

**DRAFT**

**THE BRITISH JUDO ASSOCIATION ('BJA') ('ASSOCIATION')**  
**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**HELD ON SATURDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2023 AT 13:00**  
**SYCAMORE ROOM, HOLIDAY INN M6 J7, CHAPEL LANE, GREAT BARR, B43 7BG**

**Council Members:**

|  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| Rowena Birch, President                        | Brian Davies, Vice President |
| Richard Barraclough, Vice President            | Tony Sweeney, Vice President |
| Robin Newett, Northern Ireland Judo Federation | Colin McIver, JudoScotland   |
| David Rance, Northern Home Counties Area       | John Gibson, Northern Area   |
| Matthew Clempner, North West Area & Police UK  | Raymond Taylor, Eastern Area |
| Sarah Newbury, Midland Area                    | Peter Blewett, London Area   |
| Dr George Kerr CBE, President Emeritus         |                              |

**Board:**

|                    |                                  |                  |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Ronnie Saez, Chair | Gerry Gualtieri, Chair Designate | Alex Slade       |
| Neil Fletcher      | Lee Shinkin                      | Rebecca McCreath |
| Delia Wright       | Ben Quilter                      | Paul Ajala       |
| Garth Illingworth  |                                  |                  |

**In Attendance**

Andrew Scoular, Chief Executive  
Sajid Hussain, Finance & Operations Director  
Karen Roberts, Development Director  
Nigel Donohue, Performance Director  
Lynn Madeley, Marketing & Communications Director  
Joyce Heron, Head of Technical & Education  
Justine Lynch, Executive Officer

**Other Attendees:**

|                  |               |             |
|------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Dave Duffy       | Marc Preston  | Sean Power  |
| Ben George       | Dave Dunsford | Mike Draper |
| Lewis Hannington | Dave Clark    |             |

**Clubs Represented:**

|                     |                            |                         |
|---------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Rochdale Judo Club  | Pro Judo Club              | Middlesbrough Judo Club |
| Pinewood Judo Club  | Samurai Judo Club          | Pudsey Judo Club        |
| Budokwai Judo Club  | Solihull Judo Academy      | Ely Judo Club           |
| Cheadle Judo Club   | Sheffield University       | Knaresborough Judo Club |
| Carnegie Judo Club  | Portland Judo Club         | Army Judo               |
| Elite Judo Club     | Bellahouston Judo Club     | Clyde Judo Club         |
| Edinburgh Judo Club | Destination Judo Blackhall | Limavady Judo Club      |
| Windsor Judo Club   |                            |                         |

**Apologies Received:**

|                |                |                  |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Colin Draycott | Dave Martin    | Rick Kenney      |
| Jim MacKenzie  | Chris Milward  | Warren Schofield |
| Dave Allen     | John Malkinson |                  |

**1. Welcome**

Rowena Birch (RBi) welcomed everyone to the 2023 British Judo AGM and thanked them for taking the time to attend, with a special thank you to Dr George Kerr CBE 10<sup>th</sup> Dan whom it was an honour to have him present.

## 2. Apologies

RBi also advised of the apologies received as noted above.

## 3. Respects for friends and colleagues who have passed away

|                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Derek Webster   | Roy Francis      |
| Brazil Walsh    | Dave Lovelace    |
| Ruth White      | Alex Battanviero |
| Joe Doherty     | Eddie Ainsworth  |
| David McSimming | John Young       |
| Donald Hughes   | Jimmy McQuade    |

## 4. President's Address

RBi opened by commenting that judo is the common thread that holds us all together and has been an incredible support to her personally recently during a difficult period, with her friends within the judo community reaching out and making a big difference and embracing the values of judo and of it being more than just a sport.

RBi advised that CMCl, who has served British Judo in a variety of roles since 2017, had today been appointed as a Vice President and a member of the Council at the meeting held earlier the same day. RBi passed on congratulations and thanks to CMCl for accepting this role.

