



**Cymdeithas Rhwyfo Mor Cymru
Welsh Sea Rowing Association
Executive Meeting Minutes
9th April 2016**

Members Present

Andrew Richards (*Assistant to Committee*), **Wisemans**, Chris Terry, Nicola Thomas, **Towy**, Jane Norris-Hill, Jane O'Connor, **Aberaeron**, Sue Edwards, Janet Holmes, Phil Edwards, **Neyland**, Innes Heron, Dave Reynolds (*Webmaster*), Sarah Reynolds, **Borth**, Paul Parsons, Tina Parsons (*Secretary*), **Ynys Mon**, Betsan O'Connor, Rhian Evans, Carol Davies (*Chair*), **Llangrannog**, Samantha English, **Aberporth**, Elin Powell, Bethan Jones, **Caernarfon**, Mandy Griffiths, Rick Mabey, **Fishguard** Tony Peters (*Health & Safety*), Paul Fisher, **Barry**, Karl Webber, Mark Eagle, **PYC**, Pippa Owen, Jill Gloster (*CPO*), Richard Gloster, **Porthmadog**, Roy English, Tim Knowles, **Beumaris**, Tina Gorringer, **Llangwm**, John Eddington, **Aberdyfi**, Mike Miles, **Solva**, Wendy Price-Jones (*Membership Secretary*), Nigel Bowen, **New Quay**, Chris Haines, **Aberystwyth**

Apologies

Danielle Milliner (Publicity) Conwy, Mumbles, Cardigan, Shropshire, Llanberis, Tenby, Jan Millward (Llangwm).

Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes were agreed to be a correct reflection of proceedings.
No matters arising.

Affiliation Handbook

It had been agreed in the Jan 16 Executive Meeting that a handbook would be produced and sent to clubs on Affiliation each year.

The WSRA Secretary proposed that this idea was scrapped, as the information being included in the handbook was a duplication of the information already available on the WSRA website, which even if individuals didn't have computer access, most now have smart phones and can easily access this information. The information on the website is quite fluid and documents are updated as and when required, whereas an affiliation document is only correct on the day it is sent out. If this information is then printed, it leads to an error trap where old versions of documents may be used or referred to which may have been superseded.

The Secretary asked whether it would help for a form to be sent out to each club instead, which they could sign onto to state that they had read the information on the website, and also offered to list the entire website documents in a table on the form if that helped.

It was felt by all present that a handbook was not required, nor was a form. Clubs should take responsibility to read this information to ensure they are acting in a correct and safe manner for their own benefit. The website is a valuable resource available to all clubs and when they affiliate, they should take the time to familiarise themselves with its content, not just use it to check the league tables.

Action: WSRA Secretary to cancel the production of the Affiliation Handbook.

Club Championship and Club Shield Points System

The following points system was proposed and agreed in the January 2016 Exec. Meeting:

- Club championships become a two tier competition:
 - WSRA Cup (North, South, Joint) *
 - WSRA Shield (North, South, Joint)
- For each regatta, a clubs best two results from each race category (Seniors, Ladies, Mixed & Juniors) count toward to WSRA cup
- All other results go towards the WSRA shield

* From here onward WSRA Cup will be referred to as the WSRA Championship as reflected on the website.

It was proposed by PYC that rather than the top two team results going into the WSRA Championship, with all other points going to the Shield, that this was amended so that only the points achieved by the first team from each club across the line should be entered into the WSRA Championship, otherwise the larger clubs would still always be at an advantage. Limiting this to one team would make the WSRA Championship a truer reflection of the best performing teams, based on ability rather than size.

Lengthy discussions took place and there was much confusion over how this system will work. Roy E stated that the logic was to encourage as many boats as possible to enter each race. It was mentioned that it makes it fairer to put across one boat only, as some clubs have 'made up' crews in order to participate in events, and have also used novices in proper crews just to make up race boats, rather than running them as a novice crew, so they can accrue points towards the league results.

It was clarified that the 'top performing crew' from each category, i.e. Men's/Ladies/Mixed (not the sub categories of) from each club would be entered into the Club Championship. All other crews from each club, entered in Men/Ladies/Mixed excluding the 'top performing crews' would be entered into the WSRA Shield.

PYC proposal to use the 'top boat' only in the WSRA Championship – Agreed by all.

The inclusion of junior results in the Championship and Shield were then discussed. It was felt that the junior results could easily raise the total points and skew the results, possibly in the favour of the larger clubs who may have more junior members. There are so few clubs with junior racing crews that their competition was limited, therefore almost guaranteeing 30 points, when in fairness they might be the only crew registered for that particular age group etc.

It was suggested by Nigel B that there was a separate league for the juniors, however, after discussion it was felt that junior crews already receive a certificate for each race, plus the individual race trophies and the end of season trophies, which with so few crews competing were already providing enough recognition and encouragement for them to continue with their rowing, another set of trophies would just be too much.

Proposal to remove the junior results from the Championship and the Shield – Agreed by all.

