

**THE FELL RUNNERS ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT THE CASTLE GREEN
HOTEL, KENDAL, ON SATURDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2006.**

1. **MEMBERS PRESENT:** 61 **APOLOGIES:** 9.
2. **MINUTES OF 2004 AGM.** The minutes of the last Annual General Meeting (19 November, 2005 at the Castle Green Hotel, Kendal) were approved. Prop: Tim Cock, Sec: Paul sanderson.
3. **CHAIRMAN** distributed copies of his report to the meeting.
 - a) There was a discussion about the different messages which had been given by UKA regarding rule changes, and it was confirmed that the UKA director in question had been misinformed.
 - b) The Chairman confirmed that the FRA affiliates to UKA through EA now, not NoEAA, and EA comprises nine regional bodies whereas NoEAA had only three.
4. **SECRETARY** distributed copies of his report to the meeting.
 - a) This report contained an account of the UKA rule change problem, and a request was made to debate a proposal which had been sent to the Chairman and Secretary on Thursday 17 November 2006 which stated that the FRA should secede from UKA in order to avoid future, similar problems. While it was agreed that this proposal, and the matters giving rise to it, could be debated informally at the end of the meeting, FRA Constitutional Rules 7 and 9 prohibit its adoption as a formal motion.
5. **TREASURER** distributed and reported on the accounts for the year ending 31 July 2006. These had been audited by N.Hindle.
 - a) The Treasurer confirmed the current membership statistics..
 - b) There was a discussion about the increased cost of production of The Fellrunner.
 - c) The Treasurer confirmed that UKA provide no funding for internationals. In the year ending 31 July 2007, AAA have provided £2500 for English international teams.
 - d) The Chairman confirmed that there would be a special scheme for EA affiliation of FRA members which was still to be finalised. Club affiliation fees would form part of the same discussions.
 - e) The Chairman confirmed that EA wishes the FRA to continue issuing permits on its behalf, as was previously the case with NoEAA.
 - f) Dave Hodgson pointed out that the total cost to the FRA of the 2005 World Masters was £11,800, and that the figure in the accounts reflected only the year ending July 31 2006. The difference of £4000 was incurred in 2004.

6. MOTIONS

6a. Proposed change to FRA RULES FOR COMPETITION RULE TEN

RULE TEN currently reads:-

Race organisers must stipulate age limits for their events but the following maximum distance limits for juniors must be observed.

Ages are as at 1st January in the year of competition.

The minimum age for competition is six years on the day of the race.

Under 8 - ½ mile (0.8k)

Under 10 - 1 mile (1.6k)

Under 12 - 2 miles (3.2k)

Under 14 - 3 miles (4.8k)

Under 16 - 4 miles (6.4k)

Under 18 - 6 miles (9.6k)

This motion amends this to read (changes underlined):-

Race organisers must stipulate age limits for their events, but the following maximum distance limits for juniors must be observed.

Ages are as at 1st January in the year of competition.

For FRA Fell Races, the minimum age for competition is six years, and the following distance limits must be applied.

Under 8 - ½ mile (0.8k)

Under 10 - 1 mile (1.6k)

Under 12 - 2 miles (3.2k)

Under 14 - 3 miles (4.8k)

Under 16 - 4 miles (6.4k)

Under 18 - 6 miles (9.6k)

For paired Mountain Marathon style orienteering events, over one or two days, where one of the two runners is under 18, the other runner must be over 20 and must also be the parent or guardian of the junior runner. The minimum age for the junior runner is 14, and the following straight line distance limits must apply for each day of the event.

Under 16 - 12 miles (19.2k)

Under 18 - 15 miles (24.0k)

(Proposed by Alan Brentnall of Pennine FR, Seconded by Alan Barlow of Altrincham AC. Approved by the Executive Committee.)

Alan Brentnall spoke on behalf of this motion, and there was a brief discussion prior to the vote.

Voting: For: 55, Against: 2, Abstentions: 3 **Motion carried.**

6b. Proposed change to FRA CONSTITUTIONAL RULE 5

Paragraph 3 of RULE 5 of the FRA Constitution currently reads:-

Postal votes may be used at the discretion of the executive committee. Such postal votes shall only be recognised if an official voting form is received at least four clear days before the General Meeting by the Returning Officer of the Association who shall be appointed by the executive committee.

This motion proposes that this paragraph shall be deleted from RULE 5.

(Proposed by Dave Jones of Pennine Fell Runners, Seconded by Alan Brentnall of Pennine Fell Runners. Approved by the Executive Committee.)

Dave Jones had sent his apologies, so Alan Brentnall spoke on behalf of this motion, which generated a considerable amount of very constructive discussion, with contributions from many of the members attending.

