

**WELSH ATHLETICS ROAD/CROSS COUNTRY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2020 AT J43 HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS SWANSEA**

**ACTION**

**PRESENT: -**

Liz Davies, Alex Donald, Graham Finlayson, Nikki Haines, Chris Jones, Steve Jones, Sharon Leech, Kevin Tobin

**APOLOGIES : -**

Martin Green, Peter Sowerby

**PRESENTATION BY LIZ DAVIES**

Liz presented the development pathway for endurance:

- A slide was shown outlining the performance and coaching team
- Chris explained that there's a performance sub- group, so that the coaching team are accountable for their decisions. People sit on the sub-group from outside of WA and from a variety of backgrounds, including an athlete representative (ex-athlete)
- National talent development coordinators are in charge of specific event disciplines. Areas which are a focus include low retention rate at U20 (especially female athletes), underdeveloped events such as walks and steeple, a lack of consistent performances at senior level and a lack of progress in U15 to senior in females
- Clubs and schools feed into the support pathway, which advances from the regional development programme, to national development, to Welsh futures, to Commonwealth Games programme and potential
- Another major focus is to avoid specialisation too early in development at a junior level, clubs are encouraged to offer a multi-sport approach. The aim is that more U20/U23 athletes will be competitive at the English Champs and be selected for GB junior teams
- Regional training programme is aimed at 2<sup>nd</sup> year U15 to U20 athletes, three or four days per year and a few hub training sessions, bringing coaches together with athletes to learn from each other. Each of the four regions have a lead coach and three support coaches
- National development programme is aimed at U17 and U20 athletes, invite based on standards, 3 days per year
- Futures programme is for U20 and U23, standards for this are based on tolerance tables worked back from CWG A standard. These athletes are offered physio and access to training camps
- CWG or CWG potential level athletes, based on CWG standards, offered medical and physio support as well as support for training camps
- Chris explained that the CWG standards are out of WA control, they must adhere to tracker set by CWG committee and standards are tough, getting closer to Olympic standards. Some athletes may aim for European competitions as standards could be less tough. Numbers per event for the Birmingham games are also dictated by CWG and so in some events some Welsh athletes may miss out even if they reach the A standard

- Chris mentioned Performance Hub Structure, which includes medical support as well as coaching, with James Thie involved at Cardiff Met and the hope is that Swansea Uni will also be a hub, however there's a delay on those plans at present

**MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST MEETING (ref. 27<sup>th</sup> NOV 2019)**

- Leeds Abbey Dash – it's recommended that regions do encourage athletes to compete and more importantly that there's parity among regions as to how much financial support to offer. It's the responsibility of regional reps at the meeting to take this back to their Regions. We cannot enforce an amount, we can only suggest
- HCI 2021 AD and JW still to confirm dates, see correspondence
- SJ to contact Parkrun – not done as yet
- Road Championships out for Tender in Sept 2020 ready for new season 2021
- Video link to be used for selection meetings – used for Armagh, successful
- HCI & Celtic Nations Cross Country 11<sup>th</sup> January 2020, Stirling Scotland (U17, U20, Senior) plus senior schools team. Some concern as teams not full, information not passed down that athletes had pulled out until later
- Armagh Road 3K and 5K 13 February 2020 (development and senior) – teams competed successfully with many pb performances
- Barcelona Half Marathon 16<sup>th</sup> February 2020 (seniors) – athletes competed successfully again with pb performances
- Team management roles and responsibilities, LD to generate a template

Regional  
reps

JW/WA/A  
SJ

WA

**CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

- Very sad news from North Wales and the passing of David Alun Williams. A lovely eulogy was written by Bob Frost
- Paul Brooks contacted SL about team composition for the Whitchurch 5K. SL explained there will be a Welsh team but no formal regional teams, although the North welcome to send a team so put PB in touch with Marcel of Cardiff 5K and GF
- JB fwd an email from Nick Griffiths re the Masters Marathon Champs, held within Snowdon Marathon in October. Entry system has been by ballot, 'many male and female athletes who have very good times or have podium finishes in the WA age categories within the last few years have not been successful in the entry ballot, as it stands many age group athletes will not be able to take part'. Issue raised about the appropriateness of Welsh athletes being unable to enter the Welsh Championships. SL sent to Tom Marley to query, who raised with JW. Extra spaces made available, TM to liaise with SM, however this raises question that next year an alternative race may need to be looked at. SL also mentioned to AD. GF felt that this marathon may not be suitable as a Championship course due to the off road and hilly nature, however due to the timing of this it's suited to many athletes, with no Welsh alternatives in October. In April athletes encouraged to compete at Welsh Championships held within London Marathon
- GF received email from Keith Brackstone that NI, the North, South-West and the Midlands wish to send Junior as well as Senior teams to Whitchurch 5K. GF

LD

suggests Wales do the same: senior and junior team. Committee agree that a Welsh U20 team would be a good idea, perhaps in future we could use this race as a development opportunity instead of Armagh, however this is for discussion again. LD mentioned that U20 already have many opportunities and cost implications are such that perhaps this is not needed, also may struggle to fill the female team based on standards. CJ suggest that Regions send a team, however Committee agree that a Welsh junior team is sent, with no travel/ accommodation costs covered as there's no budget for this as an unexpected event. LD to create policy and expressions of interest put on WA social media. In 2021 there's a possibility that the Whitchurch 5K will also have a mile or 3K option. TBC

