

## **Summary of the Minutes of the IMHA Board Meeting September 2014**

**Board Members (BMs) Present:**\* Glenn Paton (President GP), Sue Briggs (Secretary SB), David Peebles (DP), Peri Buckley (PB), Deb Wilkes (DW), Jackie Whiller (JW), Eduardo Guelfande (EG), Peter Jones (PJ), Andy Nye (Treasurer AN).

**Apologies:** John Stuart (JS).

**Continental Reps (CRs):** Greg Darke (GD), Adel El Guindi (AEG), Dirk Wellen (DW) & Franco Mellis (FM) emailed contributions in advance.

It was decided to summarise the Board Members' contributions to reduce the admin time and energy required to detail everything which was said. There was, understandably, significant repetition on the part of the President, who chaired the conferences and was required, to bring each group up to date with what had gone before.

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### **Agenda:**

#### **1. Continental distribution of Board Members.**

AEG (CR) proposed that the Board should appoint at least one Board member from each continent.

This proposal was considered this to be a very sensible way forward for the IMHA. Following discussion, all BMs agreed that, at the 2016 AGM, nominations for the new Board should be invited on that basis. The decision not to adopt this proposal immediately came from recognition that the Board was already quite large and that the membership had elected the present Board as per IMHA regulations in force at the time of the 2014 AGM. BMs did not know of any individuals with the required skills and experience from Continents which at present had no BMs in place. The feelings of the Board were broadly in line with the views expressed by the CRs who had emailed their opinions in advance.

**Action:** BM nominations for 2016 should include wording relating to there being at least one BM from each continent. **SB / GP**

#### **2. Delegation of tasks within the Board.**

JS (BM) proposed that BMs other than the main office bearers should have certain tasks delegated to them. Unfortunately JS was not present to elaborate on his thinking.

Although he had given some indications of what these tasks might be, it was unclear exactly what John had in mind. BMs attempted to identify a range of tasks which could be farmed out, but the only ones considered to have merit were posts including maintenance of the website, marketing and communication. There were no volunteers for such from the BMs present and so it was decided to allow JS to come back at a later BM to further explain his thinking. All BMs agreed that anyone taking on any key role would have to demonstrate that they had the skills and qualities to do so.

**Action:** John Stuart to re-raise this issue in person.. **JS / SB (Board Meeting Agenda Dec 2014)**

#### **3. IMHA Indoor Tournament, Feb 2015.**

PJ (BM) and DW(CR) sought Board approval for an IMHA Indoor Tournament to run alongside the FIH Indoor Tournament in Leipzig in Feb 2015.

The issue of identifying a suitable venue was in hand following initial discussion with the local authorities, as was FIH approval over the idea of a simultaneous indoor tournament. However, apart from attracting international squads to take part, there was an issue over the number of players. BMs felt that IMHA should stipulate a 6-a-side tournament where as FIH wanted it to be a 5-a-side tournament. BMs also felt that such a tournament should include women's teams. There was all round support for this venture from BMs and CRs. The Board agreed that PJ and DW should be tasked with organising this tournament with administrative support from SB. GP would attempt to negotiate with the FIH for a 6-a-side tournament and support such with evidence supporting the IMHA proposals. It was felt that any rule changes would not be in the best interests of securing the FIH's agreement for a 6-a-side approach in the IMHA tournament.

**Action:** Tournament organisation. **PJ / DW / SB.** Team size negotiations with FIH. **GP (End of Sept).**

#### 4. IMHA Player Nationality Issues.

PB (BM) wanted Board approval to support the present IMHA player regulations.

A member country had asked for dispensation to play a foreign national in their international squad when this foreign national, who had resided for the required length of time in that country, had moved to a new home just across another national boundary. After a reasonable discussion BMs felt that present FIH/IMHA player regulations were appropriate and that the Executive BMs should continue to decide upon each case on its individual merit ensuring consistency of approach. CRs also agreed with this assessment of present regulations, although some highlighted the need to have a degree of flexibility to encourage fledgling international Masters' countries to take part in IMHA tournaments.

**Action:** Decision to be made by Executive Board Members. **GP / PB / SB / AN (End of Sept).**

#### 5. Membership Fees & Invoices.

AN (BM) required Board to make a decision about future IMHA fees so that invoices could be sent out in good time. The present account balance is only £617 and there will be heavy demands upon the account to pay travel and accommodation expenses for the Secretary to attend the FIH Congress in Marrakech in Oct 2014.

There was general agreement that ways had to be found to increase IMHA funds to cover the costs of running the organisation and supporting tournaments, without pricing the organisation out of the reach of hockey teams from the developing world. However there was a marked reluctance on the part of BMs to actually identify a fee. Some BMs suggested a two tier fee system whereby the members from more affluent areas would effectively subsidise the teams from the developing world. Some BMs suggested delayed fees or no fees in the first year to entice new members. GP pointed out that only £1800 was collected in 2014 and that this was not enough to run the organisation.

FM (CR) had suggested £100 per member nation with £25 per team. However, no country would pay more than £250 in total in any year. The difficulty with this approach is that countries not taking part in a tournament in a particular year would not pay anything and their membership would lapse. This was not an effective way of balancing the organisations' accounts each year.

PJ (BM) suggested £100 per member including one team. All additional teams would pay £25 each. He feels that IMHA should charge host nations a fee as most tournament hosts made a good profit from which IMHA did not gain. However, this could scare away the less wealthy countries, especially when they do not take part in a tournament in a given year.

