

BRITISH DODGEBALL ANNUAL GENRAL MEETING 2018

14<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2018

6.30PM

MERCURE HOTEL SHEFFIELD

**AGENDA**

1. APOLOGIES
2. BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT
3. FINANCES
4. MEMBERSHIP AND FEES
5. AOB

**PRESENT:**

BEN HOYLE (BH), JOHN SLEMENSEK (JS), GARETH LEWIS (GL), ADEN WOODALL (AW), JOHN RUDLAND (JR), DAVE POOL (DP), ALEX HARRISON (AH), MATT WHEIL (MW), SAM WARD (SW), ALEX NELSON (AN), TAMARA HOFER (TH), SHAUN GRAINGER (SG), DANNY CARROLL (DC), ED HOLLANDS (EH), TARA BURKHART (TB), LINDSAY MCOY (LM), EMMA MILSNER (EM)

JESS GOSHAWK (JG) ARRIVED AT 7.30PM

Shortly after 6.30pm once everyone was settled and had a drink BH welcomed and thanked everyone for their attendance noting it was nice to see the healthy number of members in attendance. He reminded everyone that this is British Dodgeball's first AGM and insisted that we would be sticking very much to the agenda, it will not become a free for all and if we do get side tracked at any point the meeting will be bought back in line as there is a time limit on the room and there are several points for AOB. GL will record minutes of the meeting.

**1) APOLOGIES**

Had received from Lucinda Stott and Kathryn Thomas

**2) BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT**

BH began by saying the Board of Directors, despite all the hard work and effort that had gone into establishing British Dodgeball and the long nature of the season, had thoroughly enjoyed it. We are proud of what has been achieved in the 11 months since BD was officially formed and overall, there is a much more positive vibe around Dodgeball in this country. We are proud of the new partnerships we have in place with great venues like St Georges Park and there is much to look forward to in the new season.

JS played a short video he had put together which portrayed statistics compiled throughout the season showing membership figures, total number of players, events, referees, venues used, referees etc and much more.

BH explained that British Dodgeball is the day to day organisation name however we are a registered company with Company's House under the name Dodgeball Development Ltd, so if there has been any confusion whilst looking on line or if clubs had received invoices from us that would state Dodgeball Development Ltd. This was explained as when we first registered as a company we were told that to use the word "British" in your name you had to be the pre-eminent organisation in your field which at the time we clearly were not. As time goes by and British Dodgeball becomes pre-eminent with potential NGB status for example we can change this name to British Dodgeball with Company's House should we wish.

BH, JS and GL all confirmed that BD is recognised by the players of the sport in this country, by the EDBF and WDA but not currently by Sport England as UKDBA is still in existence out sourcing some coaching workshops etc. The boards stance on this is one of patience (there are many examples of main stream sports that do not have an NGB) there have been meetings and phone conversations with Sport England and they are aware of BD's existence and dominance of the playing side of the game and our recognition by the games councils. BD would also have to wait another 12 months to have the chance to be recognised by Sport England as the NGB as it is imperative that such an organisation has at least 2 years of financial accounts that show sustainability. The Board of Directors are also working through a plan that will ensure when the time is right BD meet all the criteria in terms of being a fully transparent, sustainable organisation that shows good governance and other similar criteria set by Sport England.

BH explained that BD is a not for profit company, all money generated from all sources is reinvested back in to the sport. The organisation is run as a business first and foremost as this is the only way that we can become sustainable and have a healthy long-term future (for example we will not run events that make a financial loss to us). BD is not a centrally funded organisation as you will see in the financial report all income is self-generated. We believe the best way to grow the Sport is by continually reinvesting and growing the structure of the organisation by increasing the fulltime members of staff who in turn can develop the game in their own geographical area or field of expertise. This should then snowball into a bigger more professional organisation developing the sport in all parts.

With all that in mind BH and JS highlighted several aims that BD have been and will continue to be working on.

- 1) To increase our full-time members of staff from 2 to 5 employees. Currently BD employs the Director of Development and Competitions Manager. From September AW will be joining the organisation to work on a project coaching and developing opportunities (along side club development work) in the Greater Manchester area. BD currently have a job advert out to employ a full time National Junior Co-ordinator to run our junior events and increase participation in the 14- 19 age group. JS will also become an employee continuing the work on media and digital platforms.

