

FINAL

SUSSEX COUNTY CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

A meeting of the Management Committee of the SCCBA took place at Worthing Bridge Club, 12 Byron Road, Worthing BN11 3HN on Friday 10 October 2014 starting at 7 pm

Present:

Mr M Pool (MP)	President
Mr A Ryder (AR)	Chairman
Mr D Galpin (DG)	Hon Treasurer
Mr D Wheeler (DW)	Hon Secretary

And other elected members: Mr P Bates (PB), Mrs H Beveridge (HB), Mrs A Galpin (AG), Mr P Gannon (PG), Miss J Simpson (JS), Mr M Wotton (MW) and Mr M Wright (MWr).

AGENDA

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Mr A Southwell and Mr G Stanford.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 18th July 2014

2.1 Accuracy

Under section 6 – Competition Rules (2), MW felt that the report could have been more clearly expressed. He agreed to provide a revised form of words. Subject to that being incorporated, MC Members were content to agree the minutes as drafted.

2.2 Matters Arising

Actions from items 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 15, 17 and 18 had been completed. Other actions from items 6, 7 and 14 would be picked up under items 6, 7 and 14 below.

3. Chairman's Report

AR reported that much of his time since the last meeting had been taken up with the initiative to refresh the County's work to attract youngsters to the game. This would be discussed in more detail under item 14 but he was pleased to announce formally the success of the application for lottery funding. A small working group of himself, Gerry Stanford and Dick Wheeler had been established to take the project forward but more would be welcome to join the group if they were able to give of their time.

4. Treasurer's Report

4.1 DG reported the latest financial balances as £5940 (current account, excluding the lottery funding for the youth bridge project), £974 (competitions account) and £23016 (deposit account). Use of the on-line entry system had continued to be very popular with around half of entries (around £4K) arriving via that route. There had been one or two teething troubles with individual transfers and DG planned to make related enquiries at the bank. Recent green point events and the autumn congress had generated total surpluses of £1373. Funding outturn for the recent Loughborough JTI was £1100 in support of 10 children attending. The outturn for the annual Kremer Dersch event totalled £404.

4.2 Reflecting on the account balances reported, PG asked about the Association's reserves and the relationship between those and its annual operating costs. DG replied that the figures reported today were simply a snap shot which did not necessarily reflect an overall position. In recent years, in very broad terms, with MC support he had maintained a position of total financial resources of £30K against operating costs of around £10K per annum. PG observed that this seemed somewhat higher than some similar organisations with which he was familiar and asked whether the Association worked to a specific policy in these respects. DW observed that although there was not a specific, documented, policy, the MC had discussed the question of the level of reserves most sensibly maintained on a number of occasions in recent years and on each occasion the MC had agreed to continue with an approach which might be summarised as:

- Financial management with a target of a broad balance between income and costs over time using such small surpluses as might arise from events and other activities to top up the reserves.
- Maintenance of a reserve of around £20-25K against the future need for capital expenditure (on equipment, cards, furniture, etc) and other as yet unidentified demands. A recent example of the latter was the possibility of the Association establishing a permanent 'home' in partnership with one of its clubs. That had not come to fruition but if it had would have involved a major investment in excess of £10K. In addition, recent discussions about the liabilities of individual members of the MC in the event of a claim which proved to be not covered by related insurance (eg because of demonstrable negligence on the part of someone acting on behalf of the Association) added weight to the view that it was wise to maintain a reasonably healthy reserves position.

The county P2P rate had been maintained at a level to preserve this balance and future increases would only be proposed if the reserves position began to be significantly eroded.

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5. Selectors' Report

DW reported on behalf of Julian Mitchell that the Selection Committee had made their choices in relation to the Tollemache Cup to be held in November. An e-mail had been circulated to MC Members listing the details. Minutes from the most recent selectors' meeting would be circulated as soon as possible. AR reported that he had attended the most recent selectors' meeting and the selectors were concerned to establish their legitimacy as clearly as possible to avoid accusations of bias where individual selectors were chosen to represent the county. DW agreed to e-mail the Chairman of the Selectors setting out the process by which selectors' appointments are made and approved by the MC. MP observed that, many years ago, the MC had adopted a policy whereby the Selection Committee was barred from selecting from their own ranks. This practice seemed not to be followed now. AR observed that whilst this might have been practicable then, because there were sufficient top players who no longer wished to be available for selection, that was not the case now. DW agreed to include in his e-mail an invitation for the selectors to suggest further ways in which the objectivity of their decisions might be demonstrated.

