

BHPA AGM

2nd MARCH 2013

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Writing a Chairman's report feels very odd. By chance, I was recently leafing through old issues of Skywings and discovered that I was first elected as Chairman of the BHPA on 16th October 1994. I think I served in that position for about 5 years that time. It feels like a different lifetime.

However, truth be told, the issues that face the BHPA never really change. We always have the problems of getting new people into the sport. Insurance issues are a perennial bug bear and certification of paragliders is like trying to pin down a sprite.

This year has been no different.

John Welch in his role as Schools Liaison Officer has been raising the issue of the schools having a bad summer. This is a matter that will be discussed at the Exec meeting that immediately follows the AGM.

Insurance follows its usual trend of a few years of good claims history leading to falling premiums, followed by a bad year and a dramatic increase in premium. This year, after several very good years, we have seen a very substantial settlement of a claim which no doubt will impact on future premium negotiations and very directly on membership subscriptions.

Paraglider certification for competitions has been a problem since the two fatal accidents at the last World Paragliding Championships in Pedrahita. The suspension of 'comps wings' from competitions has had a whole series of unintended consequences. A few of the gliders that were formerly 'comps wings' have been modified to fit into the EN-D class and many say that this has had a distorting effect on the whole EN certification scheme. The last time Exec considered the issue, they voted by an overwhelming majority to pursue the aim of having only EN Certified wings in competitions. Now

we see those unintended consequences it appears that, to a certain extent, we may be about to change our mind.

Much of the work of the members of Exec goes unnoticed. Amongst our day to day routines, we are all constantly engaged in representing hang glider and paraglider pilots to the huge number of outside bodies that can help or hinder our sports. John Nash and I regularly attend Royal Aero Club Council meetings. This is our direct route into Europe Airsports and ultimately into the European Aviation Safety Agency, which is steadily becoming the EU's version of the CAA.

Our other route of representation to EASA is via the European Hang Gliding and Paragliding Union. Our usual delegation is Chairman and Chairman FSC, however last year Angus Pinkerton was unable to attend and so I accompanied Martin Heywood to Dublin. This year Angus and I attended the meeting in Taormina on the island of Sicily. It's always a full day of tedium starting at 9.00am and ending at 6.00pm. Even so, the backdrop to the coffee breaks of a sun drenched Mediterranean sea and Mt Etna rising to a snow capped peak at 12,000 feet, gave the meeting a whole different flavour to those held in the more pedestrian parts of Europe. Next year it's Holland and we are off to a Hotel within a short ride of Schiphol Airport. It's a dirty job but someone has to do it !

EHPU has had a major influence in the discussions about certification of competition paragliders. I was fortunate enough to attend the inaugural meeting of the EHPU during my last period of Chairmanship and there was no sense then that it would become a major force. Now we attend as one of the major players, alongside Germany and France. It is gratifying to see how in such an unexpected way the BHPA has become such an influence in world Hang Gliding and Paragliding. This year we all agreed that we would not recognise qualifications or ratings created by commercial bodies and confirmed to CIVL that more work was required to approve competitions wings. EHPU continues to fund the work of the Secretariat for WG6, the paragliding EN certification body, with assistance from others.

I should comment on how Exec is a remarkable team. Everyone does their bit, but when they need help or support there is a team around them. Of the members who hold major briefs, Angus Langford pretty much ploughs his own furrow with the finance brief, but we are all confident that he has a real grasp on our finances and are happy to leave matters in his capable hands. Similarly, Paul Dancey has Skywings totally under control. Advertising may fall off but Paul keeps a chunky, high quality magazine dropping through everyone's letter box month after month after month. Angus Pinkerton has been Chairman of FSC since the BHPA was founded, I suspect he could do it with one arm tied behind his back and blindfolded. Martin H keeps close control of the insurance brief changing brokers and or underwriters when necessary. These guys are supported by the members of Exec who hold the more special interest representative briefs – Bill Bell and Calvo for comps with Brett Janaway keeping an eye on them; John Welch as schools liaison, Ed Cunliffe for Power and John Nash, External Representation and Company Secretary. During the course of the AGM, since we have an uncontested election to the Board and unless something dramatic and bizarre happens, we will be joined by Adrian Thomas. Adrian will have the usual delight of sitting and learning how Exec works for a few months before he is sufficiently up to speed to make a contribution. New members to Exec often comment that they had no idea just how complex a beast the BHPA is. Welcome Adrian.

During the year Steve Walsh stood down from Exec, and it seems, pretty much from the sport. He has served the sport as National Sites Officer for many years and his departure leaves a major gap in our activities. If anyone has an interest in this area, we are desperate for a new Sites Officer. Please feel free to give me a call or send me an e-mail to discuss. Steve, thank you for all your hard work over the years.

Not only is Exec an excellent team – we are supported and assisted by a remarkably hard working, long serving, diligent and patient group of staff. As I may say during the discussions, when the BHGA merged with the BAPC, the office staff was the equivalent of 10 full time employees. Some 10 years later, this has fallen to an FTE of 3.8. Membership numbers have not changed proportionately! So, a big thank you is due to all our staff, Office, FSC and Skywings.

One role I have not mentioned is that of Chairman. I have found it very interesting that the workload this time round is much lighter than last time. Gone are the monthly tedious Chairman's letter to Skywings, and the number of phone calls and e-mails appears to have substantially reduced. Martin had served as Chairman for longer than he wanted and needed a break and I was happy to take the role for a short while. However, most of the senior members of Exec who could do the role are too committed to their existing roles and so we now look to the new blood, those who are not so busy with a major portfolio, to take on the role of vice chairman with a view to letting Martin and I off the hook. I do not anticipate serving as Chairman for very long this time round.

