



# ENGLISH GYMNASTICS

Representing British Gymnastics Association affiliated regions:

East, East Midlands, London, North of England, North West, South, South East, South West, West Midlands and Yorkshire

## **Meeting of the English Gymnastics Association 11<sup>th</sup> July 2009, Heath Lodge Hotel, Marston Green at 10:45 a.m.**

### **Present:**

Jim Moss (Chair, W Mids), Mike Chappell (Sec.), Christine Bowker (Yorks), Kevin Flynn (E Mids), Sue James (S East), Biz Scales (South), Christine Simpkin (N West) and Mike Swallow (C. Games)

In Attendance: Mike Weinstock (C. Games Team Manager).

### **1] Apologies:**

Len Arnold (LGF), Alf Dyer (East), Dave Portas (North), Mark Gannon (CEO, BG England) and Howard Todd (ESGA).

### **2] Minutes of Last Meeting:**

Approved as a true record.

### **3] Matters Arising From the Minutes:**

**Web-site update:** At the previous meeting a proposal had been considered for the EGA site to be assimilated into a BAGA portal with a combined BG England and EGA website to be managed and administered within that environment. This was still under development. At present the EGA continues to run its own separate web-site. Jim Moss is the only person with access to this site for updates.

Should anyone require appropriate material to be uploaded then this should be sent to Jim for a quick response. The URL *englishgymnastics.org.uk* was purchased some time ago and it was felt worthwhile to place the EGA web-site under this address. It was noted that associated free email addresses are also available on request and these can be used by EGA committee members and other relevant volunteers.

### **4] English Championships:**

This item was covered by Mike Swallow and Kevin Flynn in Len Arnold's absence.

The Committee were reminded that the forthcoming English Championships for Men's and Women's Artistic are scheduled to be held at the new competition venue at New College in Leicester from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> September 2009. This event would also include Espoirs for Women's Artistic (WA) for the first time (on the Friday, 18<sup>th</sup>) with the WA and MA Seniors event to be held on the Saturday and the WA and MA Juniors competition to be held on the Sunday. The Saturday and Sunday competitions would both be full 10 piece competitions and, as such, could offer a template for similar BAGA events in the future.

Scoring for the 2009 event is still an issue, particularly with regard to the layout of the venue. It was understood that there would be manual scoring at the judges' tables with input to a spreadsheet by the master scorer. It was felt that having additional scorers at the judges' tables would be beneficial. At present Len Arnold, Mike Swallow and Trevor Low were dealing with all logistical issues regarding the competition. Kevin Flynn noted that negotiations were underway with the local Holiday Inn regarding a package for reduced price accommodation for officials for the weekend. Mike Weinstock also offered his services

to support the event.

Mark Gannon had offered the services of the BG England Development Team to support and assist with the running of the event. It was agreed that the relevant expertise of members of the team would be a useful asset. The question was raised as to who would be supporting any expenses, including accommodation, incurred by the RDOs employed and that a meeting with Mark Gannon was urgently required in order to sort out such, and other, matters.

**Action:** Len Arnold (Competition Organiser) to organise a meeting with Mark Gannon.

Mike Chappell also reported that he had received further communication from the National Rhythmic Technical Committee concerning the possibility of re-establishing an English Championships for the discipline. The discipline had hoped to possibly run a pilot competition alongside this year's Artistic event, which they believed would break even in terms of costs. However, a breakdown of likely income and expenditure had not been received before the meeting to confirm this.

The date for the 2010 English Championships was apparently as yet unclear, with the likelihood being late February or early March 2010 for the event. The date to be confirmed with BAGA.

#### **5] Regional Administrators (Update from the Regions having EGA funded posts):**

Those Regions present that had Regional Administrators in post were asked to provide feedback on how those appointed were progressing.

In general the appointments had been well received across the Regions thus far included with some excellent feedback received from the East Midlands, West Midlands and South East regions where those in post appeared to be providing great benefit to the regions, their executive committees and Regional Secretaries. The appointed person in the Yorkshire Region had only just begun in post.

However concerns were raised as to the priorities targeted and line-management in some Regions. It seemed unclear in certain cases just who precisely the regional administrator was working for. It was also unclear as to why the Regional Administrators in post were all expected to attend national Development Officer meetings held at Lilleshall. In addition it was noted that all emails now sent by Regional Administrators now carried a Gymnastics England statement/footnote. This was deemed wholly inappropriate due to the current core source of funding to support the posts being provided by the EGA and the Regions.

It was felt that, while RDOs were commonly acting as day-to-day line-managers, the corresponding Regional Executive Committee should also have a clear overview of the work performed by those in post and should also have a clear management role with regard to their Regional Administrators to ensure that the Regions and their volunteers received full benefit from the funding provided by the EGA and the Regions.

It was noted that funding to continue to support these posts beyond the initial two-year period guaranteed by the EGA would be a problem for the EGA. It was not known whether funding to support these posts beyond this period was in-built in the WSP.

Some of the Regional Administrators in post were also dealing with coaching course issues and the matter of the new Gymnastics England posts for Regional Training or Workforce Developments Officers that are funded up to half time through the WSP was discussed. Concern was raised as to whether these posts would become sustainable (particularly if part funded by Regions) especially with the extremely high, proposed costs for future UKCC coaching courses.

