
SUSSEX COUNTY CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

A meeting of the Management Committee (MC) of the SCCBA was held at the Henfield Hall on
Wednesday 10 August 2011 starting at 19.00

Present:

Mr M Pool	President
Mrs J Clinton	Chairman
Mr E Williams	Vice-Chairman
Mr R J Wheeler	Hon Secretary
Mr D Galpin	Hon Treasurer
Mr G Stanford	Tournament Manager
Mr J Williams	Membership Secretary

Mr P Bates, Mr D Ellis, Mr Y Lebrec, Mrs J Mayall, Mr A Southwell and Mr M Wotton.

The Chairman opened the meeting by expressing her satisfaction at being able to return to SCCBA business. She was now able to receive e-mails again and she hoped to be home soon. The MC noted the Chairman's return with great pleasure and congratulated her on the progress she had made.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr D Armstrong, Mrs A Galpin, Mrs H Kent, Mr R Lowe, Miss J Simpson and Mrs C Watson.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 15 May 2011

2.1 Accuracy

Subject to the following small changes:

- Paragraph 2.2.1 covered two subjects and should be split into 2.2.1 (a) and 2.2.1 (b);
- Paragraph 4.2, 1st bullet, 1st line should include in brackets after "special events" a definition of that term. This would be "(the two County congresses, one day green pointed events and the New Year Swiss Teams)";
- Paragraph 4.2, 1st bullet, 2nd sentence, insert "this" after "Whilst";

the minutes were agreed and duly signed as a true record. In addition, MP observed that the appointment of the Sussex representative for the EBU Clubs Committee did not require ratification by the MC.

2.2 Matters Arising

2.2.1 Surrey/Sussex Match (item 2.2.2)

Discussion with Surrey had now established that they were no longer able to fund their participation in this event. They had adopted a zero County P2P charge and were unwilling to change this in order to accommodate this match.

2.2.2 Update of County Directors List (item 2.2.3)

The Vice-Chairman reported that the final list had been published in the Calendar and on the web site.

2.2.3 Club Affiliation and Dual Membership Fees

MP questioned the validity of the MC's decision (at its 15 May 2011 meeting) to dispense with these fees and cover all costs through the County P2P charge. He believed that the P2P charge should relate to the benefits which members received and the Affiliation fee should be retained in relation to the benefits which Clubs received. In addition, dual membership was an issue separate from the EBU and should not be covered by the P2P charge. Furthermore, MP

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believed that changes to fees could not be made without ratification at a General Meeting of the Association. It was agreed that the abolition of these fees would be put onto the agenda for the next MC meeting and papers for and against the proposition would be prepared and circulated beforehand by EW and MP respectively.

Action: EW & MP

2.2.4 Open v Closed Events

A question was also raised about the intention to open events from 1 April 2012 to all EBU members. There were arguments for and against the proposition and it was agreed to put this issue also on the agenda for the next MC meeting. MC Members were invited to present their arguments in writing to the Secretary for circulation before the meeting.

Action: MC Members

Other matters arising were taken under section 6 below.

3. Chairman's Report

3.1 The Chairman reiterated her pleasure at being able to return to her SCCBA role and looked forward to being able to present a substantive report at the next meeting.

4. Treasurer's Report

4.1 The Hon Treasurer reported the current overall financial balances. The bank current account stood at £9557 and the saver account at £22586. P2P receipts had averaged £550 per month over the last four months in line with expectations.

4.2 Competition revenues from the two green pointed events were higher for the Teams but lower for the Pairs compared with those in 2010. Overall the total surplus was broadly the same as 2010. It was agreed that, in order to increase publicity for County events, at each event entry forms for the next Sussex event would be distributed on each table.

4.3 The payments to the chosen Charities - £400 to each of Children's Liver Disease Foundation and Cross Roads Care - had now been made and this would be reported in the newsletter and on the web site.

