



**Minutes of Council Meeting held at West Midlands Bridge Club
Wednesday 16 April 2008**

Present:

Colin Lang (Chairman), Darren Evetts (Secretary), Leslie Reece (Treasurer), Jon Downing (Vice-Chairman), Peter Augustus, Ann Bailey, Dave Cropper, Carolyn Fisher, Jane Hall, Vince Hageney, Ian Hendry, David Hulston, Pete Nicholds, John Pyner, John Robbins, Sandra Squires, Hylda Townsend, Roger Twyman, Pip Whitehouse, Nick Woosnam, Margaret Wort

It is with deepest sadness that we record the death of John Birch. John was an accomplished bridge player who contributed to the game through his teaching and in his role as County Membership Secretary. A brief tribute was given by the Chairman before commencement of meeting.

1. Apologies

Stephanie Galvin, David Jones, Mike Morriss, Alan Pagett, Chris Rowles

2. Minutes of last meeting (270208)

The minutes of the last meeting were taken as read and signed following two minor amendments.

3. Matters Arising

None

4. County Strategy – Colin Lang/Darren Evetts

• Point 1 - Competition Format/Entry

The following was agreed and will be implemented from 1st September 2008:

- The structure of events will be as follows:
 - The first Wednesday of the month as competition night; to encompass Goodman, Championship Pairs, Introductory Pairs, Mixed Pairs and Men's & Ladies' Pairs
 - The second Thursday for two WPL divisions (Premier A & Premier B)
 - The third Thursday for two WPL divisions (Division I & Division II)
 - This leaves the fourth Thursday for the Coventry Pairs League
 - The first Thursday will be available for months when one of the above can't be held on its usual night.
- **Warwickshire Pairs League**
 - Four divisions of 22 Pairs
 - Premier A – 2 x 14 Board Matches – Current Format
 - Premier B - 2 x 14 Board Matches – Current Premier Division Format
 - Division I – 2 x 14 Board Matches – Current Premier Division Format
 - Division II – 2 or 3 Board Rounds of Butler Pairs (Slight amendment to current Division II format).
 - With existing numbers this would give us 22 pairs in the two Premier Divisions and Division I. There would be 18 pairs in Division II.
 - Divisions will be formed as follows (references to Birmingham and Coventry refer to the current divisions and references without a venue refers to the new divisions:

- **Premier A**
 - The highest 20 placed pairs (this will result in 8 pairs being relegated) in the current Premier division along with 1 highest placed pair promoted from each of the current Birmingham and Coventry Division I (NB if the winners of these divisions do not want to move then see below for further promotions).
 - Any further places in the New Premier would be filled in the order:
 - The highest ranked relegated pair
 - The next highest pair from Birmingham I
 - The next highest relegated pair
 - The next highest pair from Coventry
 - The next highest relegated pairs
 - This favours Birmingham as it contains more pairs and has two divisions.
- **Premier B**
 - The next 10 highest pairs from the Birmingham and the 4 next highest pairs from the Coventry division will form division 1
 - Any further places in Premier B would be filled in the order:
 - The next highest pair from Birmingham I
 - The next highest pair from Birmingham I
 - The next highest relegated pair from Coventry and then restart this list.
 - This favours Birmingham as it contains more pairs and has two divisions.
- **Division I**
 - The remaining pairs from Birmingham Division I along with the 2 highest ranked pairs from the current division II along with the highest ranked pairs from Coventry will form Division I with 22 pairs.
 - This favours Birmingham as it contains more pairs and has two divisions.
 - This is designed to be vague as numbers may result in too many adjustments
- **Division II**
 - The remaining pairs from Coventry and those pairs from Birmingham division II will form this division. Numbers need not be even.

The selection committee has the power to place new pairings wherever a vacancy may arise. This over-rides the 'any further places' clause.

- **Championship Pairs**

- Qualifying round aiming for a 20 pair's semi-final and a 10 pair final; Semi-Final; Final with a brought forward (circa 25%) score.
- Non-Qualifiers will play in a Swiss Pairs event and will be joined by non-qualifying semi-finalists (non-qualifying semi-finalists will be assigned a score depending on their semi-final placing).
- The Swiss Pairs will be played over 8 matches with losing semi-finalists joining with an assigned score in round 5.

- **Introductory Pairs**

- Qualifying rounds to be played at clubs with the semi final and final played alongside the Championship Pairs.

- Pairs failing to qualify will be invited to join the Swiss Pairs both from clubs and the semi-final. (non-qualifying semi-finalists will be assigned a score depending on their semi-final placing). This score will be on a lesser scale than the one from the Championship Pairs.
- **Goodman Cup**
 - A Swiss Teams qualifying round 6 x 9 board matches over two nights with the top 4 teams going forward to the KO.
 - The winning team will have the choice of which team they play in the Semi-Final
 - The losing semi-finalists will compete for the Goodman Plate
 - Non-qualifiers will compete for the Frank Challenge Cup in a multiple teams event
- **Mixed Pairs**
 - As currently with clubs providing pairs from local heats
- **Men's & Ladies' Pairs**
 - Single session pairs played as either two sections or combined depending on numbers.
- ***The schedule is as follows:***

