

MINUTES OF THE AUK BOARD MEETING HELD AT THE "COMFORT INN" BIRMINGHAM ON 23RD
SEPTEMBER 2009

Meeting started at 10:55

Present: DKB, PC, SG/KH, NH, RP, SS, RT, JW, DW & MW.

Apology for absence: GG, PM, IH, PP.

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st June 2009 were accepted as a true record.

MATTERS ARISING: The AGM venue booking has been (with a .pdf booking form on the website?) SG/KH reported a surplus of some 500 medals dated 2008 which were now useless. Sales tended to be to non-members for the shorter rides. Undated medals were preferred as having a longer shelf life and the validators may deal direct with suppliers to cut down on the delay in receiving orders. They will also be sending a note to organisers requesting notice of large (20+) orders and will advise Board of progress.

A systems problem preventing full automation of on-line entries was attributed to users not following the screen instructions completely. Entry forms are to be modified to allow riders to include their mobile phone numbers as well as their next of kin's contact numbers, to ease accessibility in case of need. RP to include a note in JaM.

OFFICERS' REPORTS: JW is as up to date as possible on validations and is expecting about 2000 validations for the full season. DIY Add-ons (to be administered by Martin Malins) are now expected to start at the beginning of next season. SS has had no problems with Arrivéé – the excellent quality of picture reproduction is happily continuing. MW, for GG, mentioned Ian Hobbs was to be the next New Members delegate, assuming he, Mike, was voted in at the AGM. He suggested UK based LEL finishers who were non-members should be sent a complimentary copy of Arrivéé. This was agreed, and MW is to post the offer on the website. The majority of new members – approximately 2/3 – are by PayPal, and if the experience of the Long Distance Walkers Club is repeated, should result in a much larger membership. NH thought the system was working well and DW also advised little to report, with his job ticking over well. SH/KH are back up to date with validations, the numbers (currently 15,000) with a levelling-off after June should end up at a similar level to previous years, with the trend to a decrease in numbers on longer rides – LEL excepted, naturally – likely to continue. They have agreed with Steve Cockram that he should no longer receive copy nil Accident Reports for his analysis. RP to continue to receive all originals to include on his spreadsheet and retain for the appropriate term.

PC reported that PayPal was in operation for new members and the system will be extended to renewals shortly after some additional programming has been written to cover Life Members. The server will need to be updated in the indeterminate future and the details will need to be investigated later on, probably when the weather is less suitable for venturing outside. RT advised the accounts were now finalised, showing a healthy profit, though no details had been received from PP. The financial impact of LEL on the accounts is not yet clear, as the company, LEL 2009, has been struck off by Companies House for non filing of its accounts. It is, however, possible to be reinstated, once delinquent details have been submitted. SS commented that she believed Melita had not purchased ACP medals, saving some expenditure. Little is known of two accidents during the event, one involving a Greek rider hitting the back of a car in front of him, and the other where a driver damaged one of the buildings used as a control. (Accident Reports for both incidents have not been received.) Parenthetically, JW enquired about Perm Validation fees which were now providing insufficient revenue to meet the outgoings. After some discussion, it was voted to increase these from 50p to £1. This is the first increase for many years and the level should remain at this level for many more. ACP validation fees were also included in the discussion, but are to remain unchanged for the time being.

No volunteer has come forward to succeed RT as Treasurer; the only interest expressed thus far has come from a member who is unwilling to attend weekday Board meetings. Some alternative arrangements were put forward, without any firm conclusion, but for the moment RP will contact him again to see if he may be persuaded to accept the post. As far as his own area was concerned, RP advised this was also quiet with just the usual batch of queries after LEL. A couple of directors needed to supply the names of proposers and seconders to support re-election at the AGM. A query had been posed about the new CRB system designed to protect children and vulnerable adults which, it was established, did not apply to AUK organisers and helpers as not having an intensive enough relationship with any potential victims. He also gave details of a complaint received from South Kent DA concerning two events on the same day which was being rebutted.

Due to last-minute domestic emergency, IH was unable to attend, but submitted a report by e-mail where he advised CW were pressing for further ads, offering the carrot of an editorial on AUK. He also suggested a new home page for the club's website. In the following deliberations, MW thought there were few new members resulting directly from the ads, but despite that, the general feeling was they should continue for the moment, with IH trying to get said coverage for PBP stressing the number of 400s available next season as possible qualification requirements in addition to the normal 2011 SR series. It is believed the capability exists within the membership to design an updated home page, so an e-mail appeal will be made shortly.

MEMBERSHIP AWARD NOMINATIONS: All nominations were discussed and votes taken to decide on this season's recipients and the results were as follows:-

Services to AUK	Lucy McTaggart
Female Merit	Ann Benton
Male Merit	John Spooner
Organiser	Mark & Louise Rigby & Black Sheep CC
Helper	Ivo Miesen

There were some expressions of regret that the awards were limited, when, in a year such as this one, there were very many deserving candidates who in other years would easily secure the trophy.

GPS TRACKLOGS: DW requested authorisation to trial using these logs as evidence of having ridden the correct route on his DIY Perm events. JW suggested a series of parallel runs (i.e. using both traditional and GPS methods as a basis for comparison.) It was accepted that such data could be fraudulently manipulated, and the current system too is open to abuse. Given that all such trials should be agreed with Danial prior to the start of the ride, permission was granted on a trial basis until next June. DW to report back on progress in due course.

INSURANCE COVER: RT confirmed there was no clause in the 3rd party insurance policy excluding incidents involving motor vehicles (as had previously been claimed) He also advised that cover would extend to events ridden abroad, provided they were organised from UK, though thought it would be prudent for members to make their own individual arrangements.

LEL: Ivo Miesen appealed against the validators' refusal to validate his ride as he was out of time at the finish. Although his help at the start had been much appreciated, and had deprived him of a certain amount of sleep, it was felt by those directors and controllers who had seen him during the course of the ride that tired though he may have been, his focus had been on socialising and networking rather than eliminating his tiredness by catching up on rest. His excuse that his on-the-road speed was adversely affected by being alone on the road was not accepted by the Board and the result of the vote was to confirm the original ruling. RP to advise him of the outcome.

With regard to LEL generally, SS stressed the announced 2 hours extension to the allowed time was a decision to be taken by the Board and not in the gift of any one individual. This is to be made plain to future organisers of the event. On this occasion, a severe weather warning had been issued by the Meteorological Office for part of the route and in view of the additional risks this posed to the riders the extension was unanimously approved.

Reports of riders' cards missing some controls did not appear to be borne out in the validators' experience. Most cards were adequately, if not fully, completed. The validators are retaining the cards and will forward them to Melita only when validation fees have been received. The possibility of returning them direct to riders directly was discussed, but as many had incomplete rider details on, turned out to be an unworkable option.

Another point emerging from the discussion was the suggestion of a LEL helper's medal as a gesture of appreciation. A list of all helpers is wanted urgently for inclusion in the next issue of Arrivée. For the future, the event has grown too large for a single person to manage all the work entailed – most people apparently under-estimating the workload, and a proper management structure needs to be put in place. However, in the first instance, in view of the risks involved, the membership is to be requested to approve AUK as the organising body for 2013 and a proposal to this effect is to be put to the AGM. A group of six people have been engaged in some initial preparatory work and the meeting agreed, subject naturally to the previous proposal being accepted, that they should be appointed as a sub-committee to investigate the practicalities involved and to report back at a subsequent meeting.

The meeting closed at 15:57.