

# ACU EASTERN

(AFILIATED TO THE Auto Cycle Union)

Minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Board 2022 held Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2022 via Zoom.

President	Mr A Penny
Chairman	Mr P Armes
Vice Chairman	Mr A Foskew
Treasurer	Mr A Hay
Secretary	Mrs L Ralph

Mr C Ralph	Woodbridge	Mr K Doherty	ECMC
Mr A R Chaplin	Sudbury/VP	K Weavers	Halstead
Mr J Hearn	Stowmarket/LVP	Mr P Nash	Southend
Mrs V Hearn	Stowmarket	Mr A Waters	Diss
Mr A Kenny	Harwich VP	Mr A Wright	Halstead
Mr R Booty	West Essex	Mr E Hood	Triangle Ipswich
Mr C Keeble	Norfolk and Suffolk Group	Mr M Beadle	Halstead
Mrs D Blyth	Woodbridge		

1. Mr Armes opened the meeting and thanked all for their attendance.  
Apologies were accepted from J Blyth: P Fenn: P Belton  
A moments reflection was held in memory of Steve Brace who passed away recently.
2. **Previous Minutes** from the 1<sup>st</sup> Board of 2022 held on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2021 were accepted as a true record.  
Proposed: R Chaplin 2<sup>nd</sup>: A Foskew
3. **Matters Arising:**  
D Blyth: J Blyth has been appointed as Steward for the 1<sup>st</sup> Round of ACUE MX Championship at Wakes Colne. Will a Stewards' Report be required? PA – Yes and advised to use the current ACU forms with any necessary adaption.
4. **To receive correspondence from the Centre Secretary:**  
Zoom renewal invoice has been received. Paid for by Mrs Ralph. £119.90 + Vat total £143.88. A Hay will reimburse.  
P Fenn – has anything been progressed regarding Mr Sewter's statement 'As I shall be retiring in July 2023 and shutting down my server, the Centre will need to make arrangements for alternative hosting no later than April 2023 and preferably by April 2022'. Mr Armes responded that he is sure that this is in hand.  
L Ralph – noted that updated email addresses have been instigated for Centre Officials and some Discipline Chairs. This will be rolled out to other Chairman if they decide to take up the option. Mrs Ralph had encountered some difficulties with certain email addresses – she will consult with Paul Sewter to see if this can be resolved.  
P Armes – the Landscape review – Mr Booty will discuss this within his report.
5. **Financial report – To receive a report from Mr A Hay, Treasurer:**  
Introduction

The report details General Account income and expenditure for the financial year 2021, Motocross Account for the financial year 2020/21 (1<sup>st</sup> November 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021).

## General Account

2021 was another exceptional year with the sport recovering after the relaxation of restrictions with the first few events taking place in April and gradually the bigger events restarted later in the year. The financial position to date after such a year is a surplus of £222.13, which in the circumstances is, a reasonable outcome. This is not the final position as ACU Accounts Department has not yet reconciled the basic permits issued by Rugby, consequently the Centre has not received the £50 contribution for each basic permit issued.

The surplus has been achieved entirely by savings from the expenditure budget. Income failed to reach the amount approved in the budget in all but affiliation fees, which provided E 10 more than budgeted. As stated in paragraph 2 the basic permit contribution is still to be received and a few more premier permit fees may be added, but will still fall well short of the amount budgeted.

### Motocross Account

The motocross account has achieved a surplus of £630.04 which is £270 less than was budgeted. The reduced surplus is largely to do with the need to replace a transponder that was badly damaged in an accident which cost £315. Despite the reduced season, the sale of reserved numbers still raised £3,750 which enabled a donation of £1,250 to each of the East Anglian and Essex Air Ambulances, and the ACU Benevolent Fund.

### Recommendation

The Board notes the current financial position for 2022. The total surplus from last year was £222.00.

A Benevolent Fund cheque had gone missing but has now been replaced.

