

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting of the National Pigeon Association of Great Britain held on Sunday 14th February 2016 at the Holiday Inn, Crick, Northamptonshire

Meeting commenced at 12:40

Present:

M Rudd President, J Surrige Vice President, Ms H Seed, Messrs G R Bates, G Giddings, R Greenwood, R Henderson, P Littlewood, E Murray, C Ronald,
In Attendance: J S Harrison, Secretary.

Item 1

Chairman's Welcome:

Evan Murray as Chairman welcomed all members to the meeting, making special mention of the newly elected Vice President John Surrige, newly elected member Graham Giddings, and the returning member Colin Ronald.

Item 2

Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from Gary Eaton

Item 3

Election of Chairman:

Evan Murray – proposed by Richard Greenwood, seconder Helen Seed
Paul Littlewood – proposed by Richard Henderson, seconder John Surrige
By paper ballot Evan Murray was elected to serve as Chairman until the next AGM by 6 votes to 4

Item 4

Minutes of meeting held at Sandringham, September 13th 2015:

It was proposed by Richard Henderson, seconded by Richard Greenwood that the minutes be accepted. Carried.

Item 5

Matters arising:

Mark Rudd asked that his comment in 7e be amended by the addition of "during the show season". This was agreed.
There were no other matters.

Item 6

Committee decisions made between meetings:

Helen Seed said that an eBay account for the sale of back copies of "Fancy Pigeon World" and the Book of Standards had been agreed, and that the account was now set up with all payments going to the Secretary.

Item 7

Secretary/Treasurer's Report:

The Secretary said that membership for 2016 stood at 404, income to Feb 12th was £17,085 and expenditure £1,664 with the balance at the bank of £35,789. The Secretary advised that he had taken out Sainsbury's credit card specifically for NPA use where card payment was required and that this would be cleared each month by cheque from the NPA account. The Secretary advised that the money from the RBS account had been transferred and a letter signed by two of the signatories was being sent to close the account. Rings sent out to date was A - 3,040; B - 5,870; C - 2,970; D - 2,330; E - 2,260; and F - 870. The Secretary asked at what point there was a need to place a further order for rings. Graham Giddings and Colin Ronald both said that following a mid-season order additional rings were received within about two weeks, and suggested that the point at which additional rings were ordered was dependent on the time of year. The Secretary said he would advise when the stock of rings in any size fell to under 1,000.

Item 8

Election of Officers:

Trophies - Richard Henderson
Obituaries - Mark Rudd
Welfare - John Surridge
Standards - Mark Rudd & Helen Seed
European - Graham Giddings
Junior Members - Helen Seed
Publicity - Graham Bates

Item 9

NPA Management

9a. Implementation of ballot decision

Graham Bates offered his apologies for failing to number the first set of ballot papers sent out. The Committee were of the opinion that no further apology was necessary, it had been a simple mistake that had been quickly remedied. The ballot had resulted in all three amendments to the Constitution and Rules being carried:

A2 (g) *" To subsidise any publication dealing with fancy pigeons and to print a newsletter or other publication relating to pigeons at the discretion of the National Committee."*

B3 (d) *" Any multi breed show granted Championship Status must be advertised in the official journal of the NPA or any other pigeon periodical designated by the committee prior to the closing date for entries. The advertisement should contain the closing date."*

A10 *"To cover the accounting year membership fees shall be for the period September 1st to August 31st. Only Associate members for the year beginning September 1st prior to the AGM are eligible to vote."*

It was agreed that they were effective from the date of the AGM.

As the 2012 C+R had been amended there was discussion on whether there was a need to re-print the new version. It was agreed that the Secretary would update the Constitution & Rules and circulate copies to the Committee, Colin Ronald to provide to the Secretary the amendments made in the 2013 and 2014 ballots. The Secretary said that he would italicise and date all amendments made since 2012. It was further agreed that the amended Constitution would be added to the website for download, and additionally the Secretary would send either a paper or electronic copy to members requesting one. The matter of re printing would be re-visited at some time in the future if a need for it was considered necessary.

The Secretary asked for confirmation that change to the financial year would take effect this year (2016). The Committee was agreed that 2016 would be a short year, and the year-end account would reflect that, whereas in future years the year end accounts would reflect the complete breeding and show year. Graham Bates commented that the change to the financial year will make some members think they are being asked to pay 2 membership fees in 2016. It was agreed that this was a possibility and the committee agreed that they would stress to members that the change was an administrative change and that they simply continue to pay their membership at the same time they have in previous years.

