

NATIONAL JUNIOR ATHLETIC LEAGUE

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT ALEXANDER
STADIUM, BIRMINGHAM ON SATURDAY 11th NOVEMBER 2006

PRESENT: Management Committee. Margaret Grayston (Chairman); Wendy Daniel (Secretary); Grace Hall (Treasurer); Barry Holmes (Midland Representative); Frank Gorman (Midland Representative); Stuart Hall (Northern Representative); Christopher Betts (Northern Representative); Gerald Alterman (Southern Representative). (8)

Midland Region David Billiard (Birchfield Harriers); Keith Weetman (Border Olympians); Michael Perkins (Rushcliffe A.C.); Marg Cherrington (Tipton Harriers); Marian Williams (West Wales). (5) 5 clubs

Northern Region Eddie & Jill Gore (Cheshire Tigers); Doug Gunstone (Kingdom Athletics); James Taylor, (Kingdom Athletics); John Lunn (Leeds City A.C.); Alistair Atkin (Leeds City A.C.); Phil Thomas (St.Helens Sutton A.C.); Jack Frost (Sale Harriers); Moira McGuire (Team Edinburgh); Andy Ward (Tees Valley Tigers); Alan Johnson (Trafford A.C.); Mary Johnson (Trafford A.C.). (12) 8 clubs

Southern Region Bernard Wells (Bedford & County); Alan Sutton (Enfield & Haringey A.C.); Stuart Broadhead (Herts Phoenix A.C); Tony Cheatham (Ipswich Harriers); Mike Oakley (Ipswich Harriers); Geoff Morphitis (Shaftesbury Barnet Harriers); Bryan Goodman (WSEH A.C); Jean Burgess (WG/EL); Jan Holst (WG/EL). (9) 7 clubs Total – 33 20 clubs

The Chairman asked the meeting if there were any present that did not want the meeting to be recorded by Dictaphone. After assurances to David Billiard that the tapes would not be kept, permission was given.

The Chairman welcomed Cherry Alexander from UK Athletics to the meeting.

A minutes silence was held in memory of Frank Starkie.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Sam Cruchley (Halesowen A. & C.C.); Dick Taylor (Coventry Godiva Harriers); Stan Roberts (Liverpool Harriers); Justine Payne (Notts A.C.); Jim Harris (Trafford A.C.); Diane Radcliffe (Dacorum & Tring A.C.); Jackie Tobin (Basingstoke & Mid Hants A.C.); Hilary Nash (Bristol & West A.C.); Tony Benton (Havering Mayesbrook A.C.); John Smith (Thames Valley Harriers); Graham Howell (Yate & District A.C.); Mark Hookway (Tonbridge A.C.); Barbara Shepherd (Dudley & Stourbridge Harriers); Kabir Kemp (London Heathside A.C.); Tony Shaw (Herts Phoenix A.C.); David Rice (Herts Phoenix A.C.); Sharon Herbert (WG/EL); Frank Jackson (Bedford & County A.C.); Pat Ratcliffe (Bedford & County A.C.); Barry Ferguson (Cambridge Harriers); Sandra Garner (Rugby & Northampton A.C.).

2. **MINUTES OF THE 2005 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.** David Billiard asked why the composition of the paper match for the Final was altered from the decision that was made at the AGM. The General Secretary explained why it had happened and also explained that it was a unique set of circumstances. The Chairman apologised for any constitutional mistake the Management Committee had made.

David Billiard also requested that the minutes of any Management Committee meetings would, in future, be circulated to member clubs. This request was not discussed by the AGM.

The acceptance of the minutes was then proposed by Frank Gorman and seconded by Stuart Hall.

The proposal was carried with 24 votes for, 1 against and 2 abstentions.

The Chairman duly signed the minutes

3. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2006.** SEE END OF MINUTES

4. **FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

4.1. Consideration of the accounts for the year ended 30th September 2006

The Treasurer pointed out to the meeting that the accounts had now been audited.

