

West Midland Young Athletes Cross Country League
Minutes of Committee Meeting
Wednesday 23rd March 2022 at 7.30pm at Nuneaton Harriers AC

1. Apologies - Paul Hawkins, Wendy Kane, Noel Mckakly, Dani Sedgley, Bob Carey, Eleanor Nabney
Attendees – Noel Butler, Ray Morgan, Colin Fox
2. Review of season - See various Committee members' reports below.
3. Treasurer's Report
Noel Butler will coordinate with Mark Bullock in time for the AGM.
4. Proposed Dates for 2022/23
If we use the recommended League weekends then we shall compete on Sunday 16th Oct, Sunday 13th Nov, and Sunday 5th December. The recommended dates for 2023 are not available yet. Ray Morgan will find out what they are in time for the AGM.
5. Sponsorship:
Our 2021/22 sponsor was SportsWearDeals (Vince Wilson) who agreed to pay £100 per match that he attends up to £400 for the season. For next season Vince has agreed to pay a minimum of £300 and maximum of £500 depending on how many matches he attends. Noel Butler has received an alternative offer from Vince Cadwallader for £700 in return for advertising hoodies on the League web site and a pitch on the day. Noel will discuss further with both potential sponsors.
6. AGM
The AGM will be held on Monday 23rd May at the RSCAC Clubroom starting at 7.30pm
Some proposed rule changes for next season have been circulated. No objections as yet.
Accelerate – Youth Running Club has applied to join the League. The meeting agreed to take their application forward to the AGM with a recommendation to accept it.
Proposed Officers for next season
 - i. Chair: Noel Butler (Leamington C&AC)
 - ii. Secretary: Tracy Cresswell (Wolverhampton & B AC)
 - iii. Treasurer: Donna Tompkins (Cannock & Stafford AC)
 - iv. Registration Sec: Bob Hughes (Cannock & Stafford AC)
 - v. Results Sec: Ray Morgan (Leamington C&AC)
 - vi. Officials Sec: Noel Mckakly (Wolverhampton & B AC)
 - vii. Trophies Sec: Eleanor Nabney (Coventry Godiva Harriers)
 - viii. Website Manager: John Constandinou (Birchfield Harriers)
 - ix. Social Media Sec: Danny Sedgley (Tipton Harriers)
 - x. Referee: See next item.

7. Any other business

- a. Noel Mckakly, Officials Sec, would like to try using more than one referee over the season. This is a matter for the Management Committee rather than the AGM. It was agreed that we will trial this next season.
- b. Chip timing – Ray Morgan gave a presentation on the advantages and disadvantages of chip timing against using funnels. The same presentation will be given later to Noel Mckakly, Wendy Kane and any potential referees for next season.
- c. Ray Morgan will ask the AGM for a view on athletes registering themselves as against Clubs registering their teams. If the feedback is positive, then Ray will do a more detailed proposition.
- d. Note that the League will reach its 50th anniversary in 2025/26
- e. The meeting agreed that it would be better if a single Club took responsibility for placing and recovering the League flags in return for not providing three volunteers through the season (as Sparkhill Harriers has done in the past).

The League Officers reports and the application from Accelerate are attached below but they have been circulated previously

Ray Morgan, Acting Secretary

Date 23/03/2022

WMYACCL
Chair's report to the AGM on 23rd May 2022
Season 2021 - 2022

It was so good to get back running over the country last winter. Numbers were the lowest for many years, but this was to be expected as some people were still apprehensive about large gatherings and we had missed a whole year of new athletes in the under 11 age category. Nevertheless, those who did run had a great season.

There were times it looked as if we were not going to be able to have our usual five fixtures as some land owners were not keen to have large numbers from a large area congregate on their land but thanks to the host clubs we did get all five races in. Our thanks go out to those clubs and also to the officials who ensure the races are conducted correctly. Without them we would not have a league. Wendy Kane had an excellent first year as referee but has informed us that the five fixtures increases her workload during the season to a level that is unsustainable though she has offered to referee some fixtures next season. Your committee will discuss this and hopefully bring a solution to the AGM.

