

**MINUTES OF THE 6TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF**  
**THE BRITISH BIATHLON UNION**  
**Held at The Hotel Neuwirt, Ruhpolding GER, on**  
**Saturday 1st February 2003**

**BBU BOARD**

**PRESENT**

David Cranston CBE	(DC)	Chairman
Mark Goodson	(MG)	Performance & Finance Director
Eddy Lowe BEM	(EL)	Technical Director

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Jason Sklenar	(JS)	Athletes' Representative
Pippa Cranston	(PC)	Secretary to the Board

**APOLOGIES**

Lord Moynihan	(CM)	President
Andy Cowling OBE	(AC)	CSWSA
Alastair Dargie	(AD)	PR & Marketing
Charles Brookes	(CB)	Hon Legal Adviser
Graeme Ferguson BEM MBE	(GF)	Membership/Coaching Director

**BBU Members:**

58 Members were in attendance.

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## ITEM 1 – INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

DC introduced himself as Chairman and Chief Executive of the British Biathlon Union Board, commenting that it was not good corporate governance to have his two roles combined, but, as the floor would discover during the meeting, at present it was the only practical option.

He welcomed all present, thanked them for attending and expressed his pleasure that the number almost doubled the attendance at the 5<sup>th</sup> AGM. He was especially pleased to welcome those attending the AGM for the first time.

He expressed his regrets that Lord Moynihan, President of the British Biathlon, was unable to attend as he was extremely busy, and explained that Lord Moynihan, a former Olympian, a former Minister of Sport and member of the House of Lords was a staunch supporter of the Biathlon sport, and does as much as he can to help, particularly in seeking sponsorship. DC conveyed the President's best wishes to all the athletes competing at the British Championships.

## ITEM 2 – SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS

The relevance of the proposed amendments to the Articles of Association was explained to the members. **The following resolutions were unanimously agreed:**

- a. Proposed by Steve Anson, seconded by Kris Bebbington:

**To amend Article 5.11 c of the Articles of Association of the Union by inserting an extra sentence at the end of that Article, as follows:**

**“Notwithstanding the above, any British citizen who pays a race entry fee at the British Championships (Exercise Rucksack) in any one year shall be automatically qualified as a Full member of the Union and entitled to the benefits of Full membership, from the day of the commencement of those Championships until the day prior to the commencement of the following year's Championships”**

- b. Proposed by Bob Anderson, seconded by Mark Crisp

**To amend Article 66 of the Articles of Association of the Union by inserting the extra words, to the end of the Article, as follows:**

**“, or may at the Board's discretion be published in any journal or newsletter of the Union, or advertised on the Union's official web-site.”**

## ITEM 3 – MINUTES OF 5<sup>TH</sup> AGM

The minutes of the 5<sup>th</sup> AGM held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2002 were unanimously agreed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and were signed by the Chairman.

## ITEM 4 – MATTERS ARISING FROM ITEM 3

- a. Item 5.2 The 10 year development plan had been revisited by the Board and it had agreed that insufficient issues had changed to necessitate a re-writing.

- b. Item 14.2. The Selection Committee for 2003 will comprise of Eddy Lowe, Mark Crisp and Mark Goodson. They will inform Team Captains if any member of their team is being considered as a future prospect.

#### ITEM 5 – CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

The Chairman congratulated all competitors on the hard work that had gone into reaching the British Championships, and particularly those who had qualified for the National Squad. He was delighted that despite the present world situation, teams and individuals had been able to contribute to the Championships. He expressed gratitude to the British Army for running the Championships in tandem with the Army Championships and was glad that the BBU was able to reciprocate by helping the Army in the running of the event.

Usually the year following an Olympic Winter Games is relatively quiet, but this year has been very busy. The BBU has managed to provide some support, if not as much as it would like, for both the World Cup and European Cup teams. It is regretted that there has been no women's team this year.

As a National Governing Body, the Board had not been helped by the present world situation. The Board is generally 7 members strong and has four co-opted members: the Athletes Representative, the Team Manager, the Team Coach and a Legal Advisor. At the 2002 AGM, Richard Godfrey had been elected to the Board, but subsequently a conflict of interests was identified and he immediately resigned, so from the beginning of the season the Board was one short. The Board had co-opted Andy Cowling, Chairman Army Nordic, but as his job is DCOS HQ 1 Div, he has been understandably preoccupied. Graeme Ferguson, a founder member of the BBU Board, spent the latter part of last year in a bunker and is presently on his way to Kuwait. The lack of a Team Manager, a key member, has probably been the worst loss. Tom Kay had been seconded to the BBU for two years as Team Manager, but was 'called to colours' in the spring. Carl Evans then put himself forward as Team Manager having cleared it with his CO, but he too has had to return to regimental duties.

