



EAST DEVON REFEREES' ASSOCIATION

Shaun Mann
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Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the EDRA held on Thursday 28th October 2021

1. Present:

Shaun Mann, Adrian Bond, Graeme Martin, Ray Lloyd, Ashley Horn, Malcolm Stone, Gordon Richards, Keith Mann

2. Apologies.

Apologies received from: Dennis Bean, Graham Blackburn

3. Presidents Opening Remarks.

The President welcomed all to the meeting and hoped that all members and their families remained in good health throughout the pandemic and going forward. He also expressed his hopes that the branch will find itself in a positive place going forward and was looking forward to hearing about the future plans for the branch.

4. Chairman's Report & Opening Remarks.

Good Evening all and welcome to the first meeting of the 2021/2022 season. Firstly I hope all members have been able to stay safe and well. I have no doubt that some members will have experienced the effect of the pandemic either through personal illness or through relatives/friends being affected; I sincerely hope all involved have had a successful outcome. Due to the current world situation we find ourselves in we are certainly living a different way to how we did 18 months. This is apparent when you consider the last EDRA meeting held was a Zoom meeting in October 2020! During the past 12 months our active members will have had to contend with different arrangements at their games for example in terms of the use of changing rooms, socializing after a game and match fee payments to name just a few. The EDRA have also had to try and adapt to these indifferent times. Sadly the Zoom meetings didn't really get off the ground. I fully understand our members have other social commitments and are potentially committee members with other associations however I feel with current situation it is imperative that we attract as many old & new members to sustain the east branch of the RA. The emphasis I feel needs to be focused towards new referees which hopefully would sustain numbers for the future and create officers for the committee at a later date. We have to accept that in this wonderful world of technology, training information and practical advice is readily available on several different platforms such as IFAB or the National RA therefore as a collective ALL members regardless of position or status within the branch needs to take some responsibility and offer as many new ideas or maybe suggest some tried and tested ideas to maintain the future of the branch. As a committee once we have closed off the AGM formalities as a meeting wasn't held in June we will need to discuss the format of future meetings are they to be held monthly, Bi-Monthly, In-House here at Topsham Town or Zoom. Once again I would personally like to thank our secretary Shaun for his help & support over the past 12 months and wish all active members a successful 20/21 season.

Final point from me is a note to all committee members whilst we have several items to discuss committee meeting will finish 1945hrs latest this will allow the training officer to prepare prior to the training session.

Many Thanks

5. Secretary's Report

As secretary of the branch, Shaun noted just how difficult the last 18 months to 2 years has been for the branch due to COVID-19 and the restrictions that have been in place. Initially the branch did try to continue with virtual meetings, but these were poorly attended and were stopped in October 2020. This has been disheartening for the secretary and it is believed that the committee should seriously consider how meetings are carried out in the future in terms of frequency, dates, and content. While the secretary is willing to remain in post, he would welcome anyone who would like to put step forward for the role or to shadow and understand the work involved. Secretary also apologized that contact may well have dropped off throughout 2020 and this was due to a perceived lack of interest from members, restrictions remaining in place and personal circumstances. Shaun is looking forward to seeing where the committee and all members want to take the branch going forward and hopes that we can begin to regain the levels of interest back to pre-pandemic levels.

6. Treasurers Report

Current Account £ 358.76

Reserve Account £1,497.61

Total £1,856.47

Graeme advised that the annual accounts still need to be done and this will be actioned shortly. It was also mentioned by SM that some members had enquired about paying their membership via online banking. Treasurer advised that while this can be done, payment by cash or cheque is preferred as to check online payments, the Treasurer would have to visit the bank twice which is time consuming and not practical. Committee asked if the branch could look to update to online banking which we do not currently have due to the type of account held. Treasurer advised he will visit the bank to see if this would be possible.

Treasurer also queried of the previous list of Vice Presidents of the branch remains unchanged to arrange their membership. Secretary will check the records and update the Treasurer.

Matters Arising/Correspondence

- There has been limited contact from the RA on a national level during the pandemic and correspondence has related to online training sessions with emails being sent to all members directly.
- Recent email from Rich Mason regarding a training course for mentors. FA are looking to hold a Mentor Workshop in Devon and this is aimed at new mentors but could prove to be useful as a refresher for existing mentors. Anyone interested in attending should contact Richard Mason.
- Dennis Bean – 50 years of service → Dennis recently contacted the secretary to advise that he discovered he has completed 50 years of service within the RA and enquired about sending over a form which needs to be signed and sent off to national RA. Denis advised that he does not want a fuss and does not wish for the branch to incur any cost as the branch is usually responsible for hosting a ceremony as well as a delegate to present the award. Secretary would like the committee to discuss and agree on holding a ceremony in recognition of this achievement. National RA advised in September that due to the pandemic they are currently clearing a backlog of awards (Life Membership/Long Service/50 years) but these will be actioned. Committee agreed that the branch should arrange a dedicated evening to Dennis and suggested that Mike Mullarkey (Jnr) could be contacted to present the award. Secretary will contact Dennis to advise what has been discussed.

7. Minutes of Previous meeting.

- Since the Extraordinary General Meeting held in September 2020 one other meeting was held which was first virtual meeting in October 2020. If any members would like a copy these can be requested from the secretary.
- Chairman will contact Mark the website developer to ensure that minutes continue to be added to the website now that meetings have commenced again.

8. Election of Officers.

- It has been proposed that all committee members be elected En-bloc and that there are no proposed rule changes.
- All committee members confirmed they are happy to remain in post and members will be invited to contact Secretary or Chairman if they wish to join the committee.

9. Any Other Business.

- SM would like the committee to discuss how the branch should look going forward. Suggestions include attending a live game (now that restrictions have lifted and this may encourage new/younger members to attend to learn from colleagues in a real life environment), possibly meeting once a quarter instead of monthly, having a link with West branch where the branches merge for a larger meeting twice a season (each to hold a session and invite the other branch)
- Chairman advised that he would contact Mark (website developer) to check how much is owed for renewal of licence as no invoice has been received and this will have auto-renewed. The website was then discussed with KM advising that we should look to make more use of this and could have done during the pandemic as we are paying for the rights so should include links to website on all correspondence and maximise what we do with this. Committee have agreed to upload training presentations and look to use this as a news bulletin for the coming season and decide on whether this is an effective tool for the branch or not ahead of the 2022/23 season
- Committee discussed how best to carry out meeting for the season ahead and it has been agreed to continue with the November meeting (to be held on Thursday 18th November at Topsham Town FC) and then break until February to see what attendance figures are like. The branch will continue to provide face-to-face sessions as well as virtual alternative. It was mentioned that we could look to have less frequent meetings as there appears to be a shortage of participation across football (players, teams, and referees) with people reassessing their priorities during the pandemic.



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- KM mentioned that County RA have their first meeting in 18 months on November where they will also be discussing their format going forward and KM will report back any relevant information. There was also a reminder that all officials should be mindful of what they post on social media as this has led to bans recently and this will be discussed at the county meeting.
- GM confirmed that fees for 2021/22 season remain the same and that the RA are covering the cost of the insurance for all members (£4.00)
- MS expressed that it would be good to continue frequent training sessions to support members as he had recently observed a referee incorrectly use the sin-bin rule and felt that attending sessions may have helped in this scenario.

Meeting Closed – 19:45

Date of next meeting – Thursday 18th November 2021