4.4 Action was being taken to improve the interest received from the deposit account. Although the new interest rate was only 0.5%, DG pointed out that the Association paid no bank charges on its current account despite a quite high level of cheque activity. This represented a significant monthly benefit to the Association.

4.5 DG reported that the Strategic Review had been completed and he expressed his thanks for the valuable contribution made by James Bugden. Projected budgets up to 2013 had been produced and these showed that the increased P2P charge of 7p from April 2012 was necessary to maintain a reasonable balance between income and expenditure. DG would be proposing this for confirmation at the 2012 AGM following the agreement in principle given at the 2011 AGM.

4.6 DG also reported on the following points of interest:

- Patcham BC had been advised regarding duplimating charges.
- Following a review by the Selectors, the previous decision to restrict Tollemache expense reimbursement to £10 plus one night's accommodation was now seen as rather draconian. The Hon Treasurer proposed that the rate of reimbursement should be adjusted to £15 plus one night's B&B accommodation. This would still save approximately £350 compared with 2010. The proposal was carried unanimously.
- Patcham BC had purchased the new SCCBA board crates at a cost of £150 and the account would be paid shortly.

5. Selectors' Report

5.1 DG reported that selections for the Metropolitan Cup had been made and published. Those for the Tollemache Cup would be made and published in September.

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5.2 The Chairman enquired as to the background to the recent addition to the Selection Committee. She was concerned whether the choice might make it more difficult for the Committee to demonstrate objectivity and transparency because of the increased likelihood of selectors being selected. The Selection Committee was asked to consider this and the potential advantage of adding a further Selector (possibly EW) to the Committee and report back to the MC at the next meeting.

Action: DG

6. Tournament Committee Report

6.1 Scorebridge Support

GS reported that although the County now uses Jeff Smith software to score its events, it still needed Scorebridge as established in detailed discussions with MW.

6.2 Directors' Required Skills (matter arising item 7.1)

Three County Directors had been able to accept an invitation from EW to be briefed on the Bridgemates system. Other County Directors would be updated as soon as possible and, where necessary, this would include briefing on the Jeff Smith software.

6.3 Metropolitan Cup (matter arising item 7.2)

The TC now recommended retention of lead responsibility for this event and this was agreed. Event accounts would need to reflect that this was not a Sussex event and the higher duplimating charge would apply. Cups for the winners were being purchased with Middlesex providing the 'A', Kent the 'B' and Sussex the 'C'.

6.4 Update of SCCBA Competition Rules (matter arising item 7.3)

GS confirmed that the outstanding issues of (1) the validity of club MP awards for mixed County heats and (2) the validity of the exclusion of non-Sussex players from events originally designed solely for Sussex players had been resolved. (1) had been cleared with the EBU and (2) remained valid at least until 1 April 2012. A further query was raised about the qualification statement regarding Sussex events which had been published in the Calendar. It was agreed that this needed to be amended and GS undertook to include that change in the correction letter which he would be sending to all Clubs shortly. JW agreed to arrange for similar notification to direct and dual members on the basis of copy provided by GS.

Action: GS & JW

6.5 Ardingly Catering (matter arising 7.6)

6.5.1 Recent experience had shown a great improvement in terms of both quality and price. The MC expressed its thanks to GS for his efforts in bringing about this improvement.

6.5.2 GS reported that Ardingly had double booked 22 July 2012 and the SCCBA green pointed teams event would need to be moved to 29 July subject to EBU approval. He was hopeful of the latter. The correction letter referred to above (6.4) would include confirmation of this change.

Action: GS

6.5.3 GS reported further that, following the appointment of a new Marketing Director at Ardingly, he was concerned that the introduction of a strategy designed to maximise revenue from Ardingly's facilities would make it more difficult to book the venue for SCCBA events, which typically require only a proportion of the facilities available. Events in 2012 were safe but there may be more competition for dates in 2013 onwards. He would seek a meeting with the Marketing Director as soon as possible to explore matters further.

