



SCOTTISH WHEELCHAIR CURLING ASSOCIATION

Minutes of Meeting 9th May 2024 Online

Present

Alison Hopkins (Chair)
Michael Breen (Vice Chair)
Rosemary Lenton (Treasurer),
Harry Brodie (Competitions Convener)
Rhiannon Butterfield (Scottish Curling)
Cheryl Lappin (PPM)
Sheila Swan (BC)

Club Reps

Carlyne McCluskey (Stranraer), Martin Sutherland (Stirling), Ross Hatten (Kinross),
Dan Cowan (Lockerbie), Mo Simpson (Highland), Stuart Pimblet (Northern Ice),
David Hogg (Lothian), Gordon Alexander (BCPerf)

Apologies

Gavin McLeod (SDS), Keith Gray (BCPPF), Paul Webster (Hamilton)

Welcome

Alison welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending, no formal agenda as thought it was a good idea just to get together and have a chat about some things to look at namely

- Competitions – how do we encourage more teams
- Come and Try sessions to encourage new players
- What do Clubs want from SWCA
- Fund Raising/Trusts/Sponsorship

In depth discussion around future competitions which covered:

- Cheryl advised that Scottish Squad players will be encouraged to play in teams at competitions, Sheila is keen that squad members support our tournaments
- Change the Scottish to April to allow squad players to take part (present date would clash with Worlds)
- Harry is having a meeting within the next week with Cheryl and Sheila re dates for competitions
- Could the British be held earlier in the season?
- Could the Pairs be in December?
- Should we try and have a Mixed Doubles competition again

Discussion around why members are not signing up to competitions – is it because they are too expensive, is travelling a problem, are members not fit enough to take part in 3-day competitions. David H Suggests that we use some of the money in the bank to reduce the cost of competitions and also look at sponsorship for future competitions.

Rhiannon mentioned that she is in the process of setting up 4 Try Curling Sessions to try and address the problem of needing new members – these are planned for September/October – will ask SWCA to spread the word about these.

David H Suggest that we look at holding pairs competition at Murrayfield as this is in Central belt with good transport links and lots of accommodation. Harry to contact Murrayfield to see if they have availability and what the cost would be.

Alison asked Rosemary her thoughts on subsidising the competitions more – SWCA already subsidise the competitions by 50% - we currently have c £18k in bank.

We have only ever had sponsorship for one competition in the past and this is not something that has been actively pursued – David asked who we have contacted for sponsorship, but it has been Grants that have been applied for. Suggest that we set up a subcommittee to look at future sponsorship/grant funding.

Cheryl asked why we thought players are no longer willing to compete in competitions. Mainly cost, not having players in clubs that feel good enough to play or being fit enough to play for three days – also struggle to get a female for a team and should perhaps look at being less strict on this.

We have had no response from overseas countries wanting to compete in the British in the last few years despite Rosemary having handed out applications to teams. Suggest that we contact overseas teams early in the summer to see if they want to come to the British – this could include overseas club teams.

Sheila asked Caroline if there was anything that SWCA could do to help develop club members at Stranraer, but they are quite happy to just play to enjoy the sport.

Cheryl is keen to see how they can help to develop clubs to help and develop any new players and suggest that we have a meeting to discuss this. Martin asked Rhiannon why we don't have dual try curling days with AB players and Rhiannon confirmed that these days are actually open to all but not all coaches would be comfortable instructing a WC curler; Rhiannon is keen to address this over the summer.

Harry asked whether the Mixed Doubles (new competition) should be over one or two days and what format it should take. David suggested over two days in Dumfries – Rosemary mentioned that to keep costs down perhaps over 1 day - David asked if British Curling would put in teams if it was at the end of September and Sheila confirmed that potentially yes if it worked with their calendar. Preston may be holding a team event early September – venue still to be confirmed.

Gordon mentioned that PPF team are keen to get trained up as coaches to help with Try Curling.

Subgroup for sponsorship to be set up – Rosemary confirmed that SWCA is a registered charity. David asked how the SWCA had gained funding in the past – Rosemary will share information from the past with the sub committee but does not have time to take it on herself – Alison will head up new subcommittee along with David and Michael – need to decide on a project/initiative to gain new funds.

Rosemary mentioned that getting extra funding will not necessarily bring people to competitions as there are other reasons that have been mentioned throughout the meeting – discussion about how we can make the competitions more appealing and going forward look at whether having a triples competition is a good idea – we need to look at doing things differently in the future to make the competitions survive.

Subgroup for Competitions – Harry, Sheila and Cheryl have a meeting and will start that conversation about setting up a subcommittee – Alison asked for volunteers for this subcommittee, but no-one came forward – will ask again at next meeting – its important that clubs are represented on this committee to be the voice of the members. Harry will speak with Cheryl and Sheila on Monday and will have a meeting to discuss competitions on Thursday 16th – Chair to be confirmed as Alison will be on holiday.

Meeting closed