

PLOUGHING CHAMPIONSHIPS (SCOTLAND) LIMITED



Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Held on Sunday 3rd March 2024, at 1pm in the Bridge of Earn Institute, Bridge of Earn

	Harvey Sutherland Norna Sutherland	I Black R McKechnie	Ian Bain David Jack	Gordon Beattie Lorraine MacPhail	Ed Bennie Ron Phillips
	Andrew Mitchell (Snr)	Ian Small	Mark Skea	Neil MacPhail	D Kirkpatrick
Present:	Joyce Mitchell J Aitchison Bill Daniel W B Grieve G Black Gordon Mitchell	Frank Blyth Derek MacIver Rosie Sutherland Margo Crawford Colin Crawford Elaine MacRae	Raymond Middleton George Gilbert G Hepburn Snr G Hepburn Jim Harrow Iain Cruickshank	Gavin Robertson Iain Sinclair Hugh Currie Brian Baxter James Jack	Neil Keillor Jim Edgar D Stewart Angela Mitchell George McLachlan

In Attendance: Fiona MacKintosh

1 Welcome

Derek MacIver, the Chairperson, welcomed all to the meeting.

2 Apologies

Barry Falgate; Scott McIntosh; Willie McIntosh; Neil Ramsay; Ewan Crawford; Andrew Mitchell Jnr; James Tait; Ali Greenhill; Jill Grieve; Alex Harris; Willie Grieve Snr; Iain MacRae; Scott MacRae; Stuart Wilson; Alan Ramsay; Andy Greenhill; Alex Keith

3 Minutes of the previous AGM held 5th March 2023

The minutes were agreed to be a true record of the meeting, proposed by Willie Grieve and seconded by Gavin Robertson.

4 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5 Chairperson's Report

What a year it has been!!

It has definitely not been easy trying to get things to come together, but with a great team of helpers who have definitely gone above and beyond all our goals and more have been achieved. March saw Keith Marshall and Gordon Beattie competing in the Five Nations in Shropshire.

Beginning of May found several of us pay a visit to Ayr County Show where we had a stand to promote our up-and-coming match in October. The stand saw lots of activity all day with the girls selling merchandise whilst also entertaining the children with puzzles and competitions. We also meet up with protentional sponsors which all in all made it a worthwhile exercise.

September was when Colin Crawford, Gordon Hepburn, George Black and Dougie Stewart heading away to Holland to the European Classic and Vintage Competition where conditions were dry and hot.

October was a busy month with Brian Baxter and Andy Greenhill heading to Denmark to the European Reversible Championships. Robert McKechnie, Dave Veitch, George Melville, and Alistair Davidson headed to Wales to the 6 nations.

Also, in October James Tait, Willie Grieve, Andrew Mitchell and me along with Christine & Rosie travelled to Latvia to the World Ploughing Championships. Not knowing what lay in store I was very grateful for the most helpful advice given to me by Joyce & Andrew Mitchel in advance of travelling.

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From the time we arrived we were made most welcome by the organisers, other world board members & competitors the only drawback was the weather. The Competitors spent the first two days practicing on grass and the next two days practicing on stubble with conditions on all days far from ideal.

On Thursday Willie and James were interviewed by Grampian TV helping to lift the Scottish profile. Friday the competition began with all competitors being paraded out to the field. This was the best day of the week with the sun shining all day. The field was unfortunately uneven and hard due to the min till making conditions far from ideal.

Saturday saw heavy rain return with several of the competitors struggling to plough through lochs of water some experiencing water levels reaching halfway up their front wheels. Despite this the British Ambassador still wanted to pay us a visit. I introduced him to the Scottish Team at which point he spent some time chatting to each person individually wishing them all the best in the competition.

Because of the difficult conditions the competitors were experiencing the WPO thought it best to discuss whether the competition should continue but it was decided that the competition should carry on.

Despite a week of awful weather (apart from one day) there remained a strong sense of camaraderie amongst everyone. The competition finished with the presentation of trophies with everyone in a convoy of buses travelling to a venue more than 90 minutes' drive away. However, if the bus drivers had not got lost 3 times on the journey, I know we would have arrived a lot sooner.

We then come to the main event of the year.

When I arrived on the Saturday prior to the match, I could hardly believe the blue skies and how dry it was, compared to the rest of the country, which over the last few weeks had been drenched and was continuing to be soaked almost around the clock daily. Luckily for us the dry spell lasted the full week.

