

Independent Schools Gymnastics Association

Annual General Meeting Minutes

At Maltman's Green School, 19 March 2017, 1.00pm



(Meeting started at 13.22 due to the morning Committee meeting overrunning)

Those Present: June Walden (Chairman), Verity Boulger (Vice Chairman), Linda McNally (St Faith's), Stuart Dunkley (Treasurer), Marion Charafeddine (Royal Masonic), Trudy Smith (Stamford Endowed), Emily Burman (Haberdashers' Aske's), Suzanne Rimini (St Mary's, Hampstead), Helen le Page (Guildford High), Amy Gillman (St Catherine's), Jo Cox (Kent College), Vikki Cook (Holmewood House), Nikki Towner (Vinehall), Leanne Clarke (Maltman's Green), Rosie Berrick (Putney High), Katie Phillips (Wycombe Abbey), Gordon Finch and Rebecca Maw (British School in the Netherlands)

Apologies: Libby Craig (President), Katie Bennett (British School of Brussels), Rebecca Sanderson (HABS Monmouth), Emma Horncastle (NLCS), Charlotte Lusted (Royal Masonic School), Rebecca Crane (LEH), Sarah Curling (Russell Hall), Tara Oxley (Guildford High School), Andrea Blaxall (Castle House), Louise Finch (St Mary's, Hampstead), Sarah Richards (Dodderhill), Liz Basson (Streatham & Clapham), Katie Holmes (St Piran's), Laura Prentice (Claremont Fan Court), Michelle Uezzell (St Helen's & St Katharine's), Jacqui Deadman and Georgia Connell (St Mary's, Gerrards Cross), Amanda Hawkins (Port Regis), Sarah Portsmouth (Stormont), Claire Pocock, and Michelle O'Brien (Tormead)

Welcome: June Walden welcomed everyone to the meeting. She made a special mention and thanked Claire Pocock who had interrupted her ski-ing holiday to score at I.S.G.A. on 3/4/5 March. Linda presented her with a plant for all her work on the website as well as scoring this year. June gave thanks also to Leanne for hosting the AGM and asked for thanks to be passed to headmistress, Mrs Pardon, for allowing use of her school once again.

1. Minutes of last year's AGM

The minutes of the previous AGM held on 17 April 2016 were approved by all and signed by the Chairman.

All voted in favour

2. Matters arising

None

3. Chairman's Report

June Walden mentioned that following last AGM, the new website was up and running at the end of June 2016. Thanks were expressed to Claire Pocock, who worked hard over the Summer to learn how to run it and upload the material. It is a WordPress site, so quite a familiar site. There is a course Claire could go on – possibly funded by I.S.G.A. It is a lot of work for one person, so June asked if anyone was willing or knew anyone willing to take on helping Claire. This person would also be able to go on a course. June apologized for not having videos of Set Floor uploaded on to the website, but hopefully this problem can be rectified soon, as we now have a You Tube Account. Trudy Smith has been asked to be in charge of Media. Also on website is a 'For Sale' section which has, to date, not been used. Do feel free to send text and photos of equipment for sale and it can be advertised. June asked whether anyone noticed any information missing from website. Emily Burman queried whether the Running Orders for competitions could go on. Linda McNally thinks it is uploaded but is slightly wary of having people rely on what may be an out-of-date version. There were seven drafts of the 2017 5 Piece draw. Leanne Clark said how brilliant the site was. It is very easy to use and she has found it useful to share with a school wishing to take part in school gymnastics. It was also noted that some information and letters from host schools had been put on this year.

June mentioned that throughout the Summer term, Marion had worked tirelessly on the rules, scoresheets and guidelines for the various competitions, often late into the night, and she still had more work to do.

June offered thanks and a gift for Marion. Marion mentioned at this point that the 2 Piece rules would be re-produced in a slightly different format.

