

## **Report of the 27th AGM of the British Aerobatic Association**

Held at the Aviator Hotel, Sywell on 26th January 2002

Amongst members attending the AGM were Martin Sandford, Jurgen Schafer, Cas and Graham Smith, John and Christele Askew, John and Jane van der Luit, Richard Gee, Nick Onn, Dick Happs, Jim Duthie, Judi Jones, Robert Tinkler, John Vize, Diana Britten, John Paulson, Dave Kaberry, Aidan Grimley, John Dixon, Pete Shaw, Gerald Cooper, Oliver Johnstone, Polly Whitehead, Steve Kirton, Chris Cain, Cindy Copsey, Julie Wood, Ian Scott, Andy Cunningham, Gary Ferriman, Steve Carver, Charles Kirk, Simon Abbott, Norman Tench, Robert Woollard, James Black, Clive Butler, Alan Cassidy, Steve Green, Gareth Roberts, Patrick Rushmore, Ray Stoward, Nick and Jen Buckenham, and Chairman Ben Ellis.

Apologies had been received from Eric Marsh, Nick Wakefield and Alex Smee.

### **Chairman's Report**

Ben Ellis asked that the assembled members approve the report of the 2001 AGM; Gareth Roberts proposed their approbation, Chris Cain seconded the motion.

It was Martin Sandford, Ben said, who had said that 'it is generally accepted that the Summer of 2001 was one of the longest, driest, warmest and best Summers in recent memory .... Unless you happen to be an aerobatic pilot! It always seems to go claggy at weekends,' However, as I recall our chief concern at the beginning of the season last year was something that has almost faded from our consciousness – the Foot and Mouth outbreak. Generally our fears weren't realised and indeed it was the weather that once again has the major impact on our sport. In fact we lost just one contest to Foot and Mouth – Waterford. Hopefully it will be double the fun this year! At some contests, whole classes were unable to fly due to the weather, Standard at Fenland for example. I'm not going to give a blow-by-blow account of what happened at all our contests during the year; I'm sure you've read all about them in our excellent journal, the Aerobatics News Review. There are one or two highlights during our domestic calendar of note; John Wicks' win (at last!) at Sleaford and Nick Buckenham's excellent CD job at the Junior Nationals which enabled a result to be declared by the skin of our teeth. This I think was mostly due to the bold decision to start thunderingly early. I always feel that we waste the best hours of the day by not starting early enough. We also saw the maturity of the Glider Championships with their 10th anniversary. We were perhaps fortunate to be able to run our flagship contest, the Advanced and Unlimited Nationals, at Sywell this year as the temporary ban on GA flying was lifted quickly enough for most pilots to be able to attend. The season finished as it started, with indifferent weather at Sherburn spoiling our carefully laid plans.

What else did we get up to? As promised here last year, we sent three teams abroad; the Unlimited Power and Glider teams to their respective world championships embedded within the World Air Games in Spain and a team to the quite controversial Advanced European Championships in Hungary. Aerobatics -controversial - what? Yes – always, but this was about a major issue that will run and run, concerning the eligibility or otherwise of various aircraft types. Fortunately the matter was resolved sufficiently this time to allow the championships to proceed. Full details as ever appeared in the ANR and on the website. Not only did we have teams at all three championships but we also had a judging complement at each one. I think we can be proud of the fact that our relatively tiny association is able to produce strength in depth internationally not only at competitions, but also with our representation at CIVA. Long may it continue.

I would like to thank the committee who have each given an enormous amount of time and energy to ensure that all goes smoothly. You don't really appreciate how well we do things here until you

see the utterly shambolic attempts elsewhere. Tom, for the enormous support he gives, especially to aerobatics in the north, Nick for the continuing devotions to our website, Jen, of course for her multi-tasking everywhere – Membership secretary doesn't begin to cover the job description. Alan similarly for his work in many directions, Patrick for looking after the money, Eric and Martin for their work on the points and trophies, Ray for keeping the glider people in tow, Steve for his sterling work whipping the judges into line, Tony for his work on the journal and Nick for his back-room work as Company Secretary.

Thank you, too, for all those many un-named people here and elsewhere who have contribute during the year and last, but not least all you pilot's without whom all this would be completely valueless.

