

MINUTES

Central Athletic Club

42nd Annual General Meeting

Date and time: commences at 1900 on 30 October 2015

Venue: Lesser Hall, Victoria Hall, Dunblane, FK15 9EX

Attendance and apologies

1. The meeting was attended by Derek Easton (President/Chairman), Ainsley Normand (Treasurer), Michael Wright (Secretary), Tony Waterhouse (Competitions Manager), Joanne Brown (Club Together Officer), Gillian Marchant (Membership Secretary), Jennifer Trevis, John Dawson, Jim Forsyth, Lance Pearson, Alexander Hendry, Gillian Mailer, Andy Blance, Colin Bruce, Donald Shaw and Paul Davies
2. Apologies were intimated from Colin Sinclair; Conan McCaughey, Kenny Pearson, Elaine Walls, Isla Campbell, Phil Campbell, Liam McCabe (Vice-President), John McDonald (Past President – Development), Phil Hendry, Lewis Millar, Richard Coombs, Pauline Darnborough, Tracy Saunders, Ron Todd and Allan Gall.

Chairman's Welcome and Introduction

3. Derek Easton welcomed attendees to the AGM, and thanked them for attending. On behalf of the Club, Derek recorded thanks to all of the volunteers for their invaluable services to the club during the past year, and in particular to John McDonald who, tomorrow, is to receive Honorary Life Membership of Scottish Athletics.
4. Derek advised that there are various areas where the Club needs to improve, but these challenges are not new, nor unique to just Central AC.

Minutes of 41st AGM

5. The draft minutes of the 41st AGM were agreed as a true record. These were proposed by Ainsley Normand and seconded by Tony Waterhouse.

Matters arising and action points

6. None

Reports on Performance by Central AC Teams and Athlete Development

7. A combination of written and oral reports was discussed and the following points are highlighted:

- **Womens Cross-Country:** Tony Waterhouse summarised a report provided by Jane Waterhouse. This highlighted the importance of a small core of athletes to the success in this sphere. Whilst the team won the short course cross-country team prize, in addition to the National Cross-Country team prize, there was some disappointment in not winning the road relays in April. The challenge in the future will be to maintain the existing level of performance in the team.
- **Womens League:** Tony Waterhouse provided the report for the Women's league. This comprises a composite team with other clubs producing Team Forth Valley, and which Tony has been coordinating for the 14 or 15 years. The team is considered to be the most successful it has ever been. Central AC provide about half the athletes, which is considered to be strong support. Out of the three meetings, strong athlete support was received for the first two meetings, but there was low turn-out for the third meeting due to injury and exams. One of the significant highlights was beating Edinburgh in the third and final match which has led to Team Forth Valley now being considered a strong team in the league. Tony recorded his thanks to parents who supported the league and the athletes.
- **Mens Endurance:** Derek Easton provided a report for distribution to attendees, which he summarised verbally. Derek highlighted that the Club, once again, dominated the major championships with a strong squad of runners. Derek noted that we continue to make progress down south with a fourth place finish at the 12 stage in spring, and a third place finish at the 6 stage in autumn. Derek made special mention of Ross Houston who won the British 100K Road title (and who was subsequently selected to represent GB at the World Championships), and also of Andrew Butchart who became the first Scottish Senior Man to win the Inter-Counties Champs in Birmingham and was selected to run for GB at the World Cross-Country Championships in China.
- **Mens League:** John McDonald had drafted a report on the Scottish Athletics League and this was distributed to attendees.
- **Indoor League:** Kenny Pearson and Elaine Walls had drafted a report on the Indoor League and this was distributed to attendees.
- **Young Athletes Endurance:** Mary Kerr provided a verbal report to attendees on Young Athletes Endurance. Mary advised that numbers of participating youngsters ranged from 50 to 55, with these being very much influenced by the Club Junior Cross-Country Series. In respect of wider league events, teams are considered to be good. Boys are not as strong as the girls, with some boys teams being incomplete. The Club fielded teams in both districts and national relays. It was noted that a number of athletes were selected to compete for Scotland East at the Inter Districts in January.

Mary advised that, in respect of performances, the young females won bronze at the National Cross-Country Relays. The U15 girls won silver and an individual bronze for an U15 girl - Kate Gallagher. At the Road Race Championships, there was team gold for the U17 Men.

Mary identified future areas for development such as the East District Cross-Country Relays (which clashes with the school October break). There is also a challenge to the Club to encourage more young athletes to compete. Many of young athletes are training, but not necessarily competing. It is acknowledged that youngsters do many different sports, but the Club should do their utmost to ensure that athletics isn't the sport to be sacrificed for the sake of others. One idea to address this is to support a Junior Park Run events to encourage more kids to compete.

Mary noted that the satellite base in Forthbank (now no longer operational) at least did get a number of athletes into the Club. Mary also noted that there are continual problems with participating numbers in the older age groups.

