

# 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

**Wednesday 9 June 2004 at 1830**

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

<b>Present:</b>	John Smyth	-	Competitions Chairman
	Chris Allen	-	Chairman of Council
	Paul Applegate	-	Asst Discipline Rep: Artistic
	Nigel Holland	-	Discipline Rep: Artistic
	Ian Marshall	-	Discipline Rep: CF
	Andy Scott	-	Discipline Rep: FS
<b>In attendance:</b>	Tony Butler	-	Technical Officer
	John Hitchen	-	NCSO
	Martin Shuttleworth	-	Secretary-General
<b>Observer:</b>	Ian Matthews		
<b>Apology for absence:</b>	Kate Charters	-	Judges' Co-ordinator
	Brian Vacher	-	Discipline Rep: Canopy Piloting
	Jim White	-	Discipline Rep: Classics

---

### Item Minute

#### 36/04 Minutes

Andy Scott proposed, and Ian Marshall seconded, a motion that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 May 2004 be approved as a correct record, subject to the addition of Ian Marshall's name to the apologies for absence.

**Approved**

Paul Applegate questioned whether it was correct to record apologies from absence from Nigel Holland, as Nigel Holland had not been a current BPA Member at the time (although he had since renewed his membership). The Chairman said the minutes should stand, but the point should be recorded.

#### 37/04 Matters arising

##### 37.1 Page 2, minute 27.4 Compatibility of WADA and UK Sport Drug Free Sport Codes

UK Sport's Drug Free Sport Directorate had not yet replied to the Committee's enquiry because they had said they were under great pressure of work in preparation for the Olympics. They had said that they would reply as soon as they could.

##### 37.2 Page 2, minute 28.1, FS 8-way Grand Prix, Langar, 24-25 April 2004

It had been confirmed to teams that this had been a single event.

##### 37.3 Page 2, minute 28.2 Change of date of the Cark FS 4-way Grand Prix to 28-30 August 2004

A letter from David Hickling (BPS Langar) dated 25 May had been circulated. It concerned the clash of dates between the rescheduled 4-way FS Grand Prix at NWPC Cark and the build-up weekend to *Brit Chicks*.

The Committee confirmed that it had not agreed lightly to Stuart Morris's (NWPC Cark) request for a change of date from 5-6 June to 28-30 August 2004. It had been satisfied that the circumstances were exceptional in that he had been let down twice by aircraft providers. The Committee had therefore been faced with the dilemma of either accepting Stuart Morris's proposal for rescheduling, or honouring the published competition dates with an aircraft that would simply not have been appropriate for the meet.

The Committee confirmed that it had carefully checked the calendar and was indeed aware of the clash of the new dates with the *Brit Chicks* build-up weekend. However, its assessment was that, with more 4-way FS Grand Prix meets this year (now six instead of three), the impact of the clash would be lessened proportionately and therefore the Committee did not foresee a significant problem. The Committee certainly had no intention whatsoever of seeking to undermine the *Brit Chicks* build-up weekend.

Andy Scott and the BPA Office confirmed that they had both advised Lesley Gale of the change of date at Cark within a day or so of our meeting, as the Magazine copy deadline was looming.

The Chairman said that he would reply to David Hickling's letter in the light of this discussion.

**Action: Chairman**

#### **38/04 Nationals and Grand Prix competitions 2004**

##### **38.1 FS 4-way Grand Prix: Headcorn, 8-9 May 2004**

Andy Scott (FS rep) reported that 24 teams had entered. Team *Misstral* had won the selection for the women's 4-way FS team to represent the UK at the WPC 2004, and the Chairman confirmed that the team had subsequently accepted a formal invitation to do so.

##### **38.2 CF & Classics Grand Prix: St Andrews, 15-16 May 2004**

This had been a disappointing meet with only five Classics competitors entering. The BPA had now purchased a tuffet but it was proving expensive to transport. One of the competitors had taken it up from South Cerney to St Andrews at a cost to the BPA of the hire of a van and petrol. The Committee agreed to re-imburse these at actual cost. The Committee decided to try to find a suitable trailer for transport of the tuffet in future, which John Hitchen believed it should be possible to purchase for around £500 to £600.

**Action: All**

Meanwhile, the Office would check if Bridlington still had its own tuffet for use at the Classics Nationals (answer: it does). The Office would ask Strathallan, who currently held the tuffet, whether, in lieu of a hire charge for use of the tuffet at the Scottish Nationals, they would kindly be able to arrange transport of the tuffet to Black Knights at Cockerham for the next Classics Grand Prix to be held on 17-18 July.

**Action: BPA Office**

The Chairman said that the cost of transporting the tuffet had been something to which the Committee should probably, looking back, have given more thought. Chris Allen suggested that the cost of transporting the tuffet might be made the responsibility of the host club in bid forms in future years. Tony Butler observed that the Skills Coaching Roadshows in Classics did not appear to be meeting their stated objective of encouraging more competitors in the Classics disciplines.

##### **38.3 FS 4-way and 8-way Grand Prix: Strathallan, 29-31 May 2004**

Ian Matthews reported that 8 x 4-way and 2 x 8-way teams had entered. It had been a very well organised meet. Sadly, there had been an unfortunate incident on the Sunday evening at the end of the competition. Ian Matthews and Liz Groucott had attended as coaches, and been made to feel very welcome, although the Club had not known in advance that they would be coming. Andy Scott said he would do his best to make known to Centres in advance which coaches were expected.

**Action: Andy Scott**

No results had yet been circulated, and the Chairman said that the debrief on this item would be revisited at the next meeting.

**Action: Next meeting**

#### **38.4 Speed 8 Nationals: PPC Sibson, Saturday 2 and Sunday 3 October 2004**

The draft rules, prepared by Andy Scott, had been circulated. The Chairman thanked him for his hard work in compiling rules for this hybrid discipline. Andy Scott proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, that the rules be accepted and published. This carried unanimously.

**Action: BPA Office**

#### **39/04 Canopy piloting**

The Chairman summarised the position from the last meeting (minute 30), that this Committee was keen to issue a bid form and rules for a Canopy Piloting Nationals. The documents had been drafted by Brian Vacher and approved by this Committee, and were awaiting consideration by the Council at its next meeting on 15 June 2004. This Committee was keen for the UK to take a lead in Canopy Piloting and become the pre-eminent nation in Europe and a serious contender on the world stage.

The Chairman said that he strongly believed that it was right for the Competitions Committee to take a lead in holding competitions with the best athletes in order that their skills could percolate down through Clubs & Centres to help to improve the canopy piloting skills of other jumpers. The Chairman recognised, however, that there were a number of important safety, training and insurance issues, and was delighted that Chris Allen, Chairman of Council, was present tonight to outline these issues.

Chris Allen said that the enthusiasm and commitment of the Competitions Committee was laudable but he urged those around the table to take a broader view, as he was obliged to do as Chairman of Council, and to consider the introduction of canopy piloting competitions from the perspective of the Association as a whole.

Chris Allen then tabled an outline of a proposed new progression system in canopy handling that was due to be put for approval to the Safety and Training Committee at its next meeting tomorrow evening. It comprised four levels, from CH1 up to CH4. He said it was important to start to roll out this new progression system before the first Canopy Piloting Nationals were held. Indeed, the Canopy Piloting Nationals were an integral part of the top end (CH4) of the progression system. To hold a Nationals before the new progression system had been implemented would risk jumpers, especially newer or younger jumpers, seeking to emulate high-level canopy handling skills they would see demonstrated at a National meet. If they sought to do this with no structured training system in place, they could risk serious injury or worse. It was all too easy to see skilled canopy piloting and to assume, wrongly, that it was the canopy that enabled such manoeuvres to be made, whereas it was in fact the highly developed skills of a trained and experienced canopy pilot. The new category system would stop jumpers attempting high performance landings until they had had suitable and sufficient tuition. To hold a Canopy Piloting Nationals this year would therefore, quite simply, be putting the cart before the horse.

Chris Allen said it was important for the Association to address not just the higher level (CH4) competitions end of canopy handling, but also the introductory and intermediate levels that underpinned it. The BPA survey of new 'A' licence holders had revealed an almost unanimous demand for structured and more widely available tuition in canopy handling. The CH2 level might even lead more jumpers to help to revitalise the discipline of accuracy jumping. Those already sufficiently skilled in canopy piloting would come into the system at CH4 and would not have to go through the underpinning levels.

With regard to insurance, Chris Allen said it would be up to the Insurance Committee to take the final decision. However, in his opinion, it would be necessary for competitors and officials (including judges, etc) to hold personal accident and third party insurance to provide cover up to appropriate limits, and thereby avoid any exposure of the BPA insurance policy.

