

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 16 January 2015 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 G Stanford, Mr M Wotton (MW) and Mr M Wright (MWr).

AGENDA

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr A Southwell

2. Minutes of the meeting of 10th October 2014

2.1 Accuracy

MW pointed out that there was a missing word "been" in section 13. DW noted this and would make the correction in the final version.

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 13 below.

3. Chairman's Report

AR reported that most 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 13.

4. Treasurer's Report

DG reported the financial balances at 31 Dec 2014 as £7826 (current account), £630 (competitions account) and £33051 (deposit account, including the lottery funding for the youth bridge project (£10,000)). In overall terms, pre-audit, the year had shown a small (£700) operating surplus but this would be reduced to a small loss after inclusion of depreciation. In terms of individual events, some, particularly those aimed at newer players, had shown small losses whilst other events had shown small surpluses. There was a broad balance overall and therefore it was likely that the county P2P rate for 2016/17 to be recommended at the 2015 AGM would remain at 7p.

5. Selectors' Report

5.1 Selection Objectivity - DW had circulated the minutes of the last Selectors' meeting and a paper outlining the results of discussions about improving objectivity and transparency in the operation of the SC. MC members were content with the recommendations made but PG expressed concern that, prima facie, the Chairman of Selectors had been placed in a difficult position as a result of what appeared to be a potential conflict of interest between that role and his employment at the Avenue BC. After a brief debate about this possibility, DW explained that there were on-going discussions (referenced in the paper) regarding consistency with the EBU's policy on avoiding potential conflicts of interest and the results of these would be presented to the MC, together with recommendations for appointments for 2015/16, at the first MC meeting after the AGM.

Action - DW

5.2 Strengthening Tollemache Performance - AR had e-mailed the county's top players seeking ideas for improvement. He had received some replies and awaited others. The results of his enquiries would be presented to the Selectors in March and the results of their discussions would go to the MC in May.

Action - AR

6. Tournament Committee Report

6.1 Director Training - The on-going need for county TDs to be kept up-to-date, particularly in relation to Bridgemate and PC operations, had been discussed at the last TC meeting and it had been agreed that a yearly update should be arranged. Courses for club TDs had recently been advertised by the CTD, taking place at Patcham CC.

6.2 Future Sims Events - DW reported that the timing of the new open Sim Pairs had been discussed and, given the 'log-jam' of events in the October period, it had been agreed that it would be timed for February at a similar time to the replaced Seniors event. MW would recommend a date and clear lines with the Organiser, Peter Clinch. The latter needed to decide on the groups to receive prizes (Seniors, Juniors, etc) in addition to the overall '1,2,3'. The previously discussed consultation with clubs about dates would not now need to take place.

Action - MW

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6.3 Timing of Green Point Events – The CTD had suggested that the two county GP events be held on the same weekend to reduce cost. This had been discussed at the last TC meeting but there was little support for the idea, particularly as it was felt that such a move might reduce entries overall. This year's events at the Crowborough Community Centre involved an earlier start time in one case because of venue limitations and the impact of this would be monitored. MW observed that that the timing of the GPSP involved a first session and a main interval that were both relatively short. The TC had considered this but decided to retain the proposed timing. MC members indicated that they too were content with this.

6.4 Review of Entry Fees - The TC had reviewed the sufficiency of entry fees and had decided that no changes were necessary. MC members were content with this.

6.5 Attracting more entries to tournaments – The potential value of a survey of members (by e-mail) exploring the background to those who chose not to enter was discussed but MC members felt that this was unlikely to provide decisive illumination. Joy Mayall had recently engaged in a number of pre-event activities and had succeeded in raising entries to the NYST from 14 to 28 teams during the weeks immediately before the event. DW agreed to ask her to document what she had done so that he could circulate it as advice to other Organisers.

Action - DW

7. Secretary's Report

7.1 Communications Issues

- **Year Book 2015/16 – Progress** – DW reported that YB Workgroup had met that evening before the MC meeting and agreed that progress towards delivering the implementation plan was on track. A number of detailed actions had been agreed and the Workgroup would meet again in March.
- **Pianola** – AR had expressed an interest in exploring the potential added value of this product but given the pressures from other priorities, particularly the Youth Bridge Initiative (YBI), he felt that consideration should now be deferred to a later date. MW observed that ideas about the use of Pianola would need to be developed in ways which were consistent with the web site.
- **Use of Social Media** – AR had discussed this with Jonathan Derrick (JD) and Ollie Powell (OP) and an initial Facebook page had been set up for the YBI. MC members agreed that DW should invite JD and OP to recommend ways in which this first social media presence might be expanded to cover the whole of the SCCBA.

Action - DW

7.2 Gladys Hakki Permanent Gift – AG reported that the replica clock previously agreed was no longer available and the nearest alternative appeared to be somewhat more expensive at £195. Also after reflection she wondered whether the previous decision about retrospective awards should be revisited. After an extensive discussion the MC decided by show of hands in each case that:

- A replica clock should still be pursued;
- It should be pursued at a price similar to that previously agreed; and,
- Awards should not be made retrospectively (ie to winners before 2014).

AG agreed to look at further options accordingly.

Action - AG

7.3 Gladys Hakki 2015 – DW reported that the trawl for this year's award had been issued with a return date of 31 January. Thus far he had received three nominations so there would be a need for an MC ballot as in 2014. He would advise the MC further in February.

Action - DW

8. EBU Matters

8.1 EBU AGM – DW had circulated PB's report and PB emphasised three points:

- Sally Bugden's Gold award was an outstanding achievement reflecting the many and significant contributions she had made to bridge over many years at county and national level. MC members expressed their congratulations for such a distinctive achievement.
- In the EBU draw amongst winners of their Sims events, Sussex had been particularly successful with substantial sums going to West Sussex BC and to Reg Underwood and David Cairns.
- The appeals against the previous results of VAT tribunals were important with substantial sums of money riding on the outcome.

8.2 EBU Counties Working Groups – DW had circulated the note of the last meeting of the National Group. MC members had no questions thereto.

9. Membership Secretary's Report

HB reported that the county's membership total as of 4 January was 2948, 43 less than at the last meeting. It seemed unlikely now that Sussex would qualify for a fourth shareholder (over 3000 members) as at 31 March 2015. MW enquired about HB's awareness of dual members. HB said this was shrouded in uncertainty. MC members agreed that, in future, entry forms for the relevant events should include a question about county allegiance.

Action – AR/MW

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10. Press Secretary's Report

There had been no report from the Press Secretary on this occasion.

11. Webmaster and Master Point Secretary's Report

MW reported that a number of on-line entry acknowledgements had gone astray. Some recent changes to the *Bridgewebs* software were expected to increase the likelihood of success in future.

12. Conduct Committee Report

There had been no report from the Conduct Committee Chairman on this occasion.

13. Education Report

13.1 Youth Bridge Initiative – AR reported that the project was proceeding albeit at a somewhat slower pace than had been wished. Positive discussions with clubs and schools had been held and classes had commenced at Christ's Hospital. But, where classes were planned in other schools, gaining final agreement had proved difficult. In one case an impending Ofsted inspection had impeded progress. However, advertisements were being placed in local newspapers this month and a media release had been sent to all local newspaper, radio and TV contacts. The South East Today TV channel had expressed some interest and this was being followed up. *Facebook* pages were also up and running. DW indicated that this slightly slower start might mean the need to continue investment beyond the cut-off date for the Lottery allocation in order to complete the establishment of operational youth sections in each club. MC members agreed in principle a willingness to consider allocating funding from county reserves if such proved to be necessary. The relevant case would need to be made at the October MC meeting.

Action – AR/GS/DW

13.2 English Bridge Education and Development – DW reported a recent e-mail exchange with Simon Barb of EBED which had briefed him about the YBI. He had expressed interest in this and had asked to be kept informed.

Action - DW

13.3 JTI Events – The TC had discussed the possibility of Sussex organising its own JTI event in 2015 but given the slow start to the YBI had decided that attempting such an event in 2015 might be premature. Dave Armstrong had been in touch with AR about this year's EBU JTI at Loughborough and MC members agreed that it should be subsidised in the same way as in 2014. AR also agreed that, as this was training activity, the associated funding might be found from the Lottery allocation. DW agreed to e-mail DA to put him in the picture.

Action - DW

14. Charities

JS reported that the Charity Sims event was in progress this week and she would advise on the results in due course.

15. Equipment Co-ordinator's Report

MW reported that the county storage location would be moving again shortly to West Worthing. This was slightly less convenient for him but otherwise made no difference to the arrangement.

Action - MW

16. Dates of Next Meetings

DW indicated that the next meeting would be on 8 May 2015 (at Worthing).

Action – DW

17. Any Other Business

17.1 AGM 2015 Preparations – DW had circulated the draft agenda for the next AGM together with the nomination/application for MC membership and related papers. MW pointed out the need to clarify that the Membership T&C item on the agenda related to 2015/16. DW noted accordingly. DW asked MC members whether they intended to stand again for 2015/16 and all did so except MP and JS. DW indicated that he would be issuing the agenda early in February and invited MC applications, appropriately signed and supported to reach him soon after.

17.2 Preparations for Appointments – DW pointed out that there would be a number of vacancies to be filled at and soon after the AGM and invited the Officers and MC members to consider possible candidates and advise him accordingly.

Action - All

17.3 Standardising Entry Forms – MC members agreed the need to standardise entry forms in order to avoid possible confusion between different versions. The 2014/15 entry form masters would be used (edited) to produce masters for 2015/16. The latter would be used for the YB and sent to the CTD and all organisers with a request that they, and only they, be used to produce additional paper copies for distribution at earlier events, etc. MW had suggested that all entry forms should comply with consistent standards of layout, content, etc and he had agreed to e-mail his suggestions. He believed that they should cover the additional possible combination of a paper entry form and an on-line payment. He would arrange on-line publication at appropriate times for each event.

Action - MW

17.4 Cessation Of M Lee's business – GS agreed to e-mail Jeremy Willans in response to his enquiry about the possibility of share equipment, etc following the cessation of M Lee's business later this year.

Action - GS

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The meeting closed at 9.10pm