Voting: For: 9, Against: 47, Abstentions: 3, Spoilt 1 **Motion defeated.**

6c. Proposal to request the adoption of current English Championship veteran categories in the British Championship

We request the FRA committee to approach the UK Athletics Mountain Running Policy and Support Team (or whatever body replaces the PST for the governance of fell, mountain and hill running at UK level) with the aim of introducing the following new age categories in the British Championships:

- i. A female veteran team.
- ii. A male veteran 50 team.
- iii. A male veteran 50 team for the FRA relays.
- iv. Male and female veteran categories in 5 year increments (as per the English championships).

(Proposed by Jackie Winn on behalf of Cumberland Fell Runners Committee, Approved by the Executive Committee.)

Alan Barlow, who is now Chairman of the new body which will be responsible for the format of the British Championship from now on, stated that the format is to be reviewed, and that there was no need to have a formal AGM to make the FRA request any changes. He would take note of any views expressed, and these would go towards the general decision making process - which is not an FRA responsibility.

As the proposer of this motion was not present, and as there was no other representative present from Cumberland Fell Runners, the meeting voted by a show of hands to withdraw this motion from the business of the AGM.

It was agreed, however, that the meeting would indicate their preferences for the proposed category changes by a show of hands. The meeting favoured the proposed changes i, ii and iv, but were generally opposed to proposed change iii.

7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE.

- a) **Chairman.** Only one person, Tony Varley, was standing for this post, and, there being no objections, he was duly elected.
- b) **Treasurer.** Only one person, Madeleine Watson, was standing for this post, and, there being no objections, she was duly elected.
- c) **Magazine Editor.** Only one person, Britta Sendlhofer, was standing for this post, and, there being no objections, she was duly elected.
- d) **Statistician.** Only one person, Mark Hobson, was standing for this post, and, there being no objections, he was duly elected.
- e) **Other Officers.** The following other Officers were **re-elected unopposed.** Secretary – Alan Brentnall. Membership Secretary – Pete Bland. Fixtures Secretary – Margaret Chippendale. Championships Coordinator – Jon Broxap. Environment and Access – Chris Knox. Website Officer – Brett Weeden.

- f) Madeleine Watson agreed to continue in the post of Junior Coordinator until a suitable candidate is found.
- g) **Club Representatives.** Four seats. Four advance nominations. The following were **elected unopposed.** ; Graham Breeze (Skyrac), Sue Becconsall (Bingley), Paul Sanderson (Dark Peak), Andy Schofield (Borrowdale).
- h) **Membership Representatives. Four seats. Five nominations. After a vote, the following were elected.** Neil Goldsmith (Altrincham & District AC), Sheila Lloyd (Mercia), Ross Powell (Mercia), Rod Sutcliffe (Calder Valley).

At this point, Alan Barlow stepped down as Chairman and the new Chairman, Tony Varley, took over.

8. OTHER APPOINTMENT. Alan Barlow explained that the FRA representatives to the Regional AA bodies were no longer required under the new EA structure. Consequently, there is now only one appointment in this category. **The following representative was elected unanimously:**

- a) **WMRA Representative.** Mark Croasdale.

9. AUDITOR. Neil Hindle, elected unanimously.

10. CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING.

As usual, there was an open discussion on fell running matters after the formal business was complete. This year, the only topic under discussion was the relationship between FRA and UKA. As stated under Secretary's Report above, Keith Burns had sent a motion, which was seconded by Andy Schofield, to the Chairman and Secretary on Thursday 17 November 2006. Although this was too late to be accepted as a formal motion, it did form a basis for discussion.

The original proposal was:- **That the Fell Runners Association secede from UK Athletics governance as soon as possible consistent with maintaining continuity of management of FRA affairs, but in any event, before Feb 1st 2007, and that FRA should independently manage fell racing on behalf of its members.**

This proposal was the result of a series of actions and decisions made by UKA, with little or no consultation with the FRA, which adversely affected the sport. The latest such problem was the imposition of qualifications for fell race officials when such qualifications neither existed, nor were needed. This had been inflicted in a timescale which was impracticable, and many race organisers believed that they were running their races contrary to UKA rules, and may, therefore, have forfeited their liability insurance cover. Eventually discussions between the FRA and UKA caused the removal of this requirement from the rules, and verified that there had been no break in insurance cover. However, many thought that the risks associated with our reliance upon UKA's insurance were too great for this situation to continue.

On 5 October 2006 the FRA Executive Committee held an emergency meeting to decide whether to take out its own insurance, and also considered various degrees of independence from UKA, but it was not able to resolve all issues to its satisfaction. Consequently it decided to remain affiliated to UKA for the time being - but it initiated a subcommittee which is currently looking into all future options.

After a lengthy and animated debate, a show of hands indicated that the overwhelming majority of those present were in favour of Keith's proposal. However, as the whole membership of the FRA had not been informed of the intention to debate this matter, it would have been unconstitutional for the meeting to decide any action. It was generally agreed, therefore, that it would be a good idea if the facts and options were to be distributed to the whole membership, together with a referendum regarding the future of the UKA-FRA relationship, and the Chairman stated that he would be prepared to have a postal vote on the issue, in the hope that we would then have maximum response.