



LFR
Regular Committee Meeting
Tuesday 6th October 2020

Co-Presidents: Kirsty Fitz-Poole (KFP) and Jamie Keenan (JK)
Club Secretary: Christos Bitzis-Politis (CBP)
Club Treasurer: Alex Darsley (AD)
Membership Secretary: Simon Mac (SM)
Races Secretaries: Erika Kulikova (EK) and Alex Rendall (AR)
Publicity & Communications Officers: Joey Knock (JKk) and Andrew Corti (AC)
Social Secretaries: Brittany Bernard (BB) and Daniel Brittle (DB)
LFR Coaching Team Coordinator: Matt Haas (MH)
LFR Triathlon Coordinator: Alex Carington Smith

Agenda

LFR Coaching Coordinator Updates (MH)

LFR Triathlon Coordinator Updates (ACS)

Financial Updates (CT)

Races Update (RS)

Publicity Update (P&C O)

Social Calendar update (SS)

Membership Update (MS)

Club Secretary

- LFR virtual AGM
- Copenhagen 2021

Club Co-Presidents

AOB

Chair: KFP

Minutes: CBP

Apologies: AR, DB, JK, BB

LFR Coaching Updates (MH)

The Club coaching has restarted, though we are operating just on Wednesday evenings at the moment, due to space issues with all our previous track venues. We have been using both Mile End and the Millennium at Battersea for some time now for our coaching sessions, but neither of the above venues seems to be very willing in having us back. The Battersea Millennium been completely unresponsive to all our emails, so we are still in the dark on whether they will be letting us use the space in the end; Mile End on the other hand has made it an essential request that all users of the space must have a Better membership, Better being the entity that manages the leisure centres and gyms, otherwise we need to pay as Club an extremely high amount of money per each session, which is not only viable but also out of the question. The Paddington Recreation Ground has also not responded to our email, nor has the Southwark Athletics Centre, so with no available venues for any of our track sessions for the time being, we are forced to provide just the Wednesday training session. And the Long Runs, which are also going very strong.

The Wednesday sessions have been going really well and proving that they are very popular. ACS has helped with creating a Covid Risk Assessment Document, just for the coaching sessions, so we are currently Covid compliant and following the number of participants allowed per coaching session by England Athletics.

Depending on the current Club finances, there are a number of interested members who would like to volunteer and to take the EA training course for coaches; there may be possibly two or three persons eager to become coaches and ready to train.

It could also be very advantageous if the Club is in a financial position to subsidize the cost of a coaching upgrade course for MH, again mainly depending on how the Club financial situation will be in the very near future; this next stage-up course would cost £255, and it will take place over four weekends.

We think it is constructive and advantageous to have such a refresher, as it would revitalise the Club coaching plan.

Coming back again to the issues we have been recently experiencing with finding venues for our track session, it could prove practical to ask around and check if we know anyone who could provide the Club with a coaching venue for our track, or whether there might be any possibilities of using for such purposes any schools premises, so please pass the word and ask around.

Action to be taken:

CBP is kindly requested to please check the availability of the Finsbury Park Athletics Track for the above purposes and report back.

AC is kindly requested to please check the availability of Queen Elisabeth II Stadium Athletics Track for the above purposes and report back.

ACS is kindly requested to please check the availability of the Millennium Battersea Sports Arena in person for the above purposes and report back.

LFR Triathlon Updates (ACS)

It has generally been a good period. With the Wednesday training resuming, we had to move the online turbo session to a different day. The Turbo Time, our on-line static cycling sessions, have been going strong since May, and members have been signing up and enjoying them very much, sometimes we even had Turbo Time taking place twice a week. Emily has been delivering the swimming and the Run Tech sessions, with dun drills and anti-injury sessions through strengthening, early in the morning, from 8.00 to 8.30 am twice per week, and ACS will be taking the strengthening and conditioning module.

