

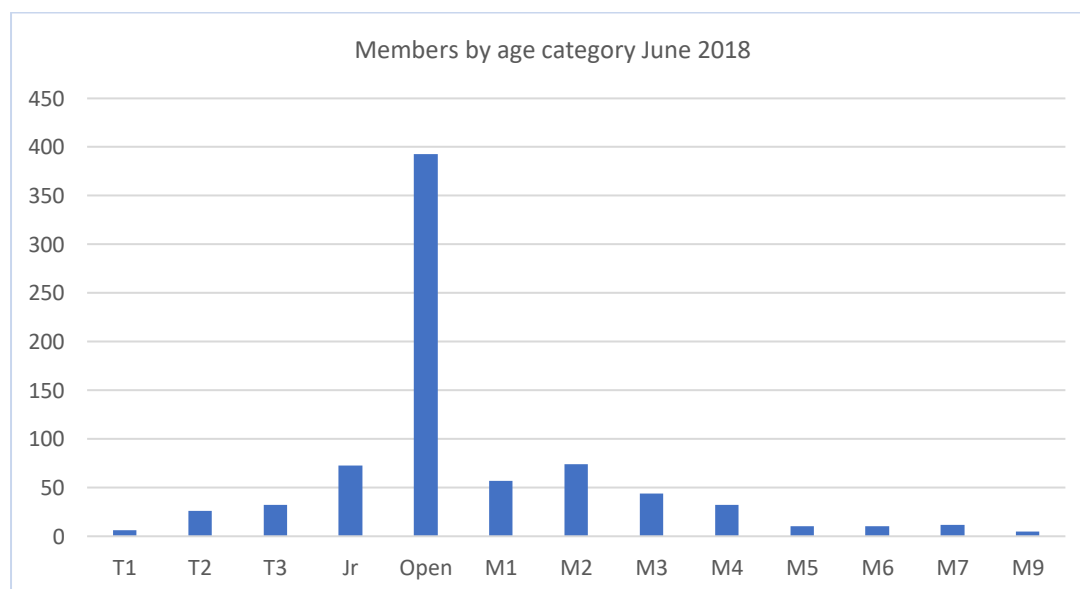
BDFPA Membership Registrar's Report 30 June 2018

How many members?

As of 30 June 2018, the BDFPA had 477 male lifters and 284 female lifters, or a total of 761 (compared to 705 lifters at the same time last year). We had 28 official (non-lifting) members. The maximum measurable membership levels are achieved at the end of November, because from 1 December applications start coming in for the following year. The November figures include end-of-year members; there were 959 members at the end of November 2017.

The ages of lifters on 20 June 2018 were as follows:

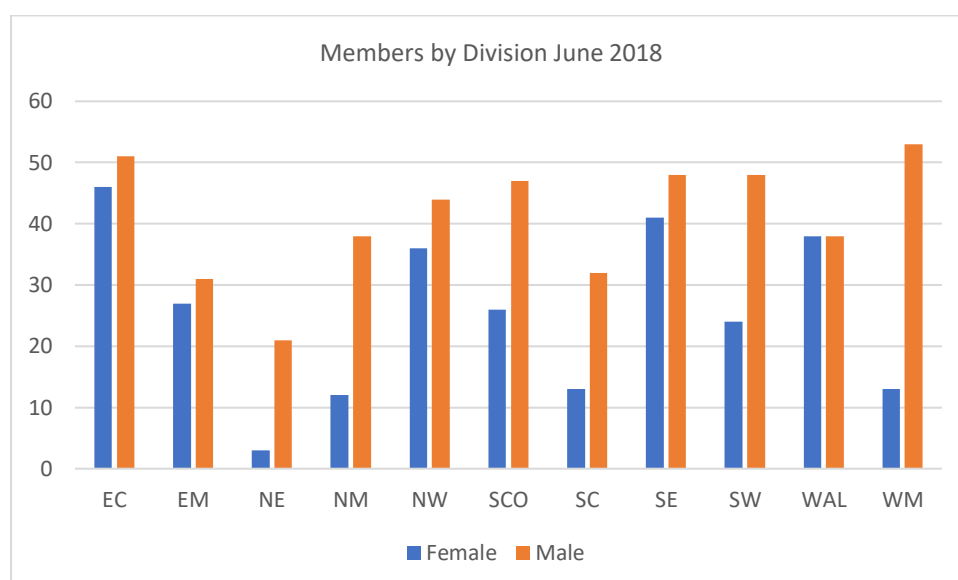
Age Category	Number
T1	6
T2	26
T3	32
Jr	73
Open	393
M1	57
M2	74
M3	44
M4	32
M5	10
M6	10
M7	12
M9	5



This appears to be a fairly normal distribution.