Chris Allen then turned to the issue of selection of a UK team to enter the second World Cup in Canopy Piloting to be held at the Florida Skydiving Centre from 29 October to 3 November

2004. He said that Nationals had never been used to select the British team for a World Cup (in contrast to a World Parachute Championship) and he suggested that the UK Pro Swoop Tour, which was already in the diary, should be used for this purpose.

In summary, Chris Allen urged the Competitions Committee to take a broader view and look holistically at the introduction of canopy piloting across the Association, considering not only the competitions perspective - which was a vital component, at the higher end - but at other aspects too. By doing so, the Association could move forward in a planned and structured fashion as a unified whole, and 2005 Canopy Piloting Nationals would form an integral part of the roll-out of the new Canopy Handling progression system.

There followed questions and extensive discussion of the points raised by Chris Allen. The precise way in which the UK Pro Swoop tour could be used for selection was considered, with the suggestion of either earmarking a particular weekend for selection, or of evaluating participants' performance on a continuing basis. No decision was reached at this stage, and Brian Vacher (CP Rep) would be consulted.

Although there were differences in emphasis in the discussion, Tony Butler pointed out that there was in fact a high measure of underlying agreement around the table.

Paul Applegate said that, notwithstanding the Competitions Committee's strong desire to build momentum on canopy piloting competitions, which he supported, he considered that Chris Allen had presented convincing arguments. Paul Applegate therefore proposed that the UK Pro Swoop Tour should be used to select the British Team for the 2004 Canopy Piloting World Cup from those at CH4-equivalent level, and that the first UK Canopy Piloting Nationals should be held next year (2005) as part of the roll-out programme for the BPA's new progression system in canopy handling. Andy Scott seconded the motion. The vote was:

For - 4                      Against - 1, by proxy (B Vacher, proxy put forward by J Smyth)                      **Carried**

The Chairman confirmed that, in line with the Committee's decision, it would **not** now be presenting a case to the Council for a British Open Nationals in Canopy Piloting in 2004. This would be on the understanding that Canopy Piloting Nationals in 2005 would be an integral part of the roll-out of the BPA Canopy Handling Progression System.

In answer to a question from the Chairman, Chris Allen said it was a matter for the Competitions Committee to decide whether formally to appoint a Head of UK Delegation to the Second World Cup in Canopy Piloting in Florida in October 2004. John Smyth confirmed that he had offered his services in this capacity on a self-funded basis, and that Kate Charters was keen to go as a trainee CP judge.

Ian Matthews reported that he had contacted Sunpath and Symbiosis Suits, both of whom had indicated that they would be willing to sponsor windblades (reference minute 32). The Chairman thanked Ian Matthews and the companies concerned for this generous offer, and asked him to convey to them that the BPA would be in a position to take it up next year, as there would not now be a Canopy Piloting Nationals in 2004. Alternatively, any sponsored windblades received could be kept in store for the Canopy Piloting Nationals in 2005.

**Action: Ian Matthews**

#### **40/04 Skills Coaching Roadshows for Juniors and Intermediates**

Andy Scott reported that FS coaching had taken place at the 2 x 4-way and 2 x 8-way Grand Prix meets held to date this season. Feedback had been very positive and encouraging.

Ian Marshall reported that two coaches and two trainee coaches ran a CF Coaching Roadshow at St Andrews. The next CF Coaching Roadshow would be on 15-16 July at Black Knights, Cockerham. 30 coached jumps had been made at St Andrews. It had proved to be expensive for the BPA, however, as the coaches had had to drive to Scotland from south and south west England. They could not fly because the kit they had to take had been too heavy.

The Chairman reminded Discipline Reps to seek always to ensure that coaches were located as near as possible to the Drop Zones hosting Coaching Roadshows in order to minimise on the cost of travel expenses. Ian Marshall said that he had sought to do this, but no coaches based nearer to the Drop Zone had been available on this occasion.

Tony Butler reported his concern, as a cheque signatory, of a significant increase in expenses payments for competitions over the last few years. He was not referring to the growth in the volume of expenses, which was only to be expected in the light of the increased number of competitions and coaching roadshow events that had been held, but to what appeared to be the increasing number of high individual claims. The Chairman said he had reviewed these claims and a number appeared to be quite disproportionate to the number of members who benefited from that expenditure. Tony Butler said that the ideal arrangement was for the coach or judge to live nearby and not to put in a claim at all.

Chris Allen suggested to the Committee that, in accordance with the demand-led policy that it already had in place for the allocation of events, budget allocation might also be demand-led. The available budget might therefore be allocated by discipline, according to the relative demand for events in each.

