



LFR

**Regular Committee Meeting
Thursday 15th June 2023**

Co-Presidents: Ashley Harwood (AH) and Andrew Corti (AC)
Club Secretary: Christos Bitzis-Politis (CBP)
Club Treasurer: Derwin Brennan (DB)
Membership Secretary: Geoff Hicks (GH)
Races Secretaries: Eliot Rees (ER) and Francis O'Callaghan (FC)
Publicity & Communications Officers: Stephen Tomaszewski (ST) and Sam Palmer (SP)
Social Secretaries: Nick Warner (NW) and Robin Budin (RB)

Agenda

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Social Activities update (SS)

Membership Update (MS)

Club Secretary Updates

Co-Presidents Updates

AOB

Chair: AH

Minutes: CBP

Apologies: FC

LFR Triathlon Updates (BH)

The Tri training camp took place in late April this year and there were 34 participants, it was the biggest group we have had to this point, and it was also very balanced in terms of gender as half of the participants were women and half were men. We have had some excellent training and I think everyone had a really good time being together, training, swimming and

cycling, and I also think that it will prove to be a very useful experience for all those preparing themselves and training for the forthcoming triathlon events.

In addition we have re-launched the bi-weekly open water swimming sessions in the West Reservoir, which proved really popular last year, and we are very optimistic that these sessions will prove equally popular this year, as swimming is the discipline most new triathletes are mostly concerned about, not really feeling particularly confident about it, so being able to provide some training for this discipline, will only boost their confidence further. The Triathlon season has just started, and there are dozens of individual events coming in the next few months, there is for example the Eastbourne Triathlon with this year's event serving as a qualification race for those hoping to qualify for the 2024 European Championships and I believe eight Frontrunners have already signed up to do it, it is a festival of various disciplines, various events, over two days.

There has been a noticeable increase in number of attendees this year, lots of new members did their first ever triathlon last year and this has helped with word of mouth attracting some more new members for the current season, so I would say that we have been quite successful in getting new people on board, and also some new members have signed up for the Windrush duathlon event, so it all looks very positive, good starting event to the season and it has almost sold out.

Naturally there is the London Triathlon in August, which is going to be big in numbers of LFR participation, and the Brighton and Hove Triathlon in September which is also going to be big, so there is lots going on. The Splash and Dash will restart soon and there is going to be launched a type of mini competition within the Club as to attract further participation; this is swimming at the Royal Docks, then either a 5k or a 10k race, so it is good experience and in particular for newcomers as it is very uncomplicated as an event to participate in, and there is a good series of those splash and Dash sessions over the summer.

Will there be an organised social event taking place after the Windrush triathlon? (AC)
Yes, there will be a social afterwards, Alex is organising a BBQ at his garden.

How many members are regular attendees? What is the cross section in terms of numbers between the running and the triathlon? (AC)

Most regular triathletes would do a run from time to time, then at the swimming events we do get from about eight to 12 attendees, then the cycling that we organise can get between between three to eight attendees, though there are usually more as we go into the summer, and lately through the collaboration that we have established with the London Riders, with them promoting their own events, we are also getting lots of visibility too. It might not seem a lot, when compared to the actual Club runs, but the Tri section has about 60 to 70 active members, so even if there are five participants at a given event, it is not a bad percentage.

One request which I would like to make is that we make sure that those coming to the Tri camp in Mallorca or those included in the Tri trips attendee list are fully paid members of LFR, to make sure that every attendee in these events is a Club member. (AH)

On this same subject, there is a very stable collaboration between Alex C and myself, whenever there is someone who needs to be allowed access to the triathlon FB group, Alex contacts me and checks whether they have been registered as members, but sometimes this might not be the case and with the membership renewals from April onwards it might be worth doing a retrospective cross examination between the triathlon current participants lists and

myself, so that no one will slip through, not only because Club events are mostly for Club members and those who are not paying their membership should not have the same rights as paid members but mostly for reasons of insurance coverage (GH).

