

## **Report of the 30th AGM of the British Aerobatic Association**

The 30th AGM was held on Saturday 8th January 2005 at the Aviator Hotel, Sywell, Northamptonshire.

Amongst those attending were: Ben Ellis, Nick Buckenham, Jen Buckenham, Eric Marsh, Mark Walden, Alan Cassidy, Martin Sandford, Dave Cowden, Steve Green, Andy Cunningham, Charles Kirk, Graham Hill, John Paulson, Dave Kaberry, Steve Todd, Richard Buchan, Bernie Raftery, David Jenkins, Ray Stoward, Barry Tempest, Corinne Dennis, Clive Butler, Gerald CJ Cooper, Alex Smith, Tommy Knight, Ed Harding, Simon Abbott, Brian Hardcastle, John Askew, Dick Happs, Judi Jones, Nigel Arthur, Mark Davies, Gary Ferriman, Nikki Mills, Graham Saw, James Allison, Julian Murfitt, Ian Trask, Julie Wood, Ian Scott, John Wicks, Chris Cain, Cindy Copsey and Phil Atley.

Apologies were received from: Aidan Grimley, Cas Smith, Steve Carver, Brian McCartney, Anne Sandford, Mark Jefferies, Kester Scrope, Peter Rounce, Tom Cassells, Nick Wakefield, Tony Lloyd and Simon O'Neill.

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the 29th AGM (17th January 2004) and the report was approved by the members present.

### **Chairman's Report**

Once again, I'm happy to report another successful year. We organise competitions at all levels, both Power and Glider, at 14 venues, making for another busy season. Only one competition Trophy wasn't awarded; despite the best efforts of Compton Abbas, thus the Air Squadron Trophy was 'rested' for a year. Hopefully the move to June this year will catch the weather gremlins by surprise. Talking of trophies, somewhat sadly, it seems that no-one has flown in a competition in a Cessna, so once again this points trophy was not awarded.

There is a downside, however. Last year, we continued to make a loss which was funded from our reserves. We now feel that this is no longer acceptable and have taken steps to ensure that our budget for 2005 breaks even. There will be an opportunity to discuss this under item 8 on the agenda.

### Out in the World...

As reported last year, once again we were represented abroad by 3 teams, Unlimited and Advanced Power and Unlimited Glider. You'll have all read of their exploits in the ANR and on our web site. I must record once again the magnificent achievement of our Unlimited Power team and their veritable triumph with a team Bronze Medal. I must also mention a particularly impressive Captain's innings by Tom Cassells, who came 13th overall. The team was only beaten by the Russians and the French, both state sponsored teams.

### On the ground...

Our competitions can't run without the considerable back-room effort from our volunteers, both judges, scorers assistants and of course the support we get from our host airfields. If I'm going to name one person who has contributed more than most to this effort, it's Jen Buckenham, who, despite not even living in Great Britain at the moment, acts as Membership Secretary, aide-memoir for Contest Directors, supplier of all essential information for registrars and last year she managed to attend a few competitions in person, just to set us back on the path again!

### Behind the scenes...

Nick Buckenham continues to work wonders with our Web site. There are in the region of 3.6 million hits a year. It's not only easy to use, but most essentially, it's bang up to date. I've been reading recently about the woes in the American Aerobatic body, the so-called International Aerobatic Club. They are complaining amongst themselves about a lack of communication and how their web site is out-of-date and how the info in their magazine is 3 months behind and no-one tells them anything. They claim a membership of 6,000 against our 200 or so, but don't seem to find the talent we're so lucky to have to make these things run. Perhaps small is beautiful on this occasion. We also have an e-mail Exploder which can be a source of information, or trite entertainment, if you're so inclined; a welcome relief from the daily grind for some. My thanks to Steve Todd, for continuing to look after this, and for moderating our excesses from time to time.

We continue to subscribe to the Royal Aero Club and to the General Aviation Safety Council. Both of these bodies are expending considerable energies and our money in ensuring that the increasing burden of aviation legislation is couched in terms that will allow us to continue to enjoy our chosen sport. I attend meetings of these bodies to try and put forward our point of view. Other Association members also put in their four penn'th, thanks Barry!

#### The year ahead...

We've another full season planned. Once again we went public on the web ahead of the booklet but personally I'm glad we still have the paper version as it's so handy to have on the shelf or at a competition as a ready reference.

