

Minutes of the SEMLA GCM 3rd March 2014

Present:

Trevor Rogers	(TR)	President & Reading
John Maynard	(JM)	EVP, Disciplinary Chair & Purley
Peter Compton	(PC)	EVP & Spencer
Miles Whittle	(MW)	Treasurer & Bath
Jon Cooper	(JC)	Fixtures Secretary
Peter Mundy	(PM)	Croydon
Ray Wood	(RW)	Youth Development Chair
Simon Peach	(SP)	South Referees Committee Chairman
Amit Biswas	(AB)	Walcountian Blues
Steve Groves	(SG)	Welwyn
Andrew Abbey	(AA)	Welwyn
Kieran Balmer	(KB)	Secretary & Brighton

1. Apologies for Absence.

Danny Buckland (Epsom)
Rob Gooch (Spencer)
Rob Collinge (Centurions)
Joey Burnett (Maidstone)
David Abini (Birmingham)
Sam Spurrell (MPC Liaison)
Nik Roberts (RDO & Bath)

2. Acceptance of Minutes from the previous meeting.

Accepted.

3. Matters arising not included in the Agenda.

None

4. President's Report

TR reported on his follow-up meeting with Mark Coups. There had been further discussion re the future role of the MPC and the replacement bodies due to be formed. TR noted that he felt the meeting had been productive and he was satisfied that the ELA want to receive significant input from SEMLA.

PM asked if the discussion had covered the issue of BUCS representation on the new body. TR replied that BUCS had not been specifically discussed as a separate topic, and the conversation had focussed more on the MPC's ongoing role in the area of club development.

5. Treasurer's Report

As per written report, circulated prior to the meeting.

MW noted that following circulation of his report, SEMLA fee payments had been received from Swansea and Brighton. MW also noted that he is due to referee Exeter in a BUCS fixture on 5th March and intends to speak to them about their outstanding fee in person.

TR asked if any of the remaining clubs (yet to pay their SEMLA fee) were in any sort of trouble.

PM noted that he had heard that Northampton might be struggling, but added that this was second-hand information.

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JM noted that JC made reference in his latest report that Portsmouth were rumoured to be in difficulty; However they seemed to be performing strongly enough in BUCS.

PM asked if Hampstead's position had improved at all.

TR noted that in a recent conversation, Dennis Tobin of Hampstead had mentioned that things were relatively upbeat, and that they expected an influx of new players soon.

[Simon Peach joined the meeting]

The question of trophies for the Plate finals was raised. After some discussion a vote was called for. There was one vote in favour of buying trophies to present to the regional plate winners, two votes against and all others present abstained. Therefore the status quo will remain and no trophies will be presented.

6. Secretary's Report.

KB reported verbally. Other than a handful of u16 dispensations, KB had nothing to report.

TR asked if a slight variation could be made to future minutes, to include the names of attendees who arrive late to the call in the main list of attendees. **KB to action.**

7. Youth Development Committee's Report.

RW reported as follows:

- U14 league due to reach its conclusion in three weeks;
- Flags tournament postponed until September due to poor weather in December, January and February;
- Still no confirmation of the New York Schools tour;
- Welwyn Tournament and Brussels Tournament both in the near future;
- South Schools Championship set for May: TASIS and Reading will compete over two legs for the Eric Jones Trophy;
- National U12 and U16 competitions have not progressed. RW has repeatedly tried to communicate with the NEMLA contact for this contest, but has received no response;

JM expressed concern at the postponement of the flags tournament. Noted that a long postponement might risk the loss of players in the youth game.

RW noted that the decision to postpone was made by the clubs themselves, and was due exclusively to the weather. The length of the postponement reflects the fact that at the time of this meeting, many pitches are still unplayable.

8. University Liaison Report.

No current officer, so no report.

9. South Manager Report.

Nik Roberts absent, therefore no report.

10. Disciplinary and Complaints Panel Report.

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JM expressed his pleasure at having no disciplinary matters to report.

11. Referee Secretary Report.

Steve Jarvis currently on sabbatical, so SP reported verbally.

Noted a need for referees for BUCS Semi-final in Exeter on 12th March – MW is the only volunteer at this point. Further noted that the Men's Trophy and Championship finals will also need officials: Tuesday 25th and Wednesday 26th at Surrey Sports Park.

Noted that the MPC are pushing for a response with regard to the efforts being made to reduce the instances of solo refereeing.

Noted that the recent Varsity fixture was an exciting game involving two well-behaved teams. SP refereed alongside TR and Gregg Irwin and the whole event was very enjoyable.

KB noted that the issue of solo refereeing could be partially addressed by deliberately arranging for odd numbers of teams within all non-prem divisions, and offering a “carrot” for sending refs elsewhere when your team has no game.