To ensure the league continues to thrive we need more clubs to host and to recruit more officials. All clubs should see what they can do to support this.

As you all know I took over as Acting Chair at the beginning of the season because Paul Hawkins was seriously ill. I had previously been chair for 7 seasons from 2009 to 2016 and the league is very important to me so I was delighted I could help.

I am pleased to advise that Paul is recovering but he has decided that he cannot do the job to the level he would want to, so will not be returning as Chair. I am sure you will all join me to place on record the league's thanks to Paul for all he has done for the League while he was Chair and wish him well for the future. In addition to Paul, Mark Bullock our Treasurer and Bob Carey our Trophies Secretary are standing down and again can I record all our thanks to them for what they have done to make the league a success. On top of this, we also need to find a Secretary as Ray Morgan has been doing this as Acting Secretary this season because Dani Sedgley stood down to concentrate of her Social Media role for the league.

Filling these vacancies is key if the league is to continue and I am pleased to advise you that we have found volunteers for all the positions. Tracey Cresswell from Wolverhampton & Bilston is standing as Secretary, Donna Tompkins (Cannock & Stafford) is standing as Treasurer and Eleanor Nabney (Coventry Godiva Harriers) is standing as Trophies Secretary. We are very fortunate to have filled these very important posts.

I was always going to be a short term replacement for Paul but as he is not standing again and we have three new officers in key positions I am willing to stand again next season to allow them to settle in before a new Chair is elected. Obviously, if there is a willing volunteer for Chair this year, I am more than happy to stand down.

Finally I must thank our sponsor Vince Wilson of Sportswear Deals for all his support for junior cross country which I know is dear to his heart.

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM.

Noel Butler
Acting Chair

WMYACCL
“Starters” notes from Colin Fox
Season 2021 - 2022

To say that being asked to act as the starter for the first two races came as something of a surprise to me, something that I had only done in an emergency twice or three times before. The method used was/is a field events warning horn, me not being a “real” starter and therefore not about to use a gun.

Being both new to our jobs Wendy and I worked out just how we would operate. After a very small hiccup at the very first race at Newton Revel, my fault, all has appeared to have gone off smoothly.

Again I was surprised to be asked to be asked to carry on for the balance of the season as it would seem that Craig could not guarantee to be there.

With one race, Nuneaton, still to go, if asked I would be quite happy, should Craig not be available, to carry on or stand it when required.

As for the white line marker we still have 7 cans of paint in the box in my garage. As usual it will be my intention to give it a good clean and grease up over the summer.

Colin Fox

WMYACCL
Results notes from Ray Morgan
Season 2021 - 2022

The big change for the last was season was the new chip timing provider. We reverted to buying in the whole service and changed to Tempo Events who are closely associated with Stratford upon Avon AC. The results for the whole season worked very well (big thank you to Sarah, Paddy and Tempo) although we have to accept that chip timing technology is not as perfect as people assume and therefore the chip results are always “provisional until checked”. I have a presentation on this subject.

There were very few late declarations or lost number replacements on the day perhaps because numbers were down generally in common with every athletics event I have attended in recent months. We may be coming out of the Covid crisis but the effects are still being felt in reduced numbers of participants. We introduced a new rule to not allow any on-the-day-declarations at the last meeting and that was accepted by the clubs, worked well and achieved the aim of reducing unnecessary distractions while we are trying to do results and awards.

