

I wonder where Pooh has got his hand!



The National Chairman's Column



After returning home from the Annual General Meeting in February I felt tired, but full of enthusiasm, so much so that I started to put together an agenda for the May NEC meeting straight away, by the end of the week it was more or less complete. Some of you will be thinking that's what I should do anyway - possibly, I'd certainly recommend it as a good way of focusing the mind on the task.

As last year, I felt that we had a glimpse into the future of Plus at the AGM; the Plus Plan presentation was very encouraging; 1,000 members, twice the number of Groups and more National events for 2011 - the Federation's Platinum Jubilee. If we all pull together we can start to make it happen now.

There were so many people to thank, I hope we included everyone, if not then here's a special thank you for those we missed. I'd also particularly like to thank National Activities Officer, Dave Filer (and team) for organising the AGM and Northern Area for putting on a fine AGM dance.

At the May National meeting we hope to be able to appoint the following Officers:

- *Honourary General Secretary*; a vital post at the National level
- *Training Officer*; Training is important at all levels of Plus and should be encouraged through special training events and through learning by doing Committee posts
- *Internet Co-ordinator*; Publicity is an important part of what Plus needs to do and one of the main tools of the NEC is

the Web Site which I wish to see developed further

- *AGM 2008 Co-ordinator*; the NEC would like to appoint a co-ordinator or tender the event to an Area
- *Auditors*; the NEC is looking for additional Auditors to help audit the 2006 and 2007 accounts, it is planned to present the 2006 accounts to the earliest Area Conferences

Please forward any enquiries or your nominations to the NEC or myself.

Between now and the end of the year there are many exciting events planned, especially those for members nationally; there's SADY – camping, fun and entertainment in Yorkshire, the Kings Lynn Group Summer Do which includes the National Rounders competition, the Milton Keynes MAD weekend which includes the National Karting (this year on the big track I understand), organised by So'ton Friends (Plus) Group, Northern Area's NEAT weekend in Leeds which includes the new National Pool tournament and of course WASH (with refurbished venue), in November organised by Kings Lynn Plus.

Many opportunities for publicity are presented by the Plus activities, there are plenty of great events at Group, Area and National scales to promote to prospective new members and then by October lets sign up as many new members for WASH as possible and surpass last year's WASH 300 target.

John A Smith

Gary Schwimmer's (Hillingdon and Harrow Active Plus) "Short but sweet" Column

After Last year's ANC where he gave undeniably the best speech of the conference, I asked Gary Schwimmer to write me an article and here is his first contribution. Hopefully as long as he agrees to it. I intend for this to be a regular feature of Plus News

A Few Good Men



Last night, Hillingdon managed to achieve the rare feat of signing up a female under 80 without duress too.

Sadly she had to share our group night with 13 men.

At least it is a start!

Gary Schwimmer, Hillingdon & Harrow Active Plus

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Editor's Column

The reason for the late arrival is due to the lack of contributions received and the somewhat optimistic hope that some more would arrive in time for me to be able to get my second edition of *Plus News* up and running. This also explains the reason why some articles are about events which happened a fair while ago. Anyway here it is, eventually.



Wayne's 40th Birthday Party

In September, our ex-national Chairman, Mr. Wayne Fenton turned forty. He held a party and a lot of us

Lucy Smith, Barnet (NTaC)

Brean 2007

I really had a very good time at Brean. I would like to say, "a big thank-you" to Adam and Kirsty for organising the weekend away and to all the helpers that also helped. I really enjoyed the line dancing and the quiz. (Not that we were any good at it, but it's the taking part that counts, plus we were missing all of our members that are

Don't forget if you wish either myself or anyone to publish a National Magazine for the federation and its members, then articles or photographs have to be received. There is never any point in assuming that somebody else will do so – they won't as I think this edition proves. Although many thanks to those who did send me stuff which either will be found in this issue or I could no longer use due to it now being out-of-date.

If anyone wishes to contribute to the next edition (probably to be published before 2010) then *Plus News* resides on our website

www.18plus.org.uk under the link to Plus News. If you do have access to the Internet and are reading it this way, please consider printing off some copies and distributing them around your group – Plus News **normally** prints from eight to twelve pages.

Richard Mahaffey, Editor
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Contributions to this issue have come from Gary Schwimmer, Lucy Smith, Lance Creed, Joe Gurney, Matt Dickinson, Simon Russo, Dave Morgan, Kirsty van Lieshout (with help from Dave Morgan), Matt Palmer

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went there to help him celebrate his special day. There were lots of his friends. I know he was overwhelmed by us being there with him and by the amount of cards and presents (including more teddy bears) he received. It certainly was a good party and the birthday boy had a great time. I'm sure Wayne will agree with all of us who went that we helped him celebrate in true (18) Plus style. Congratulations Wayne from all your friends.

good at quizzes this weekend.) (*Modesty forbids me to interject at this point – ed.*)

I thought the bands on Saturday and Sunday were both very good. I would be happy if you could get the Saturday night band back again. They were brilliant!

Good luck to the new man taking over its going to be a hard act to follow. Roll on next Brean.

