



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SELECTION COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY 4TH JUNE 2015
AT THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF ARBITRATORS, LONDON**

Present: Andy Bowles (Chairman)
 David Burn
 Gillian Fawcett
 Paul Hackett
 Dawn Mertens (Secretary)
 Gordon Rainsford (EBU Chief TD)
 Tom Townsend (Vice-Chairman)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Jeremy Dhondy, Ian Payn, David Price and Nick Smith.
(Due to the number of absentees a telephone call was made to Barry Capal, Company Secretary to establish that the meeting was quorate).

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 6TH JANUARY 2015

2.1 Accuracy

There were no matters of accuracy.

2.2 Matters arising

AB apologised, that due to time restraints, he had been unable to write to all of the Premier League players as planned requesting their support for the Bridge England Simultaneous Pairs.

3. REVIEW OF DECISIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS

Decisions taken by the Committee between meetings 7th January – 3rd June 2015 were as follows:

The following were appointed:

Bermuda Bowl, Coach: Andrew Murphy
Venice Cup, Coach: David Burn

The following teams were selected:

European Championship, Under 15

Daniel Winter & Jack Ronayne
Liam Sanderson & Isaac Channon
Harry Madden & Oscar Selby
NPC: Paul Barden
Coach: David Bakhshi

European Championship, Under 20

Freddie Illingworth & Ben Norton
Laura Covill & Stephen Kennedy
Sam Behrens & Nick Dean
NPC: Michael Byrne
Coach: Bryony Youngs

European Championship, Under 25

Tom Paske & Shivam Shah
James Paul & Alex Roberts
Dan McIntosh & Rob Myers

NPC: Alan Shillitoe
Coach: Jon Cooke

Midsummer Bridge, Salo, Finland

James Paul & Alex Roberts
Rob Myers & Shivam Shah

White House, Team 1

Toby Nonnenmacher & Michael Alishaw
Tommy Brass & Ankush Khandelwal
NPC: Alan Shillitoe

White House, Team 2

Shivam Shah & Alex Roberts
Freddie Illingworth & Ben Norton
NPC: Alan Shillitoe

Junior Camrose

Tom Paske & Shivam Shah
James Paul & Alex Roberts
Toby Nonnenmacher & Michael Alishaw
NPC: Jon Cooke

Peggy Bayer

Freddie Illingworth & Ben Norton
Laura Covill & Stephen Kennedy
Nick Dean & Sam Behrens
NPC: Michael Byrne

Beijing Hua Yuan Cup

Heather Dhondy & Nevena Senior
Sally Brock & Nicola Smith
Fiona Brown & Catherine Draper

Chairman's Cup, Sweden

Victor Milman & David Kendrick
Paul Barden & Jonathan Mestel

Coaching was offered to Sarah Teshome –Catherine Jagger and Gillian Fawcett – Jane Moore. (*Gillian Fawcett did not participate in this decision.*)

The General Conditions of Contest were changed to reflect changes in the WBF screen regulations.

The following dates were agreed:

European Senior Trials stage 1: 18-20 December 2015

European Senior Trials stage 2: 22-24 January 2016 (but if any of the qualifiers are also playing in the Lady Milne Trials, the Senior Trials will be rescheduled)

Teltscher Trophy Trials: 5-7 February 2016 (originally one week earlier but changed following a change to an overseas event)

The U25 coach asked for confirmation that it was acceptable for the team to purchase and wear hoodies in the same style as their England uniforms. The Committee had no objection, on the understanding that these would not form part of the official uniform, and that official uniform should be worn whenever required by the rules of the competition or by the NPC.

The format of the Premier League was changed, on a majority vote, to 21x 16-board matches over three weekends, each of two days. This change was made to reflect the length of matches in the Europeans. The normal timetable would be four matches on each Saturday and three on each Sunday.

Exceptionally, in order to make it possible for the Hua Yuan Cup team to participate in the final weekend of the Premier League, the final weekend for the First Division would be on the Friday and Saturday. Some of the venues were also changed for related reasons. Two of the teams containing players involved in the Hua Yuan Cup would be drawn together for the last match in order that they can make arrangements to play earlier at the venue, or as a last resort privately (screens may be available at the YC for their use). These decisions were made on a majority vote.

3.1 Matters arising

An email had been received objecting to the dropping of Wimbledon and Solihull as venues. AB had replied explaining that Wimbledon had been a temporary substitute for the Young Chelsea, so now that the YC's new premises were available the venue would revert to the YC; and that the use of Coventry instead of Solihull was for this year only, because Solihull was unavailable on the weekend on which it would have been needed.

An email from another player had been received questioning the scheduling of the last weekend on a Friday and Saturday. AB had replied explaining that this change was for this year only and due to the timing of the Hua Yuan Cup.

4. FINANCES

The provisional year end accounts for 2014-15 were tabled and there were no areas of concern. AB reported that the budgets for 2015-16 were quite generous given the other demands on the EBU's finances this year. In future all costs would be accounted for in the year in which they occurred, so for example a Home International which occurred in April would belong to the new year not the old.

4.1 Report on Open/Women's/Senior budget

A £1,000 saving has been made by not subsidising the Chairman's Cup this year. Based on current entries the Premier League should show a small profit.

4.2 Report on Junior budget

The Board have raised the limit on the number of free squad entries to EBU events to the equivalent of £5,500 per annum. This increase allows for funding entries for the new members of the U15 squad, and takes account of the fact that the U25 squad leader is intending to encourage greater participation in major EBU events. Squad funds may not be used to supplement this allowance.

5. GENERAL

5.1 Eligibility to play in England Trials

Correspondence had been received from a player regarding his eligibility to play in the First Division of the Premier League. After consultation with both the EBL and the Committee, AB had responded that currently he needed to be eligible under the rules of BGB, EBL and WBF; that he was eligible under the BGB rules; and that he was probably eligible under the EBL and WBF rules but too be certain would require a formal application to both bodies. The player had been informed that he would be entitled to play in the First Division this year. If it was subsequently determined that he was ineligible under EBL/WBF rules, he would be ineligible for the First Division next year but his teammates would be unaffected.

It was agreed that, starting after the end of the 2015 Premier League, all players entering Trials:

1. have to be eligible under BGB rules and meet their conditions
2. must, in the opinion of the Committee, meet EBL and WBF eligibility rules, but need not actively seek the EBL/WBF's confirmation
3. Must have England as their sole country of allegiance, and agree not to accept an invitation to play for another country in a BGB, EBL or WBF event.

If a player breaks the above rules, by playing in a trial and then subsequently representing another country in the relevant year, the Committee may apply sanctions against the player, and will use their judgement as to how other members of his team are affected.

PH suggested that having formed the policy we should notify BGB and request that they pass it on to the other home nations National Bridge Organisations.

The policy would apply to all EBU trials, including the First Division of the Premier League.

The 2015 Premier League would be covered by the 2014 regulations regarding team continuity and eligibility. Eligibility for the 2016 Premier League would be covered by the new regulations.

5.2 Team qualification for International events when team members change

The Committee discussed the possibility of a player playing in a trial, helping his team to qualify, but not then playing in the event for which the team had qualified. It was agreed that a player should not enter a trial unless they intended to play in the event for which the trial was a qualifier. This would not apply to the Premier League, which is not solely a Camrose Trial.

5.3 European Selections 2016

The Committee discussed the timing of selections for the European Championships in 2016. A player might be in contention for the Open or Women's Team, but also considering playing in the trial for the Senior Team. If such a player was selected for the Open or Women's Team, that would make him unavailable for the Senior Team and ineligible to play in the trial. If such a player were selected close to the start of the trial, that would cause undesirable disruption and inconvenience for the player and his teammates. If the player were selected after the start of the trial, it might lead to his team's winning the trial with a player who was unavailable for the Senior European.

The Committee agreed that selecting the right Open and Women's Teams was paramount, but subject to that constraint every effort would be made to avoid this problem. Depending on the results in Chennai it might be possible to select part or all of the Open and Women's teams prior to commencement of the Trials, or else to advise players informally of their chances of selection.

6. OPEN EVENTS

6.1 Camrose weekends – NPCs' Reports

David Burn and Godfrey King were thanked for their reports in respect of the first and second Camrose weekends. Despite England winning the second weekend, the Camrose Trophy was won overall by the Republic of Ireland, with England finishing in third place just 5VPs behind the winners.

6.2 Premier League 2015 – Divisions, format and Conditions of Contest

Seven teams automatically qualified for inclusion in the First Division and the Committee unanimously agreed that the Hinden team be awarded the eighth place.

At present there are nine applications for the Second Division, with the possibility of a further team. The Committee agreed upon Mike Bell's previously suggested format for the Second Division i.e. that each team play two complete round robins with the top four teams then playing a further round robin for the top four places. The remaining teams will play a separate round robin, but teams will be permitted to withdraw before this stage.

It was agreed a ten team movement was preferable to three-way matches, however if only nine teams participated this would involve a sit-out. The teams are to be seeded and play the same round-robin each weekend. It was agreed that TT and DB (as members of First Division teams) would carry out the seeding.

GR to amend the general Conditions of Contest, to incorporate updates arising from a pair withdrawing half way through the 2015 Lady Milne Trials and the subsequent changes made to both their opponents scores and the scores relating to un-played matches.

6.3 Champions Cup Team

All the members of the Premier League winning Allfrey team have stated they are available to play, however Andrew McIntosh, has indicated he is willing to withdraw, as he is no longer playing in partnership with David Bakhshi. Mike Bell will therefore be invited in his place.

6.4 Bermuda Bowl

Reserves have not been selected for this event. Visa applications for India can take up to three weeks, it was therefore agreed that in the event of an emergency during the event, there are sufficient high quality players present amongst the NPC's and Coaches, who could stand in at short notice.

