

## **Report of the 24th AGM of the British Aerobatic Association**

Minutes of the BAeA Annual General Meeting held at the Aviator Hotel, Sywell Airfield on Saturday 30th January 1999

The meeting opened at 1430.

### **Welcome to the AGM**

Chairman Nick Buckenham welcomed the members to the AGM for 1999. This is the 25th anniversary of the British Aerobatic Association and he hoped that it would be a good year.

Apologies for Absence

Ben Ellis, Peter Davies and Mark Jefferies offered their apologies.

### **Agenda for the meeting:**

1. Chairman's Report for 1998
2. Treasurer's Report for 1998
3. Approval of the 1998 Accounts
4. Re-appointment of the Auditor
5. Election of BAeA officers
6. Presentation of BAeA Trophies
7. The prospect for 1999
8. AOB

### **Minutes of last year's AGM:**

The meeting proposed that the minutes of last year's AGM should be accepted (proposed by Ian Scott, seconded by Graham Hill) and this was carried.

### **The Chairman's Report for 1998**

#### UK Competitions:

The Chairman reported that the Association had broken even over the last year, despite the relatively poor weather, which had led to the cancellation of a number of competitions during the season. Seething and Sywell competitions were both casualties of the poor weather.

Contests that were held proved to be very successful with high levels of flying skills being demonstrated.

#### Dan Smith

This competition provided an excellent start to the season. NB suggested that more power pilots should try their hands at the absorbing art of gliding, which he could say at first hand, was a very enjoyable way of flying aerobatics. There is a competition scheduled for this year and NB urged power pilots to have a go.

#### Compton Abbas

Poor weather on the first day of the competition forced a few pilots to withdraw from the contest. Brighter skies on the Sunday rewarded the remaining pilots with an entertaining days flying.

#### Peterborough Conington

The Standard and Intermediate Nationals provided everyone with much entertainment. This is always a highly competitive meeting, although these rivalries are always friendly which gives the competition an excellent spirit.

#### The Advanced & Unlimited Championships

These were postponed until Swansea 1999, where the results from this competition will be used to declare the Advanced and Unlimited Champions for 1998. Sywell 1999 will still be used to award the Advanced and Unlimited crowns for 1999.

#### The Glider Nationals & Internationals

The Glider Nationals were again completed successfully, with Dick Haps, Chris Cain and Guy Westgate all flying well.

Next the discussion considered the election of the Contest Director of the year for 1998.

Nominations included:

Jim Duthie  
Tom Cassells  
David McDonald  
Eric Marsh  
Chris Kelleher  
Alan Cassidy  
Nick Buckenham

Martin Sandford proposed that Nick should be named CD of the year for the exceptional way he has run the Standard and Intermediate Nationals during 1997 and 1998. This was agreed unanimously by the members.

#### International Competitions:

##### Coupe D'Anjou

Nick Bloom again excelled in this Stampe only competition, although he was beaten to the title in 1998 by his friend Don Peterson.

##### AEAC 98

The Advanced European Aerobatic Championships in Slovenia were excellent fun, with a number of British pilots putting in first rate performances, Mark Jefferies the highest placed Briton. Alan Cassidy was a member of the international jury and Ben Ellis, at extremely short notice, was unexpectedly handed the task of Chief Judge and ran the international judging line-up very effectively. We will field a team of seven pilots at the forthcoming Advanced World Championships in the Czech Republic in July this year.

##### WAC 98

Three pilots, Alan Cassidy, Nick Onn and Patrick Williams represented the UK at the World Aerobatic Championships at Trencin in Slovakia. All three pilots flew well, Alan being placed highest flying the new Securicor sponsored CAP 222.

#### **Membership**

By mid-February 1998 130 people had joined the Association for the 1998 season. More people have already joined for the 1999 season, with membership standing at 139 as of the 30th January. This bodes well for membership during the year.

## **Journal**

The production quality of the 'bi-monthly' journal was again improved during 1998, with more colour pictures being used. This complimented some excellent articles and letters written by the members.

Five issues were published during 1998, including two which carried centre-fold colour photographs. Nick made a strong request for more members to contribute both articles and pictures to the journal. He hoped that the Journal reflected the interests of the members.

At the moment, three people play key roles in the publication of the Journal:

Tony Lloyd                      Editor

Sarah Williams                Publisher

Nick Buckenham              Co-ordinator

Nick stated that he wished to relinquish his involvement with the Journal and called for a volunteer to take over this important and interesting role.

A short discussion debated the merits of trying to increase revenue generation from advertising within the Journal. If more advertising space could be sold, this might help to off-set the cost of the Journal to the members. Someone would need to volunteer to 'sell' advertising space to potential clients.

## **Web-site**

The BAeA web-site is developing very well, with the content of the site expanding rapidly. So far, the web-site has attracted 15,000 visits, which suggests that it is promoting the activities of the Association effectively.

## **E-Mail**

Currently, 71% of members have e-mail addresses, which means that communication via this medium is becoming a viable tool for passing urgent information around the Association.

A Screen saver has been designed which displays the BAeA Calendar, which can be down-loaded from the web-site.

