***GPC EUROPEAN AGM – 9th June 2016 – Rovaniemi, Finland***

***Present***

*Board:* President - Lee Marshall, Technical Officer - Ger McNamara, Treasurer - Frank Mc Givney, European Vice President - Jan Matej, Secretary - Anita Mahony

*Nations Present:* Czech Republic, Finland, France, Great Britain, Ireland, Poland, Serbia

*Apologies:* Jean Marc Chenin (France), Libor Hurdalek (Czech), Tina Gacnik (record keeper), Cina Serge (Switzerland)

The minutes of the previous AGM were distributed and there were no items arising.

**Board Members Reports**

GPC President Lee Marshall started by thanking Johannes Impio, Jen Milliron and all the Arctic Power team for the very high standard European championships which they were hosting in Rovaniemi. The venue/warm up area, equipment, technology, platform were all excellent and Arctic Power should be very proud of themselves for what they produced. He gave a special word of praise for the loading crew who ensured the safely of the lifters and had no misloads. the table crew ran the championships professionally and the crew who built a very strong platform. After last year’s poor show in Las Vegas, Arctic Power and the FPO have shown how a professional show can be run.

GPC Treasurer Frank Mc Givney reported that in 2015 the GPC had 27 national federations affiliated and so far this year 21 have joined with more to pay prior to the World Champoinships as is the norm. Some countries have had lifters join individually instead of as a national federation due to low numbers. He asked federations forwarding the affiliation fee to ensure they include the nation’s name as otherwise it’s difficult to match it to which nation has paid. Currently the GPC finances are solid and a profit of 1143 euro was made last year. Expenses include refereeing costs, record keeper costs, various purchases, corporate taxes etc. He thanked Johannes & Jen for the ease of his dealings with him on financial obligations prior to the Europeans and indicated that he was having a similar experience dealing with the organisers of the world championships in Serbia.

GPC European Vice President Jan Matej gave a comprehensive report in which he highlighted the success of the three International Championships held in Europe in 2015 - The European Championships, Balkan Cup and Carpathian cup. The European Championships were hosted to a high standard in Eastbourne, UK and he thanked Scott Halliday and Andy Saunders and all of GPCGB for running such a good championships at which 413 athletes from 20 countries took part. The 5th Balkan Cup was held in Knjazevac, Serbia in March with 163 lifters from Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Macedonia. This was in increase from 106 lifters in 2014. Lee Marshall was present and world/European records were broken at the event. The 2nd Carpathian Cup was held in Trutnov, Czech Republic in October with 209 lifters from 9 countries. This was an increase on the previous year from 118 from 6 countries. Jan Matej was the GPC Board representative and World/European records were broken. He concluded his report by thanking the organisers of this European Championships for their efforts in producing an excellent event meeting all requirements.

**Motions**

1. From Tina Gacnik – GPC Record Keeper

At events where World/European records can be broken and the Record Keeper is not present, a complete set of results (to include age of competitor) must be emailed to the Record keeper (worldgpcrecords@gmail.com) within three days of the completion of the event. At events where World/European records can be broken and the Record Keeper is present, a complete set of the daily results must be supplied by email, on a USB or in print to the Record keeper on the day of each competition to facilitate the issuing of certificates on request.

This was passed unanimously.

