

British Parachute Association

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Development Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Tuesday 18 February 2003 at 1600

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

Present:	Kieran Brady Chris Allen Calvin Blacker Ralph Fielding Billy Gollan David Hickling Eddie Jones	Chairman Chairman of Council [for item 4.4]
In attendance:	Tony Butler Lesley Gale Jon Gretton John Hitchen Martin Shuttleworth	Technical Officer Editor, <i>Skydive Magazine</i> Financial Administrator NCSO Secretary-General
Apologies for absence:	Ian Midgley	

Item Minute

01/03 Minutes

David Hickling proposed, and Eddie Jones seconded, a motion that the minutes of the meeting of the Development Committee held on 3 December 2002 be approved as a correct record.

Approved

02/03 Matters arising

2.1 Draft letter to DZOs about Employers' Liability Insurance (page 1, minute 35)

A confidential letter to DZ Owners drafted by the office was tabled. This was to call attention to Employers' Liability Insurance, and had been suggested at the last meeting. David Hickling said he was content with the draft.

David Hickling then proposed, and Eddie Jones seconded, a motion that the letter should be issued. This carried unanimously.

Action: BPA Office

2.2 Freely coaching manual (page 2, item 37.2)

This was a target in the current year's (2002/3) Action Plan that Craig Poxon had been progressing. As Craig Poxon had stepped down at the AGM, it was now necessary for someone else to take on the project. At the AGM, the Chairman had briefed Tim Porter on the requirements of the Freely (FF) coaching manual, including the allocated budget (£2K) and the target date for completion of June 2003. The Chairman had since received a letter from

Tim Porter dated 22 January 2003 (circulated) that set out Tim Porter's proposal to complete the FF coaching manual, which would cover the FF1 and FF2 levels.

Nigel Holland had also contacted the Chairman, by e-mail, in his capacity as Artistic Disciplines Rep on the Competitions Committee. Nigel Holland had said that he was very keen to see the development of this manual, and had offered to assist in any way he could.

After discussion, Eddie Jones proposed, and Calvin Blacker seconded, a motion to invite Tim Porter to compile the FF coaching manual on the understanding that:

- (a) any payment for compilation of the manual would depend on a satisfactory full draft of the manual, in accordance with specifications (b) and (c) below, being delivered in time for it to be considered at the next meeting of the Development Committee on Tuesday 15 April 2003; and; if approved, for the final draft (with any variations the Committee may request) to be available in time for it to be considered at the meeting of the Development Committee to be held on Tuesday 17 June 2003;
- (b) the FF coaching manual would cover coaching to qualify to FF1 and FF2 levels, and be in full accordance with the steps in skills development already set out in the BPA Operations Manual;
- (c) the FF coaching manual would reflect the consensus of opinion within the discipline and not give undue weighting any one individual's views, as the manual was required for use throughout the BPA.

Carried Unanimously

The Committee was grateful to Nigel Holland for his offer of assistance. As Nigel Holland was a Member of Council, the Chairman considered it appropriate to invite him to liaise with Tim Porter, on behalf of the BPA, as the work was in progress, and to flag up any issues that may arise with the appropriate people. Tony Butler indicated that he would be glad to assist with any general technical enquiries or points about presentation, to ensure that the manual dovetailed properly with existing BPA documentation.

Action: Nigel Holland, Artistic Disciplines Rep

Both Nigel Holland and Tim Porter had said they would like to see coaching manuals be developed for other Artistic Disciplines, such as Skysurf and Freestyle. The Committee considered that it was important to focus attention on one project at a time, and therefore to concentrate on the FF manual for the time being. The possibility of preparing coaching manuals for other Artistic Disciplines would come back to the table at a later date.

2.3 Advanced Canopy Control qualification (minute 37.3)

Until he stepped down at the AGM, this project had also been co-ordinated by Craig Poxon. David Hickling noted that Chris Lynch was giving his *Wing Tips* seminar on canopy handling at a number of Clubs and Centres this season. The topic seemed to be well sought after, and David Hickling had heard praise of the seminar content. Tony Butler suggested that it might be appropriate to put Chris Lynch and others who were active in this area, in touch with John Horne, who was chairing the STC working party on swooping canopies - now officially termed 'Canopy piloting' by IPC - and panel member Mark Bayada. This was agreed, and the Committee asked BPA Chairman Chris Allen, who was a member of John Horne's working party, kindly to facilitate the introductions.

