



# THE REFEREES' ASSOCIATION

**Board Meeting Minutes. Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2007  
Head Office, Coventry. 9:15 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.**

## **106. Present**

Richard Blackman (RB) (Chairman) Neville Cathcart (NC) Nigel Genner (NG) John Harden (JH)  
Pedr McMullen (PM) Ray Mallery (RM) Alan Poulain (AP) Arthur Smith (Head of Operations)

## **107. Chairman's Opening Remarks**

The Chairman opened the meeting welcoming Board members to the first meeting of the new calendar year and specifically welcoming Ray Mallery from the RAE board who has replaced Len Randall

## **108. Apologies.**

None

## **109. Minutes of the RA Board Meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> November 2006.**

The minutes were agreed and signed as a true and correct record.

## **110. Matters Arising**

None

## **111. Treasurers Report**

**111.1.** Our accounts are operating according to budget but it is considered necessary to increase subscriptions this year to increase capital to fund projects such as the RA centenary and to make the necessary additional investment at Head Office, we also need to build up our reserves which have been depleted over the past 8 years. A proposal will be considered by the RA Board AGM

**111.2.** It is acknowledged that there is a need for the members of the National Associations to debate subscription levels before they are approved by the Board. It is suggested that any proposed increase in subscriptions should be tabled at the RA Board AGM and that approval should be deferred until an EGM in September which will allow the National Associations to consider the proposals at their AGM.

**111.3.** Our last VAT inspection was approximately 12 years or so ago, at that time HM Customs & Excise confirmed that we were operating according to their procedures. VAT accounting rules and procedures now implemented by Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC) have changed since then and our new Accountants were asked to check our current procedures. Following a detailed investigation a voluntary declaration of underpayment of VAT has been made to HMRC and a payment of £6,262.06 has been made in full and final settlement.

**111.4.** Members were asked to remind County RA's and ABS's of the need for prompt payment of membership subscriptions which are due for renewal on 1<sup>st</sup> April

**111.5.** The retiring Treasurer paid tribute to the assistance that he has received from the Head of Operations who has had to manage the day-to-day running of the office while the changes resulting from the restructure of the Association have been implemented.

**111.6.** Thanks were expressed to the retiring Treasurer, Len Randall, for his service, diligence and composite reporting.

## **112. Report of the Head of Operations**

**112.1.** Staffing levels at Head Office need to be reviewed due to work load and holidays

**112.2.** It is understood that some mailings to RAW ABSs had not been received. It was agreed that HO will track the last mailing of magazines that were sent via City Link in order to find any lost parcels

## **113. Committee reports and proposals – Areas of responsibility and business activities.**

### **113.1. Head Office**

- Fire exit signs and doors do not comply with Health and Safety regulation and need changing/replacing

- The Government's no smoking policy which is to be introduced nationwide on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2007 will be implemented at Head Office with immediate effect. A draft policy was circulated and agreed unanimously
- The dangerous staircase has still not been dealt with and will be followed up by HO committee in line with recommendations of that committee on the future of Head Office
- It was decided to investigate a move from our current premises due to the large amount of work that would be needed to upgrade the building to comply with current Health & Safety standards. In addition to the staircase there are concerns about rotten flooring in places, carpet needs replacing due to trip hazards, rising damp in the passageways, new fire doors required and a fire exit from the upper floor, lighting needs replacing in some rooms and the general decoration of the entire premises due to the fact that the office has not been decorated for over 14 years. A committee has been set up to investigate the feasibility of such a move consisting of Head Office Committee plus AWSS and LNR. It was agreed that all the members noted on our lease will be kept updated on all developments.
- When the RA purchased the lease on the current premises, four members was listed as lessees, two have subsequently passed away and the lease has now been transferred into the names of Ken Anderton, Richard Blackman, John Bunn and Nigel Genner.
- It is noted that some existing HSE requirements have not been adhered to, namely the under stairs cupboard. The Board makes it clear that non enforcement by staff will be a disciplinary offence. Non compliance will render the Board liable to prosecution and we are not prepared to accept this in the future.
- Salary awards for all head office staff were reviewed in accordance with contracts of employments for each member.
- The Board were updated about the ongoing situation with our former employee Lee Harper

#### **113.2. Personal Accident Insurance Policy**

- The Board confirmed that the premium for the Group Personal Accident Insurance Policy for 2007/8 will remain at £4 per member.
- There appears to be much misunderstanding about the RA Group personal Accident Insurance policy, possibly because reference is merely made to "RA Insurance". Members are reminded that the RA currently operates a Personal Accident Insurance Scheme, not an "All risks" or a "Life Insurance" policy.
- The RA Personal Accident Insurance policy cover can be extended to incorporate cover for any type of incident that members may wish, at additional premium(s). Our Insurers advise that cover can be extended for any accident 24 hours a day at an additional cost of £1 per member; it was noted that this extension would not have assisted the family of Steve Allon who died whilst undertaking a fitness test and felt that this would not have the general support of members.
- The Board do not propose to introduce a "life insurance" policy due to substantial cost and the requirement for every member to have a regular medical examination.

