



## **RULES of Derwentside Amateur Swimming Club as at 12<sup>th</sup> June 2017**

### **1. Name**

- 1.1. The name of the Club shall be Derwentside Amateur Swimming Club, hereinafter called the Club.

### **2. Objects**

- 2.1. The objects of the Club shall be the teaching, development and practice of swimming and open water, the promotion of competitions and championships for its members and shall where appropriate be to compete at Local, County, Region, National and International level. In the furtherance of these objects:
  - 2.1.1. The Club is committed to treat everyone equally within the context of its activity and with due respect to the differences of individuals. It shall not apply or endorse unlawful or unjustified discrimination, and shall act in compliance with the protections afforded by the Equality Act 2010.
  - 2.1.2. The Club shall implement the ASA Equality policy (as may be amended from time to time).
- 2.2. The Club shall be affiliated to ASA North East Region and the Northumberland and Durham Swimming Association and shall adopt and conform to the rules of those Associations, and to such other bodies as the Club may determine from time to time.
- 2.3. The business and affairs of the Club shall at all times be conducted in accordance with the Laws, Regulations and Technical Rules of the ASA and in particular:
  - 2.3.1. all competition entrants from the Club shall be members of the Club and all competing members shall be eligible competitors as defined in ASA Laws and Regulations
  - 2.3.2. The Club shall in accordance with ASA Laws and Regulations adopt the ASA Child Safeguarding Policy, Regulations and Procedures; and shall recognise that the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and that all children and young people have a right to have fun, be safe and be protected from harm.
  - 2.3.3. Members of the Club shall in accordance with ASA Laws and Regulations comply with the ASA Child Safeguarding Policy, Regulations and Procedures.
- 2.4. By virtue of the affiliation of the Club to ASA North East Region, the Club and all members of the Club acknowledge that they are subject to the laws, rules and constitutions of:
  - 2.4.1. the Northumberland and Durham Swimming Association and
  - 2.4.2. ASA North East Region and
  - 2.4.3. the ASA (to include the ASA/IOS Code of Ethics) and

- 2.4.4. British Swimming (in particular its Doping Control Rules and Protocols and Judicial Code) and
  - 2.4.5. FINA, the world governing body for the sport of swimming in all its disciplines (together “the Governing Body Rules”).
- 2.5. In the event that there shall be any conflict between any rule or by-law of the Club and any of the Governing Body Rules then the relevant Governing Body Rule shall prevail.

### **3. Membership**

- 3.1. The total membership of the Club shall not normally be limited. If however the Committee considers that there is a good reason to impose any limit from time to time then the Committee shall put forward appropriate proposals for consideration at a General Meeting of the Club. The members shall have the right to impose and remove from time to time any limits on total membership or any category of membership of the Club.
- 3.2. All persons who assist in any way with the Club’s activities shall become members of the Club and hence of the ASA and the relevant ASA membership fee shall be paid. Assisting with the Club’s activities shall include, but not be restricted to, administrators, associate members, voluntary instructors, teachers and coaches, Committee members, helpers, Honorary members, life members, officers, patrons, Presidents, technical and non-technical officials, temporary members, Vice Presidents and verifiers or tutors of the ASA educational certificates.
- 3.3. Paid instructors, teachers and coaches who are not members of the Club must be members of a body which accepts that its members are bound by the ASA Code of Ethics, the Laws and Regulations relating to Child Safeguarding and those parts of the Judicial Laws, Judicial Rules and procedures necessary for their implementation and whilst engaged in activities under the jurisdiction of the ASA shall be subject to all the constraints and privileges of the Judicial Laws and Regulations.
- 3.4. Any person who wishes to become a member of the Club must submit a signed application to the Secretary (and in the case of a junior member the application must be signed by the member’s parent or guardian). Election to membership shall be determined by the Membership Secretary but other person(s) authorised by the committee may make recommendation as to the applicant’s acceptability.
- 3.5. The Membership Secretary shall be required to give reasons for the refusal of any application for membership. Any person refused membership may seek a review of this decision before a review panel appointed by the Committee (“Review Panel”) comprised of not less than three members, who may or may not be members of the Committee. The panel shall [wherever practicable] include one independent member nominated by the ASA North East Region. The person refused membership shall be entitled to make representations to the Review Panel. The procedures for review shall be at the discretion of the Review Panel whose decision shall be final and binding.
- 3.6. In its consideration of applications for membership, the Club shall not act in a discriminatory manner and, in particular, shall adhere to the Equality Act 2010 (as may be amended). Accordingly, the Club shall not refuse and an application for membership on the basis of a Protected Characteristic within the Act, such as discriminatory ground, whether in

relation to ethnic origin, age, sex, religion, disability, political persuasion or sexual orientation such as disability; gender or gender identity; pregnancy; race; religion or belief; or sexual orientation. Neither may refusal be made on the grounds of political persuasion.