Action: Dave R (Webmaster) to amend league race table on the website.

Surf Rowing

Betsan O presented; as they have recently purchased a surf rowing boat at Crannog Rowing Club she asked if anyone had any experience or knowledge that they would be able to pass on. It was mentioned that Newport has one and competes in it regularly, so they may be a good club to speak with, also Borth has one and Dave R was happy to advise where possible, it was thought that Tenby might also have one.

The question was asked whether they were insured through WSRA and part of the league, it was stated that you have to join the GB Surf Rowing League to be able to compete. #Andrew R confirmed that the liability insurance and personal accident cover from Perkins Slade does in fact cover WSRA affiliated members for practice/training in the surf boats, subject to the relevant risk assessments being provided to the safety officer of the WSRA. However, those same members would not be covered for races in the UK surf rowing league as these are not associated WSRA races.

The Towergate insurance will also cover the boats and associated equipment, which includes European cover. But the clubs would have to approach Andrew to get quotes on the additional premiums required for this cover to extend to the surf boats, trailers and oars. At present only Newport Rowing Club have insurance for their surf boat and associated equipment#.

Information revised post meeting by Andrew R.

It was also mentioned that Newport are arranging some safety training on use of these boats, but ultimately clubs must use their own judgement when they decide on suitable conditions to go out in. The WSRA do not have any Safety guidelines on this.

Insurance and Race Day Safety Cover

Insurance: Synopsis presented by Andrew R (Assistant to WSRA Committee). The Insurance Policies currently provides combined liability, covering the WSRA, affiliated clubs, members and regattas, together with members personal accident cover. A separate marine policy is also provided for insurance on boats and associated equipment, which currently only includes oars and lifejackets. However, not all clubs currently utilise this policy and have chosen their own insurances, which may have limitations, e.g. lack of cover abroad (i.e. Ireland).

Insurance premiums will be increasing in 2016, as last year's Insurance Premium Tax (IPT) was 6% but in the summer budget this rate was increased to 9.5% effective from 1st November 2015.

WSRA liability insurance includes league races and non league races.

Perkins Slade Insurance Policy provides the following:

Hiscox - £7,600 combined liability covering the association, affiliated clubs/members and regattas.

Ace - £2,439 – Affiliated WSRA member's personal accident liability.

Combined liability: Public liability - £5,000,000

Personal Accident: covers members from age 3 to 80, although policy benefits are reduced for members with broken bones who are aged 65 or over, and most other benefits are reduced for members aged 70 or over.

Andrew stated that some members have become 80 or over this year, so they have signed disclaimers to say they are not covered for personal insurance, only liability.

The Towergate Insurance Policy is a marine policy and cannot insure buildings and sheds as these are not classed as equipment associated with boats. Andrew noted that this policy differs to others as it has a claims franchise rather than an excess. This means that if damage occurs

that is valued at less than £250 to repair then a claim cannot be made, however, if the repair is over £250 then the insurer will pay the full cost and no excess/deductions have to be paid. This franchise does have exceptions, details of which can be found in the policy.

Nigel B asked everyone to be very wary of the towage weight on their vehicles, for insurance purposes a loaded trailer should not be more than 750kg, so it is well worth people going to a weigh bridge with their loaded trailers to check on this, as some trailers are heavier than others and you may find you're over the legal limit.

It was stated that you must be an affiliated member to be covered by the insurance for towing, but also the impact on you as a tower is that only the boat and the trailer are covered by the WSRA, the towing vehicle and the driver are insured under your personal insurance only.

Race Day Safety Cover: It is stated as a recommendation in the WSRA Guidance on Organising and Events and the WSRA Racing Rules that each safety boat is to be coxed by a person coxed to RYA Power Boat level 2 or equivalent, with a ratio of 1 safety boat to every 6 rowing boats. It was queried as to whether the safety boat ratio was just a recommendation, or was it a rule, as it is very difficult for some clubs to arrange safety boat cover and even more complex if the safety boat has to have a qualified cox, and this may result in financial implications for the clubs as they may have to hire safety boats rather than rely on good will.

However, Andrew R checked the 2016 insurance document endorsement and it clearly stated that "the insurance will not in any event make any payment; where at the time of the incident that led to the claim any mechanically propelled watercraft is in the charge or control of any person who does not hold an applicable RLSS UK Powerboat or RYA equivalent qualification or where you would be entitled to be paid under any marine insurance policy covering watercraft if this policy did not exist".

It also clearly stated that the Safety Boat should have a qualified cox as a minimum with possible additional crew to assist where possible.

Given this, it is imperative that we adhere to the rules, it is not sufficient for a verbal confirmation that an individual has their RYA Power Boat level 2 qualification and our club Safety Officers should ask to see proof of the certification prior to the event.

The ratio of 1 safety boat to every 6 rowing boats has not been dictated by the insurance company, this guideline was put in place by the WSRA, so there may be some flexibility on this, but not on the 3 safety boats as a minimum. If safety boat cover was reduced on the day of the race unexpectedly, which took the safety boat cover down to less than 3, then the race should be cancelled.