If numbers pick up and if we continue to allow declarations after the cut off for printed vest numbers up until the Saturday then the work involved may be prohibitive. We should keep this under review but the alternatives are

- (1) To be very rigid with declarations after a certain point
- (2) To charge a “fine” earlier than just on the day.
- (3) We should also consider asking athletes to register themselves which has an added benefit of being able to communicate directly with them rather than only to team managers

We have now established a less formal and less complicated finish layout and the format at Walsall and Nuneaton were better because the marshals were behind the mats which left a free view for the camera. It would help if the tape at the finish was slightly lower on the stakes so that it doesn't block the view – also no big mesh !!

Ray Morgan
5/3/2022

WMYACCL
Medals and Trophies notes from Bob Carey
Season 2021 - 2022

With Covid preventing the league from taking place the previous season, I decided to ignore the league rule stating that previous trophy winners must return their trophies (shields) at the third race, of the current season. As they had already held the shields for close on twenty months, I decided to take the pressure off slightly and start collecting them in from the very first race at Newbold Revell. I was able to collect almost all of them on that first day, and I would like to thank all the clubs and individual winners for their cooperation.

On the day of the final race at Nuneaton, as we all know, the weather was not as kind as it might have been. When I arrived ready to unload the medals and shields into a tent, I was advised by Ray Morgan that I should instead set up in the club room as two or three tents had already blown away!! This I did, where together with my wife Jo', we were able to do the presentations in the dry and warm conditions. The only snag being the distance between the finish & results van, and the presentation area, caused some slight delays as communication using mobile phones was not very successful and so we had to rely on "runners" bringing us results on paper. But it was not a serious problem.

At the end of the day, we were left with one complete set of team medals and just two individual medals. The team medals were promptly taken to the club concerned within three days while, as I write this report, I still have the individual medals with no one enquiring about them. There were four instances where youngsters tied on points. This of course resulted in one of the youngsters not being given the engraved medal. It was a case of who arrived at the presentation first. But I always order five spare un-engraved medals just in case of that happening and so all went home with a medal. I then asked the suppliers of the medals for engraved strips that I could send to these four individuals which I have now done.

Five clubs contacted me in the following week to ask for extra medals. Some were entitled to free extra medals as they had more than eight or five scorers over the season. But most of them wanted medals for athletes that had not scored for them, but wanted to "reward" them for taking part. The medals that we present nowadays are very popular, resulting in this tendency to give them to their athletes regardless of where they finish in the league. The cost to the league has gone up quite considerably since before Covid and so we now need to charge £5 for each of these "extra" medals.

The clubs who have asked for extra medals **that need to be paid for** are as below.

Stratford AC :-	7 off under 15 Girls and 2 off under 15 boys	<u>Total 9 off.</u>
B.R.A.T. :-	2 off under 17 men.	<u>Total 2 off.</u>
Tipton:-	3 off under 17 women and 4 off under 15 boys	<u>Total 7 off</u>
Birchfield H:-	2 off under 15 boys.	<u>Total 2 off.</u>

Rugby and Northampton will be dealing with the suppliers direct as they have a large order, and at the time of writing this report I think Royal Sutton Coldfield will be doing the same. Wolves and Bilston are not asking for any extra medals.

I have told the clubs asking for extra medals that need to be paid for, that the cost, at five pounds each, will be added to next season's subscriptions.

Bob Carey
5/3/2022

WMYACCL
Registration from Bob Hughes
Season 2021 - 2022

Hi all,

This season as in the past seasons I have not encountered any major problems, the numbers at the beginning of the season were ordered well in advance by Ray and during the season athletes entered the weekend before the meeting are ordered and are delivered during the week, this means that the clubs have always been able to collect the numbers on the day.

The system for on the day entries and forgotten or lost numbers seems to have worked quite well although I have to ask sometimes that they fill the forms in properly for new entries with dates of birth and EA registration licence numbers.

This season I have been using an official registration tent (when the weather allowed) so pitching it in the club tent area team managers know exactly where to go to declare any changes to their teams.

Hopefully the number of athletes entered for next season sees an increase.