RBi continued that this AGM also sees a changeover in the role of Chair of the British Judo Association, noting enormous gratitude to Mr RS who showed immense courage when taking on the role when the Association was going through a difficult time after losing the European Championships in 2018. RS worked tirelessly to rebuild the reputation of the Association and has always underpinned this with a true passion for judo.

## 5. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 12 November 2022

It was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** that the Minutes were an accurate record of the 2022 AGM held on 12 November 2022.

**PROPOSER:** Dave Clark, Windsor Judo Club  
**SECONDER:** Brian Davies, Vice President

## 6. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 12 November 2022

No matters arising.

## 7. Reports

### 7.1 Chairman's Report

RS thanked RBi for her kind words which were very much appreciated.

RS then reflected on the year 2022 to 2023 which he regarded as a year of recovery from Covid and a return to stability with membership returning to pre-Covid years and increasing. This growth had been underpinned by the Association being able to support our clubs with the Sport England Tackling Inequalities Fund and Together Fund.

Also, during this period, work had commenced on implementing the new strategy and delivering the various projects to align to this strategy. With the correct workforce now in place, the support and offering to clubs and our members has been broadened including more direct engagement, and the dividends of this are beginning to be realised.

Work has also been progressing on an 'All Judo' initiative which is looking at bringing together all the judo bodies to adopt common safeguarding and education standards which in turn will also maintain the reputation of British Judo. RS passed on his thanks to AS and KR for the excellent work they had carried out on this so far.

Moving on to Performance, there had been medals in the 2022 from Chelsie Giles (CG) and Gemma Howell, both European champions, which was an excellent result, kudos to be given to both the fighters and the coaches. Following that CG was defeated at the World Championships, however this was by the best -52kg player of the current generation. Olympic qualification continues and currently we have to players, CG and Lucy Renshall, ranked No.1 in the world. It is hoped that we will qualify 7 to 9 players for the Olympics and 4 for the Paralympics.

RS added that for him success in the Chair role is measured by leaving with the thought that he was leaving the Association in a better way than when he took on the role as Chair and that was all one could wish for.

RS then reflected on how his appointment to the Chair role had not followed a conventional path, having first been appointed as Vice Chair and then interim Chair when the incumbent Chair stepped down in 2015, taking up the role officially in 2017.

RS passed on this thanks to Dr George Kerr CBE for his fantastic mentoring and the introductions he was able to facilitate to assist RS in the Chair role; also to CMcl and JH for the excellent work they have done on behalf of the Association; and to AS, commenting that a Chair is only as good as the Chief Executive supporting them. RS also wished to thank and applaud the Directors who support AS. In regard to ND and the Performance Team, RS applauded their effort and dedication and the respect he has for the herculean task they have in creating so many excellent players from a small talent pool; KR who was appointed to the new role of Development Director and has already proved her competency and drive for this role; also SH who has transformed and streamlined our finance and operations systems and is held up as an exemplar by UK Sport and other sports; and finally thanks to JL for the administrative support.

A special thanks from RS was expressed for our volunteer network, without whom British Judo would not be able to function, RBi who has proved an excellent President and great support and of course to his family without whom he would not have been able to dedicate so much to judo.

RS concluded that the role of Chair had been an honour and a pleasure and he wished GG every success as he takes over this role.

RBi thanked RS and confirmed there were no questions for RS before moving on to the next agenda item.

## **7.2 Chief Executive's Report**

AS shared a presentation and highlighted the following key points:

- New Chair and two new Independent Non Executive Directors;
- UK Sport Code Compliance work is continuing, next deadline is December;
- UK Sport System Master Planning is being looked into whereby they are encouraging NGBs to collaborate;
- The Whyte Report on Gymnastics has an impact on all sports and our new Head of Inclusion, Safeguarding & Wellbeing will be ensuring we adopt the learnings from this report. Also looking to simplify our SafeLandings policy;
- Looking to produce our own coaching register by the end of this financial year;
- Ongoing campaign for all clubs to have their own Club Welfare Officer, which ties in with our work with other organisations which sets out the minimum standards judo clubs have to adhere to;
- There have been 6 Board meetings through the year, mainly face to face but some hybrid
- Good progress on our International Relations: Lisa Allan elected to General Secretary of the IJF; RS is on the EJU Executive Committee and IJF Masters Commission; Jamie Johnson is on the European Coaching Commission; Matt Divall is on the EJU Sports Commissioner Group; and Ian Johns is on the IBSA Executive Committee. Also looking to get Jo Banks on to the IJF or EJU Medical Commission;
- Membership income is slightly down on what we were expecting, mainly due to the switchover in CRM provider;
- Positively, we have been able to provide £485k of Sport England funding directly to our clubs, 43% of which were in the most deprived areas, which has had a significant impact. There is potentially another fund being launched by Sport England in February 2024;
- On finance, generally we are in a healthy position with rebates paid to the Areas and the British Judo Trust, deferred income expected to be at £310/£320k and looking to finish the year with £39k surplus pushing our reserves up to £460k;
- In Performance there have been some positive results with a highlight being have two female athletes ranked No.1 in the world. Also, positive to have Nekoda Davis-Smythe back on the team. The VI athletes are also performing well. Credit to go to the coaches and Performance staff;
- Good number of coaches progressing through the system as well as positive development of our technical offices with six referees now at international level;
- Adaptive Judo is developing well and the British Judo Trust assisted financially in getting a team to the Virtus Games;
- Kata has experienced exceptional growth with Llyr Jones pushing this forward;
- Continued to host successful events including our first EJU European Junior Cup in June in Walsall and we will be hosting this again in 2024. Also, in discussion with the EJU in regard to hosting a Masters competition;
- Work is continuing on our marketing and communications strategy as well as some videos that will be used for our attraction and retention campaigns (videos shared at the meeting)

RBi thanked AS for his presentation and commented that the videos were excellent, showcasing what we do and saying it better than it had been said before. RBi then opened the meeting up for questions.

Mike Draper, Portland Judo, asked if the coaches register would be held centrally at British Judo or available on the website. AS responded that this will be openly available with the permission of the coaches who would have to be current and qualified. AS added that this is going to be a requirement for all sports in two years' time so commencing now to be ahead of the curve.

Lewis Hannington, Army Judo, commented that the statistics for social media did not include British Judo on Instagram. This was noted and to be included in future social media statistics reported.

## 8. Approvals

NF as Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee advised that the Committee was a mix of independent and elected Board members who review the financials and risks prior to Board Meetings. NF added that the auditors have given us a clean bill of health with no material discrepancies and signed off our accounts for the year 2022 to 2023. NF also passed on his thanks to Sajid Hussain and his team for the excellent work and maintaining a strong professional relationship with the auditors.

- **BJA Annual Report & Accounts included in the Annual Report**

**Proposer:** Neil Fletcher, Pudsey Judo Club

**Seconded:** Peter Blewett, Budokwai Judo Club

No votes against or abstentions

- **Appointment of Auditors**

**Proposer:** Dave Duffy, Rochdale Judo Club

**Seconded:** Tony Sweeney, Vice President

No votes against or abstentions

## 9. Notification of new appointments

RS firstly introduced the two new Board members, Rebecca McCreath and Delia Wright, welcoming them to British Judo and wishing them well in their role.

RS then officially handed over the role of the Chair to GG who presented RS with his retirement gift.

RBi welcomed GG who commented that since he had been appointed he had been extremely humbled seeing for himself everything that has been achieved adding that he was looking forward to getting fully involved in the role and adding value to the Association in a role that was a fitting end to his judo career.

## 10. Any Other Business

Dr George Kerr CBE raised that he had been advised that Yamashita has fallen and broken his neck. He is in a stable condition but GK asked for our thoughts to be with him for a speedy recovery.

With their being no other business, RBi thanked everyone for attending and looked forward to seeing everyone later at the Awards Dinner.

14:30 meeting closed.