Phil Thomas asked the treasurer whether the £2500 for the administrator meant that the administration job was now a full time position that would now be advertised, as happens for the UKAYAL administration.

Geoff Morphitis requested that, prior to any individual questions, the Treasurer gave the background to the funding by UKA. :-

The Treasurer explained that after the AGM last year the General Secretary was finding the increasing workload difficult to cope with so, without her knowledge, the Treasurer initially asked UKA for a grant to pay her. She also requested a grant to enable the League to pay travelling expenses to the Scottish clubs who are the worst hit in our league. Many months elapsed before she was informed that yes, a grant would be forthcoming. The amount received was way above her expectations and the amount was to be spent under 3 specific headings: -

1. Administration of the League 2. Staging of Events 3. Supporting member clubs participation expenses.

The amount was split into 3 equal amounts and an extra Committee meeting was held in July to discuss the ways in which it could be best used.

1. Administration – It was decided to pay £10,000 for this years administration function, to be split into 4 quarterly advance payments. The Committee proposed to pay the Web site manager a £1000 lump sum payment and also for the Treasurer to be paid £2000. The League Secretary had received, so far, 2 payments of £2500 (July and October) and the Web site manager had received his payment. At the moment no other payment had been made. It was explained that if no funding was received in future years the payments would stop, but the meeting was assured that the Committee would carry on, as in the past, working hard and trying to do their best for this League.

However, if further funding is forthcoming then there will have to be some constitutional changes. Talks would have to be held with UKA with a view to appointing an administrator as happens with UKAYAL.

UKA had been kept informed with the Management Committees proposals for the use of this grant and Cherry Alexander has replied that these proposals are what UKA had intended.

The treasurer then requested any questions from the floor:-

Phil Thomas said that he had no problems with the way in which the money was to be spent.

Geoff Morphitis asked if the Treasurer had prepared a budget paper and also how UKA had come up with the figure of £40,000. Cherry Alexander answered the 2nd part of this question and told the meeting that as all other National Leagues were funded along with the UK Challenge and Events Specific it was felt that £40,000 was the appropriate figure in view of the fact that the NJAL had not received any funding in the past. The League would be told in approx. 7 weeks whether funding would continue and if so at what level for 2007/2008.

The treasurer told the meeting that she had not prepared a budget paper as, apart from the Administration payments, it was felt that the rest of the expenditure was up to the member clubs to decide on – see proposals later in meeting. These proposals, if passed, would benefit all clubs and not just some. Grace agreed that in future years, assuming further funding was forthcoming a budget paper would be prepared.

4.2. Adoption of the Accounts. Proposed by John Lunn, seconded by Alan Johnson. Unanimously agreed.

4.3. Subscriptions for 2006/2007. The Committee proposes that subscriptions remain at £200 and a rebate of £100 be paid to all clubs who were members of the League in the 2005/2006 season – Cost £10,200
It was asked whether it would be prudent not to spend all of the money in case of need in the future but the treasurer explained that the grant was for the benefit of member clubs NOW and could not be deposited in a bank account just to gain interest.

Proposal seconded by Phil Thomas and passed unanimously.

4.4. Travel expenses reimbursement for 2006 season The Committee proposes to reimburse travel expenses for the 2006 season retrospectively: - 1st 500 miles – no payment; next 500 miles @30p per mile; any mileage over 1000 miles @50p per mile. – Cost £2,649.20 Split - Midland £597.90; North - £1903.40; South - £147.90

It was proposed that there would be a minimum cheque value of £10

This proposal was carried unanimously.

4.5. Host club re-imbursement for 2007 The Committee proposes that, for the 2007 season only, the host club re-imbursement be increased to a maximum of up to £300. – Cost £16,800.

The treasurer emphasised that this was a maximum of £300 and not a set figure.

After a long discussion Geoff Morphitis seconded the proposal. The proposal was carried with 22 votes for and 4 abstentions.