Thanks,
Yours in Sport
Bob H
6/3/2022

WMYACCL
Web site from John Constandinou
Season 2021 - 2022

(I have edited a mail from John to fit this context – Ray)

I haven't migrated the website to a new server yet, although I do have a new server set up and running. There are a few technical features stopping me transferring it across. Once I have come up with an alternative solution for those technical issues, then I will be able to transfer the website in hours. I aim to solve these problems within the next two months.

Regarding the web site historic information; PDF files are preferable, as they are much smaller in size and more compatible with most devices. A pdf can always be converted into an excel file again, although it may not look identical to the original layout. We have to decide who/where should keep original formats, but they should not be on the website as the space on a web server is limited.

Sorry that I have had an extremely busy few months - I even got married a few days ago, and am currently in Scotland on my honeymoon!

Regards,
John Constandinou
16/03/2022

WMYACCL
Officials from Noel Mckakly
Season 2021 - 2022

Prior to the start of the season I sent an email to all the endurance officials who have officiated for the league in previous years to see if they were willing to help at our fixtures for the forthcoming season. Having missed the whole of the previous season I was unsure if we would have enough officials but in the end I was pleased to receive a sufficient response when all the availability replies were returned.

Wendy Kane would be the Referee this season and she confirmed this prior to the start of the season. My main job was to ensure we had enough officials and funnel marshals at each meeting. On the day they would report to myself for a briefing, each official would be given officiating duties that would include judging /recording athletes at the finish and acting as starters assistant at the start.

The nominated clubs on the funnel marshal rota had to provide three volunteers for each fixture. Funnel marshals were instructed to keep the athletes moving quickly through the finish area. Apart from two clubs who only supplied one and two volunteers the remaining clubs all provided the three volunteers during the season.

All the endurance officials that volunteered for each fixture turned up and carried out their duties. We had two new endurance officials Steve Webb and Andrew Maiden that attended our fixtures for the first time this season and I was pleased to hear that they have now achieved their accreditation Andrew Level 1 Steve Level 2 endurance official. Also congratulations to Wendy Kane who also qualified as level 3 endurance official all thanks to the experience they attained at our meetings. In total we had 15 endurance officials over the five fixtures which was sufficient. The final meeting at Nuneaton we were low on numbers with only six endurance officials due to a fixture clash with the Birmingham Indoor Games taking place on the same day.

From my perspective I had no major issues in my role during the season. I would also like to thank all the officials' marshals, results team, and hosting clubs for putting on a fixture this season. It was a pleasure to see cross country racing back on again after the break due to the pandemic.

Recommendations – I would now suggest clubs nominated for funnel marshal duties should only need to provide two funnel marshals not three of which one MUST be a female. We currently have nine marshals in the funnel area and six marshals should be enough from my view at the finish area.

Noel Mckakly
Officials Secretary
6th March 2022

WMYACCL
Referee's race reports from Wendy Kane
Season 2021 - 2022

RACE 1: 17.10.2021 – NEWBOLD REVELL

A venue that hadn't been used for sometime but well organised and planned by Rugby & Northants. Not as many racing as I had expected but with such a long time since previous race – it was expected.

There was one young person who didn't have a club vest on. I did chat with her and explain that for next time this would be a necessity and informed her of where this could be obtained from.

An issue with RSAC and lads putting their arms out as they crossed the finish line. Spoke with their team manager and this will be addressed.

RACE 2: 14.11.2021 – WARLEY WOODS

A great course – which was challenging for the athletes and provided a number of casualties in first aid. At the end of the races – still had one young lady who looked very pale and totally exhausted. Was collected by her mother and put into her car at the tent. Another young man was in pain with stomach issues. He was walked to the car, which again, had been brought to the first aid area.

One issue with a young man allegedly trying to stop an athlete passing (U11B). Spoke to his coach he had a chat with him with parent present. Matter dealt with and all parties happy. Also disqualification in U17M for someone not wearing a club vest.

