

ACU EASTERN

(AFILIATED TO THE Auto Cycle Union)

Minutes of the 3rd Meeting of the Board 2022 held Thursday 21st July 2022 at Needham Market Community Centre.

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 & DMCC	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
Mrs J Nash	Southend	Mr P Sewter	Webmaster
Mr P Fenn	Essex and Suffolk Borders	Mr J Read	Woodbridge & DMCC
Mr P Ingram	Halstead	Mrs J Ingram	Halstead
Mr R Booty	West Essex	Mrs D Blyth	Woodbridge & DMCC
Mr C Keeble	Norfolk and Suffolk Group	Mr C Cook	Braintree

1. Mr Armes opened the meeting and thanked all for their attendance.
Apologies were accepted from J Blyth: Mrs Y Smith: G Brace: A Brace: E Hood: R Greengrass: Ms D Harvey: C Dopson: Mrs K Beadle: M Beadle: G Muff
2. **Previous Minutes** from the 2nd Board of 2022 held on 24th March were accepted as a true record. Proposed: J Hearn 2nd R Chaplin.
3. **Matters Arising:**
Mr Hay reported that the £50 kick back payments has been received within the last few days – Mr Hay will check the amount as he believes it is not correct.
C Keeble: referred to the item re the uploading of minutes to the website – some had been done but nothing from the Enduro or Grasstrack committees. It is hoped that this will be rectified.
Mrs V Hearn – the trophy mentioned has now been passed on to the Trials Committee.
4. **To discuss the decision of Mr P Armes to resign from all his currently held posts at the November AGM: Chair of the Centre: Chair of the Competitions Committee: Permit Secretary: Gazette Editor.**
Mr Armes explained that he has already stepped down as Chair of the Competitions Committee and that all his other current roles will need filling. The discussion on the role of Gazette Editor was deferred until Item 11 on the agenda.
Nominations will be required for the November Board. Mr Penny suggested that this information should be shared both online on the website and in the Gazette.
The Permit Secretary role is the most that is most concerning as Clubs can apply direct to Rugby which all of the speed events do (a £50 kickback payment to the Centre is paid to the Centre for each permit). Permits for Trials are the only ones still issued by the Centre and should Clubs decide to apply direct to Rugby, the income would be lost. Mr Armes believes that ACU Rugby are working to eradicate the need for Centres. At present the Centre also receives 3% of insurances fees and this would also be lost and would affect Centre's finances.

Mr Armes stated that this role would need someone with knowledge of the system and would be happy to teach someone. Mr Armes will prepare an item for both the Gazette and the Website.

C Cook asked that if everything went via Rugby, could the Centre impose a fee/levy on organising clubs? Mr Hay responded that this would be difficult as it would be voluntary and some clubs may choose not to pay it as ACU Eastern would not be the permit issuing authority. Mr C Keble commented that as an organisation, we should be coming together and everyone should realise how important it is that the Centre continues to be funded. He also asked if there would be scope under the affiliation fees that clubs pay yearly.

A reminder that Mrs Ralph is also standing down from her role as Centre Secretary and that nominations for her replacement would also be required.

5. The Facilities Fund:

The make up of the Committee shall remain as set up originally: Chair: Treasurer: and another three nominated by the Board. At present those are Clive Dopson: Roger Chaplin and Sidge Kenny. There has been an application received by the Secretary. Mr Armes feels that for this application he should not be involved due to his impending resignation. Mr Hay suggested that the application should be discussed by the current committee (less Mr Armes) and that Clive Dopson should be asked to Chair.

6. To Receive Correspondence from the Centre Secretary:

Nominations are being sought for election to the Board of Directors and Sports Committees. The documents have been circulated to all clubs and delegates. A discussion took place on the way that these elections were to be held as a recent change to Track Racing had been voted in to align with Road Racing which is 'by invitation' in essence. A discussion is due to take place regarding speed events at the NMC meeting in November. Mr Hay stated that it has become 'by invitation' for a number of years with candidates being vetted by the sports committees prior to the elections being held. Mr C Keeble stated that his concern would be that it could further fragment the motor cycling organisations and therefore would have less clout as one large organisation. For example, there are few road racing events taking place under national level and only two ACU affiliated clubs now run at Snetterton. Mr Armes commented that track days are very popular by the venue. Mr Sewter surmised if MX would go the same way in time especially now that the MX British Championships now run by Promoters. Enduro still seems to be ACU led. Mr Armes commented that this all confirms that the model of Centres as they are needing updating. Mrs Ralph had also received a nomination form for the NMC delegate- Mrs Hearn agreed to stand for one more year.

Mrs D Blyth commented that the way that elections are run in Rugby also need an overhaul, for example at present a person cannot serve as both a director and on a sports committee which can be counterproductive. The Chairs of each sporting committee becomes a Board Member but if a member wants to become a director and fails to be elected, they have then already had to resign as a Sports Committee Member. Mr Keeble suggested that ACU Eastern could table a change on the agenda for the next NMC Meeting. Mr Armes will prepare the wording for this. Mrs Ralph will respond to Rugby when asked for our Agenda item.