Excellent workshops had been run. Firstly, one at Tormead with the Technical Committee present. A second was held at Castle House, focusing on the 4 Piece, Boys and New Schools. Linda had attended both, so went to British School of Brussels to deliver the third, saving BSB and BSN the expense of travelling to the UK. Overall, people have found the workshops to be very valuable, especially for new schools and it is hoped they will continue.

Stuart has been very busy with 41 schools affiliating this year. This equates to 58 schools, if you break down Junior and Senior. June mentioned that Stuart would be asking for clearer referencing of BACS payments with coaches being required to send a follow up email explaining exactly what the money was for.

ACTION: All Coaches

June offered grateful thanks to those who had hosted competitions this year. The 2 Piece was held at a new venue, St Mary's, Gerrard's Cross, and Jacqui Deadman did a great job in all areas of organisation. It was a packed weekend with over 87 teams. When it started, eight years ago, the competition was run over one afternoon with 12 teams in three age groups!

The 4 Piece was brilliantly hosted by Linda McNally at St Faith's at extremely short notice. June remarked that no-one else would have attempted it and survived! 40 teams, including a record number of boys, competed in one day. Linda feels this will need to be extended to a day and a half. Linda commented that her SMT were very happy with the event which boded well for the future.

At the 5 Piece, 'Team Tormead' did a stunning job. For the first time there were six age groups on the same weekend, with all age groups competing on a sprung floor. There was a great atmosphere and Michelle did an excellent job of getting so many parent helpers involved. 27 schools took part. Team numbers were – 16 x U11s, 16 x U13s, 15 x O13s, 11 x U9s, 8 x U15s and 12 x U10s. June encouraged all schools to feel free to apply for age groups that were not full.

Linda encouraged all schools with the necessary facilities, to consider hosting. It was hard work, but gives a school a real buzz.

More trophies have been donated this year – Libby donated a President's Cup and Salver, Stuart donated a cup for the 5 Piece, Louise Finch organized a plate for U10 Group on behalf of her father, Gordon Finch and June donated three Host School salvers for the 2 Piece, 4 Piece Boys and 4 Piece Girls Challenge events.

At this point, Helen thanked all for being so organized in signing for trophies and returning them on time. She feels much more on top of things now. She did ask coaches to keep track of trophies which may be taken home by gymnasts as some have gone missing. Often they are valuable trophies and some have been replaced with cheap alternatives. She asked that if something does happen to a trophy, please could coaches liaise with her or June before purchasing, so they can replace like-for-like. She offered thanks to Tormead and Kent College for arranging for someone to help with handing out trophies during presentations, so she could be left free to deal with the paperwork. June remarked that Helen's very efficient system had already spread to other competitions.

June mentioned the scoring system designed by Claire and the need to build a team of people who knew how to operate it. Currently Katherine Davies and Tara Oxley have been taught and have scored at the 2 Piece and 4 Piece competitions respectively. Laura Prentice (Claremont Fan Court), has also offered to go on to the scoring team. If anyone else is interested, they should speak to June or Claire.

June thanked Verity in her first year solo as Judges' Convenor. It is a difficult and sometimes stressful task, especially when judges drop out. Her work is much appreciated. Suzanne Rimini has also helped with researching and booking hotels. Jo Cox mentioned she had lots of new judges and said she would send information on them to Verity.

ACTION: JC

June summarized the season as being very successful with more participating gymnasts than ever, an ever-expanding boys' section, a very positive, warm atmosphere at all the competitions and we had been blessed with excellent host organisers and supportive Head teachers. All heads of host schools that she has visited have been very happy. She warns though that we must not become complacent.

