

MINUTES OF THE AUK BOARD MEETING HELD AT THE "IBIS HOTEL"
BIRMINGHAM ON 6TH JUNE 2013

The meeting started at 09:04

DIRECTORS PRESENT: IH, PC, SG/KH, JH, LJ, RP, SS, AT & JW.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: PP and MW.

OBSERVERS PRESENT: Rod Dalitz, Peter Thompson and Danial Webb

MINUTES: The Minutes were agreed as a true record, subject to the inclusion of an agreement to fund LEL 2013's overdraft requirements (which now appears unlikely to be needed.)

MATTERS ARISING: There were no matters arising.

DIRECTORS' REPORTS: LJ confirmed she would pay AUK's contribution to the film of LEL as soon as she had received an invoice and reminded everyone that the stocktaking for the annual accounts was due before the year end on 31st August. SS said Peter Moir, the new autumn editor for *Arrivée* was now in place and she wanted to agree the timetable ahead of the AGM as the date and location are not yet finalised. The Agenda is now due to be mailed by Headleys separately from the November *Arrivée*. RP confirmed the cut-off date for submissions to the AGM was 1st October. JH noted it had been a quiet period with some event cancellations in March as a result of adverse weather conditions and advised that Nigel Hall and VC167 were willing to take on the 2014 National 400 event despite differing levels of confidence that the 2014 York Show would actually take place.

PC mentioned having set up a forum for on-line committee discussions and while the change to 5-figure membership numbers is not as urgent as previously thought, it will need to be addressed shortly, so has started the procedure to upgrade the system. The events planner is being upgraded spasmodically and other than the usual queries from the members, the system has been running well. AT had also dealt with the normal complement of members' enquiries and the recording of events was continuing as normal. He has created some new pages on the website giving details of medals and badges leading to a significant increase in the number of enquiries and particularly sales. He had distributed a quotation to replenish the stock of Brevet and Randonneur badges advising that he was holding a stock of car window stickers (in addition, presumably, to those to be included with the next mailing of *Arrivée*. He needs new Membership badges as he is currently out of stock and proposed sourcing new ones to the same design as the new medals which was seconded by SS and duly agreed. ACTION: AT

MW supplied full membership statistics, noting the current total of 5211 was a record, which he attributed to a LEL, noting his own longer rides had been unexpectedly popular. The problem of *Arrivées* (230) lost by Royal Mail has been costly in both cash and time terms. As certain postcodes have seen a 100% failure rate, the fault seems to lie with the (lack of) delivery service. All known failures have been replaced; fortunately there had been an extra stock in anticipation of new members for LEL, but gaining any recompense from Royal Mail has been fruitless. The new stickers have now been received. A supply of the small ones for bikes / mudguards has been sent to Pam for onward delivery to organisers to distribute to riders. One of the larger ones for car windows will be included loose with each copy of *Arrivée* and AT has additional supplies of both types.

PP reported that Brevet card orders have now returned to normal levels after an early surge. The new postal rates have almost doubled the charges for Correx signs. Brevet cards, too, are more expensive and she wondered whether a price increase should be discussed. The AGM venue is still open; York, which was the original location, seems to be rather costly, so other areas are being investigated. JW has recorded just under 2400 Permanent events up to the end of May (breakdown supplied) The old design Brevet cards ran out at the end of March and the new one has been used since then. SG/KH reported verbally that after March with its unseasonal weather problems their validation figures had been buoyant and all organisers bar one had submitted their returns promptly. RP reported a busy quarter with plenty of members' enquiries handled including one from Graeme Holdsworth concerning publicity for his events on the BBC website. The meeting was happy for him to use this avenue but had previously decided not to use this platform as a club. The new stickers for cycles and car windows were shown and supplies of these latter ones given to those requesting them.

LEL: Jerseys are selling well with none likely to remain unsold and the supplier's pricing structure is giving a good mark-up. The rider and bag tracking systems are under test or up and running. Controllers seem to have all the necessary hardware, but IT access at the schools may be a problem. The test website is currently loaded with copy live data. Bulky supplies have been delivered into storage in Doncaster to be transported to controls as requested by the teams of drivers. There have been some changes of controllers and the scale of the catering has necessitated the employment of professional caterers at most controls. This has been funded by an increase in rider numbers. Danial confirmed he would be happy for these bulk supplies to be available for other AUK events. There are over 450 volunteers registered, which is probably sufficient, though Moffat would like more, so Nigel Hall will welcome any help or ideas. Local Authority liaison is proceeding with only minor hiccoughs. The route has been almost completely checked and is on the website as a routesheet and GPS track with a draft route for the prologue.