This is something which needs to be checked, I am definitely happy to help you out on this, let us liaise, I will send you a list and you can double-check the status of these members (BH)

During the process of renewal of all Club memberships, a whole lot of people have been removed from the LFR FB, so it might be good if we were to check that everybody who is currently on the Triathlon FB has actually signed up and paid as a Club member. Sometimes the simple action of being removed from FB makes members realise what they will be missing out on, they then focus much more and some ultimately decide to register again with LFR and renew their membership. (GH)

Is there something in particular that the Triathlon section needs from the Club Committee, is there anything where we could actively show our support to the Triathlon coordinators? (AC)

There are currently three coaches for the Triathlon section, it is understandably not so simple finding people who are both capable, as in have the knowledge and the experience and also being able to find the time to commit and do some of the coaching, it would be great if we were to keep on growing the current pool of coaches, probably this is something that we can all look to work with together, aiming into encouraging some of the members towards increasing the number of the triathlon coaches for the future (BH)

The Club Committee is here and we are all very eager to support any of the Triathlon endeavours and if you think that you may need some funds for coaching purposes, to launch a coaching programme and increase the current number with some new coaches by sending members to do a specific training, then please let the Committee know, we will always do our best to procure the funds for any such activity (AC)

By attracting lots of new members to Triathlon and by having these new members encouraged into attending some of the Tri events, this will invariably lead into needing to explore the possibility of increasing the number of events to participate at in the future, or making these events larger, by opening them up to a larger number of attendees, and in consequence having more people committed into organising such events for the Triathlon section, so this is something which we may have to consider for the future, as in increasing the number of organisers for the Triathlon section depends entirely on the number of members interested in Triathlon altogether (BH).

The Committee expresses gratitude and sincere thanks to BH for attending the meeting and for sharing such important updates with them.

Committee Financial Updates (CT)

For the time-being it is all good, I have signed the new contract for the Kentish Town Sports Centre, have paid the deposit requested for the accommodation on the Isle of Wight, various invoices relative to the International Trip have also been paid for, so everything is going really good.

Just to let you know that there are lots of new members that need to be registered with England Athletics and the Club needs to yet pay for their EA subscription, this will take place very shortly and it will be in the range of several thousands of pounds, as the great majority of LFR members have not yet had their membership with EA renewed (GH)

This is absolutely fine, thank you for letting me know, the Club has in place robust reserves for this, it won't be a problem (DB).

Races Update (RS)

The most recent event has been the Bridges Relay, which was yesterday and it proved to be quite a success, there were nine teams overall, I believe this was the largest number of teams LFR has sent so far to this event, with 33 participants in all, and LFR did actually quite well with one of the male teams coming in the third place overall, and then the rest of the teams in various positions, and the female teams went really well too, there was the LFR vet female team that came fifth in the women category, so I would say that it went really well.

This coming Sunday there are between 35 to 40 people who have registered for the 5 miles race in Eltham, so this is also another event to look forward to.

When it comes now to the next Championships event, there is in August the one mile relay in Battersea Park, and a relevant notification will come up soon for this event and it will be on the next e-bulletin.

The Big Half Discussion.

The Club has been offered 100 Community Entries and this is just for the time being. Truth be told, the organisers have been quite late in the distribution of Community Entries this year, the confirmation email arrived in my inbox only this week, which is about a month after me having placed the application form, and in addition to the above I still have to receive the administrators console for registering and distributing these places. So I am waiting for this to take place first, in order to be able to distribute the first 100 spots and after having done that, then to proceed into asking for some more Community Entries.

Two things which are relevant to the subject and which I would like to bring to your attention and in addition request the Committee's approval for both: the first would be to ask the Committee's consent to please prioritise the Club volunteers in the distribution of the BH Community Entries. By Club volunteers I mean everybody that currently happens to be offering their services to the Club, as a really small recognition of their contributions. This would include the Circle Volunteers, the Triathlon administrators, the coaching team, the International Trip subcommittee, the Webteam, Conor Devlin, the present Committee, naturally, etc etc, there are about 80 volunteers in total to consider. I am bringing this subject to the Committee's attention every year and requesting for the Committee's approval as was done in all previous years, in addition to feeling very strongly about this prioritisation, so it might be coming forward more as a recommendation on my part.

The second subject which I would like to bring to the Committee's attention is that as a gesture of consolidating further our collaboration and boost even further the excellent relations we happen to enjoy with the Brighton and Hove FrontRunners, and whether the Committee agrees to set aside and share a specific number of these Community Entries for those of the BHFR who might be interested in running the event in September. This took place again for the very first time last year, LFR was able to share about 20 entries with the BHFR, and it proved to be a much appreciated gesture, those of LFR who were volunteering that day at THB were also able to spot out and cheer the BHFR during the event, which made them

particularly happy, as they didn't expected to be recognised nor cheered, the invitation for the post Big Half social was extended to the BHFR, it is not much but as the Club has this possibility of doing this to those of the FR family that are closest to LFR, at least geographically, I don't really see why not to do this and if there is a possibility, of why not sharing the fun and the joy of this event with others. Let us not forget that some ex LFR members are now BHFR, again, it is in my opinion very important for LFR not to be operating within a chosen bubble of constructed isolation but to venture into getting into launching collaborations with other running clubs, belonging to the FR family or in general. In particular when it comes to the FR family, at least with those closer to London, I believe it is a great opportunity, or at least not one to be missed, to enhance our collaboration involving some running events, again in trying to promote both physical activity and sociability. (CBP)

