



ABC Training Trust

Chair's Annual Report

May 09 - December 10

Over the last year and a half NICAS has grown healthily, both financially and as a nationwide scheme. The scheme is now well established both as a trading company and as an agent for training and development in the indoor climbing industry. There are currently 31 Primary Centres in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. The Primary Centres act as the training and induction nodes for around 135 Awarding Centres. There have been nearly 30,000 part 1 logbooks sold to these centres since the scheme launched with over 7,500 recorded individual registrations on the scheme per year. New walls, big and small, continue to apply for centre registration and are inducted into the scheme with its influence on coaching and instructing standards.

Revenues from logbook sales have been strong over the period and our balance sheet has doubled since last year's report. This has given the board the confidence to take on both an Administrative Officer and a Technical Officer in 2010. Anne Garnish now manages our finance and administration, supporting the Treasurer. Anne is currently sub-contracted as a self-employed worker and has made a huge contribution to the smooth running of the scheme. She has admirably fulfilled the trustees' wish to see the scheme administered in a thorough and professional manner. Detailed financial reporting and registration figures have allowed the board to plan with much greater accuracy and confidence.

Iain McKenzie has been appointed as the NICAS Technical Officer on a 0.5 contract through his employer; Leicester City Council. Through Iain the board has been able to support centres and enhance quality assurance in the delivery of the scheme. Iain has also been able to carry forward development work and liaise with other bodies in relation to the aims of the scheme. With these two appointments the scheme has been able to exert real influence in the world of training and coaching in indoor climbing.

Developments that have been realised in the last year include the completion of a bilingual English/Welsh translation of the part 1 logbooks, the setting up of a newsletter for providers and stakeholder organisations, and interest from some overseas schools. However two projects stand out; firstly there has been close discussion and negotiation with three of the GCSE examination boards (and SQA) over the harmonisation of NICAS with their PE specifications. This should bring about great improvements to the syllabi and assessment for these qualifications, long awaited for by the indoor climbing industry.

Secondly the ABCTT has hosted a series of four seminars on coaching within NICAS around the country over the autumn of 2010. These were very well attended with around 200 delegates from Primary and Awarding centres. Feedback from these has been excellent and especially gratifying was to have representatives of MLT, Plas Y Brenin, the BMC, SMC, ABC and AMI all attending and contributing. Indeed the MLT and ABCTT have a shared vision and mutual interest in the development of coaching and continue to work closely together to this aim. MLT's proposed coaching awards as well as the CWA and CWLA all support the NICAS scheme and the aims of the ABCTT.

Happily my hopes for the scheme's immediate development in my last report have now been realised. The scheme is more organised in its infrastructure, more able to support centres and liaise with other key bodies. It is also becoming more influential in instructor training and in the development of coaching in the sport. Most importantly it has introduced and guided many more young people through the skills and rewards of climbing.

The board will continue to strive for greater uptake and retention of young climbers. A key indicator will be an increased uptake of the part 2 logbooks. Over the next year two other particular but related challenges appear to face us. One is how to accommodate the growing number of bouldering centres in the UK who are currently limited in their involvement with the scheme. The second is to take a long hard look at the content and delivery of the scheme after three years of operation and see if, after this review, there need to be any changes.

Guy Jarvis
Chair of the Trustees

23rd January 2011