

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
BANCHORY RUNNING CLUB
ON 7/3/2017 AT 20HR15
AT THE DOUGLAS ARMS

Present (13)

Jack Honey, Rob Bain, Colin Harris, Sandy Reid, Chris Low, Lesley Cheyne, Gordon Smith, Bill Paul, Mark Crawford, Fiona Gray.

Apologies

Helen Everard, Elsbeth Matheson, Paul Jarvis, Seb Cook, Lynsey Birnie, Mark Mosgrove, Stan Kay, Alec Erskine.

Welcome Address & Annual Report

Bill took us on a bright and positive tour of what the club and individual members had achieved during the year. He talked about the £300 cash contribution we had made to the new Sports Centre shortly to be built on the Hill of Banchory.

There has been much talk and a focus on providing value to our club members during the year. This past year the club provided for a variety of run types including Lesley's drive to start regular speed and hill reps. The training has proved both popular and beneficial to the running abilities of many of us as well as giving a closer club feel to our weekday sessions. Many runners now turn up especially for the fartlek.

Saturday morning runs had been less successful and did not continue through the winter. However, Bill will draw up a Saturday program for summer and hopefully more members will be able to join in this social run through some of the finest landscapes Aberdeenshire has to offer.

A notable achievement was Lesley's run in the D33 last year and now she is joined by Mark Crawford to do it again this year – well done you two!

Mark Mosgrove ran like the wind to get 5th place overall in the Lumphanan Detox in an amazing time of 36m18s on this difficult and hilly course.

The club entered as a team the local Crathes Half Marathon in September which was enjoyed by all. We also had entries into the Mither Tap Hill Race on Bennachie near Inverurie and Bill even won a prize. YAHOO! The Castle Torch Run continues to be a popular run on the last Tuesday of the month and is set to continue through the year. Runners not entirely familiar with the route are invited to run with someone else, as we don't want to lose anyone in the woods. The last two managed to extricate themselves from this predicament, but let's not push the boundaries any further.

The club hosted a "bring-a-friend" run from Scolty car park, which was well attended and a friendly introduction to the club.

Bill wrote an article about the club in the Banchory Fly to increase our exposure in the community and the club also provided some marshals (and runners) to help in the Boxing Day Fun Run which Sandy has so generously gifted to the town these last three decades.

The club has seen quite a few new members since Christmas and the race is on to accelerate our membership and attract many more new and existing runners to swell our numbers. Bill will shortly be advertising in the Piper, The Fly, Facebook and by word of everyone's' mouth a course we are offering to encourage new runners to take up the sport. Keep an eye out for the Banchory "Couch to 5km" program that will be run under the auspices of the JogScotland branch of Banchory Running Club.

Confirmation of Minutes of last AGM

Proposed by Sandy Reid and confirmed by Bill Paul

Matters Arising from Minutes of last AGM

Chris Low asked what was happening about the Paysubsonline initiative. Treasurer explained that with such a small membership base it had not warranted the change-over.

Treasurer's Report

The bank balance is £537 which is down on last year. Full breakdown printouts were supplied showing money spent on Jogleader training, the donation to the Sports Village and admin cost of website. Revenue from membership fees was down significantly due to the lower fee being charged and fewer paid up

members, only 21 this year. The sale of club kit from stock was also down on the previous year, as most members already had their club shirts.

Election of Office Bearers

The following posts were proposed, seconded and elected.

Chairperson:	Lesley Cheyne
Treasurer:	Sandy Reid
Secretary:	Jack Honey
Coach:	Bill Paul
Committee member:	Fiona Gray

Vote of thanks to outgoing committee

All committee members were thanked by the chairman for their time and care for the club.

JogScotland Affiliation and Fees

Bill presented an update of developments to date.

JogScotland was set up by the government as a health initiative and they got SAL (Scottish Athletics Limited) to run it. It has evolved in the direction of athletics. Training the trainer cost £95 per head. Bill described the course he attended as having about 30 participants and most were from running clubs. For instance St Andrews sent five leaders for training to help manage the two or three hundred joggers that turn up on any particular night. This highlights the possibility of raising large numbers in Banchory as well. Now that Bill is trained, he is automatically covered by insurance while he leads a group.

Banchory Running Club is organising a beginner's course (couch to 5km) under the JogScotland banner, but as part and parcel of the club. This is the way the other clubs are doing it. Burnette Park is being considered as a venue as it has all the necessary facilities for that level of running training. All the runners will need to fill out the JogScotland questionnaire PAR-Q form and pay a £2 fee. (The form is a health declaration and disclaimer and also asks for details of who to contact in the event of an emergency) This type of information is important in the administration of the running club as a whole and it was suggested that we adopt it for our members too. Following on from the beginner's course, we can introduce an intermediate course. (5 to 10km) It might be a good idea to have trainers of both genders and the younger set too so that the ABC's of our sport can be seamlessly explained to all participants. Jack and Lesley are being trained as Jogleaders too and anyone who feels they would like to get involved at this level should step forward and identify themselves.

The course itself will be advertised in the Piper, Banchory Fly, Facebook and by word of mouth. Maximum group size is 12 per Jogleader. Rob suggested the "Unit" as a meeting place as it has refreshment facilities open to all and was appropriate as a sporting venue with plenty of parking.

SAL Affiliation and Fees

History

Previously in 2012 when the BRC was being launched, the then Area Development Manager Ally Love encouraged us to affiliate saying that SAL could help the club develop and grow. Then and during successive AGM's the idea has been discussed, but always with the result that we could not see immediate benefit to the club in terms of facilities offered.