- 3.7. The Club may refuse membership only for good and sufficient cause, such as conduct or character likely to bring the Club or the sport into disrepute, or, in the case of an athlete, being unable to achieve the entry standards as laid down and provided by the Club to the applicant for membership.
- 3.8. Membership of the Club shall be renewed on an annual basis through the process of re-application not later than first day of January each year.
- 3.9. The category of membership shall be decided in accordance with the following:
  - 3.9.1. Junior Members, who shall be less than 18 years of age, shall not be allowed to hold office, attend meetings of the committee, unless by invitation of the committee, or vote at Committee or General Meetings; or submit nominations, proposals or resolutions for consideration at a general meeting of the membership.
  - 3.9.2. Senior Members, who shall be not less than 18 years of age, shall be eligible to stand for election for office and for membership of the committee, to attend and vote at General Meetings of the membership and to submit nominations, proposals and resolutions to a general meeting of the membership.
  - 3.9.3. Honorary Members, who shall be elected by the Committee, with the exception of the President or Vice-Presidents, for such a period as they think fit and shall be entitled to all the privileges of membership. Such Honorary members must be included in the Club's annual return as to membership.
  - 3.9.4. Life Members, who shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting on a recommendation made by the Committee in recognition of outstanding service rendered to the Club. Life members shall be entitled to all the privileges of membership. Such Life members must be included in the Club's annual return as to membership.
  - 3.9.5. Temporary Members, who are individuals granted temporary membership by the ASA by virtue of their participation in specific event(s) organised by the Club in conjunction with a Club, body, association or organisation under the provision of the ASA Regulation on temporary membership. Temporary Members shall not be entitled to make proposals and resolutions, to vote at meetings and to serve as officers or on the Committee.

#### **4. Subscription and Other Fees**

- 4.1. The annual members' subscription and teaching fees, as applicable, shall be determined from time to time by the Committee and the Committee shall in so doing make special provision for different classes of membership as the Committee shall determine.
- 4.2. The annual subscription and entrance fee (if any) shall be due on joining the Club and thereafter on the first day of January each year.

- 4.3. Any member whose subscription is unpaid by the date falling 30 days after the due date for payment may be suspended by the Committee from some or all Club activities from a date to be determined by the Committee and until such payment is made.
- 4.4. The Committee shall, from time to time, have the power to determine the annual membership subscription and other fees. This shall include the power to make such increase in the subscription as shall, where the Club pays the individual ASA Membership Fees to the ASA on behalf of members, be consequential upon an increase in individual ASA membership fees. Any increase in subscriptions shall be advised to the members in writing, by email or on the website, with the reasons for any increase to be reported to the members at the next Annual General Meeting.
- 4.5. The Committee shall have the power in special circumstances to remit the whole or part of the fees, including the ASA membership fees, to address social inclusion.

## 5. Resignation

- 5.1. A member wishing to resign membership of the Club must give to the Secretary written notice of his/her resignation. A member's resignation shall only take effect when this (Rule 5.1) has been complied with.
- 5.2. A member who resigns from the Club in accordance with Rule 5.1 above shall not be entitled to have any part of the annual subscription OR membership fee or any other fees returned.
- 5.3. Notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 5.1 above a member whose subscription is more than two months in arrears shall be deemed to have resigned. Where the membership of a member shall be terminated in this way he/she shall be informed in writing that he is no longer a member by notice handed to him/her or sent by post to his/her last known address.
- 5.4. The ASA Membership Department shall be informed should a member resign when still owing money or goods to the Club.

## 6. Expulsion and other Disciplinary action

- 6.1. The Committee shall have power to expel a member when, in its opinion, it would not be in the interests of the Club for the individual to remain a member. The Club in exercising this power shall comply with the provisions of Rules 6.3 and 6.4 below.
- 6.2. Upon exclusion, the former member **shall not** be entitled to have any part of the annual membership fee to be refunded and must return any Club or external body's trophy or trophies held forwith.
- 6.3. The Club shall comply with the requirements and procedures of the relevant Judicial Rules and Regulations for handling Internal Club Disputes as the same may be revised from time to time. A copy of the relevant Regulations and Procedures are given as an appendix to these constitutional rules.
- 6.4. A member may not be expelled or (subject to Rule 6.5 below) be made the subject of any other penalty unless the panel hearing the complaint shall by a two-thirds majority vote in favour of the expulsion of, or other penalty imposed upon, the member.

