

# **IRISH PÉTANQUE ASSOCIATION**

## **MINUTES OF THE 2008 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**23 Feb 2008 St Peter's Parish Hall, Bray**

**1. PRESENT:** Denis Nightingale (Pres. in the chair), Jim Ryan (Hon.Treas) George Davidson (Hon.Sec) John O'Grady, Bridie Nicholson, Pierre di Pizzo, Jack di Pizzo, Humberto Tavares, Wilma Dunbar and Richard Elvin.

**2. APOLOGIES:** Dermott Carroll, John McCloy, John Hennessy, Charles Clarke, David Beck, Kilian Kiernan, Joe Colwell and John and Sylvia Murray.

**3. PRESIDENT'S OPENING REMARKS:** Denis thanked John O'Grady and his wife for the playing, accommodation and catering arrangements which had been made for the event. He then welcomed everyone and expressed his appreciation for their attendance and support during the year. A particular welcome was extended to Bridie Nicholson, representing the Sligo Petanque club, who was attending for the first time. Denis commented on the fact that the IPA competitions had attracted increased participation, but that interest in representation at a National level had been disappointing. He suggested that this was a major issue for the coming year, given that we needed 8 triple teams for the Celtic Challenge scheduled for Ireland in 2009. He was also concerned to ensure that a lack of knowledge about the IPA and its objectives would not be a factor behind either the seeming lack of interest or our endeavours to develop at a National and local level.

**4. MINUTES OF THE 2007 AGM :** By consensus, the minutes were accepted as a true record of proceedings.

**5. MATTERS ARISING:** Denis re-iterated the rationale behind the decision of the Council in December to 'park' the issue of a 'Rule Book' for the meantime ie. that it was not cost effective, especially in the light of the availability of the Rules of Petanque via the IPA website and other sources. It was generally agreed that there was insufficient evidence of demand for a 'portable' Rule Book and, for those who wished to have a personal copy of the Rules, a print from the website should suffice.

**6. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HON.SEC:** In summary, the Hon.Sec's report highlighted the positive developments over the year which were:

- (i) increased membership and support for IPA competitions;
- (ii) the introduction of individual awards to IPA competition winners;
- (iii) re-vitalisation of the IPA website;
- (iv) the emergence of clubs in Sligo and Cabinteely; and
- (v) the increased membership and completion of a full competition programme in the North Down club.

6.1 The less positive aspects of the year were:

- (vi) an apparent lessening of interest in representation at national level, particularly for the Celtic Challenge;

- (vii) emerging problems at Bushy Park, where, for whatever reason, the early impetus had not been maintained and the continuance of a viable, affiliated club was in jeopardy;
- (viii) that the Cahir club remains dormant; and
- (ix) the sad loss, after a long illness, of Ralph Weir.

6.2 The IPA Council met once during the year. Issues from that meeting were on the AGM agenda.

6.3 The report concluded that the main issues for immediate attention were National representation and the seeming absence of a viable, affiliated club in the Dublin area, yet where there were, apparently, reasonable numbers playing regularly.

**7. DISCUSSION ON THE HON.SEC'S REPORT:** There was considerable discussion around the 'pros and cons' of changes to dates for IPA competitions. While accepting that, in the main, date changes were made in the wake of limited interest on original dates, the general feeling was that, once established on the Annual Calendar, dates should remain constant. In the event that there were insufficient applicants for those dates, then the competition would be cancelled rather than re-scheduled. Both of the aspects underlined were agreed, and it was also agreed that invitations to the competitions should require applicants to confirm their entries by a minimum period before the competition.

7.1 Discussion highlighted that a decision was needed about the numbers required to render a competition viable. It was agreed that the Hon.Sec. should draw up, for consideration and ultimate agreement by the Council, a draft policy on competitions, taking account of the criteria underlined above and suggesting the minimum numbers required to secure 'viability'.

7.2 In order to complete the picture on the state of play within affiliated clubs, Jim Ryan confirmed that the Frankfield club was functioning and had again enjoyed a very successful 'Boule Blitz' competition. Bridie Nicholson reported that numbers were on the low side at Sligo, but there were hopes that this would improve in the wake of current and future publicity.

7.3 Finally, congratulations were offered to the Hon.Sec. on the design of the IPA website.

**8. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR 2007:** The Hon.Treas. provided a detailed account of income and expenditure for the year, pointing out that there was now a single Euro account. This showed a bank balance of €3,879.19, representing a loss for the year of €270.77. Almost all of this loss could be attributed to the difference between expenditure on National 'uniform' and income for same ( net loss of €221 ). The insurance premium (€663 ) continued to be the single biggest outlay. It was agreed that the Association was still in a relatively sound financial position. Membership stood at 86.

8.1 Given the changing relationship between the Euro and Sterling, the Hon.Treas. presented a revised Schedule of Fees for membership and competition entry. The revised Schedule, proposed by Richard Elvin and seconded by Pierre di Pizzo and agreed by the gathered, is appended to these Minutes.

8.2 A vote of thanks to both the Hon.Sec. and the Hon.Treas. for their comprehensive reports was proposed by Richard Elvin and seconded by Pierre di Pizzo.

