

of the 93rd Board Meeting of the British Biathlon Union
held at the British Olympic Association, London, ENG
at 10:15 BST on Saturday 15th July 2017

PRESENT:

Board Members

Rob Weighill	(RW)	Chairman
Mark Goodson	(MG)	Secretary General & Finance Director
Carl Carrier	(CC)	Member Elected Director
Eddy Lowe	(EL)	Sport Director
Col Adrian Thurgood	(AT)	Director British Champs & Military Liaison

In Attendance

Terry Hall	(TH)	AD Officer
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APOLOGIES:

Bdr Lee-Steve Jackson	(LJ)	IBU Cup Team Manager & Athletes' Rep
Charles Brooks	(CB)	Hon Legal Advisor

Action

1. FORMALITIES

- 1.1 Apologies & Conflicts.** The Apologies were noted and there were no Conflicts.
- 1.2 Minutes of the 92nd BBU Board Meeting.** The Minutes of the 92nd Bd Mtg held on 03 Feb 17 were confirmed as a true & accurate record of proceedings.
- 1.4 Matters Arising.** None that would not be discussed on the Agenda

2. FINANCE

2.1 Budget 2016 - 17. MG reported that:

- a. The 14 month extended FY had ended on 30 Jun and the books had gone to the Accountants, prior to filing by them at Companies House. MG was no longer a Creditor and there was approx £ 17 K in the Bank; £ 1.5 K Debtors and £ 6.5 K in the Lottery a/c. Thus there is a healthy balance of £ 25 K, however should the BBU cease to exist and / or not compete internationally next winter, £ 24 K would have to be returned to the IBU as this represents an up-front payment for the 2017 – 18 season.
- b. He had issued a draft “Comparison Report” between the 15/16 & 16/17 FY. There were no major comments, and the final financial statements will be submitted to Companies House & HMRC by the Accountants (est Sep 17).

New Bd

2.2 BBU Lottery. Unfortunately Nicola Walker the Lottery Holder had to cancel her visit to London at short notice. However she had reported to MG that there was approximately £ 6.5 K in the Lottery account and that the number of ticket holders was relatively constant. She will definitely continue to run the Lottery until the end of 2017 but that, as stated in the previous Minutes, her long-term commitment may depend upon the composition of any new BBU Board.

3. SPORT

3.1 Sport Director Report. EL had previously issued his comprehensive Annual Report by Email and issued hard copy at the Mtg. Questioned by RW on the requirement / legality to produce such a detailed report EL agreed that it was in the “very nice / useful to have” category rather than essential. He stated he had been producing this report since he had been a Team Manager before the 1992 OWG, and MG stated that for him, as Sec Gen, barely a week went by when he did not consult it at least once. RW, and all, congratulated EL on all his work producing the report over many years.

3.2 OWG 2018 Planning.

- a. MG stated that he had signed off the BBU Selection & Appeals Policy with the BOA on 14 May 17. Whilst confirming to the BOA that the Chairman would head any BBU Appeals Panel, he was unable to state who the new BBU Selection Committee would be. Agreed that this was an issue for the new Board. **New Bd**
- b. LJ had been officially nominated by the BBU as the Olympic Team Manager for PyeongChang 2018 to the BOA on 22 Mar 17, and this was again confirmed by RW on 04 Apr 17. LJ had already attended one BOA Accreditation Mtg in London, had flights booked for the PyeongChang “athlete’s weekend” in Edinburgh in Aug 17, and was due to attend the BOA recce to Korean in Oct 17.
- c. In the past few days CC had issued his Member Elected Director Report and suggested that athletes and Coach (Wolfgang Pichler) would be very happy if the GBR Italian Waxman, Ilario Maddalin (IM) was the Team Manager, especially if there was only one guaranteed Accreditation. MG stated that he was fairly confident that a 2nd (IBU) Accreditation would be provided as per the last two OWG. A lengthy discussion followed with both EL and MG stating their very strong preference that the Team Manager should be British and that at 37 and with two OWG under his belt as an athlete and reciprocal knowledge by him and the BOA of each other, LJ was a better choice than the 23 year old IM, whatever his other qualities. Agreed that this was an issue for the new Board. **New Bd**

3.3 Member Elected Director Report. CC had sent out his report 2 days earlier; much of it is reflected in 3.2c above. In addition he commented that as BSS Junior Development Coach he could offer coaching in Scotland for any Civilian “Development Athletes” as he was already doing so for Holly Rees-Lay. He added that Iain Ballentine & Marc Walker were now offering laser biathlon courses.

