



## **BVF Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Date: Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> Jan 2023**

**Time: 9.30-12.45**

**Location: Zoom**

**Attendees: Carl Morris (CM), Nicola Hull (NH), Paul Baillache (PB), Luce Wright (LW), Lyn Robinson (LR), Gillian Aghajan (GA), Graham Paul (GP), Beth Davidson (BD).**

### **1) Welcome CM**

CM welcomed us all and the minutes of the last meeting were accepted.

### **2) Previous Minutes**

The following items from our last meeting were discussed in more detail:

**Team Training:** this has been suggested for the Friday before the Winton. A session to help bond the team and provide information which may aid performance at the Worlds. Areas to be explored and perhaps included within the session:

- Psychology - the benefit of an introductory session for all, or an online zoom course to be made available.
- Rule changes – utilisation of a referee to update the team on recent applicable rule changes.
- Team tactics - individuals to discuss for each weapon
- Refereeing - Joe Pearce organised an online zoom as to how referees were being guided on interpretation of attacks etc in foil and sabre. This maybe an area he can present on either on the day or via zoom
- Introductory talk for those representing GB for the first time - what to expect – GA offered her services in this area.
- Team meal/drinks - to help bonding and be held that evening. LR mentioned we could also ask those attending for help in setting up the Hall.

**Action to be taken:** this subject needs to be discussed further in the next meeting, so decisions can be made.

**Tracksuits:** After a survey from the Worlds 22 the GB vets team strongly indicated their preference for a new or different tracksuit.

- A variety of options had been researched and shared with the committee by GA. Focus was given to quality, guarantee of supply, cost and subsidy available for GB squad members.
- The committee has decided to move forward with a tracksuit top from Top Kit. Navy blue in colour, with the decision that whilst matching trousers could be purchased, fencers could also use their own navy tracksuit bottoms.

- NH suggested we get a couple of designs and see what members like as we have the Age Groups and BVF championships coming up.
- PB mentioned that it may be good to let members know about the new tracksuit before the European team event in May. We were keen to avoid people purchasing the current one.

**Action to be taken:** GA to liaise with Caryl Oliver and keep the committee updated

#### **Silver swords sparring event.**

- BD is looking to arrange a spar competition to run alongside our BVF championships in Manchester 3 pistes are available and aim is to get 10-12 competitors.
- BD has worked on communication about the initiative and areas of focus such as exercises, rehabilitation etc
- BD is developing the activator program and looking to ask our members if any wish to declare their interest to participate

**Action to be taken:** BD to arrange a spar competition and follow up on communicating with BVF members and activators

### **3) The 2023 AGM CM NH**

- AGM will be held on the 11th March at 18:00
- A discussion took place to decide which committee members are standing. As NH is standing down her position of secretary will be open to nominees.
- Under our constitution two ordinary members of the committee need to stand for re-election. As all members wished to remain on the committee two names were pulled from a hat these were KA and BD.
- NH will coordinate the AGM advising members of date/time, positions available / how to apply/ and be responsible for circulating the agenda and zoom meeting details.
- The committee felt that members should be prepared to commit to at least 5 core meetings each year, at least one of which would be a physical meeting.
- GA felt that if the committee was voting on an item at least 51% of members should be present this was agreed by a majority of those in the meeting and will need to be included in the rules and regulations.
- CM raised the issue of raising the membership fee however the consensus of the committee was to keep it the same. This was reached on the basis that we have sufficient reserves at present to cover anticipated outlays and there is no great expenditure forecast, so bearing in mind the cost of living crisis it was decided that we should not put an extra burden on our members at this time.

