

## Minutes of Track & Field Committee Meeting

### Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2023 via Teams Conference Call



WELSH ATHLETICS  
ATHLETAU CYMRU

#### 1. Apologies

John Elward, Sue Hooper, Chris Type, Neil Taylor

#### Present

Lynne Brier (LB - Secretary), Joyce Tomala (JT – Chairperson / East Wales), Lynette Harries (LyH – co-opted member), Dai Williams (DW – Welsh Schools), Alan Currie (AC – Officials / Records / Championship Best Performances), Alex Donald (AD – Welsh Athletics), Crispin Backsall (CB – North Wales), Darran Williams (DW – Welsh Athletics), Lee Hayward (LH – South Wales), Steve Hames (SH – West Wales), Zoe Brown (ZB – Welsh Athletics).

#### 2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No declarations of conflict of interest expressed.

#### 3. WA Updates:

##### a. Competition Update (AD)

##### i. Indoor dates 2023/2024

AD provided the following provisional dates:

- ✓ Welsh Athletics / Welsh Schools Combined Events Championships - Sunday, November 5<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ Cardiff Met v Birmingham match - Wednesday November 29<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ SIAB Combined Events International - Saturday December 2<sup>nd</sup>
- ✓ Junior Indoor Open (Day 1) - Sunday December 3<sup>rd</sup>
- ✓ Christmas Classic - Sunday December 17<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ Junior Indoor Open including 1k walk (Day 2) - Sunday January 7<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ New Year Grand Prix - Sunday January 21<sup>st</sup>
- ✓ Welsh Senior / U15 Championships, including walks - Saturday January 27<sup>th</sup> / Sunday January 28<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ Welsh U13 / U17 / U20 Championships, including walks - Saturday February 3<sup>rd</sup> / Sunday February 4<sup>th</sup>

AD confirmed that the dates submitted by Cardiff Met are still provisional dates and it has been agreed that the SIAB Combined International on December 2<sup>nd</sup> will be hosted by Cardiff Met in Cardiff Met.

AD provided the following key dates:

- ✓ London Indoor Games - Saturday February 3<sup>rd</sup> / Sunday February 4<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ England Age Group Championships - Saturday February 10<sup>th</sup> / Sunday February 11<sup>th</sup>

- ✓ UK Indoor Championships - Saturday February 17th / Sunday February 18<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ BUCS Indoor Championships - Saturday February 24th / Sunday February 25th

**ii. Provisional Key Dates for Outdoor Fixtures 2024**

AD then went on to share the 2024 outdoor dates:

- ✓ BUCS Championships - 3<sup>rd</sup> / 4<sup>th</sup> / 5<sup>th</sup> May
- ✓ Welsh Athletics Regional Championships – 11<sup>th</sup> / 12<sup>th</sup> May
- ✓ Loughborough International – Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May
- ✓ Highgate night of 10,000 PBs, including UK Championships – Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> May
- ✓ Welsh Athletics U15 / Senior Championships, including Invitational for u18's – 15<sup>th</sup> / 16<sup>th</sup> June
- ✓ UKA Championships – 29<sup>th</sup> / 30<sup>th</sup> June
- ✓ Welsh Schools Championships – Saturday July 6<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ NASUWT Cup and Plate – Wednesday July 17<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ SIAB International (Carmarthen) – Saturday July 27<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ Welsh Athletics U13 / U17 / U20 Championships 10<sup>th</sup> / 11<sup>th</sup> August
- ✓ Welsh Athletics Under 20 International – August 17th

The date of the SIAB international has been changed from July 20<sup>th</sup> to July 27<sup>th</sup> to avoid a clash of dates with another major championship involving junior athletes.

