

British Parachute Association

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The Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held on
Tuesday 20 August 2002 at 1735
at the BPA Office, Glen Parva, Leicester

Present:	Chris Allen	-	Chairman
	Paul Applegate		
	Kieran Brady	-	Communications Chairman
	Eddie Jones		
	Ian Marshall		
	John Smyth	-	Vice Chairman/ Competitions Chairman
	Jim White		
In attendance:	Tony Butler	-	Technical Officer
	Lesley Gale	-	Editor, <i>Skydive Magazine</i>
	Jon Gretton	-	Financial Administrator (for item 45)
	John Hitchen	-	NCSO / STC Chairman
	Martin Shuttleworth	-	National Administrator
	Lucie Wood		Development Officer
Observers:	Sacha Chilton	-	Team VMax (for item 47.3.3)
	Ian Matthews	-	Team VNE
	Claire Scott	-	Team VMax
Apologies for absence:	Debbie Carter	-	Treasurer
	David Hickling		
	Ian Midgley	-	Development Chairman
	Craig Poxon		

Item Minute

43/02 Minutes

Kieran Brady proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that the previously circulated minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 18 June 2002, should be accepted as a true record. This carried unanimously.

Approved

44/02 Matters arising

44.1 The possibility of establishing a BPA Members' Benevolent Fund (minute 25.2.1)

Kieran Brady reported that he had carried out some initial research at the library on the terms of reference of benevolent funds run by to other organisations, and had also received information from the BPA Office. This had led him to the view that the establishment of a benevolent fund by for the benefit of BPA Members would require the time for the most thorough and detailed consideration. It would also require guidance from legal specialists in such matters, which could cost some £5 to £7K, for which there was no budget. He reported that without expert

legal guidance, there existed a great potential to write the wrong terms of reference despite the best of intentions.

The Chairman suggested, and Kieran Brady agreed, that the Development Committee might wish to consider taking this idea forward, perhaps in the form of a feasibility study, with costings, to inform a yes or no decision at a later date. The Committee might wish to consider including such a feasibility study in its Action Plan Matrix for next year, 2002/3. Therefore, a diary note would be made to bring forward a reminder at the first meeting of the newly reconstituted Development Committee, which was expected to take place on AGM day next January.

Action: Bring forward for consideration for Development Action Plan 2002/3

44.2 Club News in the Magazine (minute 37)

Minute 37 had recorded Jim White's report that Club Members at Bridlington had expressed concern to him, as their BPA Club Rep, that they had sent in a lot of material to the Magazine, but had been restricted to only a small section in 'Club News'. Lesley Gale reported that she had investigated this with Paul Simms, the Club News Rep from Bridlington. She tabled a list of items received from Bridlington for each issue. Unfortunately, there had not been a great deal of material and many of the digital photographs that had been submitted had in fact been of too low a resolution to print – except, occasionally, as a very small photograph. Lesley Gale said that it was not uncommon in her experience for Club Members to believe that more had been submitted to the Magazine than had actually been sent in. However, now that Lesley Gale had discussed the matter with Paul Simms, there should be a better appreciation of how to produce material most suited for the Magazine. The Chairman thanked Lesley Gale for her action on this, and asked Jim White kindly to report back, as BPA Club Rep, to the Club Members at Bridlington who had originally raised the point.

Action: Jim White (Joint Club Rep, Northern)

45/02 Statutory accounts for the year 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002

The fully audited final draft accounts had been circulated in advance. Two minor typographical errors were corrected. There being no questions, Ian Marshall proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that the Council hereby approve the Association's accounts for the year from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002.

Carried unanimously

The accounts would be published as an insert to the October issue of *Skydive Magazine*.

Action: Jon Gretton and Lesley Gale

46/02 Ratification of minutes of Subcommittees

The minutes of each of the following meetings had been circulated in advance.

46.1 Minutes of the STC meeting on Thursday 8 August 2002

John Hitchen (Chairman, STC) highlighted the following items from the minutes of the above meeting. The reports of the Boards of Inquiry into three separate fatalities had been received by STC. In two of these cases, STC had decided that no Panel of Inquiry should be convened to follow the Board of Inquiry's report, as was the usual practice. This was because two of the fatalities had resulted from low turns, which would be the subject of a single Panel of Inquiry. A glider impacting with a parachutist in the air had caused the third fatality. This accident was already the subject of an investigation by the Air Accidents Investigations Branch of the Department for Transport.