BRC now finds itself in exactly the same state of development as when we started 4 years ago and we muddle along with about 10 runners on Tuesdays, fewer on Thursdays and fewer again on Saturdays. There are plenty more runners in Banchory and the surrounding villages that can be seen any night or day, that have never approached the club, so the market is definitely out there. So how to get it? How do we attract those runners and give them a bit of what they would expect of a club?

The SAL Website

The SAL Website had dramatically expanded. Many of my questions about what SAL could do for us are answered online by their pdf document "Support Guide for Athletics Clubs in Scotland". Furthermore there is also a webpage on Club Support which includes a detailed description on many aspects of club development such as Club Together, Club Modernisation Project, Club Leadership Academy and Club Health Checker. Then under the guise of their Club Development Toolkit are included sections on Club

Management & Finance, Coach Development, Communication & Marketing and Starting a Junior Section. While much of this information is free and open for all interested parties to learn and practice, some key elements such as the Club Health Checker are only available to affiliates. Julie showed me this area on her computer and indeed it is a useful tool in identifying areas of the club that need attention and what to do about weak areas and then by supplying the necessary training and information through either free or heavily discounted seminars, webinars and one-to-one meetings with qualified SAL staff.

Further Action

Although I speak for myself, I suspect many in the club might agree when I say that in the past we have been perhaps too complacent in accepting ourselves as a social bunch of runners that enjoy the benefits of running together. This really is the “easy option” because it requires little effort by the individual, but it concerns me that in this form the club is under constant threat of evaporating into thin air when one or more of us leaves. I believe the BRC has reached a crossroads in its development where we must choose either the easy option of the status quo and perhaps fizzle out in time, or inject a bunch of time and effort now to create a stronger, well populated club with more facilities and still enjoy the casual, friendly atmosphere currently evident. Then we can be secure in the knowledge that the BRC will sustain itself even when all of us have moved on. I’m all for the latter option and propose to throw myself into the project, knowing the huge personal reward I will get from improving my own running knowledge and skills into the bargain.

Process

For the club to become affiliated to SAL we would have to fill out their application form and be considered suitable given our undertakings of development as well as our relationship with similar or competing facilities in the same area. Then each year in August an ongoing affiliation form is filed showing how the club is getting along in terms of its development scheme. Then we get to pay £7 per active member, whether or not that member chooses any affiliation option we may include in our membership structure. The members who choose to be affiliated to SAL pay either directly or via the club another £19 per annum to SAL. Scottish Athletics are happy that we offer SAL affiliation as an option to our members. For example, based on our current overheads of about £30 a year, we could quite easily pay the £7 out of the £10 we currently charge and still cover the minimal overhead of the website. Then members who wanted to sign up to SAL affiliation would pay a total of £29, while those that did not would continue to pay £10. Of course the benefits that BRC would enjoy by being supported by SAL would be shared by every club member, SAL affiliated or not.

The Benefits

The advantages of BRC being affiliated include, but are not limited to the following;

- a) BRC more visible on “Club Finder” lists and more regular inclusion on drop-down lists when entering races.
- b) Our club will have to shape-up and develop some of its members as coaches and get huge discounts on this cost.
- c) The club shaping-up process will be guided by SAL using their experience and skill sets of their staff and shall include areas of finance, marketing and recruiting athletes.
- d) In addition, athletes who choose to be affiliated for the additional fee will receive the quarterly PB Magazine, various discounts and a £2 discount on most races. For me, this gets me my £19 back as I usually enter 8 or 9 races every year and would enjoy a regular running magazine.

Summary

I am now convinced that affiliation to SAL is the key to expanding the club and providing the facilities deserving of our members. It’s going to require a more complete engagement by our committee than in the past, but for a sport that is my passion, I cannot think of anything I’d rather do right now. I’d be getting a lot back for my efforts by being further trained and exposed to the sport I love.

On the other hand SAL has more of an athletic bias and focus on young people too. Other running clubs spoken to have not considered SAL affiliation to be a huge benefit unless for nurturing elite athletes through to provincial level.

We have already embarked on the JogScotland route which itself is going to take a lot of energy, so it might be a good idea to see that phase through before taking on the SAL affiliation.

Resolution

The consensus at the meeting was to get the JogScotland initiative going first and review SAL affiliation later in the summer or the next AGM.

Club Membership Fee Structure

Sandy said that the bank balance was enough to cover 5 more training courses and we would be getting revenue from the £2 fee per JogScotland participant and suggested we keep the club membership fee at £10 per annum. This motion was carried together with an undertaking to collect outstanding subs and allow new arrivals only 2 free trial runs before asking them to pay the £10 and become a member.

Club Training Schedule

Recently the Tuesday and Thursday running sessions have included a good amount of fartlek and hill rep work which is both popular and beneficial. The Castle Torchrun has become a permanent feature on the last Tuesday of each month. We recently experimented with a handicap run which will work a treat in the warmer months when runners won't get cold hanging about the start. We will shortly try a "30 minute out and turn" run on the Deeside Way and continue to explore new ways to enjoy the run. A longer run on the first Saturday morning of each month will be published for the summer. These features of our club schedule will continue through the year.

Any Other Business

Membership form needs to include an emergency contact and number. This is being incorporated in the new form for 2017/18.

We need an official sweeper on the Castle Run. Some discussion followed, highlighting the difficulty of doing this on a handicap start, but otherwise the problem of losing runners could be tackled by asking folk to run with at least one other person.

We should have a disclaimer and declaration of health form. This is being addressed.

High visibility vests should be worn in winter. This is difficult to enforce, but a new design of club running top might address this problem to some degree.

Meeting closed at 9:55pm

Signed:

Signed:

Date:

Lesley Cheyne
Chair

Jack Honey
Secretary