There is also a lack of funding, as the BBU has no main sponsors except the Army, therefore it is unable to do as much as it would wish

For the benefit of members attending the AGM for the first time, DC explained that the BBU was founded in 1996 after Government central funding for the BSF (now BSSF) was reduced and it elected to drop biathlon (and freestyle). Without a national governing body, biathletes would have been unable to enter international competitions, so seven experienced military biathletes got together to form the BBU. The BBU is now recognised by the International Biathlon Union, The British Olympic Association, and Sport UK. The Board is totally voluntary and executive and exists for no other reason than to support the athletes and promote the sport. Every member must be able to contribute. The main changes during its seven years is that originally there was a full time Secretary General paid for by the military, and two Team Managers, one from the Army and one from the Royal Marines – a core of three fully funded full time members. Currently the BBU has none of these.

## ITEM 6 – ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2003

MG stressed that the accounts referred only to the BBU and do not take into account money that is forthcoming from the military which is accounted for under military procedures. A very detailed explanation of the accounts was given.

In answer to questions from the members:

- a. MG accepted that it was an oversight that subscriptions were not shown under 'interest received and similar income' in the Management Information document.
- b. The feasibility of changing the annual accounting period so as to reflect a more up to date financial situation at the AGM will be examined by the Board at its next meeting. (The legal requirement is 18 months after the end of the accounting period)
- c. Under the Companies Act 1985, small companies are exempt from independent audit. The BBU qualifies as a small company and would have difficulty justifying the payment for a full audit.
- d. Royal Marines funding has ceased because of an apparent lack of transparency in the accounting. (This has been followed up by the Chairman)
- e. Money received on behalf of the servicemen from their Service is accounted for in the Team accounts and is not a matter for the BBU account.
- f. The Board have twice looked at the possibility of applying for charitable status to lessen the taxation bill, but have come to the conclusion that it is not applicable.

John McIntosh proposed the adoption of the accounts, was seconded by Kris Bebbington and agreed by all present.

ITEMS 7, 8, 9 & 10 – The Chairman took all these items as one.

ITEM 7 – RE-ELECTION OF ALASTAIR DARGIE AS DIRECTOR

ITEM 8 – RE-ELECTION OF GRAEME FERGUSON AS DIRECTOR

ITEM 9 – ELECTION OF ANDY COWLING AS DIRECTOR

ITEM 10 – ELECTION OF OTHER NOMINEES TO THE POST OF DIRECTOR

Alastair Dargie was unable to attend the meeting and had faxed a letter of resignation from the Board.

As neither Andy Cowling nor Graeme Ferguson was able to attend the meeting, the Chairman gave a brief resume of their qualifications for being elected/re-elected on to the Board.

Only one other nominee had come forward: Jeremy Hopwood. His C.V. had been circulated at the meeting.

In answer to a question, Jeremy Hopwood confirmed that living in New York would present no problems to his contribution to the Board and that no additional expense would be incurred by the BBU for his travel.

DC explained that there were three nominees for four vacancies and informed the meeting that a majority vote was needed for any nominee to be elected to the Board. Members then voted, the votes being taken for counting by independent tellers.

## ITEM 11 – APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

The appointment of King, Morter, Proud & Co., Chartered Accountants of Kings Arms Vaults, Watton, Brecon, Powys as auditors for the year ending 30<sup>th</sup> April 2003 was proposed by Jeremy Hopwood, seconded by Nigel McGillivray. As all were in agreement, the motion was passed.

## ITEMS 12 &13

### ITEM 12 – CURRENT STATE OF THE BBU AND FUTURE PLANS

### ITEM 13 – COACHING AND DEVELOPMENT COURSES

DC preferred to take these two items as one.

It has been a difficult year for the BBU, and although the Board are dedicated to the biathlon sport, they are also busy people. The difficulties are:

- Funding: Only the Army as a sponsor of any significance and much time and effort has been spent trying to get sponsorship.
- Coaching: There is no National Coach
- Development: It has not been possible to provide what is needed.
- Support: The BBU have not been able to give as much as support to the National teams they would wish.
- Resources: There are gaps in the number of personnel needed to run the BBU

It is a credit to the Board and the athletes that so much has been achieved during the current season.