What of 2002? We have a full contest season planned, although one venue appears to be off the list at present. It appears that Pool Aviation will not be at Welshpool after the 31st March, so we are seeking an alternate venue. I have already had one attractive offer, but we will explore the options before committing ourselves. We will keep you posted, but keep the date in your diary.

Internationally, the Unlimited Power team will be off to Lithuania, the Glider team to Germany and the Advanced team are off to their World Championship at a rather lovely spot in Slovenia.

### **Articles and Memoranda**

The changes to these were discussed at the 2001 AGM and the proposed changes have been circulated to the membership. Legal advice has been taken on the structure and safeguards on committee membership. John Vize proposed their acceptance; Robert Tinkler seconded the motion. The changes were unanimously approved.

### **Financial Report**

There were no questions to Patrick Rushmore following the circulation of the accounts, Gareth Roberts proposed their acceptance and Ben Ellis seconded the motion. The proposal to change the auditors to

J.S. Bethell and Co. of Sheffield. Was made by Steve Green and seconded by Gareth Roberts.

### **Election of Officers**

Nomination forms had been sent out with the December copy of the ANR. Four forms had been returned, with nominations for Tom Cassells, Martin Sandford and Gareth Roberts, Tom Cassells was proposed by Richard Gee and seconded by Patrick Rushmore, Martin Sandford by Alan Cassidy with Ray Stoward as seconder, Gareth Roberts was proposed by Ben Ellis and seconded by Ray Stoward. In a short committee recess both Ben Ellis and Tom Cassells indicated their willingness to remain as Chairman and Vice-Chairman for a further year. Proposer and seconder for Ben were Gareth Roberts and Alan Cassidy, Ben Ellis and Gareth Roberts for Tom Cassells.

### **Diana Britten Scholarship**

Diana Britten was invited to talk about the scholarship and to present the Graduate award. She said that the awards were started to generate enthusiasm in aerobatics and to give women the encouragement and opportunity to make a start in competition aerobatics.

The Graduate award would be made to the women who achieved the highest number of points in BAeA competitions up to Intermediate level and would include 10 hours of tuition, with the aim of encouraging them to continue competing.

The beginner's scholarship was not awarded last year, as there had been no applicants, which Diana found disappointing. She asked for the members to think of ways to generate interest. Dave Kaberry had suggested that there should be regional 'mentors' for students in receipt of the award. John Paulson thought that Flying Schools could be a source of students and that flying groups, with aerobatic experience could organise introductory week ends. It was felt that the association was viewed by some as a 'clique' and that there could be a link to the AOPA course and an incentive to flying schools. Alan Cassidy had started to form a link with the University Air Squadron, and this could help to open a scholarship for women.

Diana presented the Graduate Trophy to Jane van der Luit, and Ben thanked Diana and everyone who had contributed to the discussion.

### **Presentation of Awards**

James Black was introduced by Martin Sandford to present the annual points trophies

Tiger Club International Trophy –	Standard Known John Dixon
Marcus Norman Trophy –	Standard Unknown - John Dixon
Swinstead Trophy – Intermediate Level -	Gerald Cooper
Manx Kelly Trophy – Advanced Level -	Mark Jefferies
Cessna Aerobat Trophy -	Bob Pooler
Pitts Special Trophy -	Gerald Cooper
Shaggy Cow Trophy -	Aidan Grimley
Golden Frog Trophy -	Alan Cassidy
Len Perry Trophy -	Nick Onn
Extra Trophy -	Jane van der Luit
Contest Director of the Year -	Martin Sandford
Judge of the Year -	Graham Hill
Chipmunk Trophy -	Alan Cassidy

Steve Kirton was invited to introduce the Peter Clarke Trophy. This is dedicated to the memory of Peter Clarke who had been test pilot for Slingsby and taught both Steve and Tom Cassells aerobatics at Bagby. Peter died in 1996 at Old Warden. As there has been so few Slingsby flights this year, due to weather conditions Steve presented the trophy to Tom Cassells with thanks and in appreciation for all he has done for his pupils at Bagby.