My only concern is that we manage to guarantee that there are enough entries for the LFR members before sharing any entries with others (AH)

Absolutely and this goes without saying, and in particular as the event is part of the LFR Club Championships, so it is to the Club's benefit to get as many Club members as we can becoming involved in running this event, and especially among the new runners of which we have had plenty this year. So I will naturally prioritise LFR members first and then contact the BHFR. Anyway, I have explained beforehand to Ernie Stoddard, who happens to be the BHFR Races Secretary and with whom I happen to be in contact with, how the whole situation is and how we are to proceed in this together. Again, it needs to be mentioned that I am not in a position to make any type of promises to anybody, that being both to LFR and to BHFR members. The race organisers have never refused offering LFR more places before and hopefully this year the exact same thing will happen and we will be offered some more. Having said that, nothing is to be naturally taken for granted, and this also includes an extension of Community Entries but as always I will try my very best for the Club and whatever I can to support the BHFR and our further collaboration with them (CBP)

If we manage to get more community places then the Club can use, and we also offer the ones which will be set aside by you for the BHFR, is this something which we may extend to other FR clubs such as the Birmingham or the Manchester Frontrunners? I mean, if there are any spots left and available to give out, can we share these entries with other FR clubs? (ER)

I would be slightly sceptical into sharing BH Community Entries with more FR clubs than the BHFR, and in particular for two specific reasons, first of all, that is is always good to keep aside some Community entries for new members, members who will be registering with the Club within the next two months and who may be already ready and in the position to run a half, as a way of sealing even better the deal of their imminent registration, with the wonderful promise of being able to offer them a spot at such a low price for a half marathon and to race such an event together with other LFR members, as a fantastic opportunity to get to know other LFR members, to participate at the social afterwards, to promote the sense of belonging into a club and to help advance their sociability. The BH is a big event for LFR, not just in terms of numbers but also in terms of bringing lots of members together, so the more LFR runners we can inspire to participate, the better for both the Club collectively and for them individually, as it is an event that will help them feel and become better integrated. And we naturally need to promote running and racing among our members. The second reason for which I would not be entirely convinced is that these are Community Entries and as such they are limited within

the communities of London. Having a number of people living in Brighton and at the same time being LFR members is something which is justifiable, or let us say understandable and thus thought of as more easily justifiable, as not all current Club members happen to live in London. But I find it less reasonable to have 20 members of LFR living in Birmingham or in Manchester, as this ultimately does not really make sense, given the distance. Whereas having 20 members living in Brighton and Hove can be seen as valid simply because it is much more probable due to geographical proximity and thus much more reasonable. So frankly I wouldn't be open into sharing more entries with any other FR club, as this could potentially jeopardise our own hold within the Community Entries programme, and we cannot allow for something like that to happen (CBP)

The Committee considers both the above suggestions by the CS and unanimously agrees to grant the Community Entries for TBH being first distributed among the Club volunteers and then becoming open to the rest of the Club members as to be distributed on a first come first serve basis, and also into extending a number of Community Entries set aside especially for the BHFR and after the majority of the LFR members have already registered for the event.

I have some good news and some bad news to share with you all and in regards to the 2024 Green Belt Relay. First of all, a provisional date has been released and the event has been scheduled to take place on the weekend over Saturday the 18th and Sunday the 19th of May 2024. The good news is that Eurovision will in all probability not be clashing with the 2024 GBR and anyway Eurovision is not taking place in the UK next year, so LFR could potentially have lots of strong runners available for the event, many more than this year, as besides the Vet team, one of the Club's great strengths lies in the mixture of the competitive team for the GBR. The bad news is that the 2024 GBR is now clashing with the 2024 Hackney Half and the Club will not be able to send that many volunteers to the event (AC)

Thanks so much for this update Andrew, it is not so much the volunteering part which makes a 2024 LFR presence to both events a bit more complicated than we would have wished for, it is the running part of the Hackney Half which is the most worrying, from my point of view, and in order to be able to form enough teams for the GBR. The 45 LFR members that volunteered at the 2023 Hackney Half will most probably get a free entry to race the 2024 event, so with these members already engaged in racing in Hackney and with some other members which will again might be committed to volunteer as pacers for the 2024 event, as the pacers this year were treated royally, returning home with a huge number of goodies, we will have to face the problem of probably not being able to send as many teams as we used to, to the GBR.