AN (BM) suggested £50 per team per year whether playing in a tournament or not. This was easily attainable by the less wealthy countries which would probably only have one team, but would put the burden on the larger, wealthier countries which could afford to pay £2.50 per player. Theoretically with 35+ as the starting age group for men and women the larger countries would pay  $9 \times £50 = £450$ . (5 men & 4 women's teams). If fees had been collected on that basis in 2014, IMHA funds would have received £3800. He also pointed out that Ireland had made good profits on the tournaments hosted in Lisnagarvey and felt strongly that IMHA should be charging some kind of hosting fee.

It was not possible to share PJ's and AN's suggestions since the discussions with them came last. However, the President does feel more inclined to support AN's proposal given GP's Treasurer experience over the last two years. Therefore I am recommending the proposal of £50 per team per year starting on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015.

**Action:** Invoices to be sent out to all known IMHA members (past and present). **AN End of Nov 2014.**

Contact addresses to be found with the support of CRs. **AN / CRs End of Nov 2014**

Objections to this proposal and alternate suggestions to be emailed to GP. **BMs / CRs End of Sept 2014.**

#### 6. IMHA presentation to FIH Congress

GP is to make a presentation with President of WGMA at the FIH Congress at Marrakech in Oct 2014 and wanted BMs and CRs to suggest priority issues for this presentation. FIH are covering costs of GPs travel and accommodation to the FIH Congress.

There was a little discussion but the issues for all BMs were remarkably similar. The key issues identified were ensuring delegates were aware of just how large a contribution Masters players, officials and organisers were making to the aims and objectives of National Associations at home by supporting clubs, being good role models and coaches for the younger players, staying in the game many years longer and continuing to pay fees many years beyond that which had been usual in the past. Highlighting how strategically integrated Masters Hockey was across

the world and how large a market it was, in terms of attracting sponsors. Actual figures for Masters players across the world were being sought to back up these claims.

**Action:** Presentation to be completed and shared with BMs and CRs for feedback.

**GP End of Sept.**

## **7. Approval of IMHA Secretary attending FIH Congress and related costs.**

FIH will not cover the costs of IMHA secretary attending this conference. GP wishes BMs approval of her attendance to help him collect contact details, answer questions and hand out IMHA leaflets and staff an IMHA desk.

BMs unanimously agreed to this with minimum discussion. No further action required.

## **8. 2015 European Championship**

DW confirmed dates of the IMHA European Championship hosted by English Hockey as the 21<sup>st</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> August 2014. The men would play at St Albans HC and the ladies at Old Loughtonians near Chigwell.

## **9. Malaysian Tournament Invitation**

Most of the Asian countries are now lapsed members as they have not taken part in any IMHA tournaments. GP wanted BM approval to approach the Asian membership to try and entice them back into the organisation and pave the way for AN to invoice them for 2015.

Suggestions from BMs and CRs were supportive. Perhaps the proposed fees for next year might be the first step.

**Action:** To write courteously to all the old Pacific Rim nations encouraging them to join the IMHA. , **GP / CRs**

## **10. 2016 World Cup in Canberra.**

DP was able to confirm that this tournament would run from the 28<sup>th</sup> Mar - 10<sup>th</sup> April 2016. He identified that the first day was fixed but that the last day might be flexible depending upon the number of teams entering a particular age group. He also identified that the local organisers would be scheduling matches on the basis of 2 days on and one day off.

Discussion was quite lengthy during every conference session and various views were expressed from contentment to misgivings over the length of the tournament. GP pointed out that he had been party to a number of discussions at hockey events and had received emails from a considerable number of representatives of the younger IMHA international squads.. Travelling to Australia is expensive for African, American and European teams, as is travelling many times to Europe for Asian and Oceanic countries. Generally younger IMHA players take their families with them and so the hockey becomes combined with a holiday. Where tournaments last 13 days with lots of gaps and few games, players face a difficult balancing act committing to the hockey whilst looking after their families' needs. It is important that the Board finds the fine balance point between organising professional, high quality tournaments and meeting the needs of our membership and the demands made upon them by employers and families.

There was also discussion about which ladies age groups the IMHA would have to cater for if WGMA do not have a programme in place for the 60+ teams. If all the ladies matches were under the IMHA banner then this will increase pressure on the match scheduling and pitch availability.

**Action :** LOC and IMHA Board to discuss the issues.

**GP / DP / SB**

**January 2015**

## **11. 5 Year Business Plan.**

GP apologised for not having completed this plan and will present it to the Board by end of Nov. BMs and CRs approved the idea.

## **12. Any Other Business (A.O.B.)**

1. CRs and Continental Federations (CFs). It was learned that some CFs saw IMHA CRs as treading into areas which were their responsibility.

**Action:** Letters explaining the role of IMHA CRs to be sent to every CF and copied to WGMA. **GP (Mid Sept)**

2. FM would like other EU Nations to organize European Teams for the World Masters Games in Auckland in 2017. With current negotiations going on between FIH and the World Masters Games organisers IMHA should perhaps avoid involvement with this organization until the outcome is known, Further, the standard of hockey is

not at international standard and so if IMHA are to become involved, it would be on a different level. GD touched on this subject and it probably needs discussing with all our membership.

3. GD pointed out that there is a Masters Hockey tournament in South Africa with up to 100 teams. The South Africans would happily tailor a tour to suit all interests if foreign teams wanted to sample their wares. Again this is probably an area IMHA should develop for the Masters players who might never be selected for an international side.

*\* There were 4 Skype conference calls. The President and Secretary attended the first two. Additional Board Member attendees were David Peebles and Peri Buckley on Sun 14<sup>th</sup> Sept at 08:00; Deb Wilkes, Jackie Whiller and Eduardo Guelfande on Sun 14<sup>th</sup> Sept at 19:00 GMT; Peter Jones and the President on Mon 15<sup>th</sup> Sept at 21:00 GMT; and the President and Treasurer on Tues 16<sup>th</sup> Sept at 21:00 GMT.*