

## **MINUTES – SEMLA General Committee Meeting**

***7pm Monday 7 November 2016***

**In attendance:** Trevor Rogers (TR), Peter Compton (PC), Ben Jessup (BJ), Miles Whittle (MW), Jon Cooper (JC), Ray Wood (RW), Peter Mundy (PM) & Peter Rawsthorne (PR).

### **1) Apologies for Absence**

Apologies received from: Rob Gooch, Alex Spearing, Jacqui Walton-Hicks, Joe Perkins, Tracy Woodall, Harry Collins, Nik Roberts & Gabbi Simmonds.

### **2) Acceptance of minutes**

Having recently taken over as SEMLA Secretary from Mick Chennell, BJ apologised for not circulating the minutes in advance of the meeting. As club representatives had not received the October GCM minutes, TR shared them verbally and they were subsequently approved by the meeting.

It was added that the minutes of the October meeting will be circulated with these minutes of the November meeting.

### **3) Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

### **4) President's Report**

TR provided a short overview of the progress of the Competitive Review of Men's Lacrosse in England, with discussion encouraged as part of agenda item 14.

### **5) Treasurer's Report**

MW updated the meeting as per his Treasurer's Report circulated prior to the meeting. The main task over the past month has been to circulate SEMLA fee invoices to all clubs and this has now been completed.

As agreed during the October meeting, a £50 sum has been donated to St Michael's Hospice following the recent death of Roger Okill. Account balances are healthy however, with just over £6,000 in SEMLA's current account and £1,450 in the League Association's Scottish Widows account.

### **6) Secretary's Report**

BJ informed the meeting that two U16 player dispensations had been received since the last meeting. These were for Daniel Williamson and Andrew Haines of Hitchin and Spencer respectively. Both requests have been approved by SEMLA and returned to the clubs as well as being circulated to English Lacrosse for their records.

BJ asked for patience in dealing with more complex enquiries whilst he familiarized himself with SEMLA's constitution and bye-laws.

### **7) Youth Development Committee's Report**

RW shared how Spencer recently held their 6-a-side Holder Trophy event for junior programs, with 3 SEMLA clubs represented (Foxes, Portsmouth Pythons & Spencer) alongside one school from the Reading area. Pythons won on the day whilst RW reiterated that Foxes are struggling with numbers.

RW continued to inform the meeting that the national academy has stalled, and whilst the SEMLA academy has been closed, with PC leading the program, it has become the Spencer academy. Clubs should however note that the academy is open to all, not just Spencer players. The academy had a session last Sunday and also has an upcoming fixture against Cheadle.

Oxford & Guildford have established junior programs, whilst Welwyn are also making steps to try and make progress with creating one. PM raised concern regarding the increased price of lacrosse helmets and how the cost was becoming prohibitive. RW identified that there might be potential for applications for funding from SEMLA or Centurions for the purchase of equipment to support their development.

RW informed the meeting that he had investigated the potential of game days to support the completion of junior fixtures and that the first two such Days had been organized for 20 November and 4 December, at Pythons and Spencer respectively. RW continued to detail that he has proposed to Helen Murray that SEMLA engage junior programs in the South-West via potential game days at Westonbirt School in Gloucestershire, where the South-West Women's League currently complete some fixtures.

MW shared further details from within his Treasurer's Report regarding budget from the National Lacrosse Committee to invest in youth development, and PM reminded the meeting that Centurions will continue to support junior programs with the meeting thanking them for their continued generosity. BJ informed the group that Sport England have recently released a schedule for their new funding pots, with more information available [here](#) and RW reiterated the need for a plan for any funding, with TR reminding the meeting of the need for SEMLA to spend the budget provided by the NLC.

PM also queried the potential for SEMLA to look to schools to engage young people across the South of England in lacrosse and how this could support the development of existing junior programs.

**ACTION** – TR & BJ to liaise with Nik Roberts, Gabbi Simmonds & Russell Farrer regarding employing university clubs to engage schools in introducing lacrosse to their students.