Lance Creed, Barnet (NTaC)

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Dear all,
I would like to invite you all to come clubbing with us at Brannigans in Romford on **Saturday 12th May 2007**.

And thanks to a member of the Area Committee, whose birthday is *approximately* round about that time, entrance is **free!**

In order to get in free, you should (a) let me know in advance that you are coming and

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=(b) meet up at **The Moon and Stars** (the Wetherspoons Pub), **South Street, Romford, 9.30 for 10pm**. This is just down the road from Brannigans itself.

For those of you who do not know Romford, here is a multimap link: <http://tinyurl.com/d9lxt>
Dress is smart/casual (no trainers). I have included a poster, which you may print out for your club noticeboards.

Kind regards,

Joe Gurney, Chairman, EAA.



This email message is a notification to let you know that a file has been uploaded to the Files area of the NTA group.

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Regards,

Matt Dickinson (NTaC Area Chairman)<matthewleedickinson@gmail.com>

Go Ballastic!

What an end to the weekend!! The group travelled down to Go Ballastic for paint balling, the final activity of the weekend, before setting off home. Upon arrival we were met with a mass of people who would later prove to be fellow team members or those who we would shoot. Firstly everyone had to get dressed for the occasion; we covered up with overalls, face masks and loaded up with enough pellets to take out a small army. With everyone in anticipation of what lied ahead the instructors gathered everyone together to discuss the rules and the dangers of paint balling. At this point you could feel the pre-match tension, we were then divided into two teams those with arm bands and those with not. Having received or instructions we then pulled down our masks and collected our guns from the various racks. We loaded our guns with as many pellets as possible and headed to the first event. One team started off behind groups of tyres and the other to start in a central base.

I started off behind the tyres and it took me all of two minutes before being hit on the head (ouch), it was great fun and good to see people getting hit. This event was one of the best as you could fire at people through tiny gaps in the tyres. On the second attempt the teams switched places with those without armbands started in the central base and worked their way out. I lasted much longer this time and managed to hit a few people, before being hit on the leg, which killed. I take my hat off to the rest of the group who lasted a lot longer than myself. The second event was less fun with each team starting at different

ends of a field, we had to hide behind triangular bits of wood for set time periods before moving onto the next. It was easy to get hit and many people cheated at this and stayed where they were!!! After a break where we recovered from the previous events we headed into the woods where we could use up all our ammo. This event was mayhem as we had a few huts to hide behind and trees, which provided little or no protection. The winning team would be those who were remaining at the end, we all took many hits but this time was allowed to carry on until the end. We all had lots of ammo and lasted a long time, Rich lasted right until the end and got in some good close range shots. The pain of getting hit by the speeding pellets was excruciating (I still have the battle wounds two weeks on), but it was defiantly worth it for the thrill factor. After the event we waited for Ian and Kirsty who had to battle their way through traffic. We had time to sit down and reflect on the weekend. Feeling a little tired we all agreed that Go Ballastic had lived up to the name and proved to be a good conclusion to the weekend. Everyone that attended made the weekend an enjoyable one and a good laugh!

Simon Russo, Southampton Plus

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The National Karting Competition

We arrived at the Daytona Kart Track (<http://www.daytona.co.uk/>) on Saturday afternoon and from the weather in Milton Keynes it was going to be a very interesting afternoon indeed! Luckily quite a few people were also much later than us so our lateness went unnoticed;) After signing in (signing away our lives), getting our race suits and everyone trying to find a helmet that fits, it was time for our drivers briefing. This entailed the usual mandatory DVD so everyone knows what to expect once they get out onto the track and what all the flags actually mean, which is quite hard to be serious about! Does anyone actually remember what the Black and White flag was for?? I'm sure a couple of people do after seeing them plenty! The race layout was explained as a

3-lap practice followed by 3 heats of 5 laps and 7 laps of semi-final each. For those lucky enough to make the grade for the final it was a 10-lap sprint to chequered flag.

After the briefing its time to get down to the track and get some practice laps in before our heats and time to check out the karts we'll be hammering around the track and risking life and limb in. The track was as expected a little damp but after a bit of a sideways practice session there was a good dry line and the rest of the track was almost dry.

With the heats underway it was soon clear to see who the top runners were going to be straight away with Jonathan Tall taking first place in every one of his heats and Richard Morton biting at his heels getting two first places and a second. Not far behind was Peter Strawbridge taking a third, second and a first place to secure him third overall.

The Semi-finals were an interesting show with each of the top three runners winning their semi-final and the positions for them in the final remaining exactly the same! This was a great chance for people to give it their all to secure a place in the final and a have a good reshuffle of the remaining runners. Ian Strong did well to leap up the grid to secure himself as the last place runner in the final as to my disappointment. We also saw some very good improvements in a lot of peoples lap times as they fought to keep their place on the point leader board.