## **CIVA**

Alan Cassidy has been elected to the CIVA Rules Committee. A number of major revisions have been made to the CIVA Catalogue which will affect sequence design and figures that will be used in the 1999 domestic and international programme of competitions. Alan is about to release a new version of his Aresti-4 software for generating sequence diagrams and flimsies.

## **Judging**

Judging continues to develop under Ben Ellis's firm control. Bob Oliver has acted as Chief judge at many competitions this year and we are building a strong complement of active judges.

## **Accounts 1998**

Draft accounts for the 1997/8 financial year had been circulated to the membership with the last issue of the Journal. These represented the statutory accounts required by law as part of the responsibilities of a limited company. The accounts were produced by the BAeA's auditors, based on the financial records kept by Treasurer Steve Green during the year. The accounts were presented to the meeting and the Treasurer asked the members for any questions about the accounts. There were none and so they were unanimously accepted by the members at the AGM (proposed by Alan

Cassidy; seconded by Jim Duthie). The auditors were also re-appointed for the next year, again by a unanimous vote.

Steve then presented his analysis of the accounts, describing the financial performance of the Association over the period of one calendar year. This analysis provided a better view of how money was used by the Association to run activities throughout the year, capturing all of the income and expenditure associated with one competition season.

#### Starting Position:

The Association started 1998 with just under £10,000 in the bank account. At the start of the new year, approximately £1,500 was already committed to expenses accrued during the 1997 season (Journal costs and auditing fees).

#### General Income:

Total general income for the year (subscriptions & bank interest - not competition revenue) amounted to about £8,800 (£527 in interest). Membership subscriptions were slightly down compared to 1997, but total general income was about the same due to an increase in interest earned on money deposited.

#### Journal Expenditure:

The main (non-competition) expenditure was publication and distribution of the Journal. Allowing for advertising revenue (£119), the Journal cost £4,000 to publish 5 issues during the 1998 season. This included two issues which contained extra colour centre folds. The cost per copy of the Journal has risen from £2.06 in 1997 to £2.50 in 1998 - directly reflecting the additional costs of the higher quality printing used to produce the Journal now. As a result the Journal looks much more professional and benefits from containing more photographs. Note - the price per Journal includes postage. There was some discussion about the possibility of generating more revenue from advertising to off-set some of the production costs. However, it was felt that the limited circulation of the Journal and the amount of effort that would be needed by a volunteer to secure the additional advertising probably made this untenable.

#### UK Contest Costs:

Contest revenue (entry fees) amounted to about £6,450 (down very slightly compared to 1997, both years suffering from relatively poor weather). Direct contest costs (incurred whilst running the competitions) amounted to just over £4,500 - about £2,000 less than contest costs for 1997. This reflects the fact that we did not have to buy medals this year (we spent about £1,500 in 1997 buying sufficient medals to last for around 3 seasons) and that the cost of running the Unlimited and Advanced Nationals at Sywell were less in 1998 (fewer international guest competitors). We still have enough medals left to supply the 1998 season, but we need to budget for buying more medals for the 2000 season.

The largest part of the contest costs is competition insurance (£1,924), with Sywell expenses accounting for £1,051.

The competition booklet cost around £750 to produce (although £300 of this was paid during 1997).

#### International Competitions:

The Association brokers the contest entry fees for UK competitors who participate in International competitions. During 1998 this included the Advanced European Championships and the World Aerobatic Championship. There is no significant net expense associated with these competitions other than the costs of transferring the entry fees to various banks around the world.

### CIVA

In 1998 the Association sent two delegates (Alan Cassidy & Nick Onn) to the CIVA meeting. This cost about £900, about twice the amount we spent in 1997 sending one person (Alan).

### Administration of the Association:

The Association pays various fees each year to support its activities. In 1998 these included £563 subscription to the Royal Aero Club, contributions to GASCO and GAAC (£200 each) and payment to Gazebo Ltd. of about £300 for provision of internet services.

Insuring the competition trophies cost us about £400. Other administrative expenses (phone, post etc.) amounted to £850.

The Association spent around £500 on promotional activity and £500 on hardware (principally the purchase of a new printer for use at competitions).

Sales of Annette Carson's book generated an income of about £195, this being a 'trade' to provide Annette with three years membership of the Association.

### Cash at end of the year

The net effect of 1998's activities is that the Association has broken even during the year. This is encouraging considering the poor weather that we experienced during the season. Although we have not eroded the assets of the Association during 1998, the Treasurer felt that it was important for the Association to consider the expenses that could be incurred during the next competition year. We are again looking to upgrade the computer (laptop) that is used to run the competitions, since the old machine has a poor screen that makes it very difficult in bright light to run the results software. This is likely to cost at least £1,500. As has already been mentioned, we will also have to buy medals, probably during this year, likely to cost a further £1,500. If the weather is poor again during 1999 it is possible that we could lose money during the year. Unlike a commercial business, it is very difficult to raise money to off-set losses. It is important for the Association to have a cash reserve to support its activities during difficult (expensive) years, without having to ask the members to make additional contributions during a particular year.

