

DEVON COUNTY FENCING UNION AGM 2019

Date 07.07.2019

Minutes

Attendees:

Name	Club	Name	Club
Ralph Mills (RM)	Barnstaple	Val Morrish (VM)	Sidmouth
Jim Pilkington (JP)	Newton Abbot	Richard Foster (RF)	Exeter
Lucy Williams (LW)	Sidmouth	Grace Williams (GW)	Exeter
Alex Scott (AS)	Tiverton	Izabela Sosnowska (IS)	Exeter
Lynne Bournemisza (LB)	Newton Abbot	Colin Penn (CP)	Exeter
Andy Bournemisza (AB)	Newton Abbot	Victoria Racz (VR)	Exeter
Nigel Manning (NM)	Sidmouth	John Evers (JE)	Newton Abbott

Item	Notes and Actions
1	Apologies: Dave Atkins, Greg Beacock, James White, Bill Berkley, Angela Findlay, Nick Clapham
	Meeting opened at 7.35pm Chairperson's welcome Ralph welcomed everyone to the AGM and thanked everyone for attending.
2	Minutes of the last AGM and matters arising from minutes of last AGM The last DCFU AGM was held in June 2018: minutes of the 2018 AGM were read and agreed – there were no matters arising. The minutes were proposed as accurate by Ralph Mills and seconded by Jim Pilkington

<p>3</p>	<p>Officers' reports</p> <p>3a. Chairperson's report 3b. Hon Secretary's report 3c. Hon Treasurer's report 3d. County Captain's report 3e. SW rep report 3f. Competition Secretary's report 3g. Webmaster's report 3h. Junior Rep's report</p>
<p>3a</p>	<p>Chairperson's report (Ralph Mills)</p> <p>Ralph congratulated the Excalibur team on their good results again this year, and he thanked Jim and Alex for their hard work in running the county competitions.</p> <p>Overall this has been another successful year for Devon fencers. The adult events went well and it was good to see University fencers participating in the Devon competitions.</p> <p>The Junior events had fewer competitors than previous years but perhaps this was due in part to the increase in BFA fees.</p>
<p>3b</p>	<p>Hon Secretary's report (Jim Pilkington)</p> <p>Report from the Hon Secretary</p> <p>Firstly I wish to express my thanks to Ralph as Chair Person, Greg as Hon Treasurer and especially to Alex who runs our competitions with such competence; they collectively have made this post of Hon Secretary so much easier compared to 2 or 3 years ago. In his report Alex invites others to become involved in running competitions. While it has not happened yet, on the day the designated person could go sick and therefore having a small group of us who are familiar with the procedures does seem a sensible contingency plan.</p> <p>As a County we probably have more competitions than any other SW county and it was splendid to have Arlen initiate a SW event at Exeter University. We have been discussing adding more Junior events and while none have yet happened, the idea is far from dead.</p> <p>The former post we had of a County Coach has ceased and for the last two AGMs we have been working on the idea of a Coaching Secretary – that is someone who may initiate events, but equally to publicise opportunities that arise in the SW that may be of interest to Devon Fencers. Nobody has come forward to take this responsibility. Is it a task that should be added to those of the Hon Secretary?</p> <p>One shortcoming that I feel needs to be corrected lies in the area of communication. These days perhaps too many of us (including myself) blandly assume that everyone are Facebook enthusiasts and rely upon it too much as our means of conveying information. I believe we have to accept that some of us dislike Facebook, and perhaps there are others who like a second means of finding out what is going on.</p> <p>To provide for these fencers, I propose we invite fencers to join an email group (emails will be sent out 'blind'). This facility would need to be publicised care of the clubs and on our website.</p>

In our Constitution we acknowledge the need of a **Press and Publicity Officer** but in recent years have not had the benefit of such a person. Can we again consider this, as within our ranks we do have a person who has already had success in getting on the radio and is bursting with enthusiasm for our sport.

As a separate memo please refer to the **draft competition calendar**. Dates of other competitions of likely interest to Devon Fencers need to be added and/or updated. Phil Westley had envisaged the **Devon Foil having National ranking** status; as far as I'm aware there are no strict rules other than the competitions are run according to FIE rules. The crunch point would be as to what the NIF would be. How do we feel in principle?

Lastly my thanks to Lucy for writing up the minutes of the meeting.

Jim Pilkington

6.7.19

3c

Report from the Hon Treasurer (Greg Beacock) for accounts 2018 – 2019

This has been another successful year for the DCFU. This is due mostly to the hard work of event/competition organisers Alex and Jim.

The receipts for entry fees have increased from £2550.50 to £3339.70 over last year's figures. Some events were more profitable than others but I don't think this really matters as the figures indicate a growing interest in the County's competition calendar overall.

Competition entry fees seem to be at about the right level to counter costs, mainly to cover for event venues, and not too high as to put fencers off. Also the 'Early Bird' enticement seems to be working well for some anyway.

The start of this year's calendar saw a search for alternative venues as our regular provider, Exeter schools, hugely increased their hall hire prices. As a result, the necessary entry fee increase would have deemed the competitions unviable. Other venues were found initially, but then Exeter schools dropped their prices again anyway I am glad to say.

