



WORLD
HOVERCRAFT
FEDERATION

PROPELLING GLOBAL HOVERSPORT

**Minutes of the World Hovercraft Federation meeting, 10:00 am
Monday, August 7th, 2000 at Weston Park, England**

Present:

Owen Ellis	Australia, President
Bob Rennick	Canada, Secretary/Treasurer
Kent Gano	U.S.A., Vice-President, Americas
Cecil Scalf	U.S.A.
Kazutoyo Matsuda	Japan
Jim Lyne	Great Britain
W. Blank	Germany
Michael Metzner	Germany
Michel Thiry	Belgium (also representing France at this meeting)
Henk Martens	Netherlands
Christel Martens	Netherlands
Tony Drake	Great Britain, Vice-President, Europe
Danny Venn	Australia, Vice-President, Asia
Anton van der Merwe	South Africa
Francois Malan	South Africa, Vice-President, Africa
Paul Hibbard	Great Britain
Lars Ihrner	Sweden

The French Hovercraft Federation sent their regrets and as noted above, requested in writing to be represented by Michel Thiry.

00.01 President's Message

Owen Ellis opened the meeting and welcomed all of the representatives present and thanked them for staying on this Monday morning to attend the meeting. He then took the opportunity to thank the Hovercraft Club of Great Britain for hosting a successful World Championship.

00.02 Matters arising from the 1995 Minutes

Ellis asked Secretary to report on the status of any issues that arrived from the last WHF meeting that had been held in Portugal in 1995 (there was no WHF meeting in France 1997). The

secretary reported that there were no issues outstanding. Lyne reported that the only rule changes from the 1995 meeting included a couple of issues on race procedure and the elimination of duct restrictions in Formula S.

00.03 Secretary's Report

Bob Rennick spoke of the various communications received by the WHF. Rennick mentioned the addition of the new logo. During the secretary's report, Jim Lyne brought up the point that the new WHF logo was never voted upon by the WHF Board and so brought forth the following motion:

00.04 New Logo

Motion by Jim Lyne: to accept the new WHF logo as reproduced upon the WHF web page and current documentation.

Seconded: Danny Venn

Motion passed.

00.05 Technical help for WHF member countries.

Several countries have asked if the WHF could provide technical help to start racing programs. Rennick solicited the group present for volunteers but none were forthcoming. It is hoped that some countries – particularly those in Europe – could step forth to answer the call. If you can help, please contact the WHF secretary.

00.06 Financial Report

The balance of the WHF funds prior to this WHC was \$205.73US. During this race meeting, the funds increased with dues being paid by Finland, Portugal and South Africa. Additionally, a protest during the race meeting by the Australians brought an additional £10 to the balance.

During the past year the Treasurer received a consensus vote from the WHF to obtain WHF funds via the surcharge of \$2US from each competitor at the World Championship Race Meeting. Unfortunately, due to a few miscues, the \$2US was not collected at this race meeting. Consequently, it was agreed by the membership in attendance to continue to collect \$20US per year from each of the member countries and the \$2US per competitor will be instituted from the next WHC race meeting and onwards.

The Treasurer noted the problems encountered by many countries in sending in their dues during the past year. Specifically, that the charges for converting local currency to a bank draught or International cheque often exceeded the \$20US face value! He noted that Cristel Martens solution was to include \$20US cash within an Easter greeting card! Whilst it is recognised that this is not the most secure method of sending funds through the International Postal system, it is the cheapest (and worked well in the past). Therefore, it is suggested that the preferable method for member countries to submit their dues will be by sending cash.

It was also suggested that the European clubs could provide their WHF dues to a single European representative and then that representative could send the collective sums to the WHF as a single cheque. This is acceptable to the WHF but would have to be coordinated by an EHF representative.

Owen Ellis noted that additional WHF shirts are now available to the WHF representatives at a cost of £20 with all funds going to the WHF. (WHF monogrammed blue dress shirts were worn to the meeting by Ellis, Rennick, Gano, Drake).

00.07 Proposal to invite EHF President to hold a Vice-President position on the WHF.

Discussion ensued on viability of having two VP positions from Europe. Gano argued that it is not democratic to have two VP representatives from a single region. Ellis felt that since there was such a large contingent from the European continent that it made sense to have such a representation.

Motion by Owen Ellis: Do we invite the EHF President to join the Board of Governors of the WHF?

Seconded: Bob Rennick

Motion passed.

00.08 Practice Sessions

Rennick noted that several of the competitors had approached him during the race meeting with suggestions for WHC regulation changes.

WHF Racing Regulation 11.0E states:

“Two separate practice periods of at least 15 minutes each shall be allocated prior to each day’s racing.”

This was interpreted by the HCGB officials as being “15 minutes *for each formula*” and consequently the mornings events dragged on. For subsequent days, the organizers and pilots agreed to change the proceedings to have one 15-minute practice session for each formula and an open practice session for all formulae at the end with participants in this last session being required to register with the Race Director prior to being allowed on the circuit in the final open session.

Jim Lyne pointed out that the regulation does not state “for each formula” but was interpreted that way. He said that the spirit of the regulation was to allow similar formulae to practice with each other such as F2 & FS.

A proposal was brought forth to follow the example shown at this race meeting, that is to say: “15-minutes practice for each formula with a 15-minute break at the end followed by a 15-minute open practice at the end.” This was not agreed upon at the meeting.

Discussion ensued upon purpose of regulations, how they should be written, flexibility of written regulations to allow for changes when practicality overrides regulations. Further discussion will continue via e-mail.

00.09 Point Allocations

The secretary brought forth a proposal made to him by an F3 competitor during the competition. There were so many competitors in F3 that the pilots were frustrated with the fact that many were all competing for a single point. The current point structure awards points with 20 for 1st, 18 for 2nd, 16 for 3rd reducing by 2 points for each position until 10th whereupon every subsequent position receives one point less. What this means is that anyone finishing 15th or lower receives the same reward – one point. The difficulty arrives with fields over 15 competitors and indeed, the F3 had 28 competitors, or 13 racers all competing for no reason! (As all would receive the same reward of a single point). What is proposed is that the point structure be altered to reflect the number of competitors in any formulae. If there are more than 16

competitors, than the points be awarded based upon that total number. A discussion ensued and it was agreed to examine this issue further using e-mail.

00.10 Noise Limits

During the discussion upon practice sessions, Gano brought forward the query about why we have noise regulations for racing hovercraft. Discussion ensued bringing forth various regional requirements for noise limitations, environmental concerns, responsibility of our sport to better represent itself. It was pointed out that the existing regulation (Racing Regulations 15.0A) state "The maximum noise level for racing craft is 87dBA, 85dBA for Formula 25". Had this rule been applied there would have been but one hovercraft competing in Formula 1 at this World Championship.

It was agreed that this figure is unrealistic and that it should be increased to a reasonable level, one that is both achievable by the hovercraft designer and is not so excessive as to draw the ire of environmental groups. Metzner and Ellis brought forth the idea of point deduction penalties for exceeding noise standard. Agreement could not be reached so further discussion will be help via e-mail discourse. All agreed that whatever changes come from the discussion, that the WHF should stress that these regulations will be strictly enforced in the future to lend credibility to the regulations.

00.11 Future WHF Governor Meetings

It was agreed that the regulations be changed to state that the organizers of all World Championships will make arrangements for a meeting of the WHF to take place on the first day after the end of the World Championships at 10:00 am local time.

00.12 Race Numbers

During this race meeting there was controversy over the specification of race numbers and indeed this issue came to a head with an official protest. Discussion ensued upon the best type of font and colour scheme used with race numbers. It was generally agreed that black lettering on a white background is the best scheme (whereas the current regulation 5.0B states black or white on a contrasting background). It was agreed that this discussion be continued with e-mail. During the race number discussion, it was mentioned that all of the pilots appreciated having their race numbers pre-assigned before their arrival at the race site. It was asked if this practice could be written into the regulations. This will also be brought up during the e-mail discussion.

00.13 Race Fees

On behalf of the French Federation, Thiry brought forth a query regarding the entry fees. (It should be noted that several other countries also brought up this issue, both prior to and during the race meeting). It was generally felt that £75 was too much money and they wanted to know how the cost of registration at future events could be lowered. Drake apologized on behalf of the HCGB and stated that they very much wished that there be no entry fees whatsoever but that in spite of a concerted effort to locate sponsorship for the event that only a small amount could be found. No immediate solution was arrived at but it was noted that future events will attempt to keep competitor costs down.

00.14 Catch Netting Design

Henk Martens suggested that we could be doing a better job of setting up catch netting as he was concerned about competitors running into immovable objects such as trees. He suggested that we form a group to examine better designs for catch netting and come up with standards for their placement. It was agreed to continue this discussion via e-mail.

00.15 Status of Formula-S

Thiry announced that the EHF were going to eliminate Formula S commencing with their 2001 season and asked if the WHF were planning to follow suit. A short discussion followed whereupon the WHF stated that Formula S will stay a part of the World Championships.

00.16 Election of Officers

All posts received only one nomination.

President:	Owen Ellis
Secretary/Treasurer:	Bob Rennick
Vice President, Europe:	Tony Drake
Vice President, Americas:	Kent Gano
Vice President, Africa:	Anton van der Merwe
Vice President, Asia:	Kazutoya Matsuda

Paul Hibbard was originally nominated for the position of Vice President, Europe but he declined.

All nominations were accepted on a unanimous vote in favour.

00.17 WHF Technical Representative

A new position of WHF Technical Representative was supposed to have been filled prior to this Race Meeting. Unfortunately, this was done at a rapid rate and we are grateful that France's Jean-François Berry stepped in to fill this position with very little notice. As things turned out, Jeff's expertise was not called upon. The meeting agreed that this position be filled after further e-mail discussion.

00.18 Next World Championships

A call was made to query if any countries were prepared to make a bid on the next World Championship to be held in 2002. Michael Metzner announced that the German Federation is looking into this possibility but will have a better idea later in the year. Kent Gano of the Hovercraft Club of America stated that the United States of America also wish to hold the next WHC however they also require a bit of time to investigate the possibility. The meeting declared that the proponents have until February 1, 2001 to finalise their proposals. Both the French Federation and the Hovercraft Club of Great Britain offered the support of their marshals at the next World Championships.

00.19 Items to be further discussed via e-mail

Several issues were brought forward where the attendees felt that further discussion will be necessary to resolve. It was agreed that these discussions would take place via an e-mail forum. These issues were:

00.08 **Practice Sessions** – suggestions for changes to regulations.

00.09 **Point Allocations** – suggestions for changes to regulations.

00.10 **Noise Limits** – suggestions for realistic, achievable values.

00.12 **Race Numbers** – their design and pre-allotment.

00.14 **Catch Netting Design** – their design and specifications for deployment.

00.17 **Technical Representative** – the naming of an acceptable individual

00.18 **2002 World Championships** – finalising the location.

The meeting was closed at 12:30 pm.