I hope that at this AGM some of our members are able to explore the BGA AGM, they have some wonderful talks and members should take the chance to listen to some of their experts.

Should any members have any questions, I am always willing to chat, either here at the AGM or later on the phone or via e-mail.

Now the AGM falls in the early spring, it feels sensible to wish everyone a great 2013 summer season of flying.

MARC ASQUITH

BHPA CHAIRMAN

23 FEBRUARY 2013

BHPA Financial Report

In the year to March 2012 the Association made a surplus of a little over £10k down from the exceptional surplus of £42k in 2011. Our overall income remained more or less unchanged on the previous year but our costs increased by more than the rate of inflation. The Association's financial position remains good and our overall reserves stand at £478k.

Subscription income remained steady during the year as in 2011 we did not increase fees. Shop sales and profit fell over the year. The Skywings team managed a 6% increase in advertising income but unfortunately this was more than offset by a 4% increase in costs so that net costs of producing Skywings went back to its 2010 level after a reduction last year.

Over the past few years we lost most of our Sport England grant to pay for the Olympics. With the Olympic Committee keen to show a legacy effect from London 2012, its unlikely that we'll see a return to the funding of grassroots sports for some time to come.

We saw a small increase in our insurance costs (after a big reduction the previous year). FSC and Admin costs increased by more than we would like. A significant increase in travel costs was the primary cause. The 2011 admin costs figures were also flattered by a £7k VAT refund.

We have a long-term objective to maintain the real value of our reserves. With inflation running at 2.7% the Association needs to make a surplus of £13k to retain the value of reserves in purchasing power terms. Reserves provide us, as we have seen, with a buffer in difficult economic times and they also provide us with a fund so that we can, if necessary, fight existential regulatory threats to our sport. There is a fine balance to be struck between ensuring the Association's long-term viability and Exec's desire to keep fees to a minimum. This year we expect to make another small surplus but unfortunately, with prices continuing to go up, we will need a small increase subs if we are to avoid making a loss next year and Exec have agreed to the minimum necessary increase in members' subscription fees to balance the books.

I am grateful to Michelle and the rest of the team in Leicester for making the Association (and its accounts) run so smoothly.

Angus Langford, BHPA Treasurer

Money in

Subscriptions	£640,418
Operating income	£20,918
Shop	£6,273
Sport England	£860
Other income	£6,089

Money out

Insurance	£165,258
Skywings	£95,990
Comps	£34,000
Membership costs	£22,503
FSC costs	£118,244
Office costs	£227,997

Insurance Director's Report

We were fortunately able to continue our relationship with Hiscox into 2013 on the same terms as last year, along with the recent addition of those who want to participate in Human Powered Flight activities, and also those more petrol-minded within the sub 115kg category, now becoming well-established. The company is big in the insurance industry and have proved to be sensitive to our perhaps more cottage-sized needs and it is to be hoped that we can continue into 2014 and beyond with them.

We have over the last year or so had our fair share of knocks, bumps, accidents and also claims, so our history, looking back over the past 10 years or so isn't as good as it was - members will recall that during the last decade we seemed to face hardly any claims. My view is that that was probably statistically or artificially low period, and we are perhaps now returning to a more normal state of affairs with the odd member-to-member, instructional, and tandem claim occurring. The effect of the last decade's low claim rate meant that in an ascending insurance market, our premiums actually fell by nearly a half. It's difficult to anticipate what will happen for 2014, but my guess is that the level of premium could change, perhaps not for the best – we'll see.

There's been a lot of worry about personal liability this year, probably due to the nature of claims we've had, the litigation climate, and just basic curiosity. We posted information and advice on the website few months ago by way of reassurance, and hope that it's been of assistance. However, I'd just like to add my own personal note. For all membership categories, apart from tandem and instructional, there is £2m cover for you. That applies whether you are in the air, marshalling on the ground on a busy site, coaching, operating a winch, deciding club policy at the local pub, organising a competition, and yes even taking decisions in the BHPA board room. The cover is there for the day you make a mistake or error of judgement and someone gets hurt as a result.

I suppose we'd all like to have more cover, less worry, and less potential for contact with the majesty of the English legal system, but you can't really extinguish that to the absolute zero unless you just stay indoors. We're not like that though, so there will always be some risk which is why we have the cover. My advice about ground-based responsibilities is that you should treat them just as you would if you are in the air. Look around you, think ahead and try to spot potentially dangerous situations before they happen. If a particular scenario is worrying you, we're here to help.

Martin Heywood
Insurance Director
Vice Chairman
March 2013

BHPA Flying and Safety Committee

Report to the 2012 AGM (2nd March 2013)



The current FSC membership is:

Angus Pinkerton (FSC Chairman)
Tom Hardie (Airspace Panel)
Russ Hicks (Tow Panel)
John Lovell (Accident Investigation Panel)
Paul Mahoney (SPHG Panel)
Ken Raines (Chief Examiner and Examination & Inspections Panel)
Jocky Sanderson (Advanced Training)
Joe Schofield (Publications Panel)
David Thomson (Pilot Development Panel)
Mark Dale (BHPA Technical Manager)
Dave Thompson (BHPA Senior Technical Officer)

As we announced last year, an On-line Incident Reporting system was introduced in May 2012, and the first reports using the system were submitted by members in June. It isn't possible to tell if there has been an increase in the number of reports because of this new system, but there were 106 incidents reported during 2012 (compared to 93 reports in 2011). Of the total, some 67 (or 63%) involved a degree of injury (2011: 68%) and 2 of the injuries were fatal (5 fatalities in 2011). Like 2011, there was again a small drop in the proportion of injuries (in the case of the drop in number of fatalities, the numbers are certainly too small to be statistically significant.)

