

**ENGLAND MGA
MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD
AT 22a KENILWORTH ROAD, BALSALL COMMON CV7 7EY
BY KIND INVITATION OF LES AND LINDA EDWARDS
AT 7.00pm ON SUNDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2015**

Present: Paul Adcock, Les Edwards, Alastair Elliott, David Ridler (Chair), John Scott, Malcolm Trevor Jones
Apologies: Dawn Stamp, Marcus Capel, Jess Hindle, Matt Fullbrook, Shelley Aylott
In Attendance: Nikki Carter

General Matters

The minutes of the last meeting held on 30 August had been circulated and agreed.

It was noted that decisions were difficult to make in the absence of any accounts information, although it was believed that the England show and trial had made c£5,000-£6,000 and David Ridler had donated £1,200. This money had been used to pay the costs of contributions to riders' kit, leaving the £10,000 donated by the North and South intact to cover entry fees due before team selection. All the accounts have to be submitted to MGAGB for audit by 30 November, Concern was expressed that the England Committee would not have an opportunity to approve the accounts prior to submission. [Nikki Carter was asked to write to Matt Fullbrook requesting accounts within a week or the return of all bank and account information to allow David Ridler's colleague to complete the accounts before submission to MGAGB](#)

Kit costs for selected riders in 2015 had been c£5,600 rather than the estimated £3,500 due to the number of teams and individual riders taking part. Only those selected by England received help, not those riding as wildcards. ***It was agreed that a "contribution" towards the costs of selected riders in 2016 would be made but that the amount could not be specified.***

Elections for officers of England MGA would be held at the AGM to be held at the Spring Championships. Due to resignations the posts of Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary have to be filled and the Riders' Rep is elected annually. If David Ridler intends to stand as Chairman he would have to resign, as Vice-Chairman and it would make the election process far easier if he did this well in advance of the election process commencing. The process is that nominations have to be received 21 days prior to the meeting and if there were no nomination received by that date nominations could be taken from the floor of the meeting. [Nikki Carter was asked to write to all England members in January explaining the process. This would be followed up with monthly emails reminding members of deadlines.](#)

There was heated discussion about the recent MGAGB disciplinary hearing after which Alastair Elliott had received a written warning for foul and abusive language to another member of the Association. David Ridler had written to Mary Worth and to the England Committee stating that he cannot work with someone found guilty of lying as he had said that he had not done so. Points raised included:

- The Southern Region Chair had said that Alastair was a southern representative and that if the England Committee wanted to remove him that would have to be their decision.
- The committee needs to act together, so if a member of the committee feels that they are unable to work with another elected or appointed member of the committee then one of them should resign. Alastair Elliott stated that he would be happy to resign if the Committee so wished and would bear no ill feelings against anyone who voted for his removal. The meeting did not wish to remove him from the committee
- It didn't matter what people's personal feelings were, the Southern and Northern representatives were elected/appointed by their region and consequently only their committee could remove them.
- A disciplinary hearing should have been held within 21 days of the incident, not several months later. If the offence had been committed, it was outside the meeting. Another member had sworn and threatened physical violence against a member at the meeting but no action had been taken.
- Is this argument more of the battle between those who have been running the selection process and winning for many years and who no longer have children competing and those who want to change the sport, setting up new processes, but whose action were often viewed as an effort to get their own children on the teams.
- The best committees work at things and try things. They might make mistakes but do not stick with what they always done
- The North and South are now working together which no one believed possible
- There had already been too many resignations whether or not they were to do with alleged abuse or other matters.

It was agreed that under the constitution, regions had the right to appoint whom they wished as representatives on the England Committee. Representatives may well be changed at meetings of the North and South due to be held in the next few weeks. In the meantime committee members need to move on and work together

European Championships 2017

It was questioned who would be liable for any loss made by the event. It was noted that although England were the organisers, all funds owned by England in fact belonged to MGAGB so MGAGB would have to bear the cost of any loss. When Northern Ireland had run the Europeans in 2011 there had been a loss of c£5,000 due to stabling costs and this have been paid by MGAGB.

David Ridler had produced a summary of options and a basic profit and loss for the competition (subject to venue choice) produced summary of options. It was believed that there would be c14 team entries in open and U17 with 10 in U14 and U12 (In 2015 there were 14,12, 10 and 8 team entries respectively). It was agreed that the financial aim was to run a good competition and make a small profit. It was noted that IMGA requirements were that no profit be made from the riders.

