



British Biathlon Union

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MINUTES OF THE 18th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) OF THE BRITISH BIATHLON UNION (BBU)

held in the RLC Bar, (Neuwirt Schule), Ruhpolding, GER
at 16:30 CET on Sunday 1st February 2015

PRESENT:

BBU BOARD

André Oszmann	(AO)	Chairman
Mark Goodson	(MG)	Secretary General and Finance Director
Col Jon Campbell	(JC)	Development Director
Carl Carrier	(CC)	Member Elected Director
Eddy Lowe BEM	(EL)	Sport Director
Mike Moran	(MM)	Commercial Director
Col Adrian Thurgood	(AT)	Director British Championships

IN ATTENDANCE

Charles Brooks	(CB)	Hon Legal Advisor
LBdr Lee Jackson	(LJ)	Athletes' Representative

APOLOGIES

Brig Neil Marshall	(NM)	Director Combined Services Liaison
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102 BBU Members (and 4 non-voting observers) were also present.

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ITEM 1 – INTRODUCTORY business

1.1 Welcome. The Chairman (AO) welcomed all present to the 18th Annual General Meeting of the British Biathlon Union and especially congratulated the athletes on achieving the standard required to attend the British Biathlon Championships. Having been unable to attend the 2014 Meeting he was very pleased to be back for what he described as another milestone AGM for the BBU. Following the 94 – 1 vote in favour of the adoption of the new Articles of Association (AoA) at the 2014 AGM, a legal objection was raised that the BBU had not allowed the use of proxy votes. The 2014 AoA had been revised slightly and that a motion to adopt them was again on the Agenda this year. He was delighted to state that proxy voting had been fully embraced by the BBU and the members; indeed many of those present had already cast their vote by proxy.

1.2 Special Statement on Sponsorship. The Chairman reminded the Meeting that 12 months ago the BBU was on the verge of substantially cutting back on all operations, after the Sochi Olympic Winter Games, as sources of funding had all but dried up. At the 2014 AGM Mike Moran (MM) the CEO of Aspen Healthcare Solutions (UK) Ltd (AHS) had announced a £ 60,000 annual sponsorship annually until the 2018 OWG. MM had since joined the BBU Board as Commercial Director and was invited to make a statement.

MM referred to his involvement biathlon as a racer, coach and sponsor through the AWSA and RAMC (Royal Army Medical Corps) for over 30 years. He was passionate about the sport and delighted that AHS had been able to provide life-support to the BBU. He had hoped to use his 3rd Party contacts to bring in even more sponsorship but, in spite of a number of near-misses, this had not yet happened. He was confident that extra avenues for fund raising would be opened because he, like the rest of the Board, was keen to support a broader base of UK biathlon and not just the National Team and BBU infrastructure.

MM was warmly thanked by the Chairman and sat down to a generous round of applause.

ITEM 2 – SPECIAL business

Under Article 44.2.2 of the new AoA a 75% majority of the votes of the total membership is required to pass a SPECIAL RESOLUTION. On the day of the AGM the BBU had 230 full (paid-up) members, thus an absolute 75% majority is 173.

2.1 Adoption of New Articles of Association. The BBU's Honorary Legal Advisor, Mr Charles Brooks (CB) repeated his comment from 2014 that although the AGM was being asked to adopt new Articles of Association which complied with both the 2006 Companies Act and the 2012 UK Sport and Sport England governance for NGBs, it was not a legal requirement to do so. However by voting to change, the BBU would not only be in compliance with the current Companies Act (2006) but, by being in compliance with UK Sport and The Sport & Recreational Alliance (SRA) guidelines, be far more likely to receive financial and other assistance from UK Sport & Sport England.

As there were no comments or questions from the Floor, and as voting papers had been issued to the 12 Members present who had not already voted by proxy, the Chairman instructed the tellers to conclude their counting of votes.

The result of the vote was: 203 votes in favour (of adopting the AoA), 0 votes against, 6 votes withheld.