- 6.5. The Officers of the Club, or any person to whom the Committee shall delegate this power, may temporarily suspend or exclude a member from particular teaching sessions and/or wider Club activities, when in their opinion, such action is in the interests of the Club. Where such action is taken the complaint will thereafter be dealt with in accordance with the appropriate Judicial Rules and Regulations.
- 6.6. The Officials in charge of a particular event or Club session shall be responsible for the discipline. If further action is required this is to be referred to the Internal Disputes procedures as laid down in the ASA Judicial Laws and Regulations.

## **7. Committee**

- 7.1. The Committee shall consist of the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer (together "the Executive Officers of the Club") and not more than 11 elected members all of whom must be members of the Club. All Committee members must be not less than 18 years of age though the Committee may allow younger member(s) to attend their meetings without power to vote.
- 7.2. The Committee shall appoint as and when required a member of the Club as Welfare Officer who must be not less than 18 years of age, who should have an appropriate background and who is required to undertake appropriate training in accordance with ASA Child Safeguarding courses. The Welfare Officer shall not be a member of the teaching and coaching staff or the Team Manager or a member of the family of an officer, committee member, the teaching and coaching staff or the Team Manager. The Welfare Officer shall be a member of the Committee and shall report to the Committee on all aspects of welfare concerning members of the Club.
- 7.3. The Committee members shall be proposed seconded and elected by ballot at the Annual General Meeting each year and shall remain in office until their successors are elected at the next Annual General Meeting and will take office when the Chairman has closed the meeting. Any vacancy occurring by resignation or otherwise in any position previously filled at the Annual General Meeting or other General Meeting may be filled by the Committee. Retiring Officers and members of the Committee shall be eligible for re-election.
- 7.4. Committee meetings shall be held not less than once a month (save where the Committee itself shall by a simple majority resolve not to meet), and the quorum of that meeting shall be such number as shall represent not less than a simple majority of the Committee members (to include not less than one Executive Officer). The Chairman and the Secretary shall have discretion to call further meetings of the Committee if they consider it to be in the interests of the Club. The Secretary shall give all the members of the Committee not less than two days written notice of a meeting. Decisions of the Committee shall be made by a simple majority (and in the event of an equality of votes the Chairman (or the acting Chairman of that meeting) shall have a casting or additional vote.) The Secretary, or in his absence a member of the Committee, shall take minutes.
- 7.5. In the event that a quorum is not present within thirty minutes of the published start time, a meeting shall stand adjourned to the time and date falling seven days after the date of the meeting, or such other date and time as may be determined by the Chairman. If a quorum is not present at the adjourned meeting then those Committee members attending may act for the purpose of calling a Special General Meeting of the members, to which the provisions as to minimum notice contained in Rule 11.1 shall not apply.

- 7.6. In addition to the members so elected the Committee may co-opt up to 2 further members of the Club who shall serve until the next Annual General Meeting. Co-opted members shall not be entitled to vote at the meetings of the Committee and shall not be counted in establishing whether a quorum is present.
- 7.7. The Committee may from time to time appoint from among its number such sub-committees as they may consider necessary and to remove in whole or vary the terms of reference of such sub-committees and may delegate to them such of the powers and duties of the Committee as the Committee may determine. All sub-committees shall periodically report their proceedings to the Committee and shall conduct their business in accordance with the directions of the Committee.
- 7.8. The Committee shall be responsible for the management of the Club and shall have the sole right of appointing and determining the terms and conditions of service of employees of the Club. The Committee shall have power to enter into contracts for the purposes of the Club on behalf of all the members of the Club. The Committee shall be responsible for ensuring that the Accounts of the Club for each financial year be examined by an independent examiner to be appointed by the members in General Meeting. The Committee shall also have power to make regulations and to settle disputed points not otherwise provided for in this Constitution.
- 7.9. The members of the Committee shall be indemnified by the members of the Club against all liabilities properly incurred by them in the management of the affairs of the Club.
- 7.10. The Committee shall maintain an Accident Book in which all accidents to Club members at swimming related activities shall be recorded. Details of such accidents shall be reported to the ASA Office. The Club shall make an annual return to the ASA in the prescribed form.