Besides the above Club activities, there hasn't been a lot happening this year, as most, if not all, triathlon events have been deferred to next year. We are very much looking into reintroducing the Long Cycling event, at least once every two months on a Sunday, as it has proved to be very popular in the past. According to the number of participants, this time it will be different as we are most probably going to be spread over in one or even two groups according to numbers. We have been considering organising the next Long Cycling on the Sunday after, opting for a classic and very flat route to Windsor, as it is very easy to get there and if participants don't want to cycle all the way back, then they may very easily take the train back to London. As said, the course is very flat and it is open to everybody in the Club. It will be advertised in the LFR Triathlon FB group, but it could be good to send a reminder for the e-bulletin.

There is also another event which could be advertised as an invitation open to everyone who is interested in taking a training course in cycling, as lots of people have started cycling recently. This is not a triathlon-specific course and it is organised by the Camden Council.

The Triathlon Risk Assessments are up to date and we are hoping to be able to start over the next year with some more training, possibly in April or in May, in view of trying to resurrect membership's interest for triathlon, but of course it all depends on the pandemic. We have a number of plans in order to keep people involved during this winter, as we have had quite a regular attendance, and hopefully it will continue like this also in the future.

Financial Updates (CT)

All those who needed to be refund, as having renewed their membership during the lock-down and at a different rate, have already been paid back; a couple of them said that they didn't need the refund, which was very generous of them, one of them actually mentioned that they would have wanted to put this refund towards the

LFR25 celebration; a couple to whom a refund is still owed did not reply, the result of all the above is that we have had some unexpected money coming in, while at the same time still being able to contain expenditures at a minimum. The budget for the next Club Year has already been taken into account and we do have some money to spend, for example for the training of coaches that MH mentioned earlier. Financially-wise things are going quite well for the time-being, or at least they seem to be very encouraging, as we were hoping to be able to collect from membership the amount of £9000 through renewals and registration fees and we currently have already £6000.

Having mentioned the money coming into the Club, we are still due some changing venue fees, as we have prepaid for at least two months the Seymour Centre and we need to reclaim this money back, which has been a bit complicated, as the person who was handling their financial issues is probably not working at the Seymour Centre anymore, as they have not been replying to any of our emails. So, we need somehow to get in contact with them in regards to this.

CBP is happy to go in person and clarify the above financial situation as described by AD, and chase the Seymour Centre for the amount which is owed to LFR.

Action to be taken: AD is kindly requested to please share with CBP the name and email address of the contact they have for the Seymour Centre, as to be able to act on the above.

Under the current circumstances, we don't think that a christmas party is going to be taking place, so there will be available a small budget for eventually organising some social events, to the point that this is feasible and permissible. The budget which was allocated for the Cross Country races for this year will allow for the Cross Country races to go ahead for the next year, but we would also be happy to spend a small amount of money on races, if any are going to be organised.

A subject which I would like to bring to your attention is that some members are paying for their membership fees with GoCardless whereas some others are using Paypal. Paypal has proved to be very expensive for LFR and it would be better to start thinking of an alternative for next year, as from the amount paid by each person through Paypal for their membership fees, two pounds are being kept by Paypal. We are not sure why we are having two options for payment available and even more so, why do we need to have two options of payment available. This method of payment is very cost effective to the Club and so if we may avoid it, it would be much better for next year, as it takes lots of money from the Club.

In case there is a necessity to keep Paypal in place, we may still keep it and use it as an alternative option if any of the members are not able to use GoCardless, but at the same time we should definitely communicate this clearly to membership, that our preferred option for them to paying their membership fees is GoCardless, and if it makes the same to them, then they should please just use GoCardless instead of

Paypal. The deadline for membership fee renewals is coming up next week, so it would be good if we could please put this reminder on e-bulletin, mentioning that we would be grateful if they could please use GoCardless instead of Paypal, because the Club is losing out a lot of money, if they keep using Paypal.

Having said that, we are confident that we will be able to afford sending some new people to training with EA as coaches, so it is all very positive under this aspect for the time being.