ITEM 3 – ORDINARY business

For all ORDINARY RESOLUTIONS a simple 50% majority is required to endorse / pass a motion. Thus for all other motions the majority is 116.

3.1 Minutes of 2014 AGM. No comments or objections were raised to the Minutes of the 17th AGM held on 26th January 2014. They were accepted as a true record of the Meeting **with 203 votes in favour, 0 votes against and 10 votes withheld.**

3.2 Chairman's Report. The Chairman briefly summarised his Annual Report which had previously been published on the web and issued in advance, and is attached in full at Annex A. He specifically congratulated Lee-Steve JACKSON and Amanda LIGHTFOOT on their selection for the Olympic Winter Games in Sochi 2014, and for the support given to them by Manager Marc WALKER and Assistant Manager Simon ALLANSON. There were no comments or questions from the Floor and the report was accepted **with 205 votes in favour, 0 votes against and 6 withheld.**

3.3 Accounts ending 30 April 2014. MG presented the Accounts (which had been previously been published on the web) for the year ending 30th April 2014. These had been filed at Companies House. The accounts showed that the BBU had an operating profit of £ 25,583 as opposed to a deficit of £ 10,750 the year before. However as the BBU still owed Creditors £ 39, 480 (£ 54,925 the year before) the net assets / worth of the BBU was a negative figure of -£ 13,156 (-£ 38,739 the year before). Administrative and other expenses continued to be less than 20% of all costs with almost 80% of all income benefiting the National team athletes directly.

The operating loss was covered by an interest free loan from MG, as a Creditor, to the BBU.

The only question from the Floor came from Charles Bromley Gardner who requested that the BBU Lottery sub account be included in the main account. MG stated that this should certainly be possible.

The Accounts were received **with 195 votes in favour, 2 votes against and 14 withheld.**

3.4 Appointment of Auditors. The appointment of King, Morter, Proud & Co., Chartered Accountants of Kings Arms Vaults, The Watton, Brecon, Powys as auditors for the year ending 30th April 2015 was confirmed **with 201 votes in favour, 1 against and 9 withheld.**

3.5 Appointment of Directors. As the new AoA had been adopted (2.1 above) there was a requirement to ratify the appointment of André Oszmann, Col Jon Campbell, Brig Neil Marshall, Michael Moran and Col Adrian Thurgood as Appointed Directors pursuant to new Article 18.6. This was ratified **with 200 votes in favour, 1 vote against and 10 withheld.**

ITEM 4 – CLOSING business

4.1 BBU Lottery. The Chairman thanked Nicola Walker for all her work in administering the BBU Lottery who then thanked all those who were members and implored all BBU supporters to encourage more to join. Although the winnings were not colossal it did not cost much to join and every single penny went to the BBU. Current net income is approx £ 3k p.a.

4.2 Development. JC reported that new Army Biathlon Development Squad (ABDS) had been based at 39 Engr Regt in Kinloss in summer 2014. Under the tutelage of SSgt Adele Walker and Cpl Ben Woolley as Coach and Assistant Coach this successor to the National Development Squad NDS had been a success in its first summer. Utilising the facilities in Kinloss Barracks, Gordon Seaton's Cullerne Biathlon Range and overseas training in Obertilliach, the students had benefitted from infrastructure support from the Army. Although none of the students had made cut at the GBR Selection races in Norway in November,

some were not far away, and a number of them will be back at Kinloss in the summer of 2015. The names of students and staff will be announced at the end of the British Championships.

In answering a question from Colin Paton, JC confirmed that selection would not be exclusively based on results in Ruhpolding, nor would it be necessary for students to commit to a full summer at ABDS should they have other military commitments.

4.3 International Biathlon Union (IBU) Report. MG stated that key decisions taken at the September 2014 Congress in St Wolfgang, Austria had been published on the website. The only one specifically affecting the majority of members i.e. Regimental & Club athletes, was the new start procedure to Relay & Mass Starts. Others include the advent of a “Junior” IBU Cup from next season; changes to start quotas for World Cup and World Championships; the introduction of “IBU Points” to replace percentages.

