



Oxfordshire Cross Country League

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**Oxford Mail**

## 2016 AGM Minutes

*Date:* Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> May 2016

*Time:* 19:30hrs

*Venue:* Committee Room, Exeter Hall, Kidlington

### Present:

#### *League Officers:*

Dene Stringfellow (League Manager)

Richard Stocking (Treasurer)

Frank Briscoe (Entries & Results Secretary)

#### *Club Representatives:*

*Abingdon AC:* Gary Richards

*Alchester RC:* Vincente Bayliss, Jon Burgess

*Banbury Harriers AC:* Ian Robinson

*Didcot Runners:* Andrew Casey, Theresa Lamble

*Eynsham RR:* Ben Pollard

*Headington RR:* Kit Villiers

*Hook Norton Harriers:* David Warlow

*Kidlington R&AC:* Michael Search

*Witney RR:* Fraser Howard

*Woodstock Harriers:* Kevin Game

**Voting Members: 10**

### 1) Apologies

The following apologies were recorded:

*Alchester RC:* Gary Warland

*Bicester AC:* Emma Gould, Richard Gould

*Cirencester AC:* Pam Wheeler

*Eynsham RR*: Jackie Pinnock

*Oxon AA*: John Sear, Paul Thomas

## **2) Minutes of 2015 AGM**

The minutes of the last AGM held on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2015 were unanimously accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

## **3) Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

## **4) Manager's Report**

From the feedback received the 2015-16 was largely considered a success. In addition, the new feather flags to provide higher visibility for the location of race starts and finishes was positively received.

Four applications were received to join the OXL in the 2015-16 season. All four clubs were offered the mandatory initial trial season to see how they got on. Of the four clubs: Bicester TC, Henley Harriers, Oxford University Press and Thame RR, Bicester TC and OUP were only two clubs that fulfilled their trial commitment. Despite a promising start no Henley Harriers athletes attended the 3 fixtures from January onwards. No Thame RR athletes attended any of the fixtures.

With respect to each of the fixtures:

- a. Unseasonably fine weather at Ascott-under-Wychwood meant the water splash was seen more as a positive rather than a hindrance.
- b. The length of the finish funnels at both Ascott and Culham Park had to be extended owing to congestion at the finish.
- c. Horspath suffered from poor set up and a lack of marshals, hares and finish recorders. In addition, there was no visible medical support at the finish area.
- d. The Horspath fixture doubled up as the County XC Championships.
- e. The round 4 fixture at Cirencester witnessed the worst weather of the season. The weather was particularly atrocious on the Saturday when the courses were being setup.
- f. The complaints from the previous season were dealt with for the final fixture at RAL Harwell. However, the use of the satnav directions provided on the website led some drivers to drive up a private road leading to a complaint from local residents. Thankfully the issue was swiftly dealt with by the venue manager. Improved signage will prevent such a recurrence in future.
- g. The end-of-season presentations went reasonably smoothly albeit there were a few complaints about the length of time junior athletes had to wait to receive their prizes.

Participant numbers are continuing their steady upward trend. The average overall attendances have remained broadly unchanged over the past 3 seasons albeit the numbers attending different rounds has fluctuated. The total number of athletes competing in at least one event increased once again continuing the trend of the growth in popularity of the League. An increase of just under 1% was witnessed.

No appeals were registered during the 2015-16 season.

There remains a concern from the county officials that race distances for the junior athletes are too short and do not provide a good enough guide as to how well an athlete will perform in higher level competition. Despite the endeavours made during the course of the 2015-16 season to ensure that course distances were set at or close to the target maximum distances as detailed in the League's rules, venue and terrain limitations restricted best efforts.

The host clubs were thanked for all their hard work and continued support of the League. In addition, the other members of the management committee were also thanked for all their support and assistance over the past season.

The following comments from the assembly were recorded:

A problem arose at Horspath where runners in the women's race were seen to be crossing in front of the start for the men's race. The men's start was moved forward to alleviate the problem.

There was a low turnout at Cirencester Park – almost certainly on account of the weather over the weekend.

There were course changes at RAL Harwell. It was agreed to add a note to the fixture details posted on the website and to the course maps to remind everyone to check the maps and not to assume the courses remain unchanged.