**iii. Inter-Regional T & F Championships 2024**

JT confirmed that North Wales was due to host the Inter Regional Championships for 2024. JT also reminded the committee that a review meeting to discuss the outdoor 2023 championships was necessary, involving all four regions to provide feedback on the format of the 2023 championship, suitability of the date and ongoing concerns surrounding lack of officials. All four regional representatives agreed with Wednesday September 13<sup>th</sup>. This meeting is to be held on Teams at 6pm. Lynette Harries agreed to be the independent chairperson for this meeting, with Joyce Tomala taking the minutes. The committee all confirmed that a representative from each of the four regions would be present at the meeting.

**iv. Event Specific Meetings**

JT expressed concerns about lack of qualified volunteer officials in the events specific meetings this year, specifically the event that took place on June 10<sup>th</sup>. Several other committee members, who are also qualified officials, expressed concerns about too many unqualified volunteers filling in for qualified volunteer officials, leading to health and safety concerns and complaints from the officials who were

present in the matches. There were also concerns around late requests for qualified officials at event specific matches. AD agreed that there had been some issues with event specific competitions this year and some of the meetings had to be cancelled. AD said that issues were mainly down to a congested timetable, which resulted in officials being overused.

DW also added that they were sometimes late looking for additional officials because they were late being told that they had to add additional events into scheduled matches by the performance team. DW disagreed that unqualified volunteers were being relied upon for field events and said that the officials were mainly qualified on the field. Issues highlighted need to be monitored.

AD confirmed that the performance team would be meeting to address concerns, with a view to making necessary changes to these events and that Welsh Athletics would also be looking at making changes to the way that individuals can qualify as Level 1 officials, in an attempt to attract and retain more officials and encourage them to continue on their journey as fully qualified officials.

AC suggested that evening meetings were possibly more difficult to attract officials because travelling to evening fixtures was more difficult. AC also pointed out that retaining the interest of officials seemed to be proving more difficult than it has been in the past, where there were many more competitions, yet many more officials.

v. **Welsh Junior League Competitions**

AD gave the following overview:

Clubs had been mainly supportive about hosting these leagues themselves, with just one more match to go. Unfortunately, the structure had broken down in North Wales after the first match. AD also said that there had been discussions around competitions for Under 11 athletes and this would be looked at in more depth in a debrief meeting planned for September (date not yet confirmed), with discussions about whether Under 11s would remain in the junior league or have a separate league of their own, such as tri-club competitions, with clubs again being more self-sufficient in organising these matches.

SH pointed out that West Wales started planning their junior league matches this time last year and kept the discussions ongoing throughout the year. This led ultimately to the success of the league, with all events being used as development days to attract and train some new officials.

DW pointed out that it was an issue that some clubs didn't want to take the lead and were still over-reliant on Welsh Athletics to organise and lead on these matches. Concerns were expressed that not all regions had access to fully compliant venues as readily as West Wales. It was suggested that clubs could host their home matches at other venues instead of their own stadium if this was the case.

It was agreed that it was now down to the clubs to decide on how to move forward with this league, rather than rely on Welsh Athletics, who were still offering a lot of support in some regions. A de-brief meeting will take place in September.

**b. Welsh Para Results Report (NT)**

A report on para results, compiled by Neil Taylor, was circulated by prior to the meeting.

JT asked where we could access results and rankings for para athletes, as not all results and rankings are recorded in the extended rankings section on Power of 10.

**Action** Lynne Brier to investigate where we can we find information about the rankings for para athletes. Is it just on Power of 10 or is there a more extensive list of rankings elsewhere?

**4. DISCUSSION**

**a. Health and Safety Issue at Welsh Schools Cup and Plate Final, Aberdare 12<sup>th</sup> July**

JT read out a report that was sent to her from the field referee at the Cup and Plate Final. The report was discussed at great length and the report will go back to Welsh Athletics.