## **8. Officers and Honorary Members**

- 8.1. The Executive Officers and Committee of the Club shall be proposed, seconded and elected (by ballot) at the Annual General Meeting and shall hold office until the next Annual General Meeting when they shall retire. Any vacancy occurring by resignation or otherwise may be filled by the Committee. Retiring officers shall be eligible for re-election.
- 8.2. The Annual General Meeting of the Club, if it thinks fit, may elect a President and Vice-Presidents. A President or Vice-President need not be a member of the association and on election shall, *ex officio*, be an honorary member of the Club and must be included in the Club's Annual Return of Members to the ASA
- 8.3. The Committee may elect any person as an honorary member of the Club for such period as it thinks fit and they shall be entitled to all the privileges of membership except that they shall not be entitled to vote at meetings and serve as officers or on the Committee unless any such person shall have retained in addition his ordinary membership of the Club. Such honorary members must be included in the Club's annual return as to membership.

## **9. Annual General Meeting**

- 9.1. The Annual General Meeting of the Club shall be held each year on a date in June. The date for the Annual General Meeting shall be fixed by the Committee.
- 9.2. The purpose of the Annual General Meeting is to transact the following business:

- 9.2.1. to receive the Chairman's report of the activities of the Club during the previous year;
  - 9.2.2. to receive and consider the accounts of the Club for the previous year and the report on the accounts of the independent examiner and the Treasurer's report as to the financial position of the Club;
  - 9.2.3. to remove and elect the independent examiner (who must not be a member of the Committee or a member of the family of a member of the Committee) or confirm that he/she remain in office;
  - 9.2.4. to elect the Executive Officers and other members of the Committee;
  - 9.2.5. to decide on any resolution which may be duly submitted in accordance with Rule 9.3.
- 9.3. Nominations for election of members to any office or for membership of the Committee shall be made in writing by the proposer and seconder to the Secretary not later than 10 May. The nominee shall be required to indicate in writing on the nomination form his willingness to stand for election. Notice of any resolution proposed to be moved at the Annual General Meeting shall be given in writing to the Secretary not later than 10 May.

## **10. Special General Meeting**

- 10.1. A Special General Meeting may be called at any time by the Committee. A Special General Meeting shall be called by the Secretary within 28 days of receipt by him of a requisition in writing signed by not less than 7 members entitled to attend and vote at a General Meeting stating the purposes for which the meeting is required and the resolutions proposed.

## **11. Procedure at the Annual and Special General Meetings**

- 11.1. The Secretary shall personally be responsible for the handing out or sending to each member at his last known address a written agenda giving notice of the date, time and place of the General Meeting together with the resolutions to be proposed thereat at least 14 days before the meeting and in the case of the Annual General Meeting a list of the nominees for the Committee posts and a copy of the examined accounts. The Secretary may, alternatively, with the agreement of member(s) concerned distribute these materials by e-mail or similar form of communication. The Notice of Meeting shall in addition wherever possible be displayed on the Club Notice Board where one exists.
- 11.2. The quorum for the Annual and Special General Meetings shall be 7 members entitled to attend and vote at the Meeting.
- 11.3. The Chairman, or in his absence a member selected by the Committee, shall take the chair. Each member present shall have one vote and resolutions shall be passed by a simple majority. For the procedures for submitting resolutions to be considered at a General Meeting members are referred to Rule 9.3. In the event of an equality of votes the Chairman shall have a casting or additional vote. Only paid up members who have reached their 18th birthday shall be entitled to be heard and to vote on all matters. (Members who have not reached their 18th birthday shall be entitled to be heard and vote only on those matters determined by the Chairman as matters concerning juniors, such as the election of Club captains).

- 11.4. The Secretary, or in his absence a member of the Committee, shall take minutes at the Annual and Special General Meetings.
- 11.5. The Chairman shall at all General Meetings have unlimited authority upon every question of order and shall be, for the purpose of such meeting, the sole interpreter of the Rules of the Club.

## **12. Alteration of the Rules and other Resolutions**

- 12.1. The rules may be altered by resolution at an Annual or Special General Meeting provided that the resolution is carried by a majority of at least two-thirds of members present and entitled to vote at the General Meeting. No amendment(s) to the rules shall become effective until such amendment(s) shall have been submitted to and validated by such person as is authorised to do so by the ASA North East Region.
- 12.2. Any member shall be entitled to put any proposal for consideration at any General Meeting provided the proposal in writing shall have been handed to or posted to the Secretary of the Club so as to be received by him not later than 10 May in the case of the Annual General Meeting or, in the case of a Special General Meeting, 18 days before the date of the meeting and thereafter the Secretary shall supply a copy of the proposal or resolution to the members in the manner provided in Rule 11.1.

## **13. By-Laws**

- 13.1. The Committee shall have power to make, repeal and amend such by-laws as they may from time to time consider necessary for the well being of the Club which by-laws, repeals and amendments shall have effect until set aside by the Committee or at a General Meeting.

