

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 13th Nov 2018 commencing at 1.30pm.

PRESENT: D Wheeler (DW - Chairman & Secretary), P Clinch (PC - Tournament Manager), J Hardy (JH), M Pool (MP) and M Wotton (MW).

1. APOLOGIES – Mrs A Galpin (AG)

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The final draft minutes of the meeting held on 31 July 2018 were agreed as presented.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Actions from paragraphs 3.5, 3.10, 4.1, 4.2 and 5.1 had been completed.

3.1 Use of EBU TD as CTD (para 3.1)

PC had approached Richard Banbury, as suggested at the last TC, but he had not replied, despite a reminder being conveyed by a colleague. PC intended to shift his focus to either Paul Gibbons or Steve Foster and he would report further in due course. PC noted that Eddie Williams had provided excellent support for him, especially in Bridgmate maintenance, EBUScore consultancy. The critical need for a CTD remained at the Spring Congress, where a fully competent Director team is essential. Although PC could organise the logistics of the Congress, a fully-qualified, confident, at least county level director will be needed there.

Action: PC

3.2 Friday events at the Spring Congress (para 3.2)

Owing to a misunderstanding following the last TC meeting, PC had acted on the agreement there that these events should not be pursued further by cancelling the booking for that day. The Welcome Pairs had already been moved to the Saturday programme and AG's suggestions (which DW had failed to feed into the last meeting's discussion) required significant work for an additional organiser and it was unclear how this might be resourced. In addition, it was also uncertain whether the booking could be successfully reinstated given the demand for time/space at Uckfield. JH reiterated that he remained of the view that the Friday events contributed little to the overall viability of the Congress. In all the circumstances, TC members agreed that the Friday events for 2019 should not be reinstated. For subsequent years, reinstatement could be reconsidered if the related resource can be found. Appropriate changes to the web site and to the planned publicity of the event would be implemented as soon as possible.

Action: PC

3.3 Sussex Pairs – Strengthening club heat qualification arrangements (para 3.3)

Existing guidance to clubs was already clear on the requirement for one winner movements but it was not clear that this was getting through to the club directors running the heats. DW agreed to email TOs making clear the importance of advising directors involved in running heats of the Sussex Pairs, Mixed Pairs, David Pavey and Individual competitions.

Action: DW

3.4 Club Heats – Publishing Results (para 3.4)

Enquiries had established that the 'rules' for results publication were not being followed by all organisers. DW would include this in his email (see also paragraph 3.3 above).

Action: DW

3.5 Consistent application of simple systems definition (para 3.9)

Action (to develop additional guidance to TOs to ensure application of a consistent but appropriately flexible definition) carried forward to the Feb 2019 meeting.

Action: PC

3.6 Half price offers - Congress Pairs and League/Championship Teams (para 3.7 and 3.8)

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Further discussion on this idea established that the potential value could only be clarified through the use of a trial and it was too late now to implement such for the League/Championship Teams. JH and DW remained of the view that the key to entry levels lay in the extent to which TOs fulfilled all of the actions advised in the relevant Annex to the TO guidelines. The latter were developed from the experience of Joy Mayall and her events continued to show consistently high levels of entries. DW would emphasise this point in his email to TOs (see 3.3 and 3.4 above)

Action: DW

3.7 Improving participation from the furthest extremities (para 3.9)

DW rehearsed that Barbara Herold and Eddie Williams had been working on the development of a 'regional' event for less experienced players based in East Sussex. DW had been informed that the results of this event would be published on the St Leonards and East Sussex clubs' web site. DW had understood that the event would take place in October but a recent web site search had not revealed anything. DW had been hopeful that if this proved to be a success (as a replacement for the BB event previously held at St Leonards), the format might also be replicated in Bognor or Chichester as a replacement for the Bognor BB event. DW would follow up with Barbara Herold.

Action: DW

[Post meeting note – Enquiries to Barbara Herold revealed that the planned event had been cancelled because of lack of support. The next TC meeting (Feb 2019) would reopen discussions on this topic]

3.8 Lord Newton Link Trophy – Future Use (para 5.2)

PC had discussed this with Richard Newton and had floated (at a very high level) to both him and David Galpin the idea of a lower level knock-out competition that could be rather like the early rounds of the FA Cup, producing a winner amongst lower league teams, as well as automatic entry to the Championship Teams. TC members agreed that this could be a useful addition to the programme for the 2019/20 season. PC hadn't yet received any response to the idea but would follow up.

Action: PC

3.9 Year Book distribution – Use of plastic envelopes (para 6.2)

JH had spoken to the EBU and their suppliers but the results of his enquiries suggested that such a strategy would not engineer significant savings. TC members agreed that it should not be pursued any further.

