



Irish Hockey Umpires Association

Annual General Meeting held on Sunday 6th April 2014 at 10:45am at Havelock Park, Banbridge Hockey Club.

Introduction

IHUA Chairman, Warren McCully, opened the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance. He welcomed IHA President, Daphne Hall, who presided over the meeting. Daphne commended all umpires for the tremendous job they do for Irish hockey and assured everyone that their efforts are very much appreciated.

In Attendance (17)

Daphne Hall (IHA President), Warren McCully, David Acheson, Liz Clifford, Geoff Conn, Tom Goode, Andrew Groves, Gareth Herron, Graham Hohn, Robert Johnston, Richard Kendrick, Alison Keogh, Eamonn McFerran, Carol Metchette, Michael O'Brien, Simon O'Connor PJ Whyte.

The quorum of fifteen members and two officers was confirmed.

Apologies

Peter Agnew, Bruce Bale, Ingeborg Bevers, Adare Brady, Fiona Davitt, Russell Donaldson, Karen Eppel, Pat Hall, Zenia Howe, Gillian Johnston, Claire Kelly, Aisling Keogh, Noel McBride, Shane O'Donnell, Claire Oliphant, Gail Taylor.

Minutes of last Annual General Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the 2013 Annual General Meeting had previously been circulated to all members. David Acheson queried the omission of an issue raised by Linda Ingram concerning the election of a single Appointments Coordinator. Warren McCully replied that other priorities during the year, notably the development of a National Umpire Development Strategy and discussions about finance with IHA, had taken precedence. David added that it was the autonomy vested in a single person at national and provincial level that was the issue. Warren replied that it has been extremely difficult in recent years finding anyone at all to take on positions in IHUA but we should thank the small number of volunteers who take on most of the work. He hoped that when it came to election of officers then many names would go forward.

Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Warren McCully, seconded by Daphne Hall, agreed as an accurate record and signed by the IHA President.

Correspondence to the AGM

Nil.

Chairman's Report

Warren McCully opened his report by welcoming everyone and thanking Daphne Hall for taking time from her extremely busy schedule to chair the AGM. He thanked all of the Committee for their tremendous work and commitment especially the Appointments Coordinators, Tom Goode and Gillian Johnston, for their efforts. He added it had been a pleasure to chair such a hard-



Irish Hockey Umpires Association

working committee. He also thanked Robert Johnston for taking on the Secretary duties in Aisling's absence and Andrew Groves for supporting IHUA with the supply of shirts and fleeces from Gilmour Sports. He went on to recount some of the activities the Committee had undertaken during the year; primary amongst those were negotiations with IHA on umpire development.

Warren concluded by explaining that a gift had been purchased for Colin Hutchinson to commemorate his outstanding international umpiring career but as Colin was not present at the meeting it would be presented to him at the earliest opportunity.

Honorary Secretary's Report

In the absence of Aisling Keogh, Robert Johnston read the Honorary Secretary's Report.

He recorded the events of the four Executive Committee meetings held during the year but emphasised that many more meetings and conference calls had been held with IHA to discuss the multitude of issues surrounding umpire development, finance, recruitment and retention across Ireland. He asked the meeting to note the significant amount of time and effort devoted by Committee members in trying to make umpiring better for everyone. All of this time is given freely on a completely voluntary basis. Robert also praised the work of the two Appointments Coordinators, Tom Goode and Gillian Johnston, who had given up their own free time operating with an ever-decreasing panel of umpires and a fluid IHA fixture calendar which had made 2013/14 an even more challenging season than normal. Robert congratulated all Umpires and Umpire Managers at every level across Ireland who had achieved recognition at international, interprovincial or provincial tournaments and competitions.

He thanked Aisling Keogh and Andrew Groves for their work in supplying the new IHUA polo shirts and fleeces; he congratulated Fiona Davitt on being awarded IHA Umpire of the Year; he praised everyone who had attended the pre-season seminar in Belfast at which Olympic Games and World Cup Umpire, Andy Mair, was the main guest; but mostly he reserved thanks on behalf of all Irish umpires for IHUA Chairman, Warren McCully, who had worked tirelessly throughout the year virtually single-handedly organizing the Pre-Season Seminar, negotiating with IHA on umpire development pathways, rules for national and provincial competitions and a new financial model to support the national umpire development strategy. All of this while maintaining his own high level of umpiring week in week out at national and international level.

