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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 18 July 2014 starting at 7 pm

Present:

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

And other elected members: Mrs H Beveridge (HB), Mr P Gannon (PG), Miss J Simpson (JS), Mr G Stanford (GS) and Mr M Wright (MWr).

AGENDA

0. Opening Remarks

AR opened the meeting by welcoming MC Members and informing those who were not aware that Brian Campbell-Kearsey (BC-K) had found the other pressures in his life too great to bear alongside his SCCBA responsibilities and had resigned. This was regrettable but understandable in the circumstances. AR thanked DW for his briefing document and noted that the agenda was long and potentially time consuming. Accordingly he invited MC Members to maintain a sharp focus in related discussions.

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Mr P Bates, Mrs A Galpin, Mr D Galpin, Mr B Campbell-Kearsey, Mr A Southwell, and Mr M Wotton.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 16th May 2014

2.1 Accuracy

MC Members were content to agree the minutes as drafted.

2.2 Matters Arising

Actions from items 7.1, 8.2, 10, 14.4, 16 and 17 had been completed. Actions from items 2.2.2 and item 6 would be picked up under item 6 below; actions from items 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4 under item 7; action from item 8.1 under item 8; actions from items 14.2, 14.3 and 14.4 under item 14 and action from item 15 under item 15.

3. Chairman's Report

AR reported that much of his time during the first three months of his tenure had been taken up with an initiative to refresh the County's work to attract youngsters to the game. This would be discussed under item 14. More generally, he saw his primary role as doing all he could to work with clubs to increase the county's membership. He planned to talk to clubs as to what they needed and to establish how the county might help.

4. Treasurer's Report

DW reported that the Treasurer's absence had been enforced by the need for hospital tests that afternoon. DW would insert the Treasurer's report into the minutes as a post meeting note in due course.

Post Meeting Note

DG reported the latest financial balances as £9729 (current account), £96 (competitions account) and £22987 (deposit account). In addition, the newly created on-line entry system had proved very popular with around half of the entries for the Green Point Pairs arriving via that route. A similar proportion of entries for the Green Point Teams was also expected by that method. Entry levels for both events were significantly down on 2013 levels perhaps as a result of the failure to issue the 2014 Year Book in good time. This would lead to a reduction of nearly 50% in the surpluses from both events.

5. Selectors' Report

DW reported on behalf of Julian Mitchell that the Selection Committee had made their choices in relation to the Metropolitan Cup to be held in September. An e-mail had circulated to MC Members listing the details. Minutes from the most recent selectors' meeting would be circulated shortly.

Action - DW

6. Tournament Committee Report

DW reported the following:

- Director Training – Eddie Williams (EW) had planned four dates for this refresher training, one for county TDs and three others to be offered to clubs. It was expected that the financial arrangements for the county event would be as previous similar events and that the offer to clubs would be priced competitively.

Action – EW

- Appointment of Tournament Manager – As discussed at the May meeting, EW had offered to take on the TM post and DW had exchanged e-mails with him over the duties involved and the pressures from his other activities. EW had assured DW that his other activities would not

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prevent him from fulfilling the responsibilities of the TM. In the circumstances MC Members were content to confirm EW's appointment as TM.

- Competition Rules (1) – DW had circulated details of suggested changes to the competition rules for the Sussex League. These had been considered by the Tournament Committee (TC) but the latter felt that to accept detailed changes in response to particular circumstances would lead over time to ever more complicated rules. The League Organiser was accorded discretion to deal with the sorts of difficulty which had arisen and the TC had no wish to undermine this. DW sought MC endorsement of this decision and MC members indicated that they were content to endorse as requested.
- Competition Rules (2) – DW reported that Mervyn Wotton had identified the need to update the Competition Rules to reflect the current status of mixed heats. MC Members were content to approve this change.
- Future Sims Events – DW reported that the TC had discussed the difficulties which had arisen in relation to the Senior Sims event. It was now proposed that the two Sims events allowed by the EBU each year should be the charity event and an open event with prizes for the latter not only for 1st, 2nd and 3rd but also for particular groups. The TC had suggested the under 25s, the over 70s and mixed gender pairs. MC Members supported this change but felt that the age related groups might be better defined as under 35 and over 75. However, they were content to leave the final definitions to the organiser. Currently the charity event is held in January and a week needs to be set aside for that. Therefore it would seem sensible to position the open event in the autumn. These new arrangements would apply first to the events in 2016.

Action - DW

- 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

- Location and timing of 2016 GP Events – The current location of GP events (East Grinstead) was becoming increasingly unpopular and discussions were under way over a possible return to Ardingly. GS reported that early indications were that none of the possible dates in 2015 and 2016 were available at Ardingly but this may change. EW had also suggested that in 2016 the two events should be held over a single weekend. He felt that this would avoid conflicts with other counties' events, save money on transport of equipment and that a lower price might be negotiated for two consecutive days. MC Members were not persuaded by these arguments and felt strongly that players would be less likely to want to dedicate a whole weekend rather than a single day in each of two separate months and that a move to a whole weekend would reduce entries overall.

7. Secretary's Report

DW reported the following:

- Roles for MC Members – Following the resignation of the Vice Chairman (VC) and two members of the previous education group, a number of roles were vacant. AR was content to continue without a VC pro tem and MC Members agreed that there was no immediate need to fill the marketing co-ordinator role. GS agreed to take on the Mixed Pairs Organiser role. AR agreed to chair the education group and GS agreed to liaise with him over the continuing residual work arising from the *Bridge in Schools* initiative. MC Members endorsed these changes and DW agreed to revise the appointments list accordingly.

Action - DW

- Gladys Hakki Permanent Gift – Andrea Galpin had investigated options for this and would circulate the results by e-mail soon after the meeting.

Action - AG

- Recognition of Service – DW had just one nomination for a Dimmie Fleming award in 2014 which MC Members were content to endorse. This would be forwarded to the EBU shortly.

Action - DW

8. EBU Matters

DW reported the following:

- EBU Shareholders – DW reported that, as anticipated, the EBU had informed him that following a reduction in our county membership to 2973 as at 31 March 2014, the number of EBU shareholdings held by the county would be reduced to three. The Officers recommended that these should be Joy Mayall, Peter Bates (PB) and Dick Wheeler. MC Members agreed. DW would advise the EBU accordingly.

Action – DW

- EBU Metropolitan Working Group – This group (on which PB was our representative) had held its first meeting on 2 July. It (and the other working groups) would be the primary mechanism for encouraging interaction between counties and the EBU. County Chairmen would continue

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to have annual access via the Chairmen's Conference and shareholders via the AGM. The separate shareholders' meeting in April would be discontinued.

- County Association as a Charity – DW had explored with Hants & IoW the background to their successful application to become a charity. The primary reason lay in their particular circumstances and did not create an opportunity which SCCBA might follow with similar benefits.

9. Membership Secretary's Report

HB reported that the county's membership total had risen to 2995, an increase of 42 since the May meeting. 22 members had indicated a wish to remain anonymous. Her e-mail database continued to expand and now comprised 1826 addresses, of which 209 had 'unsubscribed'.

10. Communications Committee's Report

AR had agreed with BC-K to take over finalisation of the 2014 Year Book. GS had personal copies of all of the pages apart from the list of Officers and other appointments and the Chairman's opening message. AR and GS would work together to arrange for issue as soon as possible.

Action AR/GS

11. Press Officer's Report

Geoffrey Wolfarth had reported by e-mail that his preparations for input to the next issue of *English Bridge* were complete.

12. Webmaster and Master Point Secretary's Report

MW had reported by e-mail that:

- Entry to events using on-line forms had increased significantly, especially as regards the Green Point events with 50% of Swiss Pairs entries and nearly 60% (so far) of Swiss Teams entries being received this way. MW is currently working on the Autumn Congress entry form.
- Final checking of web-site calendar entries against the Year Book is still outstanding.

13. Conduct Committee Report

DW reported on behalf of Jill Armstrong that there were no issues under consideration.

14. Education Report

AR and DW reported the following:

- Attracting more young people to bridge – Responses to AR's letter to the top ten clubs had been reasonably positive about the possibility of establishing after school sections in each club. One or two clubs had still to respond but there was sufficient evidence of support to allow the application for Lottery funding (for £10K) to go forward. The application would be considered over the next two months or so and the primary use of the funding if acquired would be to allow the bridge teachers involved to be properly compensated without impact on county revenues. Whilst the funding application was being considered, AR would arrange meetings with interested clubs to discuss their questions in more detail.

Action – AR

- Teaching Web Site – Following BC-K's resignation and, given the clear links to teaching information now on the main web site, this separate site would not be pursued further.
- Seminars for Improvers – Plans for further seminars would be deferred until the necessary resources became available.
- Loughborough JTI – Jill Armstrong had reported that there were ten children confirmed and six adults would accompany them using a number of private cars.

15. Charities

JS had circulated details of two charities which she recommended to benefit in 2015. MC Members agreed. MP and PG respectively suggested that *Pericles* (West Hoathly) and the *Oyster Project* (Lewes) might be considered for 2016.

Action – JS

16. Equipment Co-ordinator's Report

MW reported that movement of the county's equipment to its new storage location had been completed and a standing order was in place in respect of the monthly cost of £30. DW had written to Jim and Sally Bugden to thank them for the storage provided cost-free for many years.

17. Dates of Next Meetings

DW indicated that the next meeting would be on 10 October 2014 (at Worthing).

Action – DW

18. Any Other Business

JS advised that the 2014 Kremer Dersch would take place at the Old Barn Way BC on 5 October. DW would assemble two MC teams and AR agreed to be the first name on his list. The invitation to clubs would be issued early in August.

Action – JS/DW

The meeting closed at 8.55pm

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