- **Young Athletes League:** Paul Davies provided a verbal report to attendees on the progress of the U13 and U15 athletes in the East Development League (3 matches in total). Paul noted that on previous years, the Club had been narrowly avoiding relegation, but now is nearer the top of the league. Paul made particular mention to U15 girls who managed to win their age segment, but that it was considered, on the whole, that there were good performances from across of the age groups. The final was considered to be a little less successful as it clashed with other events which resulted in some athletes being elsewhere, and the team slipped down to 5th place. Paul noted that the throwing and middle distance events were generally the weakest, but overall, it was considered that the Club had enjoyed a strong season.
- **Young Athletes League – Upper League Group:** John Dawson provided a verbal report to attendees on the Club's performance as part of composite team – Team Forth Valley – in the National Junior League.

John advised that the Club (Central AC) is, at present, struggling to get more than 5/10 athletes to compete in National Junior League, and on the whole poor athlete participation is now evident, with low turn-out at U17 and U20. John advised that he considers this to be a reflection of the coaching in the club, and that ultimately, the poor participation was a sad reflection on the coaches and the Club.

John advised that the team narrowly avoided relegation to retain their place in the current league. He considered that the Club does have athletes which could ably compete in the league, but that they just won't compete. John added that participation in national championships events from this age group (U17/U20) is also poor. John considered that Team Forth Valley is the only club in the league that appears to be faced with this participation difficulty. John advised that he is currently liaising with John McDonald in a bid to engage with parents, with the possibility of a Conference Day being staged.

Derek noted that this is a problem not unique to our clubs, and that he supported efforts to engage parents to help address this issue, and went on to note that the Indoors League had been particularly successful, partly for efforts to engage parents.

Lance Pearson advised that he considered it important to sell the Junior League to athletes as an opportunity for them to compete on a bigger level, and that he considers that the Club doesn't push hard enough to ensure good athlete participation.

Kenny Hislop highlighted the competing pressures of exams for junior athletes which may hinder participation, but considered that, in his experience, the best academic students are those that have a hobby, like athletics.

Derek advised that one of the reasons that the Junior Cross-Country league was started was because it was considered that junior athletes did not have sufficient competitive opportunities.

Ainsley Normand highlighted that the Club will be able to track athlete participation in due course following the introduction of the new Athlete Performance Database.

Lance Pearson suggest that a senior athlete be asked to speak to the junior athletes and highlight the importance of participation in junior league competitions. Jennifer Trevis and Donald Shaw supported this suggestion, with Donald suggesting that the presentation / meeting be held at Queen Victoria School in Dunblane.

Jennifer Trevis advised that, due to the Athlete Performance Database being in place for a full year now, that 12 months of data is available to illustrate to what extent athletes are competing. Jennifer suggested that a dual-type membership scheme could now be implemented, with one membership for those that compete on a regular basis, and another for those who do not.

Ainsley Normand advised that it was agreed in a committee meeting recently that the Club would not be proceeding with dual membership proposal.

Donald Shaw suggested a meeting at Queen Victoria School in Dunblane to have a talk from the athletes, sell the idea of competing the club to them.

- **Forth Valley League:** Colin Bruce provided a report for distribution to attendees, which he summarised verbally. Colin advised that, this year, the Club had teams in Divisions 1 and 2. The aim for the teams were not to get relegated, and maintain our level, and also give young athletes the opportunity to run in a stadium, and enhance their personal development. Despite fears of relegation at times, the teams managed to avoid this. It was noted that those that came along to the first match, generally did come along to the other two matches.

Colin summarised the positive and negative aspects of the league from his hard copy report. He recorded thanks to Joanne Brown, John McDonald and Tony Waterhouse for their support.

Tony Waterhouse highlighted that he met with a host of novice coaches months ago to act as Team Managers for the various leagues, and he considered that Colin Bruce had done a great job with the Forth Valley League. He also highlighted the recent success of Superteams and Junior Relays.

Reports on Club Development by Club Together Officer

8. A hard copy report was issued to attendees by Club Together Officer Joanne Brown, and she provided a verbal summary of this report to attendees, which was as follows:
 - Attempts are being made to boost numbers at Alloa following a strong number of coaches being in place now.
 - There are 45 juniors currently on the waiting list. There is a small pathway for able Run Jump Throw children with Active Stirling and others waiting are invited where age appropriate space allows and therefore not necessarily in a chronological order.
 - Volunteering going well with a strong database of 60 volunteers currently.
 - In respect of coach structure, there are currently 44 active coaches across the Club, and a further 5 coaches who are available less frequently.
 - Coach education has been very positive, and has been supported from a successful grant from Club Sport Stirling.
 - The new Callandar Satellite Group is off to a good start with a strong amount of volunteers involved. Lessons learned from Forthbank have been applied to Callandar.
 - A problem was highlighted in respect of the small nature of the Combined Events Group and it is proposed that Kenny Pearson come in and provide a mentoring role for this.
 - A new 'Team Quadrathlon' / Superteams Event is a new winter track and field event which is being organised in January and to be held in Grangemouth. It is principally being organised for emerging athletes with a view to giving them the opportunity to compete in an indoor-format event, due to the limited opportunities with the Indoor League.
 - Highlighted that, after 11 months of operation and 37 children being inducted, the Forthbank Satellite Group had to close due to numbers dwindling on a Saturday, and struggling to get parents to commit to assist. It did ultimately get 37 kids into athletics, many of whom have transferred to the Stirling base.
 - Joanne Brown recorded her thanks to all the coaches and volunteers who assist her in her job, and particular thanks to John McDonald and Alison Grey for their endless help and support.