4.4 Other External Agencies. The Chairman reported that there had been some changes in the organisation and structure of Meetings at the BOA. All efforts were firmly on Rio 2016 although on-going work and planning for the OWG Pyeongchang 2018 continued. MG reported that although UK Sport had held a number of stakeholder Workshops across the UK but the emphasis for funding remained firmly linked to podium potential. MG confirmed that the BBU was fully signed up to all relevant Anti-Doping protocols and that Terry Hall continued to play an invaluable role at the BBU AD Officer.

4.5 Chairman’s Closing Comments. The Chairman again thanked MM for the AHS sponsorship and stated that all Members were encouraged to seek further sponsorship for themselves, individually or for the BBU in general. He wished the athletes all success during the rest of the Championships and offered the best wishes of all Members to the athletes and support staff selected for the forthcoming Biathlon Youth & Junior World Championships in Belarus in February, and the World Championships in Finland in March. There being no additional questions or any other business, he stated that the 19th AGM was scheduled for Sunday 31st January 2016, and closed the Meeting at 17:40 CET.

Signed by:

Chairman
British Biathlon Union

Date.....



**BRITISH BIATHLON UNION (BBU)
18th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)
1st FEBRUARY 2015**

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

Introduction

This time last year I was delighted to report that the BBU had achieved its four year goal with both Lee-Steve Jackson and Amanda Lightfoot being selected for the Olympic Winter Games in Sochi. I shall comment further on Sochi in this report.

At the 2014 AGM we were able to announce a major new sponsorship arrangement with Aspen Healthcare Solutions (UK) Ltd (AHS), and also introduced the Chief Executive of AHS, Mr Mike Moran, to the Members. This sponsorship has literally "saved" the BBU, as you will also read later. Without AHS we would almost certainly have ceased to operate in any meaningful form after 30 April 2014. We remain extremely grateful to AHS, and especially to Mike Moran who has graciously accepted the unanimous offer of a seat on the Board of the BBU.

Also at the AGM the Members present overwhelmingly voted to bring in our new Articles of Association (AoA). Unfortunately a legal challenge to the procedure of the vote meant that the Board could not adopt them. A slightly modified new AoA will thus be presented for adoption at this AGM. The Board strongly advises all Members to vote, in person, or by proxy, in favour of their adoption.

Sporting Review

The 2013 – 2014 Season was the fourth of the current IBU quota and qualification system. This means that to even qualify for our quota of 2 men and one woman in World Cup, the athletes had to regularly achieve "15% or under" in Sprints or Individual races at IBU Cup, and "15% or under" in World Cup to maintain their qualification.

Through the efforts of the athletes and their support staff, this was achieved throughout the season by the Men's team who finished the season in 23rd place in World Cup Nations Cup rankings – one place higher than in 2013 – 14. They thus maintained their 2 start places for the current season, but sadly have had a rocky start to maintaining that position so far this winter, and after Trimester 1 are unfortunately lying 26th. It is the BBU's top priority to achieve a Top 23, as from next season the best 23 teams will have 3 start places; at worst we must finish in the Top 25 to maintain 2 start places.

The Women finished last year in 30th and, although this meant they dropped out of the World Cup, they achieved automatic promotion back from the IBU Cup – at the time of writing we are looking much stronger and are also in 26th position.

In the IBU Cup Nations Cup the Men finished 17th and the Women 18th. This gives GBR four male and female start places during the current season. Competition in the IBU Cup remains fierce but with some astute management of athletes and their willingness to sometimes race both World and IBU Cup in the same week, the Men could just stay in that Top 20, and maintain the quota of four start places, but are currently only 23rd. After IBU Cup 3 the Women lie in 26th spot, but in the entire GBR squad we only have two women! I really do hope that some female talent will come through the Army and civilian Development programmes, but it has not yet materialised.