Paul Applegate then proposed, and Jim White seconded, a motion that the minutes of the STC meeting held on 8 August 2002 be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

John Hitchen then referred to the Council an application from Headcorn Parachute Centre for a jump over a reservoir. A previous meeting of STC had given permission for such a jump – which was in fact a regular annual event – to take place. The jump had duly been completed. It had been so successful that the organisers had now asked Headcorn to repeat it. However,

the timescale was such that Headcorn needed an answer before the date of the next STC meeting. John Hitchen was therefore referring the request to the Council.

After discussion, during which it emerged that neither John Hitchen nor any Member of Council knew of any basis on which such a request should be declined, Kieran Brady proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that permission for the jump over water be given to Headcorn.

Carried unanimously

46.2 Development Committee meeting on 18 June 2002

Kieran Brady proposed, and Eddie Jones seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Development Committee meeting held on 18 June 2002 be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

46.3 Competitions Committee meeting on 17 July 2002

John Smyth proposed, and Ian Marshall seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Competitions Committee meeting held on 17 July should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

47/02 Reports on meetings held earlier today

47.1 Communications Committee

Kieran Brady reported that the Communications Committee had received and discussed a report from Lesley Gale about recent and future issues of *Skydive Magazine*. The Committee had also noted satisfactory progress on the Communications Action Plan for the new Action Plan year that had begun on 1 July. Finally, there had been an update about the BPA website.

47.2 Development Committee

No meeting of the Development Committee had taken place today.

47.3 Competitions Committee

John Smyth reported that the Competitions Committee had met this afternoon. He called attention to the following items.

47.3.1 Nish Bruce Memorial 2-way CF Speed Trophy

Jason, son of the late Nish Bruce, had kindly donated a trophy in memory of his father for the new 2-way CF event. The Council was most grateful for this fitting tribute to Nish Bruce, and John Smyth would write a letter of gratitude to Jason Bruce for this kind gesture which would be appreciated not only today, but for many years to come.

Action: John Smyth

47.3.2 World Cup / European Championships – Empuriabrava, Spain, 4-13 October

John Smyth was delighted to report that a UK delegation of 44 persons including 36 athletes would be going to this meet, all entirely self-funded. The UK delegation now included the CF 8-way team *Hinton-8*. A delegation uniform would be needed for the opening ceremony. John Smyth proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that an arrangement John Smyth had discussed with Sarah-Jayne Thomas for the supply of 50 T-shirts customised with a special Union Jack logo (based on the one used for WAG 2001) at a cost of £400, should be approved by the Council, to be paid for from the British Team Fund. The voting was:

For: 5 Against: 0 Abstention: 1 – Ian Marshall

Carried

All competitors would be required to provide the BPA with evidence of suitable and sufficient medical insurance, which had to include repatriation cover, as a condition of their entry.

Action: BPA Office

47.3.3 Selection Nationals 2002

Note: Because the meeting was running early and Observers were known to be arriving at 1830 to be in attendance for this item, it was held at the end of the meeting with all Observers in attendance.

John Smyth reported that the 2002 FS Nationals hosted by Target Skysports, Hibaldstow, had been the best FS Nationals in memory, with a record-beating 42 x 4-way and 8 x 8-way teams entering, making a total of 50 teams. These had been selection nationals and the National Champions XL (FS 4-way open) and VMax (FS women's 4-way) had met the agreed criteria for funding – viz, a performance equivalent to 4th place or better at the last world championships – in this case, WAG Spain 2001.

Subject to strict budgetary control, based on a pre-agreed budget, a contract to attend to represent the UK at WPC 2003 Gap (requiring return of the money in the event of default by the athletes) and the release of the funding in tranches, John Smyth proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that that funding would now be released to XL and VMax in accordance with the current Action Plan matrix, to a maximum of £30K for each team.

