

British Parachute Association

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The Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held on
Tuesday 22 October 2002 at 1840
at the BPA Office, Glen Parva, Leicester

Present:	Chris Allen	-	Chairman
	Paul Applegate		
	Kieran Brady	-	Communications Chairman
	David Hickling		
	Eddie Jones		
	Ian Marshall		
	Jim White		
In attendance:	Tony Butler	-	Technical Officer
	Lesley Gale	-	Editor, <i>Skydive Magazine</i>
	Beverly Fairhurst	-	<i>Skydive Magazine</i>
	Martin Shuttleworth	-	National Administrator
Observer:	David Turner	-	for item 56
Apologies for absence	John Hitchen	-	NCSO / STC Chairman
	Ian Midgley	-	Development Chairman
	Craig Poxon		
	John Smyth	-	Vice Chairman/ Competitions Chairman

Item Minute

54/02 Minutes

Paul Applegate proposed, and Kieran Brady seconded, a motion that the previously circulated minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 22 August 2002, should be accepted as a true record. This carried unanimously.

Approved

55/02 Matters arising

55.1 Brit Chicks women's FS record attempt (minute 52.1)

Lesley Gale thanked the BPA for its support of coaching for the successful *Brit Chicks 2002* record attempt held at Langar last month. Coaching had taken place over the first weekend, when a record 40-way formation had been built, with the record 50-way formation on the second weekend. This had been the largest national female record in Europe, possibly the world. The feedback from the jumpers and others involved had been fantastic, and a dossier of feedback had already been circulated to the Council. Only 12% or 580 BPA Members were female, so to have built a 50-way formation from this was a significant achievement. Lesley Gale recorded her particular thanks to John Smyth, for allowing sponsorship funding of about £2,154 to come from the Competitions Committee's budget for Skills Coaching Roadshows. The accounts for *Brit Chicks* had yet to be finalised, but it was possible that a sum of about

£100 to £200 would remain when all the bills had been paid, and if so this surplus would be returned to the BPA.

Lesley Gale said she would like to work with John Smyth, Competitions Chairman, to develop a positive action strategy to encourage more women into the sport, to retain those already in it, and to increase their level of skill. The aim would be to help to bridge the gap between the top team *VMax* and other female skydivers.

The Chairman, on behalf of the full Council, congratulated Lesley Gale and all of the participants in *Brit Chicks 2002* on their achievement. He supported action to encourage women in the sport, but cautioned that emphasis on all-women teams should not seek to discourage women from participating in mixed teams of men and women.

Kieran Brady congratulated *Brit Chicks* on their achievements. He then noted that unfortunately some of the information presented in support of the sponsorship request - for example a claim that it was for 'infrastructure costs' - had been misleading. The lack of adequate time for the BPA to consider the request - as the event was due to start only a matter of days after it had first been brought to the Council table - had not helped. This was a matter of great regret to him, as his Club had been damaged by incorrect rumours concerning a Coaching Roadshow that had been due to take place there. He thanked the Chairman for his personal efforts to correct the misinformation that had arisen, so as to contain the damage. He also thanked David Hickling for his understanding of a potentially very difficult situation that had ironically arisen from the purest of motives of everyone trying to pull out all the stops to help. Ian Marshall supported the sentiments that Kieran Brady had made, and suggested that the minutes should be augmented from a verbatim transcript. He also sought clarification of the minutes with reference to the number and order of proxy votes from Ian Midgley. The Chairman confirmed that he had acted in accordance with Ian Midgley's instructions by proxy.

The Chairman suggested, and those present agreed, that the BPA should celebrate the success of *Brit Chicks* whilst at the same time drawing a line under the problems that had arisen. All agreed that the lesson to be learned was that lack of time to properly consider a late request for sponsorship had given rise to misunderstandings and misinterpretations that had taken a lot of time and goodwill to rectify.

