

MINUTES FROM THE 2005 BBF AGM

Saturday, 26 February 2005

Start Time: 2:26pm
End Time: 3.43pm

Appointment of Tellers

Tim Stride
Ian Smyth

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

Senior:

Bracknell	Rob Rance
Brentwood	Sean Briscombe
Brighton Baseball Club	Martin Stabe
Croydon	Tony Fitzpatrick
Essex	Phil Chesterton

London	Alan Smith
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Manchester	Chris Jackson
Old Timers	Jean Crook
Oxford	Steve Lloyd
Sheffield	Jay Stearns
Sidewinders	Simon Gordon
Southampton	Jeremy Neads
Windsor	John Boyd (non-voting)

Other

ABUA-GB	Jacob Plieth
Scorers Association	Brian Holland

Junior

Bracknell	Hugh Jones
Brighton	John Bator
Burgess Hill	John Still
Essex	Paul Richardsc
Hessle	Ian Smyth (non-voting)
Manchester	Roleen
Baseball MK	McNeilage
	Andy Simmons

BBF Executive Board:

Ian Cox
John Eaton
Ed Edsall
Jenny Fromer
Ted Gerard-Thesingh
Ian Marchment
Darrin Muller

BaseballSoftballUK (guests): (non-voting)

Bob Fromer
Tom Gillespie
John Lee
Tim Stride

27 voting cards were issued.

Ian Cox (IC)(BBF President) opened the AGM by introducing the members of the BBF Board that were present, and by providing a brief outline of his President's report contained in the AGM pack. He continued by thanking the staff of BSUK for their work since the last AGM, particularly in relation to the Whole Sport Plan.

1. APOLOGIES

Bournemouth Cartmel Valley Halton	James Norman John Mills	Oxford BBF Board	Andy Meigs Darik Miles
Hessle Liverpool Oxford	Wendy Macadam Robbie Orme Santo Bains	Scorers Association Shropshire GB Baseball Sunderland PB	Clive Maude Rich Williams Stephen O'Dell Steve Huntley

2. MATTERS ARISING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM 2004 AGM

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the 2004 AGM.

The minutes of the 2004 AGM were proposed as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed	Ted Gerard- Thesingh	For	Against	Abst
Seconded	Ian Marchment	24	0	0
Motion	Passed			

3. FINANCIAL REPORT, 2004 DRAFT ACCOUNTS AND 2005 BUDGET

The financial report was considered in detail in the earlier BSUK meeting.

Ray Reynolds (RR)(Old Timers) asked about the 2003 Accounts, given the error outlined in the BSUK meeting. It was confirmed

that once the 2003 Accounts had been sorted out, they would be brought back before the membership for approval.

2004 Draft Accounts

There were no comments or questions in relation to the draft accounts. Approval of the 2004 Draft Accounts was proposed.

A visible majority being in favour, with no opposition, the 2004 Draft Accounts were approved by the membership.

2005 Budget

There were no comments or questions in relation to the 2005 Budget. Approval of the 2005 Budget was proposed.

A visible majority being in favour, with no opposition, the 2005 Budget was approved by the membership.

4. REPORT FROM NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN BASEBALL MEETINGS (JAN 22-23)

IC confirmed that he had attended both meetings, and that he had been impressed with the attendance and the discussions that had taken place.

IC provided a brief outline of the discussions that took place at the Northern Conference Meeting in Sheffield, based upon the report of the meeting available as a download from the BSUK website.

IC stated that the Southern Conference Meeting was an excellent example of the way in which the Board is more responsive to the membership than in previous years. Following IC's proposal relating to the use of wooden bats in all leagues, the majority had been in favour although the majority favoured introduction over a period of time rather than immediately. IC was therefore surprised that the SC Meeting had proposed the introduction of wooden bats themselves, and had voted unanimously in favour.

Wooden bats would therefore be mandatory for all teams in the Southern Premier Division from the 2006 season onwards, and for Division One South from the 2007 season onwards.

IC also discussed the possibility of adding additional Conference meetings to the schedule.

Ed Edsall (EE)(BBF Board) suggested that the Constituency representatives could hold meetings without attendance by other BBF or BSUK representatives.

IC confirmed that the Constituency representatives would work at improving communication between themselves and their members over the course of the next year.

