



**MINUTES OF THE 20th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)
OF THE BRITISH BIATHLON UNION (BBU)**

**held at the British Olympic Association,
60 Charlotte Street, London W1T 2NU, ENG**

at 12:45 BST on Saturday 15th July 2017

PRESENT:

BBU BOARD

Rob Weighill CBE	(RW)	Chairman
Mark Goodson	(MG)	Secretary General and Finance
Carl Carrier	(CC)	Member Elected Director
Eddy Lowe BEM	(EL)	Sport Director
Col Adrian Thurgood	(AT)	Director British Championships

9 BBU Members (and 1 non-voting observer) were also present.

*No Postal or Proxy votes had been received,
thus the number of votes cast represents those attending the AGM in person.*

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ITEM 1 - INTRODUCTORY business

1.1 MG, the Sec Gen, welcomed those attending, especially a number of new Members and those who had travelled from afar. He introduced EL & AT and confirmed that along with himself they would be resigning as Directors at midnight. They would leave the AGM on its conclusion, after which the Chairman would hold informal talks with Members on “The Future of the BBU”. He then introduced CC and finally the new Chairman, the recently retired Major General Rob Weighill, late Royal Artillery. He had started his skiing life in Nordic & Biathlon although his last Army winter sports appointment was as Chairman Army Alpine. RW also thanked all the Members for coming to London and stated he would lay out his vision for the future of the BBU during the Meeting.

ITEM 2 - ORDINARY business

2.1 Minutes of the 2016 AGM. The Minutes of the 18th AGM (held on 31st January 2016) were accepted without comment and by **15 votes FOR, 0 against and 0 withheld.**

2.2 Matters Arising. There were no matters arising from Item 2.1.

2.3 Chairman’s Annual Report. RW summarised his Annual Report (pages 6 – 8), noting that unusually it covered two winter seasons, which had seen some highs but quite a few lows – both on and off snow. He referred to the departure in the past few months of his predecessor André Oszmann and Directors Jon Campbell, and from today Mark Goodson, Eddy Lowe and Adrian Thurgood. He thanked them for their support and dedication to the BBU over many years – especially in the case of the latter three. In particular he commended the last 4 paragraphs (Vision; Pathway; Governance and Assistance) to the Meeting.

The Vision “to deliver British Biathlon medal success within fifteen years” was queried by Iain Sheridan (IS) as being a rather long time. RW stated that this had been roughly the time taken by Nordic to develop a couple of their athletes from virtual novice to genuine Olympic podium potential. IS stated that as a former triathlete he still considered 15 years to be a very long time and that it should be possible to nurture talent in a shorter time-scale. This would be particularly so if quality athletes who perhaps have not made it to the very top in their chosen sport, could be recruited from other sports. Mike Dixon (MD) commented that there was some exceptional talent in the UK and citing the development and results of Calum Irvine (now a GBR international oarsman) and Scott Dixon. MD felt that a 15 year cycle was perhaps not too wide of the mark. RW said the new Board would consider all aspects of Development and Talent ID and was grateful to IS who offered to share some novel ideas for fund-raising.

The Report was accepted by **15 votes FOR, 0 against and 0 withheld.**

2.4 Accounts ending 30 April 2016. MG highlighted a few aspects of the Financial Statements & Management Information as at the end of the 15 – 16 FY. He advised that at 30 Apr 16 the BBU was in debt to him as a Creditor to the tune of £ 16K. He stated that this was a lot better than the £ 39K of a few years previously. He drew attention to an increase in IBU Grants of £ 23K which was the result of a one-off increase in support to all National Federations. He cautioned that this may not be a recurring Grant and also that some IBU Grants were performance related. Answering a question from Jeremy Hopwood about an increase in the AWSA Grant from £ 8.5K to £ 19K, MG stated that this was solely due to the late payment of the 14 – 15 Grant.

The Accounts were received by **15 votes FOR, 0 against and 0 withheld.**

2.5 Appointment of Auditors. Messrs King Morter Proud & Co of Brecon were reappointed as Auditors by **15 votes FOR, 0 against and 0 withheld.**

2.6 Election of Directors. RW was ratified as an “Appointed Director” by **15 votes FOR, 0 against and 0 withheld.**

ITEM 3 - CLOSING business

3.1 External Agencies. MG reported that the IBU held an Extraordinary Congress in February, when the award of the 2021 World Championships was removed from Tyumen, Russia. This was a direct consequence of the McLaren Report into State sponsored doping. Other biathlon events and the 2017 Bobsleigh World Champs had also been relocated. However MG warned that it was becoming apparent that some findings of the McLaren Report were based on dubious facts and information, and all may not be what it seems. He reported that UK Sport had now withdrawn its biennial Grant of approx £ 3K, to the BBU (and other disciplines) to attend international congresses. Finally he was happy to say that relations with UKAD (UK Anti-Doping) were very good – largely due to the dedication of our AD Officer, Terry Hall.