June discussed her idea of giving recognition awards along the lines of the British Gymnastics Awards Ceremony. She would like to have awards for long-serving coaches ie 15, 20, 25 and 30 years. Service awards: Libby and Stuart have already been awarded for Services to the organization. She would also like a Host School award to encourage schools and Host organisers to host multiple times. Plus a long-serving award to judges. It was suggested that judges' awards should be handed out at competitions but others would be at the lunch break before the AGM. Gordon remarked he felt honoured to have been mentioned and awarded at the same competition as Stuart and Libby and we must not forget that this organization is mainly about the children and remarked it was lovely on Sunday evening of 5 Piece when the Y13s were asked to stand to be applauded. June reminded everyone that the children were given medals each year at the competitions and were recognized at their schools, but without the adults, the children would have no competition. Helen le Page and Linda McNally both agreed that as far as coaches were concerned, they were involved with the competitions for many reasons and really enjoyed their annual get-togethers, but felt it was really important to recognize those who gave so much to judging etc. **ACTION JW**

4. Secretary's Report

Linda remarked it has been a massive year with new rules, website etc. So much emailing these days. She is worried people sometimes get left off mailings and it may be an idea to have people acknowledging receipt. People have pulled out of competitions, but it is usually for good reasons. She re-iterated that all the competitions (2 Piece, 4 Piece and 5 Piece) and their hosts were amazing. She thanked Helen for her work with trophies, Verity as Judges' Convenor, June for so much and Suzanne for general help. She presented plants as gifts to all. There were just a couple of points she had slightly negative feedback on, notably the judges lunches on the first day at 2 Piece, but Jacqui had worked to rectify this by the second day. Linda felt she had also not paid enough attention to this aspect at the 4 Piece and we all needed to be aware that the judges needed to be given enough time to eat well. She also mentioned the cost of spectator entry at Tormead took some by surprise. She could see that hosts needed to balance the books and agreed that she would find out and pass on to coaches, in advance of competitions, what the charges would be. Vikki suggested that a 'weekend pass' and or 'family pass' would be a good idea for parents wanting to come both or all days and possibly a 'competitors' pass' for gymnasts who have been or will be competing. Rebecca (BSN) questioned whether I.S.G.A. should have a policy on entry fees, but June said she would say it was up to hosts how and what they charged, but by keeping entry, program and raffle charges separate, spectators could decide how much they spent. Linda agreed that Tormead had set the bar high in terms of their wonderful organization of 5 Piece, but prospective hosts must not feel deterred. They must not feel they need to offer so much.

At this point, Vikki Cook, offered thanks to Helen le Page for hosting a wonderful IAPS competition at which many of the same schools were present.

It was agreed by all that all competitions were fantastic and it worked really well from a training point of view to have U9s compete later in the year and also at a time they could be inspired by the older gymnasts.

Emily Burman queried days on which age groups competed, but Linda reminded that we had to have the two smaller age groups on a school day and needed a younger age group with an older one to balance spectator numbers plus there was difficulty getting as many judges on a Friday as for a weekend.

Rebecca (BSN) asked for entry date for competitions. Linda said a provisional calendar will come soon, but dates are likely to be same as last year ie. 29 September for 2 Piece and 5 Piece and 20 November for 4 Piece.

Helen asked what would happen if 4 Piece got too big. Linda said she would not like to go beyond awarding more than top three teams at 4 Piece and 2 Piece. The 5 Piece would remain at six places, and hopefully

this would be an incentive for coaches to enter the Premier competition. Vikki said that 4 Piece had become so popular as Group routine was difficult to achieve with coaching of just one hour a week. It was also pointed out that it was the set vault that had always been the stumbling block for weaker teams, rather than the group.

June gave thanks to Linda for her jobs as General Secretary and Competition Secretary and presented a gift of a plant.

5. Treasurer's Report and Annual Affiliation Subscriptions

Stuart remarked the organization was in a very healthy position. 41 schools had affiliated – 5 more than last year and we had made money on every competition, (due to Tormead's agreement to pay for the judges' accommodation. It is very likely that Tormead will be given a donation to help off-set this expense).

