

IRISH PÉTANQUE ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE 2007 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

10 Feb 2007 ALSAA Sports Centre, Dublin

PRESENT: Denis Nightingale (in the chair), Jim Ryan, Dave Beck, George Davidson, Dermot Carroll, Pierre di Pizzo, Mikhal Dzurik, John O'Grady, Joe Colwell.

APOLOGIES: John McCloy, John Murray, Richard Elvin, Humberto Tavares.

PRESIDENT'S OPENING REMARKS: Denis welcomed everyone and thanked them for their attendance and support during the year. He reported on a difficult year for the IPA in terms of eg. poor attendance at competitions and membership numbers, however, on a positive note, we won the 2006 Celtic Challenge (thanks being extended to Richard Elvin and others involved in the very successful arrangements) and there was a resurgence of interest in the Dublin area/clubs ** Cork and North Down clubs continued to operate well in a relatively stable environment but, unfortunately, the Cahir club was having a difficult time. Generating more interest and membership of the IPA and clubs was a key issue for the incoming year.

** Dermot Carroll's report on the Dublin area attached.

MATTER ARISING FROM MINUTES OF 2006 AGM:

FIPJP (Federation Internationale de Petanque et Jeu Provencale) Denis confirmed that despite representations for a reduction, the affiliation fee stood at €350. Following general discussion, it was agreed that continued membership, rather than disaffiliation, was the right approach.

External funding: Following general discussion, and while accepting that all efforts should be made to access whatever funding might be available, the bottom line continued to be that the main funding body required the existence of established clubs in at least 8 counties of Ireland, and this was currently not the situation. Nevertheless, the discussion identified novel methods of raising money and these were to be pursued by individuals as opportunities presented themselves. The general feeling was that lack of impetus rather than finance was the issue to be addressed.

REPORT OF THE HON. SECRETARY: Jim Ryan's report (attached) was circulated prior to the meeting and much of the ground therein had been covered by the President in his remarks. Davy Beck made specific comments about the Irish team's excellent performance/placing in the 2006 World Championships.

John O'Grady and Joe Colwell (the more recent members present) referred to 'latent' membership in their 'areas', and their view was that lack of information on the IPA, and the game in general, was not conducive to attracting/maintaining interest. John reported

that this shortcoming would have a negative impact in his Club's dealings with the Bray Council re: playing facilities. John and Joe asked for some background as to IPA membership and Davy Beck gave a synopsis of matters such as (a) individual/family membership (b) Club membership (c) insurance (d) residence in Ireland qualification.

The fact that those present had to ask for this information at such a forum as the AGM pointed up that all was not well with the IPA's communication media. While the office bearers described the kind of information which was in place, the general feeling was that it was not sufficiently up to date nor easily accessible, which precluded members from (a) learning more for themselves (b) reacting positively to enquiries from others or (c) directing others to a ready source of information.

Dermot Carroll supported the misgivings of newer members and expressed a particular keenness for a well structured IPA website, perhaps along the lines of the New Zealand site, which would provide all the information necessary for interested parties/potential members and new/longer term members.

There was general agreement that the ready availability of a 'Rule Book' which could be 'personalised' and licenses for those who required same, were other matters to be formalised within the overall concept of better information/marketing. In the meantime, Denis Nightingale and David Beck agreed to look at the up-dating/printing of an existing 'Rule Book' to assist fledgling members/clubs/players generally.

While Joe Colwell suggested that local events eg. marketing of French property, were opportunities to demonstrate/market the game and local clubs, Denis explained that traditionally, clubs had been free to develop/operate/market the game as they saw fit, without interference from the IPA. However, subject to the availability of personnel and whatever finance could reasonably be provided from its resources, the IPA would be keen to assist.

REPORT OF THE HON. TREASURER: This is attached. Main points were (a) Insurance €663 pa (b) FIPJP membership €350 pa (c) Celtic Challenge sponsorship of €3000 (which had contributed significantly to) (d) a bottom line of €1520.83 and £ 1919.87, (incl. cash in hand)

Dermot Carroll recommended that, in view of this relatively healthy position, the IPA should make some financial provision for the setting up of a new website (given that the existing site seemed to have 'disappeared') There was general acceptance of the recommendation. As a first step, Jim Ryan agreed to circulate some background to the structure/content of the 'ex' site. Additionally, George Davidson referred to a NI Government-financed initiative called MyGroupNI (www.mygroupni.com) the main purpose of which is to provide (at no cost to individual organisations) a sophisticated website for small/club type groups. He undertook to research this and report back.

It was agreed that a small sub-Committee comprising George Davidson, Jim Ryan, Dermott Carroll and John O'Grady would take forward the website issue.

At this point, the reports of the Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer were adopted by general consensus.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

President: Denis Nightingale – Prop. David Beck, Sec. Joe Colwell.

Hon. Secretary: George Davidson – Prop. Jim Ryan, Sec. David Beck

Hon. Treasurer: Jim Ryan – Prop. George Davidson, Sec. Denis Nightingale

Other Committee members: By general agreement, all others not named above (Dave Beck, Dermot Carroll, Pierre di Pizzo, Michal Dzurik, John O’Grady and Joe Colwell) were elected to the Committee.

DRAFT CALENDAR FOR 2007: Following general discussion, Jim Ryan agreed to amend and circulate the draft Calendar to take account of eg. (a) the possibility of holding some competitions on Saturday rather than Sunday and (b) the possibility of holding an event/competition to herald the opening of Bray’s new playing facilities (date dependant on factors still to be determined)

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Denis Nightingale referred to a ‘President’s Cup’ which could be considered for presentation at a competition;

It was confirmed to Mikhal Dzurik that (a) no IPA-run competitions on the Calendar were ‘open’; and (b) the name of the competition organiser would be included in the up-dated Calendar.

It was confirmed to Joe Colwell that a ‘mailing list’ existed.

ACTION POINTS:

1. **Denis Nightingale/David Beck** - up-dating/printing of a ‘Rule Book.’
2. **Jim Ryan** – Draw up and circulate some information about the ‘existing’ web site.
3. **George Davidson** – Research, and report to the Sub-Committee, information/possibilities about the ‘MyGroupNI’ website.
4. **Jim Ryan** - To amend the draft Calendar and circulate.
5. **All** – To consider (and report to Committee) ways of attracting interest/marketing clubs and the game/accessing financial and other resources.

George W Davidson (Hon. Sec)