The Team set to work and by the Thursday night preparation was complete for the two-day event ahead. Thursday evening concluded with an excellent church service for the blessing of the plough which was conducted by the Reverend Andrew McGurk who entertained us all with his stories and sermon.

Friday day1 - Competitors, Judges, Stewards, Officials, helpers, and Committee members arrived promptly with quite a bustle of excitement and some trepidation for the day ahead. Almost all the 98 entrants attended. There was a good footfall throughout the day, with lots of positive feedback coming from all areas.

RHET had arranged for local school children to attend the match, which in turn enabled them to expand their existing knowledge about farming. This was very well accepted by the children particularly their trip around the plough fields in the trailers.

Due to size of the site the people carriers were indeed a very welcome addition. We must thank John McNae for supplying the tractors and drivers for the towing of three people carriers. It was a service which was very busy and appreciated by all on both days.

We must also thank the many Trade stands and Craft stalls, who took time out of their usual busy days, to support our two-day event. All of those afore mentioned exhibitors/sellers, reported very positive feedback, and thanked us for their invite to the Championships.

Saturday day 2 - The day began with a parade, which was led by a tractor painted in Doddie Weir's legendary tartan colours. We must thank Robert McKechnie for streaming the parade live on Facebook. Once again, we had good dry conditions, which led to a record attendance from the public. Judging was completed in good time, which enabled the results to be tallied up without delay.

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The many winners of the various classes were presented with their trophies, rosettes, and prizes by Andrew and Lizanne Cuthbertson. Congratulations to the Scottish Conventional Champion Andrew Mitchel snr and Scottish Reversible Champion Brian Baxter. The day ended with an excellent meal at the Piersland House Hotel

Sunday - It was extremely heartening to see so many people come to Monktonhill to help tidy up and pack everything away before we all departed to return home. Because so many hands were willing to help, the tidying was done in record time.

I also wish to thank everyone who has helped, which in turn made this year's match the huge success it turned out to be. It's all down to Teamwork.

Finally, we move on to last weekend where we had an excellent turn out for our Training Day at Newmore with people coming from far and wide. From Orkney in the north to Fife in the south. It was great to see eight tractors and ploughs turn up. Andrew Mitchell, Willie Grieve, Colin Crawford, Gordon Hepburn junior and Gordon Hepburn Senior attended as our gurus and did a great job. They talked everybody through the different aspects, had a couple of walk rounds covering every plot whilst discussing the positives & negatives. Everyone there thanked them for their input. A lot was learned with some taking written notes on the pointers.

We must also thank Elaine and her team for organising and dishing up the food and selling and drawing the raffle. Also, thanks to Jimmy and David Jack for letting us use their land and facilities. Again, we must thank everyone involved in organising another great day.

And finally, I must thank every single person for their extreme hard work in making this year the great success it has turned out to be. However, I'm not finished there.

There is someone who deserves a special mention because of ALL the work she puts in. Not only on the day of an event but everything she does behind the scenes. She works tirelessly to ensure that everything runs smoothly and if there are any hitches, she always manages to get them sorted. Please show your appreciation of this very special lady, Elaine Macrae.

Gordon Beattie gave an insight on the 5 Nations Championship which he attended with Keith Marshall. Brian Baxter was the coach and judge. Day one ploughing was done on stubble 2ft tall. The next day all got on fine. The second day saw different conditions. Meeting with others was a highlight and good to speak with different people and having problems is a common thread. Gordon would recommend to anyone who gets the chance to do take part in one of these competitions to do it.

Gordon Hepburn said that the group set sail for European Vintage and Reversible Championship in Holland on 3rd September. The group had all taken oil skins etc and had to go shopping for shorts due to the heat. They set sail from Hull. George, Colin, Davie, and Gordon experienced really high temperatures rising to nearly 60°. They were treated well, and on the practice day the temperature rose to 38°. They were ploughing fields of dust. The heat in the middle of the day was stifling. All participants ended up with 4th place. The second day the ploughing was on black ground, no stubble, and it looked flat, but was bumpy. Thanks to Raymond Middleton for attending as Judge, and to Andrew Mitchell, Snr. Gordon would also encourage anyone who gets this opportunity to take it up.