It was agreed that if an all-weather arena was to be used, Stoneleigh was the only possible venue. This would be expensive due to their addition of costs. The site would not be

exclusively ours due to other events on the showground. A bar/marquee would need to be placed above the arena, but would have to be run by the (expensive) catering franchise holders.

If the competition were to be on grass then two arenas would be required (or three if U17 individuals were held). There was discussion on the benefits and disadvantages of plug and play or open field venues

Plug and Play: Franchised caterers and bars with fixed closing times, facilities like water, toilets and showers on site. Greater cost

Open field: no restrictions on activity but far more work to set up and take down plus (many more volunteers needed) generally greater disruption due to weather.

Specific venues were discussed and potential problems considered including Peterborough (speedway meetings), Lincoln (costs, main arena too small), Newark (building second ring on runway, have Cedric Ford pavilion for gala ball, have extra rings). ***The final decision was for Newark as first choice venue for European Championships 2017, with Stoneleigh as second choice***

The venue would need to be booked for 7/8 days. It was believed Mary Worth had the best contacts and would be asked to contact the venues for availability and prices. The competition would be held in July or August (the only confirmed date in 2017 at present is the Royal Welsh (17&18 July). [David Ridler would contact Mary Worth and ask her to get prices/dates for each venue, preferably before the IMGA meeting in December](#)

Sponsorship would be sought. British Sugar has a large beet mill in Newark and it is believed BOCM had a mill in the area. [David Ridler agreed to investigate support from them and from his personal business contacts](#)

It was noted that MGAGB had not put forward to organise any IMGA sanctioned event in 2018 due to the increasing demands by IMGA

Costs could be covered by the entry fees for the competition which are paid in two stages – generally 50% by March(ish) and the balance c 4 weeks before the competition

Competitors would be offered the option of corralling rather than stabling with the entry fee reduced accordingly.

There would be no U12 or U14 individual competitions held. These had been introduced as an unofficial competition to occupy a ring at the original venue of the 2015 championships. An U17 individual competition might be held, but would require an additional ring.

It was agreed that once a venue and dates had been agreed a small sub-committee would be appointed to organise the event. They would have the power to sub-delegate aspects of the completion to others.

Selection Process 2015.

27 responses had been received to the survey (17 named, 6 anonymous (name known), 3 anonymous (not named) and 1 well after final closing date, from c1,250 members. This was not felt to be representative of the membership, nor did the views reflect those personally expressed throughout the season to committee members.

Ranking of statements

Most important

1 To win at all age groups across all international events (ranked top by 4 of 15)

2 To provide a fair and transparent selection process (ranked top by 2 of 15)

3 To raise the standards of riding for all England Riders (ranked top by 3 of 15 and bottom by 1)

Least important

8. To actively encourage riders by giving positive feedback to all after the selection process is over (ranked top by no-one, bottom by 5)

7 To subsidise the cost for the rider /parents/trainers representing England (ranked top by 1 of 15, bottom by 9)

Asked about agreement/disagreement with various statements responses (below) were sometimes contradictory, particularly since feedback was considered the least important in stage 1 of the feedback yet over 50% are now strongly in favour of it. An Order of Merit was favoured by 14% and opposed by 43% yet selection from gathering results in the year to selection (surely the same thing) was favoured by 33% and opposed by 10%.

	% STRONGLY IN FAVOUR	% STRONGLY OPPOSED
To pick top trainers	60%	0%
To encourage support/advice for riders from senior riders/trainers	57%	0%
To have trainers involved in selection	55%	10%
To provide written feedback	52%	14%
Use a scoring process at a trial which enables selectors to grade riders	48%	19%
To use a combination of both events and a trial to select the teams	48%	10%
To have trainers subsidised to go to events	40%	10%
To Separate process makers from selectors	39%	6%
To have a trial	38%	5%
The process is improving	38%	10%
Selection only from gathering results/notes from the annual events	33%	10%
To use a mixture of Individuals, pairs and team games at a trial event	33%	29%
To improve team spirit and provide team building events	29%	5%
To look at riders at events to send them to a trial	20%	10%
Selection from viewing them at events leading up to selection	19%	19%
Use an Order of Merit and other data from events during the season	14%	43%

