

BSSF Spring Congress 2001
3rd June 2001 at the offices of The British Land Company PLC

Present:-

BSSF Directors

Tim Alcock
Peter Clarke
Alan Hartley
Ewen Maclean

BSSF Staff

Graham Bell
Fiona McNeilly

Membership

Snowsport Scotland: Bruce Crawford (also BASI), Peter Bates, Kay Bates
Snowsport Wales: Alan Evans
SCGB: Alan Mullens
BARSC: Sarah Robinson, Maud Instone, Susie Berry, Ingrid Christophersen

Apologies:

Jennifer Greenbury, Cliff Webb and John O'Grady were unable to attend but had sent prepared reports.

Welcome

Peter Clarke welcomed everyone and began by asking everyone to introduce themselves. He also thanked The British Land Company PLC for the free use of their meeting facilities.

Tim Alcock introduced the BSSF Directors who gave a presentation on their efforts since the last congress.

Alan Hartley – Finance Director

AH circulated a paper outlining financial highlights. Efficient production of accounts mean that we already have draft accounts for May. Based on realistic projections we are confident that the year will end in balance, as per budget. There should be no surprises in the final accounts.

The monies raised at the Christies auction are not included in these figures. We have made a commitment to spend this money on specific items to benefit key athletes and the money will not be spent without prior consultation with those involved in the organisation of the auction.

The children's team has been very efficiently run and, although there will be some further expenditure, they will end the year in surplus. As this surplus is the result of self-generated income, this amount will be carried forward into 01/02.

We are currently working on budgets for next year and, although some funding is confirmed, we await confirmation from other sources.

PC stressed that this had financially been a very good year.

Maud queried the use of the word profit. AH explained that this terminology must appear in the statutory accounts because of our company status, but in our circumstances generally profit = surplus.

Maud queried the payment of HN racer contributions to the BASS list. FM to check the mechanism for this and report to TD Forum.

Peter Clarke – Deputy Chairman (also reporting for Jennifer Greenbury – Commercial Director)

Before talking to Jennifer Greenbury's report, Peter talked about existing sponsorships. We must look after existing sponsors and he believes that all sponsors currently involved with the teams have been generally satisfied with the increased coverage we received last season. British Land is committed to supporting the Alpine team through the coming Olympic year and Morgan Stanley are considering their position, given the current volatility of the American market place. Syntax integration have replaced the office computer systems and provided Dick Taplin with new equipment to run the BASS list under phase 1 of their 3 year agreement. FM will meet with Syntax on Wednesday and our next priority is laptops for the coaches and the relaunch of the website. Although we should be encouraged by the coverage received this year, we must continue to work to improve sponsor coverage in the media. Too often the sponsor name is cut from a piece of our old photographs are used. Athletes and staff should constantly remind journalists of the importance of their sponsors.

Christies auction attracted over 300 people paying a £10 entry fee. There was an auction and a raffle and an amount just exceeding £25K was raised. We hope to repeat this annually.

Jennifer has made a number of approaches to city firms and others. Ryanair have a new direct flight to Salzburg and we hope to work closely with them. She has been in discussion with the Daily Mail regarding the Ski Show. We are considering a fund-raising party during the Ski Show week. She has also been speaking to sponsorship agencies on a success only basis. Jennifer has been devoting much time and effort to her role as commercial director. This is an extremely difficult task, which should be seen as a collective responsibility. Increased profile helps but has not yet brought in any substantial monies yet.

There was particular interest in the children's team from One-Tel. Unfortunately, they are in administration in Australia.

Graham and Cliff are working on a promotional video to assist in our marketing strategy.

PB raised the issue of assisting disciplines other than Alpine, as they are currently without commercial sponsors. PC stated that we have not raised any new money for any discipline over the past 12 months. FM added that although financial sponsorships had not been forthcoming, we had enjoyed relative success in encouraging suppliers to extend their sponsorships to cover team members in all disciplines (This applied to Ellesse, Thaw, Bridgedale, Cardiosport and P&O Stena, Biobas, Syntax and Bodycare).

KB stated that a member of the Freestyle Executive (Simon Ashton) has been nominated to work on sponsorship with JG.