Action: Chris Allen

2.4 Possibility of Skydiving becoming a Paralympic sport (minute 37.4)

John Hitchen (UK Delegate to IPC) reported that he had liaised with delegates from other nations at the recent IPC meeting in Brazil. His aim had been to gauge the level of support for pursuing an application for skydiving to seek admission as a Summer Paralympic sport. Of twelve responses to a written summary of this idea, delegates from eleven nations had indicated they were in favour - Australia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Slovakia,

Spain, Turkey, Ukraine and USA - with only one, Portugal, against. The Chairman said that the Committee and the BPA Office would now carry out further research on the application requirements and procedure, with a view to John Hitchen putting forward a formal proposal to the next IPC plenary meeting, to be held from 28 January to 1 February 2004. The indications looked promising that IPC would be likely to support this proposal, subject of course to no problems being identified by the further research that was to be carried out this year.

Action: BPA Office

03/03 Allocation of areas of responsibility for 2003

As was customary at this first meeting of the year, areas of responsibility (portfolios) were allocated to individuals on the Committee. The role was to keep a watching brief over the designated areas, information on which the Office would forward in the weekly post as received. The action was then to filter this, and call any points of interest to the Committee.

The following areas of responsibility were agreed for the 2003 committee year.

3.1	Advertising	-	Kieran Brady
3.2	UK Sport and Sport England (including BPA reps to Sport England Regions)	-	Ralph Fielding
3.3	Central Council for Physical Recreation	-	Calvin Blacker
3.4	Insurance	-	David Hickling

04/03 Development Action Plan 2003/4

The Chairman had introduced the planning process at the informal meeting held immediately after the inaugural Council meeting on AGM Day. Now that Committee Members had had time to think of possible items for inclusion in the Action Plan, he invited contributions for consideration. The Plan agreed at this meeting would then be put forward for ratification by tonight's meeting of the full Council.

4.1 Video conferencing for meetings

Eddie Jones put forward the suggestion of investigating the application of video conferencing for BPA meetings, to help to cut the time and expense of travel. A discussion followed in which the merits and limitations of video conferencing were considered. The consensus was that networking, non-verbal communication, an esprit de corps and a number of operational factors conducive to effective meetings - particularly of the size of the Council - were considerably dimmed, if not sometimes rendered impossible, by video conferencing. No example could be cited by those around the table of any association or institution that already used video conferencing successfully for meetings of its governing Council or its standing committees - which was not to say there were none: this was an area that might benefit from investigation. The BPA Chairman confirmed that he and the Subcommittee Chairmen had used telephone conferencing on a number of occasions. This had its place, although it was not as good as a face-to-face meeting and might become something of a challenge, particularly for the Chairman, if more than 4 or 5 people were to be involved. In general, Members of the Committee tended to the view that the limitations of meetings using video conferencing outweighed the advantages, and no formal proposal for its inclusion in the Action Plan was forthcoming.

4.2 Skysurfing (SS) coaching manual

Ralph Fielding proposed that it might be a good idea to plan for the compilation of a coaching manual on Skysurfing (SS) to complement the manual on Freeflying (FF) already in progress (minute 2.2) - assuming the latter was satisfactorily completed on time and on budget. In discussion, reference was made to the BPA Membership survey 2002, which revealed that the participation rate in SS was only 2% of the membership, suggesting that any application of BPA funds on a project of this nature would be unlikely to be of wide benefit at the present time. The proposal failed to find a seconder.

4.3 Wingsuit manual

Calvin Blacker suggested the idea of a wingsuit manual. However, the general opinion around the table was that it was too early at this time to initiate such a project, although it remained something that might be considered in due course.

4.4 BPA history

Chris Allen (BPA Chairman) joined the meeting for this item, to speak to a copy of an e-mail he had sent that had been circulated in hard copy. Chris Allen outlined his proposal to have wall-mounted historical displays at the BPA Office relating to BPA Chairmen, National Champions, and the history of the Association - all three of which were, of course, intertwined. Displays for other associations in something of a similar format were already in use for example by the APA Netheravon, and elsewhere. The project would comprise researching facts and photographs, compiling the display, and getting it produced and erected. The work could be done by the Development Officer and / or by a student engaged to undertake the assignment, or a specific part of it, as a project. The suggested overall budget allocation was £3K.

The Committee considered this to be an excellent idea that was long overdue, notwithstanding that parts of it had been started in the past but never seen through to completion. Chris Allen therefore proposed, and David Hickling seconded, a motion to have an Action Plan target of preparing a pictorial history of the BPA, with some accompanying text, for display at the BPA Office. The completion date would be June 2004.

Carried unanimously

Calvin Blacker asked whether a history of parachuting equipment might be linked with this. Chris Allen said that any such project would be heavily demanding of display space, and unfortunately the limited space at the BPA Office meant that it was unsuitable as a venue for such an exhibition. However, Chris Allen reported that he understood a history of parachuting equipment exhibition to be a commercial proposition that was already being planned for a site associated with the aircraft museum at Duxford in Cambridgeshire.