He feels:

- . affiliation and entry fees should remain the same for 2017-2018.
- . we should go back to system of giving an incentive to host schools and suggests £300 per day. This will be done for the coming year and be re-assessed next year, depending on finances.
- . we should re-instate judges dinners for those needing accommodation, on the evening before a competition

Proposed: Vikki Cook
Seconded: Verity Boulger
All voted in favour

He asks that payments for affiliation and entries be kept separate and bursars label payment with school name and brief description of what payment is for. It may be that codes need to be used and are given out this year. Stuart asked that coaches sent him an email to explain what each payment was for and what method of payment was being used. Those coaches already doing this makes his job much more straightforward.

Vikki Cook asked whether a reminder for affiliation will be emailed or should coaches look on website. June advised to wait until after 1 May and then to check that the correct year, 2017 – 2018 had appeared on Affiliation form to download from the website. Stuart asked that coaches affiliate in the Summer term, rather than wait until Autumn when competition entry payments were due. June also reminded of the risk of a fine if schools withdrew a team from a competition and warned that if they withdrew on more than one occasion that fines were stated in the rules and they would be hearing from Linda!

ACTION: JW & CP

6. Appointment of Auditors

Stuart mentioned that this year Sarah Whytock would be auditing the accounts for a £40/£50 pound donation.

Proposed: Trudy Smith
Seconded: Marion Charafeddine
All voted in favour

7. Election of Committee Members

June remarked that last year the Constitution had changed as three committees had reverted back to one. She had not paid enough attention to listing of committee members and their titles. It was agreed at Executive Committee meeting of 19 March 2017, that there be nine titled officers, namely, President (honorary position), Chairman, Vice Chairman, General Secretary, Treasurer, Technical Director, Competition Secretary, Judges' Convenor, and Trophy Secretary, together with other committee members who have a portfolio of responsibilities but no specific title. Therefore the Constitution needs to be altered to reflect this.

ACTION: JW

There was plenty of work for all and it would be good to share the load with non-committee members, eg. for scoring, proof-reading, help with website etc. June also asked Suzanne to be an assistant to Linda, whilst still retaining her other duties assisting Technical Director, Judges' Convenor and Chairman. Suzanne agreed. June mentioned that one committee member, Michelle O'Brien, had stepped down. There would be one less fewer on the committee unless anyone felt they would like to put themselves forward at this

stage. June remarked that as all but Suzanne had served their three years, they were up for re-election and there was the need for a vote for all members to be re-instated. A block vote of all committee members was then proposed by Gordon Finch.

Proposed: Gordon Finch
Seconded: Vikki Cook
All voted in favour

8. Dates and venues for 2017-2018

Before these were discussed, June mentioned there was an exciting development for 2019 in that BSN had offered to host March 5 Piece. She asked Gordon and Finch and Rebecca Maw to elaborate. They explained that a new senior school was being built on their campus which would include all the necessary halls etc that would be required to put on the championships and hopefully including a permanent sprung floor. Rebecca mentioned that heads of various BSN schools and the CEO were very supportive. June offered thanks.

Gordon warned that schools would face reticence in bringing U9s abroad and to start thinking about logistics at an early date. Rebecca has experience of organizing COBIS Games and will be able to get deals for travel and accommodation. Vikki reminded of the issue of young children sleeping alone in hotel rooms and Rebecca assures that such issues will be looked into. Trudy advises getting parents to take their own children where possible and June added that they would also be important for spectator numbers. Linda remarked that parents were often supportive of international travel, but Vikki reminded that we should put thought to where parents were unable to travel. It was questioned whether teams would need to be chosen well in advance for airline bookings, but Rebecca assured they would use airlines where names could be confirmed at short notice. Linda reminded that it was not that long a drive, but there were certain restrictions on mini-bus capacities on the Continent. Rebecca informed that the Security Risk for the Netherlands is currently a '4', but there would be the need for a backup school in case the security risk increased. The dates proposed are 1/2/3 March 2019. June pointed out that for 2020, we would need to move to 6/7/8 March, to avoid going backwards into February.