**Action to be taken:** NH to inform members about the AGM, send out relevant documents, arrange practice Zoom meeting.

LW to update Rules & Regulations

### **4) Competition Update**

#### **The Guildford International**

This was briefly touched on as reports had already been shared with EVF and a separate meeting had been held by the competition organisation committee. The following points were made:

- A few tweaks needed in timetable and refereeing

- DT to sit in the main fencing hall next year, so they could monitor how the event is running.
- Catering mentioned as a slight negative in the survey.
- LR requested no late entries to be allowed due to the administrative burden. GP mentioned there was a financial advantage to late entries. However this will be up to the competition organisers to decide upon next year.
- Feedback on the medal ceremony mainly positive. CM expressed the view that he thought Brian Speight did an excellent job.
- PB reported that we had made a good financial return, however, in part, this was due to Welsh Fencing loaning pistes free of charge and that LP provided a discount. We must be mindful that this is not guaranteed for future events.
- PB noted we had more cancellations than usual due to transport strikes, this also led to more expense as some referees had to stay overnight.

### **Age Groups**

- LW to remind members how to enter as it's via LP. A message will also go out re the format of the event as it differs from past years.

### **BVF Championships**

- LR expressed concern that we had been quoted different figures on cost of venue from Mike Swiffin.
- LR hoping to have two rounds of poules for each weapon, but it will mean an early start for epee.
- There will be an armourer at the event and the Manchester Fencing Centre has a shop.
- Mention of having a finals piste. To be discussed further by competition committee

### **5) Medals**

- Malcolm Cawton requested that we look at awarding a medal for the top over 80 aged fencer in our events. The committee agreed to look at this.
- The new medals organised by PB were felt to be popular. LW asked that the position was put on back of medal, by means of a sticker.

### **6) Selection CM**

Mike McKay has written to CM as he feels our selection policy isn't fit for purpose. His correspondence was shared with the committee prior and it outlined his thoughts that: the Nationals should not be a part of selection; he was not in favour of poule unique for the Age Groups; and he also strongly felt that the European circuit should be used more to select fencers.

- CM's response – Whilst disagreeing with the assertion that our system is not fit for purpose we should always be open to improvement or change, if it is for the better. Decisions made by the committee with regard to selection are always given a huge amount of thought and discussion. We have to look at all age groups, all weapons, and ensure our best fencers are selected. We have to be mindful of a huge number of factors including the ability of people to travel i.e. the cost involved and time available to competitors to compete. We also have to assess if the outcome of a different selection system would actually make any difference to the people that end up being selected. Plus we have to take into consideration the wishes of the majority.

- The committee did acknowledge that with the introduction of a 40 – 50 age group going to the worlds thought may need to be given to their expectations.
- The committee also acknowledged Mike's point that encouraging our fencers to participate on the European circuit would be a good way of improving their competitiveness and this is something that we should fully support.

**Action to be taken:** Whilst nothing can change for 2023 selection, as these decisions were made after a very thorough selection meeting earlier in the year, it was agreed that further discussion on the above will take place with the committee and selectors later in the year.

LW/GA will continue to actively promote EVF events and encourage participation via the website, Facebook and newsletter. We acknowledge attending European events will help prepare people for the Worlds.

## 7) AOB

- **New Event:** Chris Buxton has contacted CM and volunteered to host a veteran event at King Edward School Stratford around the beginning of July. The committee was grateful and discussion was briefly had as to type of competition i.e. novice, team event, a general veteran open, and the social side.
- **Newsletter:** NH to compile a March edition before she goes. LW/GA to take over
- **Winton Cup Rules:** CM to update the Winton rules
- **Winton Cup:** CM to chase Marcia Stretch re hire of venue on the Friday
- **AGM:** nomination form for new committee members, LW asked that they include a photo as requested by some BVF members last year. NH to action.
- **Levy for fencers entering the European event.** Prior to the meeting PB had included information on levies normally charged and what they covered. It was agreed the levy for the 2023 European Individual Championships would be kept the same as last time at £25 and correspondence sent to fencers would explain what the levy is used for
- **Guildford International Financials.** PB to produce a report for Benoit Pincemaille

**Meeting ended 12.50**

**Nicola Hull**

**BVF Secretary**