

British Parachute Association

5 Wharf Way
Glen Parva
Leicester
LE2 9TF

Tel: 0116 278 5271
Fax: 0116 247 7662
e-mail: skydive@bpa.org.uk
www.bpa.org.uk



Competitions Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on
Tuesday 10 July 2001 at 1835
at the BPA Offices, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester

Present:	John Smyth	-	Competitions Chairman
	Paul Applegate	-	Discipline Rep: New Age
	Chris Clements	-	Discipline Rep: Classics
	Dona Crum	-	Discipline Rep: FS (from item 38.2)
	Carl Williams	-	Co-ordinator, Camera Roadshow
In attendance:	John Hitchen	-	NCSO
	Martin Shuttleworth	-	National Administrator
	Lucie Wood	-	Development Officer
Apologies for absence:	Tim Andrewes	-	Competitions Vice Chairman
	Kate Charters	-	Judges' Co-ordinator
	Ian Marshall	-	Discipline Rep: CF

Item Minute

37/01 Minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2001

There was a variation to minute 30 on page 5. The first sentence of the second paragraph (beginning 'Katherine Andrewes...') was replaced by the following: 'Chris Clements said that some of the potential senior competitors may have been unhappy at travelling so far north continuously.'

With the above variation, Chris Clements proposed, and Carl Williams seconded, a motion that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2001 be approved as a true record. This carried unanimously.

Approved

38/01 Matters arising

38.1 Page 1, item 25 - Trophies Lucie Wood reported that the Overall Champions' Cup was currently being refurbished.

Ongoing

38.2 Page 2, item 25 – Fast/swooping canopies John Saunders had stood down as Chairman of STC and the Council had appointed John Hitchen to chair STC for the remainder of the current year. The Competitions Committee sought advice from STC on safety issues relating to fast/swooping canopies before setting to work on drafting competition rules of which three alternative versions (from competitions held elsewhere) were available. John Hitchen said he was due to visit another swooping canopies competition outside the UK in September, and would report back. He agreed to include the issue on the agenda of the next STC meeting to elicit the opinion of CCIs. The Chairman confirmed that any guidance from

STC within the next six months would be invaluable to the Competitions Committee, as safety was always the most fundamental consideration in setting out the rules for any new BPA event.

Action: Refer to STC

38.3 Page 4, item 29.2 Dr Roger Flinn's Judges' Logbook The Chairman had discussed the maintenance of Dr Flinn's judges' logbook with him at the World Air Games in Spain. The crux of the issue was who could ratify the logbook of a chief judge? Dr Flinn had been keen to engage in a constructive dialogue to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of everyone concerned. He had said 'Perhaps we have all made mistakes in the past: now it is time to build bridges'. In discussion, the Committee noted that the issue may have become clouded by an apparent contradiction between national and international rules on the currency of judges' ratings. This called for a more detailed discussion with Dr Flinn to seek to resolve the issue in his particular case. The Chairman asked Kate Charters and Dona Crum, as the experts on the requirements that had to be met, to pursue the matter by a meeting with Dr Flinn, perhaps at the FS Nationals. The Chairman believed that, with goodwill on all sides, it should be possible to reach a common position and earnestly hoped that this could be achieved.

Action: Kate Charters and Dona Crum

38.4 Page 6, item 32 BPA sew-on badges An example of the new BPA sew-on badge, for funded teams, was tabled, along with a companion sew-on badge from UK Sport. These were both in red and blue on a white background, and more striking than the old BPA blazer-type badge with a darker colour scheme. The cost of 25 BPA badges had been approximately £100 + VAT, and UK Sport had kindly supplied their badges free of charge. There was a brief discussion about the siting of sew-on badges, with the leg and upper sleeve now popular, as chest badges could be obscured by a harness.

Completed

38.5 Page 6, item 33 World Cup Test Event in Portugal The Chairman reported that this had now been cancelled by the organisers for economic reasons.

No further action

38.6 Page 7, items 34 CF 2-way Competition; and 35 Possible new BPA Certificate These items had been actioned to Ian Marshall, who was unfortunately unable to be present tonight. They would therefore be carried forward to the next meeting.

Action: Ian Marshall

39/01 World Air Games (WAG) 2001 Parachuting

39.1 Results and debrief

The Chairman had attended the meet as Delegation Administrator from just ahead of the training camp on 14 June until the end of the competition on 1 July. The competition dates had been 24 to 30 June 2001 inclusive. The UK delegation had comprised 31 competitors and 12 accompanying persons. These had included a producer and cameraman from BBC Sport Wales who had been making a programme for television series on *People in Sport* featuring *VMax*.