Races Update (RS)

Again there is not much happening in this sector but we had some races happening, which is very positive and great to see, with some race results coming in. We have set in advance all the dates for the Club Championships, and in the end we are going to have all the Club Championship races taking place as virtual this year, as the Cross Country got cancelled in the end.

We had the Marathon taking place in London, where we had more than ten LFR runners participating in it, at least there are about ten persons that I am aware of, there could be some more people with race results still coming in, and we have had some other racing events. We sadly feel that we should not be encouraging huge numbers of members to participate in races, as it is not advisable to do so. At this stage members may book any races they want to go to and run on their own, without any official encouragement coming directly from the Club.

Yesterday, Monday, the first Cross Country fixture came to an end, we have had lots of people taking part and lots of results still coming through today, which we are going to collect and send for the next e-bulletin.

When it comes to our super competitive marathon runners, they are allowed to do their Club Championship race on a different day and time if they want to, if the Club championship race coincides with another race they are attending in person, we have had members who would always ask us in advance, whether they may run and submit their result on different days as the ones pre established, and as they always ask us in advance we see no real issue with this, so we are very happy to always accommodate any such personal requests.

Publicity Update (P&C O)

Nothing specific to say on our side, Mailchimp is a bit of a nightmare for certain issues, but nothing more than that besides the fact that we would like to energise membership to send us some more articles for the e-bulletin, send us some more texts and some images to use.

Social Secretary Update (SS)

The SS are not present at this evening's RCM, but nevertheless we would like to suggest whether it would be possible for them to host an online quiz or a party or a film viewing until the end of this calendar year.

Membership Update (MS)

It has been quite a busy period, naturally, with the processing of renewals and registrations. We have had 229 members up to this point, with some more coming this week. The meeting relative to the digitalisation of the Club membership cards has been cancelled, due to work-overload, but JK has in the meantime shared some of the information with SM, and over the next week SM is confident that he will be sending out the actual confirmation of everyone's membership and the new digital membership cards.

Discussion on the subject of cutting-off members from the Club communication platforms, once the 15th of October deadline is over.

Based on what has been discussed and suggested in the previous Committee meeting, the idea is to remove from the e-bulletin mailing list and from the Members Only FB page all those who have not renewed their membership on time, in the following two weeks after the above deadline.

I completely understand the point of view of SM, that membership is something that members should be paying for and it should be considered as a privilege enjoyed by those who are paying for this but it has been a very difficult period for a lot of people, not just from a financial point of view, but mainly from a psychological and well-being point of view. People may feel alone, isolated and alienated and by remaining still on the Club communication platforms, even though they may have not renewed for their membership, is a way of showing that the Club still cares for them, as we keep them updated, engaged, informed, we keep them on the loop, which sometimes could be all they need to feel motivated and it is also very important be able to offer to others the possibility of having the sense of belonging somewhere and to still be part of a group (CBP).

I am not a member of Out to Swim anymore, as I have not renewed my membership this year but I still keep receiving the e-bulletin they send every time (KFP).

The thing is that if we have to remove people off the mailing lists and then we manually have to amend all the records is frankly going to be a pain in the ass. We did not have to go through this or we did have this but significantly less in all previous years, but this year it has changed very much due to pandemic. It is going to be very time-consuming, taking people off the list and then reinstating them a week afterwards, when they will have realised that they have been cut-off the e-bulletin and they will want to be put back (AC)

In my opinion we may want to leave people on the e-bulletin lists, not only because receiving the e-bull will keep them interested and all, it will definitely keep people engaged for many reasons, but it will also be an investment for the Club over the next year. I suggest that we leave these people on for commercial purposes, so that they may continue to feel connected to the Club and still be somehow engaged and then they may return in the next year and pay for their membership in full, if they feel that they have been kept without having paid in the meantime. In my opinion there will be the risk of losing forever all those who will be cut off from the LFR

communication platforms now, as they are not going to return next year, when the full membership will be reinstated, we have had a drop in membership numbers this year, and these people might return for next year (AD).

