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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 31st July 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 6 March 2018 were agreed as presented, subject to MW's request for clarification in paragraph 3.8.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Actions from paragraphs 3.5, 5.1, 6.2 1st bullet), 6.6 and 6.8 had been completed.

3.1 CTD (para 3.1)

PC had discussed this with Eddie Williams (EW) but he was of the view that there was too much overlap between the TM role and a CTD. PC disagreed, citing oversight of the panel of county TDs including recruitment of replacements, ensuring county TD education was up-to-date and the provision of senior level rulings as examples of responsibilities which were clearly outwith the agreed TD job description and dependent on a senior level TD background. DW observed that EW appeared to be by far the best local choice for such a role but clearly he was not keen to take it on. DW wondered whether a different approach might involve creating a partnership with an EBU Director for the direction of flagship events leaving the local panel to continue to be the source of TDs for other events. That EBU Director might also be the source of CTD type activities by special arrangements. TC members agreed. PC agreed to make the necessary enquiries and report back.

Action: PC

3.2 Friday events at the Spring Congress (para 3.2)

Financial analysis by JH showed that it was difficult to justify continuation of these events. They were not well supported and the additional costs associated with this third day were significant. TC members agreed that in all the circumstances these events should probably be cancelled.

[Post meeting note – Immediately prior to the meeting AG had offered by email the view that a redesign of the two events to make them more attractive, linked to a special price to play in both, with the option of food between the afternoon and evening sessions might be considered. This might also be linked to Richard Newton's proposal (see paragraph 5.2 below) by considering the Friday afternoon for a final of a competition. Entries for that competition should not affect support for the multiple teams event. Owing to an oversight, DW had failed to feed this view in to the discussion. In light of this TC members agreed subsequently to revisit the issue at their next meeting.]

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 all clubs (when advised to do so by PC following an update to the TO guidelines) making clear the importance of advising directors involved in running heats of the Sussex Pairs, Mixed Pairs, David Pavey and Individual competitions.

Action: PC/DW

3.4 Club Heats – Publishing Results (para 3.5)

Enquiries had established that the 'rules' for results publication were not being followed by all organisers. PC would prepare a draft amendment to the TO guidelines for agreement and issue via DW (see also paragraph 3.3 above)..

Action: PC

3.5 Merger of the organisation of the Championship Teams (CT) and the Sussex League (para 3.7)

David Galpin (DG) had reported by email that despite the combining of these events (and the associated encouragement to enter both), currently entries were down on 2017 for both. With only a week to go before the extended closing date, DG was not confident that final numbers would be any more than PY levels at best. PC agreed to email (via Joy Mayall) all on the membership email list to

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broaden the publicity. Separately, DG had sought approval to revert to the original method of conducting the draw for the CT. Whilst indirectly this involved more work for MW (through the need, after the final, to calculate master points manually, subsequently to create a dummy event to issue these awards and also to notify the EBU separately of the number of player sessions involved for P2P purposes), it had the advantage of providing clarity for entrants regarding potential opponents in each round. MW confirmed he was content to make this change. TC members approved the change and DW agreed to inform DG accordingly.

Action: DW

3.6 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 November meeting.

Action: PC

3.7 Half price offer for combined entries to Congress Pairs (para 4 2nd bullet)

Further discussion on this was deferred until a later meeting. [*Hon. Sec's note - in essence, for the offer to be financially viable, it would need to attract sufficient additional entries to compensate for the potential 'loss' of 50% of one event entry fee from each combined entry. It may be difficult to judge this without the results of a trial.*]

Action: DW

3.8 Half price offer for combined entries to League and Championship Teams (para 4 1st bullet)

Further discussion on this was deferred until a later meeting. [*Hon. Sec's note – see my comment at paragraph 3.7 above.*]

