

BSA A.G.M April 2022

The BSA AGM was held digitally via zoom on Saturday 2nd April 2022, with the meeting starting at 17:00 UK time. The meeting was opened by Matt Newman welcoming all attendees, and apologising for the late AGM, Matt explained that the existing committee of the BSA had been working hard in the background putting things in place to ensure the AGM ran as smoothly as possible, so if there are any issues throughout the meeting please be patient as it is the first time a BSA AGM has taken place on a digital platform.

Attendees/apologies

There were a total of 16 attendees, with apologies being received from Richard Harrison, Dan Newman, Mike Shearer, Tim Hulse and Robert Marshall.

Membership report

Unfortunately Tim Hulse the membership secretary had other arrangements at late notice so he was not present to provide a membership report detailing numbers compared to last year. This will be processed and amended to the AGM notes at a later date.

Treasurers report

As there was no AGM held in 2021 or 2020 there were not any previous AGM notes to run through, the meeting went straight in to the Treasurers report.

- Graham Worley went on to explain the main income of the BSA comes from the membership which now runs from April to March annually.
- Over the past 12 months the BSA had an income of £6914, this is £1696 more than last year.
- As an organisation the BSA has spent £2217 on insurance for the year, which is due to be renewed again this year.
- The BSA offered refunds to all members from Gibraltar as the insurance company we used could not offer them an insurance policy due to Brexit.
- The BSA purchased scales and radios for the EXE Spearfishing Club, The Dorset Spearfishing Club and the Cornwall Spearfishing club. These cost £224, £288 and £270 respectively.
- The BSA have recently spent £1199 on a venue and food for a presentation social event that is happening on the 23rd April 2022, where the BSA will charge attendees £20 per head for this event to recover some of these costs.
- Other outgoings include £69 for the website and £191 for the domain provider, and trophies for the presentation night.

- The BSA currently has £5218 as a closing balance in the bank account. Graham was keen to see the money invested into the clubs to help them succeed, and explained we have suitable funds to allow club funding and investment. Matt explained that we have now put the responsibility of members onto the clubs, so we are hopeful that we will see an increase in membership numbers over the next 12 months which would increase funds within the BSA.

Records report

Matt explained that the records will be updated and added to the BSA website with a how to guide so members know how to apply for future record catches, David Stephens went through a records report listing new records that were caught, these included:

- Gold spot mullet – caught by Callum Burns in Scotland weighing 1.69kg
- Garfish – caught by Mike Shearer in Jersey weighing 0.69kg
Both of these fish were caught in 2021
- Ling – caught in Scotland
- 3 beard rockling caught in Scotland
Both of these were caught in 2020

Survey results

The BSA distributed a survey and asked members to complete the survey, to find out what the members want and expect from the BSA and what would they like to see in the future. Russell Henderson discussed the results of the survey.

- **Response** - The BSA had a total of 86 responses, 70.9% of these responses were from current BSA members. The Scotland club ran the same survey amongst their members separately, they had 44 responses with 86% of them not being BSA members
- **Clubs** - Out of these 86 responses 27 were not assigned to a club, 2 were assigned to Southsea club, 1 was assigned to the London International Club of Spearfishers, 22 were assigned to the Exe Spearfishing Club, 3 were assigned to the South Wales Club, 15 were assigned to the Dorset Club, 3 assigned to the Cornwall Club and 3 assigned to the Jersey Club.
- **Amount of time spearfishing** - When asked how long have people been spearfishing 14% advised they were new to it, 19.8% advised they had been spearfishing for 1-2 years, 20.9% advised they had been spearfishing for 3-4 years, 10.4% advised they had been spearfishing for 5-7 years and 34.9% advised they had been spearfishing for 8+ years

- **Additional skills** - The BSA asked if anyone had any additional skills 55 responses for first aid, 15 responses for vhf license, 5 RYA Yachtmaster or equivalent, 31 RYA powerboat, 4 Lifeguard, 29 Scuba, 19 None, 1 "I like eating fish" , 1 Freediving, 1 watersports coaching, 1 paramedic, 1 imca DMT, 1 surf rescue, 1 Hospital qualifications ATL, 2 RYA day skipper, 1 decades at sea as senior
- **Courses** - When asked about spearfishing courses Maxime (The Frenchman) David Mellor, Aida and SSI were all mentioned
- **Learning** - What learning would the members like included breath hold, depth, safety, tidal planning – navigation and weather, hunting techniques, species ID – behaviour and habitats, Freediving – EQ and Technique, Boat handling, Cooking and fish preparation
- **What would you like** – 45 replies buddies, 62 insurance, 40 training, 31 mentoring, 44 safety guidance, 35 sustainability guidance, 38 species guidance, 47 spearfishing trips, 48 competitions, 65 social gatherings, 50 representation, 41 merchandise, 1 various other options
- **Further suggestions** – a British spearfishing certificate, world spearfishing competitions, community and casual dives, speara development and promotion, formal buddy scheme (mentoring), legal info, clear commercial and sponsorship policy, alpha flag awareness and promotion, communication with fishing authorities, promoting sustainability activities, habitat protection – awareness and data collection, website up to date, Gibraltar participation
- **Helping the BSA** – 18 offered help with area representation, 12 with admin, 13 with organising trips, 16 with mentoring, 14 with training, 19 with sustainability, 14 safety/risk assessment, 3 sponsorship, 7 website, 17 social media, 7 videos, 1 various other offers of help
- Russell rounded off the discussion with some quotes from members.
- A discussion followed on from this to explain that only 43 out of 44 scottish spearos filled out both BSA and Scotland surveys. So there is potential to expand membership to include Scotland and other upcoming areas. So the BSA will look into ways of appealing to other members from different areas, and looking into asking members to put rough locations on their online profile, so we can apply resources to these areas and have recognised area representatives.

