



1995 Annual General Meeting of the BHPA

Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 10 December 1995 at the Telford Exhibition Centre, Telford, commencing at 1.30pm.

These minutes are not to be taken as a true record without referring to the minutes of the Executive Council meeting at which they were approved.

Present:

BHPA President,
Chairman and
Members of the
Executive Council

In attendance:

Tom Beardsley
Jennie Burdett
Mark Dale
Bob Harrison

87 Voting members
of the Association

The Chairman apologised for the slight delay in starting the meeting due to receiving additional proxy votes which had to be counted. He reminded members that the first part of the meeting would be official BHPA Ltd business as required by the Companies Act and this would then be followed by Officers' reports and questions from the floor.

ITEM 1: MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Chairman informed members that the minutes of the 1994 AGM held on Sunday 16 October 1994 at the Telford Exhibition Centre and which had been previously approved by Exec as a true record of that meeting, were available.

ITEM 2: CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The chairman announced that he would give his report with other Exec members after the closure of the first part of the meeting.

ITEM 3: TREASURER'S REPORT

Dick Long said his report (copy attached) was contained in the convention folder and he would not therefore read out the whole thing. However, he did highlight some matters contained in the report such as the significance of the possible loss of the Sports Council grant. Dick said he was always happy to take any questions by telephone or in writing regarding the accounts. There were no questions from the floor concerning the accounts.

ITEM 4: RESOLUTIONS

3.1 That the Accounts and Report of the Executive Council for the year ended 31 March 1995 be approved.

The Accounts were presented to the meeting and the resolution was approved unanimously.

3.2 That five members be elected by ballot and appointed to the Executive Council from the following six candidates: J Bowyer, T Hardie, R Long, M Turner, A Wakelin, M Woodhams.

Of the six candidates standing for election to the Exec. the following were elected: J Bowyer, T Hardie, R Long, A Wakelin, M Woodhams. The Chairman thanked all those who had stood for election.

3.3 That Ernst & Young be reappointed as auditors and the Executive Council be authorised to fix their remuneration.

The resolution was approved unanimously.

3.4 That the Company be required, whenever possible, to:

- a) give general notice of an intended BHPA Annual General Meeting to the members and such notice should be prominently displayed in Skywings a minimum of 3 months and 2 months before the Annual General Meeting.

- b) give clear details of how and when to make proposals for discussion or to raise Resolutions at the BHPA Annual General Meeting. Such information should be prominently displayed in Skywings a minimum of 4 months and 3 months before the AGM.
- c) give clear details of how and when to propose members for election to the BHPA Executive Council at an Annual General Meeting. Such information should be prominently displayed in Skywings a minimum of 4 months and 3 months before the AGM.

Parts a, b and c of Resolution 3.4 were carried.

The Chairman then closed the formal part of the meeting required by the Companies Act.

ITEM 5: REPORTS

5.1 President's Address

Ann Welch addressed the meeting and expressed her concern that the average age of hang gliding pilots was 30. She felt this was a real cause for concern and consideration should be given as to how youngsters could be attracted to flying. Ann suggested that there was a need for some good articles to be submitted to country and land owners magazines. Also women's magazines so that mothers would understand more about the sport and allow their children to fly.

After thanking Marc Asquith for all his hard work during the year Ann presented the following awards:

The President's Trophy - Robin Hamilton for the longest distance flown.

The Hang Gliding Eagle Distance Trophy - Justin Needham.

The Sky Systems UK Distance Trophy - Steve Ham.

The Bettina Gray Best Club Magazine Prize - The South East Wales Hang Gliding and Paragliding Club.

The Wings Over a Cloud for the best article in Skywings was awarded to Kat Thurston for "All The Rotor You Can Get".

The Ralph Bygot Trophy - Justin Needham.

5.2 Chairman's Report

Marc Asquith started his report by saying that although Bob Harrison was present, he had in fact left the employment of BHPA on 27 November. Marc said Bob had overseen many changes during his years with the Association and had done a remarkable job. Ann Welch presented Bob with a gift on behalf of the Association.

Marc had written a report (copy attached) for the conference folder and summarised the contents. He said one of his targets was to simplify systems in order to give members a better service. His second goal was to do with subscriptions, he would be striving to try to reduce subscriptions and felt that with careful financial planning and controls we should at least be able to hold subscriptions at their present level.

5.3 FSC Report

Angus Pinkerton, Chairman FSC, presented his written report, copy attached.