## **14. Finance**

- 14.1. All moneys payable to the Club shall be received by the Treasurer and deposited in a bank account in the name of the Club. No sum above £5 shall be drawn from that account except by cheque signed by two of the three signatories who shall be the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. Any moneys not required for immediate use may be invested as the Committee in its discretion think fit.
- 14.2. The income and property of the Club shall be applied only in furtherance of the objects of the Club and no part thereof shall be paid by way of bonus, dividend or profit to any members of the Club, (save as set out in Rule 17.3).
- 14.3. The Committee shall have power to authorise the payment of remuneration and expenses to any officer, member or employee of the Club and to any other person or persons for services rendered to the Club.
- 14.4. The financial transactions of the Club shall be recorded by the Treasurer in such manner as the Committee thinks fit.
- 14.5. The financial year of the Club shall be the period commencing on 1 April and ending on 31 March. Any change to the financial year shall require the approval of the members in a General Meeting.
- 14.6. The Committee shall retain for a minimum period of six years all financial records relating to the Club and copies of Minutes of all meetings.



## 15. Borrowing

- 15.1. The Committee may borrow money on behalf of the Club for the purposes of the Club from time to time at their own discretion (up to such limits on borrowing as may be laid down from time to time by the General Meeting) for the general upkeep of the Club or with the (prior) approval of a General Meeting for any other expenditure, additions or improvements.
- 15.2. When so borrowing the Committee shall have power to raise in any way any sum or sums of money and to raise and secure the repayment of any sums or sums of money in such manner or on such terms and conditions as it thinks fit, and in particular by mortgage of or charge upon or by the issues of debentures charged upon all or any part of the property of the Club.
- 15.3. The Committee shall have no power to pledge the personal liability of any member of the Club for the repayment of any sums so borrowed.

## 16. Property

- 16.1. The property of the Club, other than cash at the bank, shall be vested in not more than four Custodians. They shall deal with the property as directed by resolution of the Committee and entry in the minute book shall be conclusive evidence of such a resolution.
- 16.2. The Custodians shall be elected at a General Meeting of the Club and shall hold office until death or resignation unless removed by a resolution passed at a General Meeting.
- 16.3. The Custodians shall be entitled to an indemnity out of the property of the Club for all expenses and other liabilities properly incurred by them in the discharge of their duties.

## 17. Dissolution

- 17.1. A resolution to dissolve the Club shall only be proposed at a General Meeting and shall be carried by a majority of at least three-quarters of the members present and entitled to vote. A specific date for the dissolution shall be included in the resolution.
- 17.2. The dissolution shall take effect from the date specified in the resolution and the members of the Committee shall be responsible for the winding-up of the assets and liabilities of the Club.
- 17.3. Any property remaining after the discharge of the debts and liabilities of the Club shall be given to a charity or charities (or other non-profit making organisation having objects similar to those of the Club for the furtherance of such objects) nominated by the last Committee. **(see Guidance notes 6 and 12 ref Taxation and VAT).**

## 18. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

18.1. The Members acknowledge that these Rules constitute a legally binding contract to regulate the relationship of the members with each other and the Club.

18.2. *The following statement needs to appear on Club membership forms and is to be signed by the member and must also be countersigned by the parent, or a person having parental responsibility for the member, if under 18 years of age:*

*I acknowledge receipt of the rules of \_\_\_\_\_ Club and confirm my understanding and acceptance that such rules (as amended from time to time) shall govern my membership of the Club. I further acknowledge and accept the responsibilities of membership upon members as set out in these rules.*

**Signed (member/parent)**

**Chairperson**

**Secretary**

**12 June 2017**

## **Annex 1 CODE OF ETHICS**

The ASA has recently revised its Code of Ethics. The previous version (Code of Ethics 2000 Revision) has now been superseded by the below version. The changes came into force 30 days from publishing on the ASA website, which means from Saturday 20th February 2010.

The new Code of Ethics is a general “umbrella” code and is supplemented by other documents, including the ASA Codes of Conduct for the following:

Swimmers;

Parents;

Coaches and teachers; and

Committee members, officials and volunteers who work directly with children.

