



Minutes of AGM of the UKBJJA

Time: 14:00

Date: 23 October 2020

Location: virtual meeting (Zoom)

Present:

Jack Burrell (member)
Averkios Charalampous
(member)
Dave Coles (member)
Marcelo Coppa (councillor)
Greg Creel (director)
Robert Cullinan (candidate)
Raphael Dos Santos (candidate)
Stu Forrester (candidate)
Simon Hayes (candidate)
Gina Hopkins (councilor)
Jimmy Johnstone (candidate)
Omied Khakshour (candidate)
Francis Lambert (director)
Peter Lavery (candidate)
Simon Ling (candidate)
Richard Martin (CHAIR)
James McIntyre (director)
Kawsar Noor (member)
Alex Quinn (member)
Leigh Remedios (candidate)
Jorge Rodrigues (member)
Lawrence Selby (director)
Rodrigo Souza (director)
Callum Swift (member)
Alex Veitch (candidate)
Mike Williams (CEO)
Neil Williams (candidate)
Kristina Zadunaiskaja (member)
Gretchen Zoeller (candidate)





Meeting Chair: Richard Martin

Minutes: Mike Williams

Apologies for absence: Gemma Kane

AGENDA

Previous AGM minutes

1. Outgoing Chair's Report
2. CEO Report
3. Election of new Board, Council and Officers
4. A.O.B.

Proceedings

Welcome by the Chair

0. Minutes from the Previous Meeting

These were approved unanimously without change and signed by Richard Martin.

1. Chairman's Report

Richard Martin reported that it is 8 years since the inception of the Association, and notes that there are a number of people stepping down in line with rules on governance. RM expressed gratitude first to the co-founders, Dave Coles and Simon Hayes and also to the other Directors, Independent Directors and Councillors who have given their time and expertise to develop the sport over the last years. This is a big change, but a positive one, with a new Board and a chance to strengthen the Association. RM noted that since last AGM we have had a big increase in membership, due largely to new club membership packages and to increase membership by three times during the pandemic has been outstanding achievement.

RM reported that we have finally achieved recognition by the Sports Councils and are now the official, recognised Governing Body for Brazilian Jiu Jitsu across the U.K. – this will open up funding opportunities for local clubs and the Association and will be a priority for the Association in the going forwards, with a system to be developed to assist clubs in accessing funding. It will also increase cooperation with national and international Governing Bodies and assist with development of other areas such as anti-doping and drug testing at tournaments.

RM reported that finances of Association are in the healthiest state ever and we will therefore be running the International Open tournament again in 2022. This is important as attracting the best athletes in the world will help develop and strengthen our domestic athletes. Having a big tournament with prize money was also one of the founding objectives of the Association, encouraging teams to compete for the prizes and keeps BJJ true to its roots as a competitive and performance based martial art

RM stated that of course the Association will also continue to focus on and develop grass roots BJJ at all levels.

RM thanked once again everybody who helped the Association to reach this point and welcoming those who were about to take up their positions.

RM closed by noting that he was proud to have been voted in as honorary President by the Board of Directors and would therefore continue to work for the sport in his new role.

2 CEO Update - Membership and Finances

[CEO Report Link](#)

MW noted that it had been a privilege working with the outgoing Directors and expressed his personal thanks to the Board, the Association founders, Kat Hill (previous CEO) and all who helped navigate the long and sometimes frustrating process of achieving Sport Council recognition.

MW noted that recognition opens up a realm of possibilities for UKBJJA members, allowing access to schools and universities, opening up funding and development for grass roots BJJ and allowing us to professionalise Association activities.

Membership: MW noted that we have survived pandemic with growing membership base. Thanks to club Bronze, Silver and Gold membership packages, now have just under 19k members. 2.5k of those are paid individual members, the rest are Associate members who are members because they train at a member club.

Club memberships have also increased substantially, to 332 member clubs.

MW highlighted the fact that most council positions and board positions will be up for election at the 2021 AGM, scheduled for next October.

MW noted the increase in representation of both Juniors and Female participants as a % of membership, due to club membership packages.

MW also noted increase in participation in Wales and expressed thanks to Welsh Director Greg Creel and his predecessor Neil Williams for building a very strong BJJ community in Wales. A full breakdown by age, gender and country can be viewed in the link above.

Finances:

MW noted that we have been lucky to weather the storm of the pandemic, but that the 2020-21 accounts will show a drop in revenue for that financial year. However there was also a drop in operating costs and we should be close to break even for that FY. The new 2021-22 financial year has started incredibly strongly with a 62% increase in revenue vs the same period last year and a healthy bank balance of £56k.

MW noted that we had taken out a bounce back loan as a contingency measure, but in light of a healthy balance sheet the Board voted to pay it back in full – this has been done.