Action - DW

6. Tournament Committee Report

6.1 Director Training – The refresher training day for county TDs had been held but some TDs had not been able to attend. Concern was expressed that full competence across ALL TDs in relation to Bridgmate operation had not yet been achieved and DW agreed to consult EW over what further steps might be taken in this respect. He would also consult EW over the previously planned offer to extend the training to clubs.

Action – DW

6.2 Future Sims Events – DW reported that consultations with TC members had not yet identified a preferred timing for the new Open Sims event and DW had yet to consult with Peter Clinch (current Senior Sims organiser). MC members suggested that late October might be a good choice but there were competing events to be avoided. DW agreed to e-mail PC to seek his agreement to take on the new event and to consult him over timing before seeking views from those clubs which had held Senior Sims events in the past.

Action - DW

6.3 Mixed Heats – These had been introduced a couple of years ago in order allow those clubs which wished to hold normal club events alongside a county heat still to participate. It was felt that this would help stem the tide of lower entries. In the intervening period it had become unclear as to whether this apparent advantage was actually outweighed by a growing unwillingness for some to participate in what they see as the false comparisons created by mixed heats. Whilst the MC was committed to continuing with mixed heats for 2014/15, it was agreed that the trawl of clubs for calendar information for 2015/16 should include an invitation to specify whether their proposed heats were to be closed or mixed. This would allow subsequent related publicity which would allow players to choose which heat to attend.

Action - DW

6.4 Location and timing of GP Events – EW had held discussions with Crowborough Community Centre with a view to holding our GP events there in 2015. These had been successful and the venue looked to have no obvious disadvantages and related charges were lower than both Ardingly (which was not available in 2015) and East Grinstead. MC members endorsed this choice and observed that if well received by competitors, Crowborough should be used in 2016 as well.

7. Secretary's Report

7.1 Gladys Hakki Permanent Gift – Andrea Galpin had investigated options for this. There were two options which she suggested the MC should consider. First, a replica carriage clock with a unit price of £110 less 15% if 10+ were purchased at the same time, and, second, a Cross roller ball or ball point pen, priced at around £150 including engraving and subject to 10% discount for multiple orders. There were views in favour of both options and opinion was divided as to whether winners should have a choice of clock or pen. By a narrow margin (6-5) a show of hands favoured not giving winners a choice and deciding now between clock and pen. MC members voted 10-1 in favour of the replica clock. Whether a 'bulk' order should be placed would be dependent on whether associated guarantees would not be undermined by that approach. AG agreed to hold further discussions in this respect before making the purchase through the Treasurer.

Action - AG

7.2 Dimmie Fleming Award – DW expressed his delight to report that the MC's nomination of Joy Mayall had been successful. Joy had decided to attend the EBU AGM in November to receive her award. MC members agreed that this was an excellent result.

7.3 Kremer Dersch – JS reported that this year's event (held on 5 October) had been very successful. 15 teams had entered and the overall winners were the County Stanford team. As county teams are not allowed to win the trophy, that went to the Horsham team who amassed a healthy total of 83 imps. The County Ryder team were third with Henfield BC fourth. JS had agreed with Eastbourne BC that they would host the event in 2015.

8. EBU Matters

8.1 EBU Shareholders – DW had advised the EBU regarding the changes to SCCBA shareholders.

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8.2 EBU Metropolitan Working Group – PB reported that he had received papers from this group just prior to leaving to come to this meeting. There was to be a meeting of the National Working Group on 27 October to discuss the “hot topics” perceived by the counties. DW suggested that one topic might be the competition for players’ time between club, county and national events. Arguably the ‘balance’ was becoming skewed towards more and more national events to the detriment of attendance at county events. This might be sensible in those counties which did not offer many events themselves but in the long term in other counties it might put at risk at least some of their events. PB agreed to input this view by e-mail.