The ratio of hang gliding to paragliding injuries (~5 to 1) is fairly close to the ratio of our membership numbers. In our less populous disciplines, there was one Sub-20 "speed gliding" injury, 1 powered hang gliding injury, and 2 PPG injuries.

All of our numbers are so small as to frustrate attempts to establish reliable trends, so for some years we have been working in Europe to achieve a common reporting scheme and database. A common format was agreed some years ago, but without a common database to hold the data, it has proved difficult to achieve a consistent level of reporting from other countries. The DHV have now commissioned the development of an on-line database which they have offered to all the European Associations, who have enthusiastically embraced the idea. So we may now (at last) be in sight of statistically significant numbers that can be used for analysis.

We have got very behind in publishing our incident summaries (there have been some technical difficulties) but Dave Thompson promises that the missing summaries will shortly start appearing in Skywings.

I would like to re-emphasise the value to all of our flying community of completing Incident Reports. The "one-off" incident or near-miss that affected you (or one of your flying friends) might not be as rare as you think. Without reports we can't investigate, and without investigations we can't provide timely advice and guidance to pilots or manufacturers.

During 2012 I was appointed as the Chairman of the CEN/TC136/WG6 Committee that develops and agrees Paragliding standards. The Working Group has completed its revision of EN926-2 (the Paraglider Flight Test standard). This is currently being translated into French and German, and is expected to be ratified by mid-2013. During 2013 WG6 will complete its review of the Paraglider Load and Shock Test Standard (EN926-1) and the Emergency Parachute Standard (EN12491). It is likely that a revision to the Harness Standard will begin later this year (or early next year). Following the recent CIVL Plenary Meeting, there will also be work for WG6 to develop and document flight tests for the CIVL Competition Class gliders. This will have to be completed during 2014, to allow implementation of the new Competition Class gliders from January 2015.

A new release of "Training Wings" was published in 2012, a fully glossy and very colourful introduction for student pilots, and it is also available on-line as the Elementary Pilot Training Guide. The Pilot Handbook continues to sell well (well over 10,000 copies have been sold), the new may not now be available until next year, to ensure that it reflects the new UK Airlaw provisions that will emerge as a result of the adoption of the Standardised European Rules of the Air (SERA).

During 2012, FSC implemented a new set of Exam papers, based on the concept of "environments", and continued our campaign to emphasise and standardise pre-flight checks. Hopefully all our "Geordies" continue to have their cats aboard! We have continued a development trial of a training programme for speed flying, and on post-school Coaching the Pilot Development Panel are well advanced in developing a framework for post-CP Coaching. This will provide both a task framework for Pilots to work through their skill development, and advice and notes for Coaches to help them assist Pilots' development.

We also spent quite a lot of time reviewing the Aerotow Hang Gliding Training programme, which involved quite a lot of test flying of different tug, glider and line length configurations. This work has culminated in changes to the syllabus, as well as longer line lengths and the recommendation that keel fins be used during training.

As always I would like to say "thank you" to all the people who have volunteered to work on FSC. We are all passionate about our sport and I feel privileged that such a skilled and experienced group of people are willing to give up their valuable time to contribute to its safe development.

Angus Pinkerton, Chairman BHPA Flying and Safety Committee, February 2013.



Skywings magazine continues to be delivered on time and within budget. The final Skywings management figures for 2011/12 are shown below, along with the anticipated year end result for 2012/2013. But the latter is only a prediction, and with one more issue to go and a number of invoices still outstanding it may well change. The figures for 2012/13 must therefore be treated with caution, but are useful guide in trying to establish future trends.

	Final	Anticipated
	2011/12	2012/13
Expenditure	£153,078	£157,777
Advertising & sales income	£59,109	£61,997
Net cost	£93,969	£95,780
Average net cost per magazine printed	£1.14	£1.17
Copies ordered	80,554	80,379
Copies printed	82,997	81,639
Carriers	79,392	79,110
Pages printed	608	576

As hoped, advertising income does now appear to have turned the corner, and is finally rising again. Unfortunately this welcome small increase in revenue has been outstripped by another large increase in Royal Mail postal charges. This increase is yet again well above any measure of inflation, and is a result of established Government policy to fatten Royal Mail profits ahead of a sell off.

Royal Mail are however still cheaper than their competitors, so I'm afraid there is little we can do but to accept this situation, and budget for an annual ramping up of postal charges for the foreseeable future.

As part of a full review of all Skywings expenditure to look for any potential cost savings, I obtained an alternate print quotation from Pensord, who recently won the contract for the BGA magazine on price. Unfortunately they were unable to match Newman Thomson's current charges, let alone beat them.

Joe and I also met with Newman Thomson to see if there were any changes we could introduce to decrease our current print costs. But we found that other than dropping down to an A5 magazine format, the only saving that could be made were fairly small.

So whilst all practical cost cutting measures open to us have been implemented, the savings are only marginal. With postal charges likely to increase again this April, I was forced to conclude that trying to operate within a budget that was last increased in 2009 was going to make 2013/14 extremely challenging!

I am happy to report that following discussions at the last Exec meeting it was agreed that next year's Skywings budget would rise above inflation to help compensate for the additional costs we have had to absorb over the past three years. This should help to ease at least some of the pressure next year.

Skywings is of course a team effort, and in closing I would as usual like to thank our talented and hard-working team, designer and advertising agent Colin Fargher, and editor Joe Schofield, and of course all our contributors. Without your articles, news items and photographs Skywings simply wouldn't be the great magazine it continues to be.