The Chairman said it was important to maintain the Committee's policy of parity of esteem for all disciplines and equality of opportunity for jumpers and Clubs & Centres throughout the length and breadth of the UK. That said, there was a clear need to exercise tight budgetary control and to contain expenses to the minimum. This was generally the case already, although there had been one or two high - but valid - claims going through where people had had to travel almost from one end of the country to the other. The same considerations that applied to coaches' expenses also applied to judges' expenses and would therefore be further considered under judging matters (minute 42).

#### **41/04 World Parachute Championships 2004**

An update on the UK delegations to WPC Croatia and WPC Brazil had been circulated.

The amended design for the delegation T-shirt was approved, and the office would now place an order to cover both delegations.

**Action: BPA Office**

The Chairman asked UK competitors at WPC 2004 Croatia to advise him of their planned arrival date. He would then book his flights as Head of Delegation with the intention of arriving ahead of the first competitors.

**Action: BPA Office**

Union flags and a tape recording of the national anthem would be required by each Head of Delegation.

**Action: BPA Office**

#### **42/04 Judging matters**

A written report by Kate Charters had been circulated, and the Chairman thanked her for keeping the Committee up-to-date. Most of the items listed had already been covered earlier in the meeting. The Committee noted Kate Charters' comment that the Classics Grand Prix at St Andrews (minute 38.2) had been very poorly attended and had not been at all cost effective to the BPA. Kate Charters had said in her report that she believed that the Committee needed to have a serious re-think of the Classics Grand Prix for next year to decide whether to continue with them. The Chairman said this point should be brought forward in later in the year when next year's programme of domestic competitions was being formulated.

**Action: Bring forward when 2005 competitions are being planned**

The Committee then returned to consideration of expenditure. Tony Butler reported that judging expenses at about £10K were presently some £5K overspent against the budget of £5K, with still nearly one month to go before the end of the financial year on 30 June 2004.

In discussion, Chris Allen said that it was incumbent on the Competitions Chairman to take responsibility for budget monitoring in all areas of competitions spending. The Committee accepted that it needed to review its systems so that actuals against budget could be closely

monitored on a routine basis and any potential overspends called to the early attention of the Committee so that remedial measures might be considered. The Chairman said he would ask Jon Gretton at the BPA Office kindly to continue keep him updated on competitions expenditure, now also to include judging expenditure, by means of a monthly spreadsheet.

**Action: Jon Gretton**

Further discussion took place on the need for all on the Committee to redouble their efforts to contain expenses costs by selecting venues, dates and personalia so as to avoid the need for judges or coaches to claim for travelling significant distances, at worst from one end of the country to the other. The Committee noted that another reason for the overspend was that training judges were now paid expenses (the total in the 2003/4 financial year to date was £2.5K), which had not previously been the case. This was part and parcel of building up the number of judges to full strength, one advantage of which was that with more judges, there should in theory be better distribution of judge availability across the UK, although the Committee recognised that theory and reality could sometimes be rather different.

The Chairman agreed to ask Kate Charters to monitor very closely over the next 12 months the location of judges vis-à-vis the competitions to which they were allocated. He asked the Discipline Reps to do the same for coaches allocated to BPA Skills Coaching events.

**Action: Kate Charters, Discipline Reps**

**43/04 Questions**

Paul Applegate referred some questions to the Chairman from Team *Tumbleweed*, including a question on BPA team selection and funding policy. The Chairman gave replies that Paul Applegate kindly agreed to convey back to the team.

**Action: Paul Applegate**

**44/04 Artistic Disciplines Rep**

Pursuant to minute 29, Nigel Holland reported that he had received a letter from the Chairman asking whether he wished to continue as Artistic Disciplines Rep. He apologised for any problems and misunderstandings that had arisen and for his cash shortage on his recent change of career which had delayed his membership renewal. He said he had not attended any meetings during the time his membership had lapsed. He had now trained for a new career and would have more spare time to devote to the role of Artistic Disciplines Rep, which he was keen to keep.

The Chairman asked Paul Applegate (Acting Artistic Disciplines Rep) whether he was content for the Rep role to be resumed by Nigel Holland. Paul Applegate said he was, on the understanding that Nigel Holland brought matters to the Committee table and did not act on them alone. Nigel Holland gave the Committee that assurance, and was welcomed back to the role of Artistic Disciplines rep, with Paul Applegate reverting to Assistant Artistic Disciplines Rep.

**45/04 Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 14 July 2004 at 1830 at the BPA Office, Glen Parva, Leicester.

The meeting closed at 2105.