The WSRA has a good relationship with the insurers and in return they trust us to manage our regattas in a safe manner. Nigel B reassured that in 21 years there had been no incidents as a result of race day cover.

Action: All clubs to ensure they adhere to the safety boat cover rules when organising their home events, and check certification.

Review of WSRA Constitution

Richard G proposed that it was appropriate to update and review the WSRA organisations constitution, his initial thoughts were that there were a few areas requiring change, such as: the size of the Committee; the purpose of WSRA; and, representation on the WSRA Committee. He felt that this list would not be exhaustive, and suggested that it would be difficult to make decisions if put it out the whole WSRA Executive Committee in a meeting, as there were so many members and decisions being made would be difficult, therefore, he proposed that a small "task and finish group" conduct the review, and that he would be prepared to lead it. He

asked that the WSRA Secretary send an email to all clubs, to ask for volunteers to join the group with the objective of preparing a report and proposals for consideration by the existing Executive Committee, and then presentation to members at next year's AGM in January 2017.

Proposal to update the constitution – Agreed by All.

Action: WSRA Secretary to send email asking for volunteers to assist in the task and finish group, and also to ask all clubs to read the WSRA constitution and make any recommendations for changes which can be fed back to the task group.

Welfare

Jill G (CPO) stated that she needs 2 people in mid Wales to volunteer to do DBS checking, she asked all those present to pass on the message to their club members after the meeting, to ask if anyone might be interested, and to see Jill for further details if they were. DBS checking is still done under WCBA, but may be moving over to the Sports Council for Wales in the near future. Every club must have DBS registered members if they have juniors or vulnerable adults, it was mentioned that two separate DBS checks may be required to cover both these categories.

There is now an on-line reaffirming process for those with DBS clearance, which if you go online and use it, would negate the need for reregistering every year and could be done at three yearly intervals instead.

Nicola T agreed to become one of the mid Wales representatives.

Action: All clubs to ask their members if they might be interested in providing mid-Wales support.

Any Other Business (AOB)

- Affiliation: Wendy P (Membership Secretary) reminded clubs that until the cheque is with her clubs are not affiliated and not insured to row. She has also had some problems opening various attachments.

It was mentioned that the Club Risk Assessment Checklist, as sent out with all the Affiliation documentation did not work for the users as cells would overlap. The WSRA Secretary was already aware of this problem and will be rebuilding it before next season.

Action: WSRA Secretary to rebuild the form.

- Yole Rowing: Chris T informed all present that Towy would be holding some open days on yole rowing if anyone was interested. Further information would follow and could be circulated via the WSRA Secretary.
- Amendment of WSRA Racing Rules: Roy E felt that the WSRA Racing Rules needed some improvement; he stated that it was not clear as to what was a rule, what was guidance or what was a definition, as these were all blocked together, and he felt they needed to be presented in a more segregated and official manner. Also he believed that the rules needed to be more comprehensive, to include more clarification on race scenarios, rights of way, overtaking boats, converging boats etc.

It was agreed that although the rules may need revisiting and possible re-work, that they should not be too prescriptive, otherwise we may regiment ourselves too tightly and make it too difficult to be compliant with our own rules.

As Roy was very clear on the changes he had in mind, it was agreed that he should put down his proposals and re-write the document as he saw fit. This would then need to be circulated to all clubs via the WSRA Secretary prior to the next Executive meeting, and discussed as an agenda item at that meeting.

Action: Roy E to amend the WSRA Racing Rules

Action: WSRA Secretary to circulate the proposed changes and include on the next executive Agenda.

- British Rowing Coaching Courses: Richard G brought it to the attention of those present that there is a free Level 3 course available this year through Welsh Rowing for anyone who has already achieved their UKCC Level 2 Rowing Coach Qualification to progress to become a coach educator. The course is a 1st4sport Level 3 Award in Delivering Learning (ADL), and once individuals have taken this course they need to attend a 1 day rowing specific course with British Rowing. Richard provided the WSRA Secretary with a copy of the information.

Historically there had been a block on having tutors for fixed seat rowing, but consultation had been taking place with Helen Tan and Laura Kentfield from Welsh Rowing to change this, and they had now agreed to having more tutors, they will be arranging a 2 day course at some point hopefully in the near future. Dates and venue to be confirmed.

Nigel B suggested that the WSRA Chair and Secretary discuss this with David Thompson as he had years of experience in this field.

Richard also mentioned that there were free Level 2 coaching courses available through Skerries 4 Schools (S4S), he had been notified of this via the Great River Race Team. Courses would be held down in Richmond, therefore not local, however, the free courses received would normally cost £600 per person, so were worth considering.

Action: WSRA Secretary to circulate the information on both Level 2 and Level 3 courses to all clubs so they can take advantage of this opportunity if desired.

Date of Next Meeting

To be confirmed in due course.