A member asked if a subsidy or sponsorship would be made available to teams to help them buy wooden bats. IC confirmed that this would be investigated, but that there could be no promises given.

A member asked about the bats that would be used at the Final 4, in which teams from the South that used wooden bats would play against teams from the North that might not necessarily use wooden bats. IC confirmed that the Board would review this issue. Jay Stearns (JS)(Sheffield) was of the opinion that the Northern teams were likely to follow the teams in the South in relation to the use of wooden bats.

IC was asked about the trial of bamboo bats. John Boyd (JB)(BSUK) confirmed that a proposal had been received by BSUK to use bamboo bats instead of wooden or wood composite bats. The trial had generated a positive response. There was a question regarding the definition of a wooden bat for the purposes of competitions. IC confirmed that this would be investigated, and that the CEB regulations would be checked.

5. NATIONAL TEAMS & BRITISH BASEBALL ACADEMY REPORT

Tom Gillespie (TG)(BSUK) gave a report on the national teams. He confirmed that the senior national team had just returned from a camp at the Cleveland Indians' spring training ground in Florida, and that the team had taken part in the German Baseball Open the previous summer.

TG told the meeting that the senior national team would be playing in the European Championships in Prague in July, the Junior age group would be playing in Spain in July, and the Cadet group would be playing in Poland, also in July.

TG confirmed that it had been possible to introduce and develop a GB programme that worked from top to bottom, covering all age groups. For example, a structure change at the Academy now meant that it was possible for all GB players from 8-18 years old to train at Upper Heyford on the same day, allowing the coaches to see as many of the GB players as possible, and also easing travel problems, etc.

It was confirmed that the average attendance on these 8-18 Sundays was 80 kids.

6. ABUA-GB REPORT

EE began his report with a brief outline of the statistics contained in his written report. He confirmed that ABUA-GB had covered an increased number of games in 2004 than in 2003, but that the Association was struggling for members. EE confirmed that the ABUA-GB Clinic would be held in Liverpool on 5/6 March, and that there were plans for a Southern clinic, date and location TBA.

EE confirmed that ABUA-GB had covered an increased number of assignments, including attendance at the prestigious Pony World Series in the USA. 2004 also saw the highest number of GB umpires selected for CEB tournaments.

EE also confirmed that there had been no increase in the number of ejections in 2004.

EE outlined the personal accident insurance policy that was being introduced for registered umpires, free of charge.

IC reminded the membership that it was a bylaw requirement that every team must send at least one member to an ABUA-GB clinic, every year.

Darrin Muller (Dmu)(BBF Board) confirmed that the cost of the clinic was £15 per umpire for the two-day course.

Simon Gordon (SG)(Sidewinders) recommended the clinic, even for those not particularly interested in umpiring, based on the knowledge that could be gained.

7. BSUK COACHING ASSOCIATION REPORT

Ian Smyth (IS)(BSUK) gave a report to the meeting regarding coaching in 2004. He confirmed that 20 courses had been run, leading to approximately 160 qualified coaches. IS advised that this would need to be increased to 240-250 qualified coaches per year in future.

IS advised that BSUK was introducing a system of licensing coaches for 2005, and that this system would be expanded and improved in future. IS advised that one of the main advantages to becoming a licensed coach was that personal and professional indemnity insurance (which provided worldwide coverage) was easier to obtain. It was confirmed that the qualification would last, and that it could not be removed.

IS confirmed that there would be a Spring Training Clinic at Upper Heyford on the weekend of 16/17 April. The AGM pack contained dates for various other coaching events, and the dates for these were being constantly updated. IS confirmed that in many instances, BSUK coaching events were now able to provide tutors for specific areas, rather than generic tutors as in the past.

In response to a question from the floor regarding the criteria for a Level 3 coaching qualification, IS advised that there was little more than a paper outline at present, and asked for feedback from as many people as possible regarding the criteria that were already present, and the criteria that members thought should be present.

JB confirmed that in accordance with the Whole Sport Plan, Sport England were only going to be interested in the numbers of accredited coaches/umpires/clubs present in the UK.

A member asked how the entry level for a coach was determined. IS advised that in most cases, this was done via a discussion with the individual candidate. It was confirmed that there is no requirement for a coach to have completed Level 1 before beginning Level 2. IS recommended that all coaches should take the Level 2 course, even though much of the course is basic knowledge, mainly because the course contains a lot of other useful information.

