

Minutes of the SEMLA GCM Monday 3rd November 2014

Present:

Trevor Rogers	(TR)	President & Reading
John Maynard	(JM)	EVP, Disciplinary Chair & Purley
Jon Cooper	(JC)	Fixtures Secretary
Peter Mundy	(PM)	EVP & Croydon
Simon Peach	(SP)	South Referees Committee Chairman
Ray Wood	(RW)	Youth Chair
Dave Abini	(DA)	Birmingham
Kieran Balmer	(KB)	Secretary & Brighton

1. Apologies for Absence.

Miles Whittle (Bath), Danny Buckland (Epsom), Jon Bowles (Croydon), William Goldbourne (Warwick)

2. Extraordinary Meeting:

Due to administrative error this item could not be discussed – inadequate notice had been given. It was agreed to table the item for next month.

3. Acceptance of Minutes from the previous meeting.

Accepted, but noted that the minutes did not mention the temporary break in the call. It was requested that they be amended to do so. It was also requested that future minutes could include details relating to when people log in, if they join part-way through the meeting.

4. Matters arising not included in the Agenda.

None

5. President's Report

Nothing to report.

6. Treasurer's Report

MW absent, so KB delivered the report verbally.

Noted that SEMLA fee invoices have now been sent out. Five clubs have already paid.

Noted that late postponement of Junior flags had incurred a pitch hire fee of £206

Noted that an invoice for food from the Ibis club is expected in respect of the Brussels school visit on 26th October.

Noted that the ELA had not yet responded to an inquiry regarding this season's regional allocation payment.

Noted Natwest account balance of £3,450.51 and Scottish Widows balance of £1,432.57

PM asked if, given the balances in the association accounts, SEMLA could start contributing towards coaching costs for universities. DA suggested that hosting regional coaching clinics might be an alternative worth considering. JM noted that there was an equally valid argument for subsidising the referee courses instead, and TR agreed. SP noted that the ELA have confirmed that they treat the referee courses as an income stream, but have also indicated that they would listen to any proposal SEMLA wished to make regarding a bulk purchase. SP went on to suggest that we should try to set up two or three courses in the South, in order to get a large number of people qualified. TR suggested that if a reduced price could be agreed with the ELA, SEMLA could then offer to match funds for clubs willing to send people on the course.

7. Secretary's Report.

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KB reported verbally.

Noted a sharp drop in the number of player transfers compared to the same month last year, and also a similar drop in the number of U16 dispensation applications. KB asked the committee to consider whether this might be attributable to the loss of the online club membership lists, meaning there is no effective way to check that players are correctly registered and therefore players are no longer bothering with the appropriate forms.

TR noted that the only way to cross-check the membership database since the ELA changed it is to physically examine the hard copy which is emailed to him by the ELA – highly impractical.

8. Youth Development Committee's Report.

RW reported verbally.

Noted the Holder trophy was held on the second weekend of October at Spencer, in a 6-a-side format. There was a slight drop in participation compared to last year.

Noted the International School Brussels tour took place on the third weekend of October.

Thirty boys visited, playing Spencer on Saturday and then Reading School and a mixed south team on Sunday.

RW mentioned that some clubs appear to be struggling with Youth Development compared to previous years: Welwyn and Hitchin both mentioned. However RW noted that this must be considered alongside the fact that there are now two junior-only clubs in the South:

Portsmouth, and Croydon Foxes, both of whom are doing quite well. As always, the number of volunteers available is the sticking point.

Noted the U14 league will go ahead over the winter, in a 6-a-side format.

Noted the MPC plans to set up a five-strong national youth committee (two SEMLA, two NEMLA and one ELA member). The terms of reference are yet to be finalised, but a meeting is imminent.

Noted the ELA website has been updated to display details relating to the Roadshow, which showcases the Talent Pathway. Noted that there was no other announcement to alert anyone to this development. The itinerary includes Berkhamstead School on 4th November and Surrey Sports Park a week later.

JM noted that the ELA have previously been advised of the need for better communications, but this scenario suggests that the message has not been acted upon.

PM asked if it was intended that children would attend the Roadshow; TR noted that it appeared to be aimed more at teachers / coaches / managers. TR recalled it being mentioned on the ELA facebook page but has not seen it on the ELA twitter feed.

RW noted that the list of venues comprised of four girls' schools, one northern club, one midlands university and Surrey Sports Park.

TR noted that the person running the Talent Pathway (Jane Powell) had not made any contact with SEMLA.

JM noted that the focus appeared to be weighted in favour of girls' schools – given the game is already strong there, it seems as if the Roadshow plans had not been fully thought through.