Divisions differed in total numbers, and in the proportion of women and men lifters:

Division	Female	Male	Total
EC	46 (47%)	51	97
EM	27 (46%)	31	58
NE	3 (12%)	21	24
NM	12 (24%)	38	50
NW	36 (45%)	44	80
SCO	26 (36%)	47	73
SC	13 (29%)	32	45
SE	41 (46%)	48	89
SW	24 (33%)	48	72
WAL	38 (50%)	38	76
WM	13 (20%)	53	66



The Eastern Counties, East Midlands, North West, South East and Wales approach equality in numbers of men and women lifters – Wales achieves equality. In five Divisions (North East, North Midlands, Southern Counties, South West and West Midlands), male lifters outnumber female lifters by 2 to 1 or more. The National Council may want to discuss ways of encouraging more participation by women.

Membership Registrar activity

1. Submitting new/expired members' applications to National Council for vetting

When I took over the Membership Registrar role, I was asked to send a list to the National Council for vetting every month. I have sent a list every week. I take the online applications, check each one to see whether the applicant has any expired memberships in the system (sometimes as many as 5), and if so I merge the applicant's data entries. I enter any paper/emailed applications by hand into the database and carry out the same check for previous membership. I note the Division and whether it is a new or lapsed membership

and send this information to the National Council weekly for vetting, giving them a week to respond.

The week that the National Council has to vet the new/expired memberships gives me time to write to applicants who have not supplied all information, or who have supplied conflicting information, and to sort out any anomalies. I check that people who have paid a Club rate have chosen an affiliated club; that people who have chosen a Teen/Youth rate fall within the age category, or have sent student ID. I don't systematically check whether the address corresponds to the Division, but if a discrepancy in this catches my eye, I query it. At the end of the week, all being well, I activate the new/renewing members on the database and send them an automated email which includes their membership number, Member ID and password.

2. Answering members' enquiries

Between 1st July 2017 and 30th June 2018, I dealt with 501 enquiries from members / issues arising from members' applications. Over 99% of initial enquiries were answered within 24 hours. Email threads ranged from 2 to 19 emails, with 105 email exchanges being threads of 5 emails or longer. I have made a set of email templates so that many queries can be answered quickly from the database; for example,

- You have paid for an Individual Membership, but indicated you are a Club member. Is this correct and if so, would you like to be reimbursed?
- You have paid for a Club Membership, but you do not appear to belong to an affiliated Club. Could you indicate your Club, or pay the difference between the two fees?
- You are right: you have not yet had a confirmation / membership number. This is because you are a new applicant, and I am waiting for National Council to vet you.
- You are right: you have not yet had a renewal confirmation / membership number, because your membership expired at the end of last year, and I am waiting for National Council to vet you.
- Here is how you can access your own data entry on the database.
- You have an address in Division X but you say you are in Division Y.
- You have entered as a Teen/Student member, but you are over age and have not supplied Student ID.
- You have entered a competition, but your membership has expired. If you hurry to renew, you should be all right.
- Your birth date is missing from your data entry.

Another advantage of sending an email based on a template from the database is that this automatically produces emails linked to a member's data entry, which will be available in the future.

Some of the queries I get are not membership queries, and I try tactfully to steer these towards the relevant officers (e.g. Divisional Representatives). However, some new members seem to think I am their Mum, and it is not always easy to cut the umbilical cord.

3. Checking the membership status of entrants to competitions

I have checked all competition entry lists over the year, to ensure that all competitors have current BDFPA membership status. Some organisers do a good job of sending me a list two

weeks before the competition. Some organisers post their lists on Facebook before sending them to me, and often I begin the work of checking on the basis of the FB page. Sometimes I write to organisers who haven't sent me their lists in good time to ask them for it. Occasionally organisers don't get the list to me in time. This can mean that a lifter has entered for a competition, but does not have a valid membership, and does not have the time to regularise their membership status. I am always sorry to see this, but I am not willing to send NC members more than one list a week to vet, so I make no exceptions (I recently turned down a member of my own club).

4. Affiliated Clubs

Simon Mansell has kindly undertaken to look after the Affiliated Clubs this year, and I appreciate his taking this work off my desk. When a new club affiliates, Simon writes to the database management company to request that they are put on the system, and then he configures the system so that the new club will appear in the drop-down menu for members. He then corresponds with the Webmaster to make sure that the club details are on the webpage. Simon will also be writing to currently affiliated clubs about renewals at the end of the year. Nearly all clubs renewed this year, and a few new clubs have joined.

5. Awareness raising about deadlines

I wrote an email to every current member at the end of 2017 to remind them to renew their membership.

I have also used the Facebook page to remind members about renewing, and about the consequences of not renewing on time.

Database management system

On the whole, I find the database very efficient; it has a large number of extremely useful features. There were a number of concerns raised last winter about online application, but try as I may, I have not been able to duplicate the problems that members reported. I have tried on several different platforms, and on PC and Mac, iPhone and tablet, and never been able to reproduce the issues that were reported; and neither has the database management company. There have been many fewer reports of problems in the last six months, and almost everyone who initially reports a problem has been able to apply online once I have sent them step-by-step instructions. I am hoping to do a short video showing the application process before we begin the end-of-year season at the beginning of October; I have bought the software to enable me to do this.

Catherine Walter
!7 July 2018