

# Pétanque England



## Draft Minutes of the PE Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April and on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2020

### 18<sup>th</sup> April 2020

1 Highview, Vigo, Gravesend, Kent, DA13 0RR

#### Present:

Ken Buchan (Director & Company Secretary)

#### 1 Adjournment

As a result of the Government's compulsory "Stay at Home Measurers" which came into law on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020 no member was able to attend the AGM in person apart from Ken Buchan, who as the only director present took the chair. Because it was not possible for members to attend the AGM Ken Buchan as Chairman exercised his common law powers to adjourn the AGM to a date to be fixed.

### 30<sup>th</sup> May 2020

13 Devonshire Square, Bromley, Kent, BR2 9HX & by Video Conference

#### Present:

#### Board

Martin Eggleton (President)  
Cary Bush (Treasurer)  
Annette Eggleton  
Ray Keemer-Richards  
David Baxter  
Colin Roper  
Alan Roden

Ken Buchan (Secretary)  
David Mason  
Clive De Silva  
Jim Marstin

#### Members

Diane Smith  
David Greenwood  
Matt Blyton  
Royston Williams

Jerome Morais  
Richard Savory  
Paul Leverett  
Pete Chambers

Hassi Leverett  
Glen Woodward  
Barry Wing  
Ghislaine Chalmers

#### 2 Apologies for Absence

Alan Forse, Wayne Marshall, & Paul Brooks

#### 3 Remembrance of Past Members

Martin Eggleton called upon members present to stand in silence for a few moments in remembrance of those members who had passed away since the last AGM. There were too many to name, but he would like to single out Daniel Chalmers who ran DC Petanque. Daniel was the recipient of a kidney transplant and had competed in the World Transplant Games which had been held in Gateshead earlier that year. Martin had been honoured to present Daniel with a bronze medal at those games. Sadly the transplant failed and Daniel passed away a few months ago.

#### **4 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

No errors or omissions in the minutes had been notified and the President therefore cast his proxy votes in favour of adopting the minutes as a true and correct record.

#### **5 President's Report**

This is not how I expected to be delivering my final report as President, but in these strange times we must all adapt and I would like to thank all who have been involved in ensuring we could hold a meaningful AGM, whether that be by researching our legal options, putting them in place or simply by submitting a proxy vote.

As this **is** my final report, I would like to take a few words to express some of the highlights and successes of my time in office, I am sure you won't mind. There have been a lot of changes over the 5 years, not least of which is the change from the English Pétanque Association to Pétanque England and the associated change in legal structure. This process leaves the organisation in a better position to face whatever the future may bring. Ken Buchan and David Baxter deserve particular thanks for this, I know it took up many hours of their time.

There has been a huge increase in the number of coaches available around the country, thanks in a large part to the dedicated work of Colin Roper. It has been great to see the number increasing with every report Colin has submitted to the Board.

Unfortunately, Covid-19 has delayed the start of a new umpiring development campaign as a number of courses and exams had to be cancelled but I am sure this will restart as soon as the circumstances allow.

The provision for our junior members has gone from strength to strength with a fantastic National Youth Academy providing a programme for all the under 18s who want to take part, not just those players with international potential. It has been particularly enjoyable to see the regular Facebook posts of exercises and challenges that the younger members have sharing over the last few weeks and I thank Toni Gates and her team for their dedication and inventiveness.

I have enjoyed seeing everyone at the Inter Regionals every year, watching such a large number of people playing the sport we all love is immensely satisfying and reminds me just how accessible pétanque is, something which we should never lose sight of.

As you should know by now we are not going to have an Inter-Regional this year. It was a difficult decision in many ways as the Board are well aware how much of a highlight to the pétanque season this event is for many. However, discussions with IOW Tours and Mill Rythe demonstrated that it would not be possible to hold the competition in a way that we would recognise. The expected social distancing rules would likely mean that the capacity of the site would be reduced by at least half, we would have a maximum of half the pitches available and we may need to redesign the format to allow for dining at different times. Additionally, given the age profile of our membership we were not certain that enough players would wish to take part even in the restricted format. We therefore took the decision that it was best to decide earlier rather than later so that everyone knew exactly what the situation was. This could have led to a large financial liability for Pétanque England under a contract written for very different times. However, David Mason and Cary Bush have worked extremely hard with our travel partners, IOW Tours, and this has been minimised to an acceptable level.

You may also be aware that Away Resorts, the owners of Mill Rythe, are planning to close Mill Rythe for a complete refurbishment and will be reopening with a different format, more in line with their other parks. As a result of this we knew that 2020 was going to be our last year at this venue and work had been done to find alternatives for 2021 and onwards. Indeed, the intention was that the March Board meeting would be held at one of those possible venues but unfortunately Covid-19 got in the way. Work is continuing on this and an announcement will be made in due course.

The Home Nations qualifier and the associated Championship has been another annual highlight, allowing me to be involved in supporting so many people achieve the opportunity to pull on an England shirt. I particularly enjoyed presenting the trophy to Brian Eldridge as our representative squad member when England retained the trophy at Mill Rythe when it was our turn to host the competition. Those of you who do not know Brian Eldridge may not realise that he is registered blind with only about 4% vision. This goes to show how accessible our sport is and how it is possible for someone with a disability to compete at the highest level. It was rather more tense the following year when we retained the title in Jersey, the Jersey team maximising the benefit of home advantage and coming very close to taking the trophy. The home nations championship which was due to take place in Scotland this year has been deferred until next year.

