**Wye Valley Running Club**

**Minutes of Annual General Meeting**

Friday 27th January 2023, 19:30

The Courtyard, Hereford

Attendees: Committee and club members

Apologies for absence: Amelia Louth, Lorna Shaw, Becky Ansfield, Billy Smallwood, Martin Flowers

**Introduction**

Chairman Paddy Nugent welcomed everyone to the club’s AGM, briefly presented the minutes of last year’s AGM and thanked the founding members in this our 40th year. Paddy asked Harry to remind the meeting of the original founders’ mission statement.

**Financial Update**

Treasurer Dave Sherwood presented the accounts statement which showed a surplus for the year of £2686 and a balance at 31/12/22 of £5433. He went on to explain the figures in more detail: membership fees cover England Athletics fees; all other income came from staging events such as Muddy Woody. New grant income will be available for projects in the next 12 months, such as hiring of the running track, funding for the beginners' group and extra coaching.

The accounts were approved unanimously by a show of hands of all attendees.

**Election of Committee Members**

All current committee members were reported to be happy to stand again for the coming year and as they were unopposed no formal elections were necessary, and all were re-elected. Paddy thanked retiring Secretary, Pete Smith for his many years of dedicated service to the club and also Martin Flowers for his role as our representative for the Herefordshire cross-country league and also for the UK Athletics Regional Council.

**Presentation by Mike Fawcett: “40 Years of Running: From the Fens to the Fells”**

Mike Fawcett, a stalwart of the club and a member for 20 years gave a very interesting and inspiring presentation. He explained how he started his running journey in Cambridge at the age of 15, followed by his 10 and a half years in the Royal Navy during which time he ran all over the world taking part in cross-country races, marathons, ultra-marathons, Hash House Harriers events, before eventually landing up in Hereford as a teacher in 1997. It was then that he came across runners from WVR when out on a solo run one evening. The club was based at the rowing club at that time and Mike was very impressed that the bar served real ale! So Mike joined the club without hesitation.He eventually took on the role of race organiser, setting up Darren’s Dash fell race at Longtown in 2006, explaining that this was a good introduction to fell racing. He later became a member of a Mountain Rescue Team in 2016 and as a member of this team took part in the Spine Challenge – a very demanding off-road ultra along the length of the Pennine Way. Mike then showed a video of the Spine Challenge and then took questions from the floor.

**Member Updates and Thanks**

Paddy expressed the club’s gratitude to retiring Secretary Pete Smith for his many years of dedicated service. He then updated the meeting with news and thanks regarding a number of club members:

* **Mark Dempsey** has recently had brain surgery and is currently recovering in Hereford County Hospital.
* **Brian Symonds** has gained his England Master’s vest
* **James Vidler** was thanked for his excellent hospitality at the club’s Christmas party in December in Ross-on Wye
* **Dave Sherwood** was thanked for his work as Treasurer, as was the rest of the Committee for their largely unseen work behind the scenes.
* **Peter Nugent** was thanked for his work as Race Director for Muddy Woody, with this year’s upcoming race being sold out again. It was noted that Peter had had to redesign the course very recently, owing to a late request from the Forestry Commission. It was also reported that 20 marshals had so far volunteered to help on the day.

**Activities Update**

**Becks White – Sunrise Sessions**

Becks White, a yoga teacher of Starlight Dance Company gave a talk regarding the planned “Sunrise Sessions”, designed to promote health and wellbeing in the county. The focus will be on “breath, mind and body” and will feature meditation as well as exercises designed to lengthen and strengthen the muscles. The sessions will be held at sunrise starting in April at approximately 5:50 am and will take place every 2nd month in combination with a run at locations such as St Michael’s Hospice and the Malvern Hills.

**Social Events**

After a break for food, and in Amelia’s absence, Brent gave a quick run through of the various social events that have been planned for the year of our 40th anniversary by the social committee which met on 12/1/23.

**Club Training**

Jeremy explained that the weekly club training sessions, organised by him and Dan will be more structured this year, with fortnightly track training alternating with tempo or hill sessions. The focus will be on building endurance in the winter, moving on to building speed in the summer. He emphasised that they are not qualified coaches and will need help, thanking those who have taken the England Athletics course “Leaders in Running and Fitness” and also the various informal run leaders. With extra funding now available it is hoped that more people will come forward to take the course.

**Beginners Group**

Kate Green updated the meeting regarding the beginners group. Kate is a qualified UK Athletics Coach in Running and Fitness and joined the club last Summer from Ledbury Harriers. The 10 week beginners programme will feature technique training, leaving members to run at whatever level they want. At the end of the 10 weeks, participants are encouraged to take part in the weekly 5km parkrun events. Existing members are able to join in the sessions which take place at the Halo Leisure Centre on Thursday evenings at 6:30pm.

**Race and Further News Updates**

Paddy gave an update regarding upcoming races and other activities:

* **Bearwood Park Trail Series** – 3 “low-key” trail races on Tuesdays in August (1st, 15th and 29th) at 7:30pm
* **Crocodile 8** – we need 45 marshals for this race in May – it's a professional event but a bit quirky!
* **Queenswood Family 5k** – a new event to be held in September
* **Strength and Conditioning -** Lorna Shaw, who is a qualified Personal Trainer, will run S&C sessions at the Castle Green Pavilion after the Wednesday night tempo run sessions.
* **Open Evenings** - funding is available for the club to put on Open Evenings, such as pub or park with beer and food.
* **Club Charity of the Year** is St Michael’s Hospice
* **Jo Ellis** secured the club pace for this year’s London Marathon, and several other members are also entered. Jo will be raising funds for SANDS and St Michael’s Hospice on a 50/50 basis.

**Club Awards 2022**

Many thanks to Harry for the beautiful hand carved awards which were presented to the following members:

* Mighty Oak: Martin Flowers
* Most Improved Female Runner: Amelia Louth
* Most Improved Male Runner: Richard Williams
* Outstanding Running Performance: Simon Oliver
* The Jan Edwards Shield: Paddy Nugent

**Club Championship**

Jeremy outlined the club championship for the forthcoming year. This will involve a total of 12 races with the best 6 to count towards the championship. Most of the races are off road and are local club races, eg Muddy Woody, Croc 8, Shobdon Wood, Ross 10k, X-C League races.

**Open Forum**

The meeting concluded with an open forum during which the following were discussed:

* Club kit
* Socia Media – most people are using the app to keep up to date with club events. Nicola Goodwin had some good advice regarding use of social media to promote the club - “less is more”; photos are more effective than videos
* Cotswold Relay – last year the club only had 8 runners and lost £280 - it is proposed to enter the Wyedean Relay this year as a more local alternatve.
* parkrun takeover – Brent asked if would like to do another parkrun takeover and agreed to find a suitable date, such as the day before a race when members will be free to volunteer rather than run.

**Conclusion**

The meeting concluded with an opportunity for group photographs and viewing of the excellent film put together by Lillian Istance featuring videos and photographs of club runners in various races and other activities in 2022.