1. **Items from the Board Meeting**
2. Ger McNamara introduced the concept of a 20kg bar or a thinner 25kg bar to be used for the squat for women as he had been approached by women who found it difficult to hold the 25kg bar. All of the female lifters present were asked their opinion on this. (including Tania George, AJ Wells, Bettina Razzouki Korkis, Jen Milliron, Celine Corringer) regardless of their physical size, all, without exception, and regardless of size, were in favour of continuing to use the 25kg thick bar. Many train with the 25kg squat bar and don’t want to use a different bar then they train with in competition, they found it easier to handle than a narrower lighter bar with more weight on it, they liked the feel of it on their backs and they saw problems arising in a mixed flight with the bar having to be changed between lifts for the men and the women. Anita indicated that it was probably the novice lifters who train in non-powerlifting gyms that were not used to the thicker heavier bar that wanted it changed but while it was decided that the 25kg thick bar would continue to be used in International events, Ger indicated that if the majority of female lifters in a national/regional competition wanted a 20kg bar, it could be used in those events.
3. Lee Marshall indicated that the GPC Board had made the decision, on request from many lifters, to introduce a Squat only competition to join the existing Bench only and Deadlift only competition from 2017 to be included in World and European Championships. This was welcomed by the representatives present and Franciszek Szabluk who is hosting the European Championships in Poland in 2017 indicated that he would include this in the championships.
4. A discussion on the dwindling number of equipped lifters was initiated by Ger McNamara. While it was suggested that trends in lifting go in cycles and currently raw lifting is more favoured, It was suggested that maybe lifters are afraid of the unknown and perhaps more lifters could be encouraged to try equipped, by promoting it more on social media, putting on workshops and encouraging lifters to try it out using secondhand equipment rather than having to spend big money on new equipment that may not fit or suit the lifter. Lee indicated that the numbers doing equipped lifting would have to be monitored and do something about it if the numbers drop to an even lower level.
5. It was explained that the Bid for the 2018 Europeans which was submitted by Mark Linehan and Glen Ross to host the European Championships in Dublin, Ireland was withdrawn by the GPC Board due to the inexperience of the hosts and the fact that they had never been to a GPC World or European Championships and may not be fully aware of all the requirements and expectations. While the Irish have experience of previously running a European and World Championships and the championships would have the expertise of the three Irish board members, Ger McNamara, Frank Mc Givney and Anita Mahony, they felt it was important that the high standard of European championships be maintained going forward. It was decided that going forward, nobody can submit a bid before attending World or European Championships, especially after the problems at the 2015 World Championships in Vegas when the host had never attended a GPC international event. The prospective host must also be available to make the bid presentation and to answer all questions on the event from the AGM participants. Paul George suggested that a template be drawn up where the hosts need to tick off a list of all the minimum requirements in addition to the competition requirements list which already exists. It was agreed that this would be drawn up.

Jan Matej indicated that he was satisfied that the World Championships in Serbia and the 2017 European Championships in Poland and World Championships in Czech Republic would meet all the necessary requirement given the previous championships hosted by the organisers. Ger McNamara thanked Jan for representing the GPC at many championships abroad.

The organisers of the 2017 European Championships – Franciszek Szabluk and Bettina Razzouki Korkis gave details about the championships and answered all questions put to them. The event will be held in Biala Podlaska from 25th to 30th June 2017. This is 120km from Swidnik Lubin airport, 170km from Warsaw and 200 from Modlin aiport. There is cheap public transport available from Lublin and Warsaw and also shuttles can be arranged. This city is the mecca of Powerlifting in Poland and all equipment is available for the championships. It recently hosted the Polish championships at which there were 260 athletes. The venue is in a new college and there are several high quality cheap hotels, including campus accommodation, within 200metres and 5km. The venue is 1km from the city centre and there are amenities on campus. Some hotels will be reserved just for competitors and nations are asked to indicate how many people they need accommodation for when submitting their team list. There will be plenty of accommodation available.

The organiser of the 2016 World Championships Aleksandar Tosic then answered all questions in relation to the World Championships taking place in Knjazevac in September. He explained that the event was moved from the original destination of Nis to Knjazevac as the hotel where the championships were to be held was not going to be completed on schedule and also they could not guarantee the security of the lifters. He said there was accommodation available for 500 lifters and a new 120 bed hotel has opened close to the venue which was not available when the Europeans were held. Belgrade is 300km from Knjazevac and Sofia in Bulgaria is 170km There is also an airport in Nis but not many countries have flights to there. There is daily direct public transport available from Knjazevac but the organsers will arrange transfers from these three airports and will try to group those arriving together to ensure bigger groups to keep the cost per lifter as low as possible. Ger Mc Namara asked if it was safe for Americans as there had been some concern and Aleksandar confirmed that there was no threat to lifters from any country.

**AOB**

Aleksandar Tosic said that he had been approached by a former IPF group in Croatia to get the GPC Licence for Croatia. Currently there is no GPC affiliation in Croatia. Aleksandar was advised to ask this group to complete the application for a new affiliation available on the website and submit it to Frank Mc Givney and the Board would make a decision on it, as they do with all new affiliate applications.

That concluded the matters of the meeting