

## **NMRC AGM MINUTES MONDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2022**

Phil Evans (PE) opened the meeting by paying tribute to the late Colin Stanton and also Alan Preston & Alan Hill who have both decided to step down from the committee this year. He also thanked Andy White (AW) for setting up the online meeting.

We then went on to run through the main agenda as follows:

### **Membership Report**

Helen Goodwill (HG) advised that the 'paper based' was fairly stable at 53 (from 73 in 2019). A number of other 'friends of the club' still receive paper copies of the magazine so the print run is still 70 copies. The meeting discussed whether some of the 'extra copies' could be moved to the online version and this will be explored.

The bulk of the membership is now 'free online' with the current list showing 368 subscribers at present (from 330 in 2021 & 175 in 2019). All get advised when the new magazine is produced (via Mailchimp) although opening rate of the e mails is usually only 60%.

Our Facebook followers currently stand at 404 (was 367 in 2021 & 275 in 2020) although some of these are fully registered members (roughly half) albeit unclear why some join Facebook but then do not register as free members (and get full website access etc). I shall put a survey on FB to ask the question.

If committee members using Facebook can visit the club page as often as they can and leave comments etc (not just likes) I am sure this will help stimulate growth of this membership platform.

The club also has plenty of Twitter followers albeit most seem interested only in the UAE Racing scene and this forum generates little activity regards the UK operations of the club.

### **Treasurers Report**

Richard Mattinson (RM) produced accounts for the last 12m to 30/11/21. These could not be shared ahead of the meeting but have been subsequently via e mail. RM had difficulty logging onto the meeting so PE went through the figures instead.

With Covid-19 causing cancellation of virtually all 'outside' activities in 2021 the only income seen was membership subs with magazine costs still well in excess of these resulting in a loss of £372. In actual fact this really should be viewed as a loss of £462 as two years web site fees were paid in 2020.

In previous years the surplus from the Cheltenham Preview has allowed the club to absorb the rising magazine costs but without this extra income a loss of around £500pa can be expected.

The club still had £5830 in its bank accounts (excludes competition entries where fees are ring fenced) albeit this will shrink by nearly £300 before the next subs are received to cover the ongoing magazine costs.

### **Magazine Report**

Ken Unsworth (KU) estimated the 2022 production costs as £611 albeit if some of the 'extra copies' can be deleted or moved to the online version maybe some savings can be made.

A suggestion was made that it may be worth affixing a 'return to sender' address on the reverse of the envelopes used to send out the magazine and KU was to look into this (providing only minimal costs involved).

As long as KU is happy to continue with the paper magazine distribution etc there are no plans to curtail this option at present.

### **Membership Fees**

These comments apply to the 'paper' list only.

As alluded to above the production costs now outstrip the income from the paying members.

At one time the annual membership fees peaked at £20pa in the past but we have re-structured the club since then and held at £10/12pa for many years.

Due to the loss of other income streams at present it was decided that the annual subs would need to increase to £12pa w.e.f March 1<sup>st</sup> 2022.

Details will be shared in the next club magazine and on the club website.

### **Stable Visits**

Dave Bates (DB) is our main organiser albeit PE arranged the only visit in 2021 due to DB being on holiday.

That visit was the previously postponed visit to Micky Hammond at Middleham in October.

The date selected was mid-week to allow those attending to go onto Catterick in the afternoon and that factor and the clash with school holidays meant that only 12 registered to come and a few had to drop out on the day. There may still be a bit of concern as regards Covid-19 issues which put some people off (even though outdoors).

Assuming the Covid-19 rules allow this year the plan is to seek visits in the spring & autumn ideally with racing after visits.

PE advised that (so far) Haydock, Uttoxeter, Catterick & GRIY would be interested in joint visits this year.

It was also agreed that in future the £5 donations to join stable visits would be taken in advance so as to be less 'hassle' on the day of the visit for the organiser. Should any members not be able to attend on the day they can then either allow their donation to stand or can roll it over to a future club event.