On the financial side, there are cash balances of £24,000 with reclaims of £20,000 in the pipeline which should prove sufficient until after the finish of the event. A system has evolved to minimise the effects of PayPal's intransigence which may mean the overdraft with Lloyds is not needed. Current projections indicate a surplus after repayment of the funds advanced by AUK of something between £10 – 13,000, but much is still guesstimated.

REGULATIONS: The meeting was happy with the proposed amendments to the Regulations and Appendices which are now to be presented en bloc to the AGM with due regard for the notice period for the Agenda to minimise any problems caused by Royal Mail's poor performance.

PUBLICITY SECRETARY: Peter Thompson gave brief details about himself, including his career in nursing which he was now leaving to start a course in journalism. His initial thought was that AUK needed to raise its profile and some ways of achieving that were in some thoughts circulated before the meeting including increasing the presence across various social media platforms (with software for a single access point.) Another idea was to organise some suitable BPs to funnel riders into our more core events, as British Cycling does. Attendance at rallies or cycle shows may be helpful provided the cost can be justified, or, as well as suitable cycling magazines, where we would largely preaching to the converted we might broaden out to publications like *Men's Health* or *Saga*. Danial was happy with this approach and was adamant the 2014 York show would go ahead where we could

have a stand to publicise our events. It is still not clear how much riders trade up from one distance to a longer but he stressed the importance of the club's website and also FaceBook. LJ also mentioned *Women's Cycling*, a relative newcomer magazine. Rod suggested that larger fields resulted from greater expenditure on the event. This will increase entry fees but we must remain open to all cyclists, with the slogan emerging "Ordinary people doing extraordinary things." The proposal to co-opt Peter as Publicity Officer ahead of formal election at the AGM was made by RP and seconded by AT.

BREVET CARD PRODUCTION SECRETARY: PP, though not present at the meeting had indicated she would not be standing for re-election at the AGM and the future of her role was discussed. AUK clothing is now on-line and ordered directly from Impsport without any Board involvement. She has, however, confirmed that she will be happy to continue being Trophy Custodian and AGM weekend organiser. As far as the central part of her role is concerned, the way forward is not obvious as there have been so many changes in digital print technology to affect the process of printing cards and distributing them to organisers in the future. It may be possible or advisable to contract the whole process to an outside firm, with orders being sent directly to them by organisers (who would then be bound by definite cut-off dates) so we might need a person to oversee the process. In that scenario, cards would be sent direct to organisers, but spot checks for quality control purposes would be desirable. If the new job holder were not willing to be a Board Member, then the Memo & Arts would need to be updated. After some further discussion whether the job advertisement for a replacement should be for that part of the job as it currently is, or as it will be, the feeling was that a replacement to operate the current system should be sought, but that Kieron be consulted to research an improved modus operandi which could be implemented as soon as practicable. JW to contact him with a job spec with additional input from KH, JH and PC. A job description is also needed from PP before publication of the next *Arrivée*.

ACTION: JW, KH, JH, PC + PP

OCD: Rod Dalitz, their Membership Secretary and AUK member, gave details of *Ordre de Cols Durs*, a club for cyclo mountain climbing which is an offshoot of the original French club (which latter is even less active than its British counterpart.) This records distances climbed by its members leading to a hierarchy of awards. The OCD has seen a decline in activity; due to the lack of members' contributions, the last issue of the OCD magazine was in 2010. The current membership is about 240 of which some 40 are active and the fear is that without any positive change the club will atrophy completely. Accordingly, he has suggested the clubs merge as there is a similar structure for the claiming of awards with just three active committee members. Cash balances in their bank account are approximately £2,400 of which about £400 will be used for the final issue of their magazine to inform their members about the changes. In the discussions, the joining of the clubs was described as absorption rather than merger and although we are primarily focussed on long distances, their shorter rides would not cause any problems, fitting in with schemes such as AAA. There is still a need to encourage members to participate in such rides otherwise it will continue to wither, so there has to be a commitment from OCD for regular contributions to *Arrivée* to maintain and foster that interest. The upshot of the discussions was a proposal to absorb the membership of OCD into AUK with the first year's membership subscription being covered by the balance of the OCD bank account. (Proposed KH, seconded SS.) A progress report is to be made to the next committee meeting and the details of the amalgamation reported to the AGM.