The final certainly not without its thrills and spills which mainly Richard Morton being in the centre of it all. After quite a bit of bumping of the car in front a few position changes he managed to collect two black and white flags for some un-gentlemanly driving manoeuvres. And with in a couple more laps and diving for the inside line when it was already taken he was given a black flag 10 second pit lane penalty. But instead jumped out of the kart in the pit lane not realising that it was just a stop go time penalty until the marshal shouted across to him

and he jumped back in to still finish a respectable fourth. With all the exciting race action the order finished 1st Peter Strawbridge, 2nd Jonathan Tall, 3rd Adrian Barnard, 4th Richard Morton, 5th Ian Strong, 6th Martin Ziarati, 7th Tim Wild, 8th Huw Morris.

Star driver of the day goes to Ian Strong starting the day doing 27second+ laps and finishing up with 5th behind the fast runners in the final. Good Work!

See you all next year! :-)

Dave Morgan

Just in case you were wondering about the fastest laptimes and total points out of the heats of the National Karting Competition:

Overall	Best Lap Times	
1	Richard Morton	21.56
2	Huw Morris	21.88
3	Jonathan Tall	22.03
4	David Morgan	22.20
5	Peter Strawbridge	22.32
6	Peter Mann	22.52
7	Martin Ziarati	22.59
8	Adrian Barnard	22.64
9	Ralph Grimble	22.76
10	Matt Palmer	22.96
11	Tim wild	23.44
12	Simon Russo	23.58
13	Ian Strong	23.88
14	Marieta Llivea	24.64
15	John Smith	25.09
16	Philippa Mann	25.16
17	Julie Palmer	25.23

Points Table from Heats

Jonathan Tall	40
Richard Morton	39
Peter Strawbridge	37
Adrian Barnard	35
Huw Morris	34
Martin Ziarati	34
Tim wild	32
Ian Strong	31
David Morgan	29
Peter Mann	29
Philippa Mann	29
Simon Russo	28
Ralph Grimble	27
John Smith	27
Matt Palmer	25
Marieta Llivea	22
Julie Palmer	22

Kirsty van Lieshout

(With thanx to *Dave Morgan* for typing it all)

The Mad Weekend @ Milton Keynes (MW@MK)

The weekend started on the ski slopes, some might say the most risky activity of the weekend but as it would later turn out not to be!!!!!!!!!!!!!! (OK that story is probably out by now, so it depends on who is taking part; and as our resident Mel Gibson was not present for this event it was relatively risk free).

There were seven of us skiing and one lone boarder, but as a first timer I will concentrate on the antics of the beginners' class, which four of us were in (Matt, Julie, Kirsty and Marieta).

OK I will go in order of skill, and start with me (Matt), and at 6ft 6 with a high centre of gravity, balance has never come naturally, so yes I did fall over and yes I did manage to slide uncontrollably backward and end up straddling the travelator which then had to be shut down with the big red button. I also had a few troubles mastering the snowplough and even on a shallow slope managed to pick up a fair bit of speed before hitting the safety netting, but I did start to master the plough towards the end, well nearly, another 10 minutes and I would have had it!!

An hour was just enough to know I enjoyed it but not long enough to master the basics so I will definitely be going back again.

We are going from worst to best by the way in case I didn't mention, "thank god" I hear you cry!

Marieta, former resident of Bulgaria, where I am reliably informed are some fantastic ski resorts had never skied before but obviously had picked up some tips as appeared to pick it up quite quickly. However, on one run where she had effortlessly controlled her speed and direction we all looked away to focus on the next victim,

only to turn back and see her on top of an instructor from another class on the other side of the slope!! Well we were warned that "people are like magnets on a ski slope!"

Kirsty by her own admission is an "expert skier at speed", though lacks the ability to perform the most basic "snowplough" manoeuvre used to control speed. Humbly she agreed to join the beginners on the slope to get a refresher and because not being able to snowplough precluded her from the recreational ski. After a few runs she had mastered it and was very happy with the new skill.

Julie "balance has never been a problem" Palmer (nee Morgan) picked it up in no time and was questioned by the instructor as to whether she was really a beginner. Whilst she picked up the snowplough in no time and had fantastic control of her speed, she stopped short of being "teachers pet" by refusing to fall over on an early run and pushing the instructor over instead. So please be assured I am not showing favouritism in ranking Julie as best on the day, merely self preservation following the aggression she showed in shoving the poor guy over on the slope!!

For those of us who had not been skiing before, we were very impressed by the real snow and couldn't imagine wanting to ski on rope at a dry slope after that, especially for those of us who fell over a few times!

All in all an excellent experience for the first timer and expert alike, well worth the trip. The centre offers a number of packages and we will most certainly be taking some 3-hour lessons in the future before taking a skiing holiday.

Matt Palmer, Southampton Plus

Richard Mahaffey edits the New Plus News. Please email articles, programmes and comments to me at plusnews@18plus.org.uk or rj_mahaffey@hotmail.com or send to 17 Stag Lane, Chorleywood, Hertfordshire WD3 5HP. Please note that pictures can only be used if sent electronically and are of sufficiently high quality. The articles herein do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Editor, New Plus News/National Publications Officer or the National Federation of Plus Areas of Great Britain. "© The PLUS logo is Copyright the National Federation of Plus Areas, 2007."