RW reported that although Rio 2106 had been a huge success for the BOA and Team GB the finances of the BOA had been stretched because of Rio. However at a recent BOA NOC (National Olympic Committee) Meeting it was confirmed that all PyeonChang 2018 activities were on track. There was also a contingency plan with the BOA to allow any athletes selected for the 2018 OWG to compete should the BBU fold; although this would not extend to any other aspiring international athletes.

3.2 BBU & Army Athlete Development. AT confirmed that the Army was hosting the ABDS (Army Biathlon Development Squad) in Kinloss and the Advanced ABDS, who were the IBU Cup team designate, in Ruhpolding. CC stated that as the British Nordic Development Squad (BNDS) Pathway Coach he could offer coaching for any under 23 athlete within the Nordic framework, as long as they have clear and identified cross-country skiing goals, as is the case of Holly Rees-Lay. Gordon Seaton (GS) reminded the AGM that through the British Biathlon Rifle Club (BBRC) he could offer military & civilian athletes a range of coaching, development and shooting courses at Kinloss and Arbroath; arrange the provision of Firearms Certificates and qualify Range Conducting Officers. He drew attention to the forthcoming “Biathlon Boot Camp” 11-17 Sep 17 at Arbroath; details on the BBU Facebook page.

3.3 Draft end of FY 2016 – 17 Accounts & BBU Lottery. MG confirmed that he was no longer a Creditor and that on 30 Jun 17, the end of a 15 month FY, the BBU had assets of approx £ 25K. However £ 24K of these were a result of an advance up-front payment from the IBU for next winter, which would have to be repaid should the BBU fold or not compete internationally in 2017 – 18. He explained a number of items in the draft comparison FY 15-16 & 16 -17 issued at the AGM (which will be published as part of the final Financial Statements in due course, and which will be included in the Agenda for the 2018 AGM).

- The almost doubling of an AWSA Grant from £ 11K to £ 23K was due to the payment of a long disputed unpaid Grant. Unfortunately this Grant for Army athletes in the squads has now been cut to zero.
- The near doubling of IBU Grants to £ 111K was due to a second “bonus” payment in the 16 -17 FY, similar to that in Item 2.4 above, and the advance payment for next winter.
- Minibus hire at £ 16.8K was nearly 5 times that of FY 15 -16 as the Army could no longer provide.
- Support Staff costs were higher as the Army could no longer provide a Team Manager.
- Costs of the Sec Gen in FY 16 – 17 appeared to be higher but this was a 15 month FY and a number of items e.g. Office and Travel costs were “historic” as there had been no money to pay MG in previous years!

MG stated that Nicola Walker (NW) the Lottery Manager had been unable to attend the AGM at very short notice. The Lottery continued to have fairly constant numbers and its assets were included in the overall BBU assets of £ 25K. NW intended to remain the Lottery Manager until at least the end of 2017.

3.4 Draft Budget 2017 -18. MG stated that at that morning’s Board Meeting he had issued a draft budget for 2017 – 18, which just broke even. In outline all World Cup & Olympic competitions were funded but none in Trimester 3 for IBU Cup and there was no funding for a paid Sec Gen. After-note: On 26 Jul IBU announced a special “Olympic Bonus” for all NFs. GBR will receive approx £ 26K.

3.5 The Future of the BBU. RW stated he was honoured to be asked to become Chairman of the BBU at what was clearly a difficult and not ideal time for the NGB. He intended to act with transparency and honesty with all athletes, members and stakeholders, starting with how he perceived future options. Other than folding the BBU – an option rejected at the Board Meeting that morning - he saw three options for the future organisation of the BBU:

- a. Maintain the Status Quo and operate in a very similar fashion to now. This could not happen because there was neither the money to pay for any Sec Gen, nor had there been any volunteers or anyone identified to replicate the work done by MG.
- b. Keep the BBU as the on-going NGB, but operate in a different fashion from the past.
- c. Drawdown the BBU to become virtually dormant or effectively the NGB in name only. This could allow continued Olympic and other international representation but would still require some administrative work.