Proposals

We had a total of 11 proposals, but upon further investigation we discovered that many of the proposals were in previous editions of Rules the BSA had prior to the constitution. It was agreed that the rules need to be updated to show these items that have previously been left out of updated editions of the rules. These items consist of:

- Fish species and minimum sizes for competitions will be agreed by the organising committee, and can be changed to increase fish size above the BSA minimum size or exclude some species such as dogfish on the condition the organising club notify the BSA and all participants a minimum of 1 month before the event.
- Support vessels and risk assessments must be provided for national competitions.
- Any complaints at competitions must be in a written format with a £100 deposit accompanying the complaint. In the case the complainant is successful the deposit will be returned to them, if they are unsuccessful with their complaint the organising club will keep the £100 deposit.

The following proposals were agreed and will be written into the constitution and updated rules list:

- National competitions will have 3 age categories
 - Junior (14-18)
 - Adult (19-25)
 - Senior (26+)

Relevant trophies will be provided for each category

- Measuring sticks/rulers will be provided to all clubs to ensure equipment is standardised and validated by the BSA.
- Spearguns to be unloaded before entering a swimming area – this will mostly consist of a marked area in front of the start/exit point. Anyone not adhering to this rule will be penalised, and/or disqualified
- Float numbers are to become standardised – the BSA committee will decide upon a suitable size and style (white back ground with black writing was suggested). This will allow float numbers to be more visible for competition marshals and allow a warning system to be developed, where participants caught breaking rules can be suitably monitored and penalised if required.
- The BSA will look into developing a safeguarding policy to protect vulnerable adults and minors, with suitably trained welfare/safeguarding officers to be elected and this procedure rolled out to the clubs.

Committee roles for election

Matt started the discussion and election of the BSA committee roles by announcing that due to personal commitments he will have to stand down as BSA chairman. He continued to explain all roles are up for re-election, and those participants who were interested in standing for a committee role will have to volunteer themselves and be voted into the position by the attendees present at the AGM. The votes were all unanimous and the new committee roles were filled by the following people:

- Chairman – Maxime Blondel – club rep for Exe Club
- Vice chairman – Russell Henderson – club rep for Scotland Club
- Secretary – vacant. To be filled at a later date
- Treasurer – Graham Worley
- Membership secretary – Dan Bailey
- Records officer – David Stephens
- Safety officer – vacant. To be filled at a later date
- General committee – Richard Harrison
 - Dan Newman – club rep for Dorset Club
 - Jaymz Flood – club rep for Wales Club (future)
 - Matt Newman – club rep for Cornwall Club
 - Mike Shearer – club rep for Jersey Dive Team (JDT)
 - Joe
 - *LIC club rep to be filled at a later date
- Safeguarding officer – vacant. To be filled at a later date
- Social media representative – Joel Severn
- Alan Stephens has stood down from all roles on the BSA committee, he was thanked for his input and hard work, he stated he has been on the committee since 1974 he said he fancies a break.

Any Other Business

- Need to advertise the social event/presentation night
- Trophies for the presentation night are as follows
 - 1st-10th individual ranking including champion (1st)
 - Ladies champion
 - Junior
 - Advancement
 - 1st team
 - Peter Crawford
 - Jim Taplin (fish closest to British record)
 - Sword (best international result)
- Gibraltar members, the BSA committee will speak with the Gibraltar members and recommend they speak to either The Spanish Federation, or The French Federation to see if those organisations will provide suitable individual insurance and membership cover.
- Medical cover for events James has kindly offered training, the BSA Committee will look into the feasibility of organising group training for club representatives.
- Jaymz Flood and Richard Harrison will look into developing a Welsh Club, and gauging interest.
- Dan Newman is still looking into the insurance deals and policies available to the BSA, he will finalise the options and present these options to the BSA committee to vote on.
- Matt thanked all attendees for taking the time to attend the AGM and closed off the meeting at 19:15.