

FINAL

Sussex County Contract Bridge Association

A meeting of the Tournament Committee of the SCCBA was held at 27, Bodmin Road, Worthing, BN13 3HE on Tuesday 10th November 2015 commencing at 1.30pm.

PRESENT: D Wheeler (DW - Chairman & Secretary), Mrs R Wolfarth (RW – Tournament Manager), D Galpin (DG), M Pool (MP) and M Wotton (MW)

1. APOLOGIES – Mrs A Galpin (AG), A Ryder (AR)

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The final draft minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2015 were agreed as presented.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Actions from paragraphs 3.2, 4.1, 5.5, 6.1 and 6.2 had been completed

3.1 Attracting more entries to tournaments (para 3.3)

RW felt that the design limitations of the software used to create and maintain the county web site meant that its impact as an advertising medium was not as great as it might be. MW commented that, within the confines of the BridgeWebs software, the webmaster of another county told him that he thought that the Sussex website was the best one. DW commented that from his perspective the level of entries to any particular event was dependent on the extent to which the organiser was prepared to be proactive, eg by distributing entry forms in advance and contacting past entries by e-mail. RW agreed and she would continue to encourage that approach as much as possible. She would also reflect further on any possible further improvements to the web site and discuss them with MW.

Action: RW/MW

3.2 Strengthening Tollemache performance (para 5.2)

Support for the previously planned expert seminar had waned and AR would review the situation again after this year's event. Eddie Williams had observed that now might be the right time to introduce some of the younger players who were now playing in the Premier League and representing GB in Under 20 and 25 events. The TC agreed that this was a matter for the Selectors and DW would pass on the suggestion to the Chairman (Julian Mitchell).

Action: DW

3.3 Sussex JTI (para5.3)

The event had been delivered successfully during the week beginning 10 August and plans were now in train for an initiative in conjunction with Sussex Junior Chess. It was expected that a more detailed report would be presented to the MC at its next meeting (20 November)

3.4 Henfield Candles (para 7.2)

RW reported that those previously responsible for the Candles were content for the county to retain the title given its long history. MP asked whether *Bridgemates* should be used in future as it was now a county event. DG, who would be directing Worthing BC's Hill's Trophy event without *Bridgemates* on 15 November, indicated that the use of electronic scorers only saved a relatively small amount of time between rounds and he would be content to direct without them for county events, although he had used them for the NYST, assisted by Ron Robins.

3.5 Blue Point Events (para 7.3)

Following a suggestion from Eddie Williams, the TC had reflected on the options for making better use of the EBU BP annual allowance. The TC agreed that the Spring Congress should retain its BP status but the licences for the Autumn Congress (AC) should be reallocated to the Henfield Candles and the Midweek Swiss Pairs reflecting their comparative popularity. RW agreed to explore alternative date/ location options for the AC in order to increase its attractiveness. She would also review the case for the AC Friday events following this year's cancellation.

3.6 Encouraging early entries (para 7.4)

FINAL

RW had emphasised the value of early entries in her recent Tournament Newsletter but she agreed that proactive organisers were the key to success in this area. She would continue to encourage accordingly.

4. TOURNAMENT MANAGER'S REPORT

4.1 Collaboration with other counties

Other pressures had prevented RW from taking this further (but see paragraph 4.5 below).

4.2 Events for the less experienced

A number of suggestions had been fielded by RW that the county should be investing much more in events designed to appeal to less experienced players. The county already runs several Basic Bridge and Venture Pairs events as well as the David Pavey competition for those with fewer than 10,000 MPs. One suggestion had focused on subsidised entry fees but recent experience at Patcham BC, where the county element of the fee is absorbed by the club, seemed to contradict this. There only 8 pairs had contested the David Pavey heat whereas 29 pairs had competed at Horsham BC. DW agreed to follow up with the latter on the reasons for their success in order to be able to share it with others.

Action: DW

4.3 David Pavey

Heats for this important event were about half way through and, as indicated above, entry levels were mixed. DG had agreed to direct the final at Worthing BC in 2016.

4.4 Tournament Newsletter (TN)

RW's first TN had issued via the county web site last month. Apart from the TC Chair, it had not generated any feedback. DW suggested that the next one might be designed to appeal to the wider membership and issued via e-mail. RW would consider this.

Action: RW

4.5 Café Bridge

RW and AR had attended a very successful (over 160 took part) event organised by Surrey CBA. RW was now exploring contacts with a view to organising a similar event in the Hove area.

Action: RW

5. ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

5.1 Timing of GP and Congress Events

Following positive feedback from the change of start time (to 11am) at a number of our major events in 2015, this start time would be used for all GP and Congress events apart from the Sunday of the Spring Congress, when the AGM takes place from 11.30 until 13.00.

5.2 Director Training

Eddie Williams had offered two dates for Club TD training but one had been cancelled for lack of support. He had offered to organise an update training day for county TDs in 2016 and the TC agreed to accept this. DW would inform him accordingly

Action: DW

5.3 Trophies for Sussex League Divisions 3, 4 and 5

FINAL

DG reported that all of the new trophies had been purchased and engraved with the agreed names. All was ready for them to be awarded to the winners at the end of the season.

6. COMPETITIONS (REPORTS & DISCUSSIONS)

6.1 Sussex League

DG reported that the 2015/16 season was well under way with 42 teams playing in six divisions. There was one division of six teams and one of eight with the others being of seven teams.

6.2 GP Events in 2015

Numbers of entries had been down with both teams and Pairs events around 25% lower than the previous year. Modest budget surpluses had been achieved as a result of lower costs but the 'profits' were much lower than those of some years ago.