4.6. Grant for use of EDM at Premier Division matches. The Committee proposes to allow Premier Division host clubs to apply for a grant – maximum £200 – for the use of EDM in the 2007 season.

It was explained that this was to help meetings finish on time – only to be used on long throws. The General Secretary had received a telephone call from someone who had three EDMs and could supply 1 and a trained official for £75.00. It was felt that unless officials were fully trained in the use of EDM then no time would be saved.

An amendment to the original proposal was put forward by Geoff Morphitis – “for the use of EDM and/or Photofinish”

Seconded by Alan Johnson. The amended proposal was carried with 23 votes for, 2 against and 1 abstention.

The AGM was also informed that the cost of Promotion matches and the National Final, along with assisting host clubs to use computerised results, would be taken from the element “Staging of events” in the grant from UKA.

The treasurer asked for the meetings approval to allow member clubs contact details to be used by Athletics weekly to send out their cheap subscription offers to clubs. This would save the League money on postage and the General Secretary a great deal of time. It was agreed to let them have a list of addresses only i.e. no telephone numbers or email addresses.

5. CHANGES TO LEAGUE RULES PROPOSED BY MEMBER CLUBS

Proposed by Bedford & County A.C.

“All matches in this League should have a programme that is normally achievable within a four-hour period”.

Bernard Wells distributed copies of a four-hour programme that Bedford & County felt would be appropriate for NJAL as it was felt that with the existing timetable there was too much time spent “hanging about waiting for something to happen”.

He admitted that although it could possibly work for the regions it would not be suitable for the Premier Divisions.

John Lunn strongly supported the motion but felt that 4½ hours would be more sustainable.

Gerald Alterman pointed out that no warm up time had been allowed for.

It was said that this timetable does not allow for athletes who may wish to do multi events.

It was pointed out that clubs who had a long distance to travel would want the timetable to make it worth the travelling time once they get there.

Jack Frost suggested that the only way to have a shorter timetable would be to alternate the provision of field events.

Phil Thomas pointed out that Officials would prefer a shorter timetable and also suggested that long throws be reduced to 3 trials per athlete. A suggestion was then made to reduce the Long throws to 4 trials.

Chris Betts said that one option would be to greatly reduce the number of clubs in each division – although he was not in agreement with this.

Geoff Morphitis pointed out that the timetable would definitely not work for Premier divisions unless venues had the facilities for 2 long throws to be held at the same time – there is only 5 venues like this in the country (3 for hammer)

He asked the meeting to decide whether the NJAL wishes to provide top-level competition for juniors in all events.

John Lunn requested that the Committee look very hard at the timetable. Stuart Hall replied that this had been done many times but unfortunately the Committee cannot legislate for the numbers who may turn up at a match. Stuart then suggested that each regional division get together and produce a timetable that would suit them individually. Andy Ward suggested that each host club be asked to put the start / finish time of each field event on the field card. The General Secretary pointed out that this had been requested in previous seasons but to no avail. David Billiard pointed out that there was no seconder for this proposal. Bernard Wells summed up by saying that the main reason for putting the proposal was just to give the Committee the idea of reducing the timetable, if possible. If the regions were able to produce their own timetables that would be acceptable. Leeds City then seconded the original proposal. The motion was defeated.

Resolution by St.Helens-Sutton A.C. & Seconded by Wigan & District Harriers & A.C.
"That the number of divisional matches be limited to three per season"

Phil Thomas spoke at some length in support of the resolution. The main reason for this resolution was the fact that u17 athletes have too much competition and are in danger of burn out. He told the meeting that, in his view, u17s belong in the NJAL and not the UKAYAL. He asked the Committee to formulate a policy, prior to the 2008 fixtures meeting (to be held in January 2007), to ensure that u17s are in NJAL and not UKAYAL. There was a short discussion on this, a vote was taken and the motion was defeated.

6. VARIATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION / RULES OF COMPETITION AS PROPOSED BY THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Constitution

New Rule 3.7. "All formal member club correspondence, to the League, must be on official club notepaper and signed By 2 senior club officials."