### **Any Other Business**

Aidan Grimley asked for clarification of the changes to the Four-minute Freestyle. Alan Cassidy said that the changes were being made to bring the UK into line with the FAI proposals for changes being made for inclusion in the 2003 international competitions. The Four-Minute Free will be flown at the Nationals as an integral part of the competition instead of a second unknown sequence. Scores will count towards the final score, but the David Perrin trophy will be awarded to the winner of the freestyle. Advanced pilots will fly the 'Masters' sequence and Intermediate pilots will fly 'Apprentices'. This will take place at Compton Abbas. The Apprentices will be a published sequence. The BAeA rules have been altered to accommodate the proposed change and appropriate figures have been published in the appendix of the rules (BAeA rules can be obtained from the BAeA website) Ben Ellis read Richard Pickin's note on the David Perrin Trophy, and this is published elsewhere in this journal.

In response to Ian Scott's question about holding the Apprentices and Masters elsewhere, as poor weather conditions have prevented this event for the past two years, Alan felt that this would be a difficult change, but pilots should train for the event.

Steve Carver asked if it would be possible to start competitions on Friday afternoons as, with the Tiger Trophy, entries to competitions were getting bigger. Ben Ellis felt this was not possible, as many people cannot get away from work on a Friday morning.

Nick Onn asked if it was going to be BAeA policy to fine pilots who arrive late for a competition as this may encourage them to take risks in travelling cross country through adverse weather conditions. In response Alan Cassidy said that it was not a rule of the association to impose fines, but it is the pilot's responsibility to contact the Contest Director to advise them if they felt that they would be late arriving at a contest. To facilitate this the mobile phone number of all contest directors has been published in the competition booklet and the rules have been modified to clarify the situation:

### 3.12 Late Arrivals

3.12.1 Contestants who arrive at the competition site after the notified first briefing time will not normally be permitted to fly in the contest. In exceptional circumstances, beyond the control of the contestant, and following a telephone conference between himself and the pilot concerned, the CD has the discretion to permit the latecomer to fly.

John Paulson said that in other sports if the participant does not turn up at the beginning they aren't allowed to compete, why should the BAeA be any different? Nick Buckenham said that there weren't any crisp answers and there was always the chance of upsetting someone, it is disappointing if a pilot has tried to reach the event. The obligations of the BAeA are to ensure that no incidents occur and the legally of the CD is officially brief all pilot's together at the designated time. Tom Cassells felt that it could only be a matter of time before an incident occurred and that he wished to be able to confirm that all pilots had attended the mandatory briefing.

Norman Tench asked if there was a way in which the profile of the BAeA and competition aerobatics could be raised. Alan Cassidy felt that awareness could not be done by committee but by members as individuals. Other suggestions included:

- Information to be circulated to flying clubs as not all clubs have access to the website.
- AOPA instructors could be approached, as it was important for them to be interested as they influence their students. There should be a clear message when trying to raise the profile and this should be channelled towards groups.
- If the media is present at competition association officials should be made aware.

Alan Cassidy has entered into correspondence with the chairman of AOPA, suggesting that there should be a progressive system and an award scheme, with improved liaison between the BAeA and AOPA. As yet there has been no response. John Paulson had done some work with AOPA instructors and students. He felt that Alan's proposal would make the association less daunting. Personally he has found the association friendly and helpful.

The training bursary awarded for the first time this year will be given to 3 standard, 2 intermediate and 1 advanced pilot. . The standard pilots are John Dixon, Aidan Grimley and Tim Jenkinson. Intermediate Gerald Cooper and Tony Maxwell while Kester Scrope has been offered the advanced bursary. The bursary will provide training for the pilots, but not aircraft, and is conditional on the pilots flying at a higher level at the Nationals later in the year. Judi Jones asked if the bursaries would be made available to glider pilots, Alan said that this should be future policy.

The possibility of obtaining funding from the lottery or the sports council was discussed; Ben Ellis said if it was not an Olympic sport and there was an engine attached then in his experience there

was no possibility of money being made available. The RAeC had said that there was money available for soaring gliders but aerobatics seem to be perceived as hooligans!

Alan Cassidy lightheatedly suggested that a request should be made lottery funding for the purchase of half a dozen Fox glider with a CAP 232 to tow them. Ray Stoward said that there was a 2 seat Yak being used in Germany for aerotows!

There were no other items for discussion and the meeting was formally closed at 12.47 p.m.

Jen Buckenham