### **Competition News**

PE advised there were 70 entrants for the NH Satnaps challenge this year (down 3 on last year).

Mark Banks (MB) confirmed that he would score the Alex Bird competition in 2022 again with Mike Wheater (MW) assisting with the other admin.

The usual Cheltenham, Aintree & Ascot rounds will be held. The final round will be either York or Goodwood depending on MB's holidays.

HG will also run the Heritage Handicaps comp in 2022.

Both the Alex Bird & Heritage Handicaps comps have seen encouraging entry numbers in recent years.

Minor scoring changes to be implemented to Alex Bird & Heritage Comps in 2022.

PE also advised that he will run the Grand National sweepstake again in 2022 after the bumper entry of 60 tickets sold in 2021.

### **Cheltenham Preview Events 2022**

Due to the current uncertainty caused by the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions it was decided that organising an event for March would be too risky this year. Both Haydock & Star Sports have been advised. The Covid-19 position in March may possibly be better, but as planning the event needs to start in early January the decision had to be made early.

Last year we held a series of online previews with guest pundits to raise funds for IJF.

Whilst this had some success, the donations raised were less than expected and many who registered for the online events never logged in.

Whilst a subsequent online questionnaire showed that those who did view online seemed satisfied with the events and were not averse to sending donations the numbers who actually attended were fairly low – about 25 per night of 50 per night who registered.

Indeed, with various other online previews held last year, many free to view with 'A' list pundits, the competition for viewers was deemed too strong to consider a similar event in 2022.

Rather than do nothing in 2022 the plan discussed is to hold four short online previews on the evening before each day of the festival with members asked to volunteer to present one race with a 5-minute slot per race. If there are not 28 volunteers some members can present more than one race during the week of the festival.

Races will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

PE will again contact Weatherbys & Racing Post to see if they can supply discounted copies of their Cheltenham guides.

### **Aintree Preview Event 2022**

Providing that Covid-19 restrictions allow, the club would still like to hold a 'live' event this year and a decision will be taken immediately after the Cheltenham Festival ends.

As this event usually attracts a lower number attending than Cheltenham event it will be easier to organise at fairly short notice.

Ideally the Tetley Club at Warrington can be used again if we can go ahead and we would limit numbers attending by allocating 'tables' so that the covid-19 risk would be minimised by only 'bubbles' sitting together.

Those interested in attending will be asked to register their interest and they will be e mailed in March if we can go ahead.

If the live event cannot take place an online option will be considered.

The GN sweepstake will be drawn at the event, either live or online.

### **Other Events in 2022**

Phil Kirby's yard was mentioned as a possible stable visit in 2022 with other suggestions including re-scheduling the cancelled visit to Jack Berry house and possibly a visit to the BTRC.

We shall try and keep September free in case there is again a series of open days at yards as in 2021.

### **Deputising Cover for Key Roles**

PE asked for cover on some of his key tasks such as website, social media etc.

AW & Judith Bradley (JB) kindly volunteered to assist.

### **Any Other Business**

KU kindly advised that he will be able to donate 'bottle' prizes for a raffle for the next event we hold.

### **Election of 2022 Committee & Re-Alignment of Committee Roles**

Apart from those stepping down from their roles, all other committee members were re-elected 'en bloc'.

Angela White was also elected to the committee. As Angela tends to attend stable visits rather than preview events it is hoped that Angela will be able to assist on the day at future 'outdoor' visits.

Some re-alignment of titles were also discussed to bring them more in line with roles being undertaken.

PE will assume the title of Chairman whilst JB will assume the role of 'Social Media' Administrator and be granted moderation access on the NMRC Facebook page.

Although Kieran Rowbottom was not present at the meeting it was felt that a new title of Hon President would better reflect his current status. If KR prefers another title this can be altered in due course.

Phil Evans 18/1/22