PM questioned the need for mandatory two-man officiating, citing the South's absence of a discipline problem.

KB asked if we HAVE to adopt two-man-officiating, or are we able to refuse and tell the MPC we are happy to stay as we are. TR responded that SEMLA must come up with some ideas.

KB noted that increasing the instances of two-man refereeing in the South would be useful both from an individual progression point of view and also for succession planning – if the South is to have any referees in ten years' time, then the training path for them must be in place.

SP noted that changing the mindset of the clubs might be a useful approach. It would be great if the clubs regarded refs as part of their club, and the provision of referees as a normal responsibility.

[Jon Cooper joined the meeting]

12. Fixture Secretary Report.

JC's written report had been previously distributed. Points of note were:

Byelaw 7(d): as a result of discussions in previous meetings, JC has prepared a draft amendment. **KB to circulate to clubs and invite comment.**

England Training weekends: JC noted that any reference to “England” should be taken as referring to any international squad, not just England. JC asked for thoughts regarding how a rule could be put together to allow teams affected by international call-ups to request rescheduling of league games as a consequence.

TR wondered about a two-month time limit on the request, and asked if all countries announced their rosters far enough in advance.

JC asked everyone to consider whether the rule would provide for an option to REQUEST a rescheduling, or grant an ABSOLUTE RIGHT which the opponent could not oppose.

JM noted that if the rule did not grant an absolute right then opponents might take advantage and refuse any request, thereby making the rule redundant.

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Kb noted that a two-month time limit would be impractical for instances of late call-ups due to injury replacement or similar.

TR noted that there had to be a time limit or there would be significant logistical problems caused by reschedules being demanded at very short notice.

JC asked the meeting to give the matter more thought ahead of next month's call.

JC asked if anyone had strong thoughts re division sizes for next season, or news of any new teams / clubs coming into being.

TR noted that Oxford are planning to enter a second team in SEMLA next year.

JM suggested that odd-numbered divisions might be better if used in conjunction with SP's efforts at increasing the number of referees.

KB also suggested the odd-numbered division model, citing the "carrot" for reffing for another club on your "bye week", as referred to earlier.

[Peter Compton joined the call]

JC asked AA to speak regarding Welwyn's difficulties in fulfilling their remaining second- and third-team fixtures. AA described a problem in which the Welwyn second team was very low on numbers, but calling up third team players was seen as likely to dissuade their third team players from remaining in the sport (AA felt too many of them were simply not equipped to make the step up). AA asked the meeting for permission to concede some second team games but play third team games on the same weekend (currently prohibited under league rules).

PM asked if it was simply a case of needing to give Welwyn's third team players game experience suitable to their abilities in order to keep them interested. AA confirmed that this was the case, and spoke of his fear of the third team folding if they were forced to play in second-team fixtures before they were ready.

JC confirmed that if permission was given, only two game weekends would be affected because the end of the season is near.

TR noted that it was to Welwyn's credit that this request has been made formally and openly. If we don't want clubs to be sneaky about these scenarios, we must consider the impact that our decision here could have.

PC stated that Spencer wished to formally support Welwyn's request.

JM was wary of setting a precedent that could be abused in future seasons. JM asked if AA could provide full team lists, including player's names, to each of the opponents affected if this permission was granted. AA responded that he could, and was happy to do so.

The request made by Welwyn lacrosse club, namely to be permitted to concede two second-team fixtures whilst fielding a competitive team in third-team fixtures on the same game weekends, was put to the vote. The vote was unanimously in favour of granting the request. **AA to compile the team lists as described by JM, and provide them to Welwyn third team's opponents.**

Key dates: Final date for league games in EastOne and WestOne is 30th March 2014.

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13. RDO Report.

Nik Roberts absent. No report.

14. MPC Liaison Report.

Sam Spurrell absent. No report.

15. Any Other Business.

- a) County Tournament / SEMLA Sixes: Rob Collinge was absent, but this item was discussed as per his request.

PM volunteered to organise the County Tournament provided it could be held in May.

TR noted that Reading pitches might be available in May but he would have to check.

KB noted that Purley had made a request to host the tournament this year. JM confirmed this.

JM to check availability of Purley pitches during May, and to check dates of BNC to avoid a clash if possible. JM to liaise with PM re organisation of County Tournament

In light of the alterations to the County Tournament, the consensus view was that the Sixes should remain unchanged, so that the impact of the variations for the County Tournament could be seen. Therefore the Sixes will be hosted by Walcountian Blues as previously planned.

- b) SP noted that he had been approached by Sunbury Cricket Club, who are interested in expanding their club to include lacrosse.

16. Date and Time of Next Meeting. 7pm, Monday 7th April 2014

END