The two things that will alleviate the Club's situation and which will make our position a bit more simple is that those that habitually take place at the GBR are not the same persons as the members that volunteered for Hackney this year, some did both events, that much is true, but most didn't, and all volunteers will receive their LimeLight volunteering rewards sometime around November 2023, so by then we will have a much clearer idea of who is racing which event. In addition we have more than a year to consider this in advance and to try and form good teams for the GBR, also by engaging to the GBR as many as we can from the Club's new members, so I guess that we will have to cross that bridge when we get closer to that moment in time (CBP)

Short discussion on the SEAA XC relay which the Club did last year for the first time and this year happens to coincide with the 2023 International Trip.

Action to be taken: CBP is kindly requested to please share with the Races Secretaries the email relative to the above event from the SEAA

Publicity Update (P&C O)

There is not much to report, both the e-bulletin and the FB is happening and it is all good (ST)

Discussion on the intent of trying to provide an alternative platform of immediate communication for those of membership who are not currently on FB.

The main reason for wishing to launch a new platform of communication is mainly relevant to last minute emergency issues, which may have an impact on the running and the coaching going on on that day, such as weather related phenomena, like a heatwave for example, due to which a run needs to be cancelled at the very last moment. Such an occurrence will always be announced on the FB page and those of the Club members which are on the LFR FB page will then potentially get to know about it. But others may not, as even those who are currently on FB do not always check their accounts. And for those who do not happen to follow their own accounts closely, then there isn't much that can be done about it, either.

Discussions on the utility of launching such a platform, proportionally related to the number of times such a medium will be used for emergency issues throughout a whole Club year.

Discussion on the efficient functionality of such a platform and presentation of a number of reserves relative to the above.

Discussion on the huge administrative task which will be requested by those who will take this on board as administrators, as there is no guarantee that a correlation between the WebCollect data and the data for a new platform will be accurate, as members often tend to use different email accounts for different mediums, members often change house address or telephone number without updating their WebCollect profile, so this could prove a real nightmare from an administrative point of view.

Discussion on the experience accumulated by using Spond over a period of about two and a half years, as an alternative.

From my point of view, one of the issues is that this new platform will have to be as uncomplicated and as efficient as possible in its maintenance, for reasons of continuity. If the launching and maintenance of a new communications platform is taken on board as a completely new project by a specific member of the current Committee for the rest of the year, this does not necessarily mean that there will be someone else from the following Committee that will automatically assume and continue with this task, there is no guarantee that a new Committee member will feel equally happy to adopt it as their own project and to continue with it, even if it come with a role and it is for the benefit of the whole Club. There is a specific and sometimes quite large number of certain tasks that need to be performed by each Club role throughout the year, and very often we all struggle with following up these tasks, even if some

roles are dual. In addition to this, the Club struggles every single year, there is undoubtedly a certain amount of difficulty in filling in all the Committee posts, imagine what will happen when there is also an extra task added to the present duties of a role. I can completely understand the utility of such a project but my main concern is that the Committee should every year try and make everything less complicated and as efficient as possible for those coming after, for those who will succeed each of us in our respective roles. Among other things we should be focusing on making each of the Committee roles more appealing and more accessible to others who might want to step up as a member of a future Committee, more flexible, less complicated, not to make it more difficult. Lastly, I tend to find slightly unfair the fact that someone has the time and the will to do something and then to force this on their successor, who may have the will but may not have the time necessary to bring it forward, but this is entirely my point of view.

Besides the extra work which this project will need in order to start and function, it will also require a yearly administration.

It is my feeling that someone is going to be creating a lot of work for themselves, this is a huge enterprise requesting a great amount of time and work and ultimately I feel that this is a very big operation for a very small issue.

Discussion on the technical flaws in the set up of MeetUp and on the reasons due to which the Club did not go through with it, in addition to the Club having a history of jumping into launching initiatives which they then prove to be so much more than one initially thought.

Discussion on why the LFR website is not an ideal candidate to be used as a platform of immediate and direct communication, even if there is a specific notice-board created on purpose.