Mr Armes congratulated everyone concerned who had enable a surplus to be made at all

## **6. Eventbrite Online Advance Ticket Sales facility:**

P Armes reported that both Norwich Viking and Woodbridge DMCC had used Eventbrite last year for their respective British Championship events and this had worked well. An opportunity arose to extend this to be used Centre wide and was discussed briefly at the Competitions Committee meeting in January. A decision had to be reached within seven days to take advantage of the terms on offer and therefore at the end of the competitions committee meeting, Mr Armes convened an Emergency Committee meeting. Present were the Chairs of all disciplines, the President, Treasurer, Centre Secretary and other Centre Officials. (Minutes were taken and are available and will be circulated in due course). The original set up would be for seven events with an option for additional events to be added at any time. Diss declined as did Woodbridge (who have their own plan in place with Eventbrite), Norwich Viking and Halstead took up the option. There will be no cost to the Centre and no cost to Clubs. This would mean that the option of advance ticket sales is on offer and Paul Sewter will administrate the service. The deal is for 12 months with no costs. A vote was taken and was unanimously agreed to continue.

Mrs Blyth pointed out that the advantage of pre booked tickets is that should weather conditions be adverse, the money has already been collected. Also, less cash on the day to handle.

P Armes reported that by the day of the N V event, running costs for the event had already been reached. Scanned tickets by mobile phones had worked well and kept queuing to a minimum. All equipment will be provided by the Centre. Discussions will be ongoing on how and if it would be beneficial for ordinary Centre meetings and an incentive to pre – book may be necessary by way of discounts. There is a commission payment of 99p per ticket and Clubs could choose whether to pass that on or absorb it themselves. NV had not complaints when they added it on.

There is no pressure for any Clubs to try the system, but the facility is there if they choose to do so.

## **7. Competitions Committee Report:**

The minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> Competitions Committee had been circulated prior to the meeting.

P Armes reported that the Sudbury Club had still not been supplying regs. for the Gazette. Mr Armes has been in contact with Paul Belton. Sudbury have a committee meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> April where this subject will be discussed.

(During this meeting, an email containing a set of regs. for the next Sudbury event have been received).

It was stated that Sudbury MCC are the backbone of the Enduro scene in this Centre but there has been a lack of communication. Mr Armes is pleased to note that they are trying to include Youth competitors but that discussions need to be held to ensure that ACU rules are adhered to – there is a problem with the age groups fitting with current regulations. Mr Armes would be happy to take this discussion to Rugby but is pleased that everyone seems to be working together for the future of these events. A Waters has recently been involved with Police in respect of an issue with a Practice Track. He believes current rules are in place for a reason. It seems that more manpower is needed for Youth riders as the 'line of sight' applies to youth riders. Sudbury do have more travelling marshals in attendance for the youth races which need setting up in 'controlled conditions'. A Penny was involved with the Trials and Enduro Committee when these current rules were imposed and agrees that it is down to resources and

man management. Mr Armes suggested that this should be a matter for the Centre Enduro Committee to consider and would be happy to attend.

MX – Centre Championship is over seven rounds for 2022. Stebbings are again sponsoring the series and PP Sports have come in as joint Title Sponsors. Lings have also agreed to take a full-page advert in race programmes and this totals £4000. Charlie Ralph's retirement left the Centre needing to find a replacement commentator and Stephen Hicks has come forward to offer his services. He will be mentored by Chris Chorza at the first meeting at Blaxhall. C Ralph will also be on hand to offer him advice if necessary. 1st Round of the ECC is April 10<sup>th</sup> at Wakes Colne hosted by the Halstead Club.

Mrs Blyth asked if there is a definite title for the title sponsors that could be abbreviated for programme covers. P Armes will work on this.

Mr Armes sought adoption of the 4<sup>th</sup> Minutes – proposed D Blyth 2<sup>nd</sup> C Ralph.

Co-option of Chris Keeble to the Competitions Committee: Mr Armes sought approval of Mr Keeble's co-option until the November AGM – approved unanimously.

#### **8. P P Sports Insurance Proposal:**

PP Sports have sponsored the ECC MX Championship as previously recorded and offer a policy cover similar to that of CICA for personal accident, hospitalisation, Fracture plans etc. to riders. They also sponsor several riders in the Centre and offer support with clothing etc.