Action - PB

8.3 EBU Elections – DW reported that the EBU’s elections would take place at its AGM in November. EBU officers were elected to serve terms of three years and each year a number offered themselves for re-election. This year that number included Martin Pool who would be seeking re-election to the L&E Committee. MC Members agreed that the County should nominate Martin accordingly.

Action - DW

9. Membership Secretary’s Report

HB reported that the county’s membership total as of today was 2991, just below the 3000 level required for a 4th EBU shareholder. 22 members had indicated a wish to remain anonymous. Her e-mail database now comprised 1820 addresses, of which 215 had ‘unsubscribed’.

10. Communications Committee’s Report

10.1 Year Book 2014/15 - Since the last meeting the 2014 Year Book had finally been issued. This had been largely well received although a number of members had commented on the purple colour of the calendar pages which made them difficult to read. This had been noted for change in the 2015 version. A small number of corrections had been notified to clubs at the end of September.

10.2 Year Book 2015/16 - The working group set up to plan/produce the 2015 Year Book had met earlier today and agreed the outline plan. A number of more detailed actions had been agreed to be taken in the coming weeks. The group would continue to ‘meet’ by e-mail exchange and DW would arrange for regular reports to be made to the MC.

Action - DW

10.3 Social Media - DW suggested that the Youth Bridge project might be complemented by the creation of an SCCBA social media presence. AR agreed to speak to possible candidates to take on the task of designing an approach and making recommendations to the MC

Action - AR

11. Press Secretary’s Report

Geoffrey Wolfarth had reported (through AR) that the limitations on space for county news in the new format of *English Bridge* suggested the need to be selective about which items should be published. He wondered whether such reports should be confined to the events involving less experienced players to provide them with positive feedback for their performances. The MC agreed that this sort of prioritisation would be useful and indicated that they were content to delegate such choices to the Press Secretary. DW would inform him accordingly.

Action - DW

12. Webmaster and Master Point Secretary’s Report

MW had nothing to report on this occasion.

13. Conduct Committee Report

DW reported on behalf of Jill Armstrong that after discussion with MP and AR, a case had been referred back to a club for local resolution.

14. Education Report

14.1 Lottery Grant Application – AR reported that the lottery funding application had been successful and the money (£10,000) had been transferred to the SCCBA bank account. The way was now clear to press on with discussions with clubs and local schools. The aim was to create a number of partnerships with clubs, providing funding for an initial programme of teaching for young people with a view to establishing youth section in each club which might then be continued by the clubs themselves.

14.2 Youth Bridge Project – Meetings had been held with the Avenue, Patcham and Worthing all of which were keen to work with SCCBA. At Worthing a further meeting, with a local high school was planned for 21 October. E-mails had been sent to the Chairmen at Eastbourne and St Leonards and replies were awaited. Contacts with Horsham, Crawley, Chichester and Bognor were also planned. Regular reports of further progress would be provided to the MC.

Action – DW

14.3 Loughborough JTI – DW had circulated Jill Armstrong’s report from this event. Sussex had entered the largest group of youngsters and the event had been much enjoyed by all concerned.

14.4 EBU Summer Congress – DW passed on Jill Armstrong’s report of the performance of Sussex young players at Brighton. Playing with Shahzaad Natt of London, Chris Derrick had finished first in the Under 25’s and Jonathan Derrick & Stephen Kennedy had finished first in the Under 19s. In addition, Zac Tenquist, 11 years old, had been co-opted to play with George Siddens whose partner was unwell. This was a first experience of a national event for Zac and by all accounts he acquitted himself well.

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15. Charities

Following confirmation of the choices for 2015 (and the possible choices for 2016) at the last meeting, there was nothing further to report.

16. Equipment Co-ordinator's Report

MWr reported that the owner of the new equipment storage location now planned to move and another location would need to be found. That may be at the current owner's new location. He would keep the MC informed.

Action - MWr

17. Dates of Next Meetings

DW indicated that the next meeting would be on 16 January 2015 (at Worthing).

Action – DW

18. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm