



Great British Powerlifting Federation – North West Division

General Meeting held on 21/02/15 at 3.30pm

Present: Bryn Evans Joe Bullock Aaron Lohan
 Peter Ratcliffe Joe Whiteley Stephen Manuel
 Neil Ronaldson Kimberley Cowell Shannon Clifford
 Rick Booth Emma Stott Paul Jackson
 Jo Whiteley Will Wright
 Dave Clifford Danny Taylor
 Paul Constantine

Apologies: Ahmed Kadry Ben Dandy Barrie Scougal
 Jimmy Nsouli James Doyle Rebecca Avgerinopoulou

The Secretary opened the meeting by welcoming all present. This meeting followed directly on from the referee's exam and the Secretary wished everyone success.

Introduction

The General Secretary discussed some of the recent developments within the division, including online competition entry and online payments, which were seen to be successful and very popular. There was a vote of thanks for Jo Whiteley for her part in this and the Media Team of Kimberley Cowell and Rebecca Avgerinopoulou were also congratulated on their work in the division which does a huge amount to maintain interest.

Merchandise was also discussed, especially the competition bundle being trialled for the County Championship Series. Although it is still early days for these competitions as they run from May to July, we already have 77 entries in across the 3 comps and nearly half of those entries opted to take the competition bundle of competition entry, a T-shirt and a hoody for £40. This is proving to be an excellent source of revenue for the division and also adds to the competition experience for the lifters.

County Representatives

The Secretary acknowledged that, as a division, we had not yet started to develop our County Representatives. There was an in-depth discussion of the grass-roots development of the sport in the region and it was agreed that we should be encouraging small "gym competitions" with relaxed rules as a way of breaking down barriers to entry for gym goers. Danny Taylor, one of the Merseyside reps, talked about how he had structured his own in-house "mock meet" which was felt to be a good model. Demonstration days were also suggested as a way of generating interest.

There was some discussion around the incredible growth of the federation. Jo Whiteley stated that the GBPF had grown by 40% year on year as at 1st Feb but the North West Division had grown by more than 150% so we are experiencing unprecedented growth for the second year running. The meeting discussed various ideas and strategies of how to deal with this growth: whether to introduce another layer of competition beneath the County Championships and whether it should be restricted to only GBPF members. Potentially, we might be looking at 5 County Championships in 2017 rather than 3. This would require a lot of manpower and also present a crowded calendar. However, Rick Booth had the brainwave that if we really needed to do this, we could replace the Team competition and the novice comp with the two extra County Champs thereby maintaining the status quo.

After much debate, this discussion was put on hold until the AGM in September when we would have the numbers in from the County Championships and be better placed to make decisions about the future.

It was suggested that in 2017, the County reps project manage the County Championships and this was agreed, details tbc. Although 2017 is still a long way off, planning now would mean that each County rep can start to get people trained up as platform and table crew.

Bursaries for International Lifters

It was proposed that North West lifters representing the division internationally should be given bursaries of £100 for European competitions and £200 for competitions outside Europe. This was not approved as the general feeling of the meeting was that it would not make a significant difference to most of the lifters but would have a significant and detrimental impact on the Division's finances. However, it has always been the case that lifters who are struggling to finance international competitions can apply to the Exec for support and this will be continued.

Equipment Purchase

The meeting discussed whether to buy a platform set (combo rack, bar and discs). This is a huge expense running to many thousands of pounds. However, as new centres are appearing across the region and we are doing more competitions in distant parts of the region, the meeting agreed that we would need more equipment to enable this. The question was asked as to whether the Division could afford it and it was confirmed that yes, sufficient monies were available. Additionally, any equipment bought would be an investment and support the division for many years. The purchase was unanimously agreed and the Secretary agreed to action this.

National Events

Once again there was discussion of putting on a national competition. Various venues were discussed including Hyndburn Sports Centre and Pontins and these will be investigated for suitability. The General Secretary to follow this up with the GBPF Executive.

With no other business forthcoming, the Secretary thanked all in attendance and closed the meeting at 5pm.