RW noted that he has contacted both Croydon Foxes and Portsmouth with a view to providing exit pathways for their oldest players.

PM noted that Croydon Foxes had chosen to split off from Croydon seniors, possibly because the jump from Youth to East 1 lacrosse was seen as too high. Croydon would be grateful to have any of the graduating Foxes however.

JM also noted that Purley would happily provide second team opportunities for Croydon Youth players.

JOHN COOPER (JC) JOINED THE MEETING HERE

9. University Liaison Report.

No current officer, so no report.

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10. South Manager Report.

No report.

11. Disciplinary and Complaints Panel Report.

JM had nothing to report.

12. Referee Secretary Report.

SP reported verbally.

Noted there are still isolated incidents of panel referees being faced with having to officiate alone. The panel referees are in favour of measure to discourage further instances of this nature.

PM asked if the proposed new byelaw clause will address this problem; TR and SP confirmed that it would. It has been drafted as a black and white rule to specifically provide for such instances.

SP noted that there had been a lengthy discussion nationally regarding the official uniform colours for referees. SP has suggested to the R&R committee that if the new black uniform is to be used, then the old white one should be permitted as an alternative in the event of clash with one or other of the playing team uniforms.

JM noted that football referees appear to wear a different colour every week without complaint. TR observed that the solution seemed to be an obvious, commonsense one and somehow a lot of time and energy is being expended on this topic.

SP noted that only eight clubs have met the deadline for notifying him of their club referees. KB noted that precedent existed for docking league points where clubs fail to meet this requirement, and offered to send out a reminder to all clubs.

SP noted that he received an inquiry about the feasibility of appointing a neutral referee for the Blues v Hitchin game on 8th November, due to the suspended penalty in place from last season's fixture. SP felt it was unnecessary, and has assigned a panel ref as per usual.

SIMON PEACH (SP) LEFT THE MEETING HERE

13. Fixture Secretary Report.

Jon Cooper referred to his written report, circulated prior to the meeting.

Noted West 2 still only has six teams. JC asked for any ideas about how to improve things in the West divisions.

PM suggested combining West 1 and West 2. JC agreed that a ladder format would provide more games on paper, but feared that the long journeys required would see many of these games not played.

TR noted that Chris White has now transferred from Birmingham to East Grinstead, and travels from the Midlands to Sussex every week to play because the number of games cancelled in the West divisions is frustrating to him.

There then followed a general discussion, the summary of which was:

- Greater geographic spread in the West means that the average distance for an away game is substantially longer than in the East;
- most of the clubs withdrawing appear to be University clubs;
- many of those University clubs are still active in BUCS.
- lack of University funding for non-BUCS competition may be the barrier

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PM suggested that SEMLA could fund minibuses. TR pointed out that if this was popular with the Universities, it could quickly become unsustainable and possibly place SEMLA in funding jeopardy. KB suggested that SEMLA could offer to match funds raised by Universities towards minibus hire for SEMLA games – might stimulate some universities to partially-fund their teams on Saturdays and places less burden on SEMLA funds if popular.

JC agreed to contact the West 2 clubs who have dropped out to see if travel is the major issue and report back.

JC noted cancellations in East 3 had reached 40%. Purley A team appear to be struggling. JC reminded everyone of byelaw allowing teams to borrow two players from another club, with written permission of opponents (paragraph 7 [e]). The general consensus was that whenever clubs expand and start fielding a second (or third) team, some cancellations will be inevitable. No different to when a new club starts up, and if the game is to grow we must treat these cancellations sympathetically and offer support.

JC to circulate a reminder of rule 7[e] to the teams in East 3.

14. RDO Report.

DA reported verbally.

The ELA is restructuring the development jobs nationwide. South employees will discover the changes at meetings later this week, but it appears as if any job losses will be limited to the North

15. MPC Liaison Report.

No report.

TR noted that SEWLA have informed RW that they are withholding all monies, other than registration fees, due to a disagreement with the WPC over the budget. Details unclear at this time.

RW noted that SEWLA have arranged a meeting with Paul Coups on this subject.

16. Any Other Business.

Sixes Venues:

TR noted that Reading is still willing to host, but do not wish to be seen as hogging all the South events and would have no objection if another club wished to host.

PM noted Croydon has the necessary field space, but there may not be enough volunteers to actually run the event. Also, it would not be possible for Croydon to make a profit so the members of the Club are not unanimous in wanting to host.

TR noted that Reading could use either the Ibis or the Academy pitches, subject to date confirmation. However, the Academy is a council-owned facility with a strict no-alcohol policy.

17. Date and Time of Next Meeting: 7pm, Monday 1st December 2014 via conference call

END