

Newsletter No 5

Dear Member

Apologies first of all for not reporting back sooner on the meeting Mick Billman and I had with the Sport and Recreation Alliance (SRA) over the formation of a new Governing Body, that I referred to in an earlier Newsletter.

One reason for the delay is the ongoing disciplinary issue which only serves to make trying to do good things for the EKF more and more difficult.

You may have seen a recent Facebook post that is now attacking individuals personally and which has crossed a line that is unacceptable. The incident that started all this, in the Board's opinion, was nothing more than a personal vendetta and carried out in such a way as to cause public humiliation for an individual. The consequence of this is that the EKF has now received formal notification of a legal action for financial damages, allegedly caused by their unlawful actions. That's as much, at this time, that I can or want to say over this as the matter is now in the hands of the EKF's lawyers.

SRA Meeting

The meeting was last Friday at the SRA offices in London and in attendance was Emma Boggis, SRA CEO and Rob Tate, Governance Officer. The reason for the meeting was, essentially, for the EKF to be brought up to date with the discussions that took place in a previous meeting that no one from our side was able to attend. To give this process its correct title it is; "Karate Governance Structure Proposal."

However, from the start we had to make our position clear that it was unacceptable that having entered into this process as the EKC, this had now been disbanded and was represented by four Karate Associations (in simple terms 4 votes now not 1). The comment was made to us that if we felt this wasn't right it may be that the process would proceed without the EKF, to which we said that if that was the case then so be it as we would not sit at the table now with only one vote against four and that with everything we had going for the EKF we were happy to go our own way.

We also made the point that one of the four associations had fewer members than some of our EKF associations and on that basis what was to stop any small association demanding a seat at the table, to which there was no real answer, although in the proposal there is provision for other associations applying for membership and I touch on this later.

This set the tone for how the meeting then progressed, which was to find some way of moving forward. One of bones of contention was that the auditing of the other association's membership figures was imperfect with one of them being unable to verify more than 66% of their supposed numbers. As I've mentioned previously the auditors commended the EKF on the accuracy of its returns - all credit to Mike O'Brien who handles our registrations.

On that point, we know from experience that some of the figures given by the other side are likely inaccurate and need further verification, but eventually the discussion turned to the merits of proportional representation something, in fact, the RSA had been considering but not mentioned up to that point and they had prepared a short discussion document on that subject.

In principle, we have no issue with proportional representation as our growth profile (we are now up to 29,000 members) would mean we would be fairly represented. However, the SRA proposal set 5,000 members as the starting point to have both a seat at the table of the new governing body and one vote, to which we said the starting point has to be a minimum, properly audited, 10,000 members to ensure we had associations who represented a good number of students. On that basis, we would have three votes by the time the body, if ever, was established. Any less than 10,000 members would likely mean that eventually there would be far too many groups, and if I remember the old BKCC days this simply meant that nothing ever got done

Other issues that were discussed were the lack of checks and balances Sport England displayed during the financial debacle of the last governing body where tens of thousands of pounds still remain unaccounted for and we expressed our concern that if the new body did come to pass that this couldn't happen again as it would bring the whole Karate arena into disrepute.

What we did learn is that there is a new UK Sports Governance Code about to be published and in this will be the definition of an 'independent director' which, as

described in the meeting we would be happy with. If you remember, on the new body there would be the Karate groups, an independent Chairman and 5 independent Directors.

So that's where things stand at the moment and it was left that the SRA were going to go back to the other groups to seek their thoughts.

We'll keep you up to date with any developments.

Regards

Peter Consterdine

VP