

Held at the University of Birmingham

Apologies: - Adrian Lole RLSS National Development Officer, Abbie Hoyle, representatives from Bristol, Salford and Aberdeen Universities.

Present: - Representatives of Birmingham, Southampton, Loughborough, Oxford, London, Cambridge, Plymouth and Nottingham Universities.

Current Situation

As this is the first meeting of British Universities Lifesaving Clubs Association, hereafter BULSCA, the basic setup at the clubs present was discussed.

The size of clubs obviously varies greatly and it appears that smaller clubs tend to be self-funding while larger clubs tend to receive financial support from their Athletic Unions.

Several methods of funding were discussed including sponsorship and possible Lottery funding which was mentioned by Plymouth who had previously been offered £2500 but have lost this money due to the accounts system at their university. Would it be possible for BULSCA to apply for money like this and then share it out in some way?

It was agreed that a BULSCA website should be set up and an idea of the current status of all clubs with respect to finances, pool time etc. could then be posted on this. Oxford University's representative agreed to organise this. *Ed - you're reading this on the new website*

Joining BUSA

BULSCA need 25 established clubs and a recognised governing body (RLSS or SLSA) to join BUSA

Getting 25 clubs

BULSCA still needs more competing clubs to get to 25.

There are some existing clubs who do not compete however if these clubs compete BULSCA will still be short of the required 25. Therefore new clubs must be set up at other universities.

Several methods of establishing new clubs were discussed including:

- Contacting all athletic unions to see if they have clubs BULS don't know about and to let them know what we do. Nottingham's representative agreed to do this.
- All clubs should participate in Branch events and enter non-university competitions to try and raise the profile of university lifesaving amongst people about to start university.
- It was suggested that at certain competitions swimming clubs could be encouraged to enter. This would hopefully lead to some clubs starting lifesaving squads and eventually clubs.
- Whilst it is important to start new clubs it was acknowledged that smaller new clubs needed support in order to survive.
- A mentoring system was suggested in which older clubs could help small clubs with advice.

It was also noted that many clubs were in a catch 22 situation in which their funding was dependant on BUSA membership. Would it be possible to run as a trial club within BUSA so that smaller clubs could get some funding and status.

In the short term it was agreed that new clubs could compete for free when they attend a competition for the first time and clubs running for less than a year may be offered a discount.

Governing Body

The RLSS is the obvious choice for governing body and must be approached to petition BUSA on BULSCA's behalf

BULSCA must approach the RLSS. Several ways of doing this were discussed:

- Contact Adrian Lole to see if he would be interested in visiting some clubs, competitions etc. He could then represent BULSCA to the RLSS. Birmingham agreed to do this.
- It was also suggested that clubs could contact their Branches to represent them at higher levels.
- It was noted that if the RLSS is to represent BULSCA to BUSA then BULSCA members must participate in RLSS events at national (RLSS conference in May and National speeds) and branch level. Club members should also have membership of the RLSS. Captains agreed to encourage their members to do this.

Competitions

Establishing a recognised set of rules for common events was discussed.

It was acknowledged that clubs should have the right to organise their own events but a set of rules would be available for common events.

The RLSS national rules were agreed as a possible framework and Birmingham agreed to send copies to all clubs so that amendments could be made.

This information will be collated and a set of rules drawn up.

The possibility of having a speed competition with events similar to the National speeds was discussed.

Loughborough volunteered to host this event and it was decided that swimming clubs should be invited.

Each club also agreed to substitute the boat race at the end of each competition for one speed event that would not count in the points for that competition. This will give people a chance to try different events and may encourage more people to enter the National Speed competition.

A universities open water competition was discussed possibly at Swansea, as their competition is traditionally late in the year. However it was agreed that it might be better to build up interest in open water competitions by entering Bournemouth Regatta and then consider a BULSCA competition at a later date.

Any Other Business

It was agreed that this meeting should be held once a year during the Easter holidays. The venue and date will be decided at a later date but it was agreed that it should be held in the Midlands.