

## **SOUTH OF THE THAMES CROSS COUNTRY ASSOCIATION REPORT FOR 2020/21**

1. **AGM:** Not held

2. **Elections / Re-elections:**

President: Ken Pike (Kent AC)

Hon. Gen. Sec: Geoff Newton (Tadworth AC)

Hon Treasurer: Don Turner (Epsom & Ewell H)

Hon. Race Sec.: Don Turner

Hon. Asst. Sec. Archives & History: Brian Boulton (Cambridge Harriers)

Hon. Asst. Sec. Trophies: Brian Boulton

Hon. Auditor: To be arranged

3. Races not held due to covid-19.

It was planned to hold the 5 Miles Team Race at Morden Park, organised by Dennis Williams and the 7.5 miles Championship at Beckenham Place Park, hosted by Kent AC. However, the local authorities responsible for the parks in question refused to even discuss agreeing provisional permissions to hold the races in Morden Park and in Beckenham Place Park due to covid-19. Kent AC and Dennis Williams eventually gave up the struggle towards the end of September.

UKA / EA did start issuing cross country permits at the beginning of October subject to a number of restrictions to maintain social distancing. These included a cap on numbers and either starting in "Waves" or at intervals as in a time trial. Whilst this is better than nothing, we feel that it would devalue the team aspect and championship aspect of our races. It would also mean using chip technology which would massively increase the costs of holding the races.

Towards the end of September, the country entered a second wave of covid-19 infections and it became obvious that the above difficulties were not going to go away in the near future. Its difficult enough to persuade clubs to host races at the best of times. I did not think it was fair to ask other clubs to take over from Kent AC and Dennis in the circumstances, bearing in mind Dennis only took the job on because nobody else came forward. So, it was decided to cancel the races for the 2020/21 season. Where clubs had paid their affiliation fees for the current season, these would be carried over to next season.

In my opinion the country is effectively on a war footing against covid-19. Our races were cancelled during the last two world wars, so there is precedent. Hopefully, there will not be a gap of 4-5 years in this instance.

About the only good thing to come out of the covid-19 pandemic has been the new South of the Thames CCA website. Big thanks are due to our webmaster, Alan Mead, who has used the time created by lockdown to sort out a more secure, more stylish and more informative website that we can be proud of. Thanks again Alan!

The 2020 AGM was initially arranged for 24 April by which time the country was in lockdown. It was provisionally postponed to an unspecified date in September, but it became obvious long before

September that holding a meeting indoors between a group of mostly elderly men was not a good idea. Indeed, by September, the rule of 6 was in force.

As there were no proposals for rule changes and no volunteers to take over from myself or Don Turner it was decided to do without a 2020 AGM and Don and myself would carry on doing such things as needed to be done until the next AGM in 2021.

Last year I said "I am becoming concerned about the fact that the running of the Association is mostly in the hands of a very small number of rather elderly persons and that these people cannot go on forever. Hopefully, younger people will step up to fill the breach when this becomes necessary, otherwise 130 plus years of history will go down the drain. With each year that passes, this comment becomes more to the point, even without Covid-19."

Geoff Newton

Hon Gen Sec