#### **113.3. Magazine and Publications**

- **Refereeing:** The second issue of this magazine had been received. Disappointment was expressed that given the time this issue had been in production that there were very few RA articles. Comments that not enough reference is made to articles commissioned and written by RA members are being addressed for the future. There was a meeting at The FA on 1<sup>st</sup> February to discuss the next issue which is due in April
- **Manual of Guidance:** Updated pages were approved for distribution and will be sent out with minutes
- **RAShop brochure:** This will be updated for the future; we are also looking to revamp the current RAShop web pages along side the brochure to bring in more pictures

#### **113.4. Quiz**

- Distribution of guidelines and expense procedures has taken place. The quiz master has been agreed
- A new trophy has been donated by Nigel Genner, for which the Board is grateful; a form of words was agreed for the inscription
- The Board agreed to look at prizes for future winners which may possibly attract sponsorship.
- Pedr will advise the quiz coordinator if there will be an entrant from Wales this year

### **113.5. Grand draw**

- The Board wish to encourage members of every ABS to participate in this fund raising activity by selling draw tickets to family and friends because the draw
  1. offers the opportunity to win 1 of 55 cash prizes ranging from £5,000 to £50. With the increased number of prizes in the 2007 draw there is a 1 in 1,250 chance of winning a cash prize. Lower odds than at anytime in the past
  2. generates Income for the Association
  3. helps to keep membership subscriptions as low as possible
  4. earns ABSs 50% cash back on ticket sales.
- It is noted that there is a potential sales force of approximately 13,000 members throughout the 3 National Associations and if every member were to sell just 2 books of tickets we would increase the retained profit for the RA to almost £15,000.
- ABSs are reminded of the need to return counterfoils with the remittance advice fully completed to comply with gaming Board regulations. It was agreed that if counterfoils were not accompanied by the form, HO would complete, if they could identify the originating ABS.
- The Board approved an increase in the price of the tickets for the 2008 draw to £1 per ticket and agreed that they will be printed in books of 5. Pedr McMullen opposed the motion.

### **113.6. Supplies**

- The RAShop brochure and website will be updated as above. One of our members has volunteered to photograph stock items for which the Board is very grateful.
- The new proposed RA standard kit was shown to Board members and was unanimously approved. A couple of sample kits were given to Board members to show at games they would be officiating in the future
- There are a number of obsolete shirts which are available from our supplies department – about 40 with FA Referee badges on them. It was suggested that we should try to sell these at reduced cost which will put £2,000 - £3,000 into circulation.

### **113.7. RA Website, Marketing & Member benefits**

- Positive feedback has been received following the launch of the enhanced Website but there are still some areas needing attention. When it was launched every Society secretary was contacted either by email or by letter, or both, asking them to log on and insert their contact details. As of 30<sup>th</sup> January less than a third of ABS secretary details had been entered. The RA Website committee is undertaking to input the details of all ABS Secretaries, this will be a laborious and time consuming task, but will ensure that every Society is listed on the site and will allow visitors to locate their nearest society. The Society Secretary can then go on line and enter additional Society details. If nothing is done, their Society contact details will remain on the website with the e-mail address recorded. News items are being regularly updated
- There had been requests for branch sites to be able to upload documents from our site. It was felt that to go to additional expense only to duplicate was unnecessary and was not approved

### **113.8. Overseas and Associate Members**

- Len Randall has done a sterling job in retaining membership and producing a newsletter for our members. Ray Mallery has agreed to work with Len to continue this work.

