

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 16th December 2014 commencing at 1.30pm.

PRESENT: D Wheeler (Chairman & Secretary), D Galpin, M Pool, A Ryder, and M Wotton.

1. APOLOGIES – A Galpin, E Williams

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The final draft minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2014 were agreed as presented.

3. MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Stratification (para 3.2)

MW reported that an in e-mail exchange with AR Jeff Smith had asserted that stratification could be utilised under his software. Subsequently, a county TD, Keith Norman, had used it (for the East Grinstead BB event) and, although he had encountered minor problems, he had managed to resolve these himself.

3.2 Director Training (para 3.3)

DW suggested that further action would need to await input from Eddie Williams (TM/CTD). His mother had been taken into hospital but he would be reporting by e-mail as soon as possible. The TC agreed that a full refresher training day for county TDs would be needed in 2015, particularly in relation to the use of Bridgemates and the Jeff Smith software.

Action: EW/DW

3.3 Continuation of Mixed Heats (para 3.5)

These had been discussed at the MC in October. 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 (particularly in the Year Book) which would allow players to choose which heat to attend. DW had revised the request for information from clubs accordingly.

3.4 Appointment of new Tournament Manager (para 4.1)

Eddie Williams's (EW) appointment had been endorsed by the MC at its last meeting.

3.5 Year Book 2015/16 (para 4.2)

The YB working group had been set up, a task list agreed and progress was being monitored and reported to the MC. MW queried whether Gerry Stanford was still a joint editor of the YB and AR confirmed that he (AR) was now the sole editor. DW agreed to amend the appointments list accordingly.

Action: DW

3.6 Chairman's Cup (para 6.3)

TC members acknowledged the past difficulties in the availability of suitable participants for this biennial event. AR indicated that he was now minded to focus a new event for this cup open to those participating in the Youth Bridge Initiative. He would think further about this and report back to the next TC meeting.

Action: AR

4. ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

4.1 Future Sims Events

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The move to create a new open event (to replace the Senior event) had been the subject of an extensive e-mail exchange. It was agreed that the best timing was probably late October or November but there needed to be consultation with the clubs most likely to hold heats as to the best date. MW agreed to draft an enquiry to be sent to the clubs concerned by DW in due course.

Action: MW/DW

4.2 Item replicated in error

4.3 Feasibility of Sussex JTI in 2015

DW suggested that, on the one hand, the relatively slow progress on establishing firm partnerships which provided a sound foundation to the proposed YBI classes suggested that attempting a JTI of our own in 2015 might be a step too far at this stage. Alternatively, it was possible that Lottery funding might be used to subsidise an expanded entry to Loughborough JTI in 2015. There was also the possibility of the new Chairman's Cup – see paragraph 3.6 above.

4.4 Guidance re BB@B

DW described the recent e-mail exchange with Molly Freeman and the response given. The TC was content to endorse that response.

4.5 Sussex Pairs Qualifiers

Recent potential difficulties with qualifiers had been resolved satisfactorily and intervention by the TC was no longer required.

5. COMPETITIONS (REPORTS & DISCUSSIONS)

5.1 Sussex League

DG reported that the season was now well under way with 41 teams involved, two fewer than the previous season. The teams in the lowest division were playing each other twice to compensate for the lower numbers there. In response to a query from DW, DG confirmed that the ruling on the number of players allowed in each team had been accepted by all concerned.

5.2 Green Point Events 2015

EW's report on the preparations for these events was awaited. DG said that the times associated with the deposits paid to Crowborough suggested that EW may propose an earlier start to the Pairs event in May. The TC expressed concern about the possible impact of such on entry levels. DW agreed to e-mail EW to check this.

Action: DW/EW

5.3 Tournament Returns – Cost Recovery and Feedback

In the absence of EW's reports, there was no specific intelligence but DG indicated that he was not aware of any loss-making events in 2014.

5.4 Review of Entry Fees for 2015/16

DG indicated that in light of the continued balanced position on tournament outturns, despite lower entry levels, he did not believe it was necessary to increase any entry fees. The TC agreed. AR enquired about his suggestion that for the league and Championship Teams, the entry fee should be £4 per player rather than £16 per team. DG said that this would discriminate against those teams that

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used a pool of up to six players, only four of which could play at any one time. The TC agreed with this and approved the continuation of the £16 per team fee.

5.5 Attracting more entries to tournaments

DW referred to the membership survey he had proposed some weeks ago. This would seek intelligence as to the reasons for non-participation. MP reminded the TC of the major survey carried out in 2012 and wondered whether another survey would achieve any more intelligence. DW replied that the proposed survey was much shorter and very specifically targeted. AR believed that there should be a more pro-active approach to publicity about future events, including regular e-mails to 'push' events. Current publicity in the YB and on the web was relatively passive. DW agreed to e-mail Hazel Beveridge to seek her views on how a more pro-active approach might be achieved.

Action: DW

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 On-line entry system – State of Play

MW reported that he had passed on reports of e-mail acknowledgements going missing to the BridgeWebs contact but his reply was still awaited. He said that he would try to report the eventual results of his enquiries to the next MC meeting.

6.2 Tollemache 2014

AR expressed his disappointment with the performance of the Sussex team at this year's event. He was keen to explore the steps which might be taken to strengthen the team in advance of future events. A series of challenge matches with other counties might be organised although he recognised that even now pressures on players' time were significant. DW wondered whether professional coaching might be a worthwhile investment. It was agreed that, in the first instance, the players should be consulted as to their views on options to strengthen future performance. AR agreed to e-mail Julian Mitchell to initiate that discussion.

Action: AR

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 30 June 2015

18 December 2014