Paul Dancey,
Corporate Communications Director
March 2013



Website Report – 2013

The online incident reporting system has now been in operation for around 10 months, and appears to have been very successful with around 74 submissions made over that period. The feedback received has been generally very positive, and has resulted in a few minor tweaks to the system being made.

The shop software in use on the website has been updated to the latest version available, and I've made a number of minor changes to the way schools and clubs information is displayed, following feedback from Steve Millson.

Perhaps the most visible changes made over the past 12 months are those necessary to comply with "new" EU cookie regulations. These regulations require the explicit consent of visitors before "non essential" cookies can be set. Examples of this are the cookies set by Google when maps are embedded in pages such as our "find your nearest school" page, or when YouTube videos are embedded in web pages.

I have therefore had to include code to stop these embedded features being displayed before visitors have given their explicit consent for the cookies to be set. Our on-line incident report form also uses cookies, but I would argue that this is an "essential cookie", so no explicit consent is required for this.

As a result a slide-up box now appears at the foot of the screen when you first visit the site, requesting permission for cookies to be set. But once permission has been granted this should not re-appear.

I have also updated our privacy page to list all the cookies we use, and what class each cookie falls into, using the guidelines issued by the authorities. In my view these changes should mean that we now fully comply with current EU cookie regulations.

The website continues to be maintained on a regular basis, whilst discussions are ongoing about future developments.

The existing website is currently undergoing its annual "spring clean" and software audit, and as part of that process I am refreshing the "look" of the site ahead of the new flying season. This work should be completed before the end of the month.

Paul Dancey
Corporate Communications Director
March 2013

Competitions Report

This last years weather has made it a difficult year for all flying, competitions included. Despite this two long standing UK records were broken; the UK open distance record by Carl Wallbank in April and the Out and Return record by Johnny Carr in May.

Changes to paraglider certification following the series of accidents during the Worlds in Piedrahita continue to be played out with the final shape of glider certification still not finalised.

As with previous years, the top level UK PG comps continue to be held abroad, this year in Italy and Spain, which gives access to a more 'international' style of competition flying and given the weather this year seems a particularly wise policy.

In Hang gliding the European Cat 1 competition in Turkey was poorly supported, largely for logistical reasons, and in the end, in common with a number of nations, we were unable to field a viable UK team.

However in the World Championships in Forbes the British team came from behind to secure Bronze and Kath Rigg secured Silver in the ladies section in punishing conditions proving the UK can field a world class team at the highest level of the sport..

British pilots also took bronze in the Paramotor World League Cup.

Paramotoring changed its status to become a BHPA club and competition panel bringing powered competition flying fully into the BHPA fold. This coming year we are hoping to bring together Accuracy and Paramotoring at a joint competition venue, I have hopes that a successful competition will become an annual event attracting a wider audience to see what these competitions can offer.

The British entry in the Worlds HG Competition also gave us a slot on prime-time Radio 2 that Press officer Ben Philpott very effectively used to sell the virtues of free flight to a national audience.

While safety remains a top priority, all disciplines are, in differing ways, concentrating more effort on developing pilots, certainly commendable and perhaps the route to more British world champions!

British Paragliding Open Competitions

The Panel organised two separate CAT 2 Open competitions during 2012; the first was based in Meduno, on the southern side of the Italian Alps not far from the Slovenian Border. Brett Janaway was instrumental in coordinating the event preparation jointly with the local paragliding club, and the competition was a distinct success, despite the slightly lower number of competitors. Calvo was an excellent Meet Director and the only incident was to Neil Roberts, who had a hard landing after leaving himself too few options and broke vertebrae and ribs. He recovered well with no lasting effects.

The location, with higher alpine peaks behind and the option of flatland flying to the south, makes task selection interesting and varied, and allowed for tasks despite potential overdevelopment in the mountains. This Open was won by Emile van Wyk of GB, with Ronnie Geijsen (NL) and Steve Senior 2nd and 3rd respectively.

Note: the Panel has selected and announced Meduno as one of the competition venues for 2014, and the local Mayor and his team have offered enormous support for the forthcoming event.

The second British Open was held in Pedro Bernardo, a delightful small town on the southern side of the Gredos Mountains to the west of Madrid. While Piedrahita (on the

north side of the same mountain range) is very well known, 'Pedro' is less so, but nevertheless an excellent venue with good task and distance potential. The south-facing takeoff means tasks can start earlier than in Piedrahita, and again the flatlands in front give choice of routes if storms are a possibility.

This competition was won by Ronnie Giejsen, with Guy Anderson and Francisco Reina (Sp) on the podium.

The overall British Champion is the person who has the most points from the sum of the two British Open competitions, and in 2012 the trophy was hotly contended, as always. The overall winner was Steve Senior, champion for the second time; the first being in 1999. The overall women's champion was Emma Casanova-Senior, her second successive time as female champion. During 2012 the Panel took the decision to invest in a permanent trophy for the British Women's Championship, and this is being engraved with the names of all previous winners. Between the Panel archives and Joe Schofield these names were able to be identified, despite surprising inconsistencies and the poor memory of some of the recipients!

The European Paragliding Championships were held in summer 2012 in St Andre les Alpes, a classic venue and flying site. A change to the entry rules to CAT 1 events since the Worlds in Piedrahita meant an increased team/squad size for the higher-ranked nations, at the expense of nations lower in the rankings. Note: only pilots who were within the top 400 pilots globally, or had been inside the top 400 with the previous 24 months. This ruling allowed the scoring team to be supported by additional squad members during the tasks, a positive benefit. It will be interesting to see how many team places are awarded to GB for the 2013 Worlds in Bulgaria, as this affects our budget..