## **114. Discussion Items – Areas of responsibility delegated to other bodies**

### **114.1. Annual Conference Weekend**

- Arrangements for the 2007 Annual Conference Weekend which will be held at the Warwick Hilton Hotel on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June are well in hand. This responsibility for this and future Conference weekends has been delegated to the RAE Conference Committee who have appointed a chaired by Nigel Genner.
- The booking form has almost been completed and will be distributed to ABSs in early March and posted on the RA website
- The L&MSA awards will be presented at the Friday evening reception when a buffet dinner will be available. There will also be a stand up Bingo competition and entertainment from “Paul Arnold”
- The theme of Conference on the Saturday will be practical refereeing with Premiership Referees as keynote speakers. A Buffet lunch will be available as usual. The Provisional Timetable is as follows

09.30	Registration
10.00	RA Chairman opens Conference
10.05	Keynote speaker
11.00	Workshops, then comfort break and refreshments
12.00	Workshops
1.00	Lunch
2.15	Law Changes
3.00	Workshops
4.00	Keynote speaker
4.45 – 5.00	Close

The pre- bookable Workshops will be

1. Offside
2. Match Confrontation
3. Recognising Foul Challenges
4. Simulation
5. Refereeing on Local Parks
6. Player Management
7. Improve on Field Performance
8. RAE - Where are we now? A seminar for senior members to meet the RAE Chairman

The Speakers / workshop leaders will be

1. Steve Bennett
2. Mike Riley
3. Mark Clattenberg
4. Howard Webb
5. Ian Blanchard
6. And others

- The Ladies Trip will be to Evesham & Worcester. Leaving the hotel between 9.45 - 10.00 and returning at approximately 3.30pm
- Arrangements for the Saturday evening dinner dance are in hand.
- It was agreed that the Head of Operations will: -
  - invite the English Cup Final officials who are RAE members
  - prepare a guest list for consideration by the Conference committee
  - liaise with First Media
- RA Grand draw tickets will be on sale at Conference.
- Buckets for Benevolent Fund donations will be at the AGM and at Conference.
- Coventry RA has been approached to operate tombola. ABSs will be written to asking for tombola prize donations.
- The supplies stand will operate. The need to improve the presentation and labelling was acknowledged.
- There has been an increase in room charges at the hotel. The cost of a Single room has increased from £60 to £63 per night and the cost of a double room has increased from £74 to £77.70 per night.
- It is understood that Liverpool CFA proposes bringing a 50-seater coach of young referees at a very low cost. This initiative was applauded by the Board who would like to encourage other County FAs to arrange for their young Referees to attend.

#### **114.2. Benevolent Fund**

The fund stands at £147157.48 The Chairman reminded members to be mindful of the needs of those members and families less fortunate than ourselves.

#### **114.3. Strategic Plan**

Board Members were requested to submit any observations and amendments to Alan Poulain. None have been received so far

#### **114.4. RA Centenary – 2008**

- **Centenary Committee**

It is proposed that the **Centenary Conference** will be at **Wembley Stadium on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2008** this is awaiting confirmation. This date will avoid the European Championships which are scheduled for June. A Centenary committee consisting of AP, NG, BOT, David Elleray and AWSS was agreed  
A flyer will be produced and sent with these minutes to advertise the date of the Centenary Conference to remind members to put the date in their diaries.

- **Commemorative badge**

It was decided that the production of a centenary badge will not be pursued.

- **Commemorative coin**

It was agreed to investigate the suggestion of a commemorative coin which had been made by a member from Huntingdonshire Society. The Board greatly appreciated the suggestion and AP will investigate costs for the next meeting

- **Centenary Publication**

Julian Carosi is collating articles for this publication. The format and cost still needs to be considered.

**ABS Members are asked to forward suggestions for the magazine and articles to Head Office.**

**115. Election of officers for 2007**

Chairman Richard Blackman  
Vice Chair Nigel Genner  
Treasurer John Harden

It was agreed that because there is not the necessary expertise on this Board to fulfil this role, the Board will co-opt a member with the appropriate skills to complete the work and John will report to the Board. John will be added as a signatory to our Bank account.

**116. Appointment of Committees responsible for business activities**

Head Office	NG, JH, RM & AP
Commercial	AP & RB
Group Personal Accident Insurance	RM
Magazines and Publications	AP & RB
Quiz	JH
RA Draw	RB & PM
Overseas Associate Members	RM
Conference weekend	RAE Board

**117. AOB**

Neville Cathcart advised the meeting that he might be standing down as NIRA representative after the April meeting and he requested the opportunity to bring a 'shadow' to the next meeting. The Board agreed to the request advising that only one member from NIRA could claim expenses.

**118. Date Time And Venue Of Next Meetings**

It was agreed that future meetings will be held on  
Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2007 with a 1.00 p.m. start time, followed by the RA AGM.  
Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2007 and Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2007.  
AP will take over catering responsibilities for Board meetings.

**119. Close of Meeting**

Closing the meeting the Chairman thanked all Board members for their participation in a very productive meeting and wished everyone a safe journey home.

Signed:

(Chairman)

Date: