



PROPELLING GLOBAL HOVERSPORT

WORLD  
**HOVERCRAFT**  
FEDERATION

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## **Minutes of the World Hovercraft Federation meeting, 9:00 am Monday, August 30<sup>th</sup> 2008 at Towcester, Great Britain**

### **Present:**

Chris Barlow, Great Britain  
David Ryan, Ireland  
Jaroslav Balaz, Slovakia  
Magnus Ivanoff, Sweden, WHF VP, Europe  
Michael Rausch, Germany  
Bob Rennick, Canada  
Owen Ellis, Australia  
Jakub Furmanski, Poland  
Clinton Buckwell, Australia

James Lewendon, Great Britain  
P. Robinson, Great Britain  
Jean Francois Berry, France  
Henk Martens, Netherlands  
Tony Drake, Great Britain, WHF President  
Christel Martens, Netherlands, WHF secretary  
F. Wilson, Great Britain  
Bill Baker, Great Britain  
Christian Godicheau, France

### **10.01 Welcome by the President**

Tony Drake opened the meeting and apologised on behalf of the HCGB for playing the wrong anthem for Italy.

### **10.02 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Michel Thiry - Belgium and Peter Streader - Australia.

### **10.03 President's WHF board report**

*"I would like to take this opportunity to say a sincere thank you to all members and friends of the Hovercraft Club of Great Britain for organizing an outstanding World Championship. At the last count there were over 140 hovercraft and 200 drivers ~ a huge logistical task and one executed in a superb manner. Many of the members of the HCGB have in effect put their "normal lives" on hold for the past few weeks to make this Championship possible and to these people we are extremely grateful. I would also like to thank all the drivers who competed at the highest level and presented our sport at its best to the world.*

*This past World Championship was the first that has been presented to the world by a live and interactive web cast. There is no doubt that this is the way forward to reach both existing and new supporters and future participants in our sport. I sincerely hope that we will all be able to benefit from this new initiative and commend its use to future hosts of our championships.*

#### Finance.

*Our Treasure has asked me to report that we have just paid the costs for our website domain, for the next five years, and now have 796.45 Euro in the bank. Not a kings ransom but adequate for our needs. In view of this I ask the meeting to agree not to charge the HCGB our standard charge of 5 Euro per driver towards our operating costs but to reduce it to 1 Euro and if the event does not make a loss use the balance of 4 Euro to replace the lost and damaged Electronic Lap Scoring (ELS) tags units from the Championships and if anything is left use it enhance and make ELS more robust.? **(The meeting agreed this).***

#### ER.

*It was pleasing to see that our hosts were able to include ER in their busy programme. Judging by the entries and the competition this class seems to be very popular. As this appears to be a growing formula we have made a proposal, which we will consider later, to create the position of ER Director on the Governing Board. This will focus our attention on its development and take it forward into the future.*

#### WHF Certificate of Excellence.

*We have not received any suggestions for recipients this year, therefore an award will not be made for 2010.*

#### Future World Championships.

*For our World Championships to retain any credibility and be seen as truly world championships it is essential we retain and encourage craft and drives from around the world. As I see it we have two options. Firstly, from time to time we should seek out hosts from outside of Europe. I fully realize that the majority of craft and drives reside in Europe and any Championships outside of Europe may not be well supported. The second option, and one which was debated at our last Board Meeting in Sweden, is that competitors from Europe should in some way subsidise foreign drivers. I am pleased to say that the second option was adopted by our last hosts although I am dismayed to learn that this has been criticized by many. As I see it we only have these two options ~ if you can think of others please do let me know.*

#### Increase in awareness in our sport from other countries ~ the news and desire is spreading.

*Since our last meeting I have received quite a few enquiries from potential new member countries. I would like to mention two in particular ~ South Korea and Hungary. I met with representatives for South Korea here a few months ago and Hungary has visited us over the past weekend.*

#### Speed Run Competitions.

*It is many years since any member country hosted an attempt on the WHF speed records. I would just like to remind our member countries that we have a comprehensive set of rules to cover this and that it is not necessary, although*

*desirable, to hold these at the same time as World Championships. It would be great if a country would come forward to organize a Speed Run Competition for us.*

#### *WHF Competition and Construction Regulations.*

*Over the past few weeks I have received a number of queries requiring interpretation of our rules which have caused me to critically look through both our Competition and Craft Construction regulations. Regrettably, I have to say that in some areas there is confusion and in other areas, particularly in the Construction Regulations they are out of date with current developments around the world. This meeting is not the place to debate these deficiencies so if re-elected I will ensure that both sets of rules are fully reviewed and re-written. Where changes are necessary these will be identified, debated, and resolved by e-mail via our member country representatives.*

#### *Technical Director ~ sub committee.*

*I notice from our agenda that there is likely to be an election for the post of Technical Director. If this happens, and what ever the outcome, I would like to record my thanks to our current Technical Director ~ Jean-Francois Berry. Jean-Francois designed the prototype ER regulations which were the basis of those we use at the moment. In view of what I have previously said about our regulations I will be encouraging any future Technical Director to form a small sub-committee to help him review the philosophy and content of our Construction Regulations.*

#### *Harmonisation of WHF and Member Country Rules.*

*I have often been asked my views on harmonising rules for member countries. In an ideal world as with most other sports the World body would set the Competition rules and Scrutineering considerations which would apply to World, European and National events organized by its member countries. This is the route that I would most certainly prefer however, I'm not too sure how this would be received by our member countries. I just know how difficult it is to get a consensus within a single country let alone across the world as a whole. Having said that, I'm sure any member Country who wished to organise events to our standard would be most welcome to do so.*

*For what it's worth my personal view is that the WHF should be the regulatory authority for its member countries. Again, I stress this is only my own view and not that of the WHF but certainly would commend to our member countries.*

#### *And the Future.*

*The year ahead will be a busy one for the officials and Member Country Representatives. Any consultation issues will be circulated to all those people who have registered an e-mail address during the past World Championships registration process. However, any comment an individual wishes to make must be returned through their country representative so that we can be sure it has been considered by their country as well. Throughout the world we have the best collective knowledge and information of all aspects of hovercrafting ~ with everyone's help we can ensure we remain at the top of our sport.*

#### *And finally.*

*My thanks go to Cathy Godicheau for the time, effort and expertise she dedicates to revising and maintaining our web site. And to Christel Martens, our Secretary, for all the work she does in keeping me and the WHF on track.*

*That concludes my report to the WHF Board meeting.*

*Tony M Drake JP, President of the World Hovercraft Federation.”*

In response the President's report Australia mentioned how pleased they were about the host country's assistance with container funding ~ it was a most generous gesture, and certainly made it possible for them to attend the Championships. The meeting requested that this practice be continued for the future.

#### **10.04 Election of Officers**

Owen Ellis informed the meeting he wishes to step down as Vice President Asia. He therefore proposed Clinton Buckwell for this position, the meeting agreed and welcomes the new Vice President Asia.

For the position of Technical Director there were 3 candidates. (Jean François Berry, Bill Baker and James Lewendon) After a secret ballot James Lewendon was elected as our new WHF Technical Director.

The following were agreed as office holders until 2012:

President - Tony Drake  
Secretary/Treasurer - Christel Martens  
Technical Director – James Lewendon  
Vice President Americas - Kent Gano  
Vice President Europe – Magnus Ivanoff  
Vice President Asia – Clinton Buckwell  
Vice President Africa – not appointed

#### **10.05 Proposal to change the voting principle at future WHF Board meetings**

A proposal to change the voting rights of member countries had previously circulated. After a short discussion the meeting agreed that:

**Each voting country will have one vote. This vote will be enhanced with one extra vote where that country have had drivers competing in two out of the last three WHF World hovercraft championships.**

#### **10.06 Members report**

Apart from Holland the WHF secretary had not receive any other reports, therefore all countries present gave a short update.

Sweden lost a few members after the Worlds in 2008. Now they are growing again.

Ireland has no new information.

Australian has a lot of activity at the moment.

Canada has no new information.

France has about 50 craft at the moment, about 35 are cruising craft and the other 15 are used for racing. Because they have to pay a large tax when they organize a race meeting the French prefer to have a different form of meeting. When they arrange an European or French Cup meeting the tax is not an issue.

Slovakia feels all is well with them and they are growing slowly. They are part of the Motorboat Union which have more powerboats and not too much hovercraft action. With help from the German club it was possible to run a European race meeting.

The Hovercraft Club of Great Britain club keeps growing but unfortunately drivers do not go to European race meetings.

Germany has less drivers and noise is getting more and more a problem.

Poland ~ the club is growing after the European race meeting but members are more interested in cruising. For registration the crafts are seen as motorboats.

#### **10.07 Proposal to create a Director of ER (Endurance Racing) on the WHF board**

Owen Ellis explains why this rapidly growing formula is important for the future and needs a director at the WHF board. **The meeting agrees and accepts Owen Ellis as WHF Director of ER until 2012.**

#### **10.08 Host for future World Championships**

Michael Rausch explains that on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> September 2010 there will be a European race meeting in Saalburg Germany. If this meeting runs well and Klaus Bonighausen can get the agreement of the City and the owners they may come forward with a proposal for 2012. Poland would like to host a World Championship in the future but not before 2014.

#### **10.09 Any Other Business**

Magnus Ivanoff (Sweden) asked why there where no lap times available during time trials. It seems that the very heavy rain has caused a lot of problems for the ELS system and the time trials where taken manual ~ 2 persons for each driver. It took considerable time to process the large amount of data produced. Naturally the drivers would prefer to have their lap times available during time trials.

**Sweden also asked to add to the rules that; in case of a protest the results will still be posted but have Provisional written on them. The meeting agreed this.**

Sweden suggested that if in the future a new formula is introduced, the WHF should adopt the rules of the country that already has existing rules for the formula instead of creating new ones.

The Australian team thanked the organizers for Griffon Hoverwork 2010 Championships and the container support. Special thanks go the Marshals and all others around the course for all the work they have done.

There seemed to be some mistakes in the ELS system use during the Championships. A discussion started about a backup system or the use of an other ELS system. There was a backup system, about 24 people taking times manual. From the drivers point of view the system previously used in Berlin worked very well but this system couldn't handle our regulations. Therefore the complete Berlin results had to be re-calculated manual.

The safe exit from any water to land sections should be 2 meters wider than the course markers. **The meeting agreed that the regulation for land and water should be the same.**

#### **Any Other Business to be continued:**

The following were also raised as Any Other Business but as they had not been circulated for prior consideration the meeting decided that they would be circulated by the Secretary for e-mail discussion and voting. This will take place over the next few months.

David Ryan (Ireland) proposed to define the maximum engine speed limit for F35 as 3600 RPM.

There were a considerable number of protests during the 2010 Championships. A proposal came forward to change the protest fee from US dollars to Euro and to increase the level to 100 Euro. If the decision of a protest was appealed to the WHF a further 100 Euro fee would be appropriate.

The lap scorers from the Griffon Hoverwork 2010 World Hovercraft Championships came forward with the proposal to remove the time trials from the Championships and use the previous World Championship grid positions. All drivers that arrive for the first time or changed formula will be placed on the grid as they arrive or time them during practice. This brings more time for actual racing.

Mike Rausch (Germany) proposed that all drivers that finish will at least get one point. This way they will be in the result list, which can be important for any sponsoring.

In Germany it is very hard to find fluorescent crash helmets, there is only one manufacturer. This makes it very expensive and hard to get. Mike Rausch will write a proposal for further discussion by the member countries.

For manual lap scoring it would be useful to state in our regulations a maximum number of hovercraft that are allowed on the grid. In the last Championships in Formula 50 there were so many craft that it was very hard to deal with. On the other hand heats take a lot more time and need extra work to make sure the heats and grids are correct.

David Ryan (Ireland) feels that it should be possible to make a protest and deal with it later so the driver can first repair his craft for the next start. As the outcome of the protest can be of influence for the next race this doesn't seem to be the best way.

Great Britain request that the rule; One craft with the same driver can only go in one formula to be reviewed again.

**The President thanked everyone for attending and participating in the meeting, and the meeting closed at 10.50 am.**