## 5) Treasurer's Report

- a. The League's finances are in a healthy position.
- b. The sponsorship was received from the Oxford Mail for the 2015-16 season.
- c. The Other Expenses – Round 3 item was clarified as a one third contribution to the costs of the hosting of the Horpath fixture. The contribution was made on the proviso that Oxford City AC endeavours to cover its fixture hosting costs in future via the usual method of collecting parking fees.

### Questions:

- i. The cost of the new start/finish banners were queried.  
*Richard clarified that this was a one-off, non-recurring expense – assuming of course the sponsor remains unchanged. The Oxford Mail paid half of the cost – one each of the start/finish banners incorporates the Oxford Mail logo the remainder do not.*

- ii. A concern was raised about what the financial position is likely to be at the end of the 2016-17 season.

*Richard confirmed that in all likelihood the surplus would be higher.*

## 6) 2016-17 Season Notices

- a. The following requirements come into force with immediate effect following the EA affiliation ruling change as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 concerning competing athletes detailed in the 2016 AGM documentation:
  - i. All member clubs of the OXL must be EA affiliated.
  - ii. All athletes must be a member of an EA affiliated club.
  - iii. All athletes of age 11 years and above must be registered as paid-up EA affiliated athletes.
  - iv. No entries will be accepted on the day.
  - v. No unattached runners are permitted to run.
  - vi. Guests are permitted provided they are a member of an EA affiliated club and are registered as paid-up EA affiliated athlete.
  - vii. All entries for each fixture are to be received by the Sunday evening (i.e. 6 days) prior to the next fixture.
  - viii. In the event of a change of club it is the responsibility of the athlete to ensure the proper transfer procedure has been completed as clearly set out on the EA website.
- b. Guides detailing commitments and requirements will be issued to all Fixture Directors and Team Managers.

## 7) Dates and Venues for 2016-17 Season

The fixtures are scheduled for the first Sunday of the month with the exception of the Combined Oxfordshire County Championships fixture the date of which is tbc.

**Rnd 1: Sun, 6 Nov 2016** – Witney RR agreed to host.

**Rnd 2: Sun, 4 Dec 2016** – Culham Park will not be available. *Venue and host tbc.*

**Rnd 3: Sun, 8 Jan 2017?** – The date of the Combined Oxfordshire County Championships fixture is tbc. *Venue and host tbc.*

**Rnd 4: Sun, 5 Feb 2017** – Abingdon AC agreed to host – *Venue: RAL Harwell. TBC.*

**Rnd 5: Sun, 5 Mar 2017** – Woodstock Harriers/Eynsham RR agreed to joint host – *Venue: Hill End Centre, Farmoor. TBC pending approval following meeting at end of May.*

Harcourt Hill was offered as a potential alternative venue to Headington RR for the December fixture – ***action Dene to supply contact details.***

Subsequent to the meeting it was learned that the Ascott-under-Wychwood venue would not be able available owing to a change of landowner.

## 8) Divisions for 2016-17 Season

The following team promotions and relegations were confirmed for the 2016-17 season.

**Women** Division 1: **promoted:** Newbury B

**relegated:** *Oxford City A*

Division 2: **promoted:** Radley A, Hook Norton A, Newbury C

**relegated:** *Kidlington A, Highworth A, White Horse A*

**Men** Division 1: **promoted:** Abingdon A, Alchester A

**relegated:** *Eynsham A, Witney A*

Division 2: **promoted:** Cherwell A

**relegated:** *Team Kennet A*

A short discussion ensued in relation to the criteria by which clubs are promoted/relegated that was directly related to Proposal ge below.

## 9) Discussion & Voting on the 2016 AGM Proposals

A long discussion was held on the ethos of the League.

### Proposal a): Affiliation Fee Structure Amendment

The proposal by the management committee to amend the existing fee structure in favour of smaller clubs from:

Up to 20 participants in the previous season: £50.00

21-79 participants in the previous season: £100.00

80 or more participants in the previous season: £150.00

to:

Up to **25** participants in the previous season: £50.00

**26-79** participants in the previous season: £100.00

80 or more participants in the previous season: £150.00

### Votes for Proposal a):

In favour: 10

Against: 0

### Proposal b): New Club Affiliation Proposals

To invite those clubs who have satisfactorily completed their trial season (Bicester TC and Oxford University Press) to join the OXL.