Of note was the excellent 3rd overall place in the European Championship awarded to Russell Ogden, Ozone test pilot and part of their design team; and the 2nd women's place awarded to Kirsty Cameron, who also comprehensively broke the UK women's distance record in 2012.

Note: Russell Ogden has just returned from Colombia and the 2012 PWC Superfinal competition, where he again placed 3rd overall, an excellent result at the world's highest-level competition. Guy Anderson also had a very creditable result in this competition, given his multi-day rescue and lengthy recovery from his accident in Sun Valley during summer 2012.

The British Team managed 5th overall, only a few points separating them from 3rd place.

In 2013 the British Open rounds are being held in Manteigas, Portugal in early July and in St Andre, France in late August.

Overall, the Competitions Panel is in good shape with a mix of experienced and newer members, and we are excited about what the future of paragliding holds.

British Hang Gliding Competitions

European Championships

Kayseri, Turkey

This year saw the rare introduction of a new venue for international hang gliding competition, namely Kayseri in Turkey. The pre-Europeans had been poorly attended and the weather was variable. With no previous experience of the area it was no surprise that some countries chose not to make the long trip.

When the Competitions Panel asked for submissions to be considered for a place on the Europeans team we were not exactly inundated. A team size of 6 pilots was allowed with 3 to count each day. We were unable to raise enough interest to score as a team.

Despite best efforts we were only able to improve the position to 4 pilots at one stage but this figure dwindled until we were left in the sad position of not sending anyone to represent GB.

There were several factors to contend with for this venue; travel time for the return journey was approx 1 week, the next Cat 1 competition was less than 5 months later, both comps would be expensive in time and money due to the distances involved, the weather was at best an unknown and Turkey's neighbour is in the middle of a civil war.

Not all these factors were predictable by CIVL and to a large extent their hands have been tied due to the lack of options. However, it is the opinion of this Chairman that a turning point has been reached that CIVL are yet to respond decisively to:

Cat 1 comps have become expensive, complex and heavily regulated. They are in danger of becoming too unwieldy to host and unattractive to attend. A simpler format may need to be found to ensure their long term success.

British Nationals - Chabre Open

Laragne, France

After a successful combined competition with the French last year it was hoped to repeat it this year. However, they had decided to run an aerotow competition and the logistics of this meant that was not possible. Instead we returned to our most popular venue, Laragne, and ran back-to-back competitions with the Belgians. This format "seeds" both competitions and helps to make both viable, competitive and attractive to pilots from other countries.

This year the weather was relatively kind and a total of 5 tasks were flown. The organisation of the competition was taken on by Comps Panel member Lorenzo Labrador. Lorenzo's fluent French alongside help from local expats Ray (retrieve service) and Shaun (Club Class mentoring) as well as several launch marshals helped to make the week run smoothly.

#	Name	Nat	Glider	T 1	T 2	T 3	T 4	T 5	Total
1	Luis Rizo-Salom	FRA	WW T2C	524	936	973	927	753	4113
2	Andreas Olsson	SWE	WW T2C	411	851	1000	911	737	3910
2	Christian Voiblet	SUI	Combat GT	416	994	862	837	801	3910
4	Gordon Rigg	GBR	Moyes LitespeedS4	522	861	915	883	633	3814
5	Malcolm Brown	GBR	WW T2C	525	842	844	609	664	3484
6	Grant Crossingham	GBR	RS 3.5	521	787	969	822	299	3398
7	Francois Isoard	FRA	WW T2C	406	929	594	606	720	3255
8	Anthony Stephens	GBR	Aeros Combat L 13	386	682	984	646	488	3186
9	Tanno Rutten	NLD	Wills Wing T2 154	491	837	595	676	573	3172
10	Dave Matthews	GBR	LS S3.5	422	892	596	623	627	3160

British Class 1 Champion: Gordon Rigg

There were 5 entries to the rigid wing class this year. Without the French contingent the competition was not as fierce as last year and the tasking was the same as Class 1.

#	Name	Nat	Glider	T 1	T 2	T 3	T 4	T 5	Total
1	Paul Harvey	GBR	Atos VR	579	894	514	951	690	3628
2	Tim King	GBR	Atos VR	499	714	1000	600	0	2813
3	Ilya Ivanov	RUS	Atos VS	274	394	528	199	424	1819

British Class 5 Champion: Paul Harvey

A total of 9 pilots competed in the Club Class. Their shorter tasks were started before the main field to help ensure they had plenty of space to fly and establish on the take off ridge.

#	Name	Nat	Glider	T 1	T 2	T 3	T 4	T 5	Total
1	Dan Balla	GBR	LS	444	601	536	78	882	2541
2	Araldo van de Kraats	NED	Sting 154	435	455	711	164	737	2502
3	Hadewych van Kempen	NED	Airborne Sting 3	470	219	1000	84	325	2098

British Club Class Champion: Dan Balla

British Open Series

This year saw two major changes in the ever popular British Open Series (BOS).

The first was the expansion of an idea being used successfully with the Club Class. The introduction of a retrieve system in this class was designed to help overcome one of the main logistical obstacles to entering competitions. It's perceived success prompted a version to be added to the other classes.

By utilising the drivers already present and formalising the costs and organisation of retrieves we have been able to offer a retrieve system open to anyone to use. It is hoped that this, alongside other changes (designed to make the introduction to and participation in competitions easier) will continue to attract pilots from clubs into the UK competition scene.