#### **8) University Liaison Report**

It was noted that the new University Liaison Officer is Russell Farrer, with no further update for the meeting.

#### **9) South Manager's Report**

TR explained how the dispute with suppliers regarding the provision of the South representative squad's kit remained ongoing, with a further update to be provided at the next meeting.

#### **10) Disciplinary & Complaints Panel's Report**

BJ shared the content of the report received prior to the meeting with the only incident recorded for the month from the Purley v Buckhurst Hill fixture on 29 October. Please see the report circulated prior to the meeting for further details.

#### **11) Referees Secretary's Report**

There was no update for the meeting.

#### **12) Fixture Secretary's Report**

JC expressed his thanks to those who have submitted fixture results in a timely fashion since the start of the season. It was noted that there has been a few issues with Flags fixtures, with teams not submitting scores and then opposition teams in the next round not knowing where they were having to travel to the next weekend and JC also identified that there had been a number of fixtures conceded in the West Ladder.

There was some discussion around the potential for a Midlands league, with JC sharing feedback from Rob Gooch regarding Milton Keynes' support for the concept.

PM also informed the meeting that there was a very real possibility that Croydon Lacrosse Club might have to close down in the near future. The club is really struggling with player numbers at the moment, and so their team has had to concede the majority of fixtures so far this season.

PM continued to identify how there are a number of clubs short on players at present with Spencer & Hillcroft being the two clubs with significant squad depth throughout their multiple squads. It was proposed that Spencer & Hillcroft close their doors to any additional player recruitment, but it was agreed that it would better to tackle the recruitment and retention issue at the heart of the problem. BJ informed the meeting that the Rugby Football Union have recently investigated retention of university players, and offered to share the survey with SEMLA.

PR also suggested that there might be scope for a 'player pool' to be created within SEMLA. It was acknowledged that this would have repercussions around player eligibility, but it was agreed that it could have potential with social media identified as a proposed mechanism to facilitate such a program.

**ACTION** – BJ to discuss with Russell Farrer regarding potential universities to link Croydon with as an additional recruitment stream.

**ACTION** – BJ to circulate the RFU's retention survey to TR, PM and Centurions.

**ACTION** – PR to consider the potential for a ‘player pool’ and what the resulting eligibility implications might mean.

### **13) RDO Report**

TR reminded the meeting that the English Lacrosse Association has recently launched their online officiating courses for level 1 qualifications for both men’s and women’s lacrosse. Visit the [ELA website](#) for further details.

### **14) NLC Liaison Report**

PR informed the meeting that there had been very little activity since the previous SEMLA meeting, but that progress had been made with the creation of a SEMLA Development Plan and the establishment of a December tournament running on the weekends of 10/11 & 17/18 December.

PC shared how he had an email from Martin Cragg of the ELA regarding the Winter Classic event in December and how the ELA are looking for the 100 best English players to participate in the tournament across the two weekends. TR gave some additional context regarding the event and how it has arisen out of the ELA’s Competitive Review of the Men’s game in England and the meeting agreed that the decision making process surrounding the agreement of a date for this event, and the subsequent communication of this, had been poorly carried out by the ELA. BJ commented how the Review was seeking to be progressive, but the meeting agreed that the ELA’s transparency is a recurring issue.

JC emphasised that it should be up to the club whether they allow their players to participate in the event, with existing bye-laws meaning that SEMLA can not enforce any rearrangement of fixtures for clubs. PC identified that Spencer players might well be interested in attending.

**ACTION** – TR to call Mark Coups to discuss the Winter Classic.

### **15) Summer League**

BJ provided a brief update received from Henning Schmidt prior to the meeting, confirming that there will be Summer League happening in summer 2017, with the team also looking at putting on other events. There will be a further update shared at the next meeting on 5 December.

### **16) Any Other Business**

There were no AOBs raised.

**Please note that the date and time of the next meeting is Monday 5 December at 7pm.**