



The English Ski Council

**Alpine Racing Committee
Minutes of the 91st ARC meeting held on 2 February 2002
At Swadlincote**

Present

Des Pirkhoffer	DGP	Peter Heath	PH
Gillian Gilyead	GG	Sandra Palmer	SP
David Manns	DM	Alan Ashfield	AA
Paul Hothersall	PH^	Marc Telling	MT

Apologies

**Ian Roberts
Alan West
Willie Taunton-Burnett
Graham Beck**

Action

91.1.0. MINUTES

Minutes of the 90th meeting are still under discussion therefore not approved.

91.2.0. English Alpine Championships

DGP stated that he had spoken to various people over the Christmas period at the BARSC races in Lenk, including parents and racers, and it was generally felt that people would like to see the Championships become a more elite race. Additionally, DGP reported that there was desire for the EAC to become a FIS event.

Prior to the meeting DGP had circulated a discussion document outlining various options open to ARC, this was the basis for a detailed examination of strategic direction.

The discussion had three areas of examination: The nature of the race; the date of the race and the FIS status of the race.

DGP asked the committee to reflect on what type of event was required by racers. AA noted that when the EAC was originally conceived it was designed to be an introduction to snow racing for members of the coaching scheme who had not raced on snow before. PH commented that there are now a lot more opportunities for young racers to start on snow than there were 20 years

ago. DGP pointed out that from a marketing point of view it would be harder to attract sponsors to the event if it was seen as a development race.

A motion was put to the committee that the EAC be confirmed as the premier event in the ESC calendar. All present voted and the motion was carried unanimously. This decision allowed the remaining issues to be discussed within a clear directional framework.

Next the issue of date was considered. There were three possible times discussed: Christmas; February Half Term or Easter. PH voiced the feeling of most of the committee that moving the EAC to Christmas would cause great difficulty, not least of which would come from the impact to BARSC. There was no support for a change to Christmas.

Half Term was discussed. DGP had received representations from W. Taunton-Burnett (England Team Performance Director) that half term would be a very good time to hold the EAC, as it would provide a mid season performance indicator. This point was made to the committee. MT explained that it would be useful to have the EAC held at a different time to the British Alpine Championships so that if an athlete was injured or was not on form they would not lose two events in one go. GG made the point that half term is held at different times in different counties and for that reason logistics would be very difficult, probably resulting in a reduced entry. GG also explained that when school age racers are trying to negotiate with their schools for term-time activities (absence), it is helpful if the main events are held during holiday periods. DM & PH^ both pointed out that half term is traditionally a popular time for training camps and if half term was used for EAC and the BAC remains at Easter it would be very difficult to get good training on snow for school age racers.

The current timing of Easter was reviewed and again MT expressed his reservation about having the two main events of the season at the same time. The discussion of Easter inevitably centred on the liaison between the ESC & BSSF. DGP was tasked with ensuring that communications between ESC/ARC & BSSF/BARC were started as soon as possible.

A motion was put to the committee that the EAC be held at Easter in 2003. All present voted and the motion was carried by a majority of 7-1.

Finally the issue of the FIS status was addressed. PH stated that if the EAC were to become a FIS event the additional cost could be circa £5000 including free lift passes for non-GBR entrants & trainers, FIS TD costs, additional piste preparation etc. This additional cost would have to be borne by sponsorship. PH also explained that substantial numbers of foreign racers would be eligible under the quota system to enter the race. It is customary for these racers to be provided with free entry and lift passes which add considerably to the costs.

There is a need for a detailed cost proposal to be worked up and it is most likely that a working group will be set-up to address this.

PH pointed out that if the 2003 EAC is to be a FIS event then there is very little time to get that information onto the FIS calendar.

Given the amount of work required and the timescales involved a proposal

was put to the committee that “ARC will work towards making The English Alpine Championships a FIS event as soon as practical”. The committee unanimously endorsed this proposal.

91.3.0. English Alpine Squad Selection Process

DGP opened the discussion with the view that in principle the way the selection is currently handled is fair - Athletes currently know the “Consideration Criteria” they need to achieve to be eligible for consideration when the selection panel sits.

A discussion followed about the purpose of the Team.

DGP suggested that the committee confirm that the English Alpine Team is a structure designed to support athletes while they attempt to develop from Club/Regional racer to GB Squad. The committee confirmed this to be the case.

There then followed a discussion about whether selection should be on the basis of performance or potential. AA explained that talent spotting is a very difficult task and although attempted in the past little success was made. MT asked what the position of existing members of the Team would be if selection was made on potential rather than performance. The committee agreed that performance should be the basis for selection.