The second change was situating a round of the BOS in the Peak District. This has not previously been possible due to restrictions put in place by the Peak District National Park Authority and the local flying club. Changes meant that we were offered the opportunity to compete there using the Bradwell Gliding Club (BGC) as a base.

Logistically the competition ran very well with the BGC base proving a useful and entertaining place to stay. However, as ever the weather was more difficult to contend with. Airspace restrictions were the main fear about locating a competition in the Peaks and these fears came to fruition when rare easterly conditions prevailed causing one flyable day to be cancelled. Without trying different locations it is not possible to truly appreciate the benefits and problems involved. The addition of a new venue for the BOS is welcome but the Peak District may not feature regularly on the fixture list in future but the warm welcome from the BGC and the smooth organisation provided by Wayne Thompson will ensure it is considered favourably.

Parachute clinics run by Greg Emms on blown out days were been popular and are another sign of the strong safety culture within HG competitions.

Overall the season went well with an encouraging number of new names on the score sheets. The challenge for 2013 will be to keep those names and add some more.

Normalised Scores for BOS Class 1

#	Name	Glider	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	Total
1	Grant Crossingham	Moyes Litespeed	500.0	500.0	464.1	383.8	462.3	0.0	335.5	0.0	2646
2	Bruce Kavanagh	Wills Wing T2C	284.5	341.2	500.0	336.4	381.9	379.0	500.0	220.7	2438
3	David Shields	Litespeed RS	350.0	423.6	478.1	423.9	437.5	226.0	311.3	500.0	2303

Normalised Scores for BOS Class 5

#	Name	Glider	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	Total
1	Tim King	Atos VR	488.0	356.5	0.0	119.0	388.0	230.0	415.3	500.0	2378
2	Paul Harvey	Atos VR	500.0	500.0	500.0	257.0	217.0	230.0	362.8	82.6	2350
3	Neil Atkinson	Atos VR	184.9	115.3	0.0	0.0	122.0	230.0	278.1	308.5	1239

Normalised Scores for BOS Club Class

#	Name	Glider	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	Total
1	Richard Welbourne	Aeros Discus	469.9	207.0	0.0	500.0	0.0	500.0	182.0	1859
2	Till Obermeier	Wills Wing U2	324.9	207.0	0.0	130.9	0.0	177.7	126.0	966
3	David Corbett	Moyes Litespeed	500.0	186.0	278.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	964

Worlds

Forbes, Australia

A hard fought worlds with huge tasks flown in record temperatures found the British team struggling in the early stages, perhaps by trying a little too hard, but they showed their mettle clawing their way into a podium finish by the end of the competition.

As the other teams flagged our results just got better. Kath Rigg had equipment problems and missed a day through illness, despite this she secured Silver in the Ladies section, in Task 9 Gordon Rigg found poor air on final glide to land less than 100m short of a 248Km task. Agonising, but Gordon took it in good form and still managed 15th place overall behind UK top scorer Grant Crossingham in 6th place.

The teams results were at least in part due to the support and hard work of honorary team manager Ben Phillpott and Steve Gale's organisation and support.

#	Name	Nat	Glider	Total
1	Corinna Schwiegershausen	F GER	Moyes Litespeed RX3	5930
2	Kathleen Rigg	F GBR	Moyes Litespeed RX3.5	4414

#	Name	Nat	Glider	Total
1	ITA			26212
	Alessandro Ploner	ITA	Icaro Laminar 14.1	
	Filippo Oppici	ITA	Wills Wing T2C 144	
	Christian Ciech	ITA	Icaro Laminar 14	
	Tullio Gervasoni	ITA	Wills Wing T2C 144	
	Davide Guiducci	ITA	Wills Wing T2C 144	
	Suan Selenati	ITA	Wills Wing T2C 144	
2	USA			26140
	Robin Hamilton	USA	Moyes Litespeed RX4	
	Paris Williams	USA	Aeros Combat GT 13.5	
	Kraig Coomber	USA	Moyes Litespeed RX3.5	
	Zac Majors	USA	Wills Wing T2C 144	
	Mitch Shipley	USA	Wills Wing T2C 144	
	James Stinnett	USA	Wills Wing T2C 144	
	Linda Salamone	USA	Moyes Litespeed RX3	
	Jamie Shelden	USA	Moyes Litespeed RX3	
3	GBR			25215
	Grant Crossingham	GBR	Moyes Litespeed RX3.5	
	Gordon Rigg	GBR	Moyes Litespeed RX3.5	
	Gary Wirdnam	GBR	Icaro Laminar 13.7	
	Carl Wallbank	GBR	Moyes Litespeed RX3.5	
	Anthony Stephens	GBR	Moyes Litespeed RX3.5	
	Dave Matthews	GBR	Moyes Litespeed RX3.5	
	Kathleen Rigg	GBR	Moyes Litespeed RX3.5	

#	Name	Nat	Glider	Total
1	Manfred Ruhmer	M AUT	Icaro Laminar Z9 14.1	9010
2	Alessandro Ploner	M ITA	Icaro Laminar 14.1	8871
3	Filippo Oppici	M ITA	Wills Wing T2C 144	8560
6	Grant Crossingham	M GBR	Moyes Litespeed RX3.5	8242
15	Gordon Rigg	M GBR	Moyes Litespeed RX3.5	7854
17	Gary Wirdnam	M GBR	Icaro Laminar 13.7	7734
19	Carl Wallbank	M GBR	Moyes Litespeed RX3.5	7631
44	Anthony Stephens	M GBR	Moyes Litespeed RX3.5	6368
49	Dave Matthews	M GBR	Moyes Litespeed RX3.5	6052
70	Kathleen Rigg	F GBR	Moyes Litespeed RX3.5	4414

Notable Achievements

After more than 10 years of trying and many unsuccessful attempts Carl Wallbank set a new UK open distance record. Setting off from Llangollen in north Wales via a turnpoint set in between airspace restrictions he landed on the beach near Weymouth. The new record is an impressive 276.9km

In May Johnny Carr showed he still has what it takes setting a new UK defined (and absolute) out and return record of 108.67 Km, 38 years after setting his first UK record.