There then followed in depth discussion on the selection process, the performance of individual selectors, trainers and riders and ways in which the process could/should be changed in 2016. Items raised included:

- Some riders were shortlisted for trail having not been seen by selectors at events. Selectors need to attend all selection events.
- Use of a scoring system (0,1,2 – error, correct, superb) was not consistent between selectors, some applied 2's too often. The use of scoring should be as an aide

memoire for selectors to help in writing feedback etc. It was not necessarily the five highest scoring riders who would be selected, but a team would be selected were riders' skills complimented each other.

- It was felt that it is essential for team members and their parents to get on with one another as conflict ruins a team's performance.
- Scoring enables feedback to be written quickly as it highlights inaccuracies. Arbiters should have written all feedback (positive) but some did not. Feedback requests wwre received as shown below. Of these no open rider was given feedback and 1 U17 rider has yet to receive feedback

	NOT AT TRIAL	AT TRIAL
U12	-	2
U14	-	6
U17	6	3
Open	1	1

- Some selectors failed to respond to requests for information or reply to any emails.
- At the trial selectors were told to watch only one lane so were unable to compare riders in different groups.
- There was discussion about whether England Committee members could also be selectors/trainers. It was agreed that here were few enough volunteers wishing to be selectors etc, so England Committee members could also apply to be selectors and/or trainers.
- Concern was expressed that some selectors had owned/sold/trained some of the ponies that were in their selection group. It was felt that although this was a potential source for bias it could not be avoided in a small sport.
- Trainers should be involved in the selection process and has a casting vote if necessary. The trainers could also act as arbiters for the selection process, keeping the records and sending the requested feedback to the secretary for dissemination.
- Selectors should be chosen without reference to whether they were Northern or Southern
- ***The selection process for 2016 would be based on watching riders at the Spring Champs (9/10 April, English Championships (23/24 April) and Champions of Shropshire (1/2 May). Riders would be invited to come for trial on 21/22 May***
- Trials would be much smaller than in 2015, with c10 riders trailing in the U12 and U14 age group and slightly more in U17 and Open, depending on whether riders put down to do one, two or three teams.
- Trials for European Individuals (and potentially World Individuals) would be held by an individual competition held over two sessions at the England Trial. Riders would be expected to put the team before the individuals
- Riders could put forward more than one pony for team selection with the selectors choosing which pony they wanted for trial.
- The trail would not be videoed. Last year there were insufficient helpers with Matt Fullbrook running catering and David Ridler the box.
- Feedback would only be provided for riders who made the trial, not those who failed to do so.
- It was agreed that teams would be selected as quickly as possible to enable England teams to ride together at competitions.

- It was noted that entries for all England teams had been made to the Northern Challenge and special rosettes ordered for them. Only one team had turned up, making a lot of effort and a financial loss for the Northern Challenge. Teams need to be better organised and probably compete together at least twice. The England Committee will need appoint a delegated individual to organize this element as John Scott was seriously let down last year and no communication was made to him as to the reasons why.
- At present the reserve rider in a team pays the cost of a gold package and the five selected riders then pay the balance of the team entry fee, thus covering the package for the trainer. It was suggested that the event is expensive for the riders anyway and that the England Committee should pay the equivalent cost of a gold package for the trainer.
- David Ridler would revise the trial protocol document and circulate for comment to the committee
- Nikki Carter would send an email to all England members asking people to put their names forward to be selectors, trainers or to ride for England and also for volunteers to help organise the European Championships. Names should be received by 1 January

English Championships 2016

It was decided that this competition should be organised by the team organising the ETC 2017 as a trial run out, so consequently the best venue would be at Newark. This might prove very short notice for the committee, so other help may be needed from the committee

- David Ridler would ask Mary Worth to help book Newark showground for the competition and to get more help and to get more help for the English Championships the Subcommittee will also need to decide on the show format and style

IMGA Meeting 2015

Nikki Carter was attending the meeting in Dublin on 5/6 December and would report on progress for the 2017 ETC.

She requested guidance on some voting issues and was advised to vote for herself, Davy Quinn, Alun Whitney and Rob Lockyer for competition referees

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held in January