Honorary Treasurer's Report

Michael O'Brien presented the comprehensive audited accounts for the year. He noted that the affiliation fee increase from €12 to €25 had resulted in increased income from our 128 registered umpires. The IHA grant for umpire development was only €750 which was spent entirely on the Pre-season Seminar in September.

Michael explained that later in the meeting a motion would be proposed to set a deadline of 1st December in each season for payment of affiliation fees. Simon O'Connor asked why our financial year runs Jan-Dec and not Apr-Mar. Michael replied we are bound by the IHA financial year which runs in parallel with the calendar year.

Adoption of the Honorary Treasurer's Report was proposed by David Acheson, seconded by Geoff Conn and accepted by the meeting.



National Umpire Appointments Coordinator's Report - Ladies

In her absence, Gillian Johnston submitted a report which was read by Tom Goode. In it Gillian highlighted the lack of umpires on the women's side of the game and the impossibility of covering all national games in the current format. She explained the issues arising:

1. Some Clubs did not nominate an umpire for the competitions they entered.
2. Some umpires were nominated by their club in name only but the individual knew nothing about the nomination and was therefore not willing to umpire games.
3. Some umpires who had been nominated were unwilling to travel except with their own club.
4. Some umpires were still playing and therefore unavailable to be considered for games.
5. Several competitions were arranged for the same weekends and therefore it was impossible to get the matches covered without asking umpires to stay on to do more than one game at the same venue.
6. Senior umpires were being asked to umpire in one province one day and end up having to umpire in another province the next day as umpires were crying-off too late in the week to get a replacement.

Unfortunately all too often during the season Gillian was left with a situation where no umpires could be provided for games. If the status quo continues she believes the women's side of the game is going to suffer greatly so suggested some rules that need to be put in place now:

1. Clubs must nominate an umpire who is willing to travel, within reason, to officiate games as requested by the National Coordinator.
2. Nominated umpires must fill out their availability on the on-line computer system.
3. Nominated umpires cannot decide themselves which games they will and will not umpire.
4. Once the umpires have been appointed then only in exceptional circumstances should alternatives be considered.
5. Provincial Appointers must be aware that all games in Irish National Competitions take precedence over Provincial Competitions.
6. Clubs must be made aware that they have a responsibility to provide umpires to a standard that they expect themselves each week and to be encouraging younger members to take up the whistle.

Finally, Gillian praised those umpires who were appointed on a regular basis and fulfilled their appointments. She expressed her sincere thanks to Tom Goode who helped greatly especially towards the end of the season. She also thanked Warren McCully for his support and guidance throughout the season.

National Umpire Appointments Coordinator's Report - Men

Tom Goode opened by thanking each and every umpire for their cooperation this last season. The changing of match schedules at local and national level did not make things easy and put considerable strain on umpiring resources especially as IHUA was not always consulted in advance of changes to the fixture calendar.



Irish Hockey Umpires Association

Tom recorded his congratulations to all those umpires appointed to the various Irish Cup finals. Once again, Irish umpires continue to perform exceptionally well on the international stage. For the record, the following is a list of all Men's appointments made during this season:

Umpire	Tournament
Andrew Groves	Club Champions Trophy (ITA)
Colin Hutchinson	EHL 1.1 (ESP)
Geoff Conn	Champions Challenge I (MAS)
	Indoor Club Champions Cup (ENG)
	Champions Trophy (IND)
Kris Cholewa	Russian Club Championships
	Club Champions Challenge I (CZE)
	U16 Championship II B (LTU)
Malcolm Coombes	U21 Four Nations (IRL)
Shane O'Donnell	Junior Championship II (POR)
Simon O'Connor	Indoor Club Champions Challenge I (CZE)
Warren McCully	EHL Round 1.2 (FRA)

In addition, congratulations were extended to Geoff Conn on his promotion to the FIH Outdoor World Development Panel and to Simon O'Connor on his promotion to FIH Indoor Umpire. This season Colin Hutchinson and Robert Johnston retired as FIH international umpires.

Tom especially thanked IHUA Chairman, Warren McCully, for all his help and guidance over the last twelve months and described him as the voice of reason required on a number of occasions.

On a final note, Tom said it was disappointing to see the number of cry-offs during the season given that the on-line facility is available to record availability. He will be proposing measures to the incoming Executive Committee to deal with umpires who fail to use the computerized system to record their availability and then cry-off on a regular basis.

Daphne Hall thanked Tom, and in her absence Gillian, for their comprehensive reports and for the efforts they have put in to umpiring during the whole season.