British Accuracy Competitions

Classic Accuracy

The Classic Accuracy Nationals were held earlier than usual on the Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend, and many thanks go to Arthur Bentley of Birdwings for organising the event and being meet director. Simon Sykes Junior became National Champion for the first time and Beyond Extreme (Don Bodill, Andy Webster, Nick Simmons) won the team event also for the first time. Stuart Short was awarded the Nigel Legg trophy for services to accuracy - Stuart is CFI of Greater London South West & Surrey PC and tows every year at the nationals.

Scout clubs Skylincs and Greater London South West & Surrey PC remain active and support tow launched accuracy. Birdwings had a successful league competition on the August bank holiday weekend.

The European Grand Prix was validated on the full compliment of three competitions in France, UK and Holland. French pilot Jacques Lecamus became European Grand Prix Champion for the third time, and UK's John Lawrence claimed a creditable second place. Martin Robe's consistent flying throughout the year saw him win the classic accuracy league for the second year in succession and third time in total.

2013 will see the usual domestic and European events, with Arthur Bentley representing the BHPA Accuracy panel on European Grand Prix matters. As in recent years there is concern that the number of pilots, clubs and tow sites are dwindling in classic accuracy.

Paragliding Accuracy

Despite two attempts in August and October, the Paragliding Accuracy Nationals succumbed to the weather and could not be validated this year. But thanks go to Beyond Extreme and Chris Haynes for arranging the events.

Macedonia hosted the third European Paragliding Accuracy Championships, where the full 12 rounds were completed in difficult thermic conditions. Slovenia took first placed, and the UK team finished in a creditable 6th place. The UK was represented by Billy Elliston, Don Bodill, Andy Shaw, Andy Webster and Marshall Hall. Thanks go to Squad Manager Chris Haynes who organised a series of training camps and to Taz Spence for taking on the role of Team Manager at the event. The UK also had a strong FAI representation with Nikki Spence being a steward and Andy Cowley being Jury president.

Andy Shaw and Andy Cowley attended the World Games test event in Columbia and assisted with the development of their towing operation. Andy Shaw claimed a creditable second place in front of Andy Cowley who was training up the judges. Don Bodill and Nick Simmons attended the pre-worlds in Bosnia where the weather conditions and site selection limited the flying opportunities.

A busy year meant that British pilot participation in the Paragliding Accuracy World Cup series was low, but Andy Webster claimed a creditable 9th place overall in the series. Due to there being no Nationals this year league points were very sparse and Andy Webster won the Airways Accuracy League for the second consecutive year. At the end of the 2012 season there were three UK pilots in the top 50 of the WPRS (Andy Webster, Nick Simmons and Andy Shaw), and the UK as a nation is in a creditable 7th position.

The big event in 2013 will be the World Championships to be held in Bosnia. Nikki Bodill has taken on the role of Squad Manager and will be running a series of training camps leading up to the World Championships. The team selection criteria is still based on training camp and competition results, however the points system has been modified to encourage better attendance at overseas competitions.

The date and venue for the 2013 Paragliding Nationals is still to be determined, and running an accuracy event along side the British Paramotor Championships is also being investigated. Paragliding accuracy may also have a representation at a RAeC event at Duxford. 2013 will also see a pre-European Championship in Serbia, the World Games in Columbia, and the usual World Cup series.

There are concerns about the low number of UK pilots actively participating in paragliding accuracy where as the sport is expanding, especially in Asia.

BHPA Accuracy Panel

Ben Haworth and Tony Blacker left the Accuracy Panel this year, but Brett Janaway rejoined as Website Officer and Jonathan Parkinson took on the role of Treasurer. There are nine panel members; Liz Lawrence (Chair), Andy Webster, Jonathan Parkinson, Chris Haynes, Arthur Bentley, Don Bodill, Nikki Bodill, Taz Spence and Brett Janaway.

Nikki Bodill is also Chair of the CIVL Paragliding Accuracy Sub Committee.

Youth

Billy Elliston and Simon Sykes Jnr were both awarded the RAeC Brietling Certificate of Recognition (young person's award) this year due to their successes in paragliding accuracy. William Lawrence also received a RAeC bursary.

British Paramotoring Competitions

The wettest summer on record has badly affected British competition flying, both in terms of our own competitions and also with British pilots trying to train for international competitions.

British Open Championships

Terrible weather left us with only a 24-hour flying window over the 4 days, but we still managed to validate 5 tasks. The bad weather forecast put many pilots off from attending, so there was a much-depleted field of 30 this year.

This was our fourth year at this site, which is particularly good for precision tasks, but we've decided that we should look for a new venue for next year's event. Pascal Vallée of France was this year's Open Champion.

British National League

The Open was also the closing event of the 2012 League. Unfortunately, the first League event was cancelled due to bad weather and the second was also badly hampered. The winner of this year's League and the new British Paramotor Champion is Dean Eldridge – congratulations for this great win. In second place was Phil Jennings and in third place was Michel Carnet.

ULTRALIGHT SINGLE SEAT RALLY (USSR)

Once again, severely affected by the atrocious summer weather of 2012, only 4 pilots started the event – this year from Halfpenny Green airfield near Wolverhampton in the West Midlands. In the foot-launched class, Richard Whitmarsh retained his title with a great flight in difficult conditions south to the Welsh coast and back.

