

British Parachute Association

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Competitions Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Wednesday 29 May 2002 at 1830

at the BPA Offices, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester

Present:	John Smyth	-	Competitions Chairman / Discipline Rep: Classics
	Paul Applegate	-	Discipline Rep: New Age
	Ian Marshall	-	Discipline Rep: CF
	Jim White	-	Discipline Rep: FS
In attendance:	John Hitchen	-	NCSO
	Nigel Holland	-	Asst to Discipline Rep, New Age
	Martin Shuttleworth	-	National Administrator
	Lucie Wood	-	Development Officer
Apologies for absence:	Kate Charters	-	Judges' Co-ordinator

Item Minute

32/02 Minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2002

Paul Applegate proposed, and Jim White seconded, a motion that the minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2002 be approved as a correct record.

Approved

33/02 Matters arising

33.1 Page 1, item 25.1, Classics World Cup of Champions (Slovakia: 27 July to 3 August 2002)

None of the athletes invited had to date indicated that they were in a position to take up the invitation. It therefore appeared that the UK would unfortunately not be represented at this meet.

No further action

33.2 Page 2, item 25.3, Classics Central Regionals

The Chairman reported that Andy Paddock, CCI of Silver Stars, had said he would enquire officially whether it might be possible for Silver Stars to host this meet, possibly towards the end of September. He had yet to come back on this, and the office would check with him on the latest position.

Action: BPA Office

33.3 Page 2, item 25.4, Accommodation for the UK team at Gap, France, for the WPC, 7-14 September 2003

The Committee was pleased to note that, following Council approval, a reservation for 25 twin-bedded rooms for bed and breakfast during the competition week and the preceding training week, had been made with the Hotel Carina in Gap. The Committee noted that the hotel had requested payment a deposit of approximately £1,800 in February 2003. However, after discussion, the Committee considered that it might be wise to pay part of the deposit, say 10%, now. This was to help to ensure there was a proper contract in place, which was

desirable because once the likely scarcity of local accommodation during the World Championships became more generally realised, it was foreseeable that competitors from other nations might try to book the same rooms.

Action: BPA Office, after ratification by the Council

33.4 Page 2, item 25.5 Swoop Canopies competition

The Chairman reported that he had spoken to Steve Swallow of Target Skysports, Hibaldstow, who was in negotiation with the relevant authorities over planning approval for a water trench. The outcome was awaited with interest.

Ongoing

33.5 Page 3, item 25.8: Updated BPA Anti-Doping Policy

The Committee noted that, following ratification by the Council on 23 April, the updated BPA Anti-Doping Policy and Rules as set out in BPA Form 220 were now in force.

33.6 Page 5, minute 28 Delegated authority

The Council, at its meeting on 23 April, had formally delegated authority to the Competitions Committee to deal with routine competitions matters, excluding any involving additional expenditure or changes of policy, without the need to await formal ratification of decisions, whilst at the same time the Committee remains fully accountable to the Council. The Committee welcomed this decision, which would enable it to deal with routine matters in a more timely and efficient manner.

34/02 National and Regional Competitions 2002

34.1 Nationals 2002

34.1.1 New Age Nationals

Dona Crum had called attention to a statement in the published rules (reproduced from the FAI/IPC rules) that there would be a minimum of five judges. The Committee noted that this was not applicable to the Nationals, for which there should be up to a maximum of three judges. An amendment sheet would be produced to state this. The amendment sheet would also confirm that each event was to be held over 5 rounds, as stated in the introduction to the rules but contradicted by the 7 rounds stated in the FAI/IPC rules.

Action: BPA Office

34.1.2 Other Nationals

Arrangements for the Nationals in FS and CF/Classics were in place and progressing to plan.

34.2 Regionals 2002

Judges' reports on the FS Southern Regionals, Classics Southern Regionals and CF Southern Regionals had been circulated and were received by the Committee with thanks.

34.2.1 FS Southern Regionals: Headcorn, 11-12 May

This meet had, by all accounts, been nothing short of superb. With 22 teams competing, it had been the largest Regional competition for many years. The hospitality extended to competitors and guests by Headcorn, which had included a Saturday night barbecue and disco organised by Mick Danby, had been excellent. The Chairman read aloud a draft letter he had prepared to Pete Sizer (DZ Operator) to thank him and his team for hosting the event, and to express the hope that the success of this meet would encourage Headcorn to remain on the competitions circuit and bid not only for Regionals, but also for Nationals, when the bid forms for next year's competitions were issued. The Committee unanimously supported the Chairman's letter to Pete Sizer.

