

*From: Sylle Arvidieu*

**1. What is your take on there being several memory associations presenting themselves as being global? Where does the IAM fit in?**

Many sports have more than one association or federation, each standing for something different or placing emphasis on different aspects of the sport. What matters is our own identity, values and integrity in a structure of harmonious diversity.

**2. What would be your top two ideas to help broaden the memory competitor base?**

Media coverage including interviews and other involvement with a broad range of competitors and other active members of the community.

Outreach in schools, universities, community centres etc.

*From: Lynne Kelly*

**3. Some motivation letters referred to the value of memory sports for education and implied a role for IAM extending beyond sports to promoting the broad benefits of memory training. Do you see this as a role for IAM? If so, to what extent?**

Whenever I am asked what the point of a given memory sport discipline is, I point out that while I have little use for the skills I learned playing football as a child on a daily basis, most human beings need their memories several times a day! Moreover, while none of my students' parents would be capable of doing their jobs without years of training, society seems to think it is acceptable to expect people to study for at least a decade without equipping them with the skills to do so.

The fact that many of our championships are held in libraries and places of education shows that we are already reaching out to the community but, of course, more can be done.

**4. Some motivation letters talked about the high entry level into the sport. Can you point to some successful efforts in that field and / or ideas you have for making it more accessible?**

Looking at the range of scores in overall rankings, I would say that a high entry level is far from the case. A number of competitors work hard over a period of years to improve in one or more disciplines. In fact, an important element in many championships is that competitors are clearly there at least in part to compete against themselves. However, we can learn a lot from what is happening in Germany, for example, where some schools are not just a convenient venue for championships but actively involved on a year-round basis. It may also be worth considering recognition for athletes who make the most progress in a given period.

*From: Kelly Knight*

**5. What is your approach to bringing new members, especially young ones, into the sport?**

Physical athletes often start their sport as children, be that at school or in clubs. For a relatively young sport it falls to us to inspire schools to introduce memory sports as part of what they offer for a broad education for youngsters who will become life-long learners in a society where knowledge evolves at an ever-increasing speed. Once again, it is worth looking to Germany and considering different formats that encourage youngsters to try the sport. Nevertheless, memory sports can transcend arbitrary barriers such as gender and age, and I would be especially keen to explore ways to introduce the sport to new members at both ends of the age spectrum, perhaps by reaching out to university students first, so they, in turn, can reach out to older and younger people.

*From: Florian Minges*

**6. What is your opinion on the ongoing digitalisation of memory sports? Yay or Nay? Why?**

I have been considering this issue for a number of years and believe it has a lot of benefits for a number of reasons. Not only is it more practical and allows competitors to have feedback on their performance much more quickly and accurately, but it is much more efficient and environmentally friendly and gives arbiters more time to meet competitors' individual needs.

Nonetheless, I would hesitate to digitalise all disciplines. The South German Open in Würzburg in 2015 showed the potential for zooming in to particular competitors' recall in a way that is not possible with paper recall but I still believe there are benefits of being able to watch physical memorisation and recall, such as showing memory to be a practical skill and not just a computer game. Although the card disciplines are very time-consuming to prepare and mark, speed cards in particular is spectacular to watch, which is important in terms of bringing the sport to the public. We need a balance and a sport in which all disciplines were digital would be as interesting to watch as exams as a spectator sport!

However, any change process needs to be considered holistically and tested thoroughly.

**7. The IAM is currently looking for a host for the IAM World Memory Championship 2019. The DL for applications is the 7th of December (so before your answers to these questions will be published). What do you think about the feasibility of organising an IAM World Memory Championship in your country, either next year or sometime in the future? What are the biggest obstacles? Is there anything that could be done or changed to make it easier / more convenient in order for someone to host it in your country?**

The United Kingdom has already hosted more WMCs than all other countries put together, so I would not see yet another one as benefitting the global community as a whole. I think it would be far more important to give a chance to other committed countries. The work in progress for our current World Memory Championship shows that dedication, vision and co-operation across borders are more important than some of the factors that have been emphasised in the past.

**8. The memory sports community has many dedicated volunteers who are contributing to it in many different ways, both internationally and nationally. If you could highlight one such person today (who is not also running for the IAM International Board right now), who would it be, and why?**

Only one? And not running for the board? That's really tough as there are several people and it's hard to know where to start without offending all the great volunteers without whom championships would not be possible. How about those who have served us so wonderfully on the board since its creation? Or the team of Swedish volunteers who worked together both on site and behind the scenes in a country other than their own to run a wonderful European Memory Championship last month?

On further thought, though, one individual does come to mind, Gaby, who stood down as an arbiter last year. Not only have her passion, integrity and work ethic contributed so much to the sport in the last decade, but on a personal level her support and loyalty have done so much to make me the arbiter I have become since working alongside her.

*From: Anonymous*

**9. How do you consider your own potential contribution to the board to be unique, compared to the other candidates?**

A number of roles and perspectives are necessary for a sporting community to function healthily, and while it is important for athletes to shape their own sport, I also believe I can bring the perspective and continuity of an experienced arbiter with a strong sense of fair play and inclusion.