

Minutes – SEMLA General Committee Meeting

7pm Monday 8 January 2018

In attendance: Trevor Rogers (TR), John Maynard (JM), Peter Compton (PC), Ben Jessup (BJ), Peter Rawsthorne (PR), Nik Roberts (NR), Peter Mundy (PM), Tracy Woodall (TW), Bob Sharples (BS), Antony Thornton (AT), Rob Gooch (RG), Dale Claxton (DC), Tom Clohessy (TC), Elliot Day (ED), James Lucas (JL), Aaron Day (AD), Kyle McHugh (KH)

1) Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from: Miles Whittle (MW), David Brucie Morris (DBM), Ray Wood (RW), Dennis Tobin (DT), Jacqui Hicks (JH), Tom Paton (TP), Ben Thompson (BT)

2) Acceptance of minutes

The meeting noted that Casey Hughes' transfer from Hitchin to Welwyn had been recorded incorrectly within the Secretary's Report, and should be revised. There were no other objections to the December minutes and, pending the above revision, they were passed by the meeting.

3) Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4) President's Report

There was no report for the meeting.

5) Treasurer's Report

BJ read out MW's written report, following its circulation with all other papers ahead of the meeting. TR went on to share the background to Bluesfest referee training and reiterated the value of this for the development of officials across the South.

6) Secretary's Report

There was no report for the meeting.

7) Youth Development Committee's Report

TW shared a verbal report in RW's absence.

Following the cancellation of the Oxford game day due to snow, the next game day is scheduled for 28 January in Portsmouth, with U12, U14 and U16 fixtures planned at present. The intent moving forwards is to schedule a junior game day on the last Sunday of every month.

PC also shared that a junior tournament is being held in Brussels on 20/21 April, with intent to take an U18 South representative squad to compete.

8) University Liaison Report

There was no report for the meeting.

9) South Manager's Report

There was no report for the meeting from Rob Clark (RC), but TR informed the meeting that RC has confirmed with the organisers of the Nick Kehoe Trophy that there will not be a South Development squad entered into the 2018 tournament.

10) Disciplinary & Complaints Panel's Report

JM shared some background on the expulsion foul referenced within his report, and clarified that the player in

question had not received a disciplinary sanction because his apology was deemed profuse and genuine by the match official.

11) Referees Secretary's Report

There was no report for the meeting.

12) Fixture Secretary's Report

BJ shared a verbal report from DBM in his absence.

DBM has contacted multiple venues to enquire about hiring facilities for the Flags Finals, to be held on 14 April. His intent has been to select venues with easy access of J15 of the M25. A number of those approached have been disregarded due to inappropriate facilities, but DBM will be ranking remaining options based upon facility quality, future partnership strategy and costs.

DBM has also proposed a formal SEMLA Awards ceremony with a guest speaker, three-course meal, and awards for winners of the respective league and flag competitions, each league's MVP (following a shortlist being published in advance), Centurion Award and Stan Smith Award presentations, and a new annual award to highlight commitment to SEMLA's outreach and excellence. It is proposed that the evening is held at a private venue in Surrey or Berkshire, with good access to a train station with good links to Reading, Victoria or Paddington with a maximum cost of £55 per head. The late May bank holiday or first Saturday in June are being considered as appropriate weekends for such an event.

DBM also reminded all members that he needs many more submissions for the 2018/2019 season SEMLA calendar, and asked that all clubs send high-quality photos and/or links to semla.fixtures@southlacrosse.org.uk.

DBM reported that responses to SEMLA's Winter Classic questionnaire published before Christmas were good. There was 33 responses in total, with a full questionnaire summary to follow.

DBM will also be publishing a questionnaire on the league restructure plans in the coming weeks to gain feedback on how plans might meet or not meet expectations or requirements for all clubs and all players. Feedback will then be shared in a future GCM, but it will be vital that the questionnaire sees a large number of responses.

With regards to SEMLA fixture activity in December, DBM reported that SEMLA had two teams withdraw from SEMLA for the remainder of the year – Bournemouth and Walcountian Blues 2s. 20 fixtures out of 43 across December were also rearranged or conceded, with many teams having used up their spare rearrangement weekends – a cause for concern at this stage of the season.

RG queried if Chichester had withdrawn from SEMLA. TR shared that he had not been able to contact the club, but that Luke Wylie had advised that they were not wanting to travel – AT offered to help SEMLA make formal communication with the club.

TR invited comments from the meeting regarding the SEMLA Awards proposal, and there was general agreement, but with concerns shared around the cost and accessibility of the venue. It was recognised that it would be more likely to have clubs attend where one of their members were nominated for an award, and also proposed that a reduced cost per head be offered for a table of 10 as opposed to individual ticket purchases. There was also discussion about the opportunity to attach such an event to the Flags Final, or similarly to directly tout it as a fundraising event.

13) Development Officer Report

NR reported that there have been a couple of queries around loaning out the club starter sets, and that he has drafted a budget request for development including coaching bursaries, and the introduction of a base grant system – more information will follow in the coming months.

NR continued to share that there he has received no further comments regarding the Junior Development Plan.

14) NLC Liaison Report

PR shared that he had limited activity to report, but asked that all members send through any comments regarding the draft agenda for the National Lacrosse Committee's February meeting.

15) Junior Development Plan

This agenda item was picked up within the Development Officer report above.

16) LDO

BJ reminded the meeting of the context of this discussion, with English Lacrosse (EL) having reacquired endorsement rights from UK Visas & Immigration. NR informed the meeting that EL is seeking to be the conduit to help recruit LDOs, but not acting as previous. Clubs will be responsible for the LDOs, with EL able to endorse applications, but not sponsor them directly.

PC queried that he understood the roles were meant to be more Head Coach roles, rather than historic interpretations of the role of LDOs. The meeting asked that PR query this with NLC at their February meeting to get more understanding.

17) League Restructure Proposals

The meeting noted that two proposals had been circulated with the agenda and other papers for the meeting.

NR introduced proposal 2, explaining the intent for the mix of local leagues and South-wide programmes alike to solve multiple challenges. RG responded, sharing his confusion that there was a degree of difference between NR's verbal report and the paper circulated.

BJ informed the meeting that DBM intends to create a questionnaire to capture formal comments and that SEMLA would then look to pull together a sub-committee following the collation of all comments in spring 2018.

PC commented that there might be potential for a change of language to 'divisions' and 'conferences' to differentiate between local and South-wide leagues. BS went on to suggest that game weekends like those deployed in the women's South-West leagues, and TR commented that these had been successful in Europe.

DH suggested that SEMLA also built in a squad limit, similar to the North. TR responded that this had been done previously to drive new team entries, but that it had in fact left clubs losing players.

18) Any Other Business

BJ shared an update from JH on the Wales' Men's Lacrosse squad, with players from South-based clubs making up the majority of those selected across the World Championship squad and Dragons squad alike.

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