

BGA CONFERENCE

A new venue and a programme offering something for all guaranteed that the 2011 event was one of the best ever

ON 6 March, some 350 glider pilots gathered under an overcast sky for this year's BGA Sporting Conference and AGM in Nottingham. The day kicked off with separate forums for club chairmen and for CFIs/senior instructors.

Following a welcome to all and a brief description of the Sporting Conference programme by the BGA Communications officer, Keith Auchterlonie, the day's series of presentations started with Ian Gallacher. An aerobatic display pilot, human factors trainer and club CFI, Ian provided a visually exciting and thought-provoking insight into the highs and lows of his own development and subsequent worldwide experience as a gliding aerobatic display pilot and display team member.



Delegates signed in and collected their free polo shirts, courtesy of sponsors Joint Aviation Services (All photographs by Dean Hartwell)

THE ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF EFFORT UNDERTAKEN AT CLUBS AND CENTRALLY IS RECOGNISED

BGA Chief Executive Pete Stratten then facilitated a 50-minute session titled 'Meet the Regulator'. In providing some background context and describing a number of regulatory issues, Pete noted the importance of on-going collaboration and mutual respect between the BGA and the CAA, as well as the inevitable link between airspace safety performance and on-going freedoms within UK airspace. A CAA panel of Phil Roberts (Directorate of Airspace Policy), Giles Porter (Operations Inspectorate), Cliff Whittaker (Licensing & Training Standards Policy) and Neil Williams (Airworthiness Policy) then answered and elaborated on a number of questions that had been previously submitted by BGA volunteers and club chairmen. Subject matter included: modifications to glider instrument fits, noting that type certificate holder's generic instructions are most helpful; the BGA's vital role under emerging EASA licensing and operations requirements; maintenance of existing privileges; and a number of airspace technology and policy issues.

After lunch, BGA Chairman Patrick Naegeli reflected on the past 12 months of BGA activity, recognising the enormous amount of effort undertaken at clubs and centrally in delivering, developing and defending our sport. Focusing on the on-going development of the BGA Performance Group and the Operations Group, Patrick highlighted the work of the various associated sub-committees and other volunteers involved. Patrick went on to describe how the Executive Committee had authorised a small group to review and, where appropriate, modernise the BGA Articles of Association. He described a plan of review and BGA club consultation during 2011 and early 2012 that can be expected to result in a revised set of Articles being presented for approval at the 2012 AGM.

Noting the investment purchase of

the new BGA office, the relocation and an associated redundancy, and the higher than expected cost of implementing new back office systems, BGA Treasurer Les Kaye reported on the Association's annual accounts for the year ending September 2010. He went on to describe the planned budget for the year ending September 2012, including a small rise in membership fees.

Pete Stratten then outlined some of the regulatory issues dealt with during 2010 and noted how the BGA will continue to work closely with clubs and participants to ensure that their views and needs are fed back into this vital work.

Moving on to the formal business of the AGM, the Minutes of the AGM held in March 2010 were approved; the Annual Report was adopted; the Revenue Account and Balance sheet for the year ending 30 September 2010 was adopted; the budget for the year ending 30 September 2012 and annual subscription rates were adopted and auditors King Freeman were reappointed for a further 12 months. On the appointment of officials, Company Secretary Keith Mansell identified that four Executive Committee members required by the Articles to retire by rotation had been re-nominated. As the number of vacancies exceeded the number of nominations, Dave Fidler, Chris Gibson, Peter Harvey and Andy Perkins were accepted as members of the Executive Committee. The formal business closed with the re-election of all the BGA Vice-Presidents.

BGA Diplomas were then presented for services to gliding to the following: Dickie Feakes, John Delafield and Roger Crouch, all of Windrushers GC; Doug Jones of Bristol & Gloucestershire GC; Mike Fitzgerald of Devon & Somerset GC; Peter Carrington of Lincolnshire GC and Ray Parkin of Trent Valley GC. Sadly, Ray died after a short illness some weeks before the presentation and his Diploma will be presented to his family by Ray's gliding club. Phil King, acting chairman of the BGA Safety Committee, and Martin Langford, CFI of the Black Mountains GC, were each presented

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with a Bill Scull Safety Award.

A BGA Silver Medal for outstanding service to the BGA was presented to Cambridge GC's Steve Longland, who has, during many years of commitment, set the standard for gliding training and instructional documents, manuals and diagrams, as well as contributing enormously to the Instructors Committee and S&G.

A BGA Silver Medal for outstanding performance was also presented to Pete Harvey, of Windrushers GC, for his consistent achievements in international competition flying, including winning the European Championships on three occasions.

Highlighting 50 years of penning unique observations and insight of gliding, as well as his role as an adviser and guide to S&G over nearly as many years, Patrick Naegeli presented Michael Bird of Lasham Gliding Society with a BGA Gold Medal for exceptional and distinguished service to the BGA. Patrick went on to identify a number of honours recently awarded to glider pilots by the Royal Aero Club and to congratulate Keith Mansell of Midland GC on his recently-awarded MBE.

As the afternoon moved on, the conference was treated to a series of short presentations. John Williams, Bruce Cooper and Roy Wilson described their experiences and exploits at the back end of 2010, flying huge tasks in Andean wave. They described some of the physiological as well as psychological challenges generated by long-distance flying, including a 16-hour, 1,600km triangle in rapidly changing conditions.

Dr Alistair Nunn then presented a piece titled 'Smarter for longer. Maintaining your nationals rating into old age', in which he offered insight and guidance on pilot fitness issues, which any thinking pilot lucky enough to have been in the room cannot fail to have benefitted from. Finally, Pete Harvey presented a very amusing and engaging session describing many of the experiences of Gliding Team GB in Hungary during the 2010 WGC, including lessons learned by the Championship organisers and, by association, some Serbian border guards, following a mass landout in Serbia on one of the competition days!



A busy trade exhibition provided delegates with a hands-on experience of gliding essentials



There was the opportunity to get up close and personal with senior members of the CAA



Contribution to the sport was recognised. Phil King (right) and Martin Langford (left) were each presented with a Bill Scull Safety Award by BGA Chairman Patrick Naegeli

CHAIRMEN'S FORUM

WITH a larger number of people in the room than expected, BGA Chairman Patrick Naegeli detailed the brief agenda and noted the need to complete the session before oxygen levels fell too far! Following a brief rehearsal of the agreed safety objectives from a similar session in 2010, Hugh Browning presented an update on safety performance over the past 12 months, focusing on preparation for flight, instructing and winch launching. A lively and positive exchange of views followed, after which Hugh confirmed that the briefing material would be made available for use by chairmen at their own clubs. Chief Executive Pete Stratten then summarised a number of regulatory activities and described a number of associated timelines. The 35 delegates all agreed that this one-hour event, closed before the main Sporting Conference got under way, had been very helpful.

CFI AND SENIOR INSTRUCTORS' FORUM

THE session began with an overview from BGA National Coach Mike Fox, based on how we interact with other users of class G airspace and our knowledge of the operations of those other users. Hugh Woodsend gave an overview of the presentation that he gives to other pilots, especially the military. This presentation details the operation of gliders, what they are capable of, some of the distances covered, speeds, and where gliders are likely to be operating in what weather. He also highlighted what caused the most surprise to military pilots! He gave a short presentation aimed at raising the awareness of glider pilots of some of the operations of military and commercial operators in class G. Mike then concluded with the message that we must live up to our reputation and act responsibly within the airspace that we share, which includes familiarising ourselves with the operations of other disciplines where appropriate. He gave examples of good practice and resources for training our cross-country pilots.



■ Sixteen-year-old Charlotte Kitchen, of Burn GC, was the recipient of this year's Caroline Trust Cadet of the Year award, for progress made and her contribution to the club. She was presented with her award by the Caroline Trust's Pete Roberts (left) and Burn CFI Dave Peters



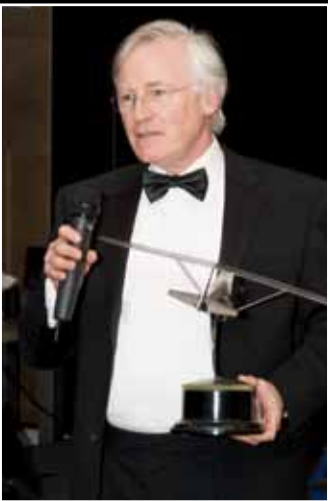
(Above) You are never too young to get hooked!

(Left) Four types of glider were exhibited: a DG-1001M (courtesy Julian Hitchcock), Jonker Sailplane's JS1, David Innes' Nimbus 4, and a Ventus 2cxa. Ventus owner Steve Jones is pictured (below left) keeping a careful eye on his toy as it is manoeuvred into the exhibition



(Below) John Williams was joined by Bruce Cooper and Roy Wilson, for a presentation describing their experiences and exploits flying huge tasks in Andean wave at the end of last year





Clockwise from top left:

■ There was lots to see at the trade exhibition, including the latest technology and a DG-1001M (top right)

■ Birthday girl and award-winner Kay Draper, pictured with David Roberts, is treated to a rendition of *Happy Birthday* by the evening's live act, Three Times A Lady

■ The sign says it all!

■ Ian Gallacher gives a highly visual presentation on aerobatics

■ Leigh Wells receives the Goldsborough Trophy (shared with Steve Jones), awarded to the highest placed pilot(s) in the previous World Championships

■ Adrian Emck takes the Chris Wills Trophy as winner of the Wooden Ladder