34.2.2 Classics Central Regionals: Netheravon, 11-12 May

A comprehensive Chief Judges' Report from Tony Makepeace had been circulated and read with interest. In his report, Tony Makepeace had noted that in the senior event, there had been a huge difference between the highest and lowest scoring competitors. He believed that this did not encourage newcomers or allow grassroots competitors adequately to demonstrate their performance. He had therefore recommended to the Committee that an

additional category should be introduced to remedy this. In the discussion that followed, the Chairman recalled that there had been calls before for the introduction of a 'Masters' category. However, the Committee considered that it would be unwise to introduce an additional category at this time because, in aggregate, there were so few competitors. The recommendation set out in the Chief Judges' Report therefore failed to find a proposer.

The Chairman read aloud a letter recently received from Jeff Chandler, who had been a competitor at this meet, and which he had asked to be circulated to the full Council. In the letter, Jeff Chandler had expressed his concern that a catch-up had taken place, and had asked that two other competitors who Jeff Chandler believed had benefited from this should have their scores disallowed. Jeff Chandler had also complained that a judge was a partner of a competitor. The complaint was set against the background of Jeff Chandler's unconnected disagreement with the judge who happened to have been a competitor at a meet some two years ago. That matter had long since been settled and was now history, although Jeff Chandler's letter contained a number of inaccuracies relating to it.

After discussion, the Committee set out its position as follows. There was no reason to assume that the decisions taken at the Classics Southern Regionals 2002 were not duly constituted and made in the prescribed manner, by the Chief Judge in association with the Meet Director. Therefore, there was no basis for the Committee to seek to take away another competitor's scores as Jeff Chandler had suggested. The Committee did, however, share Jeff Chandler's view that, in principle, excessive catch-up should not be encouraged at competitions. When there was catch-up, it was at the decision of the Chief Judge in association with the Meet Director, after consultation with the competitors.

With regard to the use of Judges whose partners are competitors, skydiving was a small community in which just about everyone knew each other. It was not unusual for couples to participate in the sport - indeed, many partnerships had started precisely because of a shared passion for skydiving! Therefore, it would arguably be rather an extreme move to seek to impose restrictions of the nature that Jeff Chandler had suggested. Further, it might be seen to cast doubt on the skills or integrity of our judges, who did a marvellous and often thankless job for the Association. Judging decisions are not made by one judge alone, and in the case to which Jeff Chandler had referred, the individual was a trainee judge, fully under the supervision of the Chief Judge.

The Committee's decision was, therefore, that the results of the Classics Southern Regionals would stand and that no new restrictions would be imposed on the deployment of judges.

The Chairman would send a letter of thanks, on behalf of the Committee, to Mike Smith and his team at Netheravon for kindly hosting the competition, and for their help and hospitality during the event.

Action: Chairman

34.2.3 CF Central Regionals: Langar, 18-19 May

Ian Marshall reported that only two teams had registered, together with a scratch team of local jumpers although they were intermediates. In his Chief Judges' Report, Bob Charters had questioned whether the disappointing attendance might have been because of a clash of dates with a CF Coaching Roadshow at Netheravon. However, Ian Marshall confirmed there been no clash of dates because the CF Coaching Roadshow at Netheravon had in fact taken place over the following weekend, 24-25 May (minute 36.2). The Committee endorsed Bob Charters' thanks to Dave and Angela Hickling at the DZ for their hospitality and for hosting this event.

34.2.4 New Age Central Regionals: Target Skysports, Hibaldstow, 25-26 May

Due to bad weather, this meet had been re-arranged for the weekend of 15-16 June.

35/02 International competitions: World Cup/European Championships , Empuriabrava, Spain: 4-13 October 2002

35.1 UK delegation

Bulletin 1 had today been received through the Royal Aero Club. This was a combined event, comprising a World Cup and European Championship in FS and CF, together with a European Championship in the New Age Artistic Disciplines. Flights to Spain this October, if booked now, were extremely cheap because it was the end of the holiday season - fares as low as £10.50 one way had been reported on the Internet. The Committee therefore wished to encourage as many competitors as possible to represent the UK: up to four UK teams could be entered for each event. All entries would be self-funded.

To date, FS teams *Quicksilver* (D P Tyler), *VNE* (A Pook) and *VMax* (E Groucott) had expressed an interest in taking part. CF *Team X* was also considering entering but its position was not yet clear. The Chairman hoped that FS team *XL* might also take part.

The Committee asked the office to circulate Bulletin 1 to the captains of all the teams noted above. The covering note would say that the BPA Office would be co-ordinating the entry of all teams in the UK delegation, and that the entry and any associated fees should be paid by each competitor to the BPA, who would make a bank transfer to Spain to cover the entire delegation, and thereby save considerably on bank charges. Individual teams should not register direct with Spain, but through the BPA Office.

Action: BPA Office

The Chairman made an offer that, if the size of the delegation turned out to warrant it, and the Committee and competitors agreed, he would be prepared to be the Team Manager on a self-funded basis.

It was noted that Bulletin 1 said nothing about accommodation, which was therefore taken to mean that competitors would need to arrange their own. The good news was that, unlike the situation around Gap, local accommodation was plentiful.

35.2 New Age judges at World Cup

The Chairman said he understood from Dona Crum that she had been invited to be a New Age judge at the World Cup. He had asked her to clarify with the Chief Judge that this was a formal invitation for her to join the Panel. If so, it meant that IPC would cover her entry fee. Upon receiving clarification at the next meeting, the Committee would be able to consider the possibility of the BPA paying her air fare and travel expenses in accordance with its policy of supporting qualified international judges from the UK in maintaining their ratings.

Action: Next meeting

35.3 CF Crew festival

Ian Marshall reported that a CF crew festival would be held at Empuriabrava at the end of the World Cup. Over 100 people had expressed an interest and bookings were now being made. The sponsored event included accommodation and food, and the Cypres rule had been waived.

36/02 Skills Coaching Roadshows for Junior and Intermediate Athletes

36.1 FS

Jim White (Discipline Rep, FS) was delighted to report that the first FS Roadshow of the season had been held at the North West Parachute Centre, Cark, Cumbria, over the weekend of 11-12 May. The coaches had been Martin Soulsby, Ian Stevens, Ian Matthews and Kev Sargent of *VNE* and Liz Groucott of *VMax*. 35 juniors and intermediates had attended to improve their skills over a glorious weekend of fine weather. Participants had come with experience ranging from 55 jumps to 350. Coaching had also been provided to two more experienced 4-ways, reviewing their video and dirt dives. Conditions had been so good that 138 jumps had been made - 12 x one on one, 8 x 3 way, 16 x 4 way. At the end of the weekend there had even been a competition between two 13 ways! Special thanks were due to the coaches, who had done a fantastic job and all the staff at Cark, especially Dennis

and Manifest who had really helped to make things happen, and also Rob Colpus. The Chairman thanked Jim White for arranging the event, and for managing to attend this as well as the FS Southern Regionals at Headcorn which had been held over the same weekend.

Jim White reported that the final FS Coaching Roadshow of this season had now been arranged for the weekend of 31 August - 1 September at Sibson, coached by XL.

36.2 CF

Ian Marshall (Discipline Rep, CF) reported that a forecast of the worst weather this year meant that, unfortunately, the turnout on the first CF Skills Coaching Roadshow of the season, which had been held at Netheravon over the weekend of 24-25 May, had been poor. Seven first timers had attended, together with twelve others of varying experience. Seven coaches had been available, plus two camera persons. Ten others had registered but had not turned up, probably due to the weather.

The first three days had been a washout due to poor weather, but plenty of briefings had been carried out and videos shown. Jumping had taken place on the Monday (*sic*). All the novices had got in at least three jumps in each. Everyone had done well in the limited time available, and the day had finished with an eight stack attempt with two female novices - it was pleasing to see more women coming into CF nowadays - that had built to seven. It looked as though the first-timers had got the CF bug and would be coming to the next Roadshow to complete their CF1. There had been no wraps or cutaways.

Ian Marshall recorded his thanks to Netheravon for hosting the event, and the staff for keeping the canteen and bar open on a hopeless forecast, and to the pilot Nick O'Brian for flying around the storm clouds. Thanks were also due to *Team X* and *The Red Devils* for loaning canopies.

Ian Marshall said he was now working on a date for the next CF Coaching Roadshow, to be held at Langar.

36.3 New Age / Artistic disciplines

Nigel Holland (Assistant to Discipline Rep: New Age) reported that Sibson had asked that the dates of their New Age Coaching Roadshow should be 13-14 July, rather than the weekend before the Nationals, because of the availability of coaches. The Roadshow had been duly arranged for 13-14 July. Around 10 coaches had been approached, and most had confirmed their attendance. Nigel Holland said that this may sound like a lot of coaches, but some of the disciplines required one-on-one coaching. After discussion, the Chairman acknowledged that, this being the inaugural New Age Roadshow, it was something of a test event. However, to avoid a budget overspend, he believed it to be important for other Roadshows, some of which would inevitably be held away from the coaches' home DZ, that the number of coaches should be restricted to two per discipline (ie, two each for freefly, freestyle and skysurf). NWPC Cark had also expressed an interest in hosting a New Age Roadshow, following its recent highly successful FS Roadshow (minute 36.1).

Nigel Holland said he hoped that a reasonable number of jumpers would attend the Sibson Roadshow for coaching. The Chairman noted that FS Roadshows had proven to be extremely popular, whereas Classics Roadshows had generally been very sparsely attended by the juniors and intermediates for whom they had been designed. It would be interesting to note how attendance at the first New Age Roadshow would fare on this scale. The Committee would review plans for future New Age Roadshows in the light of experience of the inaugural one at Sibson.

Nigel Holland said that he had also considered the importance of promoting safety at the Roadshow, and had therefore arranged for Time Out to be there to give demonstrations.

Nigel Holland went on to report that Extreme Sports Channel TV wanted to cover both the New Age Coaching Roadshow and the New Age Nationals at Sibson. Lucie Wood reported that the BBC had also expressed an interest. The Chairman was delighted at this media interest. He asked that both contacts should be put in touch with Sue Meacock at the DZ because it was important for DZ management to be responsible for any contractual

arrangements with the media. The BPA would support and encourage whatever media involvement DZ management considered appropriate. John Hitchen suggested that top performers might be invited to the Nationals to help to sustain media interest. Nigel Holland said that the Extreme Sports Channel had asked whether he might like to be involved in presenting their coverage.

The Chairman and Paul Applegate thanked Nigel Holland for making such a good start to his involvement with the Committee's work, and for the motivation and effort he had so clearly demonstrated.

36.4 Skills Coaching Roadshows FAQs

The office had prepared a draft new Form that set out some frequently asked questions about Skills Coaching Roadshows, including the role of the host DZ, about which one coach had enquired. Jim White proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that this new Form be approved.

Carried unanimously

37/02 Coaching for senior teams

The Chairman confirmed that this was progressing well, with teams *XL*, *VMax*, *VNE* and *4-Pak* all having completed successful training camps.

Ongoing

38/02 Anti-doping issues - update

38.1 UK Sport event contact sheet

The Committee decided that the office should complete and return UK Sport's Anti Doping Directorate's event contact sheet ahead of each of the Nationals. (This was to file precise information on time, venue, location and meet size for use by UK Sport's contracted anti-doping testing agency, should it decide to select the meet for random testing.)

Action: BPA Office

38.2 Competitor anti-doping briefings

The Committee decided that responsibility for competitor anti-doping briefings rested with the Chief Judge in association with the Meet Director. It had been reassuring to note from reports received that such briefings were already routinely taking place.

38.3 Permissible alcohol level

A number of competitors had asked for an official statement from the Association on the permissible alcohol level for competitive skydiving. This had generated much discussion, and Dr John Carter, Medical Adviser to the BPA, had been consulted.

After discussion, the Committee decided that the BPA's position on alcohol in competition skydiving would remain as stated in the Operations Manual, Section 11: Medical, paragraph 2.2 which reads: *No parachutist will take any form of alcoholic drink before he/she has completed parachuting for the day. Persons deemed to be under the influence of alcoholic drink will not be permitted to parachute.* Since this represented no change from the status quo, no motion needed to be proposed or voted upon.

38.4 New form: Anti-doping agreement for team funding

The Committee approved the second draft of a new form 'Anti-doping agreement for team funding'. In due course, this would be issued for signature by each member of each funded team along with the usual competitors' agreements.

39/02 Judging matters

A written report from Kate Charters (Judges' Co-ordinator) had been circulated. The report confirmed that it had been a fairly good start to the season, especially for FS. Four new trainee judges had so far shown great promise.

The Office was running low on its stock of judges' logbooks and had asked for advice on whether a different format - perhaps a ring binder rather than permanently bound - might be better for the new printing. The Committee decided to hold consideration of this, and any other possible variations, until the next meeting, when Kate Charters would be present.

Action: Next Meeting

The Chairman read aloud a personal letter and a letter to the Council he had received from former judge Karen Hickmott, whose non-jumping Associate Membership had been withdrawn by the Council last year under the provisions of the Operations Manual following her conviction in the courts for the possession of a class A controlled drug with the intent to supply. The Chairman said this was a matter for the full Council to consider. His own opinion was that she had been a competent judge, she had been punished by the due legal process, and according to her letter had been rehabilitated. He believed that the letter demonstrated genuine remorse, and hoped that members of this Committee, in their capacity as Council Members, would consider her request for re-instatement as a judge with some sympathy. It was understood that her request had been made with the support and encouragement of other judges who would be glad to see her re-instated.

Action: BPA Council

40/02 Membership survey 2002

The results of the Membership Survey 2002, which had been analysed by Lucie Wood, had been circulated to the Council. This would be discussed in full at the next Council meeting, but now was an appropriate time, on behalf of the Competitions Committee, to thank Lucie Wood for her hard work in analysing the returned questionnaires. A glance at the analysis suggested that, so far as could be discerned from the structure, format and content of the questionnaire, the work of the Competitions Committee continued to chime with the Membership. By extrapolation of the survey returns, it appeared that just over one quarter of the Membership were competitors. It was pleasing to note the high level of support for our National Teams and for the Skills Coaching Roadshows - which was clearly a successful and well-supported concept - from across the entire membership base.

41/02 Date of next meeting

Wednesday 17 July 2002 at 1830 at the BPA Office, Leicester.

The meeting closed at 2035.