4.5 BPA website

Martin Shuttleworth had circulated a paper in which he had put forward some suggestions for development of the BPA website in his capacity as Development Officer. These were considered by the Committee.

Ralph Fielding proposed, and Calvin Blacker seconded, a motion that the following website development targets, with the associated budget stated, should be included in the Action Plan.

Re-design the homepage of the BPA website - Budget £800

Add a new page of information on travel insurance to the BPA website - Budget £500

Carried unanimously

4.6 Sponsorship of large FS record attempts

Lesley Gale updated the Committee on a number of large FS record attempts that were in prospect for the Action Plan year 2003/4, and suggested that the Committee might wish to consider including sponsorship of such attempts in the Action Plan.

Several attempts, including *Brit Chicks*, were planned: but it was as yet too soon to have any firm details. Yet this was a catch 22 situation, because budgeting for the year had to be done now. When details of the record attempts emerged, if no money had been set aside, any possibility of BPA sponsorship would then become difficult or impossible. The Chairman recognised this as a genuine dilemma, as he had been - and was - adamant that agreed budgets should be adhered to, and he confirmed that Lesley Gale was entirely correct to flag up the issue now, when the budgets were being set. The question was, how should the matter best be treated in budget-setting?

After careful consideration, Ralph Fielding proposed, and Kieran Brady seconded, a motion that the Development Committee should set aside a further budget for the year. This was a contingency budget of £10K. It would be made available, at the discretion of the Development Committee and subject of course to ratification by the full Council, to support any FS large formation record attempts that may approach the BPA for sponsorship during the year.

Voting For - 4 Against - 0 Abstention - 1 (David Hickling, as an interested party)

Carried

The Chairman emphasised that this was strictly a contingency budget: no guarantee was implied as to whether or not any particular application for sponsorship would be successful - that depended on the case made by any application/s received. Whether or not this contingency should be included in the Action Plan, or merely treated as an additional budget for the Committee to draw on outside the Action Plan, was a matter on which the Chairman said he would seek the advice of Chris Allen at tonight's meeting of the full Council, which in any case needed to ratify the idea before any budget could be put in place.

4.7 RAPS safety and equipment review

Calvin Blacker observed that work was still in progress on one of the current year's (2002/3) Action Plan targets, in association with STC, of reviewing and enhancing RAPS safety, equipment and instruction techniques. This target had had a significant budget, and he asked whether it should be repeated in the 2003/4 Action Plan or, if not, whether any unspent funding in the current year would still be available in the next financial year (starting on 1 July 2003) as it seemed likely that this work would extend to then. Jon Gretton (Financial Administrator) explained that there were no routine arrangements for any underspend from one financial year to be carried forward as additional expenditure for the next. However, the Chairman said that this work would be continued by STC and that an adequate budget would be available to STC to meet its obligations to sustain this important project. STC could call on the Development Committee for any assistance it may require in the implementation stages, but there was no need to repeat the target in the 2003/4 Development Action Plan.

05/03 Banner advertising on the BPA website

Martin Shuttleworth had already covered this item at the meeting of the Communications Committee held immediately before this meeting.

06/03 New photocopier for the BPA Office

The Chairman reported that he had received a memo from Jon Gretton (Financial Administrator) stating that the existing office photocopier had developed a fault. The machine was over five years old, had been written-off from the accounts over a 5 year period. It now had now life-expired and it would not be economic to repair it. The Office had identified a new photocopier that would be suitable for the Association's needs, and which came with a maintenance agreement, which past experience had proven to be essential. The estimated capital cost would be approximately £8K. The Chairman said that a photocopier was an essential piece of equipment for the office to function, and supported the purchase of a new one.

Ralph Fielding proposed, and David Hickling seconded, a motion that a new photocopier should be purchased for the BPA Office with a budget of up to £8K for the capital cost, and that the best-value maintenance agreement for servicing and repair of the machine should also be purchased to help ensure that down-time when the machine was not working was kept to a minimum.

Carried unanimously

Lesley Gale asked whether she might purchase the old photocopier for use in the editorial office, which did not have a photocopier. The Chairman suggested that she liaise with Jon Gretton outside the meeting.

07/03 Dates of future meetings

Tuesdays at 1600 at the BPA Office, Glen Parva, Leicester (following meetings of the Communications Committee, for those involved, at 1400): 15 April, 17 June, 19 August, 21 October, 2 December.

The meeting closed at 1730.