I am however conscious that this report is being written at the end of Trimester 1, which traditionally has never been our strongest part of the season. There is a whole month and a further three World & IBU Cups to go before the AGM.

However the talent shown by the Junior Men from the Cairngorm BNSC is beginning to make its mark. None more so than from Scott Dixon who achieved the best ever GBR results in the Junior World Championships in Presque Isle USA last February. Joined by Robert Sircus, and probably Sam Cairns and Calum Irvine, this foursome is expected to compete for GBR in the 2015 Junior Worlds in Minsk Belarus in February. Through the dedication and hard work of Nicola Walker, the BBU Lottery has provided funding for much of this venture, where former World & IBU Cup athlete Si Burke will be the Manager.

The National Development Squad (NDS) had been based at RAF Kinloss for many years but last summer with 39 Engr Regt firmly on the ground in "Kinloss Barracks", the Army took command of most of our development. SSgt Adele Walker and Cpl Ben Woolley coached an ambitious new-look programme for the Army Biathlon Development Squad (ABDS), but unfortunately none of their students made the cut at the GBR National Selection races in Norway back in November.

As always we have seen some departures and arrivals during the past 12 months. SSgt Marc Walker finally left the Army and full time work for the BBU in August. He was an ever present in the World Cup team from 2000 - 2006 when he switched to coaching and management, culminating as Olympic Team Manager for Sochi. His wife Adele competed in six World Championships (2 more than Marc!) before moving to the ABDS at the end of last season. On behalf of all BBU Members I warmly congratulate them on the birth of daughter Emily on 2nd December, and thank them both for their tireless service and huge contribution to British Biathlon.

Joel Smith raced on the IBU cup for a couple of seasons but retired, aged just 23, to further his Army career. Shortly we shall lose our Assistant Olympic and now World Cup Manager Bdr Simon Allanson who leaves the Army at the end of this season. I am delighted to welcome to the "BBU Family" our new wax technician Federico (Fede) Fontana from Italy who was previously with the Polish team and IBU Cup Coach Daniel Graf – a former German World Cup athlete.

The icing on the GBR "biathlon cake" was of course Sochi, and the Olympic Winter Games 2014. We maintained our proud record of having been represented in every OWG since Biathlon first appeared in 1960. LBdr Lee-Steve Jackson 16 Regt RA achieved the 5th best GBR men's results in those 54 years. His Personal Best of 42nd, when he missed just one target in the 20 km Individual was an outstanding performance. Cpl Amanda Lightfoot AGC became the "face of Team GB" as she was chosen to model many of their outfits during the kitting-out in Manchester; she appeared on several TV and Radio shows. Her results were not quite so spectacular but matched those of our only other female Olympian, Sgt Emma Fowler RLC in 2006, and, like "Jacko", Amanda has her sights firmly set on Pyeongchang 2018.

Sponsorship

I have already mentioned the debt we owe to Mike Moran and Aspen Healthcare Solutions. Without their support I would almost certainly not be writing this report today, but with that support we are on a far more secure footing as we look towards the Olympic Winter Games in 2018.

But, none of us should be under any illusions about the future. It is up to the Board and the athletes to deliver; AHS has not signed a blank cheque, and should our performances in World & IBU Cups not be up to scratch we may still not have the funding to get to 2018. The Army Winter Sports Association has been a major sponsor, but has had to reduce its financial support although we still, thankfully, receive some support from them and of course from the Army in general. UK Sport is conducting a major review of how they allocate funding to all Olympic sports. Nothing is likely to change until after Rio 2016, so we continue to be one of several unfunded Olympic sports. The International Biathlon Union provides us with some very welcome income as a result of their successful negotiating of TV rights; but the TV market is a fickle one – if audiences drop so do advertisers and ultimately so do our grants from the IBU. The outcome of all this is that we cannot rest on our laurels. We are constantly looking for more sponsorship and for ways to increase revenue from the BBU Lottery.