56/02 Fliteline

Correspondence relating to this item had been circulated ahead of the meeting. It concerned the failure a parachute jumping recruitment agency called "Fliteline", the proprietor of which was a BPA Member (referred to in these minutes as the Proprietor of Fliteline, abbreviated to 'PF'). More recent correspondence was tabled. The Chairman said the matter had been put on the agenda at the request of David Turner, who was present tonight. The Chairman had written to PF inviting a written response to the correspondence so far and an invitation to attend if he so wished. PF had elected not to attend and had supplied a response in a letter dated 14 October that was among the correspondence that had been circulated.

The Chairman invited David Turner to speak. David Turner said that Fliteline had gone out of business owing a number of BPA Affiliated Clubs and Centres, between them, a sum of some £20K. To avoid bankruptcy, PF had applied to the courts for an Individual Voluntary Agreement that gave protection from his creditors and had offered them a settlement of 14p in the £, which the creditors had voted by a majority to accept. David Turner said that in his opinion, PF's letter of 14 October was too little, too late as it was the first expression of contrition by PF that he had seen. In David Turner's opinion, the failure of Fliteline had brought the sport into disrepute.

David Hickling then read aloud a letter from PF to British Parachute Schools, Langar, dated 10 May 2002. David Hickling said he interpreted this letter as evidence that PF was aware of Fliteline's financial problems as early as 10 May 2002, and that stated that in his opinion the letter was a betrayal of trust. The Chairman asked that a copy of the letter be circulated to Members of Council. Paul Applegate believed PF should to come to the Council to explain his actions in connection with the failure of Fliteline because PF's letter of 14 October 2002 to the BPA Chairman did not allow for the dialogue that was necessary to establish the facts.

Kieran Brady noted that a letter of support from a Drop Zone (to whom PF still owed money for jumps done) had been tabled, and said that PF may well welcome the opportunity to explain his actions in relation to Fliteline to the Council. If PF had found himself in a situation over which he had had no control, and had acted honourably and to the best of his abilities, then he should be willing to come to demonstrate to the Council that this was the case.

David Hickling proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that PF be invited to attend the next meeting of the Council on the evening of Tuesday 3 December 2002 to explain his actions in connection with the failure of Fliteline. Further, PF should be made aware that his non-attendance at that meeting may result in the suspension of his BPA Membership until such time that he does attend a Council meeting.

Carried unanimously

David Turner thanked the Council for its consideration of this item, and left the meeting.

57/02 Royal Aero Club project on the future regulation of airports in Europe

A paper summarising the background to this project had been circulated. Tony Butler offered to take any questions, and clarified a number of points raised by Ian Marshall. The Chairman thanked Tony Knight and Tony Butler for their hard work on behalf of the BPA in compiling information to give to the RAeC's project leader, David Roberts. The Council then gave a vote of thanks to Tony Knight for his contribution to the project on behalf of the BPA.

Tony Butler said that David Roberts - who was a Member of the British Gliding Association - had done a sterling job of researching and compiling the report. In his opinion, it was possibly the best thing the RAeC had ever done.

As it involved a European dimension and a response from all of the RAeC's member bodies, perhaps not surprisingly the report was extremely technical and complex in nature. The crux of the matter was that the RAeC, in concert with the CAA, were seeking a model of regulation in the UK based on the type of exposition that the BPA had with the CAA. This was in the vanguard for UK airports, and was something in which the BPA could rightly take pride. The other issue was that of whether or not parachutes (as distinct from the aircraft from which parachutists jumped) were covered by new European regulations or not. If they were included, parachutes, like hang gliders, would be likely to be exempt from certain requirements that applied to aircraft. There was a need for a clearer definition of whether, in the context of European legislation, parachutes were considered as to be 'aircraft' or not. The BPA, through the RAeC, was making a strong case that they were not, and that parachutes should not be included in the legislation at all.

For all of European Sport Aviation only Europe Air Sports (EAS) had a guaranteed seat on the new European Air Safety Agency (EASA) that would regulate the conduct of aviation in Europe. Some powers and responsibilities would be delegated to national agencies, for instance the CAA for the UK. Tony Butler reported that he was re-kindling the European Parachuting Union (EPU), whose establishment the BPA had catalysed some years ago, in the hope that the BPA could get a greater degree of influence for sport parachuting with EASA through the EPU.

58/02 Ratification of minutes of Subcommittees

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

58.1 Communications Committee meeting on 20 August 2002

Kieran Brady proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Development Committee meeting held on 20 August 2002 be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

58.2 Competitions Committee meetings on 20 August and 18 September 2002

Ian Marshall proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Competitions Committee meeting held on 20 August 2002 should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

The Chairman sought Ian Marshall's assurance, on behalf of the Competitions Committee, that their entry fee to the World Cup 2002 for team *Quiksilver*, that had been paid by the BPA, would still be recovered from the team, who had withdrawn before the competition. He noted that the organisers had undertaken to refund of 50% of the entry fee, and possibly more if the final accounts for the event were in profit. Ian Marshall confirmed that the Competitions Committee would recover from team *Quiksilver* that component of their entry fee that was not refunded to the BPA by the event organisers.

Ian Marshall then proposed, and Jim White seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Competitions Committee meeting held on 18 September 2002 be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

The Council congratulated the British women's 4-way FS team *VMax* on their triumph in taking Gold at the World Cup / European Championships held at Empuriabrava earlier this month. The team comprised Liz Groucott, Sarah Laughton, Sacha Chilton and Claire Scott. The team had already been awarded Life Membership following their Gold in Australia in 1999, but Liz Groucott had not been a member of the team at that time. David Hickling proposed, and Ian Marshall seconded, a motion that Liz Groucott be awarded Life Membership of the BPA in recognition of her achievements in *VMax*, the other team members having belonged to *VMax* in 1999 when team members were similarly recognised for their achievements at that time.

Carried unanimously

Ian Marshall reported that the British 8-way CF team had taken the Bronze Medal at the European Championships in Spain. The Council offered its congratulations.

58.3 Minutes of the STC meeting on Thursday 10 October 2002

David Hickling proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that the minutes of the STC meeting held on 10 October 2002 be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

59/02 Reports on meetings held earlier today

59.1 Communications Committee

Kieran Brady reported that the Communications Committee had agreed the renewal of Lesley Gale's annual contract with the BPA for editorial services. The Magazine budget for 2002/3 had been discussed and approved in outline, subject to additional detail to be provided to the next meeting by Lesley Gale at the request of Eddie Jones. Arrangements for re-designing the Affiliated Drop Zones and Associated Organisations pages of the Magazine had been discussed and agreed. Consideration of the criteria for the inclusion of organisations in the Club News feature in the Magazine had not been concluded, and had therefore been held over until the next meeting.

59.2 Development Committee

The Chairman reported that he had chaired the meeting in the absence of the Development Chairman. This was to enable it to be quorate with three voting members present. David Hickling had expressed concern on the increase in premium of his centre's public liability insurance (this being the standard business component of the insurance, nothing to do with parachuting) and had agreed to investigate whether a better deal might be obtained if a number of BPA Clubs and Centres were to together seek cover through the same insurer. Action Plan targets had been allocated, and rates for banner advertising on the BPA website had been further clarified.

60/02 Reports from Club Representatives

There were no reports.

61/02 Nominations for Royal Aero Club Medals

Ian Marshall reported that nominations for Royal Aero Club medals needed to be made by no later than Wednesday 27 November 2002. This was before the date of the next BPA Council

meeting. The Council therefore decided that nominations, preferably accompanied by a draft citation, should be sent to John Smyth, BPA delegate to RAeC, for him to prepare the submission to RAeC after appropriate consultation within the BPA. There were various RAeC awards and medals, and Ian Marshall suggested that John Smyth would be best placed to form a view on which award it might be most appropriate to nominate any given candidate. The main thing was to ensure that some suggestions were put forward to John Smyth, and Ian Marshall urged all Council Members to consider very carefully whether there was a deserving person or people they could propose.

