

How to run a BHPA Club Repack

At the start of 2017, many Clubs will be running Club Reserve Repacks for their members and often others who can make it. These events identify problems but also educate pilots to have confidence in their reserves which are a last chance in many incidents. All pilots should endeavour to attend such events especially those who are new to the sport or who have purchased equipment that has not been installed with any help. Though there are BHPA qualified packers, dealers and schools and Club Coaches with a wealth of experience, the greatest number of complete faults are found in pilots who are isolated from advice of any sort. For those Clubs who have yet to set up a repack, here is a short piece of advice.

This advice is based on the experience of a great many repacks and has been shown to work well. There may be some strict advice that may be seen as draconian or a bit strong, unfortunately a small minority of people can ruin a perfectly well set up event through their insistence on their personal needs, which will impinge dramatically on the majority of others. Bad experience produces Rants, sorry!

Organisation

The Event : Most Club Repacks are supervised packs, they are not individual packs. The pilots will be given guidance, advice and assistance but should not expect to sit idly by while someone does it for them. Make sure that this is understood. If someone wants an individual repack then they can pay for it at many firms. Publicise the event early and regularly. Negotiate the date with your BHPA packer well ahead. Remember only BHPA packers are covered by BHPA Insurance, local "experts" are not.

Premises : A clean flat area, like a gym or school hall is perfectly adequate. You will need to put up signs and provide directions. Take brooms / brushes to clean the floor before and after the event. Get the floor really clean. Have a boot park to prevent dirt entering the area and be strict about it.

Numbers : Numbers will be defined by how much support is needed rather than area. Give the event plenty of time, a good approximation is 8 reserves an hour, so if you book for 4 hours 32 people max. It is better to finish "early" than have the caretaker tapping their watch! Make sure that you emphasise that this is a working event and everyone who attends should be a paying attendee (plus BHPA member). Those who want to "watch", "use the floor but need no help" or want to bring the dog and the kids for a run about should be discouraged.

Timings : Emphasise the times and ask pilots to be prompt and punctual. Most repacks will start with a demonstration that is intended to get most pilots well into their repacks, someone who attends late will miss this and cannot expect an individual lesson. During the event warn pilots when the event closes so that they stop parayakking and get on with it.

Costs : Clubs charge a variety of fees. The cost should cover the hire of premises and any BHPA EPS packer that attends. Some Clubs subsidise the event for members and charge a bit more to non-members, such matters are for your committee. You are strongly advised to take all payments, without refunds, before the event not at the door or a good flying day will wipe out your event.

BHPA EPS Packers Costs : Please think about and agree this fee before the event. At the very minimum you should cover the travel and accommodation costs. Remember you will probably have someone who is attending in their own time, has travelled to be with you and will work flat out with considerable skill for the whole event. You should reward this contribution beyond just bare costs.

Here is a suggested notice to use as a template publicise your event.

The Sample Club reserve Parachute Repack will take place on Date at Venue (Provide Post Code and Map) at the times of DETAILS. This will be a supervised pack where pilots will pack their own equipment with support from Names. You do not have to bring your wing but make sure you do not detach your reserve from your harness. Make sure you know what make your reserve is, give these details when booking and bring the manual for it. Please have clean shoes or be prepared to deposit dirty footwear in the boot park. The area booked is for reserve packing only, so do not bring wings expecting to lay them out for drying, inspection or folding. Please be on time for the start, as the event will commence with instruction that will help the subsequent repack. Payment must be made before the event as there will be no bookings taken on the day. Please pay DETAILS.

Lastly, thanks to all those Club officers and volunteers who have run Club Repacks for many years now, their initiative to making these events happen is based on a conviction that reserves save lives, they are right. Reports on these events and the faults found can be seen in Skywings.