Mr Armes spoke of his thoughts on the remodelling which would include the Gazette regs. He had received a request to change a permit to include youth entries and offered to put this information out but was told no as the club would use their Facebook Page to do so. There has also been a Facebook page set up by the Enduro Committee which he was concerned about as neither he nor the Webmaster had been aware of this. Concerned that some content may be dubious and that the information being shared could also have been sent to the Gazette and the Centre website. Mr Armes also advised the Board that regs that are put out on FB pages and do not include a permit number are actually an illegal document. Concern was also raised that Rugby do not check or correct any regs which do not meet their own criteria. A comment was made asking if a template could be set up for all to use so that documents were all uniform. P Armes responded that there is one available.

7. Financial Report:

Mr Hay, Treasurer, had prepared a report which had been circulated to all delegates. He was disappointed with the levels of income in 2022. Only three motocross and three enduro events had sent in the Centre Support Charge and should this non payment of all events continue, then the predicted income will not be achieved.

The ACU have paid £880 but that is short of the expected £1500. Mr Hay will check this figure.

General expenditure was low. The Centre Function spent £198 of the £1000 budget. Also, a small saving of £167 in the trophy budget.

Motocross Income: Once again a good sale of numbers has produced £3500 for the three nominated charities.

Sponsorship of £2100 will be shared between the championship organising clubs.

Income from transponder hire is considerably less this year and looks to generate £3000 of the £4500 predicted.

Recommendation: That the Board notes the current financial position for 2022.

C Ralph commented that he thought it had been agreed by all delegates that the Centre Support Charge would be paid and suggested that all clubs should be reminded of this. Mr Armes will deal.

8. To discuss updating the current ACU Eastern GDPR Compliant Database: C Keeble.

This idea was originally put forward as an agenda item for a Sustainability Meeting. As a Centre we need to look at why the sport has 'shrunk'. In the past there were Clubs who had Club Nights from which ideas were fed back to delegates and then to the Board acting as a 'central intelligence'. We now seem to rely on the internet and Facebook so have lost our route of communication. Some information is sent out from the Centre officially and the rest via social media. The Centre did host a 'Forum' online but this was closed down due to bad comments being posted. Discipline Forums do not really work either. We do not know how many members we have across the Centre, club members/officials etc. Only competition licence holders are recorded via the ACU.

P Armes stated that he does hold a GDPR compliant list of Officials. Mr P Sewter says that the list does not comply to the current rules and that to build such a database is almost impossible. All members would need to sign up and agree for an alert to be sent to them when information needed sharing. Mr P Ingram stated that anything on paper was OK to share as long as people knew what was being shared. Mr Sewter expressed concern that as an organisation, it would be unable to defend any litigation.

It was suggested that something along the lines of the ACU Weekly Newsletter could be set up. P Armes says this is what the Gazette does but perhaps does need setting up electronically. Most clubs have their own Facebook pages but the Centre has no control over the content. Comment was made that Facebook invites the "keyboard warriors". A discussion took place on how this could be handled. Whether to reply or to ignore. Mrs Ingram feels that FB is the way to communicate with younger people going forward.

Mr Armes thanked Mr Keeble for bringing this topic to the Board and agreed that there is a need to work together to embrace the technical era.

Mr Ingram commented that Clubs do not see people as members now, just as customers.

9. To discuss the recent Sport 80 proposals received from Rugby:

The Club Management System has been designed to benefit both sports clubs and Governing Bodies. Mr Sewter told the Board that he had tried to set a similar system up for ACU Eastern 15 years ago and not one club took up the option.

Sport 80 will be running the ACU's new updated website. It is free of charge to clubs.

Comment was made that this could impact on local sponsors. Mr C Keeble attended an online seminar and felt like they were making it up as they went along with no clear understanding of motorcycling sport and certainly no knowledge on the ACU online entry system. Mr A Hay also attended an online seminar.

Discussion re sharing of information (GDPR). Mr Booty belongs to another organisation and says it is possible to block information to the umbrella company. C Cook asked if everyone needs to agree to share their information – Mr Armes says there should be an "opt out" option.

10. Competition Committee Report: P Armes

The minutes of the 2nd Competitions Committee meeting held on 31st March had been circulated prior to the meeting. Mrs Hearn asked if there had been a definitive answer as to when insurance cover on an event permit stopped. This has not been resolved. There were no further comments and the minutes were adopted. Proposed K Weavers 2nd J Hearn.

11. To receive a report on Access, Environmental and Rights of Way: R Booty.

Mr Booty provided a report covering the following topics.:

Landscape Review; No feedback received from the government. T

Intended closure South Acre Road at Castle Acre; a link was provided for further information.