Action: GS

6.6 TC Delegated Authorities (matter arising 18.3)

GS had circulated a matrix of proposed delegations shortly before the meeting. MP suggested changes to the proposed authorities for deciding competition rules and final/semi-final dates. Other MC Members asked for more time to consider the proposals and it was agreed that the matter would be deferred to the next meeting.

Action: DW

6.7 County Competitions on Weekdays (matter arising 18.4)

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It was agreed that an event could be organised for 2012/13. In addition, the recently announced arrangements for EBU Blue Pointed events might provide further opportunities.

6.8 Tournament Manager's Report

6.8.1 GS reported a concern regarding mixed heats. In the past club heats may have contained pairs who had turned up for their normal club night to find the only game was the County Heat and they were faced with going home or paying the County entry, ie reluctant participants. The trial rules this year will allow reluctant pairs to opt out of the County Heat, not necessarily a negative. GS's concern was for the Championship Pairs. Last year this event barely broke even and if there was a reduced number there should be the ability either to remove one of the semi-finals or charge some table money, and maybe for the final. The Calendar does state that fees up to £8 may be charged and the venues normally require considerably less than this, even including refreshments, so there should not be a problem in making changes if necessary.

6.8.2 PB reported the current thinking about the Henfield Candles. Henfield were not keen to be the only host in future and were seeking a joint hosting arrangement with SCCBA, with a provisional date of Sunday 10 June 2012. It was agreed that the TC would consider this at its next meeting. JC asked the TC also to consider the timing of the Ardingly Swiss Pairs alongside this issue.

Action: GS

7. Secretary's Report

7.1 Calendar and Clubs

The 2011/12 Calendar had been published and distributed. The need for a number of corrections had been identified and these would be dealt with as soon as possible (see 6.4 and 6.5 above).

7.2 Publication of 'Draft' Minutes

7.2.1 Minutes of the MC meeting on 15 May 2011 had been published in final draft form as required. The approved version would replace those after this meeting. DW indicated that the minutes of the current meeting would be circulated to those present well before publication and he asked that any comments/corrections be sent to him in good time so that the published version could be as accurate as possible.

Action: MC Members present

7.2.2 MW enquired as to whether TC minutes would also be published. The MC agreed.

Action: GS

7.3 Kremer Dersch

Arrangements for this event were well advanced and it would include a short break at the half-way point to allow communication with a 'captive' audience of Clubs' representatives. The overall theme of the presentation would be the value added by the County in return for its P2P charge. A trawl for ideas amongst Officers was in train and other MC Members were invited to offer views. Six MC Members had already volunteered to represent SCCBA in one of its two teams. Other volunteers were invited to contact DW. He would take the advice of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman as to pairings and team composition.

Action: MC Members

8. EBU Matters

8.1 Regional Club Committee activity

Terms of reference for the RCC had been obtained and DW would consider any need for co-ordinating action between the Sussex representative, the MC, the TC and the EBU shareholders to avoid any confusion in communications with Clubs. The issue would be put on the agenda for the next MC meeting and papers would be circulated beforehand.

Action: DW

8.2 Chairmen's Meeting

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EW reported that the major theme at the last meeting had been bridge development and education. Surrey and Yorkshire had taken significant initiatives in this area and EW suggested that Sussex might benefit from the creation of a Bridge Development and Education Committee as a sub-group of the MC. This was agreed in principle and its first task should be to explore how its activities might add value to what was already done/being done by the EBU and other Counties. In the first instance, EW would copy the EBU papers to JC, PB and DW (the shareholders) and discuss with Dave Armstrong how things should be taken forward.

Action: EW

8.3 Role of Shareholders

As agreed at the last MC meeting, PB had agreed the Sussex response to the EBU enquiry with the other shareholders. There had been no further communication from the EBU and the issue was not discussed at the Chairmen's meeting. PB noted to seek further clarification at the EBU AGM on 5 October 2011.