Tim Alcock reported for John O'Grady

We are doing very well at the highest level with Lesley McKenna finishing the World Cup Half-pipe Series in 3rd place. Building a development team is difficult, as snowboarding does not have the same competitive base as Alpine. We are not attracting young talent soon enough (apart from in Scotland). Beth Munro has been employed to manage snowboard administration this post from Hillend, this post is part funded by BSA, SIGB, Snowsport Scotland and BSSF. Channel 4 has agreed to film the British Snowboard Championships, which should make the search for sponsors easier.

Ewen Maclean – Disciplines Director

EM is the newest Board member and took office in November. He has spent his time getting to grips with the organisation of BSSF. Initially he was tasked with reorganising the Alpine Executive, which is to handle Team management issues. The Home Nations were invited to nominate representatives who could oversee a specific area of interest to this committee. Jenny Shute will oversee children's issues and Robin Kellen will speak for youth issues.

The British Alpine Racing Committee (BARC) is to focus on race organisation issues. This committee has a much wider role than the Alpine Executive. The first meeting will be held this afternoon. The committee structure will comprise Board representation, FM and member group delegates, Chief of Champs, National Seeder and Chair of TD Forum. Where possible this group should communicate by email and meet seldom.

EM will report to the Board on all disciplines. Snowboard has their own representative. He will now focus on Freestyle and Nordic.

SR queried the make up of the Alpine Executive. We asked the membership for nominations, the nominees have been given specific tasks. EM to circulate the terms of reference and structure of both Alpine Executive and BARC with these minutes.

PB raised the issue of snowboard development. There is a void between the elite and junior level. We need to have a separate discussion on this with snowboard representatives present. Grass roots snowboarding is not the responsibility of the BSSF. If the Home Nations are not doing this, it a BSA job? Because of limited resources we help where we can and the lines are blurred between the organisations working for snowboarding based at Hillend.

Tim Alcock

We are currently financially balanced, but we are still on a knife edge. There is continued pressure on discipline executives and commercial groups with regard to budgeting and fund-raising. We must concentrate on a wider base of sponsors. We must not become complacent. We must help Jennifer Greenbury in her substantial efforts.

We might consider staking a small amount of money on an agency to push our sponsors in the press. Athletes must be properly dressed and mention sponsor's names in every interview.

Paddy Field has resigned as Nordic Director and the Board thank him for his hard work. Paddy will be replaced by Tim East, who has been involved in the sport for some time. Paddy will continue to chair a FIS committee.

We had fantastic results last year, not just from Lesley McKenna and Alain Baxter, but also from many of our younger athletes across all disciplines. Clearly our programmes are working well.

TA had attended a Freestyle Executive and was encouraged to learn of the large number of freestyle athletes going to Australia. They are rebuilding interest in the sport and developing new ones.

Our administration is as slim as can be and is one part-time member of staff down since mid-season. The move to Hillend has been a very positive step for all concerned. We do not work hard enough at keeping in touch with our membership.

Events committee has become the commercial committee lead by Cliff Webb and Jennifer Greenbury.

Other Matters

BC reported that 3 APC courses were held in May with Reini attending, which was fantastic motivating factor for the trainers on the course. He passed his ideas on to level 1 & 2 trainers and also the APC trainers. British Team trainers are happy to share their knowledge. We have an open invitation for aspiring trainers to attend British Team camps on placement.

GB explained a little about the base in Lofer, which has been funded by The British Olympic Association in conjunction with Salzburgerland. It is a small pension situated in Lofer, which is on the border of Salzburgerland and Tirol and conveniently placed for access to all sorts of wintersports facilities (Kaprun – glacier, many lower resorts, half-pipe Berchtesgaden). The base has been fitted with much specialist equipment and boasts a fitness room, weights room, wax room, IT room, physio room, lounge areas. Accommodation in the BOA base will cost full board £20 per night to national team members. Some athletes will be able to keep one room throughout the season. GB and FM will draw up guidelines for athletes using the base (these will also be published in the yearbook). Above all, it is vital that the atmosphere within the base is one of high performance sport. We would like to see the base used by Home Nation squads. Anyone interested in staying in the base should contact Fiona or Jen at the office.

The Congress broke for lunch at this point. The delegates returned at 2pm and broke into two discussion groups. One group met as BARC for the first time, the other group enjoyed a broader discussion touching on issues primarily concerned with communication. The website was discussed at length.