

Minutes of Forest of Dean AC AGM

2nd October 2024

Rising Sun, Moseley Green

Present: Alan Robertson, Stef Francis, Mel Smith, Daren Smith, Jason Ross-Collins, Chris Moore, Jacqui Wynds, Simon Kewin, Kate Baldwin, Abi Edmunds, Patrick Rennison, JimStorarr, Walter Leach, Max Eckert, Katie Waller, James Nelmes, Julian Boon, Scott Berry, Heather Swiss, Brian Francis, Wendy Lawrence.

1. Chair's report

Alan opened the meeting thanking everyone who came and explained that this year had been a very difficult year for the club. In June the club lost Dave Lucas, who had given so much to the club over the years as coach, mentor and friend. Alan asked if members would be in agreement to dedicate the Blaisdon 10k races to Dave. Everyone present agreed to this. In July the club lost another valued and enthusiastic member, Vicky Hewlett, who will also be sorely missed and Alan asked to dedicate this year's Christmas Tree Race to Vicky, with the club making a donation from the race profits to Great Oaks Hospice. We remembered Dave and Vicky with a round of applause.

Alan went on with his report to explain that the club is continuing to change as since Covid many members decided to run for fun and fitness rather than competition. This can be seen in many clubs with memberships continuing to fall.

Track and Field Athletics

Interest in track and field competition has declined since Covid but we are continuing our association with Hereford and County AC to compete in the Midland Track and Field League. This league is not for elites but for all members to have a go. Look out for the posts on the members only Facebook group.

Cross Country

We competed in three leagues last winter season (Gwent League, Gloucestershire League and Herefordshire and Borders League) and in the Herefordshire Summer League. The men's team had a very good turn out in the Gwent League and after strong performances held their own in Division 2 after the previous promotion. Unfortunately, the turn out for the Gloucestershire and Herefordshire Leagues was disappointing.

The Herefordshire Summer League was enjoyed by a few more members and we managed to have a team in three out of the four races.

We need more ladies to come forward for cross country. Claire Jackson has agreed to become ladies' cross country captain and will promote all races.

Scott Berry is continuing to look after cross country competitions and the liaison with the leagues. Look out for posts on the members only Facebook page.

Julian Boon will continue as Captain of the Gwent League Team and will register anyone who would like to run.

We discussed that it is unfortunate that members have to commit to 3/4 races of the Gloucestershire League to be registered at the beginning of the season, as the club has

to pay for everyone who is registered regardless of them running all races or not. This can make it rather expensive for the club if members do not run the races they have registered for. The Gwent and Herefordshire Leagues only charge for actual runners in the events.

All cross country races are paid for by the club and anyone wishing to run just one or two races of the Gloucestershire League should pay for the races and will be reimbursed.

Juniors

Unfortunately, due to various reasons our junior section is in decline. We do have a very small number of enthusiastic Juniors, who turn up to training each week, but without a dedicated junior coach they have to train with the seniors, which is not ideal and puts additional pressure on the adult coaches. We will be reviewing the Junior coaching situation.

The juniors are still able to compete in Track and Field as part of Team Green (Allied to Hereford and County AC) and they will, of course, also be able to compete in the Cross Country leagues.

Alan confirmed that Chris Toomer has agreed to be the Junior Representative for both, Track and Field and Cross Country.

Races

The Christmas Tree Race, Fountain 5, Blaisdon and Coppett Hill races took place this year and were successful and well attended. However, we do need more members to step up and help with the organisation and volunteering of races. We are currently looking for a Race Director for the Christmas Tree Race, which will take place on the 15th of December this year.

Jools explained that Blaisdon 2025 will be his last year of organising the race as the course will need to be re-measured for 2026, which will be assigned to the new Race director.

Training

The Tuesday Training Sessions have been a big success again this year. They are well coached and attended by adults and juniors. Alan had the pleasure announcing that we now have two newly qualified senior coaches. Walter Leach and Jim Storrar both passed their respective coaching courses in the last few weeks. Walter and Jim will be the designated Head Coaches and in charge of FODAC coaching. Alan reminded us that we are desperately short of someone coaching the Juniors and he is hoping that some previously trained up coaches or parents will step up to help.

Club Championship

We have not had a club championship since Covid. Alan tried to reintroduce it but was unable to keep this up due to many other commitments. He was very pleased to announce that Jacqui Wynds and Owen McLaughlin have agreed to organise a new Club Championship, which should start in the new year.

Alan then proceeded to thank the committee members for their hard work throughout the year. The club would not function without a committee. Alan thanked Stef, who is stepping down as club secretary. Stef will still be promoting races through her extensive contacts and also remain as Safeguarding/Welfare Officer.

2. Treasurer's Report

The annual accounts were compiled by the outgoing treasurer Emma Bevan and independently audited by Sharon Stratford.

A copy of the full report will be available on the web site and club app.

In brief the club has a bank balance of £18,471.68.

Club income for the year was £11,132.55, which was made up of Membership fees, Races, track/training fees, club kit sales and donations. The expenditure of £9,149.16 was paid out for EA affiliation fees, Race expenses, Coaching courses, admin costs, track hire, monies paid back to Run Forest Run, which we were holding for them and online fees.

3. Membership Report

The current membership is less than 150 members, however, we have recently seen a small number of new members joining and hope that we will be able to welcome more new members soon.

4. Election of New Committee

The committee positions below were voted for by the members present at the AGM

Chair	Alan Robertson
Vice Chair	Patrick Rennison
Treasurer	Jason Ross-Collins
Secretary	James Nelmes
Membership Secretary	Alex Lindfield
Coaching	Walter Leach, Jim Storrar
Safeguarding Officer	Stef Francis
Race Coordinator	Dan Sandford
First Aid/Health & Safety	Mark Williamson
Social Events Coordinator	Kate Baldwin, Abi Edmunds

5. Any Other Business

Walter queried what is happening with the track. The quality of the track has deteriorated and he was wondering if we would be able to offer the school a working party to try and improve it. It would also be worth finding out what the long-term plans are. If the club has a future on this track, would we be better off installing new floodlights rather than buying temporary lights, which are not cheap.

Alan will speak to the school about the working party and together with Brian he will speak to the new MP to find out more about the future of the Five Acres Site.

Brian offered to support the club by doing media reports and communications.