

**WELSH ATHLETICS ROAD/CROSS COUNTRY COMMITTEE
2023/2024 SEASON**

MINUTES TEAMS MEETING WED 17th JANUARY 2024 5.15PM

ATTENDEES: -

Alex Donald, Alaw Evans, Graham Finlayson, Sharon Leech, Steve Mitchell, Kevin Tobin

APOLOGIES : - Martin Green, Steve Jones, Derek Osborne

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None

ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING (15th NOVEMBER 2023)

- List published of athletes supported on WA programme
- *AD to put expressions of interest on website for the 10K Welsh Champs (2 year contract) and the 10K series (1 year contract)*
See below discussions
- *Welsh Inter Schools/ Inter Regional Cross Country Championships Dolerw Park feedback:* the event saw a lot more from the North and a few more from the East attend this year, although the total number was down ever so slightly. Welsh Schools are keen to return to Dolerw. One potential issue with site, so if we do return will need to address. It was seen as a good course from a spectator perspective. Discussion with regard to the 2024 IR/IS will take place at a future Committee meeting
- *Athletes selected for European XC 10th Dec Brussels:* Moli Lyons U20s
- *European Clubs Cross Country 25th February 2024 Albufeira, Portugal.* Confirmed that Swansea (men) and Les Croupiers (women) will attend. The Clubs will cover additional costs (only accommodation for three team members covered by the event), with a contribution from WA
- Selection meeting for HCI XC was held on 20th December and for the Armagh 5K/3K on 3rd January

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- SL attended the GC meeting on 22nd November, some points which were relevant to the Road/Cross Committee were as follows: 1) the East region raised the question about there being too long a gap between the Senior women and men's

races at the IS/IR XC Champs at Newtown. SL stated that she thought it worked well, that the Senior women 'tested' the course for the juniors and that it would be impossible to have the Senior men in the middle of the programme as it would take too long plus the course would be too churned up after it. Rob Champion of the West agreed. SL agreed to take it to the Committee for discussion 2) the East suggested that each Committee submit a report prior to each GC meeting. SL stated that each committee submits minutes, which can be read prior to the meeting 3) the East brought up the fact that the process of becoming an official/ coach takes too long and needs looking at. It needs to bear in mind that people are volunteering their time and simply don't have enough time, also very often the volunteer mentors don't have enough time to complete the paperwork required to enable officials/ coaches to become officially qualified. Further to SL circulating minutes of GC meeting, SJ suggested that Regional eligibility be linked to the Club, to make boundaries easier. SL informed GC of SJ suggestion. GC committee felt this would be complicated, they are suggesting that JW meets with the Regional leads to 'map' out the regions so that there's no ambiguity for Inter Regional event selection

- SL also attended the GC meeting on 10th January. The North Region requested that we discuss in this meeting the Inter-Regional 10K for 2024. It was hosted by Helena Tipping (Wrexham) in 2023 and was felt to be a successful event and so Regions are keen for it to continue. AD stated that he will contact the Regions as they need to select a race, as they did last year. AD will also remind the regions that it wasn't well attended in 2023, possibly due to the location
- GF would like to propose that a Welsh team be included in the Cardiff 5K at Whitchurch, which will host an inter-area match. SM stated that we cannot put a Welsh team in a Welsh Championship race. GF suggests that perhaps next year the Whitchurch 5K is not a Welsh Championship race. GF would like to see a Welsh representative team as there will be a regional English and Irish team in the race. KT suggests SM take it back to CT for discussion, with the suggestion of including an U20 team in the future
- Further to the selection meeting on 3rd January (attended by SM, KT, MG, SL, apologies from SJ, AE), SM reported back to CT as there was some debate on 2 athletes, CT sent an email to confirm his team selections. He also added: *Having received feedback from Steve regarding some of the discussions*

that occurred around selection. I would like to just pick up on the committees need to work within the terms of reference of the group. Steve holds the responsibility to provide the performance information for objective discussion. The aim of this is to avoid subjective or inappropriate subjects being discussed that may influencing selection decisions. Please be mindful of this in future selection meetings. The role of the committee carries a large responsibility within this area, and I look forward to continuing to work with you all into 2024.