Carried unanimously

This would cost up to £60K, leaving £5K remaining in the budget of £65K. The £5K would act as a contingency reserve. John Smyth said that team the 8-way National Champions VNE had unfortunately not met the performance criteria for funding. Ian Matthews (VNE) said his team had missed the average score of 13 per round by only 0.5. He was convinced that the team's performance had improved but that this had not shown in the scores because the dive pool had slowed down. However, the criteria for funding set out in the rules for the Nationals stated that performance of our teams at the World Cup would also be taken into consideration for possible funding for WPC 2003. This would bear in mind the performance of teams from other nations and any inferences that could reasonably be drawn from that about the speed of the dive pool 2002 compared with the dive pool 2001 on which the current performance criteria were based. In answer to a question from Ian Matthews about where the funding would come from if VNE did achieve the performance criteria at this autumn's World Cup when up to all but £5K had tonight been earmarked, John Smyth said that it would not be reasonable for funding to be withheld from teams that had met the funding criteria on the basis of another team that might possibly qualify at a later date. The onus was on VNE to perform really well at the World Cup, and if it did, John Smyth was confident that the Competitions Committee would not let the team down, and that other sources of funding for next year's World Championships, perhaps including the British Team Fund, could be explored.

In the Artistic Disciplines Nationals 2002 held recently at Peterborough Parachute Centre, no team had met the performance criteria for funding to the World Championships 2003. However, the National Champion Freely team *Sebastian Freely* had missed the performance criteria for funding by only 0.2, having scored an average of 7.4 over seven rounds compared with the 4th place score of 7.6 over the same number of rounds at WAG 2001. The team maintained that their score would have been higher had one of the three judges not left before the event had been completed. The team believed that the judge who had left had been the highest scoring, but that in any case the team considered that the judges had contravened the published rules by not maintaining the stated minimum of three judges throughout the event. John Smyth said that the Competitions Committee was investigating.

Finally, John Smyth reported that letters of invitation were to be issued to teams that had competed in this year's selection Nationals, but had not met the performance criteria for funding, to join the UK delegation to the World Parachuting Championships 2003 on a self-funded basis. The CF selection Nationals had still to take place next month, and it was not a selection year for the Classics disciplines of style and accuracy landing.

48/02 Club Reps

Ian Marshall, although not a Club Rep, had visited Cornwall Parachute Centre earlier this month for the CF Southern Regional Competition. He said he had been told he was the first serving Council member ever to visit, and that the Club would welcome further visits in due course. He said he had been very warmly received, and had found it to be a small, family-run

Club with a good, friendly atmosphere. The only thing that had disappointed him about his visit had been the weather, which had been atrocious!

49/02 Report on the Royal Aero Club

John Smyth (BPA Delegate to RAeC) reported that the Royal Aero Club was undertaking a major information gathering and consultation exercise among its member organisations, including the BPA, to formulate a concerted UK response to official consultation on the future regulation of airports in Europe. This was important, and painstakingly detailed, work. It was essential for the UK to put in a coherent and well-argued case to hold its corner. The Chairman said he had seen the consultation material and the detailed responses from Tony Butler and Tony Knight that had been sent by the BPA to the RAeC Project Co-ordinator, David Roberts. He thanked Tony Butler and Tony Knight for the considerable time and effort that they had already devoted to this project, which would continue until September.

John Smyth expressed his delight at the current level of activity by the RAeC, which in his experience was unprecedented. He believed that by this exercise, the RAeC was providing a valuable service to support the airports community in the UK. As the European dimension became ever more dominant, strong and proactive UK representation was absolutely vital. The current RAeC activity held the promise that by working together, UK airports could achieve this.

The Chairman thanked John Smyth for such a positive report.

50/02 Application for Association

Ian Marshall proposed, and Jim White seconded, a motion that the application for Association to the BPA by The Skydiving Company Ltd, which was based at Headcorn Aerodrome, should be approved.

Carried unanimously

51/02 Staffing

The Chairman reported that Lucie Wood, Development Officer, had announced that she would be leaving the Association's staff on 30 August. On behalf of the Council, the Chairman thanked Lucie Wood for the contribution that she had made to the BPA's work, and wished her every success in her new job. The Chairman said that he had held informal discussions with the Committee Chairmen on future staffing at which it had been suggested that the National Administrator and Office Manager post held by Martin Shuttleworth should be re-styled to something along the lines of 'General Secretary and Development Officer', although at this stage this was just a working title. Discussions were continuing, and the Chairman would report back to the next meeting.

