

**Annual General Meeting of the British Top-Band DF Association
Camelot, Princes Street, Piddington, High Wycombe, Bucks
17 February 2008 at 14:00 hrs**

Present:

Graham Phillips, David Ryan, John Mullins, Steve Stone, George Whenham, Geoffrey Foster, Colin Merry, Rosie Merry, Roger Shepherd, Alan Simmons, Brian Bristow, John Champion.

Apologies for absence

Graham Jones, Colin Boyce, Bill Pechey, Doreen Pechey, Chris Plummer, Dave Holland, Tim Parker, Roy Emeny, Andy Collett.

Minutes of the last meeting held on 25 February 2007

The minutes were agreed as a true record, proposed by Geoffrey and seconded by Steve.

Matters arising

Conversion of the DF films to DVD had been carried out; the DVD was with Bill P.

Election of officers

All officers were prepared to stand again. Steve proposed that they be elected *en bloc*, seconded by Geoffrey and carried unopposed.

The Association's officers for 2008-9 are then as follows:

Chairman George Whenham
Secretary Bill Pechey
Treasurer Tim Parker
Contest Manager Brian Bristow
Auditor 1 Philip Cunningham
Auditor 2 Roy Emeny

Brian asked the meeting to note that he would not be contest manager in 2009. He needed someone to spend time with him this year to hand over; a lot of advance planning had to be carried out. Being Contest Manager did not necessarily mean taking over the clocks and transmitters and Brian could continue with that role if required

Rosie M thanked the association officers for all of their work and the meeting concurred.

Chairman's Report

The chairman gave a brief report of another successful year in 2007. He thanked all the clubs for putting on events, officers for all of their work and especially thanked Brian for his efforts during the year.

Treasurer's report

Tim's report was circulated, is available on the web site and was read out by John. The Association had 27 members in 2007 compared with 26 in 2006. There was a net increase in balance of £4.27. The report was accepted and the accounts approved unopposed – proposed by Brian and seconded by Graham.

Subscriptions

Discussion was delayed until AOB to follow information regarding replacement transmitters

Possible amendments to rules and guidance

There had been a plethora of emails circulated via Topica regarding the timing of transmissions on qualifying events and the national final. Brian had proposed a compromise in an email. The meeting wished to avoid the danger of road races by organisers putting TXs far apart if transmissions were too frequent. Several members wanted to keep the rules the same. There was further considerable debate around this issue. Alan suggested that if operators/organisers used their common sense during the event when timing transmissions, the problem could be resolved. The meeting wanted to encourage new competitors and if competitions were too hard, they would be put off continuing to compete. Some new comers never found a single transmitter. Roger suggested that once a winner had succeeded in finding all transmitters, organisers (not operators) should communicate to operators that more frequent transmissions should be given (an individual operator would not know if a winner had succeeded). Steve made 2 suggestions – a) Reduce the 14:00 transmission to 2 minutes as those who competed on their own were not able to take two bearings from different positions. b) Use fixed transmission times. The latter

suggestion was roundly rejected by the meeting. Eventually the following was proposed (Steve), seconded (Graham) and agreed by majority vote:

RULES:

- The 14:00 transmission on qualifying events would be reduced from 4 to 3 minutes
- The transmission lengths described in the rules be changed to read “a MAXIMUM of 15 minutes from the end of one transmission to the start of the next”
- Also carried by majority vote (proposed by Brian, seconded by Roger): start rule to revert to the old one of a fixed earliest departure time of 13:30 (13:00 for national final) for all competitors (except those awaiting an approximate bearing).
- Rosebowl points system – change to the Grand Prix system of 10, 8, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 for the first 8 competitors home. (Proposed by Brian, seconded by George, carried by majority vote). The best 7 scores of 8 to be used to calculate the Rosebowl scores to ensure organisers did not lose points opportunity when running an event. (Proposed by George and seconded by Rosie – carried unopposed).
- The proposal for more transmitters with some less well hidden was discussed but was rejected due to the lack of available transmitter operators for some clubs. More operators could reduce the number of competitors which organisers didn't want. It was also mentioned that it was difficult enough to get clubs to organise two station events.
- No further changes to the rules

GUIDANCE TO ORGANISERS:

- It was agreed that the Contest Manager should remind organisers a month before an event of the guidance to organisers (document headed 'Recommendations') by sending them the notes (2 page document). Also, item 5 (Transmissions) would be emphasised to organisers, particularly the statement: *'However, should it become obvious that competitors are experiencing unusual difficulty in locating a hidden station, the operator should increase the frequency and/or duration of transmissions. For the last 15 minutes of the contest transmissions must be continuous and should end with an accurate location, including NGR of the station'*.
- Organisers would also be informed that they should keep in touch with operators and, as soon as a winner was evident, the number and duration of transmissions should be stepped up to encourage other competitors to find all stations
- An example of transmission timings may also be communicated to organisers
- Raised under AOB – organisers should also be reminded to ensure that access to stations was clear, identifiable on the map, public and, above all, safe

Events calendar for 2008

The calendar was circulated at the meeting by the Contest Manager and will shortly appear on Topica and the BTBDFA web site. It is also shown below.

Any other business

- **Transmitters**
 - Roger has spent many hours developing a new combined transmitter and clock assembly. The Mid Thames transmitters are getting old and the question of funding for new TXs needs to be addressed (clubs, BTBDFA, special fund?) Roger has so far just developed prototypes and he will need help to build sets. He also wanted to ensure the new sets were at least as reliable as the old ones which had served us well.
 - Graham, Steve and Geoffrey all offered to help assemble when the time came and it was thought that Paul Clarke and Phil Arnold may well also help with assembly.
 - Mid-Thames would test the prototype during the 2008 season
 - Costs would probably £100 to £200 per set – there may be economies of scale for larger numbers of transmitters; Roger agreed to obtain approximate costs of materials
 - Production would probably take place in 2009, but funding was need in 2008 to prepare for construction next year (possibly 4 to 6 assemblies with spare parts for 10+ as the latter may be difficult to obtain in future years).
- **Subscriptions**
 - Geoffrey proposed a subscription of £10 for 2008, bearing in mind the need for new transmitters – carried unopposed

- **Expenses**
 - It was agreed that the contest manager should be given the option to be reimbursed expenses associated with the transport of transmitters and clocks around the country for qualifying events, on presentation of receipts.
- **Safe Access to Stations**
 - Rosie raised the issue of safe access to transmitter sites following various injuries last year. It was noted that the 'right to roam' did not automatically give access to so called 'public' land. It was agreed to give organisers firm advice to ensure access to stations was clear, identifiable on the map, public and above all safe (see advice to organisers above). The Contest Manager will emphasis this point when sending guidelines to organisers (see above). The current recommendations state: *'It MUST BE possible for competitors to approach and reach hidden stations safely, without, for example, having to run across motorways or main line railways'*.
- **Organiser Provision of Information**
 - Roger's suggestion that organisers must include which version of the OS map they were using on the start details was agreed. The Contest Manager would request this information when communicating with organisers.
 - The Contest Manager also agreed to emphasise to organisers that access to stations **MUST** be visible on the map version indicated and organisers must check this.
- **Encouraging New Competitors**
 - Geoffrey raised several issues regarding the encouragement of new/young blood into the sport. He suggested various publicity and support ideas:
 - Distribute the DF manual to new and potential competitors (the manual has been recreated in 'word' and is awaiting updating by Bill P and George!)
 - Geoffrey has checked copyright issues with RADCOM and we can, if we wish, reproduce articles from the past
 - George, Graham Jones and John all have PowerPoint presentations (Bill P also has a presentation for giving lectures)
 - Brian mentioned that he a Bill P are giving a lecture to the Reading Club during May
 - Get publicity back into RADCOM – Brian commented that this had been tried before and they had consistently let us down, but they will publish calendar dates
 - Geoff agreed to try again to get an article in RADCOM, also run a mail shot to all clubs and update Graham's receiver design to give to new competitor prospects. He needed help with typing and George offered to assist.

The chairman thanked Brian for his hospitality and closed the meeting at 16:10 hrs

2008 Programme of Events

Date Event Organiser

20 Apr	Qualifier No.1	Torbay
11 May	Qualifier No.2	Manchester
01 Jun	Qualifier No.3	Colchester
22 Jun	Qualifier No.4	Banbury
13 Jul	Qualifier No.5	Andover or Weston Super Mare
03 Aug	Qualifier No.6	Weston Super Mare or Andover
17 Aug	Qualifier No.7	Coventry
14 Sep	Qualifier No.8	Mid-Thames
28 Sep	National Final	Northampton
30 Mar	GT Peck Memorial Trophy – please note the change of date	
25 Oct	Eric Mollart treble Night	