St Mawgan – road downgraded to Restricted Byway. Although not in our area has implications for the whole of England and Wales. It is understood that at least two organisations will be appealing the decision.

Forestry England; There had been unconfirmed reports of FE attempting to deny access to motorised vehicles. Mr A Waters has heard nothing at all from FE and has been working closely with FE on the planned November Enduro. Natural England actually overrules FE but an exception was made for Thetford Forest – an area of special scientific interest. Mr Booty was asked to keep the Board posted on any developments.

LARA – have just published “Managing Motor Vehicle Use in the Countryside. Full document can be obtained on <https://laragb.org>.

New Chairman is in place.

Mr Booty’s report had been circulated prior to the meeting and he is keen for feedback from delegates to ascertain if the information he provides is of any use or interest.

12. Eastern Centre Gazette: Report from P Armes Editor.

Mr Armes stated that is ironic that as he steps down the content is much improved with more articles being provided. From such as Paula Day, Enduro, and there will be a piece regarding the Isle of Man in the next edition. Mr Armes expressed his thanks to all the contributors.

Mr Armes stated that the printed monthly copy of the Gazette has reached its sell by date and was originally used to get regs. out. These days it is all online so that area is almost defunct. There is no need to publish regs any more but the Gazette needs to be used as a ‘what’s on’. One idea is to produce the Gazette quarterly or 6 monthly and utilise it as a Centre Magazine with reports from events etc. The Gazette could be sent out electronically with all information on events and their opening dates. This would need to be financed and could attract more advertisers.

Paul Sewter asked who would handle the advertisers. P Armes responded that he thinks Ron Greengrass would be happy to work alongside someone with a view to them taking it on. Payments can now be made direct into the Centre bank. C Ralph asked where the Gazette Funds would end up – P Armes responded that this is a Centre Resource and therefore belongs to the Centre. Use of such monies need careful handling in the case of another “Pandemic” scenario. Mr Ralph stated that any changes to costs of the Gazette would need to be made with time enough for Clubs who run a two-tier membership cost system. Mr Armes noted this.

Mr Armes expressed his opinion that a new editor would need to be an off-road enthusiast with clear knowledge of the sport. Mr Penny suggested that the Gazette was tried bi-monthly and then quarterly. This would be a Board decision made in November. Mr Kenny asked how many copies are currently distributed. Mr Armes will find this out.

Gazette Finance Report from R Greengrass:

Mr Greengrass was not present but had sent his report electronically prior to the meeting.

Period 1st January 2022 to 30th June 2022 showed a deficit of £1104.55

Current Account £16,093.03: Reward Account £37,110.94. A donation of £250 had been sent to ACU Ben Fund.

13. To receive a report from Mrs D Blyth ACU Eastern Benevolent Fund Officer:

Mrs Blyth had nothing to report apart from that Debbie Walmsley had stepped down as Ben Fund Officer at Rugby and a new person was in post. Neither Mrs Blyth or Mrs Ralph had received any updates. Mrs Blyth was asked to contact Rugby for a report for the November Board.

14. To update the proposed Celebration of the Centenary of the Centre: A Penny:

Mr Penny reported that a meeting had been held by the Centenary Committee on 27th June and agreement had been reached to hold a Dinner at Stoke by Nayland Golf Club on Friday 21st October. The proposal is that the tickets are priced at £20 per person and subsidised by the Centre (full cost is £45 pp). This would include dinner and drinks. (There will be 25 rooms available on a first come first served basis).

The Committee agreed that this should be funded by the Facilities Fund as all clubs had contributed to this. Mr Armes disagreed with this as did Mr Hay. It was agreed that the maximum cost to the Centre should be capped at £7000.

Numbers required are a minimum of 150 with a maximum capacity of 250. Following a full discussion took place the following proposals were voted upon:

- 1. Do those present agree that a celebration event should take place. This was agreed unanimously.
- 2. That the maximum cost to the Centre be set at £7000. Agreed unanimously.
- 3. That the cost to the Centre be taken from the Facilities Fund in full – Unanimously votes against.
- 4. That the full cost to the Centre be taken from the Gazette Funds (6) or 50/50 with the Facilities Fund 13 for. Therefore, the cost to be split 50/50.

Mrs Hearn requested that the information on the event be placed on the website and in the next Gazette.

Mr Penny asked those present to contact any previous officials/riders who may like to come along.

Mr Ralph asked what would happen to Centre monies in the event of the Centre closing down – the money would be returned to current ACU Eastern affiliated clubs.

15. Any Other Business:

Mr Kenny thanked Mr Armes on behalf of the Centre for all his hard work and efforts. Mr C Keeble asked if another meeting would be required prior to the November Board. Mr Armes responded that any communications necessary could be done electronically.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 22.15pm.

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

Signed
ACU Eastern Secretary

Dated.....

Signed.....
ACU Eastern Treasurer

Dated.....