Willie Grieve gave a report on the World championship, he said there had been a great team spirit in the team from Scotland, and he enjoyed the trip. The tractors went 5 days ahead of them and the group flew from Newcastle to Latvia. The tourist board organised the hotel etc. There had been a trip on the Sunday, and they saw lots of the countryside, however, the temperature dropped to -2°, and there was sleet. The practice sessions were held on grassland, the ground was heavy, and this turned out to be the best ground for the week. They carried out adjustments and coped, there were two practice days. The weather was not good and it rained every day. Friday saw them ploughing on stubble plots and it was hard. On Saturday 40mm of rain fell, and this was in the first two hours, it was really a complete wash out. The ground was unlevel and hard. There was a ceremony on Saturday and then the group returned home on Sunday. Willie said that the World Ploughing Organisation is leaving too much to the host countries, and Latvia was not as experienced as others,

and that they should be more involved in the run up to the match. James and Willie were pleased to represent Scotland at world level.

Brian gave a resume of the European Reversible championship in Denmark. This was his first trip to a reversible competition to Europe, he added that Andy had experienced this before and could help with the admin. On the 18th of October the truck was organised for the Monday, and Brian drove the truck out. Gordon Beattie went along as wing man and to help navigate. The freight ferry was basic, and they arrived at night, and were unable to get off the ferry. When they finally arrived on site it was very late. Accommodation had been arranged in a boarding school. Day one saw the ploughing being done on stubble, and this was a learning curve, but the day was good. Day 2 was on grass, and it started to rain. Brian was happy with the results and happy that he had gone to do it. The Danish were good hosts and he drove home by himself. He gave thanks to the sponsors and recommended to anyone who gets the chance to take part in one of these competitions to do it.

Robert McKechnie attended the 6 Nations on 9th September in Wales. Dave Veitch, George Melville and Alistair Davidson attended with Robert. Friday saw a church service followed by a meal. The temperature was 20° and not as high as Holland. The ground was hard, level and flat. Robert said that he made new connections at the match. Alastair was 3rd. Robert notices that Scotland was the only country to provide a judge and steward. There were practice plots available. It was a beautiful site, and a great experience representing the country.

6 Annual Accounts and Appointment of Accountants

Elaine MacRae advised that the accounts have not been finalised by the accountants, however, she had a breakdown of the figures. The figures show a lower profit than previously, she added a new system is being used for the accounts and this gives things in more detail. The Social evening shows an expenditure but no income. There were various things done, which as a charity are not acceptable and could render the insurance invalid. Security must be in place, and an Event Management Plan must be in place. Elaine was grateful to Hugh and his team, who managed to get £20k in sponsorship, and £3k for advertisements. There were a lot more donations and gifts, but it was not possible to list them all. There were a few unexpected items at Monktonhill, which impacted on costs.

Currently we are actively trying to find a sponsor for the hospitality for 2024. Elaine mentioned there is possibly £6k which could be saved this year. Newmore has lots of sheds, so this will save on the marquee hire etc. There are also payments which had rolled over from 2022, and it is unclear if these payments had been included in 2022 accounts or not. Elaine concluded by saying that if anyone had any questions to email her or Fiona.

The balances in the accounts at present are £34,714 and £35,703, and this includes the George Mutch money.

We are now looking onwards and upwards and looking at possible discounts for things such as zoom licences etc. There had been good feedback that the match was improved, and was more friendly etc. Thanks to Margot for organising the merchandising, and Elaine added there is quite a bit of merchandising in stock.

Willie Grieve said that Derek had thanked Elaine, and added that the membership should also thank her, and this was done. It was added that this all started with a negative and it was great to see such a good result, and good report.

7 Constitution and Articles of Association

Gordon Hepburn said that there was a length of term for the top table. This should read 2 years for the top table and five for the management team. This was discussed and it was suggested that the 5-year terms should be lifted from the management team. Dave Carnegie said that there did need to be a change, but this should not be hard. It was agreed that there be no restriction on the term for management.

To clarify – the Vice Chair will do 4 years in total, two as vice and two as chair. Dave suggested changing this to 3 years and 3 years, however this was not approved.



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8 Appointment of Office Bearers, Directors and Trustees

