

Roadhoggs Committee Meeting

24 March 2015, L.C.C.C

1. **Present:** Dan Bannantyne, Mal Blyth, Jackie Brown, Keith Dakin, Alison Lodwick, Dave Lodwick, Steve Martin, Colin Smith, Sid Smith, John Stew, Dave Swan, Kim Richardson, Barry Waterfield
2. **Apologies:** Ron Atton, Barbara Hermann, Lucy McMillan, Mark Ramsden
3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2014:** AGREED.
4. **Matters arising from the minutes not appearing elsewhere on the agenda:**

Branded hi-vis tabards were ordered and looked very good when worn by the officials and marshalls at the Bradgate XC and Kibworth LRRL races. A request to purchase a further 10 was approved, subject to the necessary funds being available.

5. Frequency and format of meetings:

- i. Dave L observed that a three meeting per year cycle had meant that the timing of committee meetings was not always appropriate to deal with all the business at hand, particularly when the club is organising races. He proposed, therefore, that the committee meet every two months. The proposal was AGREED.
- ii. Dave L proposed that for an experimental period, the number of standing agenda items should be reduced to:
 - Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting
 - Matters arising from the minutes
 - Finances (including any proposed major expenditure)
 - AOB

During this period, a draft agenda would be circulated well in advance of the meeting, together with an invitation for committee members to propose additional items for discussion. Specifically, the details of any proposals involving major expenditure should be included in the agenda circulated in advance of the meeting, not raised at the meeting under AOB. The proposals were AGREED.

6. Kibworth and Bradgate wash-ups:

- i. Kibworth
 - Dave S observed that there had been one notable omission from Dave L's post-race "thank you" email – Dave L himself – and he wished to place on record the Club's thanks for his efforts in the run-up to the race (including undertaking the risk assessment and securing the race permit). The Committee wished to place on record their thanks to Dave S and Colin for acting as Race Directors.
 - Reflecting on the race on the day, the redesigned start/finish worked well and were well-received by the Race Referee and Event Adjudicator (although "wrangling" the runners would be easier with rope rather than tape)

- There had been a great response from members to oversee car parking and, whilst the car parks filled up quickly, there didn't appear to have been any major problems, despite a larger than usual field of runners.
- Dave S had fewer marshals at his disposal than he would have liked, due to no-shows of volunteers and the traffic management requirements. This meant that adequate marshalling at certain parts of the course (in particular, the closing stages of the race through Smeeton Westerby) was only achieved by co-opting a member who had intended to run, the wife of another member who had come to spectate and a member of another club. The committee observed that there had been no adverse feedback from the runners regarding marshalling and the shortage of marshals did not appear to have affected the safe running of the race. However, a number of suggestions were made for the future, including:
 - advance designation of marshals to marshalling points;
 - the appointment of deputies/reserves for each marshalling point;
 - greater preparedness to call on members to marshal rather than run.
- One part of the course (from the top of Gumley Hill down into the approach to Smeeton Westerby) was problematic, as runners did not comply with the instructions to stay on the left hand side of the road until after the canal bridge. Two options were proposed, for further consideration next time the Club organises the race:
 - Re-evaluate the risk at that point, with a view to allowing runners to move to the right-hand side of the road before the canal bridge
 - Enforce running on the left until after the canal bridge through more robust marshalling.
- It was noted that Fleckney & Kibworth had undertaken to organise the race in 2016. Dave L expressed the hope that, between now and 2017, when the Club are next due to organise the race, a Race Manual could be assembled, to capture the collective experience of all those involved.

ii. Bradgate

- The event was a great success, with more than 600 runners (a Derby Runner League record)
 - There was a great deal of positive PR for the Club, particularly on social media, and some fantastic photographs were posted on the web.
- The course was very tough (more akin to a fell race) but very popular with the runners.
- Car parking was a major problem – we simply weren't adequately prepared to cope with 400 cars. Some residents of Newtown Linford were extremely upset by inconsiderate (and, in some cases, illegal) parking.
- Despite the car parking problems, the Park Manager was delighted and is keen for the event to be staged again.
 - Kim advised the committee that exclusive use of the Old John car park (with access to plentiful nearby on-street parking), combined with robustly enforced parking restrictions (for example, multiple occupancy or tent carriers only) would address the parking issues.
 - The meeting discussed possible timings of a Derby Runner League race next season. It was noted that snow would require cancellation of the race (due to safety and parking issues) and that, therefore, the race would have to be timed for either November 2015 or March 2016. Kim reported that the March 2016 date had already been claimed by Hermitage. Whilst organising three meetings in one

calendar year would be a challenge for the Club, the consensus was that the necessary volunteers could be found to support a November date.

- Subject to (i) the Park management agreeing to us having exclusive use of the Old John car park, and (ii) a race date in November being approved by the delegates' meeting, it was AGREED that we would volunteer to organise a Derby Runner League race at Bradgate Park.

7. Finances:

Colin reported that the Club's balance at the bank was extremely strong: £4459.65. However, he explained that this was an inflated figure, as the vast majority of membership subs had been received but anticipated major outgoings (including affiliation fees for England Athletics and ARC) had not yet been paid. The new on-line payment facility via PayPal had proved extremely popular and instrumental in securing early payment of subscriptions. After all anticipated outgoings, a working balance of around £3000 was expected. This was a healthy figure, reflecting (i) income from the Kibworth and Bradgate races and (ii) increased membership.