Issues highlighted by the Field Referee included:

- Only two other qualified field judges on the day for long throws.
- The discus would be thrown in the outside field in a "safety" section that had been taped off by red and white plastic warning tape. WA personnel, accepted field referees concern several teachers were trying to if not succeeded in coercing them into allowing the discus to take place with a couple of teachers saying, "that this was the way it was done at schools because no school had a throwing cage". Field referee made the point that that was perhaps their practice and that in those circumstance the head teacher would be accepting the Vicarious Liability should an incident or injury occur but at this meeting they were not going to do so. WA staff were advised that what the teachers wished to do outside of the competition was entirely up to them. Stressing that there will not be any involvement of WA officials not even in preparing or taking the equipment to the

sector. The teachers accepted this and conducted the competition under their own volition. Field referee aggrieved at results being published online. JT suggested that maybe this had been a misconception as Opentrack results are live. DW stated that results were not published on Po10.

- Questions were asked why Welsh Athletics had licenced the event with the limited amount of officials available. DW replied that licencing was done at the beginning of the season.
- AD said that it had been safely cordoned off with the markers being much further away than the athletes were capable of throwing. JT had received a photograph of the discus taking place outside of the stadium. Concern was expressed that the event had taken place in a public park.

AD outlined notification of UKA condemnation of the cage at Aberdare. LyH agreed that the throws events shouldn't have gone ahead and expressed concern about health and safety issues in general. The consensus of opinion from members present was that concerns are that the teachers were persuasive to allow the event to go ahead. Schools must operate under healthy and safety rules and that similar situations should not be allowed to go ahead in the future.

- b. Date for Outdoor 2023 Review  
Four members – Joyce, Darran, Sue and Alex, date tbc.
- c. Date for Inter-Regional Championships Review agreed 13<sup>th</sup> September.
- d. **ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING – not already covered:**
  - i. **Action:** RH/DW to meet with LH (South Wales) to discuss and work through current event organisation guidance.  
This meeting did not take place in an official capacity, although several discussions have taken place and they now feel that there is no need for this meeting to take place, with LH feeling more confident moving forward.
  - ii. **Action:** It was agreed that a working party would be put together to discuss a set of possible standards at future championships for senior and Under 20 athletes. CT will consider which staff member will be most suitable to participate in this working party. *JT reported that CP Action - DW will come up with a set of standards at the end of this season and bring his suggestions back to this committee.*

## 5. REPORTS:

- a. Welsh Schools (AJ)  
DW (reporting in AJ's absence) said that all events took place during the course of the year, SIAB was the best that they have had in a long time, with a good medal haul, Welsh Schools went well.  
**Action** – Lynne to ask AJ for his report.

b. Regional Issues

**North**

Hopefully Deeside will be back in action by next year, but Colwyn Bay will not be ready until the end of next season and throws will not be able to happen because of pitch in centre.

CB gave details on the number of athletes competing in North Wales events.

**South**

South Wales throws will be cancelled until the facility improves.

**East**

JT facilities – Brecon and Blaenau Gwent dug up for resurfacing work, Cwmbran is not fit for purpose for competition as infield cannot be used and track surface is deteriorating. Junior Champs at Newport this weekend. State of Newport facility was not good the site needs to be cleaner and tidier. AD said that it had improved a lot – seats cleaned etc.

**West**

Regional development day planned on same day as indoor champs and keen that clashes don't happen again.

13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Jan or 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> Jan

c. **Officials Committee (AC)**

AC no issues to raise.

JT asked that AC reported back to officials committee that there were concerns about lack of officials at many events this year.

**6. Any Other Business.**

CB thank representatives from the other regions for helping with North Wales duties at the Inter-Regional Championships.

AC – will produce up to date records for 2023 outdoor season at the next meeting.

Zoe Brown – query from coach – are we going to start recognising Under 15 triple jump performances? AC said that he would look into this. Full discussion once we have the information at the next meeting.

a. **Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday October 11<sup>th</sup> 2023

b. **Dates of Future Meetings:**

- i. Wednesday December 6<sup>th</sup> 2023  
(all meetings commence @ 6pm)