Conclusion to the subject: SP will see if he can come up with any suggestions on what the ultimate purpose of this initiative is going to be, on how to monitor it and on how to ensure that all required parameters of safety for members are in place and all the relevant logistics for the next RCM.

The Committee will hear what SP has to say and will make a decision to the matter there and then

Social Activities update (SS)

The first Thursday social at the Village was very successful, everything went really well, there were about 50 attendees.

There is a question from a couple of members, on why is this event starting at 8pm, whereas most other LFR events would start at 7pm? It was indirectly mentioned that it would have been much more practical to have the event starting at 7pm, so that members can go to Village directly and as soon as they finish work, instead now there is a short gap of an hour between 7 and 8 pm.

The time was chosen without any particular reason in mind, so that members can arrive without any pressure and after having had something to eat and without being in a rush. If

starting the event at 8pm seems to be creating some complications among attendees, I am happy to move the next event forward by an hour, it shouldn't really be a problem.

Short discussion on the 2023 Pride March

There are a number of parameters that need to be maintained, in order to avoid any complications. The most important is the dress code as all participants must adhere to the guidelines and wear the official LFR red vest or the tri suit, but not the tri rainbow vest. This is for reasons of uniformity. Most new members have an LFR vest but we may also make an appeal to those who happen to have a spare red vest to bring it on the day as to ensure that all participants can march wearing one, as those not wearing the official LFR colours on the day will not be able to join the parade.

Last year we met at Grosvenor Square in advance and set off from there after wearing some rainbow face paint and glitter. I think we should be following the same pattern this year, for reasons of practicality and convenience. Members will collect their armband for the parade from Nick there and then.

Action to be taken: CBP Is kindly requested to please enquire Minesh P if by any chance the LFR long banner is stored in the Pride Run storage facilities.

In regards to the Saturday 16 of September, day of the Pride 10K, we were again thinking of getting The Village for the after-after party.

Committee is happy with the choice of venue and agrees with the suggestion of NW

Short discussion on the LFR Christmas Party

There has been no response so far from The Thistle; on the other hands, The Anthologist is still available for Saturday the 25th of November.

Action to be taken: CBP is kindly requested to chase and follow up with The Thistle in regards to the LFR Christmas Party.

Membership Update (MS)

You will all be happy to know that there are 550 registered members at the moment. As mentioned the EA registrations are still far behind but I am keeping very optimistic that the task will be completed sometime around the end of July, as there are still hundreds of members to process. The good thing is that nobody among members is really worried about this, there is a deadline for registering members by the end of June, I mean, if there are any urgent registrations, of members who wish to race at a specific event, I will of course process this immediately, but this has not happened until now, I have not really been contacted in regards to that. And just to be clear on this the backlog is entirely related to the registration with EA of new members, and most new members, unless they come to LFR from a different running club, do not really have any idea what a URN is.

If anyone should raise it please make them aware that we are working as fast as we can, if they have urgent need then ask them to please get in touch with me, until the 30th of June all of membership fees need to be paid, but there is a window until these are expired, there is also no issue with all those who happen to be first claim with LFR but those who happen to be

second claim with another club, I have already processed their registrations, simply as they might get a problem with their second club, so this is also all done.

Action to be taken: CBP is kindly requested to please send an email to The Thistle in regards to potentially expecting reduced numbers for brunch on Saturday the 1st of July, due to the Pride March.

Co-Presidents Updates

Short update and discussion on the Gymshark collaboration (AH)

Discussion on the Thursday run revival

Discussion on Tuesday track sessions and coaching in general

Suggestion of launching a “Beginners to Middle Level” number of sessions for those who would like to start with track but are still very apprehensive of the whole track engagement; launching the beginners track session on Thursday and then continue to have the advanced track sessions on Tuesday as before (RB)

This is a very good suggestion to consider in the future but it still does not resolve the issue that the current Tuesday sessions have already reached capacity of attendees.

Matt Haas is planning on attending the July RCM, separate session, it would be a great opportunity to have these suggestions brought to Matt’s consideration.

Having a new regular track session on Thursday could be much better, as every other running club is having theirs on a Tuesday.

Discussion on the Seymour Bag Drop

Request to have the website updated in regards to the above.

This is sadly an issue that the Seymour Centre have created for themselves.

Having a bag drop has proved enormously beneficial for LFR members as there is no gender neutral space that contains any lockers, there is a changing room for gender neutral persons but in order to use the lockers, one needs to enter either the male or the female changing rooms.