RACE 3: 5.12.2021 – ALDERSLEY LEISURE VILLAGE

Another good course. One young person disqualified for not having the correct number on.

No first aid issues.

RACE 4: 16.1.2022 – WALSALL ARBORETUM

Organised jointly by Birchfield and Royal Sutton. Good course with lots of space for tents etc. Concerned about the male urinals – open tent at front and back and looked far too exposed for safeguarding purposes. If venue is used again – that needs to be addressed.

No first aid issues.

RACE 5: 20.2.2022 – PINGLES STADIUM

Organised by Nuneaton with similar course used prior to covid. Course needs matting to go across the pavement areas. Insufficient first aid – Nick was told that 2 were needed – I asked him to find another but that didn't happen and the first aider was asked too but he didn't do anything about it. I had problems contacting Nick to sort out walking the course, paperwork etc. At start of day I asked for additional marshal to be put on the craft centre car park pedestrian entrance onto the field – Nick promised but it never happened. That is needed if that venue is to be used again. The start of all the races have far too many athletes together round the first bend whilst pedestrians are trying to get onto the course.

One incident with a young man from Stratford (U17) race. His language at the start line was inappropriate. I spoke to him at the end – didn't DQ him but said that wouldn't be tolerated and if used again – he would be DQ'd.

No first aid issues.

Overall, we have been blessed with relatively decent weather, and very few incidents.

Many thanks to all those who have officiated, marshalled and helped in any way.

In terms of my involvement – I have spoken with Noel M regarding this and I don't wish to carry on in this role. I have found the 5 fixtures too much. I am happy to do 2 of the closer fixtures if that helps out. However, if one person wants to take on all 5 fixtures - that is fine with me. I am just trying to come up with a workable solution.

Wendy Kane
Race Referee
7/3/2022

WMYACCL
Referee's season report (summary) from Wendy Kane
Season 2021 - 2022

This season we have been blessed to have been able to hold all the league fixtures. Two new venues (Newbold Revell and Walsall Arboretum) have proved to bring added fun to the established venues (Warley Woods, Aldersley and Pingles). All venues have worked well and had elements that have been challenging to the athletes. A massive thank you to all the Clubs that have hosted fixtures – it is not an easy job but it is rewarding. These venues are not set in stone so other Clubs are welcome to host fixtures.

The year has seen a great number of athletes competing, however, the numbers did seem lower than prior covid. There have been very few incidents to deal with. First aid were busy at Warley – but barely nothing at other fixtures. It is worth reminding hosts that there has to be a minimum of 2 first aiders at every fixture – this is a league rule. There have been disqualifications over numbers and vest, a warning was given to an athlete over foul language and a couple of conversations had over vests.

Officials have been fantastic as have the funnel marshals. We have had them in abundance although slightly fewer officials in the last fixture. Big thanks to Noel for sorting all this side of things out.

As usual our admin team doing results, capturing the races on video, sorting numbers, presentations etc were also a blessing so my sincere thanks to those folks too.

Wendy Kane
7th March 2022

WMYACCL
Submission from Accelerate – Youth Running Club
Item 7.c. on the agenda

Received by e-mail:-

Dear Ray

Thank you for your email below.

In response to your questions, I confirm the following:-

- We do have a club strip which is a black vest with double diagonal electric orange strips and a club badge;
- You can contact Rebecca Adams or myself (Kerendee Kang) about any League business;
- In terms of the website, you can put Rebecca Adams (07779 794961 bekiea@hotmail.com) and myself Kerendee Kang (07557 883 695 email address kezgarcha@hotmail.com) as persons to contact;
- Our club is England Athletics affiliated;
- We will ensure that we have appropriately qualified technical officials in time for the 2022 league. Please could you confirm if the courses are run by England Athletics.
- Please find attached letter explaining why we want to join the League and what we can bring to the League.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards
Kerendee

See also the letter which accompanied that mail – in separate document.