



# British Universities Life Saving Clubs' Association

General Meeting

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2009

Room 3E, University of London Union, Malet Street, London, WC2E 7HY

## Minutes of General Meeting

### In attendance:

Jason Bell  
Dorota Bortel  
Tom Chamberlain  
Rhys Clements  
Oliver Coleman  
Eve Coomber  
Simon Creasey  
Gareth David  
Aidan Hethedington  
Amy Jennings  
Tamsin Jones  
Iain Long  
Martin May  
Ed Pickering  
Lydia Roe  
Rich Rowe  
Jessica Savage  
Kathryn Shaw  
Tom Strachen  
Alan Sutherland  
Stuart Vagg  
Kate Vlaeminke

University of Birmingham  
Championships Coordinator  
University of Southampton  
University of Southampton  
Webmaster  
University of Nottingham  
BULSCA Chair (Chairperson)  
Loughborough Universities  
University of Plymouth  
Loughborough Universities  
University of London  
BULSCA Secretary (Clerk)  
BULSCA Treasurer  
University of Cambridge  
University of Bath  
Club Development Officer  
University of Plymouth  
University of Nottingham  
Sport Development Officer  
University of Bath  
University of Warwick  
University of Warwick

### Observers:

Stuart Ward (Grand Wizard of the Judges Panel).

*Unless otherwise stated, all actions should be completed in time for the next general meeting.*

**Simon called the meeting to order at 11.05.**

### 1. Apologies for Absence:

Swansea.

### 2. Approval of Minutes from the Last Meeting:

Simon went through the minutes. No errors were found.



It was noted prior to voting that Plymouth had not paid their membership fees, and were therefore ineligible to vote.

**Vote 2.1:** Simon proposed accepting the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**For:** 7  
**Against:** 0  
**Abstaining:** 0

The proposal was accepted.

### 3. Matters Arising from the Minutes:

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

### 4. Officer Accounts:

Simon stated that, should any club wish to question the BULSCA committee, this could be done outside of the meeting. There were no objections.

### 5. SERC Rules Amendments:

Simon, in Stu Richardson's absence, presented **Paper B** on amendments to the SERC rules. He proposed amending the proposal by removing reference to rule **5.3.7.5**. Simon noted that EAV was performed in the water, and hence the rule should remain in place. As Stu was unable to accept the amendment, it was put to a vote of the General Meeting:

**Vote 5.1:** Simon proposed removing references to rule **5.3.7.5** from the proposal.

**For:** 7  
**Against:** 0  
**Abstaining:** 0

The proposal was accepted.

The General Meeting then moved to vote on the amended proposal:

**Vote 5.2:** In Stu Richardson's absence, Simon proposed accepting the proposal outlined in **Paper B**, subject to the amendment in **Vote 5.1**.

**For:** 7  
**Against:** 0  
**Abstaining:** 0

The proposal was accepted.

**Action 5.1:** Iain to make the necessary amendments to the BULSCA Competitions Manual.

### 6. Diving with a Torpedo Buoy:

Tom presented **Paper C**, on suspending rule **5.6.2.2**, and adopting the new RLSS rules on diving with a torpedo buoy.



London asked whether RLSS Trainer/Assessors would be able to sign off club members to dive with torpedo buoys. Simon stated that was correct. Oli noted that the swimming pool in which clubs train would need to have a final say on who could train competitors to dive, as it has health and safety implications.

**Vote 6.1:** Tom proposed accepting the proposal outlined in **Paper C**.

**For:** 7  
**Against:** 0  
**Abstaining:** 0

The proposal was accepted.

### **7. Equipment in SERCs:**

Tamsin Jones (London) presented **Paper D**, on equipment in SERCs. She noted that clubs often have to take kit with them that is not used, and clogs up poolside. Given that SERCs now go to the BULSCA Judges Panel well in advance of the competition, there seems little need for this.

Oli disagreed, and felt that clubs do not need to be informed in advance, as it may enable them to train for the SERCs better.

There followed a discussion about outdoor clothing. London felt that it was unnecessary to require teams to bring outdoor clothing into isolation, only to be told that the SERCs are inside.

**The General Meeting was informed by Martin that Plymouth had now paid their membership fees and were hence entitled to vote.**

**Vote 7.1:** Simon proposed removing reference to outdoor clothing and footwear from the proposal.

**For:** 8  
**Against:** 0  
**Abstaining:** 0

The proposal was accepted.

**Vote 7.2:** London proposed accepting the proposal outlined in **Paper D**, subject to the amendment in **Vote 7.1**.

**For:** 8  
**Against:** 0  
**Abstaining:** 0

The proposal was accepted.

**Action 7.1:** Iain to make the necessary amendments to the BULSCA Competitions Manual.

### **8. Reforming BULSCA General Meetings:**

Iain presented **Paper E**, on reforming BULSCA General Meetings. He summarised the contents of the proposal and stated his motivation. He feels that General Meetings are run too much like a club committee; that there is a lot of discussion that leads to no substantial changes to policy.



Oli noted that he has sat on committees with similar procedures, and that it removes freeform discussion. He felt that it was too bureaucratic. Iain accepted that it removed freeform discussion, but noted that, the length of many BULSCA General Meetings relative to the number of decisions made, this was not necessarily a bad thing.

Birmingham asked for clarification on how to deal with multiple people wishing to object to a proposal. Iain referred Birmingham to the supplementary document, General Meeting Procedures, which explained this in detail. He noted that each individual would be given two minutes to object.

Oli noted that the BULSCA Chair already has the ability to move the meeting on, and questioned the need for the proposal. Simon and Iain responded that, whilst correct, the proposal clarified how and when the meeting could be moved on, for those not as well-versed in meeting procedures.

Stu Ward stated that the proposal needed to clarify judges' entitlements at meetings. Iain stated that members of the BULSCA Judges Panel shall automatically have speaking rights, but no right to vote. Other judges may request speaking rights from the BULSCA Chair in advance of the meeting.

**Vote 8.1:** Iain proposed accepting the proposal outlined in **Paper E**, and adopting the supplementary paper, General Meeting Procedures, as BULSCA standing policy.

**For:** 8  
**Against:** 0  
**Abstaining:** 0

The proposal was accepted.

### **9. Responsibility for the Competitions Manual:**

Martin presented **Paper F**, on transferring responsibility for the BULSCA Competitions Manual to the BULSCA Judges Panel. He noted that, in the vast majority of cases, BULSCA judges were the ones suggesting amendments to the Manual. Moreover, he noted that the points tend to be less substantial than in previous years. He therefore suggests moving responsibility for accepting/rejecting rules changes to the BULSCA Judges Panel.

Iain noted that, since the Competitions Manual has been in use for several years, most amendments are a matter of fine-tuning, rather than substantive changes to rules.

Birmingham asked whether the judges were happy with this idea. Stu Ward noted that, although they had not been asked yet, he did not see it as being a major issue.

Simon proposed an amendment to the procedures outlined. He felt that suggested amendments should first be sent to the BULSCA Committee, and only forwarded to the Judges Panel if the Committee accepted the amendment. Should the amendment be rejected, the club proposing it could protest, and take it to the AGM.

Stu Ward noted that this may result in the need to add a rule allowing for mid-season rules changes.

**Martin accepted the amendment**, and suggested moving to a vote.



**Vote 9.1:** Martin proposed accepting the proposal outlined in **Paper F**, subject to the amendment offered by Simon and Stu Ward.

**For:** 8  
**Against:** 0  
**Abstaining:** 0

The proposal was accepted.

#### **10. Competition Proposals:**

Simon presented **Paper G**, on competition proposals. He summarised the proposal as follows. Clubs should submit the form at the back of the pack, along with the spreadsheet detailing their budget. This enables to budget properly, as well as enabling the BULSCA Committee to reject any proposals that make large profits outright.

Birmingham asked whether there was need to account for the host club's teams on the spreadsheet. Moreover, they queried what attendance level BULSCA would make their decisions based upon. Simon clarified, noting that so long as the proposals were competitive, the BULSCA Committee would not look to reject them.

Birmingham also noted that their union only funds them for one-third of the competitions they seek to attend. The revenues from the Birmingham competition enabled them to attend a lot more competitions. Simon accepted this as a valid reason for charging more. Moreover, Iain noted that, so long as clubs could justify charging more, the BULSCA Committee would accept their proposals. The aim of the proposal system was to encourage attendance at competitions, not discourage it.

Plymouth stated that they receive no funding from the union at all. Simon stated once again that he realises clubs rely on their competitions as a source of revenue, and that BULSCA would not block any proposal that justified the price is charged. Iain added that this proposal should help clubs such as Plymouth, as they should see competition fees fall, making them more affordable.

Simon suggested that, in order to encourage participation, BULSCA clubs could offer last-minute free spaces to smaller clubs at a reduced rate.

Bath noted that there was an implicit threat. What happens if clubs do not comply to the proposal they have put forward? Simon noted that BULSCA would consider withdrawing its support for the competition, resulting in it not counting towards the league. Bath responded by saying that it is impossible for them to know their costs in time for the AGM. Iain accepted this as valid, and suggested speaking to the BULSCA Committee if costs went up. Moreover, they could state that their prices may have to increase in their proposal.

Bath also raised concerns about food prices. Simon stated that food should be charged at cost. Dorota noted that this was tricky. Birmingham stated that, if food was charged at cost, they would charge £3.57 per person. Simon noted that this should be rounded up, as bodies, judges and helpers are traditionally given free food.

Bath then asked about deadlines. They noted that the proposal needs to state how long BULSCA can review proposals. Simon noted that these deadlines were implicitly given, in line with the date of the AGM. Martin noted that if clubs wished to submit their proposals early, this would be extremely useful.

Warwick asked how to register interest in the freshers' competition. Simon stated that there was a box to tick.



Bath asked how much detail was required. Simon noted that it was up to individual clubs, however the more detail the better.

Oli suggested amending the proposal, allowing clubs wishing to host the freshers' competition to submit two proposals: one for the freshers' competition, and a back up one, should they fail to win the freshers' competition. **Simon accepted this amendment.**

Iain noted that there is no reference to health and safety in the proposal. He suggested that BULSCA should emphasise that host clubs are responsible for managing health and safety at their competitions. Oli noted that competitors were only insured by BULSCA at the BULSCA Championships. **Simon accepted this amendment.**

Southampton asked what would happen if clubs amended their proposal on the day of the competition. Simon stated that they would have to justify the changes. He further suggested that costs should be completely finalised when entries are opened.

**Loughborough arrived at 11.57. Martin informed the General Meeting that Loughborough had not paid membership fees, and were hence ineligible to vote.**

**Vote 10.1:** Simon proposed accepting the proposal outlined in **Paper G**, subject to the amendments offered by Oli and Iain.

***For:*** 7  
***Against:*** 0  
***Abstaining:*** 1

The proposal was accepted.

#### **11. Abolishing the Cap on Competition Fees:**

Iain presented **Paper H**, on abolishing the cap on competition fees. He noted that the competition proposal scheme made the cap superfluous.

Southampton asked if the fees cap remained for the freshers' competition. Iain stated that all competitions, including the freshers' competition, were included in this proposal.

Plymouth raised concerns that this would discriminate against clubs with expensive facilities, who would necessarily charge higher prices. Iain noted this point, but stated that clubs should be allowed to choose which competitions they wished to see in the league. If competitions were more expensive, clubs should take that into account. Furthermore, it ensured that no competitions ran at a loss.

Oli noted that, at BULSCA Committee, it had been decided to introduce a recommended retail price of £30 for a competition. Iain accepted this, but stated that he had not been comfortable proposing such a system, as it would negate the reforms he was looking to introduce. As a compromise, he suggested setting a recommended retail price of £30 for next season, and then allowing free competition for the following season, as clubs had observed prices. **Oli accepted this amendment, and withdrew his objection.**

Southampton questioned whether this would lead to collusion. Iain noted that, under the previous agenda item, BULSCA reserved the right to reject any proposal that made large profits.



**Vote 11.1:** Iain proposed accepting the proposal outlined in **Paper H**, subject to a recommended retail price of £30 during the 2010-2011 season.

**For:** 8  
**Against:** 0  
**Abstaining:** 0

The proposal was accepted.

### **12. Increased Cooperation with the RLSS:**

Alan Sutherland (Bath) presented **Paper I**, on increasing cooperation with the RLSS. He noted the pilot being run in the West Region. He works closely with the RLSS and Ellen Moore, and suggested that RLSS wants to work closer with BULSCA.

**Vote 12.1:** Bath proposed accepting the proposal outlined in **Paper I**.

**For:** 7  
**Against:** 0  
**Abstaining:** 1

The proposal was accepted.

Southampton asked about cooperation with the SLSA. Simon noted that he had not heard from them. Southampton noted that Swansea are involved with the SLSA, and that Simon should try to contact them.

**Simon adjourned the meeting from 12.20. The meeting reconvened at 12.27.**

### **13. Aberdeen Competition:**

Simon presented **Paper J** (tabled at the meeting and therefore attached), on the Aberdeen competition. He noted that more than one club had complained about each point listed in the paper, and that he had disregarded several other complaints that could not be confirmed. Moreover, he noted in detail that all of the problems highlighted related to management and scoring issues, which could not be resolved *ex post*. He had listened to the accounts and opinions of members of the BULSCA Committee at the competition, as well as those of the complainants, before reaching the recommendation. He then asked for comments.

Southampton asked if there was any way to prevent the problem of BULSCA Judges Panel decisions not being implemented by the Management Committee. Simon noted that this was extremely difficult to do on the day.

**Vote 13.1:** Simon proposed accepting the proposal outlined in **Paper J**.

**For:** 7  
**Against:** 0  
**Abstaining:** 1

The proposal was accepted.

**Action 13.1:** Simon to inform Aberdeen of the General Meeting's decision as soon as possible.



#### **14. Any Other Business:**

##### **14.1. Complaints Procedure:**

Iain presented an additional paper on complaints procedures. He noted that BULSCA did not have formal procedure by which clubs could complain about competitions. The paper he presented was aimed at rectifying this. However, it was prepared at the last minute, and he has not had time to consult particularly widely. As such, rather than voting in the policy, Iain invited comments.

Oli suggested that, rather than taking actions depending upon weighting, the number of events should be considered.

Bath asked why the BULSCA Chair was given the job of investigating. Iain stated that he simply took this from the appropriate section of the Competitions Manual. Bath suggested simply amending the current disciplinary procedure, rather than producing a whole new one.

Iain thanked the General Meeting for their input.

##### **14.2. Plymouth Chair:**

Jess Savage (Plymouth) announced that she would be stepping down as Chair of Plymouth. Helen Bugg was taking over.

##### **14.3. Labelling on Competition Spreadsheets:**

Southampton asked that casualties be labelled with descriptions on the competition spreadsheet, rather than, 'Casualty 1', 'Casualty 2' etc. Oli stated that he always requests details of the SERCs, and adjusts the labels appropriately. He also hopes to add SERC diagrams. Simon stated that he would forward these, as well as SERC comments.

##### **14.4. Summer Activities:**

Simon suggested organising something for next summer. He proposed holding a competition for both old boys and current competitors. Participants would have the opportunity to act as a casualty and a judge, as well as a competitor.

Southampton asked whether the Beach Weekend would go ahead. Simon stated that he hoped it would. Plymouth noted that they are close to a beach with a campsite within easy walking distance. Southampton noted that Bournemouth was another possibility.

London noted that judging in a pool was very different to judging in a beach. They suggested including a pool SERC as well. Simon stated that the dry was the same. Southampton suggested one day at the beach and another at the pool. Simon worried about the cost.

##### **14.5. Aberdeen:**

Loughborough asked whether BULSCA could get a formal apology from Aberdeen. They noted that their club went into debt in order to attend. Simon stated that he would inform Aberdeen of the decision, and pass his report onto them. After that, it would be up to them whether they issued an apology.

**Simon closed the meeting at 12.52.**





## Paper J: Aberdeen Competition

To be tabled at the meeting

Proposer Name and Position	Seconder Name and Position
Simon Creasey, BULSCA Chair	The BULSCA Committee

There have been a number of complaints / queries regarding the Aberdeen competition after the publication of results under rule **3.2.4**.

Below is compiled list of the relevant complaints and with them in italics is the opinion of the chair with regard to the rulebook.

### Dry SERC:

- One team has complained that there was no acoustic signal for the start of the dry.
  - This should have been appealed/protested immediately at the cessation of the event, or when it was first realised the event had begun.

### Wet SERC:

- There was no brief for the wet SERC – In the final version of the reviewed SERC there is a brief which contains important information.
  - This is in contravention of rule **5.3.5.2**, but more importantly the supplementary information was of import.
- Despite assurances to the panel that bottles intended as aids in the SERC were to be Robinson's juice bottles, they were in fact old screen wash bottles. In view of rule **5.3.6.3** which prohibits the use of real chemicals in the scenario area, some were penalised unfairly for not using the bottles.
  - Since those competitors affected could not realise that they had been misled before the publication of results, it is appropriate that this matter be brought to appeal before finalising the results. Unfortunately no such appeals committee can be formed to find a solution effectively; there is no record of those teams affected or any way to quantify the impact on the scoring.

### Rope Throw:

- One team was disqualified for breach of **5.4.6**, for swimmer 3 holding the rope fractionally out of the water before the start.
  - The team in question did lodge a protest, but were presented the rulebook and told that the judge had followed the rule. This would not have been penalised (nor has it been when it regularly occurs) at any other competition where we keep consistency with an experienced Head referee. – The penalty should not stand.
- There was a complaint that a marshal was (fortunately for the team in question) spotted submitting the number of people in as the number left in the water (ie. 1 instead of 3)
  - Clearly this doesn't need a ruling, however it representative of a number of complaints/ concerns regarding the briefing of individuals on the day with particular regard for the speeds. Indeed when one team lodged a protest, rules were cited from the championships manual rather than the competitions manual. Moreover, the team was told that the judges had been comparing the rules in the two manuals when adjudicating.



#### **Swim & Tow:**

- Competing teams have corroborated that in some instances that the times and places for finishes did not represent what actually happened.
  - Under **4.1.1.1** no appeal may be made on the basis of the place judges' decisions. However it appears that either placing was not conveyed to the scorer or that no-one was judging the placement, merely the timing. Consequently we are forced to call into question the placing in all the speed events, particularly as it appears some timekeepers watches managed to be some five seconds apart for teams that finished near simultaneously.

There were many other cases of either unsubstantiated problems or hearsay which were not deemed admissible in this paper.

#### **Conclusions:**

I find the problem with the wet SERC at this time pretty insoluble - no fair adjustment can be made to the scoring, nor can the event be removed. Coupled with the serious reservations held by the committee with regard to how the timings, placement and scoring were conducted on the day it is the regretful conclusion of this paper that the competition results should be discounted from the league and that all attending teams receive one (1) point as stipulated in rules **3.1.5.3** and **3.1.6.3**.

The committee acknowledges the difficulties faced by the Aberdeen committee compared with many others, most notably the unavailability of many regular contributors to judging, marshalling and scoring. However in the interests of fair competition we are compelled to act on the memberships behalf.