MW noted that there will be a number of priorities for the Association going forward which will require investment: we are planning on tightening up our membership process and our processes around ratifying ranked tournaments amongst others, with the intention of ensuring the best possible standards of vetting, of safety and of standards for the benefit of all BJJ practitioners. This will require an investment in manpower and systems, and expressed a view that it was no longer adequate to rely on well-meaning volunteers to accomplish this. MW stressed that all funds are ploughed back in to the sport and any operational costs will be to ensure that BJJ is safe, accessible, welcoming for all and meets the highest possible standards across all areas.

MW closed by saying he was very much looking forward to working with the new Board and Council on implementing this.

3 Election Results

RM expressed his satisfaction at seeing such a strong group of candidates and proceeded to read the results of the election, which can be viewed here:

<https://secure.electionbuddy.com/results/RFC3MM6QCRJQ> (full results)

RM congratulated the winning candidates and noted his pleasure at seeing representatives of BJJ School, Pedro Bessa and Gracie Barra taking the top positions on the Board and that this was a sign of how democratic the Association was and that it was great to see such historic teams having a role in the Association over the coming years.

RM congratulated Neil Williams in particular for taking over as Chair and the leadership of the Association.

4 A.O.B

Pete Lavery mentioned a Legacy Committee to ensure continuity for the incoming Board. RM confirmed that the Board had voted on 22 October to establish a committee consisting of RM, Dave Coles and Simon Hayes with immediate effect. RM also confirmed that he was happy as President to continue to deal with Sport England and other projects which required some continuity.

Leigh Remedios asked for clarification on whether Sport England recognition covered the whole of the UK or just England. RM confirmed that we had been recognised by the Sports Councils of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland (each of which are separate bodies).

Lawrence Selby expressed, from his experience of having been involved with other sports at different levels, including NGB, that there was due an enormous round of congratulations to all involved in achieving recognition. It was an exceptional, not-easily-attainable, achievement. RM thanked LS for major part LS played in that process.

Kristina Zadunaiskaja asked whether the recording of the meeting would be made available. RM and MW both stated that they had no objections to sharing it. A link will be published in due course.

Gina Hopkins asked whether there had already been any discussions around funding opportunities. RM confirmed that he is in discussions with Sport England, but noted that we do not fit into their 'Core Funding' model. Funding opportunities will be a priority for the new Board and for incoming Treasurer Simon Ling. GH noted that she was thinking about specific projects, e.g. around disability BJJ or women's BJJ and noted that she knows a very good bid writer. RM noted that we would be extremely grateful to make contact. RM stated that we want sport council funding to be available to all clubs and that we will be working on funding application templates for each of the regions.

Simon Hayes expressed his thanks to Dave Coles and to RM for setting the Association up. He noted that it would be very easy for teams and individuals to see each other as competitors and rivals, but that we were colleagues, not competitors and that only by working together can we ensure that we protect UK BJJ from outside entities which may not have the best interests of BJJ at heart.

Stuart Forrester noted that there are some challenges ahead, in terms of making sure BJJ is safe and inclusive, but that we were on the right path and he thanked the outgoing Board and Council.



LR asked about processes for safeguarding and also the reporting of abuse or harassment. RM expressed a firm desire that all clubs take responsibility and make this a priority. As an association we are strengthening our membership requirements to ensure all clubs are fully vetted and have appropriate training in safeguarding, first aid, etc. and all facilities are safe environments. LR asked if resources to do this are available through the UKBJJA (e.g. DBS checks). RM confirmed that it should be available and subsidised. MW pointed out the [UKBJJA policies page](#) on the website and pointed out that we have new codes of conduct and membership policies and explained the new requirements that we were asking for from new and renewing member clubs. MW also noted that we will be offering training in Safeguarding, First Aid and Coaching and already offer [DBS checks](#) via the website. He encouraged all members to take detailed look at the website as there were many resources available – and that the site should be the first point of reference for any questions. GH offered to share a safeguarding reporting form for us to adapt. LS pointed out our Safeguarding policy (for children) and our Equity policy (which deals with the fair treatment of all people). He highlighted our complaints policy and our whistleblowing contact address (report@ukbjja.org) and that he believed we had a robust procedure for dealing with formal complaints and allegations of harassment. He stated that any club looking to build their own set of policies is welcome to take a look at our policies and adapt them as needed.

Jack Burrell highlighted the risks of University BJJ clubs closing as a result of the pandemic and asked about the need to support University BJJ and resources for university clubs. RM confirmed that this would be an area for development. He expressed thanks to Tim Carden for the work he had done as University Officer and noted that we needed a succession plan and additional support for TC in that role. MW pointed out that University BJJ was one area where funding was definitely available, via BUCS and that becoming a BUCS recognised sport should be a priority.

KZ asked whether there was any relationship between the UKBJJA and IBJJF. RM stated that we had no current relationship, but were happy to talk to them or any other international body and we expected to forge more relationships in the future.

Neil Williams expressed his thanks to the founders and outgoing Board and that he was looking forward to working to take BJJ forward.

5 Close

RM closed by thanking the Board, Council and CEO for their hard work and contributions.

There being no further business, the meeting was concluded at 14:45.