

Kendo na hÉireann

Annual General Meeting

Sunday 12th May 2013

Attendees

Cormac McKinstry
Jonathon O'Connell
Alexei Lorenz
Karolis Turcila
Fuyuku Ootake
Jennifer Asada
Macdara McGuire
Gerard Keane
Aaron Kelly
Daniel Mulcachy
Alan McNevin
Maurycy Kaczor
Sergio Milani
David McGlynn
Lee Cahill
Marta Prieto
Raul Fernandez
Tomasz Pawlak
Patrick McGuire
Kathryn Cassidy
Jason Clouston
Martin Kiosew

22 out of 67 members were present and three dojos 75% of dojos were represented. The meeting was quarate.

Election of Chair

Aaron Kelly was elected chair for the meeting.

Annual report

President Jason Clouston gave a short summary of the activities of the federation this year.

He congratulated everyone on a good year, saying that it was a turning point for the federation, with members progressing in grades.

The March seminar was a big success and we now believe that the removal of the Goodwill taikai actually made the seminar better, allowing more teaching and getting more value from the sensei we invite.

The National team also did very well at the European Kendo Championships in Berlin.

Jason stressed that the clubs and members as a whole need to strive to increase the size of their own clubs, along side the work that the federation is doing. Overall we are down members this year, and while the federation can help, activities to attract members have to start from the clubs.

He also asked for all members to volunteer and support the federation in small ways by volunteering. This was echoed by the other board members, as well as several other attendees.

Treasurer's report

Martin presented the budget for the March seminar as example of how the federation is spending the membership fees and how we are budgeting for events and activities. The seminar was considered a financial risk ahead of time, but as shown in the budget it was a huge success with 60 participants and a small profit instead of the expected loss. The budget sheet also outlines the tasks and expense items that have to be considered for an event, and can be used by the clubs in planning their own event and by future federation boards.

Next the yearly budget was presented, and Martin stressed how the new fee system was the driving force that made this kind of financial planning possible.

Martin explained that he had hoped that we might reduce fees again this year, but with a drop in membership numbers this would be impossible at the moment.

He went on to emphasise the importance of the national squad and national squad training and encouraged everyone to attend squad training.

The contribution to the squad this year was quite high at 35% of the total budget, but it was explained that this was due to the very high cost of the trip this year. It was added that in previous years the squad has paid for everything themselves, and it is good progress to see that we can offer some financial support, even if it is still small in terms of what is spent by other federations.

The membership is expected to be 73 members this year (including 6 people who have not yet paid or sent forms, but are expected to do so). So current numbers are 67.

Martin also asked for all members to help with ideas for collecting money, getting sponsorship, fund-raising, etc.

The plan for this year was reviewed. We expect to make a moderate loss this year, but this may be mitigated by fund-raising and temporary memberships during the rest of the year.

In summary, the financial situation of the federation is now very strong, thanks to everyone cooperating on fees.

Election of board members

President: Jason Clouston

Nominated by Kathryn Cassidy and seconded by Lee Cahill.

Result: elected

Vice-president: Patrick McGuire

Nominated by Lee Cahill and seconded by Alan McNevin

Result: elected

Treasurer: Martin Kiosew

Nominated by Aaron Kelly and seconded by Gerard Keane

Result: elected

Secretary: Kathryn Cassidy

Nominated by Patrick McGuire and seconded by Lee Cahill

Result: elected

IMAC

Kathryn gave a short overview of the progress towards joining IMAC, including the benefits and responsibilities of IMAC membership, including training courses and certifications for instructors.

The dojos will be receiving information on these courses soon. Gerard suggested that we find out who in the clubs already has training in first aid, etc. and it was agreed that this would be done.

Benefits of IMAC were discussed including the ability to give a level of assurance to members and potential members that we are garda vetted and have child-protection courses and other requirements.

Pat stressed that this can be used in advertisements for the clubs, and Lee added that in the Gymnastics club in which he is involved they have been able to get many more junior members

specifically because of advertising their compliance with garda vetting and certification requirements.

Lee also asked whether the Garda-vetting would be an issue for foreign coaches coming to Ireland for seminars, or if we had a national coach from abroad. This is to be investigated.

Yudansha College

Pat asked whether we wanted to proceed with the idea of a Yudansha College, but it was agreed that there was no clear picture of what this would be or how it might work, and probably no need for it. As the community is small enough and we see each other often, it may not be required. For the time being, efforts will be made to ensure that there are clear communication channels instead of going forward with this.

Membership

Aaron asked why the membership numbers are down this year, is there a specific reason and is there something we can do to reverse the trend. In general it was felt that there was no one reason, and that we should be able to improve the situation with more advertising. Patrick described some of the advertising techniques used in Galway such as participation in the St. Patrick's day parade, posters in colleges, contact with local newspapers, etc.

It was suggested that each club get one or more volunteers to help out in this area.

Gerard volunteered to take photographs at the Nationals, and asked that someone write a short piece for Irish Fighter to accompany the photos.

Ways to retain beginners were also briefly discussed, but it was pointed out that statistically we will always lose beginners, the key may be to get more of them in the first place.

National Coach

As Vincent sadly resigned from the position of National Coach for next year, Lee asked if we had a plan for finding a new coach going forward. Some ideas were suggested, and Jason said that he would like to discuss it with present and past squad members and get an idea of people's opinions before going forward.

Website

Tomasz asked about the website and it was agreed that we would have to find a way to keep it more up-to-date and current, with social media being seen as a good way to bring some dynamic content to the site, as the current site is not easy to update for non-technical people.

Martin suggested that each club could encourage one or more members to also get involved in doing updates of the material on Facebook and also the website later if we can make it easier to do.

The following people volunteered to help:

- Tomasz Pawlak
- Macdara McGuire
- Marta Prieto
- Lee Cahill
- Gerard Keane

Goodwill

Lee asked if there was a plan to revive the Goodwill taikai, and the consensus was that this might be done but it would be a long term plan. For the time being we will run the seminar instead.

The topic of fundraising for the Goodwill was raised, and should be fed into general suggestions for fundraising.