These Codes of Conduct can be found in Wavepower 2009/11 under section 2. All documents referred to in the Code of Ethics are readily available on the ASA website. (Please note that the ASA adopts the anti-doping rules of British Swimming; this document is also available on the website

### **Code of Ethics**

All individuals within the ASA aquatic disciplines will at all times:

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person, be they adult or child, treating everyone equally within the context of the sport.
- Respect the spirit of the sport adhering to the rules and laws in and out of the pool, incorporating the concept of friendship and respect for others.
- Promote the positive aspects of the sport and never condone the use of inappropriate or abusive language, inappropriate relationships, bullying, harassment, discrimination or physical violence.
- Accept responsibility for their own behaviour and encourage and guide all ASA members and parents of junior members to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and conduct.
- Ensure all concerns of a child safeguarding nature are referred in accordance with Wavepower (ASA Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures).
- Conduct themselves in a manner that takes all reasonable measures to protect their own safety and the safety of others.
- Promote the reputation of the sport and never behave or encourage or condone others to behave in a manner that is liable to bring the sport into disrepute.
- Adhere to Wavepower the ASA Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Adhere to the ASA Anti-Doping Rules.
- Adhere to the ASA Equity Policy.
- Adhere to the ASA Laws and Regulations.
- Adhere to the ASA Codes of Conduct.

## **Annex 2**

### **GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING INTERNAL CLUB DISPUTES**

#### **1 Introduction**

The purpose of these notes is to give Clubs guidance in the handling of internal club disputes. With the introduction of the Code of Ethics and the increased risk of litigation it is important that internal disputes are handled correctly from the outset. Whilst most Clubs do from time to time have disputes between Committee members, parents and swimmers these can usually be resolved amicably between the individuals concerned. Occasionally it is also necessary to discipline swimmers for minor incidents of misbehaviour and this can also be done fairly by the Coach/Team Manager.

Sometimes a more serious dispute arises in a Club and because such a situation does not occur frequently Clubs are unsure how to handle the matter. This can lead to the dispute becoming more serious with recourse to the Judicial procedures becoming necessary.

These guidelines do not apply to paid employees of a Club. If a Club is in dispute with a paid employee then the employment contract and employment law needs to be considered. Specialist legal advice may have to be sought.

#### **2 General Principles**

ASA Judicial Regulations define Protests and Complaints and it should first be decided whether the matter is a Protest or a Complaint. A Protest can be dealt with by a Club provided they are the Promoter of the Competition to which the Protest relates. A Complaint cannot be dealt with by a Club. However, it is often possible to resolve a dispute within a Club without the matter becoming a formal Complaint. If either party is dissatisfied with a decision reached in an internal Club dispute then they still have the option to make a formal Complaint to the ASA Judicial Administrator.

It must be noted that a Club only has the power to legislate for a breach of its own rules and can only suspend a swimmer from its own Club activities. A Club has not power to handle a dispute relating to a member of another club nor deal with an offence against ASA Law.

The key principle to be followed is that ASA laws and regulations conform to the law of the land in so much that an individual accused of an alleged offence is innocent until proven guilty and he/she must have reasonable opportunity to present a defence and have his/her views heard.

In these notes reference is made to the term "dispute" to avoid confusion with the term "Complaint" used in formal ASA Judicial terms. The term Club could also refer to a League or County Association. It is assumed for the purpose of these notes that the dispute is between the Club and one or more of its members. It is most important that the same people in the Club do not become both the prosecutor (or defender) and the judge. If the Committee or its officers are either the prosecutor or defender or involved in the dispute then they must find other members not connected with the matter to hear the evidence from both parties to the dispute.

There are occasions when a problem arises in a Club, for example fighting between members in a training session, where immediate action is required such as a temporary suspension or exclusion from a training session or from wider club activities. Coaches and officers should always be given the power to invoke a temporary suspension. A report should then be made, immediately, to the Club officers who should follow the procedures in the relevant section of the rules.

#### **3 Procedures**

On receipt of the dispute every effort should be made to resolve the matter by informal discussion. In difficult cases the Chairperson of the relevant Panel is empowered to appoint an independent

arbitrator to assist in achieving a settlement. If this fails or it is clearly necessary to discipline a member, the Club should set up a panel to deal with the matter.

The panel should consist of three persons, one to act as Chairperson. A Secretary may also be needed. The panel will need to consist of people not involved in the dispute and the Club may want to ask individuals from outside the Club to sit on the panel. The full Club Committee could of course hear the dispute but given the number of people on a Committee this could be seen as intimidating and it is usually preferable to have a smaller number of people to hear a disciplinary matter, hence the recommendation to set up a panel of three persons.

The Chairperson must notify both parties of the date, time and place of the hearing and the names of the panel members. Both parties need to be given copies of all the papers and every effort should be made to hold the hearing within 14 days of the receipt of the dispute.

If either party is under 18 years of age they must be advised of their right to be accompanied by a parent (or other person with a parental responsibility for them) or coach to help them present their case.

Both parties should be allowed to bring witnesses.