4. EXTERNAL AGENCIES

- 4.1 **BOA.** RW had attended the last NOC Meeting and confirmed that there had been little of interest to the BBU. The BOA had not exactly been “flush” post-Rio 2016 but had received sufficient “bail-outs” and was expected to fully complete all OWG 2018 tasks.
- 4.2 **UKAD.** TH had, during Item 3.2, referred to the necessity of any Olympic potential athletes and staff to complete the UKAD “Clean Games” and “Clean Sport 1 & 2 level” Briefings These could probably be done by Webinar, and it was particularly important that that Scott Dixon be indoctrinated. He will liaise with the athletes and LJ, as potential IBU Cup athletes in the AABDS should also be included. He confirmed that he was very happy to continue as the BBU AD officer and that UKAD were very happy with the response that he and the BBU had been able to give to UKAD. TH
- 4.3 **UK Sport.** MG reported that UK Sport had now withdrawn the biannual grant (approx £ 3 K for BBU) they gave to all sports to attend overseas Congresses.
- 4.4 **IBU.** MG had little to report from IBU other than that it was possible they would hold a small 25th Anniversary in 2018 at the Radisson Blu Edwardian, London Heathrow, where they formed in June 1993. No decision had been made if the IBU Cups scheduled for Russia next winter would still take place there (knock on effect of McLaren Report).
- 4.5 **UKAFWSA / AWSA.** AT confirmed virtually NTR other than that Rucksack was scheduled for Ruppolding 24 Jan – 09 Feb 17 (Biathlon 01 – 06 Feb). MG confirmed that the AWSA annual grant of £ 1 K per Army athlete in BBU teams (previously a £ 25 K lump sum) had now been reduced to Zero with immediate effect.
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5 STRATEGY & GOVERNANCE

- 5.1 **Budget Proposals 2017 -18.** MG had circulated a suggested budget for the next 12 months and advised that the new Board retained 30 Jun (rather than 30 Apr) as the end of the FY date, mainly because some IBU Grants are received in late Apr or in May. He re-iterated comments in Item 2.1a above, concerning possible repayment to IBU, and the failure of WC athlete’s to repay some perceived allowances / grants. This budget had been based on historic budgets and allowed for a full Olympic & WC programme, bar WC 9, but not for all IBU Cups. To stay solvent it did not include any fees for a new Sec Gen. RW thanked MG for preparing the budget and stated that the new Board would consider all factors. *After-note: On 26 Jul IBU confirmed a special “Olympic Bonus” will be paid in the autumn. As a “Cat C” NF, GBR will receive EUR 30K.* New Bd

5.2 The New Board / “Plans for Future BBU”

(A number of comments recorded in this Item were discussed during earlier Items, but it is more logical to record them here.

- a. RW opened by expressing extreme gratitude for all the hard work, dedication and enthusiasm displayed over many years’ service to the BBU by the three retiring Directors, and especially that of MG who he said could not be replaced at the present time, and that a new modus-operandi would be required to ensure the continuation of the BBU.

b. RW the stated that he was effectively 2 months behind in planning for the future as he had unexpectedly been called away to Argentina on business, as well as having other commitments. He expressed disappointment that the existing and current Boards had not put into place any succession plans, and especially for the simultaneous retirement of three Directors (EL, AT and especially MG). AT stated that at virtually every Bd Mtg he had attended in the past 5 years ago “Transition & Succession” had been discussed at length. The long and short was that there were few, if any, volunteers with the right experience prepared to work seriously for the BBU. (There had not even been a nomination to be the 2nd Member Elected Director). Although two candidates had been proposed to succeed the Sec Gen, one received a far better offer (full-time paid job, with pension) whilst the other could not accept the relatively low pay offered to fill the Sec Gen slot. After some discussion it was agreed to disagree on who should have done what for succession, as “we are where we are”.

c. MG confirmed that, out of the blue on 01 Jul, he had received a short Email from Maj Rich Crawford (RC) that he would be taking over the accounts in September. MG was disappointed that it was not sooner but that if he had to continue with any BBU work (including HO / TO of accounts) after 31 Jul he would expect to be paid for it, and at double his current rate. RW undertook to ask John Mead (JM) who would be joining the Bd to ascertain if RC could take over sooner. MG had Emailed to RC & the Bd explaining that taking over the UK Bank a/c was relatively straight forward, but under German rules RC could only open an account in Germany in person at the Branch. MG strongly advised that Ruhpolding was the only sensible place for the BBU to continue to hold its German a/c as it was the base for most training and a great deal of winter activity. RW also expected that RC would wish the accountants to be nearer to his own home location than Brecon.