6.5 Practice match against France

The French Bridge Federation has proposed playing a friendly match in Paris, with six pairs participating, offering a choice of midweek or weekend dates in February. Accommodation and meals will be provided by the hosts, the EBU would need to pay travel expenses. AB has already approached the current Bermuda Bowl team and three players are not available. The Committee agreed that an email should be sent to Premier League players asking them to express their interest in playing in this event and state their preference for midweek or weekend dates.

6.6 Yeh Brothers Captain's report

The Committee thanked Michael Byrne for his Captain's report and congratulated Michael and Mike Bell on their impressive performance in the Pairs event. The Committee hoped that we would receive an invitation to participate in the 2017 event, although PH pointed out that invitations were usually issued based on the preceding year's Bermuda Bowl results.

7. WOMEN'S EVENTS

7.1 Lady Milne - NPC's Reports

David Burn and Simon Cochemé and were thanked for their reports for the England and EBU teams respectively. The event was won by Wales, with the England team finishing as runners-up and the EBU team fourth.

7.2 Lady Milne 2016

An email has been received commenting on our poor result in this event in 2015 when compared to the success of our International Women's team. The idea of running a teams trial was once again discussed but rejected as members of the Committee felt there would be insufficient entries and the pairs trial is considered to be the premier women's event at present. It was agreed that for 2016 the two top finishing pairs will be offered a place in the Lady Milne team with the third pair being selected by the Committee. The third pair may not necessarily have participated in the trials or be a pair that played in partnership in the trials.

It was suggested that a two stage trial be considered in future years.

7.3 Venice Cup

Reserves have not been selected to date for the Venice Cup. It was agreed that Sarah Teshome and Catherin Jagger would be asked to be reserves, and would be asked to obtain visas for India in case they were needed.

7.4 Practice match

A practice match has been arranged in Paris for the last weekend in August. Accommodation will be provided by the French Federation and the EBU will therefore only have to pay travel expenses. As only five members of the Venice Cup team are available, the opposition have agreed that either the Captain or Coach can play.

A further match has been proposed for February, alongside that for the Open team.

8. SENIOR EVENTS

8.1 Teltscher Trophy - NPC's Report

Simon Cochemé was thanked for his report on the 2015 Teltscher Trophy. The England Team finished in third position with 97.54 VPs, with Ireland the winners on 123.90 VPs and Scotland the runners-up 111.39 VPs.

8.2 Senior European Trials

The Committee agreed on an entry fee of £500 per team, with the format being decided when final entries are known.

8.3 Seniors Trials for the Teltscher Trophy

The Committee agreed on an entry fee of £340 per team, again with the format being decided when final entries are known.

8.4 D'Orsi Bowl

The question of reserves for the D'Orsi Bowl was discussed. It was agreed that as with the Open Team, in the event of a substitute's being needed at short notice, someone could probably be found amongst people already in Chennai. The Committee agreed that if this situation arose a rapid decision could be made at the time, so there was no need to select a player in advance.

9. JUNIOR EVENTS

9.1 World Youth Pairs

The World Youth Pairs takes place in Opatija, Croatia 20th -29th August 2015. Although the Squad Manager has advised squad members that we do not usually offer funding for this event an application has been received from one partnership. The Committee agreed to check with the Squad Manager if he felt there was a case for funding entry fees for this event.

9.2 EBU U25 Pairs

After consultation with the Squad Leaders the Committee agreed that the winners of the U25 pairs, if both are England eligible, will each be guaranteed a place in an England team, although not necessarily in partnership.

9.3 Paris Invitation

The Paris Youth event clashes with a Premier League weekend this year. Although we sent two teams to the inaugural event in 2013 we would therefore be unlikely to have enough players for a second team this year. Alan Shillitoe has volunteered to act as NPC for the event.

9.4 Other Invitations

There are no other invitations to consider at present.

9.5 U15 Squad

GF commented that Sarah O'Connor has done an excellent job with the U15 squad and it was good to see so many young players at the recent Spring Bank Holiday event. Sarah reported that training was going very well and that she hoped to have two further training sessions before Tromso.

9.6 U20 Squad

Michael Byrne has also arranged two training weekends before the Europeans and commented that all members of the team were practising regularly on BBO.

9.7 U25 Squad

The Committee agreed that the Junior Premier League team consist of a squad of ten players, with three pairs playing on any weekend, as last year. Alan Shillitoe queried if any funding would be available for the Junior European Pairs next year. AB had replied there is no money available at present but this event will be taken into account when applying to the Board for the 2016/17 budget, likewise if any of the teams qualify for the World Championships next year. GF commented that no updates had been received recently regarding the Girls Squad; she also requested that the Squad Managers advised when Squad Training sessions are taking place.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting will be Tuesday 10th November, 2015 commencing at 1.15pm.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11.1 Chairman of Selection Committee

AB advised that he would not be re-standing for election at the AGM when his three year term expires and would also therefore be retiring as Chairman of the Committee.