



7th JANUARY 2019

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2017/18

INTRODUCTION

This is my second Annual Report as the Chairman of the BBU. It covers a period of significant change and recurring challenge, reflecting the wholesale movement of personnel from and onto the BBU Board and also within the Governing Body of the IBU. The financial climate remains austere and the number of elite athletes that GBR has performing at international events has continued to decline, exacerbated by the Army's change in policy regarding the demise of the Advanced Biathlon Development programme in 2017. The period 2017/18 can therefore be defined by one of transformation, the development of a revised pathway for British Biathlon and further alignment of the BBU with GBR and international sporting and biathlon organisations.

First of all, and on behalf of all biathletes, Members of and interested parties in biathlon, I would like to thank Mark Goodson and Eddy Lowe for their contribution to GBR biathlon over many years (in fact, decades!). I would highlight the fact that Mark was not only Secretary General (and therefore CEO) but as a singleton also fulfilled all the vital functions of the BBU, including finance, HR, administration, operations, strategy, marketing and communications. It is a reflection of their collective stature and reputation among the international biathlon community that at this year's IBU Congress I was persistently approached by national delegates expressing their gratitude for the influence, support and advice that both have given over very many years. Their presence will continue to be felt but they will be missed by the athletes, BBU and the IBU alike and I wish them well in their retirement.

SPORTING REVIEW

2017 - 2018

The 2017-18 year was always going to be a challenge given the lack of ability to put together a formal training and selection process following the demise of the ABDS and the significant change in the composition of the BBU.

Despite the challenges, we fielded two athletes on the World Cup circuit for the whole season, Amanda Lightfoot and Scott Dixon. 2018 was also an Olympic year and Amanda was once again

selected to race for Great Britain in PyeongChang, South Korea. On the IBU Cup and IBU Junior Cup Holly Rees-Lay and Sofie Hopkins both competed in trimester 1.

The best race of the season came in WC 1 in Östersund, SWE where Amanda achieved 31st place in the Women's Individual - a very impressive result indeed.

As ever, we are grateful for all the support that we received over the course of the year most notably from Ilario Maddalin who the lynchpin for the WC team was, Sarah Greig who supported Amanda as the Team Leader at the Olympics and the Swedish team without whom we would have struggled. Finally, I should mention Scott Dixon's retirement at the end of the season. We wish him well in all his future endeavours and hope that he will remain an important part of the GB biathlon family.

FINANCE & SPONSORSHIP

2018 has been a period of financial consolidation. The Winter Olympics brought with it some financial benefit and a generous grant from the IBU has ensured that the BBU is able to deliver its administrative function over the next 12 months. Event money received from the IBU will ensure that the BBU is able to support athletes and some limited support staff to attend competitions throughout Europe.

While there was no sponsorship in 2018 the committee continued to look at avenues to generate income through sponsorship. Lottery funding from UK Sport is still a distant prospect due to the current lack of podium potential at future Olympic games.

There has been a significant change in Army policy that has, for the present, impacted on the financial support that serving soldiers receive while training on snow. It is hoped that by close engagement with the relevant authorities the impact of this can be mitigated for future seasons for international athletes.

Thus, we look forward to 2019 in a precarious but not precipitous financial state. The committee will continue to try and maximise revenue but minimise costs to ensure that we can put as much as possible towards the athletes on the snow.

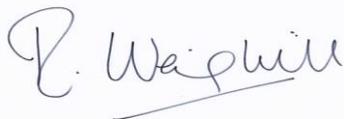
GOVERNANCE

The most significant change in the BBU has been in governance and the selection of new Board Members during the latter quarter of 2017 and early 2018. With the retirement of Mark Goodson, Roddy Christie has assumed the post of Secretary General. Formally noted for his prowess in Army Alpine as a skier and Secretary, Roddy stepped into the role just prior to the 2017/18 season and run-up to the Olympic Winter Games (OWG) in PyeongChang, Korea. Behind the scenes a number of willing and dedicated volunteers have helped sustain the BBU over the past 18 months. Director Carl Carrier focusses on Development and Coaching; Terry Hall is the Anti-Doping Officer; Iain Sheridan has assumed the role of "Honorary Legal Advisor"; Nicola Walker continues to run the BBU Lottery and Rich Crawford has stepped in to manage the finances. Brig John Mead, Elizabeth Sedgwick and Sarah Grieg have now all become Board Members. Their support and contribution goes largely unrecognized and without them the BBU would not have been sustained. Formally, I would like to thank them all.

THE FUTURE

The intent that I formulated in last year's report remains largely unchanged:

- **The Vision.** The vision is to deliver British Biathlon medal success within fourteen years. By implication, this includes maintaining a strong and enduring relationship with HM Forces, particularly the Army. It is inconceivable that in the short-term we will be able to project elite biathletes into biathlon world cup/championships and the OWG without the identifying an effective and sustainable pathway for military talent. However, in the medium- to long-term as well as the military, talent will be sought, identified, developed and selected from external sources in the hope that the pool can be significantly broadened, thereby raising the realistic expectation that this vision can be met.
- **The Pathway.** The new BBU Board was selected and in place by the end of 2017 and with it the means to develop a medium- to long-term strategy in pursuit of the vision. In the short term, and in a climate of persistent BBU financial austerity, the Board will continue to identify funding streams (from the military and other sources) in order to increase capacity (principally people) across all the biathlon functions. In addition, the priority for the 2018/19 season is to identify and select elite biathlete talent and support them in IBU Cup, IBU World Cup and IBU World Championships, where appropriate.
- **Governance.** The selection criteria for the new members of the Board was based on diversity, strategic insight, passion for the sport, influence and commitment. The BBU will conform to UK Sport governance and will have the structure, people, communication, standards and conduct, policies and processes in place accordingly. British Biathlon will continue to qualify for UK Sport and Sport England support, but clearly in a highly competitive financial market much will depend on the success of the athletes. An essential task for 2019, and in compliance with UK Sport Governance Code, will be the generation of Terms of Reference for each member of the Board.
- **Assistance.** The BBU has implemented a strategy of stakeholder engagement and relationship building with wider partners. Importantly, this includes GB Snowsport (previously named BSS) and other national and international sports that are in one way or another related to biathlon (e.g. Modern Pentathlon, archery, gymnastics etc). This will also create economies of scale and help the BBU adopt best practice. But, as I said in last year's report, none of this can be achieved without the full support and a commitment of those who are associated with the sport, in small or large part. I need assistance to set British Biathlon on a road to achieve the milestones, objectives and the vision that will be laid out in 2019. Thank you.



Rob Weighill
Chairman