I stated that the BBU Lottery is part funding our entry into the Junior World Championships. From next season there will be a Junior IBU Cup and, if GBR is to enter, this will put even more strain on our very limited budget. There are not many juniors in the Army capable of competing on the international circuit, but at least they earn a salary. The junior civilians are in an even less fortunate position as most are still at school or university, and very few are in paid employment. It is a real struggle for them to further their biathlon careers, and, frankly, there is no easy answer as to how the BBU can help them at present.

In a nutshell, and in spite of the enormous generosity of our existing sponsors – financial and “in kind” - and of our suppliers such as Bob Anderson at RMA Sports (UK) Ltd, we all need to seek more ways to increase our income. I referred last year to the BBU’s 2013 Strategy Day when we identified that we needed something like a 3-fold increase in our annual income to around £ 500,000, but more likely a 6-fold increase to £ 1,000,000 to make any real impact on the road to a World Cup or Olympic podium place by 2022. Nothing has changed; we must all seek more sponsors and more funding revenues.

Governance

At the last AGM there was an overwhelming majority in favour (94 votes to 1) of adopting the BBU’s new Articles of Association (AoA). It had long been the intention of the Board to modernise our structure, after Sochi, and to bring our governance into line with the requirements of UK Sport and the Sport & Recreational Alliance (SRA), under the terms of the Companies Act 2006.

In practice there would have been very little in the day to day running of the BBU that would have changed from our previous AoA (under the 1985 Companies Act) and the new AoA. Unfortunately a legal challenge was raised that although our previous AoA did not require us to offer proxy voting, to those who could not attend the AGM in person, because we were moving to an AoA under the 2006 Act we had to do so.

After a considerable amount of work by our Honorary Legal Advisor Charles Brooks, Secretary General Mark Goodson and myself, I had no option but to propose to the Board that we could not proceed and adopt the new AoA. In the intervening months we have “tweaked” some of the wording in the AoA but as recommended by UK Sport and the SRA, and to bring the BBU into line with modern good governance principles, the Board believes that its future composition would be

best served by a mix of:

- Specialist roles into which Directors with the appropriate skills are appointed* (e.g. Finance, Performance, Operations, etc.)
- Independent (i.e. no previous connection with Biathlon) Directors who will be appointed* to bring useful external experience to the BBU and adds to the skills on the Board.
- Two elected Directors to provide input from, and serve the interests of, the wider membership.

(* New appointments will usually follow an open recruitment process).

Moreover we are offering all members, whether they attend the AGM or not, the right to vote by proxy. Proxy voting forms are included in the AGM documents, published on the website and posted to the very small number of members who, not being athletes will not be in Ruhpolding at the AGM. We also now publish Minutes of Board Meetings on the BBU website; have given a vote at Board Meetings to the Athletes' Rep and, subject to demand, will hold an Open Forum in the UK in 2015.

Just as last year, a 75% majority of the Members will be required to vote in favour of the new Articles. But unlike last year this includes proxy votes from those not attending the AGM. However any abstentions are rejected and an abstention includes those who choose not to vote "Yes" or "No" or vote "Withheld".

The Board believes that voting in favour of the changes will enable the BBU to continue to support biathlon in the UK amongst all sections of the community and particularly at international and Olympic level. Conversely, if these changes are not approved, it may prove very difficult for the BBU to operate effectively in the future and could seriously damage our relationship with existing and future sponsors.

Accordingly, on behalf of the Board, I strongly urge all Members to vote in favour of the proposal, and also to vote in favour of the other resolutions placed before you.

Conclusion

2014 has been a challenging year for the BBU. Elation with our continued Olympic representation and particularly with the results of Lee-Steve Jackson, but then disappointment with the Men's results in Trimester 1; sheer delight with the sponsorship from Aspen Healthcare Solutions (UK) Ltd; frustration with the inability to implement the new AoA. But, what I cannot fault is the determination of our international athletes and support staff, and the enthusiasm of your volunteer Board Members. I wish everyone connected with the BBU every success in 2015.

André Oszmann
Chairman

30th December 2014