



18 September 2023

Dear Members,

As I write this letter in advance of our 2023 Annual General Meeting (AGM), it is in the knowledge that GB Snowsport (GBS) has achieved its most successful season in British snowsport history. The results accomplished by our athletes were outstanding by any measure, but even more so given the disappointment we faced last year with the announcement of a reduced funding allocation from UK Sport for the Milan-Cortina Olympic and Paralympic cycle.

The on-snow achievements of the entire GBS programme last season were remarkable and are best summed up by the fact that for the first time Britain recorded a World Cup, World Championship, or X Games podium in every athletic discipline under our purview. To be clear that is in Alpine, Freestyle Ski, Freestyle Snowboard, Moguls, Snowboard Cross, Ski Cross, Cross-Country, Telemark, Para Alpine, Para Snowboard and Para Nordic. To have achieved this level of success across the full spectrum of skiing and snowboarding competition was outstanding and recognised as such by our international peers.

We have also seen heightened levels of public interest in the success of our athletes, not least at the Freestyle World Championships in Bakuriani where Huw Nightingale and Charlotte Bankes, Zoe Atkin, and Mia Brookes secured podiums, with Brookes (Freestyle Snowboard Slopestyle) and Nightingale and Bankes (Team Snowboard Cross) being crowned World Champions.

The cost of running athlete and competition programmes remains significant. Changing climactic conditions around the world are causing significant degradation to previously reliable European training bases during the off-season period. This increases our cost base further as we have to travel to the Southern hemisphere to find quality training conditions and does so at a critical time for athlete training and development. It also highlights the profound impact and threat that climate change is already posing to our sports.

Nevertheless, the coaching and programme teams, together with our athletes, have demonstrated significant adaptability to maintain a world class training and technical development operation. They are also backed by a rejuvenated sport science and medicine (SSM) programme which has helped British athletes to reach new heights, and sees GBS emerging as a world leading sports governing body with cutting edge SSM activities.

Following the reduction in funding last year, we appealed, as we should, against the UK Sport decisions, underpinned by our continued belief in the potential of the athletes and programmes for which funding was sought. While the outcome was unsuccessful, we are confident that in doing so we have highlighted the quality of the athletes which we hope will have benefits further down the line

(and indeed at this year's Annual Investment Review meeting with UK Sport we did receive an uplift in funding for our Para Nordic athletes). Finding new sponsorship opportunities continues to be difficult despite our best efforts. To raise funds for our Alpine team, which receives little support from UK Sport, we have recently launched Alpine Club 1000 whereby donors will be able to have their names publicly displayed on the race suits worn by the team. Full details can be found at <https://gbsnowsport.com/alpine-club-1000/> if you should wish to participate.

On behalf of the board, I would like to thank and congratulate our Chief Executive Vicky Gosling, Head Coach Pat Sharples and the Senior Leadership Team for their considerable efforts over the past year. The board also congratulates all our athletes, coaches, support teams and staff for their remarkable achievements of the past season, none of which would have been possible without their deep commitment and dedication.

The last year has been one of change in membership of your Board of Directors. During the year we have welcomed two new Independent Non-Executive Directors to our board, namely Greg Bennett, who became our Treasurer, and Michael Oesterlin. The discipline committee representatives have also changed with Juliet Foster (Alpine) and Martin Carr (Freestyle) both being nominated to join the Board in February. The representatives of the Home Nations have also changed with Dominic McGonigal (Chair, Snowsport England) joining the board.

As many of you know, this will be my last AGM as your Chair and as a Director of GBS. And hence we were also delighted to welcome Jason Cobbold as a new member of our Board and as our Chair Designate following a competitive appointment process. I am absolutely confident that under Jason's stewardship, GBS will continue to go from strength to strength.

Jason's background is in advertising. He is Chief Executive of creative agency BMB. He has extensive experience of working alongside major sport industry brands and has been a long-time supporter of GBS providing advice and counsel through BMB.