9b. Ring Size for LFCL Tumbler

The Secretary confirmed that he had received no written communication from the LFCL Tumbler Club on this matter. Helen Seed said that she had spoken to the Club secretary, Adrian Twidale, at the Hurworth Grange Show on January 9th and he had asked her what he needed to do on the matter.

Richard Henderson said that he was at the Club AGM when the membership had voted unanimously in favour of the ring size reverting back from B to C. Mark Rudd said that he didn't agree with the change in ring size. Richard Henderson said that until 3 years ago when the ring size was changed to size B the breed had been ringed with size C for more than 30 years. He said that in the past 3 years B rings had to be removed from many adult birds because they were too tight, the request for a reversion to size C was therefore made on the grounds of welfare. It was agreed that as the EE allow a 1mm variation in ring size a reversion to size C would not cause a problem.

Richard Henderson proposed that as the breed club had made the decision to change the ring size at their AGM it should be approved by the NPA, seconded by Paul Littlewood. The vote resulted in 4 votes in favour and 4 votes against, the Chairman used his casting vote and the proposal was carried. Mark Rudd requested that his vote against the proposal be noted. Mark Rudd asked when the LFCL Tumbler Club would change the breed standard to reflect the change in ring size, adding that the written description in the LFCL Standard has not changed

since the mid 1930's. It was agreed that during 2016/17 show season young birds could carry either B or C rings, but from the 2017/18 show season and thereafter all LFCL Tumblers must be ringed with size C. The Chairman asked the Secretary to write to the LFCL Tumbler Club and advise them of the decision and confirm in writing that the club had requested the change in ring size. The Secretary would amend the Ring Size List.

9c. ASR Club and ASR Society(GB) applications for affiliation

There were two applications for recognition of a breed club for the American Show Racer, from the American Show Racer Club [Dave Savage/John Otley] and from the American Show Racer Society (GB) [Carla Wilson]. There was general discussion on the timing of both applications, as there seemed some delay in submitting the applications after it was known that ASR Society had held a meeting during the summer of 2015. Richard Greenwood asked if the VPC had released the ASR and given any preference to either the ASR Club or the ASR Society, there was agreement that the VPC had released the ASR but had given no preference to either club.

The meeting considered both applications and various comments were made on the presentation of the two applications. The Secretary confirmed that Mr John Otley is not a paid up member of the NPA. Richard Henderson proposed, seconded by Richard Greenwood that Mrs Carla Wilson's application for affiliation for the ASR Society(GB) be accepted. John SurrIDGE said that he had been led to believe that the ASR Club had more support and had more established breeders as members. This led to considerable discussion. It had been rumoured that the proposed ASR Club would be adopting the European Standard for the American Show Racer, and not the American breed standard. The Committee were in full agreement that the standard from the country of origin must be accepted. It was pointed out that in the rules of the ASR Society (GB) it clearly stated that the birds would be judged to the American standard.

Graham Bates said that only Mrs Carla Wilson's application for affiliation had been presented in the correct manner providing both the rules and all other information required for the committee to make a decision. John SurrIDGE said that the committee did not want to divide or split the breeders and suggested that the two clubs be asked to come together and form one club. Evan Murray said that from discussions he had had it was clear that there would be 'fallout' whatever decision was reached by the Committee.

John SurrIDGE proposed that the decision be deferred to the next committee meeting to allow the ASR Club to present a correct application. There was no seconder. Graham Bates proposed that both the ASR Club and the ASR Society(GB) be written to and asked to work together. After lengthy discussion the proposal was withdrawn.

A vote was taken on the proposal made by Richard Henderson that the application for affiliation by the American Show Racer Society(GB) be accepted. The proposal was carried by majority decision. Paul Littlewood abstained. The Secretary was asked to advise both the ASR Club and the ASR Society(GB) of the decision and to point out that the stance of the NPA is that the standard of the country of origin must be used. The Secretary was asked to return the £10 which had been sent in by John Otley and Dave Savage.

9d. Guidelines for formation of Breed Clubs

There was a general consensus that there was a need to draft out guidelines for the formation of breed clubs which could avoid future difficulties. Graham Bates said he thought such guidelines existed, but suggested that they should include the requirement to provide details of officers, committee, members and rules as a minimum. After discussion it was agreed that Colin Ronald would produce draft guidelines for consideration at the next Committee Meeting

9e. Ring Transfers

The Secretary had highlighted that 20% of the NPA Certificate winners at the East of England Show were not transferred to the name of the exhibitor; this pattern had been reflected at various other shows. The Committee felt that many members had 'grown out of the habit' of transferring birds. It was agreed that in fairness to all members and exhibitors they must be reminded of the need to transfer and given the opportunity to transfer birds before the beginning of the 2016/17 show season. It was agreed that with the commencement of the 2016/17 show season the rules would be enforced. The Secretary to write a notice to be printed in the next FPW and to be placed on the website.