6.3 Tournament Returns – Cost Recovery and Feedback

RW was continuing to monitor recovery although feedback from each event (in the form of financial reconciliations from organisers) was often slow to appear.

6.4 Feedback from Midweek Swiss Pairs

DW had circulated a copy of a recent e-mail and initial responses. The correspondent had written to Joy Mayall making various comments about the organisation of the Mid Week Swiss Pairs, particularly the choice of movement. Whilst DW appreciated the international dimension to the correspondent's extensive experience and the colourful forcefulness with which he had expressed his views, his suggestions for change attracted little support from TC Members. MP felt that he did have a good point about the need for a clear proviso on the pre-event documentation about the final movement to be selected being dependent on the final number of entries but his views about movements were not accepted. In addition, DW rehearsed that the primary policy of the TC was to evolve its competition offerings in response to the views of the majority of those participating or potentially participating. Examples of that evolution in recent years have included changes of venue, changes of start times, elimination of unpopular events and the introduction of new events in response to demand. Indeed, the Midweek Swiss Pairs itself was introduced relatively recently as part of that evolution. As regards the details of the movement employed, in general, the choice of movements for county events was made in line with EBU recommendations and for the benefit of the majority of participants. However, as a matter of personal interest DG had applied the mathematical formula indicated by the correspondent to the Swiss Pairs weekend at last August's EBU Brighton Summer Meeting. There were 287 pairs which gave a square root of $17 + 2$ i.e. 19 rounds when there were in fact only 14. This meant that only 74% of the "correct" number of rounds was played at the EBU event, compared with 75% at our Midweek Swiss Pairs event. It would seem therefore that whilst we may not be perfect, we were at least as 'good' as our national body. DW agreed to respond further to the correspondent accordingly.

Action: DW

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 Licensing & Master Points Handbook

MW reported that the September 1st version of the L&MPH quite clearly indicated that the heats of our county events were no longer to be considered as part of our county events for master point purposes, resulting in lower awards in the heats and in the final. The EBU's primary contact regarding master point issues confirmed this to MW by email. MP subsequently ascertained via the EBU's leading master point expert that there had been a misunderstanding. Consequently, county heats will remain as part of our county events for master point purposes and, therefore, awards for heats and final will remain as they were.

7.2 Appointments 2016/17

DW reported that there were three organiser vacancies for 2016/17 following advice from Eddie Williams that he was no longer able to do the Autumn Congress, the Inter Club Teams of Eight and the Venture Pairs. MP indicated that if no one else could be found he

FINAL

would be prepared to organise the Autumn Congress. Other options for the other events were discussed and DW agreed to follow up on these.

Action: DW

7.3 Confirmation of Membership Requirements for SCCBA events

MW had circulated a detailed note and the TC agreed that this should be published on the web site. It should also be included in the 2016/17 Year Book in due course.

Action: MW

7.4 Entry Forms – Request for Postal Address?

Following further consideration, the TC now agreed that requests for postal addresses were no longer required on competition entry forms apart from the Sussex League. If needed in future, addresses could be obtained from the Membership Secretary's database. MW would update the current entry form standards document and pass it to RW for circulation to organisers.

Action: MW

7.5 Directors – Guidance for TDs and Organisers

The new versions of the EBU Blue and White Books were to be supplied to all county TDs. There was therefore no longer a need for Sussex specific guidance. It was important that ALL county events were directed by county directors or others of the same standard. Event organisers should be made aware that EBU directors were an alternative if no county director was available. MP believed that the costs involved would be similar. A note about this option would be included in the Year Book next year.

Action: DW

7.6 CTD Comments

Eddie Williams had e-mailed DW with a number of observations. These were discussed and DW agreed to send responses after the meeting.

Action: DW

7.7 Championship Teams Plate Draw

A team captain had e-mailed Roger Poulter (RP - Champ Teams Organiser) expressing a concern about the draw for the Plate competition. The TC agreed that there was an issue to be resolved. MW indicated that he thought that RP was away on holiday for "an extended period" so the TC agreed that DG (with RW) would organise a contingent, witnessed, redraw of the Plate first round. The result of this would be used if the result of a yet to be played second round match in the main competition led to there being a 'vacancy' in the Plate second which would give one team a second bye. DG would write to all involved with the result of the redraw, clarifying the actions that would be taken dependent on the outcome of the awaited result. DW would ensure that RP was briefed in anticipation of his return in due course.

Action: DG/DW

7.8 Mixed Heats

In response to a question from MW TC confirmed it was content to continue with mixed heats. MW observed that the enquiry about Clubs' intentions regarding mixed heats, which had been included on the request for information for use in the Year Book, had not generated many replies. DW agreed to look at whether the enquiry could be made clearer on the request for the 2016 Year Book.

Action: DW

7.9 Mini League

MW observed that the inter-club league organised by the Avenue BC had been described in the 2015/16 Year Book as the "Sussex Inter-Club League" which might give the impression that it was a county event. The TC agreed and DW agreed to negotiate a new name for the Avenue competition in the next Year Book.

Action: DW

7.10 EBUScore

FINAL

MW said that there seemed to be doubt about the status of *EBUScore* compared with other software in use for county events. In the first instance RW would e-mail Ron Robins to check on the line he was taking in updating the county equipment for which he was responsible.

Action: RW

7.11 Chairman's Cup

This event had been held recently using the established format and in future years it was expected to be 'converted' into an event for younger players. MW observed that even if this change was not implemented in 2016, the published rules would still need to be updated. DW would advise AR accordingly.

Action: DW

7.12 Invitation Pairs 2016

On behalf of AG, DG circulated hard copies of the dates proposed for the Invitation Pairs heats in 2016. The TC agreed to the dates proposed.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 23 February 2016

13 November 2015