RC

d. RC had confirmed to MG that he was only taking over the accounts and not any other of the Sec Gen tasks. RW stated that the account was a priority and persons would be found for some of the Sec Gen tasks. However the athletes would be required to play a far larger role in their own admin (booking hotels / flights (incl for Support Staff) / minibuses etc) than in the past. EL expressed concern that co-ordination on the ground was very important and it would be all too easy to make a cock-up resulting in missing races etc. MG felt that LJ would be capable of making race entries on the IBU database. However he strongly felt that “HQ BBU” would be required to register new athletes / make the relevant returns to IBU, BOA etc / establish a Selection Committee (MG will forward previous Selection Policy documents) / have a 24/7 Media Rep, especially for OWG / prepare Athlete’s Contracts / disseminate legal documents for AGMs & Companies House etc, as well as fulfil the myriad of other roles last listed on the “BBU Task Org” dated 14 Aug 16. Although retiring as a Director he would stay in the non-onerous role of Company Secretary, until 31 Jul, or shortly afterwards. A new Company Secretary (who need not be a Director) and a new registered address would be required. He further stated that he thought the Hon Legal Advisor (CB) would be stepping down after 15 years. *After- note: CB had actually informed CC by phone on 13 Jan and MG by Email on 17 Jan that this was likely. (Apologies from MG for not informing the Bd sooner). On 18 Jul CB Emailed the Bd that, after 15 years, he was indeed stepping down with immediate effect. A formal appreciation for his work will be recorded following the next Bd Mtg. His replacement will be a matter for the new Bd.*

LJ

New Bd

MG

New Bd

New Bd

- e. RW stated that he had never claimed that it would be easy to replace MG and that the simultaneous departure of three Directors made this even harder. Both EL & AT agreed with MG that in their opinion “simultaneous” was not a key factor as nearly all of their work was done in the winter whilst MG’s was year-round. RW repeated his gratitude for the work done by “The Three” but said that for whatever reasons, we are now in the position we are in, and must work through it. MG accepted this but confirmed that come what may he was resigning after the AGM, as were EL & AT, and did not expect to be doing BBU work after 31 Jul, unless at double pay, as per Item 5.2c. To that end he wished to hand over the “info@britishbiathlon” Email and the website on 31 Jul. CC agreed to take over the Email address and would be responsible for disseminating Emails to the responsible persons. *After-note: RW & MG have since agreed that it was apparent that in the best interests of the BBU, this date was too soon. RW & MG will hold detailed Handover / Takeover talks on 17 Aug, with the Email address etc to be handed over shortly afterwards.*
- f. RW explained his intention to run the BBU with a small strategic Board and that the minimum legal requirement in the AoA of three members (RW, CC, & JM) was manageable, although he hoped to appoint a 4th shortly (Maj Liz Sedgwick). He would then recruit a team of supporters and helpers to manage the operational level – in effect taking over many of the Sec Gen tasks. To that end he would be holding a Stakeholders’ Meeting in early September. He had planned to hold this in May but unfortunately had to cancel due to his work in South America.

RW, MG

5.3 Vote on “Plans for Future BBU”.

- a. RW surmised that whilst the situation was far from ideal, he believed that for the sake of the athletes we had to continue in the short-term. However the next 6 months were vital to ensure that the BBU did have a long term future. If after 6 months things had not worked out, then the BBU would probably have to fold, as indeed it would if MG, EL & AT were not prepared to support his plans and vote in favour today. CC strongly backed the proposals (as did non-voting TH).
- b. MG stated that he had been in discussions with the BOA and IBU and had a contingency plan, in the event of the BBU folding, that would allow Amanda Lightfoot (AL) and Scott Dixon (SD) to compete in the OWG 2018 in PyeongChang, if selected. It was expected that AL would fairly easily retain her current Olympic Qualification but SD had a mountain to climb and would need to improve his results by approx 20% to obtain qualification. Both athletes were well aware of these facts. The Contingency Plan was only for 2018 and did not include any IBU Cup or Development athletes. Thus, if the BBU folded it was likely to fold for good, unless a new NGB could be formed and become IBU / BOA / UKS compliant etc.
- c. MG was thus prepared to vote in favour of the Future Plans. EL & AT agreed that for the sake of the athletes this was the best option. The motion was carried unanimously.
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6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 6.1 Website.** MG apologised that the website was not better, but he had never come to grips with this one designed by Apt. TH said it was still an invaluable information tool whilst CC felt that Facebook and other social media were more relevant. MG stated that the website was an essential and legal requirement unless the BBU sent reports / AD info / Yearly Financial Statements/ Notice of AGM / Proxy Voting Forms etc by Royal Mail. RW stated that the website would continue and be run by the New Bd. **New Bd**
- 6.2 Calendar & “Things to Do”.** TH asked if MG could produce a Calendar / “Things to Do Chart” of annual requirements before he left his post. MG agreed this would be a useful resource. **MG**
- 6.2 Date of Next Meeting.** In the Autumn, date tbn. AT commented that in the past it had always been held in London the day after the AWSA Autumn Mtg. (This year: 01 Nov). **RW**

The Meeting closed at 12:15 BST.

Signed by:

Date:

**Rob Weighill
Chairman**