JS asked about fees for CRB checks. IS confirmed that at present, there was no fee for such checks, but that the CRB was not keen on small organisations (those currently undertaking 50-100 checks per year). As a result, IS confirmed that a fee might be introduced for CRB checks if problems arose.

8. MOTIONS TO THE AGM

IC advised that there was a motion to the AGM from BSUK to amend the Constitution. The amendment was to make it a requirement that all of the relevant AGM documents were published no later than 20 days prior to AGM, rather than 30 days prior to AGM as it stood at present. There were no objections to this motion.

A visible majority being in favour, with no opposition, the motion was approved by the membership.

There was a motion to approve the Fees Proposal contained in the AGM pack. Jenny Fromer (JF)(BSUK) confirmed that this had been circulated and discussed at the Northern and Southern Conference Meetings earlier in the year. JF also confirmed that the motion was to vote on both the Fees Proposal for 2005 and the target figures for eventual fee levels contained in the Proposal.

A member asked if the BBF would consider giving financial assistance to new teams, in the form of a waiver of their initial annual fee, or a wildcard lottery to enable one club to receive a rebate of their annual fee, provided that the clubs in each instance could show that the money saved had been used for club/field development.

JF confirmed that of the £250 charged as an annual fee to every new team, half of this sum was returned in the form of equipment. It was also felt that the Club Accreditation Programme was a better overall system, given that it too contained a financial incentive for clubs.

A visible majority being in favour, with no opposition, the Fees Proposal was approved by the membership.

9. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

- Final 4 – **National League Champions**
Croydon Pirates
- Final 4 – **Premier League Champions**
Cambridge Monarchs
- Final 4 – **Division 1 Champions**
Sheffield Bladerunners

National League South Champions

Windsor Bears

National League North Champions

Liverpool Trojans

Premier Division South Champions

Cambridge Monarchs

Division 1 South Champions

Herts Falcons

Division 1 North Champions

Sheffield Bladerunners

Northern Conference West Division Pony Champions

Manchester Saints

Northern Conference East Division Pony Champions

Menwith Hill

Southern Conference Pony Champions

Burgess Hill

Youth Final 4 Pony Champions

Burgess Hill

Northern Conference West Division Bronco Champions

Manchester Saints

Southern Conference Bronco Champions

Bracknell Baseball Club

Youth Final 4 Bronco Champions

Bracknell Baseball Club

Baseball Scorer of the Year

Mark Goater

Baseball Coach of the Year

Dave Ward

Baseball Youth Coach of the Year

John Still/Darrin Muller

10. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

IC confirmed that there were ten positions on the BBF Board, seven constituency positions and three at-large positions, and that there were currently seven members of the Board. He confirmed that all six current constituency members were standing for re-election, all of them unopposed. In addition, there was an unopposed candidate for the remaining, currently vacant, constituency position. As a result, he advised that although all seven names were on the ballot papers handed out to voting members, they only required a single vote to confirm their election.

IC also confirmed that there were four candidates for the three at-large positions. He therefore advised that the three candidates with the most votes would be elected to the Board.

IS and Tim Stride (TS)(BSUK) were selected as tellers.

After a count of the votes cast, it was confirmed that all seven constituency candidates had been elected to the Board. It was also confirmed that Tony Fitzpatrick (TF), Ted Gerard-Thesingh (TGT), and John Mills (JM) had been elected to the Board as members-at-large.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

TG was asked to give an update on the suggested eligibility requirements for National League teams. He confirmed that he would have a dialogue with the NL teams, and then pass the suggested requirements to the Board at the next Board Meeting.

TF asked BBF/BSUK to confirm that there would be a checkmark on the website rosters for players aged 21 or under, in relation to their exemption from the player movement rules. It was confirmed that this would be done.

TG confirmed that the season was due to start on either 10th or 17th April, depending upon the league/division in question, and that there would be no Wednesday play in National League South following a discussion of the suggestion with NLS teams.

Tom Keegan (TK) reminded the membership of the Anglo-Essex Tournament, to take place two weeks before the season starts. The membership were also reminded that the London Tournament would be held on the weekend of 9/10 July, and that the deadline for the payment of the remainder of annual fees was 31st March.

IC closed the meeting by confirming that he was happy to discuss any baseball-related issue with any member, and that his contact details were available on the BSUK website.