attending and closed the meeting at 12:30pm.