5.4 Insurance

Marc Asquith summarised the main points in his written report, copy attached.

5.5 Skywings

Mark Woodham's written report is attached.

5.6 Admin

Andrew Wakelin's written report is attached.

5.7 Clubs/Sites

John Clarke's written report is attached.

5.8 Competitions

Jim Bowyer's written report is attached.

ITEM 6: MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Chris Jones asked why it had taken so long to publish the fact that there had been a problem with Keith Cockroft's parachute. Angus Pinkerton replied that it appeared that the French police had come to the conclusion that the glider had hit a mountain and there was no need for them to make further investigations. Angus said Bill Morris had had to do a great deal of work to get colour photographs from the French and these had only just been received. The BHPA investigation would continue.

Trevor Birkbeck asked about BHPA funding for the purchase of a site. John Clarke replied that he was looking into the site question and whether funds could be made available to purchase important parcels of land. John said we have no security as a sport and he would like to see the Association buying sites of importance.

Trevor Hayes asked if, as ratings were being rationalised, exams could also be rationalised. Angus Pinkerton said that creating exams was really quite difficult as things kept changing. The long term objective was to create a couple of hundred questions and a random selection would be taken so that each exam would be different.

Nick Smith wondered whether any consideration had been given to quarterly or monthly direct debit payments for membership fees. Dick Long explained that this had been looked into but would be too difficult in regard to insurance if someone stopped their direct debit midway through their membership year. The Chairman agreed that the situation would be reviewed.

In regard to the Super Floater, Noel Whittall asked if members could be sure that the BHPA would have this type of aircraft within its ambit. Angus Pinkerton replied that all three classes of hang glider required foot launching of the aircraft. The current situation was that BHPA had been approached by one of the manufacturers who was keen to gain airworthiness certification for their aircraft and Angus said as far as he was concerned all foot launched aircraft were proper topics for BHPA control.

Referring to the possibility of BHPA funding the acquisition of sites, Roger Pearce asked whether such sites would be run at a local level or by BHPA. John Clarke replied that it would be at local level but this project was still in its very early stages and clubs would be consulted as it went along.

Steve Goodall asked whether his glider would still be certified if he put new lines on it. Angus replied that it would only be certified if it was the same in all components as the glider which was originally certified. Anyone who was not sure that they were covered should get their glider registered with the BHPA. Modifications would be considered and if satisfactory there would be no problem with registration.

Trevor Birkbeck asked whether BHPA funding would be available to enable clubs to buy dual gliders for air experience flights to attract new people into the sport. This was discussed and concern expressed by some members that the BHPA did not appear to spend much money on promotion of the sport. In response to Trevor's question Bob Harrison pointed out that the BHPA did in fact own a dual glider which could be loaned out to clubs who were considering buying their own but not sure whether it would really work for them. Graham Phipps added

that his club knew nothing of the BHPA glider and had purchased their own through local sponsorship and Sportsmatch.

Discussion on this subject continued with some members feeling that BHPA should provide loans to clubs for the purchase of dual gliders and others totally opposed to the idea. The Chairman said that if Trevor wrote to BHPA requesting a loan then the matter would be considered.

Dave Thompson said that rather than using BHPA members' money to provide loans, it would be more useful if someone could advise the clubs how to go about getting sponsorship. Mark Dale said that the Technical Staff had this kind of information and would be pleased to help anyone who contacted them.

Graham Phipps asked if BHPA had considered improving the training system to encourage EPC pilots to stay in the sport. Angus replied that the vast majority of people who tried the sports were not sufficiently committed to continue and the number of pilots staying in the sport had remained constant for the last twenty years. Angus went on to say that the greatest proportion of people staying in the sport were tow based and the club environment encouraged them. Tow based clubs converted more pilots and it was clear that well run towing operations kept more pilots in the sport.

Harriet Pottinger said that if hill clubs had access to a dual glider they could give their students a taste of what it would be like when they were pilots and encourage them to carry on. Andy Walters pointed out that if dual pilots were allowed to charge for taking people up there would be more people trying the sport. However, Tom Hardie replied that this was against the law and if Andy wanted to get it changed he should speak to his MP.

Angus said that there were no aerotow schools at the moment and although aerotowing was an excellent way of giving air experience flights it was very expensive to run. FSC would be looking at ways of having a mechanism for dual air experience flights.

There were no further questions and Peter Ronfell proposed a vote of thanks to the Executive Council for all the work which they did.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 3.40pm.