We've the Power Unlimited World Championships to look forward to in Burgos and the Glider Worlds in Russia; the latter a rather daunting prospect, I fear. There's also the Advanced Europeans, somewhere in the Czech Republic, a rather more attractive venue. We wish all our teams the very best and eagerly await reports of their exploits.

Thanks -

- To everyone on the committee and the officers of the association who work so hard on your behalf.
- To everyone who worked on the ground at our competitions, judging, assisting, running, scoring and taking video.
- Most especially to the pilots who flew in our competitions.

#### **Financial report.**

Martin Sandford presented the financial report, in Anne's absence. The accounts had been circulated to the members prior to the AGM and are available on the web-site. It was noted that two non-committee members had signed the accounts as required under Clauses 50 and 51 of the Articles of Association.

#### **Election of Officers.**

The meeting was reminded that three officers of the association were due for retirement by rotation; these being Tom Cassells (Vice Chairman) Martin Sandford (Points & Trophies) and Gareth Roberts (PR). Gareth Roberts had stood down from the committee with effect from the 13 September 2004. The Chairman wished to record his thanks to Gareth for his services to the association over the past 8 years.

The meeting was also apprised of the proposed nominations, these being Tom Cassells, Martin Sandford, Julian Murfitt, Steve Green and Simon O'Neill. These members were then asked to leave the meeting whilst a show of hands in favour of each was conducted.

The show of hands in favour of each was recorded as follows:-

Tom Cassells	35 votes
Steve Green	28 votes
Martin Sandford	27 votes
Julian Murfitt	11 votes
Simon O'Neill	6 votes

There was a short recess whilst the committee considered the voting in the election of officers.

Accordingly, it was agreed that Tom Cassells, Martin Sandford and Steve Green be appointed as officers of the association for a term of three years. It was noted that Simon O'Neill had volunteered to take on the role of PR & Fundraising, and would therefore be co-opted onto the committee in this role.

The committee then considered the post of Association Chairman. Ben Ellis said that he would be prepared to stay in post for one more year and this was unanimously accepted and agreed. It was also agreed that Tom Cassells be reappointed Vice Chairman. The meeting was then closed.

The AGM was the reconvened and the members were notified of the appointment of officers and co-opted members, and that Ben Ellis would remain as Chairman for 2005.

Therefore the committee for 2005 would be as follows:-

*	Ben Ellis	Chairman
*	Tom Cassells	Vice-Chairman
*	Nick Buckenham	Web-site
*	Alan Cassidy	Head of Contest Organisation
*	Andy Cunningham	Glider Representative
*	Mark Walden	Liaison
*	Eric Marsh	Keeper of Trophies
*	Martin Sandford	Points Tabulator
*	Steve Green	Judging Coordinator
	David Cowden	Company Secretary
	Anne Sandford	Treasurer
	Jen Buckenham	Membership Secretary
	Tony Lloyd	Journal Editor
	Simon O'Neill	PR & Fundraising

Those marked with a \* are Directors of the BAeA.

### **Competition Calendar**

The Chairman confirmed that the competition calendar had been finalized, and that the contest information booklet had been completed and would be available for distribution at the end of the meeting. He wished to thank Julian Murfitt for producing an excellent publication.

There then followed a lengthy discussion concerning requests submitted for additional competitions, by organisations outside the umbrella of the BAeA. This included consideration of a proposal (discussed at the committee meetings of the 13th November 2004 and 8th January 2005) put forward for an 'open' competition (that could include competitors from mainland Europe) based on the BAeA beginner and standard classes. This competition would be an event for 'one-type' aircraft

based round the Super-Decathlon; it had been suggested that the event should be held at Goodwood aerodrome in August.

Nigel Arthur and Barry Tempest proposed an event, to be held at Leicester, for aircraft without the benefit of an inverted fuel system. Nigel felt that this was a good way to encourage people into the Association and the competition environment. He said that interest in this type of competition had been shown by members of the Moth Club, who have aircraft based at Leicester.

Alan Cassidy suggested that if potential competitor numbers for both events were low it might be possible for the clubs to agree to combine forces and hold the proposed events at one location. It was noted that Goodwood were to have a meeting to discuss this subject during the week following the AGM; Alan would assist in co-coordinating the organization of the events.

Ben Ellis said that the committee had agreed that it would extend guidance with regard to the organisation and judging at these events.

It was noted that if the Association underpinned the events organisation, the competitors would be required to carry the appropriate level of third party insurance as a condition of entry. This then led on to the question of membership status and fees for pilots/flying clubs participating in these 'additional' competitions, and whether there should be the equivalent of a membership 'day-rate'. At this point, the Chairman called a halt to the discussion, explaining that the subject was raised just to give the meeting a flavour of the initiatives being considered. More information would be disseminated as and when the thinking progressed.