PP Sports have also offered a collaboration with the Centre (which in no way affects the sponsorship) whereby anyone signing up to a policy from a link in the Gazette will give a 5% kickback of the premium (also 5% on renewal). It works that a link is followed which generates a follow up from Paul Shorter who is the local agent and the Centre is deemed an 'Exclusive Introducer'. A full explanation of how this will work will be placed on the ACUE Website. Mr Armes sought agreement this evening so that the first advertisement can go into the programme for the 1st Centre Round on 10<sup>th</sup> April. Mr Weavers asked if this could also cover staff preparing circuits etc. It was stated that Insurance is a vital component of racing and that although permits do cover 'workers C Ralph has come up against a query on the length of cover and how soon a permit 'closes' after an event. P Armes stated that this will be going to the NMC meeting from ACU Eastern for a satisfactory and definitive decision. C Ralph asked if this could be for all disciplines and not just MX – yes plus any individuals who also sought personal accident cover. A Waters commented that there are several levels of cover starting at £10 per months. Following a full discussion, a vote was taken and 19 were for with one abstention that the Centre take this forward.

#### **9. Grass Track one day Championship and Trophies:**

Mr Armes asked Charlie Ralph to take the lead on this item. Mr Ralph stated that the Grasstrack Championship had for several years now been run by a Promoter and therefore the Centre receives no income for this event. However, Trophies are awarded, engraved and replicas provided for the Centre Awards Presentation, plus invitations to the winners who are provided with a meal, and that adds up to quite a cost. There are 9 Trophies, 11 replicas and 11 invitations. Approximately at a cost of £4-£500. Mr Ralph feels that this is unfair to all other disciplines who contribute via levies. A Foskew remarked that only GW Racing are willing to run the event. P Armes commented that all other disciplines contribute and that, whether a Club or a promoter, fairness dictates that a contribution should be made. G Wilby has intimated that this may be his last year due to poor health. Communication should be made when it is clear if anyone will run next year. This item will be further discussed at the next Competitions Committee meeting.

#### **10. Access, Environmental and Rights of Way Matters.**

Mr Ray Booty provided the following report:

##### **Landscape Review**

You should all have seen the message from head office regarding the government's Landscape Review. There is precious little time left for members to respond to this review but it is critically important that as many members as possible do respond. Could a reminder be placed in the April Gazette with instructions on how to respond? We are somewhat late to this party, a point I have made to Neil Doctor, with the deadline for responses on 9th April.

Once again, a simple piece of legislation is being hijacked to penalise motorised users. The review was originally intended to address the management of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The scope of the review has been extended to ask questions about banning motorised users from unsurfaced and minor surfaced roads. The question is very open and does not define whether it is limited to National Parks and AONB's. The fear is that this could create legislation that would be used anywhere in England and Wales to close roads as the authority wish. Non-motorised user groups are, of course, pushing their members to take this opportunity to exclude all motorised users from recreational uses.

Links are on the report from ACU. P Armes will ask the webmaster to place link on ACUE Website. Mr Booty will be happy to answer questions.

### Eastern Region

The following message has been issued by Mildenhall Police:

*Mildenhall police are working in joint partnership with the Forestry Commission to drive down anti-social behaviour in #MildenhallWoods, caused by off-road dirt bikes. New anti-social behaviour signs have been introduced to educate those misusing the forest and we are encouraging the public to report incidents of these off-road bikes being ridden. You can report these incidents via 101 or online here. <https://www.suffolk.police.uk/.../6-report-anti-social...> Please include details such as times, locations, descriptions of the bikes/riders. Where possible, obtain a photograph of the offenders but ensure you do not put yourself in any danger. We will deal with offenders robustly, where an offender can be identified, using powers under the Police Reform Act 2002 and Road Traffic Act 1988.*

Request issued by Essex Highways PRoW Team for Voluntary Restraint (VR) on all Essex byways due to the wet conditions. This period should be ending about the time of the meeting.

I have received the Essex Highways capital expenditure plan for 2022/23 with several byways due for repair.