The hearing should be as informal as possible but needs to be controlled. Points to note;

(a) The complainant will present evidence first and the accused will have the right of reply.

(b) Both parties to the dispute are able to call witnesses, the complainant going first and each party should be allowed to question the other party's witnesses.

(c) Witnesses must wait outside the hearing room until they are called. After questioning they may wait in the hearing room, taking no further part in the proceedings.

(d) The Chairperson or Secretary will make notes of the hearing and the panel will make every effort to announce their decision verbally to all the parties without delay followed by written confirmation to reach all parties within five days.

#### **4 Powers of the Clubs**

The powers of Clubs regarding the disciplinary action they can apply must not exceed those in ASA Judicial Laws which can result in full suspension from Club activities for whatever period the panel shall decide or in expulsion. The panel if it wishes can impose a lesser penalty such as a written or verbal reprimand.

If either party to the dispute is dissatisfied with the outcome they are still entitled to make a Complaint to the Judicial Administrator at ASA Head Office, Loughborough.

#### **5 Further Information**

Additional guidance can be obtained from the ASA Handbook Judicial Regulations. The Sports Council have also issued a booklet "Getting it Right" a Guide to Sports Ethics and Disciplinary Procedures.

#### **6 Conclusions**

The key message when dealing with disputes is to ensure:

(a) All parties are treated fairly;

(b) The complainant has the opportunity to present the case; and

(c) The accused has the opportunity to respond.

**Annex 3**  
**ASA LAWS and REGULATIONS**  
**INTERNAL CLUB DISPUTES**

**1 CLUB RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITIES**

The rights and responsibilities of a club in terms of its discipline, its internal dispute procedures and the sanctions it can impose are given in ASA Regulation 281 which specifies:-

**ASA Regulation 281 Club discipline and internal dispute procedures**

281.1 For a breach of its own rules, an affiliated club or body may:

281.1.1 apply sanctions to a member relating to activities wholly within its own jurisdiction up to and including suspension from any or all of them;

281.1.2 expel a member, provided that before doing so it informs the member of the alleged offence and gives him a reasonable opportunity to defend himself against the charge. If the alleged offence is also a breach of ASA Law or Regulations the club or body shall not deal with it but may make a complaint under the Judicial Laws and Regulations.

281.2 A club or body may expel from membership and/or refuse to renew the membership of any member who has been suspended according to Regulation 109 or Regulation 241 provided that any such expulsion or initial refusal shall not be lawful after the twelve months immediately following the end of the suspension.

281.3 Each club shall include in its rules provisions specifying the procedures to be carried out to handle internal club disputes.

281.4 Any such provisions shall comply with the ASA Recommended Club Constitution and the accompanying Guidance Notes.

**2 COMPLAINT TO ASA**

Any dispute that involves an allegation of a breach of ASA Law must be submitted to the ASA and dealt with as a complaint under the condition of ASA Regulation 150.4 and ASA Regulation 281.1.2. ASA Judicial Regulation 102 deals with the circumstance of a complaint made to the ASA. It provides the necessary explanation that defines a complaint, the grounds on which a complaint can be made, who can make a complaint and the procedure to be used.

**ASA Judicial Regulation 102. Complaints**

102.1 A complaint is a formal expression of dissatisfaction with the actions or behaviour of any person, including an individual or a club, or other body, or organisation or with alleged unfair practice in connection with the sport.

**3 INTERNAL DISPUTES**

When a dispute arises between two or more members of the same club, body or organisation it must be handled using the Internal Disputes procedure specified in the Club Constitutional Rules and the following ASA Judicial Regulations 150 to 155.

**ASA Judicial Regulation 150 General**

150.1 The primary objective of the Regulations in this section is to set out ways by which a just outcome of an internal dispute between the members of a club, organisation, association or body may be secured as expeditiously as possible.

150.2 An 'internal club dispute' is a dispute involving an alleged breach of the club's rules, between two more club members, any or none of whom may be an officer of the club, or one or more club members and one or more employees of the club (the "parties").

150.3 If a dispute cannot be resolved fairly and amicably between the parties concerned, and does not involve a breach of ASA Law, it may be dealt with under the relevant provisions of Regulation 281 which deal with club rights and responsibilities.

150.4 Any dispute which involves an allegation that there has been a breach of ASA Law by a member must be dealt with as a Complaint under Regulation 102 and the other relevant Regulations.

150.5 If the dispute involves an allegation against a paid employee of the club the issue must be dealt with under the terms of his contract of employment.

150.6 A failure by a club or any of the parties to comply with these Regulations 150 to 155 inclusive shall be grounds for a complaint under Regulation 102.