Copies of the results of WAG Parachuting 2001 had been circulated. John Hitchen was preparing a report as Head of Delegation. John Smyth had written an extensive article on the meet for *Skydive Magazine*, from which he highlighted the following points.

- The spirit of the British team had been a joy to witness. This had been undaunted, and probably even strengthened, by the many organisational problems that had unfortunately come to characterise the event.
- The organisers had made a fundamental mistake in arriving to set up at the venue, Armilla Air Force Base just outside Granada in Southern Spain, only one day before competitors were due to arrive for the start of the training camp. The organisers were never able to recover from this mistake, as it was impossible fully to regain lost ground.

It was clear that set up should have begun at least a week before the start of the training period.

- Many training jumps had had to be below altitude because of air traffic problems. The manifests were slow and the number of jumps severely restricted. The Accuracy site had been so beset with technical problems that it had not been completed until the day before the start of the competition. It had then offered about 2 hours of jumping for some 200 competitors! Unfortunately, continuing major problems with the Accuracy site were to remain throughout most of the competition days.
- In 4-way FS, *XL* (in the open) and *VMax* (in the women's) had both missed out on medals by a hair's breadth, *XL* by an average score of 0.7 over ten rounds and *VMax* by an average of only 0.2. The Gold in both events had gone to the USA with average scores only 1.5 and 0.6 ahead of our respective teams. In sharp contrast, the teams in fifth place had trailed our teams by an average of 3.8 and 2.6 respectively. **The Committee congratulated *VMax* on their achievement of a new UK 4-way FS women's record with a score of 21 in Round 10.** Brian Vacher's video skills had been widely applauded. Both *XL* and *VMax* had confirmed their place in the world's premier league and had come so to near bringing home a medal for which they had worked so hard.

Action: Publicise *VMax*'s new UK record through Mag and Website

- Other results were: in 8-way FS, *VNE* had come 7th in a field of 10; in Accuracy Jeff Chandler had come 104th and Nicky Johnston 122nd in a field of 139, while Katherine Andrewes had been placed 38th and Esther Reynolds 53rd in a field of 69; in Men's Skysurfing, Clockwork Orange had come 10th of 15 teams and were a good prospect for the future; in CF 4-way Sequential, *Team X* had come 8th in a field of 10 after problems in one round, and they had also entered the 8-way speed with the Belgian team but, due to an IPC rule, the 8-way scores could not be published. Thanks were expressed to Colonel Panton of the Princess of Wales's Regiment for kindly agreeing to release Lee Andrews, a skilled and competent cameraman, to replace *Team X*'s injured Paul Denis-Smith.
- It was sad and ironic that the venue had been an Air Force Base whose security and bureaucracy had imposed entry restrictions, the most notable of which was to have precluded spectators from attending the event. The effect was one of holding the parachuting championships behind closed doors, which was the antithesis of IPC's mission to open up the sport to the public through the media.
- The superb efforts of IPC officers, notably Patrice Girardin of France (Meet Director) had retrieved a situation that may so easily have descended into chaos. The Chairman would write to thank him for his work in so ably dealing with the many organisational problems that had arisen.

Action: Chairman

There followed a discussion in which John Hitchen said that IPC had foreseen organisational problems with the meet, but had decided to go ahead with it because of a strong desire for the World Parachuting Championships to be part of the World Air Games. As it had turned out, there had been little or no synergy between the different airports at WAG as the various championships had been held in different parts of Spain. To all intents and purposes, parachuting had been a self-contained event. A sanction fee was being held by FAI until the next IPC meeting in January 2002 and the organisers in Spain would have to put forward a highly compelling argument to recover this in the light of fundamental deficiencies in the organisation of the meet. That said, it was worth noting that parachuting had reportedly been one of the better run of the WAG events. The Chairman said he was planning to attend the next IPC meeting as an observer and would seek, with UK Delegate John Hitchen and Alternate Delegate Bob Card, to ensure that the organisation of world parachuting championships was never again reduced to what had unfortunately at times bordered on a shambles.