***Votes for Proposal b):***

In favour: 10  
Against: 0

**Proposal c): Senior Perpetual Trophies**

As not all the Senior perpetual trophies were returned for the awards presentations and the decision was taken not to present any of the perpetual trophies on that basis, the proposal is to discontinue all but the 1<sup>st</sup> Division men's and women's team trophies.

***Votes for Proposal c):***

In favour: 10  
Against: 0

**Proposal d): Season End Award Presentations Timings**

Displeasure voiced by some athletes and parents ahead of the season end awards presentations at having to wait so long, resulting in non-attendance of athletes/parents at the main awards ceremony as well as non-collections of prizes. Should the timings be changed? A short discussion ensued where the options of delaying the mini minor presentation and splitting the presentations into 3 parts were considered. Neither of those options met with any agreement.

***Votes for Proposal d):***

In favour: 0  
Against: 10

**Proposal e): 2 Up / 2 Down for All Divisions Regardless of Points Scored**

The ensuing discussion highlighted the point that it was felt that clubs were being disincentivised by the current system.

***Votes for Proposal e):***

In favour: 10  
Against: 0

***Notes:*** The above proposal was agreed on the basis that the change will come into force for the 2017-18 season (i.e. the change will be applied to the results of the 2016-17 season).

*In addition, a further suggestion was put forward for the divisions to be comprised of 10 – 12 teams rather than the unequal current split – **action Dene to include as a proposal for next AGM.***

### **Proposal f): Age Categories to be as at Midnight Prior to 1<sup>st</sup> Fixture**

A short discussion ensued following the presentation of Emma Gould's case against the proposal that highlighted issues that would arise in relation to the junior athletes. The assembly was unanimous in its rejection of the proposal.

#### ***Votes for Proposal f):***

In favour: 0

Against: 10

### **Proposal g): Men's Race to Precede Women's at All Fixtures**

Gary Richards pointed out that the proposed change would allow Fixture Directors to stand down marshals sooner as well as allow the post-fixture cleanup process to be completed more quickly.

#### ***Votes for Proposal g):***

In favour: 10

Against: 0

### **Proposal h): Restructure of Constitution as Presented at 2015 AGM**

The League's Constitution lacks coherent structure. In order for the future benefit review and revision, the management committee proposes that the Constitution is restructured as per the proposal as presented at the 2015 AGM. It was confirmed that there are no actual changes to the wording of the Constitution other than to a point reference.

#### ***Votes for Proposal h):***

In favour: 9

Abstention: 1

Against: 0

### **Proposal i): Further Amendments to Constitution as Presented at 2015 AGM**

*Assuming the aforementioned Constitution Restructure is approved, that the further proposals for change to the Constitution presented at the 2015 AGM will be reviewed and presented for discussion and voting at the next AGM.*

#### ***Votes for Proposal h):***

In favour: 9

Abstention: 1

Against: 0

## **10) Election of Officials**

A vote of thanks by Gary Richards (*Abingdon AC*) was expressed on behalf of the assembly to the management committee for their contributions to the League.

The following officials were re-elected and voted in unanimously:

<i>League Manager:</i>	Dene Stringfellow
<i>League Treasurer:</i>	Richard Stockting
<i>League Entries &amp; Results Secretary:</i>	Frank Briscoe

## 11) AOB

### a. Race Distances

The Oxon AA case was presented to the assembly that the junior race distances in none of the League fixtures (with the exception of the combined Round 3 / Oxon County XC Championships fixture) offers little useful guide to team selection for the Inter-Counties XC Championships. It is the Oxon AA view that the only way to properly assess the junior athletes is for the OXL race distances to be increased.

A short discussion ensued where the following points were raised:

- i. The OXL does not want to discourage young athletes.
- ii. The courses (*with the exception for the very young athletes*) are typically more demanding than the flat, parkland courses used in the Chiltern League.
- iii. The Chiltern League is a bigger League than the OXL and presents a higher level of competition for the athletes.

On that basis, it was agreed that the League will endeavour to ensure that Oxon County XC Championship race distances will match as near as possible those of the Chiltern League and SEAA events and will also aim to ensure that all the race distances for the other fixtures are near or at the target maximum distances:

### b. Race Distances Notice

It was agreed to add a notification in advance for the combined fixture confirming the Oxon XC Championship distances.

## Close

The meeting was brought to a close at 22:00hrs.

*Dene Stringfellow*  
**League Manager**

23 August 2017 : Amended as agreed at the 2017 AGM held on Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2017.