A large saving has been made on the cost of medals this year, thanks to Jack Hughes (however the figure shown in the summary is not the final amount as the County owes Jim Pilkington for purchases made earlier in the year).

Other significant outgoings include the Excalibur entry at a cost of £365. Money well spent considering the Devon Team's success at this event in recent years.

New Devon Team T-shirts were also purchased at a cost of £342, this will be reflected in next year's accounts.

Greg Beacock. DCFU Treasurer.

Opening balance	£2734.29	
	In	Out
Receipts/ Event Entry fees	£3339.07	
Hall/Venue hire		£1614.00
Medals/ Trophies		£194.07
B.F. Event Licence		£30.00
Excalibur Entry Fee		£365.00
Sundries/ Early Bird prizes		£30.00
DCFU website		£111.75
Closing balance	£3728.54	

<p>3d</p>	<p>County Captain report (Iza Sosnowska/ Grace Williams)</p> <p>It was another successful year for Devon at Excalibur as we finished in a close second place, just behind Kent. This was an impressive result and a truly combined effort, with every fight of every team member contributing towards the overall placing.</p> <p>As always, team selection presented some challenges, with epee teams in particular proving difficult to put together due to the scheduling of a key pentathlon event on the same weekend (which was particularly frustrating as this also took place at Bath University!). This meant that a number of the men who had previously agreed to fence became unavailable, and a couple of the ladies were only able to fence on the Saturday. Despite this, Devon managed to field a full team, and we are grateful to those who fenced through injury, travelled hundreds of miles for just one day, or picked up a different weapon to make this happen! Thank you also to Tina Black, Andy Lines and all those who advised us throughout the process.</p> <p>We had new Devon t-shirts printed this year with the County kindly covering the costs for all team members. We went with the same company as previously, as they already had the print set up and we were able to collect the order in person, making it by far the most cost effective option. In future though we would advise starting the process earlier in the year – especially if the County were to consider a different design – as the company was quite difficult to communicate with and things ended up being slightly last minute. Thank you to Greg Beacock for his help in making Devon the best dressed team at Excalibur 2019!</p> <p>It is noticeable that Devon always has a great team spirit, and it is good to see this both inside and outside of the sports hall. We carried on the tradition of having a team meal on the Saturday night – for the third year in a row the team, parents and supporters met at the Joya restaurant and had a wonderful meal together.</p> <p>2019 also seemed to be the year of the girls, as Devon picked up the following trophies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best cadet; Abagael Black • Best women’s epee individual: Tia Simms-Lymn • Best women’s epee team • Best women’s sabre individual: Iza Sosnowsa • Best women’s sabre team • Best women’s foil individual: Grace Williams <p>Well done ladies!</p> <p>Just a final thanks to all those who advised us, and to the fencers and supporters on the weekend for making it another fantastic Excalibur – here’s to more success for Devon in 2020!</p> <p>Iza and Grace</p> <p><i>There was a short discussion following the report and the following points were raised: What would help the incoming Devon Captain? A team meeting on the Saturday morning prior to fencing so that the team is prepped? A captain per weapon? Club visits had proved useful for selection. It was noted that selection could be adversely affected if Devon qualifying events were held on the same day as national ranking competitions.</i></p> <p>Congratulations were recorded to the Devon team</p>
<p>3e</p>	<p>SW rep report (Jason Ball)</p> <p>No report received.</p>

3f

Competition Secretary's report (Alex Scott)

Competitions Secretary's Report 2018- 2019

I apologise for not being present to give this report in person. I have been called up to compete for the SW Region at the Winton Cup – due to a number of clashing events rendering many better fencers unavailable – and will probably be somewhere on the M5 back from Nottingham at the time you read this.

First and most important, thanks to all those who have helped keep Devon's competitions running throughout the season. It takes a lot of roles to make the day run smoothly, and we could not do it without those who volunteer to help out, often at short notice.

Our calendar saw several changes in dates and locations between 2017 – 2018 and 2018 – 2019, some planned and some forced on us by changes in venue conditions or in the calendar at higher levels. Despite this we have maintained our full calendar of events – or with have done, assuming the Dart Pairs at the end of this month receives enough entries to be viable (Jim probably has some entry forms with him, if anyone needs one!). Thank you all for bearing with us, and I hope things will be more stable in the coming year.

Devon competitions returned to Plymouth for the first time in many years with the Buckland Handicap, and we were rewarded with a good turnout and several unexpected results. It's important that we spread our competitions around the distribution of fencers within the County rather than allowing them to cluster locally to the organisers. This is a good start to that aim, and one I hope to build on.

The Devon Open Foil was a relatively small affair, in part due to handover complications as the Westleys could no longer commit to running it. Even so, it raised a significant sum as a charity competition on behalf of Cancer Research UK, and I believe it's worth maintaining this link for the coming season.

Entry numbers at the County Championships have been roughly level year-on-year. We still make a loss on some competitions, but the profit from others is enough to keep the overall programme viable. The number of age groups at the Junior Championships always makes them awkward to organise – especial thanks to those fencers and parents for their patience. You can help by encouraging more young fencers to compete – more in your age group doesn't just mean more fencing for you, it also usually means fewer headaches for us!