Action: PB

8.4 Sim Pairs Scoring

PB reported that the EBU had decided to insource scoring arrangements for Sim Pairs from 1 April 2012. The background to this was a largely economic argument. Insourcing would achieve significant cost savings and would open the possibility of reduced entry fees.

8.5 EBU Elections

Papers had been received by the shareholders for the 2011 EBU Elections. MP wished to stand for re-election to the Laws & Ethics Committee and PB (as a Sussex shareholder) would be submitting the nomination.

Action: PB

8.6 One Day Green Pointed Events in 2013

DW reported that the County would be seeking two events as usual. Provisional dates were 23 June and 21 July. A return would be made to the EBU shortly.

Action: DW

9. Membership Secretary's Report

JW reported that the membership count remained around 3000. Over the last year it had varied between a low of 2968 and a high of 3028.

10. Newsletter Editor's Report

YL confirmed that the recent issue of the Newsletter and Calendar had proceeded without major difficulty. He had a number of ideas, eg selling advertising, for future issues and would bring them forward for consideration in due course. DE commented that extra thickness arising from additional pages of advertising might put at risk the validity of the currently used minimum 2nd class postage and additional postage costs might outweigh the receipts from advertising. The final copy date for the end January 2012 Newsletter would be mid December 2011. EW commented that after very many years he would be very happy to see someone else take responsibility for future issues of the Calendar. AS agreed to take responsibility for the 2012/13 issue.

Action: YL & AS

11. Communication Coordinator's Report

There was nothing to report on this occasion.

12. Master Point Secretary's Report

Apart from his contributions to earlier discussions, MW had nothing to report.

13. Conduct Committee's Report

13.1 JM reported that the complaint regarding the Mixed Pairs final was now subject to an investigation of the facts by the CC. JM had spoken to the complainant and a Committee sub group had been formed, which AS had agreed to join. The results of its work would be reported to the next MC meeting.

Action: JM

13.2 JM reported that the County Constitution had been reviewed against the EBU model and the need for a number of changes had been identified. The principal changes were concerned with two areas. The first concerned the need for clear separation between the investigation of a complaint and the judgement

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of that complaint. Currently the CC divides itself into two parts to achieve this separation for each complaint but MP confirmed that Human Rights legislation requires clearer separation (with two separate committees) if the associated procedures are to be seen to be fair. The second concerned the current absence of any time limit for the submission of a complaint. JM suggested that three months would be a reasonable limit and the MC agreed. In due course the resultant changes to the Constitution would need to be approved by the EBU and by a General Meeting of the Association.

Action: JM

13.3 JM reported that recent experience suggested that the workings of the CC were not widely known and she proposed to provide an article to be published on the web site and in the Newsletter.

Action: JM

14. Education Report

There was nothing to report on this occasion.

15. Charities

DW reported (on behalf of Julia Simpson) that Clubs had recently been approached for ideas as to those Charities which the County should support in 2012. The results of this trawl would be reported at the next MC meeting.

Action: JS

16. Date of Next Meeting

The next MC meeting would be held at Patcham at 19.00 on Thursday 13 October 2011.

17. Any Other Business

17.1 DG proposed that the Treasurer's one signature limit, which had remained at £500 for eleven years, be raised to £1000. The MC agreed.

17.2 MW suggested that the current web entries for Competition Rules and the Constitution be replaced with PDF copies. The MC agreed.

Action: MW

17.3 GS reported that May Langmaid had resigned from the TC. JW had been invited to join the TC.

17.4 YL asked whether the MC would be interested in establishing a private web site as a forum for discussion and sharing information. The MC invited YL to bring forward proposals.

Action: YL

17.5 MP suggested that the levels of permitted agreements for Basic Bridge and Venture Pairs events were not appropriate in that in some cases they prevented new players from using the conventions they had been taught. MC Members would take soundings on this and the matter would be discussed further at the next meeting.

Action: MC Members

18. Closure

The meeting closed at 22.30.