PH said that it would be very unfair to existing team members, and those close to selection, if all the selection criteria were changed so close to selection taking place. It was agreed that there is a need to support the structure already in place, and that the 2002/03 selection criteria would need to be defined quickly if changes were to be made. One practical and time saving change suggested by PH was to ask racers to submit themselves for selection which would save time considering racers who would not be accepting an offer of a place with the team.

The Selection Panel still needs to be put in place but selection will take place in May 2002.

DGP

91.4.0. Artificial Slope World Championship - Update

Following last meetings decision to ask BSSF/BARC to assist in the process of establishing a framework within which to hold an Artificial Slope World Championships Ian Roberts has written to Fiona McNeilly (Operations Director of BSSF). Fiona expressed her personal opinion that the calendar is currently full and that FIS would be unlikely to sanction an event which created another World Champion. FIS would probably prefer the term “Criterium” for events of this type. Subsequently Fiona asked Ian to raise the issue with Ewen Maclean (Chair BARC) for further discussion. No response was available to report to the committee.

MT pointed out that the title of “World Champion” is very useful for personal sponsorship and for this reason the event has value.

PH suggested that it may be more sensible to rename the European Championships to European OPEN Championships thus allowing all countries to enter without causing difficulty within FIS.

91.5.0. ARC Composition – Update

At the last ARC meeting DGP stated that he would write to all ESC registered

clubs asking for volunteers to work within ARC, he is now awaiting nominations. Although it was felt the need for new members on the committee, people should be aware that it was not just to turn up for observations purposes, the need is for genuine workers to help raise the profile of ARC and its purpose.

91.6.0. England Squad Sponsors

The uniforms for the Squad are now ready from Five Seasons Clothing. DGP/WTB will be meeting with Five Seasons on the 7 February 2002, with the view of the sponsorship being for the next 3 years. AA stated that a contract should not be signed without an ESC board member being present.

91.7.0. ROTP Report

DM reported that the Artificial Slope Race calendar is now finalised. He stated that ROTP will be setting up a working group to address the need for more Race Officials,

The Occasional Race Bulletin is still in the draft stages but will be issued at the end of February. The Race Manual will be updated at the same time as the Race Bulletin.

The Protest Fee for races has been raised to £25.

Boys and Girls have been renamed Minis in keeping with the snow races.

Snow blades can now be used for course inspection.

91.8.0. STP Report

Notes of the annual STP forum of ESC & SCOW TDs were tabled. In a written report, Ian Roberts highlighted the ongoing discussions with BSSF and BARC regarding the European and World Championships, the need to include safety issues at race official briefings and the decision to apply the FIS/BSSF equipment regulations to dry slope races from April 2003. It was noted that the current FIS/BSSF regulations do not specify a minimum turning radius for slalom skis.

91.9.0. Athletes Report

MT reported that there was concern that the Dry Slope Entry fee had gone up to £15 and why there was a need for this? DM explained that the extra £1.50 would be recovered from Clubs to go into a fund specifically for the training and development of Race Officials. DM will write to the Clubs concerned to explain how the process will work and go over the new paper work. **DM**

MT also stated that racers and parents wanted to know why slopes without sprinkler systems were being used above those with sprinklers. DM stated that unfortunately there are not many slopes in the country with sprinkler systems and it had been taken into consideration when putting the calendar together.

Racers also wanted to know why all the Grand Prix are at the beginning of the season, when there are exams and the possibility of the racers not being on form. DM stated he would talk to ROTP for next year's race calendar to be looked at with the possibility of spreading GP's out. **DM**

MT stated that there needs to be clarification of the FIS starts for the **MT**

males, i.e. if the Squad have entered 6 males into a race and another British male turns up why is it still possible to be bumped off the race as training with the Squad should ensure priority into the race. DGP stated that this should not happen and will liaise with WTB to ensure the guidelines are clear.

91.10.0.

GG left the meeting at 15.30. Unfortunately before being able to give her report, but stated she was concerned the committee had still not been told who is in the Squad. DGP stated that the appeals have now been sorted out and those who have appealed have been told one way or another and that the list will be put on the ESC web site ASAP. **DGP**

GG also asked for a detailed account of activities undertaken by the English Alpine Team. DGP agreed that this information should be more readily available and to produce a report of team activities. **DGP**

91.11.0. AOB

DGP stated that the Squad racing/training in Sweden and Norway went very well.

DGP explained that he had considerable concern about the level of expense involved in running the Sweden camp and would be working with WTB to produce a detailed breakdown of costs.

The next camp will be at the beginning of February in Les Houches for 4 days racing/training. With a further camp taking place in Norway from 12 – 25 February.

91.12.0. Next meeting 20 April 2002 at Swadlincote.

Meeting closed at 16.20.