It was explained to the meeting that this was to stop complaints etc. being handed to Committee members on scraps of paper without the knowledge of the club involved.

An amendment to the original proposal was put forward by Phil Thomas and seconded by Alan Johnson – delete all wording after notepaper. i.e. "All formal member club correspondence, to the League, must be on official club notepaper." The amendment was voted on and not carried with 8 votes for, and 18 against. The original proposal was then voted on and carried with 19 votes for, 6 against and 3 abstentions.

Rules of Competition

Rule 2.2. Add " 2nd claim members are not permitted to compete for composite clubs."

It was pointed out that there are large composites and very small composites. Keith Weetman pointed out that there are cases of clubs not wishing to join the League but some of their athletes wish to compete but if this proposal is carried then they will not be able to. It would reduce opportunities for competition whereas the League should be looking to maximise opportunities. Alan Johnson asked if there was any control on the composites that are allowed in the League, if UKA allow them to register as a composite club does the League have to take them in. The Chairman answered that we have the final decision. Stuart Hall pointed out that if a composite team already comprised of 5 clubs – the maximum allowed by UKA – then by bringing in a further 8 athletes it could almost be classed as bringing in another team. David Billiard pointed out that some composite clubs are becoming very regionalised and we must be careful for the future. The motion was passed with 14 votes for, 10 against and 3 abstentions.

Rule 5.3. Change "once every three season" to "once every two seasons".
The motion was carried with 24 votes for and 3 abstentions.

Rule 21 (Protest procedure) Remove

Gerald Alterman told the meeting that the NJAL was the only league that has a protest procedure. We run under UKA rules and they do not provide for protests and appeals. The decisions of the referees and starter on the day are final yet this year we have had 3 protests. Committee members, who are at a disadvantage from not being at the meeting, then have to deal with these protests, which means that they have to rely on verbal and written reports. This rule does not deal with eligibility, and as we run under UKA rules their rule 23 would still be applicable. Any question of eligibility would still be sent to the General Secretary. David Billiard said he felt that if a club was not happy with the standard of officiating at any of our meetings they should still be able to bring it to the attention of the League. Stuart Hall pointed out that complaints of this nature should be sent to the Officials secretary for the region rather than the League.

The motion was carried with 20 votes for, 3 against and 4 abstentions.

The Management Committee wishes to further develop the women's steeplechase and as such proposes that: -
"From and including the 2007 NJAL season there shall be "A" & "B" scoring strings in the women's 1500m steeplechase. This rule shall apply to the Premier Divisions only"

John Lunn said that until every host club can go to UKA and extract from them the money to purchase adjustable barriers then the League should forget the event. The Chairman replied that this was the reason that only Premier Divisions put on the event.

The motion was carried with only 2 abstentions.

National Final – The Management Committee proposes that; -

“Qualifiers for the 2007 National Final will be the top 3 clubs from each of the Northern & Southern Premier Divisions and the top 2 clubs in the Midland Premier.”

David Billiard said that, as last year, he felt that the Midland region should have parity with the North & South. Allan Sutton said that he felt that a paper match was the fairest thing to do. Stuart Hall suggested that we reduce the Final to 6 clubs.

An amendment was then put forward to do a paper match between the 3rd & 4th places in each Premier Division for the last 2 places in the Final.

This was carried with 15 votes for, 4 against and 5 abstentions.

7. LEAGUE DATES FOR 2007

It was explained that the original league dates had been set at a fixtures meeting at UKA offices in January. Since then various competition providers had set their 2007 dates with the inevitable clashes, the most important one being the territorial u20s being put on the same date as the Leagues 2nd fixture – 17th June. There would appear to be 2 other options available to us – 10th June and 27th May.

It was said that as NJAL is an u20 league then we should avoid any u20 championship (English, Scottish and Welsh).