Consequently, the Treasurer proposed that the members should give the committee the power to raise membership fees to a maximum of £50 for a full member and £25 for an associate member, should the need arise during 1999. These increases would only be implemented if it was felt to be absolutely necessary to preserve the financial stability of the Association. It is the express wish of the committee that the membership fees should not be increased until this becomes necessary. Should the accounts suggest that the cash reserves are likely to fall below £5000 at the end of the 1999 season then this would be the trigger point for the Committee to consider raising the membership fees. Although this appears an unlikely situation, the Treasurer felt that it was prudent to make this option available to the committee. This proposal was put to the members (proposed Jim Duthie, seconded Alan Cassidy) and was carried in a vote.

### **Constitution of the Committee**

Peter Davies has recently resigned from the committee as a result of work pressures. Nick Buckenham thanked him for his contribution towards running the Association over a number of years. Gareth Roberts and Tom Cassells had served three years on the Committee and so were due for re-election, since they both wished to continue with their roles. This left three places on the committee to be filled. Martin Sandford was proposed as a new committee member. Since there

were three places vacant and three candidates, Gareth, Tom and Martin were duly appointed unanimously.

Nick Buckenham then expressed his wish to relinquish the Chairmanship within a few months, certainly by the end of September, once again due to changing circumstances not connected with the Association. Although he had enjoyed the role tremendously for eight years, during which time the BAeA had achieved a solid and impressive record in contest administration and growth in all aspects of contest flying, in his opinion it was essential now that the stewardship of the Association should be taken over by another member whilst time is available to establish a suitable new Chairman and all the important details can be handled with due care and attention. Eric Marsh (Vice Chairman) thanked Nick for the excellent work he had put into developing the Association, making it a highly professional organisation and placing it in a very strong position to promote aerobatics and in particular competitions in years to come. The membership supported these sentiments and gave Nick a much deserved vote of thanks.

For his part Eric said that he also felt unable to take up the role of Chairman and similarly wished to relinquish the Vice Chairman's duties, to make way for other people to take the Association forward. He called for the members to think about nominating people who might be suitable for the Chairmans position, but added the caveat that the individual must have the right skills to be able to run the Association professionally and build on the excellent foundations laid by Nick Buckenham. It was suggested that nominations should be forwarded to the Committee before any decision was taken about choosing a new Chairman.

### **The coming year**

Nick Buckenham reviewed the prospect for coming year. Unfortunately we are unable to go back to Seething this year, due to noise sensitivity, however Sleaford and Sherburn-in-Elmet have agreed to host competitions again this year. Kilrush once more provides an opportunity for members to include a trip to Ireland in their contest season, whilst there are Advanced and Unlimited international competitions for the UK teams in both power and glider categories.

It is hoped that there will be "mini-competitions" staged at public events, similar to those held at London City Airport and (intended) at Biggin Hill last year. Lasham is hosting a number of glider training days during the summer (noted in the Calendar) and also intends to fly aerobatic sorties most Friday evenings during the summer - members are urged to contact John Gilbert for more information.

### **Trophy Presentations**

It was suggested that trophies awarded for specific competitions should be presented on the day of the competition and not re-presented at the AGM. Only the points trophies and other awards unrelated to specific competitions would be presented at the AGM. The members thought that this was a good idea and it will hence be the practice during this season.

### **Points System for Points Trophies:**

The Chairman had asked Martin Sandford to consider the system used to allocate points at the end of each competition that contributed towards an individual pilots tally towards particular points trophies throughout the season. Martin presented his analysis of the requirements of the points system and outlined various methods which could be used to allocate points. Martin's very thorough and considered analysis appears elsewhere in this Journal. This presentation led to a lively debate about the intricacies of a points system. A central point which emerged as being particularly contentious was the operation of a discard system, which allows a pilot to throw away one or more of his results, or to miss out a competition or two during the season without suffering an over-

drastic effect on the seasonal points tables. After a discussion of the pros and cons of the discard protocol, the members voted to retain a discard-based procedure, and asked Martin to put proposals to the membership (via the Journal) about the system which could be used for calculating points trophy data in the future. The proposed system could be applied to the results of 1999 competitions to see how each final tally compares to the current system. At the end of this trial period, a decision would be made about which points system should be used for the 2000 season. A questionnaire would be used to survey the opinions of the membership on this matter, since the new system would have to be adopted ahead of the next AGM in order for the Competition Booklet to be issued with the revised rules.

#### **CAA Control of Aerobatics**

Nick Buckenham was happy to advise the meeting that the aerobatics certificate proposed by the CAA last year had now been dropped as an idea. The BAeA has been invited to join the Display Council (Air Display Committee) which is a relatively new forum charged with monitoring good practice within the display scene.

#### **Writing for the Journal**

Nick also encouraged all members to make contributions to the Journal - either writing or photographs. With insufficient material the Journal would lose its current impressive style and scope - it was, he said, up to every member to make a sensible contribution.

#### **Annette Carson Books**

There are still some copies of Annette Carson's book Flight Unlimited available from the membership secretary.

#### **Any Other Business**

No additional items were raised.

The meeting was concluded at 1630.

Minutes prepared by Stephen Green. 9 February 1999