Item 10

Shows

10a. Championship Show dates

The Secretary had circulated a list of the limited number of show dates which clubs had submitted. There was general discussion and it was agreed that all show dates must be submitted before the next Committee Meeting and that in following years all clubs must be advised that they had to follow the procedure outlined in the Rules. The Secretary said that if all were happy with the forms he had put in the committee bundle this would be sent out to all clubs for return by March 31st, and in future years could be sent out for return by January 31st. The committee agreed.

Muffed Tumbler Club. The application by the Muffed Tumbler Club for championship status for the 'Tumbler Show' was discussed. From the letter and draft classification it was unclear whether the request for certificates was for Muffed Tumblers or Muffed, LFCL and ESFT. The Committee would be unable to consider granting NPA certificates for LFCL or ESFT as both breed clubs already have 'club shows, but may consider granting those for the Muffed Tumbler'. The Secretary was asked to write requesting clarification.

Southern Counties Show Racer & Flying Breeds Club. There was general agreement that only NPA certificates for flying breeds could be issued at this show, the Secretary was asked to check the show returns. There was discussion on whether the club had been given permission to schedule ASR classes. The Secretary was asked to check the minutes to see when such approval had been given.

Northern Counties Flying Tippler & Tumbler Society. The NCTTS had moved their show to Saturday 19th November, the day before the Lancashire FPS show, they are in close proximity

and it was felt entries at both shows could be affected. Helen Seed said that as part of the booking agreement the venue for Lancashire had been booked for three years. The NCTTS show had for many years been held in mid-December and had moved its date forwards. The committee agreed, with some reservation, that for this year the NCTTS would have NPA championship status. The committee suggested that in future years NCTTS moved forward one week (12th November 2017) as this would not clash with any other Northern show. The Secretary to advise NCTTS of this.

The Committee approved dates for East of England (9/10); Egremont (22/10); Dragoon Club (30/10); Antwerp Smerle (30/10); Sufex (12/11); NCTTS (19/11); Lancashire (20/11); Newcastle (26/11); BPSS (3+4/12); Scottish Flying (10/12); and United Fancy Homer (11/12).

10b. Procedure for circulation to all clubs

Paul Littlewood said that there must be a system in place to ensure that in future years all dates were submitted in time to be discussed at the February meeting. There was lengthy discussion on the need to clarify or amend Rule B3(h), it was generally agreed that the wording is ambiguous. It was agreed that this be considered at a later meeting for possible amendment to be included in the next ballot of members.

10c. Blackpool & RPRA

There was full discussion on the 2015 Blackpool Show. The Chairman expressed his annoyance that the Secretary had added "and no application was made to the NPA for championship status" to the end of the BHW notice stating that this was factually incorrect and that the show did not have to apply for championship status as this had previously been granted, they just had to request certificates. The Secretary apologised saying it was done for clarification. There was heated discussion on "championship status", the majority holding the view that by applying for a show date and submitting schedules for approval shows were in fact applying for 'championship status'. Paul Littlewood questioned whether shows which had not requested NPA certificates in 2015/16 and were not held under NPA Rules still had championship status and would automatically be granted NPA's in the future?

Colin Ronald said that he had spoken to, and met with, Andy Lowe who had said that he would be asking for NPA certificates for Young Bird Show, Nottingham and Blackpool in the coming show season, however he wanted help with judges and show administration. Mark Rudd said that the Show Rules applied to all shows, and exceptions could not be made. Richard Henderson pointed out that there was a written procedure/guidance for running a show, and agreed that there could not be exceptions for some shows. Richard Greenwood said that he would like to see the NPA take over the running of the show and form a closer link with the RPRA Show of the Year; there was general agreement that the committee should not directly be involved in organising a show. Richard Greenwood said that there had been many complaints about the over-crowding of birds in sales pens, and feared that such action reflected badly on the pigeon fancy and could have repercussions if DEFRA or welfare organizations became involved.

John Surridge had tabled a letter relating to the NPA notice in BHW following Blackpool, he asked "why hang out dirty washing in public"? Richard Greenwood said that there had been widespread discussion amongst exhibitors and visitors to the show. Richard Henderson pointed out that half the committee had been present at the show and had seen and heard negative comments made about the show, the NPA and NPA members. Evan Murray agreed that there had been widespread complaints at the show, and that it had reflected badly on the NPA. Mark Rudd said that Ray Knight had asked him why the NPA had "taken away certificates from Blackpool". Evan Murray said that he felt the NPA Committee had acted correctly in placing on record it's concerns and placing a notice in BHW and on the NPA website; adding that he was very concerned that the NPA had 'lost' three good championship shows.