150.7 Organisations, associations or bodies affiliated to the ASA shall conform with such parts of Regulations 150 to 155 inclusive as may reasonably be applied to them, in all respects as if they were a club.

### **ASA Judicial Regulation 151 Sequence of steps to deal with a dispute**

151.1 The parties shall use any reasonable means to settle the issues between them informally and amicably.

151.2 If such a resolution cannot be achieved, the dispute shall be referred to the chairperson of the club committee or, if he is a party to the dispute, to another officer of the club who is not a party who within seven days of the reference shall appoint an independent person to act as a mediator between the parties. The mediator may be a member of the club or a member of another club affiliated to the ASA.

151.3 If the mediator is unable to bring about a satisfactory settlement within twenty one days, the club committee shall within a further fourteen days appoint a panel (the "panel") to determine the dispute.

151.3.1 The panel shall consist of three persons who have not been involved in the dispute, either from the members of the club or, if this is not possible or desirable, from the members of any other club affiliated to the ASA.

151.3.2 The parties shall be given the opportunity to object to any of the members of the panel at least seven days before the scheduled date of any hearing. The club committee shall consider any such objections, decide whether they are justified and act accordingly.

### **ASA Judicial Regulation 152 Procedure before a hearing**

152.1 The panel members shall appoint one of their numbers to act as the Chairperson and either appoint another of their number, or alternatively appoint an additional person without any other powers, to act as the clerk of the hearing.

152.2 The Chairperson of the panel shall arrange the date of the hearing and notify the parties of the arrangements at least fourteen days in advance of the date set. The notified date shall not be changed unless one or more of the parties has a compelling reason for not being able to attend on the notified day or time.

### **ASA Judicial Regulation 153 Procedure at a hearing**

153.1 The procedure shall be flexible and it shall be the responsibility of the Chairperson of the panel to ensure the orderly and effective conduct of the hearing.

153.2 The panel shall not be bound by the judicial rules of the courts of England and Wales governing procedure or the admissibility of evidence provided that the hearing is conducted in a fair and orderly manner and that each party is given a reasonable opportunity to give and call evidence, address the panel and present his case. The Chairperson shall have the discretion to limit the number of witnesses that would otherwise have been called.

153.3 Witnesses shall normally be provided with an area outside the hearing room and not take any part in the hearing other than giving evidence and responding to questions

153.4 The parties shall be informed of their right to make a complaint under Regulation 102 if they are dissatisfied with the conduct of the hearing or the grounds upon which the decision was made or if they consider any sanction imposed to be disproportionate.

### **ASA Judicial Regulation 154 Procedure after a hearing**

154.1 The panel shall come to a decision as soon as reasonably practicable after the hearing and if possible announce its findings and decisions orally to the parties.

154.2 Notwithstanding anything in Regulation 154.1 the Chairperson shall notify the parties and, if

the club was not a party to the dispute, the club secretary in writing of its findings and decisions within five days of the hearing.

### **ASA Judicial Regulation 155 Considerations regarding children**

155.1 Any person under the age of eighteen (a “child”) who is a party to a dispute or who has been called as a witness shall normally be accompanied by a parent, a person with parental responsibility or a suitable adult. The Chairperson shall have the sole discretion as to whether a child is permitted to present or defend a case or be questioned as a witness and may order that the child be assisted or represented by an adult.

155.2 The Chairperson shall give due consideration to any child attending a hearing as a party to a dispute or to give evidence and in particular:

155.2.1 No child aged fourteen or under shall normally be expected to attend a hearing to give evidence in person. His evidence shall normally be given as a written statement with the assistance of a club welfare officer or other person acceptable to the child and parent. Questions and responses may be relayed by a panel member. If the child appears distressed the panel shall rely only on the written evidence:

155.2.2 A child over the age of fourteen shall only attend a hearing as a party to the dispute or to give evidence in person provided he wishes to, and the Chairperson has consulted with the parent and child and is satisfied that they both understand the nature of the hearing and what will happen and that the child is competent to attend:

155.2.3 If there is a disagreement between parent and/or child and the Chairperson on any of the considerations above, the Chairperson shall consider requesting advice from the Independent Child Protection Officer via the ASA Legal Department.

155.3 During the hearing, a child who is expected to give evidence in person and his accompanying adult(s) shall be required to attend only those parts of the hearing which are necessary for him to give his evidence and shall be provided with a separate waiting area with no contact with any of the [other] parties.

155.4 After the hearing the Chairperson shall inform the parent of the panel’s findings and decisions and shall discuss whether he or the parent shall inform the child.