Election of Officers for 2014/15

Daphne Hall declared all posts vacant and proceeded to conduct the Election of Officers for the 2014/15 season. The following were elected:

		<u>Proposed by</u>	<u>Seconded By</u>
Chairman	Warren McCully	Tom Goode	by acclamation
Honorary Secretary	Simon O'Connor	Geoff Conn	Eamonn McFerran
Honorary Treasurer	Graham Hohn	Michael O'Brien	Andrew Groves



Election of Executive Committee for 2014/15

The following Committee members were elected to serve for the 2014/15 season:

	<u>Proposed by</u>	<u>Seconded By</u>
1. Eamonn McFerran	David Acheson	Andrew Groves
2. Geoff Conn	Tom Goode	David Acheson
3. Robert Johnston	Eamonn McFerran	David Acheson
4. Gillian Johnston	Warren McCully	David Acheson
5. The meeting was unable to elect a fifth Committee member so it was agreed the incoming Executive Committee should seek to fill this position as soon as possible.		

[File Note - Aisling Keogh agreed to take on the final position a week after the AGM.]

Election of Umpire Appointments Coordinator - Ladies

Warren McCully thanked outgoing Ladies' Appointments Coordinator, Gillian Johnston, for her efforts and commitment to IHUA in this very difficult role.

The meeting was unable to elect a new Ladies' Appointments Coordinator so it was agreed the incoming Executive Committee should seek to fill this position as soon as possible.

Election of Umpire Appointments Coordinator - Men

It was proposed by Eamonn McFerran, seconded by Simon O'Connor and unanimously agreed that Tom Goode be elected as Men's Umpire Appointments Coordinator for 2014/15.

Membership Fees for 2014/15

It was proposed by the Honorary Treasurer, Michael O'Brien, seconded by Graham Hohn and unanimously agreed by the meeting that membership fees for 2014/15 should remain at €25.

Alteration to the Constitution

Michael O'Brien proposed the following alteration to the Constitution:

Current Wording

"Membership shall consist of all persons duly registered with the provincial umpire associations of the IHUA. Membership may also include all Honorary life members of the IHUA."

Proposed Amended Wording

"Membership shall consist of all persons registered with the provincial umpire associations of the IHUA. Membership may also include all Honorary life members of the IHUA.

A membership fee of €25 per person will apply for IHUA membership.

Each provincial umpiring branch is charged with ensuring full payment is made to IHUA on or before 1 December each year. Should payment not be received in full the registered person(s) will not be considered for selection, until all outstanding monies are paid. Each provincial association is required to provide a list of the persons to IHUA at the time of payment."



Irish Hockey Umpires Association

Michael explained the purpose of the change is to set a deadline each season for payment of IHUA affiliation fees by Provinces. All agreed this was a good idea in its intention.

Richard Kendrick suggested IHUA write to Provinces well in advance of 1st December each season to demand payment. PJ Whyte suggested that instead of umpires not being considered for selection it would be more prudent to impose a financial penalty rather than further restrict our panel of available umpires. Both issues will be considered by the incoming Committee.

Adoption of the revised Constitution, as proposed by the Hon Treasurer, was seconded by Simon O'Connor and unanimously agreed by the meeting.

Appointment of Auditors

It was proposed by Michael O'Brien, seconded by acclamation and therefore unanimously agreed by the meeting that Crawford Tipping be elected Auditor for 2014/15.

General Business

1. PJ Whyte queried how many assessments had been conducted on all umpires appointed to national competitions during the season. Warren McCully conceded that no assessments had been undertaken but that the new Umpire Development Pathway and Grading Structure is designed to address this issue. Tom Goode added that we currently have no dedicated Panel of Graders/Assessors willing to undertake assessments.
2. David Acheson asked why there is no Umpiring Working Group in Irish Hockey. Warren McCully referred to a previous IHUA AGM which had rejected the IHA's proposal to form an Umpiring Working Group. Richard Kendrick added that IHA and IHUA had been working very closely together this year for the betterment of umpiring and it is important this collaboration continues. Warren McCully said that much more work still had to be done at national and provincial level while Robert Johnston supported the call for more people to get involved on the various working groups and committees to help take umpiring forward.

Closing Comments

There being no further business Daphne Hall closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance. She wished re-elected Chairman, Warren McCully, and his incoming Committee continued success in the future and reiterated her thanks to all umpires for the difficult job they do throughout the season for Irish hockey.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12:05pm.

ROBERT JOHNSTON
on behalf of Aisling Keogh (Hon. Secretary)

Minutes accepted as an accurate record
IHA President