Action: IPC Delegate and Alternate Delegate

Notwithstanding the difficulties imposed upon the competitors by organisational problems at the meet, the British delegation had been a credit to its country. The Chairman said that everyone in the BPA should have pride and respect for the competitors who had trained and competed so hard as part of the Great Britain and Northern Ireland national parachuting team.

In reply to a question from Dona Crum, John Hitchen said that the tapes from WAG should be available in due course through him, or from Kate Charters via the Judges' Committee.

Chris Clements had noted an anomaly in that British competitors had entered the Style event, yet none had met the performance criteria for selection. This had been inconsistent with the position of the Competitions Committee. The Chairman accepted responsibility for this well-intentioned mistake because of extenuating circumstances at the meet. There had been such difficulties with the Accuracy training and competition, it had been the only sure way to get these competitors in the air, rather than standing around for up to 4 days. The Chairman sought the Committee's understanding of the very difficult situation that had obtained at WAG, and proposed that this experience should be fed back into a review of selection criteria. The Committee agreed that attendance criteria for selection for the national team and performance criteria for funding should be a main agenda item for the next meeting, to which the Chairman of Council would be invited because of implications for the exchequer funding of competitions through UK Sport.

Action: Next meeting

39.2 Delegation T-shirts

The cost of the specially-designed pack of three British delegation WAG T-shirts had been met from the British Team Fund, with the intention of recovering it from sales. The Chairman reported that the funded teams had purchased the shirts as planned, however some of the unfunded competitors had been reluctant to do so notwithstanding that a delegation uniform had been required by the organisers for the opening and closing ceremonies. The Chairman reported that he had taken the decision not to ask for payment for the shirts from unfunded competitors. This gesture had been greatly appreciated as a token of the BPA's goodwill and had probably contributed to setting the tone for the positive and harmonious atmosphere that had prevailed within the British delegation throughout the meet. The Chairman believed this to be a lesson for the future, but offered to stand down if the Committee felt unable to endorse his decision. The Committee unanimously supported the Chairman in his view that provision of the shirts to unfunded competitors was a valid call on the British Team Fund. A few T-shirts remained which would be offered for sale, and members of the Committee were keen to purchase them at the normal price of £17.50 per set of three. The Chairman expressed his thanks to Sarah-Jayne Thomas for a design that looked very smart and had been appreciated by the teams.

Completed

39.3 Thanks to the Chairman

On behalf of the Committee, Chris Clements thanked John Smyth for his hard work on behalf of the British delegation as UK Delegation Administrator at WAG.

40/01 Nationals and Grand Prix 2001

40.1 Classics/CF Nationals

The Committee had for consideration a letter dated 9 July from Dave Johnston of British Skysports, Bridlington. This stated that due to a lack of entries to date he was withdrawing his offer to host this year's Classics/CF Nationals, although he would be prepared to continue if the BPA were to underwrite the cost. The Committee confirmed that Nationals were run at no cost to the BPA, therefore a subsidy could unfortunately not be offered, which meant that a change of location was necessary.

The Chairman called attention to a discussion at the Council meeting on 19 June (Council minute 39.4 refers) which had foreseen this situation. The Chairman of Council had stated that should it arise, the event should be offered to other Clubs that had originally put in a bid following which, if necessary, new bids should be sought. Wild Geese had been the only other Club originally to have bid. Their facilities were good, but the cost of running the meet in Northern Ireland over two weekends would be high and the location would be unlikely to

generate much additional attendance, which had already been identified by Bridlington as the key problem. Chris Clements, as Classics Discipline Rep, said the prime concern had to be to safeguard the future of the discipline and she agreed to discuss these issues frankly with Maggie Penny of Wild Geese. If Wild Geese agreed, Chris Clements would advise the Chairman in order that the bid form could be re-issued to all DZOs, even though time was now short. The Committee wished if possible to retain the original dates of Fridays to Sundays 3 to 5 and 10 to 12 August 2001, but conceded that a variation in dates might be unavoidable consequent on the new location that was now being sought. The Committee confirmed that the published technical rules, including the specification of team size as 4-man teams, would continue to apply.

Action: Chris Clements / Chairman

40.2 FS Nationals, Hibaldstow

The Committee had for consideration a letter dated 5 July from Steve Swallow of Target Skysports, Hibaldstow, who had unfortunately been prevented by prior commitments from attending this meeting to discuss the issues in person.