RW, and the Board, believed Option “b” was the recommended way ahead. He explained that at very short notice he had recently had to work in South America for 2 months and some planning including a Stakeholder Meeting in May had not taken place. Thus although we are not in an ideal world “we are where we are”. But he was confident that with a change of strategy and governance, including the appointment of a female Director, and recruiting the right individuals, life-support could be given to the BBU and that it would be possible to maintain many of the Sec Gen tasks.

He would now be calling a Stakeholder Meeting in September, but felt it may be necessary to review the whole process of change in 6 months. If it was not working, Option “c” may be necessary. Whilst the BBU was in a difficult position, he urged people to come forward and offer assistance and to put the word out for support.

3.6 Any other Business. No points were raised from the floor.

3.7 Chairman’s Closing Remarks. RW again thanked EL, AT and especially MG for over 50 years of combined support and dedication to biathlon in general and the BBU in particular. He concluded by reminding all present that he would be delighted if they would stay on after the AGM to informally discuss “The Future” or any other aspect of the BBU.

The Meeting closed at 13:55 BST.

Signed by:

Chairman
British Biathlon Union

Date.....



**British
Biathlon
Union**

**BRITISH BIATHLON UNION (BBU)
20th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)
LONDON, ENGLAND**

15th JULY 2017

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

INTRODUCTION

I am delighted to write my first Annual Report as the Chairman of the BBU. This report differs from all the 19 previous ones as it covers a period of having two Chairmen in post, and also of two winter seasons.

In his January 2016 report, my predecessor, André Oszmann, commented: *"We now find ourselves once again in a difficult time financially and, we are also facing difficult times on the International stage"*. Nearly 18 months on this situation prevails, as I shall comment later. But first, on behalf of all athletes and Members, I wish to thank André for everything he contributed to British Biathlon until his resignation as Chairman in July 2016. Having first been involved with the BBU as a sponsor in 2006, he joined the Board in 2008, becoming Chairman in 2011. That he left with the BBU still in *"a difficult time financially"* was equally frustrating to him, and to the rest of the Board. Thankfully, he and his wife Julie were instrumental in setting up the successful BBU Lottery – a legacy that continues to contribute direct support our junior civilian athletes.

SPORTING REVIEW

2015 - 2016

Following the retirements of Lee-Steve Jackson, Kevin Kane and Nerys Jones the 2015 – 2016 Season was a challenge on the World Cup. But, with the men having finished the previous season in 24th place in Nations Cup we still had two Start places, although only one for women. Sadly, at the end of the season GBR had fallen to 26th place (Men) and 27th (Women) giving a quota of only one man and one woman for the 2016 – 17 season.

With only three start places for our inexperienced Men's Team on the IBU Cup it was unlikely that we would improve on our IBU Cup Nations Cup placing of 27th. We did not, and fell to 32nd, although we did not compete in Trimester 2 due to it clashing with the Regional and Army/British Championships. No women were selected for the IBU Cup.

The World Cup Team consisted of Amanda Lightfoot, Scott Dixon and Marcel Laponder, the latter of whom who was stood down at the end of the season. Marcel first competed in World Cup in 2007 and in six World Championships; he lives near Ruhpolding and we are grateful for the support still provides to the Teams. The IBU Cup Team was Alex Gleave, Robert Sircus and new-comers Vinny Fountain, Martin Shaw and Sandy Wishart. Sircus and Sam Cairns both competed in the Junior World Championships in Romania.

We were served extremely well by our dedicated but small team of Support Staff. Simon Allanson was WC Team Manager with Italian Ilario Maddalin as the new wax technician. Wolfgang Pichler continued to coach Amanda and we had further support from his Swedish Team. On the IBU Cup Lee-Steve Jackson was the manager, coach and waxman with some support from Daniel Graf. Si Burke once

again took the juniors to their World Championships and was most ably supported by “JC” McBride.

2016 - 2017

Performances at the World Cup were mixed, with adequate results in Trimester 1, very disappointing in Trimester 2 but much brighter in the final Trimester. Here, Amanda Lightfoot recorded the best ever GBR female result and one of the top GBR half dozen of all time, when she finished 32nd in the 15 km Individual World Championships in Hochfilzen. In the final World Cup in Oslo, Scott Dixon also recorded a World Cup PB when he finished 65th in the Sprint. This season was the first of two for athletes to gain qualification for the 2018 Olympic Winter Games in PyeongChang. Scott has met the BOA criteria of a minimum of one top 2/3rd of a field placing once and Amanda 3 times. However she is only 113th in the IBU/IOC quota of 114 athletes for 2018, but should maintain her qualification next season. Scott is 5th reserve (119th) in the men’s quota and must produce super-human results next winter to achieve qualification.