It was noted that dual affiliation (to EA and ARC) incurred the club in additional cost, with affiliation fees for EA in the region of £800 and for ARC around £100, and there was a discussion of the respective benefits of EA and ARC affiliation:

- ARC affiliation provides insurance cover for training session led by "experienced" runners whilst EA requires sessions to be led by trained Run Leaders. At present, the Club cannot guarantee that sufficient trained Run Leaders will be available for every training session, whereas there are always experienced runners available to lead pace groups.
- On the other hand, EA race insurance is tried and tested – legal representation will be provided in the event of a claim going to court.
- High levels of dual affiliation encourages EA to listen to the views of running clubs. It is a commonly-held belief amongst clubs that without ARC, endurance running would figure even less in EA's thinking than it does at the moment.
- It was AGREED to continue with dual affiliation.

8. Beginner Running:

Alison reported that 10 individuals participated in the Run England sponsored beginner's running course staged at Manor Road in the autumn of 2014, with about half that number attending the parallel course staged at University Road. Of the Manor Road cohort, six attended more than one session and, of those, three have continued to run with the Roadhogs and the other three are known to have continued running as a self-supporting group. Of the University Road cohort, one has continued to run with the Roadhogs.

Whilst the courses achieved the Run England objective of encouraging more people to take up running, they were labour-intensive to support. For a small club, such as Roadhogs with limited coaching capacity, a structured course is not an appropriate model for supporting novice runners. Since January 2015, therefore, we have been offering support to novice and improving runners on a one-to-one basis, with three individuals taking up the offer so far. One benefit of this approach is that we attract people who already run, but simply lack confidence.

We have also formalised provision for “improvers” (particularly the graduates of the Run England sessions) and runners coming back from injury by introducing an “Intermediate” group as part of the main Wednesday training offering, running 4/5 miles at a somewhat slower pace than the main group. This ensures that developing runners are supported appropriately and don’t feel that they expected to run further or faster than they want to.

Dave L proposed that Alison’s role in supporting novice and improving runners be formalised with the title “Beginner Running Co-ordinator”. This was AGREED.

9. Social/non-competing membership:

Alison observed that, at least initially, improving runners lack the confidence to contemplate participating in races and that, therefore, the majority of the benefits associated with club membership are seen to have little or no value. She proposed that a Social Membership subscription be introduced, applicable to non-racing members (including those members with long term injuries which prevent them from racing). This was AGREED, at a rate of £15 per year.

9. Coaching and athlete development

- i. The Club’s trained Run Leaders (Alison; Dan Bann; Dave L; John S and Steve R) had met recently to discuss the Club’s training offering and a coaching strategy. It was noted that, whilst it isn’t the Roadhogg way to “ram coaching down people’s throats” there was a need for more coaching capacity, particularly to advise the better runners. Not only would this be a benefit that we could offer the faster runners but should also contribute to a reduction in injuries and improved team performance. John S is around half-way through the coaching course and has already provided individual training programmes for members preparing for marathons. The group proposed that the Club fund the training of two more Run Leaders as coaches. This would be a significant investment (the discounted price of each course is £250) but would enable to Club to provide individualised coaching plans for every member that wanted one. The consensus of the meeting was that it was necessary to make the investment in order for the Club to move forward and that it would be good to have coaches with a range of age, ability and personality. It was AGREED that two of the existing Run Leaders should supported in upgrading to Coach.
- ii. The meeting was advised that the Network funds coached club-sharing sessions, including one on video analysis of running styles (which can be helpful in injury prevention as well as performance improvement). It was AGREED that, if there is sufficient interest, a room should be booked at Manor Road for a video analysis session.

10. Summer training

- i. The committee supported the continuation of the current summer training pattern, with Wednesday training alternating between Manor Road and a location in the county.
- ii. Dave L advised the meeting that he is developing 4/5 mile options for all the existing summer routes, although noted that some off-road running would be necessary. For some routes, he was also looking at longer options, to challenge the faster runners, and he is also developing “wet weather substitutes” for those away-day routes which are difficult to run if the ground is very wet.

- iii. Dave L advised the meeting that the number of away-day candidate venues exceeds the number of available slots by some margin. He was delegated to decide the itinerary, which will begin on 8 April 2015 (Baker's Arms in Blaby).

11. Marketing

Dave L advised that he planned to revisit the Club's marketing strategy, drawing on Natasha's expertise, but noted that a significant gap is the lack of suitable photos. We would need a much improved stock of images, including team shots before races, training nights away from Manor Road and social events.

12. AOB

- i. Livingstone Relays, 3 May 2015
Dave L is on the organising committee for the event. He will include a reminder in the next round-robin email, but team composition will be left to the team captains.
- ii. Social events
Keith thanked Dan for continuing to provide cover as Social Secretary in recent months. He has now taken up the reins once more and hopes to have at least one social event each month. The next event will be a curry night on 4 April 2015, with a skittles evening and quiz night to follow.
- iii. Round Leicester Relay
It was confirmed that it is unlikely that the event will be staged again, at least in its most recent incarnation. No one had volunteered to take over the organisation and it the enormous amount of paramedic cover required means that it is not commercially viable for a professional event organiser to take on.
- iv. Team Captain Titles
The proposal to have Men's and Women's Team Captains, with Kim styled as Cross-Country Coordinator/Manager was not accepted. The following were AGREED:

Kim: Men's Cross-Country Captain and Cross-Country General Manager
Mark R: Men's Road Running Captain
Jackie: Ladies Cross-Country Captain and Ladies Road Running Captain
- v. Contact details
Members to be reminded to update the Membership Secretary of any change of details (address, phone number, email address, and so on). In this regard, it was noted that an omission from our current records is next of kin/emergency contact and the membership form would be amended to enable that information to be collected.

13. Date of next meeting

Tuesday, 2 June 2015 at L.C.C.C.