The letter sought the Committee's assistance to ensure that all rounds of the 4-way were completed before the competition was called, even if it had to continue until the second weekend. The Chairman had spoken to Steve Swallow by telephone and said that this was one of several organisational issues that would come up arising from the new two-weekend format that competitors had requested. Decisions on when to call any competition had to be left to the Meet Director in the light of consultation with all parties with full cognisance of the circumstances prevailing at the time (the number of teams registered, their standings, the weather forecast, etc). John Hitchen had been invited to be Meet Director and suggested that teams might jump in order of priority rather than in reverse order if this was agreed beforehand at the competitors' briefing. The Competitions Committee was simply not in a position to mandate in advance operational decisions such as this.

40.3 Classics/CF Grand Prix – change of venue

Chris Clements had, after consultation, arranged a change of venue for a leg of the Classics/CF Grand Prix due to be held at Border Parachute Centre, Brunton, on 14-15 July, to be transferred to Hinton, where there would be a height restriction of 6,500 ft. This switch had been necessary because of the continued closure of Brunton due to restrictions imposed to prevent the spread of foot and mouth disease. The Committee expressed its sympathy to Tim Andrewes on the continued closure of his centre, which was now the only one still completely inoperative. Chris Clements said that she had unfortunately been unable to contact Ian Marshall, CF Rep, despite several attempts. John Hitchen said he would not be free to attend, and that the role of Meet Director would be in the capable hands of Dave Emerson. John Hitchen said that it would not be possible for him to take responsibility for competition equipment, and Kieran Brady had kindly agreed to ensure that the ground-to-air video equipment would be delivered to the competition site.

The Philishave tuffet was being hired at £30/day for this leg of the Classics Grand Prix. Discussion ensued about whether the BPA should seek to buy a tuffet, perhaps this one if it was for sale, as the Philishave team had now disbanded. The Chairman concluded that, for the next 12 months, hire probably remained the better option but there would be no harm in Chris Clements enquiring of the availability and cost of the tuffet for possible purchase at a later date.

Action: Chris Clements

41/01 Skills Coaching Roadhows

41.1 FS

In a letter of 10 July, Steve Swallow had called attention to an apparent anomaly whereby a pre-Nationals Coaching Roadshow in FS had been scheduled for the weekend prior to the FS Nationals, which were being hosted by Hibaldstow, but at another Drop Zone. He had pointed out that training just prior to the Nationals was, by custom and practice, a benefit expected by the host Drop Zone and important for the overall economics of the meet.

The Competitions Committee now saw the point that there had been an unfortunate juxtaposition of dates. This had been entirely unintentional, in fact it had been an accident only realised on receipt of the letter from Hibaldstow. Dona Crum explained that Langar had kindly offered to host an FS Coaching Roadshow at an earlier date. That date had been impossible for the coaches, who had requested that a later date be arranged. It was – but this had had the unintentional effect of closing the gap between the Roadshow and the Nationals such that they were now on successive weekends and the Roadshow had become, in effect, a pre-Nationals Roadshow. The Chairman had already apologised and explained this to Steve Swallow by telephone, and he had expressed the hope that Target would not allow student or tandem operations adversely to affect the competitions weekends.

Finally, Steve Swallow had set out his concern that Target Skysports had not been invited to host a Coaching Roadshow. Some Drop Zones had approached the BPA following publicity in *Skydive Magazine* and the Chairman had explained that all Drop Zones willing to host a Roadshow would be given the opportunity in due course. He was grateful that Hibaldstow supported the concept of the Coaching Roadshows and their interest had been noted for a future event.

Dona Crum reported that she was liaising with Kieran Brady over the arrangements for a FS Roadshow at Strathallan's forthcoming 'extravaganza' event.

Action: Dona Crum

41.2 Camera Operators' Roadshows

Carl Williams (Camera Roadshow Co-ordinator) said that coaching for Camera Operators would be included in a CF Skills Roadshow to take place at Hinton later this month. The coach would be Paul Denis-Smith of *Team X*. He was also liaising with Tony Danbury and Kieran Brady about a camera operators' Roadshow session at Strathallan. The Chairman said that Brian Vacher of *VMax* had very kindly offered his services as a camera operators' coach when the rest of the team were coaching FS. Lee Andrews, who had jumped as part of *Team X* at WAG, had also offered his services for a CF Coaching Roadshow in September.

41.3 General

The Chairman thanked the Discipline Reps for their hard work in arranging Skills Coaching Roadshow programmes in each of the disciplines. This was an ongoing activity that he hoped would grow from strength to strength. He confirmed that coaches were entitled to claim expenses from the BPA comprising car mileage allowance of 33p/mile plus £25 per 24 hour subsistence, including overnight accommodation.