**9. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:** There being no alternative proposals, the President, Hon.Sec. and Hon.Treas. were re-elected. It was agreed that the Council would consist of the remainder of those present. \*

\* Excepting Jack di Pizzo, since the IPA Constitution requires Council composition to be drawn from the Ordinary membership ( ie. over 18 years of age )

9.1 The Election outcome, therefore, proposed by Richard Elvin and seconded by Pierre di Pizzo was:

President: Denis Nightingale

Hon.Sec. George Davidson

Hon. Treas. Jim Ryan

Other Council members: John O'Grady, Bridie Nicholson, Pierre di Pizzo, Humberto Tavares, Wilma Dunbar and Richard Elvin.

**10. REVISION TO THE IPA CONSTITUTION:** The draft of a revised Constitution, which had been considered and approved by the Council at its meeting in December 2007, was ratified, subject to the change of the membership year ( Para 3.3 ) to read ' The membership year shall be 1st April to the following 31st March ' and a consequential change at Para 4.1.

**11. CALENDAR FOR 2008:** A draft Calendar for 2008 was circulated. The various events and timings were based on knowledge of forthcoming events and the actual pattern from 2007, and a number of venues were open for discussion. In terms of venues, agreement was reached to the holding of the Selection for the Senegal World C'ships at Bushy Park, the IPA Triples at Bray, the 2009 Celtic Challenge selection at Bushy park and the Irish Doubles/Singles at Sligo. The finally agreed Calendar is appended to these Minutes.

**12. CELTIC CHALLENGE SELECTION:** Given the low level of interest which applied to the 2007 and 2008 selection events, and the undesirable outcome that teams qualified by default without competition, there was general agreement that some new procedure should be introduced. After discussion, the meeting concluded that a Selection Panel should be created, tasked with selecting the requisite number of teams from persons who would be required to apply as singletons ie. no pre-determined 'teams'. Applicants would be entitled to suggest their preferences as to their team role ( pointer, shooter, milieu ) and their other team members, but there would be no guarantee that these preferences would be met, the Selection Panel having the final say on team composition. Applications would only be accepted from individuals who were prepared to accept the outcome of the Selection Panel's considerations.

12.1 When teams had been selected, a competition would be held to determine placings in the overall team ( ie. A1 – A4, B1 – B4 ( as necessary )) The agreed procedure would form part of the draft IPA competition policy referred to at Para 7.1 above.

12.2 Richard Elvin and Humberto Tavares were confirmed as main selectors, with Jim Ryan as Secretary to the Panel, with a casting vote, if required. This was proposed by Pierre di Pizzo, seconded by George Davidson.

**13. VENUE FOR THE 2009 CELTIC CHALLENGE ( IRELAND ):** In the normal scheme of things, it was Cork's turn to be offered the opportunity to host the competition. Jim Ryan confirmed that the Frankfield club was prepared to do so, reporting that the required facilities in terms of piste, adjacent hospitality, nearby accommodation and air/sea/land access points were all met. There being no other suggestions, the meeting agreed that the Frankfield club should be the venue.

**14. INSURANCE:** As already reported to the Council meeting in December 2007, the Hon.Sec. confirmed that a Dublin insurance company had offered to cover the IPA for 945 Euros, inclusive of cover for its Officers, in the event that an individual sought to claim against them in their official capacity. A premium of 623 Euros was offered if 'Officers' cover was not required. Current IPA insurance is 663 Euros. The Hon. Treasurer, through whom current insurance has been arranged, confirmed that while the new premium sought by our current insurers would not be known until 1 April coming, Officers were covered by the policy. In the circumstances, it was agreed that the Hon.Treas. should continue to deal with the matter and inform the Council of the outcome.

**15. IPA PERPETUAL TROPHIES:** These trophies ( Singles, Doubles and Triples ) have not been available for award at recent competitions. The possibility that replacement trophies might be required was to be considered, however, the Singles and Doubles trophies appeared at the meeting. As regards the Triples trophy, it's whereabouts has been sought to no avail so far. There is, however, a President's Cup which has not been played for in recent times, and it was agreed that this should be awarded as the Triples trophy.

#### **16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

**16.1 BUSHY PARK** - Given the uncertainty about the situation at Bushy Park, those attendees who normally play there were asked about their intentions, in terms of either joining the club which was currently affiliated to the IPA, or forming a new club. John & Richard confirmed that their intention was to build on the present nucleus in Bray where a club is now established and where the local Council still had plans to provide a suitable area. (A temporary facility has also been kindly provided by Bray Wanderers Football Club subject to their fixtures list.) This did not preclude them from attendance at Bushy Park in the interim. Pierre offered to try to sound out Bushy Park players about their intentions. The IPA Council will provide a forum through which potential support may be available and to which progress reports would be welcome.

**16.2 LICENCES** - It was generally agreed that a new, more business-like form of IPA Licence was desirable. This would be of a 'laminated' type, available to members on provision of a passport size photograph to Jim Ryan, Hon.Treas.

This concluded the formal business of the 2008 AGM.

#### **TO DO –**

- (i) Draw up AGM Minutes/draft Competition policy/Revised fee structure/Calendar/final Constitution (Hon.Sec )
- (ii) Pursue Insurance issue (Hon.Treas.)
- (iii) Provide Bray PC progress reports to IPA Council (John O'Grady/Richard Elvin.