- Email from Arwel Lewis that he and Mike Robbins happy to TM the Anglo Celtic Plate 100Km at Boddington. 5 M/F in a team, three to score. He's confident of having three men, may struggle with three women. Arwel asks for expressions of interest to be put on the website (now done). Arwel has emailed team selections to Rhiannon, one more team spot available for M and F, following the Barry 40mile race
- SL emailed JW re clash of Welsh XC Champs and North Wales 10mile road champs. JW raised with NW Region. SL contacted MG who suggested clash unavoidable as the only 10mile race in North, next year two 10 mile races
- Email received from JW and circulated to committee, regarding various issues. Firstly the difficulties experienced organising teams' logistics, secondly the equalisation of distances in cross country – a survey will be conducted among athletes, thirdly WA propose hosting SIAB 2021-2 and HCI 2022-3 to spread costs. Committee to confirm agreement (or not) of third point. Logistics is to be reviewed internally, CJ confirmed that it's being addressed. Equalisation of distances at cross country to be discussed among club athletes via a survey. GL and UKA have recently conducted a similar survey. Celtic/ HCI: NI to be asked to host Celtic and HCI in 2021. HCI want the competition in February, SJ arguing that SIAB also need to move to February and this is to be discussed at a SIAB meeting. It's unfortunate that now the HCI and SIAB will not be held within the same meeting, having worked hard to have both competitions combined
- SL also queried re Cardiff Half and Cardiff X dates, JW confirmed that they would still be in October, dates governed by TV and UKA respectively
- Email received from PB questioning date of Welsh Road Relays and stating that North Wales Road Relays have been scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> September 2020. SL asked JW for update on Welsh RR. AD happy that NW Road Relays are on this date as the Welsh Road Relays are hoped for 12<sup>th</sup> September. This is not confirmed as yet, as need to check with Pembrey.
- Email received from Kay Chapman (TM Stirling) and Carwyn Jones (TM Barcelona) regarding shortcomings in pre event organisation/ logistics. NH (TM Stirling) also voiced her concerns at shortcomings at Stirling. Issues addressed internally, as per point above re logistics
- Email received from TM re Welsh 10K series. Proposed events are: Newport 10k – 19<sup>th</sup> April, Caerphilly 10k – 17<sup>th</sup> May, Run Fest 10k – Rhyl – 21<sup>st</sup> June, Cardiff 10K – 6<sup>th</sup> September, Swansea 10K – 20<sup>th</sup> September. Welshpool 10k showed interest to be a series race, however as it's their first year and it clashes with the Welsh

**TM/AD**

**LD/WA  
social  
media**

**WA**

10k Championships it was felt that this wouldn't be suitable. It could be a good one for future years. Chris Yorke put a few forward including the Run Fest above, Flintshire 10k on 18<sup>th</sup> October which was used last year, and Bangor 10k on 4<sup>th</sup> October which clashes with Cardiff Half and Welsh Champs. It was felt that the Run Fest would be best with the time of year and nice to finish with the Swansea 10k where many of the likely winners will be racing. These races to be confirmed. Further discussion among committee raised the issue that there are too many 10K series in Wales. Committee suggest that there should be one series over a variety of distances and spread across Wales, which could include distances from 1mile to half marathon. This would offer more opportunity for more athletes to compete well and be more interesting as a whole. AD to take back to WA to discuss

WA

### **2019/20 ROAD & CROSS COUNTRY COMPETITIONS PROGRAMME**

Domestic fixtures:

- Welsh Cross Country Championships, Pembrey, Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2020 (selection event for mini-marathon first 6 past post in U13, U15, U17)
- Welsh Schools March 11<sup>th</sup> 2020, Brecon (selection for Cross Country race and for the mixed relay)
- Welsh 10K Champs, Cardiff Bay March 29<sup>th</sup> 2020
- Welsh Marathon Champs 26<sup>th</sup> April 2020, London
- Welsh Half Marathon Champs Cardiff 4<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Representative fixtures:

- SIAB XC 21<sup>st</sup> March Falkirk (mixed relays 4x1500m at U15 and U17)
- Mini-Marathon London 26<sup>th</sup> April 2020
- Welsh 5K Champs, Whitchurch Cardiff Sat 9<sup>th</sup> May 2020
- Anglo Celtic Plate 100Km, Boddington, Sat 16<sup>th</sup> May 2020
- Masters International Cross Country, 15<sup>th</sup> November 2020, Dublin

### **SCHOOLS**

- SIAB selections for both mixed relays and the traditional cross country races will be based on Welsh Schools Cross Country results, as well as track/road performances for those selected for the mixed relay. Policy states that all must however race at Brecon to be eligible. LD stated that there must be a clear policy on the website to clarify selection procedure. SJ confirmed this is the case

### **TEAM SELECTION AND MANAGEMENT**

- Whitchurch 5K to be selected, as per policy. According to the website, expressions of interest for this race were to be made by 13<sup>th</sup> December. [https://www.welshathletics.org/image/Documents/Selection%20Policies/Selection-Policy\\_Road\\_2019-20.pdf](https://www.welshathletics.org/image/Documents/Selection%20Policies/Selection-Policy_Road_2019-20.pdf) This needs updating and expressions of interest advertised, to include a junior team. Again, according to the website, the selection meeting is due to take place on April 3rd

LD

**AOB**

- AD confirmed that Welsh Cross is to go ahead Saturday despite the weather. Will only be cancelled if Park decide to do so, Park are confident that there will be no need to close, but are due to do a further inspection before Saturday. However there may be a need to alter the course so that runners are not near trees. Tents may not be erected nor barriers used. The marquee of mayhem will be up as this is put up by a professional company who will take responsibility of the safety of the tent. The shape of the marquee may alter slightly to suit the weather conditions
- SJ mentioned a possible issue with Brecon course for Welsh schools, as one field is holding water. Derek Price to look at an alternative if the water does not recede

**DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

- Wed 25 March 2020, 6.30pm, Holiday Inn Express Swansea East SA10 6GZ

**AD/SJ/DP**