Proposed	Proposer	Seconder	Elected/Votes
Chairperson Derek Maclver	Ian Kilpatrick	Hugh Currie	Elected
Vice Chair Gordon Beattie	Gavin Robertson	Dave Carnegie	Elected
Management Committee – 3 from each area			
North			
Iain MacRae	Willie Grieve	Hugh Currie	25 - elected
Gavin Robertson	Dave Carnegie	Mark Skea	19 - elected
David Jack	Willie Grieve	Colin Crawford	21 - elected
Ian Sinclair	Gavin Robertson	Brian Baxter	6
Alan MacKay	Rosie Sutherland	Elaine MacRae	15
Northeast			
Gordon Hepburn Jnr	Gavin Robertson	Mark Skea	32 - elected
Mark Skea	Gordon Hepburn Snr	Gordon Hepburn Jnr	28 - elected
Iain Cruickshank	Mark Skea	Dave Carnegie	24 - elected
Raymond Middleton	Gavin Robertson	Ian Sinclair	10
Angus			
Brian Baxter	Willie Grieve	Gavin Robertson	34 - elected
Willie Grieve	Brian Baxter	Mark Skea	32 - elected
Neil Keillor	Brian Baxter	Willie Grieve	17 - elected
Alastair Greenhill	Dave Carnegie	Gordon Hepburn Snr	Advised did not want to stand
Ron Philips	Gordon Hepburn Jnr	Mark Skea	11
Lothians			
Colin Crawford	Dave Carnegie	Willie Grieve	elected
Frank Blyth	Gordon Hepburn Jnr	Brian Baxter	elected
Margo Crawford	Elaine MacRae	Willie Grieve	elected
Glasgow			
Robert McKechnie	Willie Grieve	Ian Kirkpatrick	elected
Alan Ramsay	Ian Kirkpatrick	Hugh Currie	elected
Hugh Currie	Dave Carnegie	Gordon Hepburn Snr	elected
DIRECTORS			
North			
Iain MacRae	Willie Grieve	Alan MacKay	20 - elected
Gavin Robertson	Dave Carnegie	Mark Skea	15
Northeast			
Gordon Hepburn Jnr	Mark Skea	Willie Grieve	elected
Angus			
Brian Baxter	Dave Carnegie	Willie Grieve	elected
Lothians			
Colin Crawford	Hugh Currie	Mark Skea	elected
Margo Crawford	Gavin Robertson	Rosie Sutherland	Declined to stand
Glasgow			
Hugh Currie	Ian Kirkpatrick	Mark Skea	elected
<p>Gordon Hepburn mentioned that a round of applause should go to Robert McKechnie for all his work on social media.</p>			

9 **Appointment of World Board Member**

Derek was proposed to be the appointed world board member proposed by Gordon Beattie and seconded by Willie Grieve. A suggestion was made that the person who is nominated to this should do so for several years. Andrew Mitchell Snr proposed that this be 5 years, and this was seconded by Hugh Currie.

10 **Any other competent business**

- **Judging world class** – Brian proposed that the world style classes have two judges at each end, and the reason for this is that there is a lot of ploughing to consider. Mark Skea seconded this. It was suggested that judges from out with Scotland are also used, and this be purely for the world style classes. All other plots 3 judges be used. Willie added to make sure that 2 judges are judging of the end and judging half the plot not just the end. Ian Kirkpatrick agreed that the whole plot needs to be looked at. Bill Daniels said if they were doing anything other than what Ian had said then they are not doing their job, they need to look at it all and not just what they see from the ends. If you look at one end, then go to the other you can change your mind. This is for world style classes only. Various thoughts were expressed on this, and it was felt that judges need to be briefed to this effect.
- **Picking Judges** – Gordon Hepburn Jnr asked how did we propose to pick judges out with Scotland? Should it be two and two? If it was decided to have three judges would the split be North, South, and middle, or should this be scrapped? Robert said that North/Central/South had been agreed at a meeting last year. Perhaps outside judges could be incorporated. Andrew Mitchell Snr said Ireland, N Ireland, Wales, and England and have two alternately. Gordon Hepburn Jnr proposed two international and two Scotland. One judge from Scotland and one international at each end. This was seconded by Ian Kirkpatrick.
- **Classic Reversible** – Raymond Middleton mentioned that the singles openings were poor last year. Accuracy was not good and not ploughed through. Three inches from the feering not finished and proposed that we go back to the double opening. This was seconded by George Melville. Colin suggested we keep what we have at present, and learn how it works, he added that this is the way Europe does it. This was seconded by Hugh Currie and Andrew Mitchell. Gordon Beattie asked if classic reversible or multi-furrow were included in this. Gordon Hepburn Jnr said just reversible. The rules would also have to be implemented for local matches. Andrew Mitchell Snr said that a five-furrow plough was easy to do a double split but this was more difficult with a four furrow. A vote was taken for double opening classic – three votes single opening 12 votes. It was decided to leave as is.
- **Second Day Ploughing** – Brian Baxter suggested to leave multi-furrow for classic reversible. It was agreed to keep all the same.

11 **Date of Next AGM**

The next AGM will be 2nd March 2025 venue to be confirmed.

The AGM closed at 14:30