That said BD are mindful and extremely grateful to have many volunteers up and down the country who support BD and ultimately the growth of the sport. As with any sport we are reliant on volunteers and it is important they are fully recognised and appreciated. As was seen at the NEC, big events like that look visually so much better and we simply can't run such events without that kind of support.

- 2) To build on the huge success of our first year in terms of offering more and diverse events, be that resources, training/coaching opportunities and competitions. Our 2018/19 season calendar will be released in the coming weeks but there will be more Opens, more Uni events, more Junior competitions, more Leagues including the new Mixed League. We will be providing more International events and dedicated International training weekends as well as hosting the 2019 Euros which should prove to be the biggest ever.
- 3) To increase and provide the highest possible coach education programme, including more Level 3 courses. BD sees the growth of Dodgeball in schools and wants the teachers to become competent coaches with increased knowledge and understanding of the game. The massive growth of existing and new clubs shows that they need to develop internally to provide a route for the schoolchildren into community Dodgeball. It is imperative clubs are encouraging members to do the coaching courses and welcome junior players. As touched on previously the UKDBA is still offering coaching courses and as such is a competitor. We aim to provide a much better quality and comprehensive programme so that those interested in becoming coaches are signposted to our courses and then in turn the money is reinvested in to Dodgeball by BD.
- 4) From day one BD has always stated that we will be a transparent organisation with our members at the heart ensuring they have a voice and are heard.... We welcomed LS on to our board in November having been elected from a membership vote. The Delicious brand has been about having fun and engaging with players at events (today's Delicious Open has raised money for charity). Our Ambassador programme still needs some work on and we will be announcing new BD ambassadors shortly who will help promote the sport and endorse the Come Join in mentality/ strap line. The new City Leagues are also an attempt to increase opportunities for new players into the game.

### **3. FINANCES.**

BH passed around a document highlighting all the financial information from BD's first 11 months. In response to a question from TH, it was explained that the Director of Development had been ultimately responsible for financial accountability however going forward (there is a meeting on 23/7) BD will be using a new professional accountant.

In response from a question from the floor BH and GL explained where "project funding" comes from. BD had been successful in working on behalf of clubs in Stafford, Burton on Trent and Birmingham in obtaining small grants from County Sports Partnerships for satellite clubs which focus on engaging 14-19 year olds (not to the exclusion of other club members). This sort of funding is available up and down the country and clubs are encouraged to contact BD as we can help gain access and write funding applications. The new Junior Co Ordinator position is also being part funded from "project funding" received from Sport England.

At this point a lengthy discussion took place around the issue and sizeable cost of floor marking tape. Clearly it is a huge cost to BD GL explained the difficulty in logistics in getting tape to Uni Leagues etc he also explained the vast difference in cost between the standard tape and the tape we are instructed to use at St Georges Park. For now, we must bear that cost but going forward Clubs are encouraged to speak with the venues they use week in week out for training (handing over large sums of money) to see if deals can be made to get permanent Dodgeball courts laid. SG and GL highlighted the venue in Stafford who saw the potential for use by the Raptors satellite club and multiple use by BD for Uni

leagues, mixed league and open events and have laid 2 courts for us. As the sport becomes more main stream this sort of partnership will hopefully become common place.

EH praised BD for showing sound business acumen and asked if there is a financial prediction for Year 2. BH responded by stating although there is no official projection as discussed, all the revenue streams should increase i.e. more competition/leagues, vastly increased coach education and BD whilst not scrimping will be looking at areas to reduce costs where possible e.g. floor marking tape. So, in summary BD hopes to show further growth in year 2. BH also reiterated the point that BD is first and foremost a business and job creation and staff pay rises etc have been properly budgeted for and would not be happening if they couldn't be afforded and sustainable.

#### **4. MEMBERSHIP AND FEES**

TH quickly asked if the 50% deal for members on coaching courses would still be applied, everyone thought this was a good deal. Yes, it is still the deal.

BH passed around a document outlining the current season's fees and a discussion took part around some slight increases.

BH explained that BD are going to be adopting new strict code of conducts which will be enforced, and all competing players will need to become BD members and thereby agree to the code of conduct and accept appropriate sanctions if deemed to have broken it. BD propose that this can be a Playing Membership with £0 charged to the individuals.