### **Membership Fees**

There followed a discussion around a number of issues relating to fees, including the issue of cost of Associate member fees (£50) to those who give their time to assist at BAeA events. Steve Green pointed out that helpers do not have to be members, but in those circumstances they would not be allowed to claim expenses as member helpers are.

Ben Ellis referred to the letter already sent to members concerning the proposed increases to subscriptions, and asked for approval to implement in 2005. The general consensus was that even with these increases, membership fees formed only a fraction of the cost of flying and it was acknowledged that BAeA costs have to be covered if it is to maintain the level of activity involved in each competitive season. Implementation of the proposed increases, to be effective in 2005 was then approved on a show of hands. It was agreed that the committee would examine a rule change in respect of helper's vis-à-vis the question of membership fees for them.

The question of increased fees to glider members was raised from the floor. There followed an overview of a dispensation proposal for glider membership fees. After discussion, power members generally indicated that they would not be in favour of such a dispensation. Alan Cassidy suggested that perhaps the Dan Smith competition could be officially split into two distinct competitions; one for beginners and one for sportsman. This would provide some degree of dispensation for those entering glider aerobatics for the first time. It was agreed that this proposal would be developed at meetings with the glider membership.

The discussion then moved on to a question as to what were the main objectives with regard to the way forward for the Association. The Chairman said that the committee had discussed this at its November meeting and, in a nutshell, the consensus view was that the Association needed to attract more money and more members, including more corporate members. It was noted that Simon O'Neill had been asked to give some thought to the ways in which the association might attract

more corporate members, and that he would report back on this in due course. It was suggested that membership and fee structures were currently too complicated and needed looking at. This was noted and would be examined for possible revision in 2006.

### **Team Funding**

The meeting was reminded that international Team members had been granted the sum of £125 per person. The meeting was invited to discuss and put forward ideas for the future. One member said that given the low level of reserves on the balance sheet and the current deficit in the profit and loss, the grant to team members should be suspended until more substantial financial resources be secured.

There followed a general discussion as to ways in which more money could be attracted into the associations funds. These points were noted and the meeting advised that they would be conveyed to Simon O'Neill for his consideration.

Gerald Cooper raised the question of bursaries paid to members to encourage them to move up to the higher competition levels. It was noted that this was not generally known by the membership and should receive more publicity. The current bursary level stood at £340, to a set number of competitors per level.

After further discussion on all these points, it was agreed by the meeting to put international funding and bursaries to the vote. Accordingly, on a show of hands, it was agreed that international funding would be suspended until further notice and that bursaries would remain payable at the current level. The detail concerning these payments (bursaries) would be included in an issue of the ANR and on the web-site.

### **The Aerobatic News Review (ANR)**

In light of the current profit and loss deficit, the meeting was reminded of the cost of producing 6 issues of the ANR throughout the year. Jen Buckenham also pointed out that in addition to the question of cost, it was becoming increasingly difficult to provide enough 'fresh' good quality copy to maintain the standard of the ANR for 6 issues per year. There followed a discussion which considered a number of alternatives in terms of preserving the frequency of publication of the ANR. However, it was agreed by the meeting that the ANR would be reduced to 3 issues per year.

### **Award of Trophies**

The Cessna Aerobat trophy was not awarded.

The other awards made were as follows:-

Standard Points Trophy	Richard Buchan
Marcus Norman Trophy	Richard Buchan
Swinstead Trophy	Clive Butler
Advanced Points Trophy	Garry Ferriman
Glider Points Trophy	Paul Conran
Pitts Special Trophy	Garry Ferriman
Shaggy Cow Trophy	Ian Trask
Golden Frog Trophy	Tom Cassells
Extra Trophy	Mark Jefferies
Slingsby Trophy	Alex Smith
Diana Britten Graduate Trophy	Corrine Dennis
Len Perry Memorial Trophy	Tom Cassells

Chipmunk Trophy	Brian Brown
Contest Director of the Year	Nick Buckenham
Judge of the Year	Ian Scott
Special Award to an Overseas Winner	Alex Caramella

Eric Marsh reminded all recipients that it was their responsibility to arrange the appropriate engraving and to have the trophies insured whilst in their care.

**Any other business**

There were no other business items raised.

The meeting was then formally closed.