Work has prevented me from travelling overseas to support our international squads as often as I might have liked but the trips I have been able to make have always been enlightening and have shown both how far we have come and how much further we have to go.

When I became President, I thought 5 years was a reasonable amount of time to occupy the role, and I stand by that view. Annette & I are stepping away while we still love the sport, and the many friends we have made through it. We are going to give our successors the opportunity to carve their own path by opting to stay away for the foreseeable future so that we are not peering over their shoulder watching their every move. Obviously, we will be available to

answer any questions and provide counsel should they ask, but it is on to the next stage for everyone.

We have had two great candidates for the position of President, and I will be announcing the successful candidate very shortly. I wish him every success going forward. It is going to be as challenge. During the last 5 years opportunities to take part in representational competitions in both the World and European Championships have increased tremendously with additional age groups and additional single sex competitions within the age groups. The Board is looking to begin a consultation with members and communications will be sent out shortly inviting you to express your opinions and views about playing pétanque in England and about Petanque England itself. I urge you to get involved. It should not be seen as a question of them and us. It is your Board and you can directly influence what happens. Social Media is great for mass communication but not everyone is on social media and unless it is carefully controlled and managed it can be led and controlled by a small minority group and is susceptible to cajoling and bullying.

Some questions have arisen concerning possible refunds of membership subscriptions. This will be a matter for the new board to consider but I should mention that although no playing activities are taking place currently PE continues to incur significant overhead expenditure.

We have also received queries about the ability of members to play during the government's social distancing restrictions. The Board has been issuing guidance regularly and will be issuing further guidance in the near future as a result of the government's most recent guidelines.

I would like to thank all those who have served on the national committee / Board for their support, dedication, and hard work during my presidency. It has always been a team effort and they have been a great team.

I would also like to thank anyone and everyone who has supported and worked with me over my time in the world of pétanque, whether that be as a team-mate, club associate or at the Regional & National level. I hope I have done my best to make you proud

Finally, as has become traditional, I would like to finish with thanking Annette for everything she has done in helping me achieve as much as I have. Without her backing me up I would not have been able to do the job. And she has asked me to remind you to keep wearing sunscreen.

Diane Smith proposed a vote of thanks to Martin for his capable guidance of PE over the past 5 years which was supported by many other members present.

## **6 Adoption of the Accounts for the period to 31 December 2019**

Martin Eggleton reported that some questions concerning the accounts had been submitted prior to the AGM and replies had been made by Cary Bush, the treasurer. Copies of these replies will appear as an addendum to the minutes.

Martin Eggleton reported that of the 380 valid proxies submitted 259 had voted to approve the accounts including 3 general proxies he had exercised as chairman, 9 had voted against approval and there were 112 abstentions. The proposal to approve the accounts was therefore carried.

## **8 Appointment of President**

Martin Eggleton announced that 223 proxy votes had been submitted in favour of Clive De Silva, 125 in favour of David Mason and there were 32 abstentions. He declared therefore that Clive De Silva had been duly appointed to be the new President of Petanque England. He extended his best wishes to Clive in his future role.

## **9 Appointment of the Directors**

Martin Eggleton explained that there were 5 vacancies on the Board and announced that the votes cast for the director candidates (excluding those for Clive De Silva who had become a director by virtue of his appointment as President) were as follows:-

Toni Gates	206
Barry Wing	198
Christine Spray	181
Alan Roden	131
Janice Keemer-Richards	156
David Mason	155
Matt Blyton	146
Peter Hardy	110

He declared that the top 5 candidates, Toni Gates, Barry Wing, Christine Spray, Alan Roden and Janice Keemer-Richards were duly appointed as directors. He thanked all the candidates for allowing their names to be nominated and congratulated the successful candidates on their appointments. He also expressed commiserations to those who had not been successful and expressed the hope that they would not be deterred from supporting the Board in whatever role they may be needed.

## **10 Approval of the Subscriptions for 2021**

Martin Eggleton indicated that the Board had proposed that the adult member subscription be increased by £3 and that the junior member subscription remains unchanged. He explained that the proposed adult membership fee increase was in line with a long-standing policy of increasing the fee by small amounts every other year in order to avoid the need to make large increases on an irregular basis. The results of the proxy vote were 202 votes in favour of the increase, 98 against with 80 abstentions. The adult membership subscription

for 2021 would therefore be £25 with the junior membership fee remaining unchanged at £5. Martin expected that in the months ahead the Board will be reviewing the position generally with regard to subscriptions and will be looking at future budgets.

## **10 Any Other Business**

Clive De Silva introduced himself as the incoming President and expressed his thanks to Martin and Annette Eggleton for everything they had done for PE over the years. He intended to carry out the Presidency along the lines he had outlined in his application document. He congratulated all the newly appointed directors and expressed the wish that the Board would be acting as one going forward. He recognised that we were experiencing challenging times and hoped that the whole membership would come together to overcome these and that it would not be long before more normal playing could be resumed. It was good to see some members already out playing singles. Clive concluded by again thanking Martin & Annette for their past contributions.

Martin Eggleton reported that there had been no formal notifications of matters of any other business and concluded the meeting.