In spite of missing World Cups in Korea and Finland (re-located from Russia, following the repercussions of the McLaren Report into doping) both the Men & Women’s teams finished 27th in the WC Nations Cup. Once again this gives GBR one start place on the WC next season. In the IBU Cup the men, with the same athletes plus Dixon but without Sircus, improved to 27th. New international athletes Emma Drew and Sam Grist together with Amanda Lightfoot also finished 27th. There was no GBR entry in the Junior World Championships although Holly Rees-Lay showed promise on the IBU Junior Cup before Christmas.

Pending his retirement from the Army, Simon Allanson left the BBU in June. He first raced WC in 2006 and following three World Championships became the Assistant Team Manager for Sochi 2014 and Team Manager 2015 -16. I thank him for all his efforts, and wish him well as Manager/Coach of the potential GBR Paralympic Team for PyeongChang. Daniel Graf replaced Simon, but only on snow, whilst Ilario Maddalin was again an exceptional Wax Technician and Wolfgang Pichler an Advisory Coach. Lee-Steve Jackson master-minded almost all aspects of the Army Advanced Biathlon Development Squad and the IBU Cup team, assisted in Trimester 1 by Ben Woolley.

FINANCE & SPONSORSHIP

The BBU has never been in a strong position financially and for the past dozen years has been kept solvent by the Sec Gen and BBU Director, Mark Goodson. The athletes and the Board are immensely grateful and fully appreciate his decision not to renew this facility at the end of the current Financial Year on 30 June 2017. In spite of many efforts, we have failed to replace the two major sponsors of the last decade and in the past two seasons received no sponsorship money at all. Indeed we only survived and competed last season due to the receipt of a most unexpected Grant from the IBU. Our current international standing and lack of podium potential is such that it does not attract Lottery funding from UK Sport.

Given this background, the Board appointed a fund-raising consultancy “Apt” in the summer of 2015 to raise our profile and hopefully increase new funding. Unfortunately this proved difficult and, following the resignation of the Chairman last July, Apt terminated their contract. The Board has continued to seek new avenues of sponsorship and funding without success.

GOVERNANCE

Behind the scenes a number of willing and dedicated volunteers have helped sustain the BBU show over the past 18 months. Member Elected Director Carl Carrier focusses on Development and Coaching; Terry Hall is the Anti-Doping Officer; Charles Brooks our long serving “Honorary Legal Advisor”; Nicola Walker runs the BBU Lottery and Gordon Seaton the British Biathlon Rifle Club providing general shooting advice and a conduit to Firearm Certificates. 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.

I have already mentioned the departure of André Oszmann but in December 2016 we also said farewell to Colonel Jon Campbell. He joined the Board in 2010 serving initially as Strategy and then Development Director. I thank him on your behalf for an enlightened and dedicated approach to his role. At the same time, three Directors, Mark Goodson, Eddy Lowe and Colonel Adrian Thurgood gave notice of their intention to resign on 30 April 2017. However for legal and financial reasons this date is now 15 July 2017.

Mark (Secretary General & Finance Director) and Eddy (Sport & Technical Director) were “Founder Members” of the BBU back in 1996, although before that Mark had been Chairman Army Nordic for 4 years whilst Eddy managed the GBR team at both the 1992 & 94 Olympic Winter Games. Adrian has been on the Board for 5 years as Director Military Liaison and British Championships. Fortunately, as the BBU is lucky enough to have the Army organise the British Championships on our behalf, we shall still see Adrian in Ruhpolding in his “Army” hat; as indeed we shall see Mark & Eddy in their “Contractor” hats!

The whole of British Biathlon owes them an enormous debt. With over 50 years of cumulative biathlon administrative knowledge they will be a very hard act to follow, but follow them we must.

THE FUTURE

Looking to the future I have formulated the following intent:

- **The Vision.** The vision is to deliver British Biathlon medal success within fifteen years.
- **The Pathway.** A new BBU Board will be selected by the end of July 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 severe BBU financial austerity, with support from volunteers the current members of the Board will identify funding streams (from the military and other sources) to reduce the likelihood of insolvency and set the conditions for assured support to the current athletes this season and the next.
- **Governance.** Over the next two months selection criteria for the new members of the Board will be 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 funding, but clearly in a highly competitive financial market much will depend on the success of the athletes.
- **Assistance.** The BBU will partner Nordic to achieve economies of scale and adopt best practice. But, 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 prescribed by the Board in the forthcoming months. Thank you.

Rob Weighill
Chairman
17 June 2017