No one was in favour of keeping to the original date – June 17th

A vote was taken on the 2 other options and it was decided that the 2nd fixture date would be May 27th.

Therefore the League dates for 2007 will be: -

April 29th; May 27th; July 1st and July 29th

A discussion then took place re. the date of the Promotion matches. The UK School games would now clash with the original date of August 27th along with the UK Challenge Final and various other inter regional fixtures. It was felt that September 16th was too late in the season, as a lot of u20s would have left for university. September 2nd was the date of UKAYAL Final but it was felt that it would be highly unlikely that any of the 8 clubs involved in the Main Final would also be involved in any of our Promotion matches. It was therefore decided to hold our Promotion matches on September 2nd, with the Main Final being held the following week September 9th.

8. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2006/2007

The following officers and Committee members were elected.

8.1.	CHAIRMAN	Margaret Grayston
8.2	GENERAL SECRETARY	Wendy Daniel
8.3	TREASURER	Grace Hall
8.4	NORTHERN REPRESENTATIVE	Stuart Hall
	NORTHERN REPRESENTATIVE	Christopher Betts
	MIDLAND REPRESENTATIVE	Barry Holmes
	MIDLAND REPRESENTATIVE	Frank Gorman
	SOUTHERN REPRESENTATIVE	Gerald Alterman
	SOUTHERN REPRESENTATIVE	Sharon Herbert

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

A request was made for the new addition to rule 2.2. not to be brought in until 2008 season to allow small composite clubs to regroup as the closing date for registration with UKA had passed. This was not possible – an amendment to the original proposal should have been made at the time.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 4.00p.m.

Chairman's Report

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen and welcome to our AGM.

Once more I would like to thank our anonymous benefactor who has, once again, given us the extremely generous donation of £5000.

This year we have also been given a grant of £40 000 by UKA. Grace will speak about this in her treasurer's report. On behalf of everyone I must thank Grace for her continual pressurising of UKA for a grant.

At this stage I will point out that we do not know if this grant will continue, maybe with a smaller amount, or whether it is a one off.

I would also like to convey our thanks to Athletics Weekly for their continued support of our League. The Athletics Weekly Grand Prix is a major feature of our League and again was closely contested throughout the season. Congratulations to the Grand Prix Final winners Noni Mordi from Shaftesbury Barnet and Joshua Cayenne from Spenborough & District AC.

The final at Derby was excellent and the weather was wonderful. The promotion matches also went well and we shall be seeing new teams in the Premier Divisions. Thank you to everyone who helped to make the final and the promotion matches such a success.

Congratulations to the winners of our National Final Blackheath & Bromley Harriers AC, and their ladies section who will represent us in Europe next year, as well as Enfield & Haringey Men. Both these teams competed in this years European Juniors Club Cup in Moscow, and finished a very respectable third. As this competition is still single sex, very archaic I know, we are able to split the scores from our Final, and allow the strongest clubs to represent us.

We have also seen more league records broken throughout the season; these are all available on the latest news section of our web site.

We, as a league, have now gone through the first year of joint scoring and the introduction of a Midland Premier League. This transition has gone through without any major problems.

More clubs are still asking to become members of the league and the number of composite teams is rising, giving the opportunity for more juniors to compete.

It is always difficult to put together divisions and some clubs will not be exactly where they would like to be. Wendy, as usual has done an excellent job in sorting out the divisions. This is a difficult, and quite often, a thankless task. However, we still need clubs to be willing to act as hosts. More clubs are now using the computerised results system, which is allowing results to be done more quickly and also making checking easier. It also enables results to appear on the Leagues Web Site.

This year we have a problem, not of our making, concerning dates for our fixtures. Wendy will tell you more about that later.

Our League is still going from strength to strength, but it is only with your help and co-operation that the committee can run the League at the high standards to which we all aspire.

Thank you on behalf of the committee for all your help and support throughout the season.

Finally I should like to thank the committee for all their hard work, and in some cases, extra work, which allows our league to continue running smoothly.