10d. Show Representative Reports

The Secretary said that he had only received 5 reports. The Committee agreed that they would be discussed at the next meeting when missing reports had been filed. The Secretary asked if the Committee required copies of reports, it was agreed this was not necessary. Of the reports received there were no adverse comments or matters for consideration. Evan Murray said that he had spoken to Richard Henderson at Pickering that the hall was cold on Saturday morning.

The matter of the availability of Certificate Withhold Cards was discussed. The Secretary said that he had no such cards and accordingly had not sent any to shows following his appointment as Secretary; he added that he had checked through the files and could find no reference, and asked that someone send him a copy in order that in future they are sent out with certificates.

Item 11

Correspondence

Letter from The Poultry Club regarding its ballot was discussed. The Committee view was that it was happy to continue with John Elsdon as Scrutineer and would not therefore take up the offer of a reciprocal arrangement. The Secretary was asked if he felt able to act as scrutineer for The Poultry Club ballot, he replied that he was not. Richard Greenwood said that he would be more than happy to act as scrutineer for the Poultry Club. The Secretary to advise the Poultry Club and forward contact details.

Letter from John Surridge (21-12-15);

John Surridge suggested that this could be discussed at a subsequent meeting. Letter deferred.

Letter from John Surridge (05-02-16) with attached copy letter from Hans Schipper (HS) John Surridge explained how the letter had come to be written. Mark Rudd said that he was very disappointed with the content of the HS letter. He said that he and Helen Seed had met with Jean Louis Frindell (JLF) at Leipzig in December and had a very amicable and productive meeting; since then they have exchanged numerous friendly emails. Mark Rudd said that this letter did not correspond with recent communication with JLF and he would be wanting a vote of confidence from the Management Committee to carry on.

Mark said that JLF appeared very supportive from his emails and he and Helen are working towards completing many of the standards discussed ahead of the next EE meeting in May, many items have already been completed and more are ready to submit. Some of the points raised in the HS letter were discussed and it was agreed that the contacts for all EE Standard matters to remain with Mark and Helen. Unfortunately, due to work commitments Mark cannot attend the upcoming EE meeting but would ensure that correspondence would be sent to JLF ahead of the meeting. Helen Seed asked John Surridge what had prompted HS letter noting that it was in response to a letter from him dated 27th January. John Surridge did not have a copy of that letter with him but said he would send a copy.

Evan Murray asked what should be done about the letter from HS? Paul Littlewood suggested that Mark Rudd should ask JLF if he is happy with the current relationship, and ask him if he knows why the letter from HS was written. Mark Rudd said it was probably best to continue to move forward with JLF in a professional manner and to continue with the plan discussed in Leipzig, but ask him to keep the rest of the EE committee informed of the progress being made and that the only points of contact were himself and Helen Seed. John Surridge said he would merely advise HS that the letter had been presented to the committee. Graham Bates said that it was important Mark Rudd had the assurance that he has full support of the Committee; this was agreed by all members who expressed their full support.

Item 12

Dates & venue for committee meetings to February 2017

After discussion the following dates were proposed:

April 24th - Premier Inn, Rugby

June 12th - Premier Inn, Rugby

Sept 18th - Premier Inn, Rugby

Feb 12th - Venue in M62 corridor, Leeds/Bradford area. Helen Seed agreed to seek suitable venues. Members were asked to confirm their availability for these dates and the Secretary to book the venue.

Any Other Business

Richard Greenwood expressed his concern at the state of the Fancy, he said that it was a working man's hobby, and the NPA Committee must be careful not to appear 'to dictate to the members', it must 'pick & choose battles without alienating members'. He said that standards had fallen badly in the past 10 years and needed to be raised, but 'we need to think about how we treat people'. Mark Rudd commented that the C+R are seen as the Committee's rules whereas in fact they are the Association Members' Rules. There was a discussion on Richard's comments.

Colin Ronald asked how much revenue had been raised from Patrons, the Secretary advised that there were currently 10 Patrons giving an additional income of £500.

John Surridge said that, as requested, he had revised John Elsdon's booklet and handed out copies. The Committee agreed that they would discuss this at the next meeting.

Paul Littlewood said that discussion between meetings were sometimes overlooked and felt that there was a need for all such decisions to be recorded more fully.

Paul Littlewood said that the sub-committee set up to look at affiliated club shows and breed clubs in general needed to meet and get the process going. Richard Greenwood offered the use of his home.

There being no other business the meeting closed 16:05