I have noticed that many people are still though willing to pay for having zoom meetings and such for entertainment purposes, and if they see that they are kept on the loop and that they are still receiving the e-bulletin, then they might not be bothered at all to renew (JKk).

There needs to be some kind of exclusivity, otherwise people will not be bothered to renew, we don't have the Christmas party going on this year, where those who are not Club members they can't come, nor the International Trip which is for members only, if the former members know that they can't get removed, then they won't bother to renew at all (SM).

We have already announced that the deadline is next week, there is the FB access and the e-bulletin, we may consider pulling them out just from the e-bulletin but leave them on the FB page (CBP).

It is much more time-consuming and logistically a lot more complicated to kick people off the e-bulletin than to remove them from FB (AC)

Then how about we do the exact opposite, we keep them on the e-bulletin, as it is so complicated to have them removed, and we kick them off the FB page, as this is the simplest option and the one which will cause the smallest amount of work for you (CBP).

In the end the Committee decided the following: as we are still financially not completely stable and we may still need to have an increase in numbers for the next year, we assume that those who will be left on the loop this year will be willing to come back normally next year which will be in the long term financially beneficial for the Club. In consequence it is decided to keep members who have not renewed on e-bulletin but remove them from the FP page in the two weeks following the deadline of October the 15th.

The question that arises is whether members who have not yet renewed their membership could still come along and run with the Club.

The Committee believes that they should not be allowed to for insurance purposes and that they should be reminded that participating at the Club runs is just for members only and new runners. In addition to this subject, the question that now comes up is whether we will be able to monitor such membership issues through Spond and whether we should remove from Spond all those who have not renewed their membership.

Action to be taken: SM is kindly requested to consult with JK about Spond and enquire in regards to the above

Club Secretary

LFR AGM

The date for a virtual LFR AGM has been confirmed as Tuesday the 10th of November.

We would like to have this event also as an opportunity of creating a platform for membership to ask their questions (AD)

Although in principle favourably agreeing to the suggestion of taking some questions in the same evening, it is important that we keep this event as short as possible. I would suggest that we offer membership the opportunity to ask beforehand any questions they may have on any day on the week before the AGM takes place and having these questions beforehand, we may then capture them and answer them and have both the questions and the relative answers made public, for everyone to consult at their own time and pace. So, I would suggest that questions are definitely asked and answered though not all of them in the AGM evening, as we may never know how many questions there may be. Also some people may feel much more confident posing questions in writing then being put on the spot on that same evening and having to formulate their questions in public. (CBP)

One of the important questions which we need to ask them now is if they want to be part of the committee, as there will be many Committee members who will be stepping down and this is not an issue that is safe to leave at the very last moment. It is good for membership to know that so and so roles will be vacant in five month's time, so that they may prepare themselves, if they want to step forward.

By Constitution the Co-Presidents will definitely have to step down at the end of this Club Year, as it is not permitted for either of them to remain for more than three years in the same role. The CT would like to step down too, as well as the MS.

The AGM will be taking place in the form of a webinar, and there is also the possibility of recording the whole event and keeping that on the LFR Drive.

Copenhagen 2021

After having consulted the two documents which have been previously circulated, one of which has been very recently released, in regards to how Copenhagen 2021 proposes to be dealing with the pandemic, the Committee decides to show their support to the event by having Copenhagen 2021 being publicised through the official Club communication platforms, while in the meantime monitoring all updates in regards to the event and the pandemic as they may come, through the two LFR liaison persons.

AOB

Suggestion from membership regarding the creation of bag-drop invigilators for each of the Club runs

The Committee feels that any arrangements towards such a suggestion could prove to put at risk those who will be acting as bag-drop invigilators and that such a solution would not provide any guarantee that the items remained in custody will be kept neither safe nor dry, as there isn't handy nor accessible a covered space where members may safely leave their bags. Also, as there are no changing facilities available for the time being, and with bags exposed for over an hour to the weather conditions, runners may be changing into even wetter clothes than the ones they were wearing during their run.