The organisers are planning a different format for 2013 to combat the risk of poor weather on a single weekend. More details soon...

2012 European Paramotor Championships

The most important competition of the year was the 2012 European Paramotor Championships in Marugán, Spain. The British PF1 team won a bronze medal and the top three individually placed British pilots in the PF1 class were:

- Michel Carnet (8th)
- Dean Eldridge (17th)
- Barney Townsend (22nd)

British pilots competed in a number of other overseas competitions. Dean Eldridge took first place in the Canadian Fly Games World.

World League Cup

This was the first year of the WLC and to some extent, it's still experimental. The British team won third place behind Thailand (1st) and France (2nd). The individual winner was Pascal Vallée of France and the highest-placed British pilots were:

- Michel Carnet (=4th)
- Dean Eldridge (=8th)
- Phil Jennings (=15th)

Club organisation

Earlier this year, the British Paramotor Competitions Committee evaluated the possible exposure to litigation of officials involved in the organisation and running of competitions and training in the UK. As a result of this, the committee established a new club under the auspices of the BHPA: the BHPA Paramotor Competitions Club, now chaired by Dave Hill.

Other committee members are, Barney Townsend (also the new Alternate Delegate to CIMA), Paul Smith and Francis Rich.

Looking ahead to 2013

After a challenging year, British paramotor pilots are hoping for much better conditions in 2013. Dates have been set for the first leg of the British League (19-21 April) and the British Open (18-21 July). The planned European Championships in Estonia have now been cancelled for complex reasons.

CIMA has approved the 1st FAI World Paramotor Slalom Championships which will take place in Aspres sur Buech in France from 9 to 15 September 2013, so this will be the main focus for international competition this year.

Bill Bell 19/2/2013
compiled from Panel Chairmen's reports.

Admin Director's Report

There is nothing very much to report this year. The office has been busy as systems and procedures have been improved to accommodate new areas now covered i.e. SDR, Speed Gliding, HPA. Also, new PRS exams have been issued and the Training booklet updated.

The system for checking memberships is working well, several clubs are now doing this more often than the required once a year. The lists sent in to us for checking do not have nearly as many lapsed members on them as they did when this scheme was first introduced.

Staffing levels at the office have remained the same, although slightly rearranged. Michelle is now working full time instead of just four days and Jennie has reduced her hours from full time to four days.

We have now been in our building at Merus Court for two years and can report that it all runs very smoothly. We have regular meetings with the other businesses in Merus Court so the disputes with neighbours, which used to be a problem at our old office, do not arise. The only problem we have had was with pigeons that decided our windowsills were just perfect for them to spend the winter. Sadly, owing to the mess they made, we had to take steps to move them on.

Marc Asquith
Admin Director
March 2013

School Liaison Report

After 4 years of poor summer weather for teaching, each worse than the preceding one, schools in the UK have reached crisis point. In the next 12 months we stand a very realistic chance of losing 10 – 20% of the UK schools. If we lose too many schools it will have a major effect membership numbers.

I sent out e-mails to all the BHPA schools (There are 52 although 2 are based abroad and 1 is a paracending school) and had 30 replies. I simply asked them how their year had been and how they felt things were going. All of the UK schools had had a difficult time, ranging from “considerably worse than last year” to 5 schools that said they intended to close down as they simply couldn’t keep going.

The future of our association is inextricably tied up with that of schools and we will need to provide them with support during this very difficult time, although for some it is probably already too late.

When a school closes and the CFI moves on to a new profession we lose someone who took at least 8 years to get to the point where they could open that school. Unlike many business, paragliding schools can't simply respond to conditions and demand, closing in poor years and opening in good ones. If we lose 20% of the UK schools it will be years before we recover.

There are a number of areas where schools can be helped:

- ⤴ Reducing or not charging registration fees for 2013
- ⤴ Reducing the TI, I, and SI supplement for 2013
- ⤴ Reducing the cost for tandem passengers from the standard Day Membership fee

John Welch
School Liaison
March 2013

Paramotor Report

The weather in the last year has been dire as everyone with any interest in flying knows. I'm certain paramotor businesses have been affected though probably less so than the free flying disciplines. Let's all hope the weather in 2013 takes a turn for the better.

Insurance; a new insurance policy underwritten by AXA and brokered by a company in Austria has appeared in recent months. While it is relatively expensive, has lower cover limits, and no history when compared with the BHPA insurance, it is available to 'pilots' with no qualifications of any sort. A development we have seen before in recent years, it will be interesting to see how long this one lasts.

Low flying complaints are on the rise and there was a successful prosecution in 2012 following complaints from the public at a beach location. There were also rumours circulating in 2012 that CAA wing registration was to become mandatory within a short timescale. We have been in contact with CAA and while there are no plans for mandatory registration to be introduced it's clear that some sections of CAA desire 'something to be done' but also that it would take a strong business/safety case to actually make anything happen from a legislative stand point. A user based scheme of wing registration could serve to pick out the responsible pilots from the rest but it seems few pilots would bother to join such a scheme unless it was forced upon them in some manner.

Slalom wings; several of the main manufacturers of paramotor wings now have small, fast, agile, uncertified paramotor wings available, aimed at the new generation of slalom competitions, and these wings are making their way into the hands of day-to-day pilots. While we haven't seen a rash of accidents as a result members are reminded of the requirement to register any sub-20 meter and/or uncertified wings with the BHPA office so that the pilot is covered by the BHPA insurance while flying.

Edward Cunliffe
Paramotor Liaison

March 2013