Action: DW

[*Post meeting note – Immediately prior to the meeting AG had offered by email the view that with the benefit of hindsight it might have been better to have introduced a financial incentive this year. She believed that something along the lines of £22 - £16 for the league and only another £6 to enter a team (containing the same team captain) into the Championship Teams might be attractive. Further incentives might include linking success in the Championship Teams to selection for the Tollemache (although this idea has been overtaken by the new process recommended by the Selection Committee), and for the Metropolitan Cup (b or c as appropriate) for the winners of the plate. Owing to an oversight, DW had failed to feed this view in to the meeting.*]

3.9 Improving participation from the furthest extremities (para 4 5th bullet)

DW noted that Barbara Herold (BH) and EW were now working on the development of a 'regional' event for less experienced players based in East Sussex. If this proves 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. TC members agreed to await feedback from BH and EW. DW agreed to check with BH/EW on the outcome in due course.

Action: DW

3.10 Maximising total charitable donations (para 6.2 3rd bullet)

This action had been included as a reminder to DW to enhance the work associated with the Charity Sims in due course.

Action: DW

3.11 Re-introducing bidding/opening lead competitions (para 7.1)

PC reported that these had been reintroduced to the Spring Congress and the Candles and they seemed to have been well received. The opening lead competition at the Candles had attracted 25 entries. PC would continue to offer the feature, next at the Autumn Congress.

4. TOURNAMENT MANAGER'S REPORT

4.1 GP Events

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PC enquired about dates for GP events in 2019. DW advised that the EBU enquires about these almost two years in advance. He would check the situation and advise further in due course. PC also reported EW's idea about combining the two events into one weekend. DW advised that this idea had been put to the TC some time ago but the view taken then was that such a combination would be likely to result in lower entries overall as, given competing priorities for spare time activities, a fair number of potential entrants might take the view that dedicating a whole weekend was more difficult than a Saturday in one weekend and a Sunday in another.

Action: DW

4.2 Chairman's Cup – Future of Event

The MC had referred discussion on this back to the TC. Given previous difficulties and the absence now of a volunteer to organise and provide refreshments for this event, TC members were not inclined to continue with it. DW would report back to the MC.

Action: DW

4.3 Evolving BB events

Action agreed at paragraph 3.9 above would replace any further action here.

4.4 TD fee rates for SCCBA GP events

PC and JH confirmed that their review of these rates had not shown any need to raise them.

5. ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

5.1 Competition Rules – Qualifiers and Reserves

PC had fielded a proposal from William Bourne (WB) that the competition rules be enhanced by the addition of the advice on qualifiers and reserves currently confined to the TO guidelines. DW had circulated a draft of the changes required. TC Members were content and DW would put them to the MC for approval on 17 August.

Action: DW

5.2 Lord Newton Trophy – Future Use

Richard Newton (RN) had advised MP that the current programme of charitable walks between SCCBA clubs and bridge sessions at each club for the Lord Newton Trophy would be concluded in November 2018. RN had made a suggestion for a new annual competition for this Trophy open only to the less experienced based on NGS grading. TC members were conscious of the current 'churn' in such events whereby BB events had become less popular and developments (in East Sussex) aimed at evolving replacement events had yet to bear fruit. PC would discuss matters further with RN and report back.

Action: PC

6. COMPETITIONS (REPORTS & DISCUSSIONS)

6.1 Sussex League/Championship Teams

See paragraph 3.5 above.

6.2 Tournament Returns – Cost Recovery and Feedback

JH had circulated summary reports of the outturn from county events held this year to the end of June. Outturns were slightly down on 2017 but overall JH still expected a surplus of around £3000 to emerge at the end of the year. Alongside the county's EBU UMS income this would ensure a broadly balanced position with the expected outturn of operating costs. That said, a number of events, eg the Candles and the Autumn Congress, were now consistently loss-making and he would continue to ask questions regarding the overall financial viability of the county's tournament programme. Alongside this JH was pleased to report that actions taken by Gerry Stanford had reduced the cost of Yearbook production and distribution by around £1000. This would compensate this year for the lower tournament income now expected. DW suggested that if the YB distribution used the same plastic envelope arrangement as the EBU magazine, costs might be even further reduced. JH agreed to enquire about the EBU service supplier in this respect.

Action: JH

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None required.

8. Date of next meeting – 13 November 2018