BD would still have a voluntary Adult voting membership category proposed between £15 and £20. A discussion took place around this DP asked, "why not have every member pay a fee?" BD has always been conscious of attracting new players and aware of the large number of students in the game it is felt that too many costs up front i.e. membership, competition fees, travel could put people off especially if they are only likely to play the odd Open or event. DC explained his experience in Scotland and agrees that in his opinion it would be better to keep player membership low but increase club membership. It was therefore agreed to keep adult voting membership at the current price of £15.

The membership document shows a proposal to increase junior membership from £5 to £10-£15. EM asked what the junior players get back for their membership having previously received one or two newsletters last season. The consensus was that they should see more for their membership. BH indicated that now we have our clothing sponsor on board (BLK) there are numerous options available including goodie bags draw string bags etc. To move the meeting along it was agreed that the Board would look at this in conjunction with the still to be appointed Youth Development officer. Junior membership is to stay at £5.

BD are proposing to increase Club Membership to £50 from £30 DP and others asked if and how this membership fee related to clubs and having insurance cover through BD at their training sessions and at events. JS explained that BD have a meeting scheduled next week with a new insurance provider and we would be able to provide much more information on this after that meeting.

BD propose to keep current League fees the same at £60 per round, the Open event fees the same at £70 except for the following events which is proposed to go up to £75 as these are the much bigger events with much higher associated costs.

New Season Open, British Open, English Open and English Champs.

A discussion took place around how clubs collect match/ tournament fees. EM proposed that if clubs have squads of 8 at events it is easy to collect £10 from each player so made a proposal for those events identified the cost go up to £80 a vote took place and it was unanimously agreed to set the fee at £80. GL suggested that the British Open is hoped to be another huge tournament (40 men's teams last year) and we had already had enquires from teams in America to take part.

BD proposed that Junior Open fees should rise from £40 to £50. In season 1 these events were often the ones that were a financial struggle for BD to break even. BD are altering the timings slightly and each team will play more matches at each event. This motion was passed.

A discussion took place regarding a £10 per person International match fee. This was agreed in principal although further information will be forthcoming with the alternative being a cost per international team competing at events and the team managers filtering those costs down as they deem appropriate.

## 6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

BH again touched on the Sport England situation re iterating that BD would need to provide 2 years of financial accounting before being able to get NGB recognition. BD are working toward compliance.

DP and others asked about the format of the Mixed League. It was agreed that a deadline of October would be set to express interest in this new league..... players **would have to be** from their Parent Club i.e. no inter club mixing, and clubs will be asked to submit a list of likely players to help arrange the Leagues fairly, because the proposed format is for 2 leagues of 8 teams.

City Leagues: AW gave a report on the pilot Manchester City League which has 2 more rounds remaining. The League has been a success with each round being played in a friendly spirit and has attracted 20-25 new players, which is the main objective. BH identified the 4 new Leagues starting in September and suggested that there could be many more in due course..... All BD need is a key person in an area to co-ordinate the rounds as BD do all the admin etc. Anyone with an interest should contact BD.

Debtors: The board are looking for consensus on possible action in 2 different examples of debtors and the owing of money.

The first example being the case of an individual leaving a club (moving to another) and still owing the club money. Is this BD's responsibility and can/should we have the power to do anything?

The consensus was that a) this is very hard to prove and, in most cases, boils down to one word against another. b) BD should not get involved with individual club internal politics and disputes. It could be the case that BD remind clubs and strongly advise them to keep good accurate records and have them audited periodically.

The second example is where a club owes BD money but is refusing to pay it.

It was agreed that in such situations any club owing money would not be accepted into BD events until the debt is settled.

University Schedule and Finance.

TH raised issues around the scheduling of Uni champs in the season just gone and difficulty during exam periods etc. BH explained that the forth coming schedule/ calendar had been changed slightly with Uni champs being earlier however still toward the end of the season as the events follow a development/ progression cumulating with Uni champs. The general mood of the room was that it is always going to be difficult to fit Uni events in that suit all, however the number and range of opportunities for Uni Dodgeball is now much better than it ever was.

TH also identified issue with payment for events and having to go through Unions then missing out due to demand. GL explained the process involved in applying for competitions. BD has always been able to produce invoices for entry fees that can be sent to the Universities. Clubs should not worry about missing out and should liase with BD to explain their individual circumstances. Clubs can reserve places at events. The refund policy is the same as for community clubs in that if a team needs to withdraw before an event if they do so before midnight on the Monday prior they will receive a refund or if appropriate a Tournament credit transferable to another event.