ACTION: RD

STRATEGIC PLAN: AT insisted the plan was not solely his property but, in fact, that of the whole Board. His contact has not been available, so he will formulate procurement procedures and authorities himself. He also complained of lack of updates on the statistics and details of the expenditure actually made for the plan. Details are to be sent to him and copied to the Board.

BREVET CARD CHARGES: JH admitted this proposal had largely been overtaken by events, but was to combine production costs and validation charges into a single fee but should now wait until Kieron's recommendations had been received. He also wanted to scrap the additional charge for BRM event validation – there have been about 30 such events per year for the last three years. Acceptance of this change was proposed by JW and seconded by AT to take effect from 1st October 2013. A record of entries on events is also needed as well as a list of successful finishers.

SAES: Rather than a universal requirement for 2 saes with a postal entry, JH suggested the number required be requested by individual organisers, as some made routesheets available on the website, avoiding the need for one envelope, and others – often the same guys – offered instant validation at the finish, again reducing the number required. JH and PC are to make the necessary amendments between them.

ACTION: JH, PC

AGM: The venue has not yet been booked as PP is finding York too expensive and is looking further afield. The Holiday Inn at York was suggested which is next door to a previous venue. The suggestion to cap the price paid by members attending the weekend was agreed, (proposed by SS, seconded by KH) but without a definite starting figure, no level of subsidy could be agreed.

ACTION: PP

The pre-AGM committee meeting is being brought forward to the Friday evening before the AGM rather than the Saturday morning to enable the committee to join in the ride with other members (Proposed LJ, seconded RP) Also, to enable as much of the day as possible to be spent riding, the AGM itself will start this time, at least, at 4 pm. It is expected to have finished by 6 pm allowing everyone to prepare for the Annual Dinner. This was proposed by SG and seconded by LJ. IH believed that in the absence of any objection following the inadvertent lack of notice given to a few members for the 2012 AGM, there is no need for an EGM to ratify its decisions.

WCW: Steve Gloster's request for contributory funding of this event had been circulated and was discussed. JH has already had discussions with him, but the likely number of riders, the budget and the proposed facilities are all unknown at this stage, as is the entry fee, though £10 - £20 is typical for an event of this length. JH is to continue the dialogue with him.

ACTION: JH

WEBSITE: IH suggested keeping the front and back ends of the website separate, while PC wanted to keep the calendar in the front end. Danial mentioned that Kieron had suggested that rather than his doing piecemeal projects for us, it would be preferable for him to design a holistic concept covering all of AUK. In addition, Invent Partners (who designed the LEL website) would like to pitch for improving the AUK website and he offered to oversee all the club's visual communications. It was then agreed to brief Kieron to work on a suite of designs which could be submitted to Invent Partners subsequently for the website. To fund this, Danial asked for authority to spend £1,500 with Kieron and start negotiations for the website with Invent. This was duly agreed (Prop AT, Sec JH.) The list of upgrades required on the website is to be prioritised by PC and future requests for enhancements are, for the moment, to be ignored with JW acting as gatekeeper to maintain order.

ACTION: DW, JW, PC

YORK ARROW APPEAL: Dave Minter's appeal against non-validation of his team's ride and his request to take on the organisation of this event in future were considered. Although there was general agreement that the entry – having missed two deadlines – should not have been accepted, it was felt that John was being helpful. Once accepted, and despite Brevet card discrepancies, the offered proof of passage by electronic means was not acceptable in this instance and digital photographic evidence is not acceptable at all because of the relative ease of falsification. Since most of the team were very experienced Randonneurs, a higher standard of administration was expected and, crucially, the proof of passage fell below the required standard, so the appeal was rejected.

AOB: SG advised she had a suitable template for job descriptions and would be happy to collate them. KH mentioned there was an occasional problem with organisers who had provisionally updated the results not submitting their results punctually and asked for them to be filtered out, once identified. JH enquired if there had been any progress in talks with British Cycling about allowing their members to enter our events without taking out temporary membership: none so far, it seems. He also reminded the meeting that nominations for awards should be sought in the next *Arrivée*. JW confirmed we would not be having a stand at the Orbital Cycling Festival. LJ advised she would shortly be going to France for an extended period and reminded everyone that the annual accounting year ended on 31st August, requesting stocktaking details in ample time before then.

DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 26th September 2013 at 09:00 in the Ibis Hotel, Birmingham.

The meeting closed at 15:45.