## **11. To receive a report on the Eastern Centre Gazette from P Armes**

- a. Mr Armes reported that he has been encouraged that a few more articles are being received for publication and hopes that continues. He is still concerned about the future of the Gazette as Mr Greengrass' report shows a small loss over the past 12 months. This is due to printing costs which have risen by 25-30%.

P Armes stated that it is inevitable that the Gazette, in its current form, will become digital only over time and it may be that the 'paper' Gazette becomes more of a quarterly magazine. Of the seven events in the current Gazette, all are online entries and all bar 2 are online only. Mr Kenny stated that when the Gazette came into being in 1947, the Centre bailed it out financially several times and that he is surprised that it is still going. He thanked Paul Sewter and Phil Armes for making it so attractive. P Armes stated that the Gazette will continue as it is for now but that further discussion on it's future will be had at the November Board.

### **b. Report from R Greengrass, ACU Eastern Gazette Treasurer:**

Income Year End 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2021:	£4594.25
Expenditure	£6991.03
Deficit for Year	£2396.78

Barclays Current Account £17,197.61

Reward Account £37,109.09.

Mr Greengrass reported that it is pleasing that the advertisers continue to support the Gazette. Also, two or three clubs have increased their requirements.

## **12. Benevolent Fund: To receive a report from Mrs D Blyth.**

Mrs Blyth reported that there is only one ongoing case within ACU Eastern and that had been dealt with direct to Rugby.

A Centre Cheque had been sent to the Ben Fund on behalf of the Centre.

A Hay – the Fund had paid out a total of £55,300 in 2021.

Debbie Walmsley is no longer the contact. Mrs Blyth will update any further developments on who takes over.

**13. Centre Function Report:**

Mrs Ralph reported that the Awards Presentation evening had taken place on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> March at Needham Market Community Centre and had been a well-attended event with just under 100 present. Most of the prize-winners had attended to collect their trophies but that three Youth MX riders had been unable to do so due to racing at Sherwood the next day. The buffet had been provided by Tammi Hubbard and was superb. Thanks were extended to Jack and Vera Hearn, Alan and Lyn Willis, Alex Wright and Alan Foskew for their contribution of help which was much appreciated. Charlie Ralph had acted as MC for the evening and thanks to him too. Thanks also to the three MX traders, Jim Aim, GH Motorcycles and Southside who provided raffle prizes and to those individuals and Clubs who also donated. The cost to the Centre was kept to just over £200.

**14. To discuss the Centenary of the Centre and if/how to celebrate:**

Mr Armes opened up the discussion with a question of what type of event – a multi-discipline get together at a large outdoor venue or something else.

Mrs Hearn felt that this should be celebrated with a sit-down meal at a good venue. Mr Penny agreed that this should be a proper dinner with invited guests of up to 250 present.

He has already been in touch and obtained quotes from the Copdock House Hotel and Stoke by Nayland Golf Club.

He proposes that a nominal cost of £25 be paid by attendees with the Facilities Fund picking up the remainder.

Mr Armes proposed that a sub-committee be formed to take this forward and it will consist of: A Penny: P Armes: C Keeble: A Kenny: A Hay: A Foskew and Mrs V Hearn.

**15. Any Other Business:**

A Waters – sought clarification on whether it is still necessary, now covid restrictions have been lifted, that there is still a need to advise local councils of events. The consensus is that events with paying public needs to be advised, those with no paying public that it is not necessary. There is a number where it becomes necessary to advise, but this varies between Local Authorities.

C Keeble – asked who was responsible for updating various committee minutes to the website – each discipline plus Centre Secretary for Board and Competitions committee. Will ensure these are updated.

Mr Keeble also questioned if others had problems getting payment from Rugby following events – the advice was that you have to keep asking.

J Hearn – has been looking after a large glass trophy for the last 5 years – won each time by Mark Banham who refuses to look after it. Mr Hearn would now like to pass this on. Mr Dopson and P Armes have spoken about this and will try to resolve the issue.

Mr R Booty will send his contact details to P Armes.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.27pm.

Date of next ACUE Board will be November 13<sup>th</sup> 2022. Time and Venue to be advised

Sustainability Meeting 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022. Time and venue to be advised.