62/02 Entertainment at the Annual Dinner Dance - Saturday 18 January 2003

After considering various options, Kieran Brady proposed, and Jim White seconded, a motion that the live band *Grounded* and Celebrations Disco - both of which had entertained at previous BPA annual dinner dances - should again be booked for 2003. Both appeared to be well appreciated by those attending, and there was a risk in changing a successful formula.

Carried unanimously

Grounded had again kindly offered their services free of charge, with the BPA needing only to cover the cost of amplification and staging. Tony Butler stated that there was the possibility of the Royal Artillery sponsoring a solo singer at the AGM. If the solo singer happened to be available for the AGM, the Council agreed that he should be invited to perform in addition to the band and disco.

63/02 Staff matters

63.1 Employment Committee

The Chairman outlined the background to the preparation of draft terms of reference (circulated) of the proposed BPA Employment Committee. The need for this had been highlighted by a routine update of the Development Committee's terms of reference during the summer. These specifically excluded establishing staff pay levels and other employment matters. It was therefore desirable that these matters should have preliminary consideration in an appropriate forum which would be chaired by the Staff Liaison Officer and comprise the BPA Chairmen, Chairmen of the Committees, and the Treasurer. The Employment Committee would itself have no power, but would make recommendations to the full Council. Equally, it was not a Committee to which Members would be nominated at the inaugural meeting each year. Rather, it would comprise only *ex officio* Members, ie those elected to the named offices.

David Hickling proposed, and Eddie Jones seconded, a motion that the Employment Committee be constituted as set out in the paper before Council, with terms of reference as stated thereon.

Carried unanimously

(*Note:* For ease of reference, the Employment Committee composition and terms of reference are now recorded as Form 229.)

Items 63.2 and 63.3 were held *in camera* with only voting Members present, with staff and others in attendance leaving the room. David Hickling and Paul Applegate requested, and the Council agreed, that minutes should be made of *in camera* sessions, with the Chairman retaining the tape where matters were confidential.

63.2 Combined role

Further to minute 51, Paul Applegate proposed and Eddie Jones seconded, a motion that the Council should accept a recommendation by the Employment Committee and agree a new combined role of National Administrator and Development Officer for the post held by Martin Shuttleworth.

Carried unanimously

Eddie Jones proposed, and Jim White seconded, a motion that a revised salary should attach to the combined role.

Carried unanimously

The Chairman said that there were presently two rates of employer pension contribution - 4% or 6% - paid in respect of different posts on the staff. It was the intention of the Employment Committee to look at the historical justification for this at the same time as the annual pay review next summer, as there may be a case for reviewing the lower rate of 4%. For the new post above, the Employment Committee had suggested the rate of 6%. David Hickling proposed, and Ian Marshall seconded, a motion that the employer's pension contribution attached to the post should be 6%.

Carried unanimously

Further to a recommendation by the Employment Committee, Ian Marshall proposed, and Jim White seconded, a motion that the job title of the new post should be "Secretary-General and Development Officer".

Carried unanimously

63.3 Staff Christmas lunch

Paul Applegate proposed, and Ian Marshall seconded, a motion that the Council should, in recognition of the work done by all nine members of staff during the year, fund from the BPA an office Christmas lunch for the cost would be not more than £21 per head, total £189.

Carried unanimously

Those who had left the meeting for the *in camera* session now returned.

64/02 Royal Garden Party

The Chairman apologised for not mentioning at the last Council meeting that he and his partner, Lisbeth Harris, had had the honour of representing the BPA at a Royal Garden Party held during the summer. They had had the privilege of being able to meet Her Majesty the Queen, and had enjoyed a stimulating conversation about parachuting with her.

65/02 Date of next meeting

Tuesday 3 December, immediately following the EGM at 1830, at the BPA Office, Leicester.

The Chairman said this would be the last meeting of the Council in 2002. He reminded Council Members who wished to stand for election for the Council in 2003 that their completed nomination forms needed to be received at the BPA Office by no later than noon on Friday 1 November 2002.

The meeting closed at 2055.