TH asked about Club Development and Junior Support. AW is the club development officer and has worked really hard on resources for clubs which are on the website, from September he will be a full-time employee and will be looking to offer support and advice to clubs in all aspects of their development. As previously stated there are numerous County Sport Partnership funding pots that BD can help clubs get financial assistance from as long as you are targeting 14- 19-year olds.

The Directors wanted the meeting to be aware of correspondence received from an Individual in Wales who had indicated displeasure and was indicating that they may work with others and attempt to take over all Dodgeball in Wales and run events etc including the National Team. A discussion took place around this with BH suggesting that should this take off it would not be good for British Dodgeball and hinder the prospects of NGB recognition down the line. AN suggested that in the nicest possible way there is little to be done to stop this action however as BD is affiliated to EDBF and the national team will compete at Euros there is little to worry about there. In conclusion it was agreed that the individual will be asked to reconsider such actions and trust BD to carry on with plans including in Wales.

Referee Development Plan: GL passed around a document which has been put together and will be the 2018/9 referee Development Plan. GL quickly (time restraints) identified that in the season just gone we used 61 different referees. Clearly with increasing number of competitions and leagues the likelihood is we will need a similar number if not more next season. The salient points of the plan are:

- 1) we can offer small workshops to clubs who identify 6-8 potential interested people... they would then be expected to referee at events
- 2) All referees irrelevant of experience will be monitored and assessed through the season. At each event and league meet randomly allocated clubs will be asked to provide assessments. We will also have an anonymous assessor at events.
- 3) All referees will have a record kept including records of their time and assessments.
- 4) Again, all referees irrelevant of experience will be expected to have an individual plan to improve their refereeing.
- 5) There will be much more group discussion and team work identifying weaknesses and rule interpretations with the aim of consistency across the board.
- 6) Referees are well looked after in terms of good hourly pay and paid swiftly with travel expenses where appropriate.

7) All referees will be expected to sign up to the code of conduct.

Team GB:

The final point of the night began with JS playing a video/slide show indicating BD plans (and proposed times scales) to set up a Great Britain Dodgeball Team and associated player pathway through the International teams and development teams.

The salient points from the slide show were explained by the Directors explaining:

Team GB will be our Flagship team, representing the national Federation at world events and friendly international series home and away. Helping to ensure BD remain at the top of the sport domestically and Internationally.

We firmly believe and will strive to ensure representing National teams including team GB should be affordable for players and coaches. We will strive to ensure players, coaches, volunteers and staff have a strong and sustainable pathway to grow and develop to be their best.

Having team GB opens up many more opportunities for funding, for employment, for sponsorships and growing partnerships (Sports Development- which is ultimately what BD is all about and measured by)

We believe firmly that the two current world organisations would best be suited merging into one World Association (this should happen in the coming years). Once this is in place Olympic status can be achieved and the 2028 LA Olympics could be a realistic target.... At which point BD would be expected to provide a GB competing team..... we want to be fully prepared and help show that we would be ready in any discussions that take place Olympic wise.

From 2018/9 BD will be introducing a Home Nations League which will see increased opportunities for NEW and existing international players, this Home Nations League will include matches for Development teams and age group teams... not just the elite 6 players. We envisage creating a player pathway and conveyor belt of top quality players that is the envy of other International countries.

BD have invited (and been accepted) Dodgeball Canada to a friendly International series in the UK April 2019 vs team GB playing both cloth and foam variations of the game.

A lengthy discussion took place with questions touching on:

Tactics (GB priority?), and recruitment of coaches/management and team selection policies.  
DP.

Timescales: the consensus within the room was that a team Management Structure would need to be in place asap if players are going to gel together and learn and be trained in Foam ball tactics.

JG indicated that she believed the transition would prove difficult in the home nations other than England.

The meeting drew to an end with the board thanking everyone for their attendance and support.

GL also drew everyone's attention and gave a personal thank you for the hard work (often unseen and underappreciated), dedication and passion of Ben Hoyle and John Slemensnek indicating their drive for the growth of the sport and not personal accolades or financial reasons. Without their vision and bravery in the creation of BD 12 months ago we would not be here today. A rousing round of applause was asked for and deservedly received.

\*all hand outs and videos/slide show links can be found below.