Ongoing

42/01 Prioritization of Action Plan Targets

The available budget from the UK Sport exchequer grant for competitions was £25K compared with a bid of £60K, leaving a shortfall of £35K. The Committee therefore discussed priorities and pro rata reductions in budget. The Chairman said that domestic competitions would cost about £10K. This would leave £15K for everything else.

The top priority was training international judges and Dona Crum and Karla Cole were assured of BPA funding to attend an international judges' seminar in Germany this autumn. A revised budget for this was £2K. Coaching Roadshows for juniors and intermediates would be re-budgeted at £10K, camera operators' coaching at £1K, and coaching for senior teams (ie, teams that had achieved medals at the Nationals) at £2K – this would be to help to meet the cost of a top international coach when the teams were at training camps abroad, and the concept would be discussed informally with teams by Dona Crum at the FS Nationals.

Action: Dona Crum

The Chairman said that the overall budget was now very tight and he therefore proposed, with the Committee's full support, to ask the Council to agree that the BPA should provide the £5K to fund *XL* to compete in the World Games in Akita, Japan, to relieve pressure on the rest of the competitions budget.

Action: Chairman to propose at next Council meeting

43/01 Judging matters

The Chairman read aloud a mail from Kate Charters who was unable to attend. In this, she had noted that it had been a problem to organise judges for the FS Grand Prix at Hibaldstow which had been held one week late, over the weekend 23 /24 June, due to bad weather over the original weekend. John Hitchen said that it was the DZ at the request of team leaders, rather than himself and Karla Cole, that had re-scheduled the event. He had understood the rescheduling to have taken place only after consultation with Kate Charters over the availability of judges as neither Karla Cole nor he had been available during the following weekend. There appeared to have been a breakdown in communication with Kate Charters that had unfortunately left her with a problem over a matter that he had understood to have been resolved before the new date had been settled. As it was, 2 intermediate and 4 junior teams had attended on the following weekend, with Bob Charters, who had kindly re-arranged his work commitments at short notice, as the only Judge. The Committee expressed its gratitude to Bob Charters for his help in these difficult circumstances.

Kate Charters had made a reference to an expenses claim form from judges' training that had taken place at the Scottish Nationals. The Chairman explained that the basis of the query was that a claim form had been received at the office which had not been countersigned by Kate Charters. The matter had now been resolved. Judges' training at the Scottish Nationals had gone well, and both Karla Cole and Dona Crum had been sent information on the FAI international judges' seminar due to take place in Germany, although Dona Crum might unfortunately not be available on the date. The Chairman reconfirmed that both would be fully sponsored by the BPA to attend.

John Hitchen said that he was minded to stand down as an FS judge in an effort to promote greater harmony among the FS judges. Another judge had indicated that they felt like doing the same. The Chairman asked that John Hitchen, and any other judge, should not take such a decision without first discussing the matter with Kate Charters.

Action: John Hitchen, Kate Charters

44/01 Club Representatives' visits

Chris Clements had made a Club Rep visit to the Devon and Somerset Parachute School, at which selection and funding criteria for the national team had been raised with her as an issue. The Committee had already decided to include this as a main agenda item at the next meeting (minute 39.1). Kieran Brady had made a Club Rep visit to Target Skysports, Hibaldstow, during a leg of the FS Grand Prix, where issues about the attendance of Members of the Competitions Committee at meets had been raised, together with matters concerning the allocation of Coaching Roadshows. The Chairman had already replied on behalf of the Committee, with a copy circulated, the content of which the Committee endorsed. The question of Coaching Roadshows had been further discussed earlier in this meeting (minute 41.1).

45/01 Number of rounds at World Championships

Chris Clements said she had heard that IPC planned to reduce the number of rounds in FS, and if so believed that the proposal should be opposed. John Hitchen (IPC Delegate) confirmed that IPC was considering reducing the number of rounds for all disciplines, the alternative being to restrict the number of qualifying nations. This was due for further discussion at the next IPC meeting in January 2002, which the Chairman planned to attend as an observer.

46/01 Date of next meeting

Wednesday 29 August 2001 at 1830, at the BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester.

The meeting closed at 2230.

Distribution:

Competitions Committee and other Members of Council, Vice Presidents, Staff, Editor.