#### **6] Whole Sport Plan (WSP):**

No report had been received with an update on the WSP. It was understood that a synopsis

of the WSP would soon be published. Whilst it was recognised that the final proposal was based around the information provided through the individual Regional Development Plans produced for 2009-13 it was unclear what precisely had been included or what had actually been accepted by Sport England for funding through the WSP. It was understood, following a recent meeting between Gymnastics England and Regional Chairs at the GMAC in Birmingham, that RDOs had been informed about what had been agreed and that they had been tasked with informing their respective Regions as to the likely budget available and the priorities to be targeted. It was noted that no budget for Gymnastics England had yet been received by a BAGA Board. It was agreed that, in order to monitor and evaluate progress of the WSP, updates would remain as an agenda item for future EGA Committee Meetings.

### **7] Judges for England:**

Concern was raised regarding problems that had arisen during recent weeks relating to the selection of judges for the forthcoming English Championships. Emails had apparently been sent by the judge convenor to prospective judges for this competition in batches over intervals of time with certain judges seemingly receiving prior information. This had resulted in complaints from the Chair of the National WTC and other Brevet judges, concerned at a lack of inclusivity in terms of judge selection. In addition judges had apparently been requested to offer a contribution of £50 to support their involvement to the EGA when such a contribution had not been agreed by the EGA Committee as a policy. There was concern that these communications had been seen to be divisive and that considerable damage, particularly in terms of goodwill, had been caused. It was suggested that, under these circumstances, the current Judge Convenor, Karen Hofen, should be asked to step down from this role.

A proposal was made that a review should be performed regarding judge selection for EGA events and that advice on judge selection for EGA Championships and Internationals should be performed in collaboration with the National WA WTC whereby national strategic overviews could also be incorporated.

Mike Swallow expressed concern at these events and that, as Technical Co-Ordinator, he had not been privy to any of the complaints received. The judge convenor had his full support. It was stressed that no complaint had been raised against Mike Swallow.

A break was then taken in the meeting.

Upon resumption the Chair proposed that, henceforth, the EGA should link with the BAGA WTC judge panel to co-ordinate judge selection for EGA events. Karen Hofen would be thanked for the work that she had performed on behalf of the EGA, but due to the concerns raised over recent events would be asked to step down as judge convenor for WA. Christine Bowker would henceforth act on behalf of the EGA in terms of liaison with the national WTC judging panel and would oversee judging at future EGA events. This was agreed by all voting members present.

At this point Mike Swallow offered his resignation and left the meeting.

**Action:** Jim Moss and Mike Chappell to write to Mike Swallow to thank him for all the work he has performed on behalf of the EGA.

### **8] England JTC Proposals:**

This item was deferred for discussion to the next EGA Committee meeting.

### **9] Treasurer's Report:**

The Treasurer briefed members about the current situation regarding finances.

The cost of kit for EGA WA squads was discussed and proposals/suggestions were sought from those present as to how these costs might be offset by asking squad members to make a contribution towards the cost of certain items that are available. The running and organisation of future WA squads was also discussed in the light of Mike Swallow's

resignation. These issues and the possible appointment of a squad administrator would be discussed further when all were present at the next squad session at Ipswich in October 2009.

A budget forecast for 2009/10 was also discussed with indicators of possible expenditure.

**10] Secretary's Report:**

Aside from the communications received by the Secretary discussed in earlier sections the only item raised concerned the evident lack of communication received from Gymnastics England by the Secretary over recent months. This matter to be raised with Mark Gannon.

**11] Commonwealth Games (Update):**

Mike Weinstock provided a verbal report. The main items raised included the following: The dates for the Commonwealth Games in India have been fixed for 3<sup>rd</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> October 2010. As yet there was no information regarding a holding camp prior to the Games, normally teams would travel one to two weeks in advance of the event. Control competitions for selection have been agreed for the Artistic teams, including both EGA and BAGA National Championships. Ultimately the Commonwealth Games Council for England will require a long list of nominated competitors for the Games. There is a Team Managers' meeting scheduled for September and two advanced planning visits to India are scheduled, the first in late October 2009. Plans for the Games Village look extremely good, however there is concern over the competition facilities. The selection of artistic gymnastics teams for all of the Home Countries will also depend upon GB selection criteria for World Championships that are taking place close to the Commonwealth Games period. Adrian Stan will draw up clearly defined selection criteria for BG that will then dovetail will subsequent HC selection. There is a lot of paperwork involved, but the England team organisational infrastructure is excellent. It is understood that there are numerous opportunities for potential sponsorship for the England team and these need to be nurtured.

Kevin Flynn enquired regarding costs and it was understood that the Commonwealth Games Council for England would cover the costs of any advanced visits to India.

Jim Moss thanked Mike for his report and for attending the meeting.

**12] Any other Relevant Business:**

Jim Moss noted that two EGA WA squad members had taken part in the recent World Student Games and read out a letter from the coach of one of these gymnasts thanking the EGA for their support and the positive impetus and encouragement that EGA squad membership and participation in International events for England had provided for this gymnast.

The meeting closed at 2:30p.m.

**11] Date of Next Meeting:**

The next EGA Management Committee meeting will take place on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2009 at the Heath Lodge Hotel, Marston Green at 10:45 a.m..

***If no remarks are addressed to the Chairman by 20<sup>th</sup> August 2009, these Minutes will be considered to be Adopted and signed immediately by the Chairman (as Chair of the Meeting) as a true record of proceedings***