52/02 Request for the BPA to sponsor the *Brit Chicks* women's FS record attempt

The Chairman said that there was an item of business for the Council to consider that ordinarily would have first been raised at the Development Committee. As no meeting of the Development Committee had been held today, the item was therefore coming directly to the full Council. It was a request by Simon Ward for the BPA to sponsor the *Brit Chicks* women's FS record attempt to be held in a few weeks' time at Langar. A copy of an e-mail to the Development Committee (which had been previously circulated only to Members of that Committee) was tabled and the meeting paused for reading time. The e-mail referred to a PowerPoint presentation. Lesley Gale, who was in attendance tonight, was herself involved in the organisation of the event, so the Chairman invited her to speak to the PowerPoint presentation. Lesley Gale duly outlined the background to this high-profile event, the need for sponsorship and the benefits to sponsors.

There followed considerable discussion during which there emerged a consensus of support for the event, coupled with frustration that the application had come 'out of the blue' only a few weeks ahead of the start date, leaving the Council without an opportunity to include it in the BPA's Action Plan or to budget for it. Kieran Brady said that the Action Plan and the agreed budgets associated with it were the blueprint for the Association's activities in any given year, and this included any sponsorship. He said that he was not seeking to be obstructive to an event that he personally considered deserved the BPA's support, but the fact remained that the BPA Council, with the fiduciary weight of the Association on its shoulders, had to ensure that

when it authorised expenditure of the membership's money any such spend was (i) value for money, and (ii) fully accountable, which meant properly controlled and fully documented. Unfortunately, the request for sponsorship now before the Council satisfied none of these criteria. This meant that, much as he would like the BPA to be able to help, Kieran Brady considered the Council quite simply lacked the tools to do so.

The Chairman reported on two proposals by proxy that had been sent to him by Ian Midgley, who had been unable to attend this meeting. The first was for the vote on this item to be conducted in camera by secret ballot. This failed to find a seconder. Ian Midgley's second proposal by proxy was that no funds should be released outside those that the Council had already agreed in its budgets for the year. Although this proposal failed to find a seconder, it led to further discussion. A possibility then explored was that the BPA might sponsor lifts, which cost an estimated £1K each. The Chairman next read aloud a further proposal by proxy from Ian Midgley, which was that if the *Brit Chicks* were successful in achieving a record, the BPA should pay for that particular lift, and expect to receive the benefit of the resulting publicity. This proposal did not find a seconder.

John Smyth agreed with what Kieran Brady had said, and fully understood Ian Midgley's position, but stressed the need for greater flexibility to deal with unforeseen events within a properly controlled and fully accountable framework of financial management. In the absence of a contingency budget, funding to be able to offer sponsorship to *Brit Chicks* had to come from other sources. Kieran Brady said that the only available sources were previously agreed budgets, because he could not support an ad-hoc dip into the Association's reserves, which he believed to be unsound financial management.

The Chairman pointed out that the event comprised coaching as well as the record attempt. Indeed, it was likely that more junior and intermediate jumpers would be coached by seniors such as *VMax* than could be selected for the 40-way record attempt or even any 50-way attempt, as Lesley Gale had reported that pre-registrations had already exceeded 70. He enquired whether any sponsorship might therefore be available from the Competitions Committee's budget for Coaching Roadshows. John Smyth reported that, being still early in the financial year that had begun on 1 July, funds were still available in the Coaching Roadshow budget, particularly since some coaches from senior teams had not claimed the expenses to which they were entitled. Although it might well leave the budget strained by the end of the next financial year on 30 June 2003, John Smyth said that he did find himself in a position to suggest that an absolute maximum of £5K from this budget be allocated specifically to sponsor coaching at the *Brit Chicks* event.

As he fully concurred with Kieran Brady's points about the need for responsible financial management, John Smyth then formally proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that the BPA should sponsor *Brit Chicks* to a maximum of £5K from the previously agreed Coaching Roadshow budget for 2002/3, on condition that a formal itemised budget was provided to the BPA by the *Brit Chicks* organisers to set out how much sponsorship was being sought, and for precisely what it would be used. After consideration for approval of this budget by John Smyth, the agreed sponsorship money would then be paid on the production of adequate documentation, such as duly completed expenses claims from the coaches. The vote was:

For: 5 Against: 0 Abstention by proxy : 1 - Craig Poxon

Carried

53/02 Dates of future meetings in 2002

Tuesdays at 1830 at the BPA Office, Leicester: 22 October, 10 December (EGM & Council).
Following meetings, for those involved, of the Communications Committee at 1400 and the Development Committee at 1600 at the same venue and on the same days.

The meeting closed at 1920.