I would also like to record my particular thanks to Dr. Christian Ewald and Paul Trayner who both made substantial contributions to our Board discussions over many years and have now stepped down as directors. In addition my thanks go to Robbie Clyde, Scott Simon and Louise Wright who also were Board members representing the Home Nations and have stepped down in the last twelve months. All Board members have made substantial contributions to the success of GBS and it is wonderful to see our deliberations turning into the results we achieved last season. There is currently a Board vacancy for a representative of the discipline committees and the Chairs of our Discipline Committees have been asked to nominate someone to fill the vacancy left by Dr. Ewald's resignation.

At the end of the 2023 AGM Richard Leman will also be retiring from the Board. Richard joined the Board in June 2017, soon after he had stepped down as the Chair of Great Britain Hockey. He has contributed substantially to the progress made. GBS will especially miss his knowledge of, and contacts in, the key United Kingdom sports governing bodies. His ability to gently guide GBS towards pragmatic and smart solutions has been invaluable. Again, we are currently searching for a new director to fill his shoes.

Being the end of my second and final term as Chair, I will also be leaving the Board at the conclusion of the AGM and would like to thank all GBS members, staff, athletes, coaches, support teams and discipline committee members who have contributed during my tenure as Chair. Their support,

constructive feedback, and commitment to the cause of British skiing, snowboarding and para snowsport has been much in evidence, without which we could not have taken the giant strides made over the past few years. In the early years we had to take tough decisions to professionalise everything we did; international sport, sadly in some respects, is not a place for the 'glorious amateur' to survive or thrive. Those early decisions set the foundations for what has followed. It is the combined efforts of all, including a large number of volunteers, which has allowed our athletes, young and more experienced, to deliver on the international stage. With three years to go until the Milan Cortina Games, I wish everyone involved now and in the future great success, and shall continue to be your best supporter and fan from the side of the piste.

The Board has decided to continue with the format that allows attendance at the AGM either physically or by video although we assume that most of you will prefer to join by video. To ensure that members gain access to the meeting we would ask that those of you who wish to attend either at New Cavendish Street or online should let us know by email at [cosec@gbsnowsport.com](mailto:cosec@gbsnowsport.com). We will either send you video conference login details a few days before the meeting, or arrange for you to join us at New Cavendish Street having been informed of the relevant security arrangements.

If anyone wishes to submit questions in advance of the AGM then they can do this by emailing [cosec@gbsnowsport.com](mailto:cosec@gbsnowsport.com) and we will do our best to raise the questions at the meeting. Of course, live questions during the meeting will also be encouraged.

This AGM provides an opportunity to review the past year and to appoint three new Board members. There are five resolutions to be voted on at the meeting:

### **1. Report and Accounts**

The audited Report and Accounts for the twelve months to 30 September 2022 are for adoption. In the year under review GBS had a deficit of £228,588 mainly due to the substantial costs we encountered in meeting the requirements of different national and international Covid testing regimes, increased accommodation needs to create covid-secure bubbles and complex travel arrangements in the run up to the Olympics and Paralympics, all of which I explained in my letter last year. In the current year we have taken steps to mitigate these losses and we would hope to report a small surplus. The Report and Accounts are available on our website.

### **2. Re-election of auditors**

The Audit and Risk Committee has recommended the reappointment of Crowe LLP, who have indicated their willingness to continue in that role.

### **3. Board membership**

Greg Bennett joined the Board in November 2022 as an Independent Non-Executive Director and is our Treasurer. He is up for election for a four-year term of office until the end of the 2027 AGM.

Michael Oesterlin also joined the Board in November 2022 as an Independent Non-Executive Director and is up for election for a four-year term of office until the end of the 2027 AGM.

Jason Cobbold joined the Board in June of this year and is up for election for a four-year term of office until the end of the 2027 AGM. It is the Board's intention that Jason will be appointed Chair of GBS after the AGM.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

Rory Tapner  
**Chairman**