The Early Bird and Master at Arms schemes continue to be well supported, albeit to varying extents in each competition. Special mention has to go to Keely Sawyer, the first person to complete a 'full house' of competing in all six Junior and Senior County Championships in one season!

As ever, while we do make every effort to avoid clashes, there are only a limited number of weekends in the year and we don't always know of everything else going on. If there are any suggestions for how we can make our competitions more accessible, or you know of any events that we should avoid, please let us know.

At last year's AGM we discussed a proposal for a Junior Teams competition. While there was interest in the principle from a range of sources, the practical and logistical aspects mean that a single Championship-type event is unlikely to be feasible or representative. Thoughts are still being given though, to a challenge up in Junior Epee and this is lined with setting up an

	<p>after school' affiliated club at Torquay Boy's Grammar School.</p> <p>Most of DCFU's competitions are currently run by myself and Jim, roughly covering the fencer-facing and venue-admin aspects respectively. I am quite conscious that this leaves the County vulnerable should either of us become unavailable for whatever reason, quite apart from the additional challenges when there are several events in loose succession. Anyone who may be interested in helping to run a competition, particularly with the venue side is therefore invited to get in touch.</p> <p>Thank you all for another year of strong competition, and I look forward to the 2019 – 2020 season.</p> <p>Alex Scott 05/07/2019</p> <p><i>There was a discussion on what could be done to increase entries for Junior competitions. It was felt that the BFA membership fees for Juniors might prohibit some fencers however there are now a number membership options for new starters and recreational fencers.</i></p> <p><i>Nigel Manning and Richard Foster volunteered to help with Junior competitions.</i></p> <p>Thanks were recorded to Alex for all his hard work</p>
<p>3g</p>	<p>Webmaster's Report (Ralph Mills)</p> <p>Ralph reported that the website is ticking over and remains an important point of contact. The Facebook page is also frequently used to convey information and to advertise events but e-mail is not currently used (see Jim's comments 3a)</p> <p>Please send Ralph anything you would like added to the DCFU website.</p>
<p>3h</p>	<p>Junior Rep Report (James White)</p> <p>Report from the Junior's Representative (James White)</p> <p>James has discussed adding more Junior events to the calendar including a junior team event.</p> <p><i>There was a brief discussion on whether there would be enough fencers of each age group to form teams and mixed age teams might be an option, but it would need to be considered if this could be done safely for younger fencers (potential for mismatch in size of weapons/ opponents etc).</i></p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Appointment of Officers</p> <p>The following committee posts were appointed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Chairperson b. Hon Secretary c. Hon treasurer

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. County Captain di. Vice Captain e. South West Representative f. Competition Secretary g. Training Secretary h. Webmaster i. Junior Rep
4a	<p>Chairperson Nominee: Ralph Mills Proposed by: JE Seconded by: LB Ralph Mills voted in as DCFU Chairperson by AGM attendees</p>
4b	<p>Hon Secretary Nominee: Jim Pilkington Proposed by: RM Seconded by: JE Jim Pilkington voted in as DCFU Hon Secretary by AGM attendees</p>
4c	<p>Hon Treasurer Nominee: Greg Beacock Proposed by: LB Seconded by: AS Greg Beacock voted in as DCFU Hon Treasurer by AGM Attendees</p>
4d	<p>County Captain Nominee: Dave Atkins Proposed by: RF Seconded by: IS Dave Atkins voted in as DCFU County Captain by AGM Attendees</p>
4di	<p>Vice Captain TBC</p>
4e	<p>South West Representative Nominee: Richard Foster Proposed by: IS Seconded by: CP Richard Foster voted in as DCFU South West Representative by AGM Attendees</p>
4f	<p>Competition Secretary Nominee: Alex Scott Proposed by: AB Seconded by: RF Alex Scott voted in as DCFU Competition Secretary by AGM Attendees</p>

4g	<p>Press Officer Nominee: Bill Berkley Proposed by: LB Seconded by: JP Bill Berkley voted in as DCFU Press Officer by AGM Attendees</p>
4h	<p>Webmaster Nominee: Ralph Mills Proposed by: JE Seconded by: AS Ralph Mills voted in as DCFU Webmaster by AGM Attendees</p>
4i	<p>Junior Representative Nominee: James White Proposed by: JP Seconded by: RM James White voted in as DCFU Junior Representative by AGM Attendees</p>
5.	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note for future meetings, items for AOB, please submit prior to meeting if possible. - The Bristol Open and Dart Pairs – please promote these upcoming competitions to your fencers
6.	<p>Date & time of next AGM</p> <p>June 2020 (Date, venue and time TBC)</p>
7.	<p>Meeting closed at 9.05 pm</p>

DEVON COUNTY FENCING UNION AGM 2019

ACTIONS FROM MEETING ON Date: 07.07.2019

Item	Action	To be completed by	Y/N
1	Clubs to send any items they want including on the DCFU website to Ralph	All clubs	