The topic of team selection was discussed at the GC meeting with some questions raised across the disciplines. SM has now revised the selection policy for both the above races further to the selection meetings. It is an athlete's responsibility to read the selection policies carefully. Some of the senior athletes we have don't wish to represent Wales at some distances as their focus is another distance. This needs to be respected. The representative opportunities should be aimed at developing athletes.

Performance team will initially select potential team athletes, however for those who wish to be considered but may not have raced during the time window mentioned in the policy, or may not have done the suggested races, then they will need to email SM. SM also suggests looking at an athlete's career trajectory, so if there are two athletes who are similar in terms of performance, choose the athlete whose career is most likely to continue to improve.

SM, although he's now modified the selection policies, will not publish these modified versions. He will however bear the changes in mind for next year. AE stated that having the chance to have automatic selection (using Cardiff and Liverpool XC as 'trial' races for example) seems fair and stated that the selection policies seemed to be an improvement and were clearer. She also liked the fact that it was open to athletes who have not had the chance to attend the 'trial' races, albeit it is their responsibility to contact SM to indicate their interest.

With regard to a selection meeting, KT suggested that a nominated member of the Committee attend the selection meetings with the Performance Team and that this person would be able to make an input. The nominated member would not necessarily be the same each time but would need to provide considered input taking account of any selection policies. Failing this, then the Performance Team can select the team and take sole responsibility. 1st option

was the preferred one. AE suggested the whole Committee is involved prior to the meeting and send their selections to SM. KT suggested all take time to think about it and email SM if we have further suggestions.

SM asked the Committee whether they'd be happy for the upcoming selection policies to be updated. Committee agreed, SL suggested that if they are updated, athletes be made aware

DISCUSSIONS

- Welsh Championship and Welsh Series Races: 10K Championship race (2 year contract 2024 and 2025): Interest received from: ABP Newport 10K April, Brisco Gorseinon 10K May, Helena Tipping 10K Wrexham, Admiral Swansea Bay 10K September, Richard Burton 10K November
Welsh 10K Series (1 year contract 2024): Interest received from: ABP Newport 10K April, Caerphilly 10K May, Brisco Gorseinon 10K May, Helena Tipping 10K Wrexham, Porthcawl 10K July, Cardiff 10K September, Admiral Swansea Bay 10K September, Richard Burton 10K November
KT suggested having a different Welsh Championships 10K for seniors and the Vets, AD had mentioned this to Bernie Jones, but he stated use the same race
Committee suggested Swansea 10K as the Welsh Championship race and Newport, Caerphilly, Helena Tipping, Cardiff and Richard Burton as the five Welsh 10K Series races.
AD to notify race organisers and inform Committee if there are any issues
- It's been confirmed that the Glynneath 5mile race did not meet the criteria set by UKA for Dewi Griffiths' time to be recognised as an official British record

FIXTURES

DOMESTIC

- Welsh Cross Country Championships Brecon Sat 17th February 2024
- UK CAU Champs and Cross Challenge Final XC Prestwold Hall Loughborough
- *ERRA National 12 & 6 Stage Road Relay Championships Sutton Park Birmingham 6th April*

- London Marathon (inc Welsh Marathon Championships) 21st April London

REPRESENTATIVE

- Home Countries International 20th January 2024 Parliament Hill London (inc World Trials) (Senior and U20, also U17 – but not an international at U17 age group, part of X Challenge)
- Armagh 5K/ 3K Thursday February 8th 2024 (Senior)
- European Clubs Cross Country 25th February 2024 Albufeira, Portugal (Swansea men, Les Croupiers women)
- Trafford 10K 3rd March 2024 development team (one M & F U23/ U20 team)
- Walks event March 2024
- Valencia Marathon Dec 2024

SCHOOLS

- Welsh Schools Cross Country Championships Brecon, Wednesday 28th February 2024
- SIAB Santry Dublin, 23rd March 2024
- WSAA Mini Marathon London April 2024

PERFORMANCE

- The programmes are underway, the first NDP has taken place, some athletes are attending a warm weather training camp over the Easter weekend

AOB

- none

DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

- Wednesday 20th March 2024 5.15pm. Microsoft Teams invite will be sent to members for a virtual meeting, minutes will be available on WA website (emailed to eleanor.cartlidge@welshathletics.org and media@welshathletics.org) and emailed to members