Stirling 10K

9. Colin Sinclair provided a hard copy report on the Stirling 10K held on 13 September 2015 which was distributed to attendees. Colin was not able to attend the AGM, and Michael Wright summarised the main points of the report as follows:

- The event was ably delivered by Derek Easton, Lewis Millar, John McDonald, Hugh Buchanan, Colin Sinclair and Ainsley Normand, with Linda Sneddon organising marshalling.
- Sport Systems were employed to provide chip timing which was considered to be successful.
- The course is the same as used for the previous 8 races, and there is no reason seen to alter the course.
- Thanks was recorded to Derek Easton for leading sponsorship efforts, which saw sponsorship be received from Tunnocks, Highland Spring, EEC cooling, the Peak, the University, Graham's Dairies as well as the long standing support from Run4It and LifeFit.
- Some suggested changes were made for the next race in 2016 including 1. Review the start/ finish area to allow for space for chip removal; 2. Raise with police whether the road at the start can be closed; 3. We are still asked for medals to be included, but it is felt that medals are unlikely to yield more entries or justify a higher fee.

Treasurer's report

10. Ainsley Normand presented the audited accounts for 2014/2015 to attendees; and noted the following in relation to these:

- A deficit of £3,895 was recorded in the Club accounts. This can largely be explained due to the timing of costs coming in this year. For instance, Stirling University invoiced for the second half of the summer Tues/Thurs track usage in September rather than October, meaning that £1,858 fell into this year's accounts, with no comparison in last year's accounts.
- Cost of training venues is significantly increased, up from £8.7K to £16K. This was partly due to Balfron costs rising significantly, up from £800 to £3,100 due to increased numbers and requirements for larger training areas.
- Training venue costs are further increased by about £1,000 due to increased Stirling University hire costs for Kenny Pearson's group on Monday nights.
- On the whole, it is not considered to be a problem for the Club in meeting these additional facility hire costs, and it is not considered that an increase in membership fees is required at this stage.
- A £5.5K profit was made on the Stirling 10K, which has been put towards athlete development funding.
- Athlete development is being spread out a bit more evenly now than in past years. Previously, significant proportions of this had been distributed to the main Stirling endurance group, but athletes from other areas of the Club are beginning to take advantage of this funding.

11. Alex Hendry asked whether there is an opportunity for the Club to invest some of its reserves. Ainsley advised that she is open to suggestions from the membership for spending opportunities.
12. Derek advised that the membership need to be aware that we spend over £16K on facility hire at present, and that reserves of almost £30K perhaps do not constitute reserves of sufficient magnitude to warrant spending of it.
13. Kenny Hislop asked whether there was any way to develop kit to make it more profitable. Ainsley confirmed that kit is currently available, which Hugh Buchanan procures on behalf of the Club.

Update from Membership Secretary

14. Gilliant Marchant was introduced as the new Membership Secretary, having taken over the role from Jennifer Trevis. Derek Easton recorded his thanks to Jennifer Trevis for her work in the role.
15. 518 athlete members are currently recorded which is considered to be strong, with a good spread between male and female.
16. In respect of junior membership, the Club is now at capacity, with a current waiting list of about 45 people.
17. Jennifer Trevis advised that, in respect of membership numbers, this year is comparable to what we have had in previous years. Jennifer also considers that we need to highlight on social media that fees need to be paid.
18. Jim Forsyth queried the current rules governing membership and country memberships. He highlighted his daughter who lives and studies in Edinburgh, but returns on a weekly basis to train, and based on current rules, she must pay a full membership, rather than country membership, as she uses the club facilities. Both Lance Pearson and Jim Pearson queried whether it was justified that athletes in these circumstances should have to pay full memberships.
19. Ainsley Normand defended the current membership criteria, and highlighted that full membership fees (for those that train at Club training venues) are needed to cover both facility hire costs, and also the various competitions which the Club agrees to pay through full membership fees.

Appointment of Committee Members and Office Bearers

20. The Committee's proposals for next year's office bearers and Committee were approved, which recorded the following:

President: Derek Easton
Vice-President: Liam McCabe
Past President (Development): John McDonald
Secretary: Michael Wright
Treasurer: Ainsley Normand
Competitions Manager: Tony Waterhouse

Stirling Representative: Lewis Millar
Alloa / Dollar Representative: Peter Martin
Balfron Representatives: Lynn Buchanan
Grangemouth Representative: John Dawson
Membership Secretary: Gilliant Marchant

The following club members were accepted as ordinary committee members on to the committee:

Donald Shaw. Proposer: Derek Easton. Seconder: Alex Hendry
Kenny Hislop: Proposer: Donald Shaw. Seconder: Mary Kerr

AOB and general discussion

21. Derek thanked everyone for attending, and noted that the success which the club enjoys today is partly due to the Club members, coaches, team managers, and volunteers, all working together.
22. The Chairman thanked all present for attending and closed the meeting.