4. TOURNAMENT MANAGER'S REPORT

4.1 County laptop computer

At the Autumn Congress PC had experienced a lot of difficulties in keeping Bridgemates and printer running simultaneously while connected to the county computer. It runs on Windows 7 and is not of a sufficiently high specification to be upgraded to Windows 10. Although Ron Robins believes that it is still useable by judicious application of USB ports, PC requested that consideration be given to purchasing a new one. TC members supported this request and DW would seek MC approval on 30 Nov.

Action: DW

4.2 Suppression of 'Other results' on county Bridgemates

Following the Autumn Congress, PC had received a request from Peter Griffin that the 'Other results' feature be suppressed because the debates/discussions which flowed from it acted as a brake on playing time. PC advised that if the facility acted in the way described it surely reflected the fact that other players were showing some interest in it and its suppression might not be well received. Management of playing time was a matter for the TD and if this facility was having a marked effect as described, it would be up to the TD to encourage a more succinct approach to the viewing of other results. However, PC would check with the EBU on the practice at national events.

Action: PC

5. ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

5.1 Kremer Dersch 2018

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Held again at Eastbourne BC, this event had attracted 13 teams (3 up on the previous year). The Avenue were clear winners with 77 VPs and West Sussex second and Patcham third, separated by only one VP (43, 42). TC members agreed that the event should stay with EBC for 2019.

5.2 Metropolitan Cup – Concerns raised by Middlesex CBA

Peter Hasenson of the MCBA had emailed county chairmen with a number of concerns about the future of this event. MP agreed to provide DW with his comments and DW would draft a response for his approval.

Action: MP

5.3 Master point based entry restrictions

DW suggested that events such as the David Pavey and the Venture Pairs, entry to which was restricted to players with MP totals below certain levels, should have restrictions based on NGS gradings at a point in time each season. NGS gradings were a more accurate measure of current competence. MW agreed to research the practicalities of this idea and report back.

Action: MW

5.4 Stratification – Extension to all suitable events

Ernie Rivett (Worthing BC) had suggested that stratification should be extended to all suitable county events to encourage participation by the less experienced. This could raise entry levels, particularly if it was accompanied by prizes for the 'best' less experienced pairs. MW referred to his proposals from a couple of years ago which had envisaged extension to other events but action remained to be taken. TC members agreed that this extension should now take place.

Action: DW/MW/PC

6. COMPETITIONS (REPORTS & DISCUSSIONS)

6.1 Sussex League/Championship Teams

6.2 Competition Rules

- Arranging matches – Costs associated with request for 'half-way' venue – DW had circulated a draft MC paper recommending a change which would make the away team responsible for the venue costs of a half way location. The right to call for such rested only with the away team captain and it seemed logical therefore that associated costs should be borne by the away team. PC was not convinced but other TC members agreed to recommend this change to the MC.

Action: DW

- Rearranged heats – associated publicity – TC members agreed to record that the policy here was email all clubs with details of the rearrangement and post those details prominently on the county web site. This is entirely in line with paragraph 1(2) of the preamble to the competition rules.

6.3 Tournament Returns – Cost Recovery and Feedback

JH had circulated summary reports of the outturn from county events held this year. Overall outturn was slightly down on 2017 but JH noted an encouraging profit from the Autumn Congress, albeit mainly derived from the lower overheads applicable to the use of Patcham BC as the venue. The Ladies Pairs had also shown a surplus derived from Joy Mayall's assiduous application of the TO guidelines. MW had circulated a very useful analysis of entries in 2017 and 2018 and this seemed to reinforce the importance of effective marketing.

6.4 Autumn Congress – Viability

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As indicated above (6.3), this event showed a small surplus this year because of the lower venue costs arising at Patcham BC. TC members agreed that it should continue, based at Patcham BC, subject to their agreement.

6.5 Tollemache 2018/19

The revised selection process had worked well and MP had collected the papers associated with the secret ballot and passed them to DW for retention. The qualifying event was due to take place on 17/18 Nov.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 Ladies Pairs Trophy

DW reported that an additional sleeve was required to maintain the recording of winners. JH confirmed that he would be dealing with Joy Mayall's request shortly.

7.2 Worthing BC ideas

In addition to their views on Stratification (see 5.4 above), WBC had suggested that the county might consider organising one or two additional simultaneous pairs competitions. It was pointed out that the county is limited to holding just two competitions by the EBU. DW observed that the EBU/EBED programme of events provided a 'sims' opportunity in most months. He would report back to WBC accordingly.

7.3 Director Courses

PC had agreed with Eddie Williams that TD courses would be held at Patcham in 2019 on the following dates:

- 1st - 13th April - Book/Judgement Rulings day 1
- 2nd - 11th May - Book/Judgement Rulings day 2
- 3rd - 8th June – Assessment

8. Date of next meeting – 19 February 2019