Trudy Smith has kindly offered to host 2 Piece on 11 and 12 November 2017, at Stamford. It will probably be Juniors and U9 Boys on the Saturday and Seniors and U11 and U13 Boys on the Sunday, but this needs to be confirmed.

Linda will once again host the 4 Piece at St Faith's on Sunday 21 January 2018, with the possibility of adding a session on the afternoon of Saturday 20 January.

Currently no host school for 5 Piece. Amy Gillman mentioned that her head, Alice Phillips, had gone to Tormead on the Friday of 5 Piece and been hugely impressed. She would offer St Catherine's as a venue for 2018 5 Piece on 2nd, 3rd and 4th March, but had reservations about finances as the school would not want to make a loss. It was pointed out that it would be cheaper for I.S.G.A. to offer financial assistance rather than pay hire of a sports centre. Amy questioned whether it was necessary to hire a sprung floor as this is hugely expensive. June stressed that a sprung floor must be seen as a luxury, not a necessity. Gordon added that he was 90% certain he could get a sprung floor sponsored. It was agreed that if it was necessary I.S.G.A. would always advocate spectators' tired seating rather than a sprung floor. Marion also reminded of the risk to gymnasts using a sprung floor when they were not used to training on one. Amy Gillman will report back to her Head and give more thought to the commitment required, over the holidays, and get back to June and Linda immediately after Easter.

ACTION: AG

Katie Phillips said that there may be a possibility of Wycombe Abbey offering to host, although it could not be done unless it was staged on an exeat weekend and this would be 9/10/11 March for 2018. Wycombe pupils leave school lunchtime on Saturday 10. We would need use of their facilities from Friday 9 which may not be an option. The Plan will be first to explore St Catherine's option, then Wycombe Abbey.

ACTION if required: KP

At this point, Linda said that she would explore the options of using either Port Regis or St Piran's for the IAPS championships. The date would be two weeks 25 November or 25 - 26 November 2017.

ACTION L McN

9. Date of next AGM

it was agreed that the end of the Easter term was better than at start of Summer term. Date of 18 March 2018 was proposed and agreed by all.

10. AOB (sent in two weeks previously)

Option of having 5 gymnasts in the Group Routine – as this will impact upon the rules, it won't happen in this cycle.

Colour of strapping tape on gymnasts – agreed not to legislate, but ask coaches to make gymnasts aware of being as conservative as possible in their choice of colour before a competition.

Sports bras – there seems to be a trend towards brightly coloured, racer back sports bras. This is to be discouraged. Marion reminded coaches that the rules stipulate 0.1 deduction per gymnast at each apparatus for visible underwear.

6, 5, 4 format at all ISGA competitions – Linda wanted a vote on whether all were in favour of 6 in a team, with 5 only to compete on each apparatus but still only 4 scores to count. In general, a favourable idea as it would mean there was not one lone gymnast not competing in group routine and coaches could take a gymnast who was mainly a vaulter or floor worker rather than an all-round gymnast. It was agreed that if six gymnasts were taken to a competition that all six gymnasts must compete on at least one piece of apparatus.

Proposed: Linda McNally

Seconded: Trudy Smith

All voted in favour

There was discussion on having U13 gymnasts competing as U15s, but Linda referred to 2016 AGM where it was voted that Y7 and Y8 could not compete as U15.

Emily asked whether Boys' age groups could be extended to U14 or U15. Linda reminded of the huge difference in size of boys of this age group and would said it would not be a good idea. She would like to see larger entries in U13 Boys before adding another age group. Helen suggested an Individual competition for older boys, but June reminded that rules say no individuals. It was suggested if there was space at 4 Piece they could come as guests or Allstars, so younger boys could see what they can aspire to.

June mentioned that Suzanne had designed a Technical Specification form for competition hosts to complete as rules say they must let Competition Secretary know in writing certain equipment dimensions. Linda feels strongly that this would be an extra task for an already busy organizer who has gymnastics as only a small part of her very busy work day. Helen added that they were making changes to run-ups etc the night before IAPS. It was agreed that the main thing that needed to be passed on to coaches was the size and orientation of the main floor area. It was agreed there would be no form, but the organisers would get as much information as possible to the General Secretary, for distribution to participating schools.

Vikki mentioned she would like the 'Position' element to be removed from certificates as it was demoralizing to point out a gymnast came 65th. We need to remember in the main these are just school gymnasts competing, not hardened club gymnasts. Leanne suggested that an alternative 'participation' certificate was put on website. Amy mentioned she had already made one for her St Catherine's gymnasts. Tracy Tigchelaar who has designed certificates was texted and replied she could make changes but would now need to pay to be able to use the font, but that if I.S.G.A. could cover this, she could easily amend certificates, programme covers etc.

It was asked whether we could refer to ourselves as ISGA (one word), rather than the initials. Agreed – Yes. But I.S.G.A. would be used at formal events ie Presentations

June mentioned that following one season of new rules, it had become apparent of the need for some minor tweaks and additions. Marion said she could sort most by herself, but there were a few which she felt required a discussion:

5 Piece Voluntary Vault – listing the permitted 10.00 tariff vaults would help both judges and coaches. Proposal to have just Yamashita and Half on half off as the only vaults more difficult than a handspring, that would be recognized.

Proposed: June Walden

Seconded: Linda McNally

All voted in favour

Boys Voluntary Vault, removal of lengthways box option which was not being sufficiently used.

All in favour, except JW who abstained

Number of seconds to hold the Front Support position: All agreed that a Front Support, Jump in and up should be held for 3 seconds. However the Front Support shape need only be held for 2 seconds in a Back Roll to Front Support. If these two skills were linked, ie. Back Roll to Front Support and then squat in and a straight upwards jump, the Front Support shape need only be held for 3 seconds in total. These will now be listed as such on the code.

Senior Set Floor, Forward Roll to Dish – should this be a straight leg entry or from a squat? All agreed that for consistency and safety of gymnasts, they should show a squat position, keeping a straight back, before rolling.

ACTION: on all points above MC

At this point Jo Cox asked what those who had judged it felt about the Senior Set Floor. Marion, Stuart, June, Verity, Suzanne all replied they really liked it. Many coaches felt it gave gymnasts who may not excel in areas such as flexibility, a good opportunity to show their strength and control and achieve a good score.

Trudy pointed out that it would be nice to recognize gymnasts who were currently competing or had recently competed at I.S.G.A. who had gone on to achieve recognition at a high level in their sport. Ten year-old Violet Manser of Kent College (South Essex G.C.) is part of the British Gymnastics Talent Development Squad and three girls will be competing at the English Championships on the weekend of 7/8/9 April – Lottie Smith of Stamford (Huntingdon G.C.) in the Senior category, Evie Lamb of St Catherine's (Leatherhead and Dorking G.C.) in the Junior category and Clara Rimini, ex St Mary's, Hampstead (Berkhamsted G.C.) in the Espoir category. June has asked for photos of them to be included on the website.

ACTION: JC, SR, AG, LS, JW, CP

Vikki asked whether it would be possible to change days for U13 age groups at March competition as girls had just competed at IAPS Netball on the Friday and were exhausted on the Saturday. Also, if they needed to travel to a venue the day before competing, eg. Netherlands, this would not be possible. Linda said she could always arrange for these girls not to be in first round, but this would not solve the travelling abroad issue. June suggested contacting Fran Hide at IAPS to see whether at the IAPS Netball the U13s could compete on the Thursday and U11s on the Friday, thus giving them a day off before they competed their I.S.G.A. gymnastics. Linda agreed this would be a good idea and would talk to Fran. **ACTION: L McN**

Music – there had been a request for music to be sent digitally to host schools. Major reservations about this for various reasons. Linda said nothing would change before the 2020 cycle.

The meeting closed at 16.20.