As to the future:

- Funding: DC and CM will continue the search for sponsors and are getting ideas and help from Mike Davies and Jeremy Hopwood. Sponsorship is a difficult arena and even the British Olympic Association has a cash flow problem.
- Coaching: The BBU has advertised for a National Coach and there has been some interest. There is also some “home grown” talent who are offering help.
- Development: The Selection Committee will comprise EL, MG and Mark Crisp. The aspiration is to have 4/5 courses in the summer/autumn for promising athletes, who will then return to their units and will hopefully be seen back here in 2004. But the courses will depend on getting help from at least one military person to help organise and manage them. The Board has already received some offers. Dates and details of these courses will be sent out to the units as soon as possible after the end of the Championships.
- Support: As much as possible is being done for the National teams, but support is dependant upon funding, finding a coach and a team manager.
- Resources: The BBU is looking for help and would be grateful if anyone who is prepared to offer their services would contact a Board member. There have been some offers of help such as that from Carl Evans who used his initiative, spoke to his CO and then volunteered to be Team Manager.

The concept for the 2003/2004 season is, as already mentioned, that there will be 4/5 development courses for promising athletes. There will also be 4/5 training camps run for the senior athletes, but the right coaches and someone to do the administration are

needed. The selection races for the World Cup and European Cup teams will be held in November and are open to anyone.

Mark Crisp, who has an IBU qualification for coaching coaches, had offered to help Graeme Ferguson to run another “coach the coaches” course. He is also prepared to ensure the course takes place even if GF is still not available. The course will concentrate on practical coaching rather than theory.

The BBU’s long term aspiration has not changed. The aim is a British National in the top three in 2010 Olympic Winter Games for both men and women. DC accepted that this was an ambitious plan, but feels there is a need to aim high!

#### ITEM 14 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- a. Mark Crisp agreed to look into the possibilities of civilian clubs participating in any coaching courses run under military auspices. The BBU will help where possible.
- b. Information about courses being run will be published on the website and individuals will be able to register details on the website.
- c. The BBU intend to have dates for courses during 2004 agreed by the 2004 British Championships and a format letter that Team Captains can take back to their units after the Championships.
- d. The “coach the coaches” course that is to be organised by Mark Crisp during 2003 will take place over five days at the end of May/beginning of June.
- e. The COs of any athlete selected for development at the 2003 British Championships will be informed as soon as possible after the end of the Championships
- f. Gordon Seaton informed the meeting that his Kinloss training facility is available to anyone at any time. Seven courses had been run there in 2002. He urged the athletes to be proactive in their own development.
- g. The minutes of the BBU 5<sup>th</sup> AGM were published on the BBU website in March 2002. When the calling notice for the 7<sup>th</sup> AGM is published on the website, a reminder that the Minutes of this meeting are also available will be added.
- h. Athletes were reminded that they should apply for firearms certificates as soon as possible as they are mandatory. Advice can be obtained from Arthur Harvey or Gordon Seaton.
- i. There are no plans at present for a Summer Biathlon. Jock Inkster had looked into it last year and concluded that there was not enough demand to make it worth the effort.
- j. The meeting was assured that there are trophies for youths this year.
- k. At present there aren’t enough resources to publish a regular team training performance update, but this will be kept in mind should an opportunity present itself.

#### ITEM 15 – CLOSING REMARKS

The Chairman thanked the tellers and announced the results of the elections to the vacancies on the Board:

Andy Cowling	46 votes
Graeme Ferguson	46 votes
Jeremy Hopwood	38 votes

All three, having achieved a majority vote, were elected to the Board of the British Biathlon Union and were congratulated by the Chairman

Signed by D A Cranston CBE \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman British Biathlon Union

Attachment: Board Members with effect from 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2003

**BRITISH BIATHLON UNION**  
**BOARD MEMBERS**  
**WITH EFFECT FROM**  
**SATURDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 2003**

**PRESIDENT**

**MEMBERS:**

- Lord MOYNIHAN
  
- ANDY COWLING OBE
- DAVID CRANSTON CBE
- GRAEME FERGUSON MBE BEM
- MARK GOODSON
- JEREMY HOPWOOD
- EDDY LOWE BEM

**CO-OPTED MEMBERS**

- CHARLES BROOKS
- JASON SKLENAR

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: DAVID CRANSTON  
Appointment: Chairman