Month	1 st Wednesday	1 st Thursday	2 nd Thursday	3 rd Thursday	4 th Thursday
September			Premier A & B	Division I & II	CPL
October	Champ Pairs QR		Premier A & B	Division I & II	CPL
November	Champ Pairs Semi-Final Intro Pairs Semi-Final Swiss Pairs Matches 1 - 4		Premier A & B	Division I & II	CPL
December	Champ Pairs Final Intro Pairs Final Swiss Pairs Matches 5 - 8	Division I & II	Premier A & B	CPL	
January			Premier A & B	Division I & II	CPL
February	Goodman Cup Matches 1 – 3		Premier A & B	Division I & II	CPL
March	Goodman Cup Matches 4 – 6		Premier A & B	Division I & II	CPL
April	Goodman Cup Semi Final Frank Cup		Premier A & B	Division I & II	CPL
May	Mixed Pairs Goodman Cup Final	CPL	Premier A & B	Division I & II	
June	Ladies' & Men's	CPL	Premier A & B	Division I & II	
July					
August					

In addition the following was agreed relating to the WPL:

- Pairs are required to provide subs if they can not attend unless they find another pair in their division who also can not attend and then both pairs can withdraw from a session. Such pairs will receive 8VPs per match. Any withdrawals should be made via Email (preferred) or Telephone and NOT verbally.
- No shows or last minute cancellations would be scored as 0 VPs.

- If a replacement pair can't be found there will be two long sit outs scoring 15VPs each.
 - Remove all references to Rovers
 - Premier Divisions and Division I play 14 board matches.
 - Division II to play pairs movements with butler scoring (2 or 3 board rounds).
 - Full rule changes will be published in due course.
- **Point 2 - Council Representation**
 - **County Youth Officer** - Darren introduced Dave Cropper, Dave a former junior international agreed to take on this role. Dave outlined a vision for encouraging Youth Bridge through local schools.
 - **County Membership Secretary** – Sandra Squires agreed to take on this role.
 - **Point 3 - Newcomers**
Pete Nicholds reported that he'd been interviewed on Radio WM about card games and he'd given out the County's email address. Suggest we look to getting more "on air" exposure.
 - **Point 4 - Home Venue**
Following discussions with West Midlands Bridge Club's Council it was agreed that from 1st September 2008 West Midlands Bridge Club will become our County Home Venue.

We would like to thank clubs that have hosted events over the years particularly Moseley and Coventry and would continue to seek their support for some future events (particularly County Matches). Our County Sessions at WMBC will initially be:

- Wednesday – 1st in the Month – General Competitions
- Thursdays – 2nd and 3rd in the Month – Warwickshire Pairs League

In addition to the above other events will be held throughout the year.

It was noted that a separate County notice board at WMBC would be a very good way of communicating information, about events/results.

5. AGM

- **Officers** – With the addition of Dave and Sandra the Officers would remain unchanged (assuming no new nominations were received) for the coming year.
- **Committee** – We can have up to 10 non-representative members; we currently have 8.

6. Membership

It was agreed to opt in to the EBU Computerised Membership system. This requires members to pay EBU/County subs direct to Aylesbury in the future. Following a query about Direct Debits, it has been confirmed that this is not compulsory.

7. League Secretary's Report – Jon Downing

KO has reached the (Semi-) Final stage with Robbins/Green to play either West Mids A (Hackett) or Sutton Coldfield E (Crane). In Division 1, one team is well behind in its matches (4 still to play), In Division 2, one team is behind (3 matches still to play), while in Division 3, the University team is well behind (4 matches to play). This appears to be following the pattern of recent years. The Shirley team have confirmed that they have dropped out of the league due to the death of their team member. Any team having difficulty arranging its matches should immediately contact the League Secretary.

Verbal notice of results is not acceptable. Suggest a card collection system at WMBC and maybe emailed results.

8. Tournament Secretary's Report – Pip Whitehouse

Simultaneous Pairs – This year sees the lowest number of heats with Moseley, Nuneaton and Walsall not running one.

Tournament Directors should send copies of results to both Pip and Stephanie.

9. Match/Selection Committee/Publicity Report – John Robbins

Midlands Inter-County League vs Gloucestershire Dawes lost 2-18, Porter won 12-8 and Markham won 17-3. The end of season positions are Dawes 2nd with 96VPs, Porter 2nd with 106 VPs and Markham 3rd with 94 VPs, which is a highly creditable outcome. Next season begins on May 18th at Sutton BC against Derbyshire.

10. Secretary's Report – Darren Evetts

- **Correspondence:**
 - County Charity – It was agreed that clubs would be invited to nominate a charity and then Council would decide which one to support in the coming year (this may be by a simple draw). Nominations should be for charities that are not funded nationally but are local and dependant on charitable donations. Nominations would need to be with the Secretary before December 31st each year.
 - County Tollemache Selection – The question was raised as to the process for County Selection, particularly that for the Tollemache. Pairs appear to be selected who don't actually compete (as pairs) in any (or many) County Events. We should be expecting pairs who are asked to represent the County to be competing within the County (if only to prove their selection is justified) and this would be communicated.
 - Stratford BfA Club – Is moving to The Function Room, Stratford Town Football Club, Knights Lane, Stratford Upon Avon, CV37 7BZ. An opening event is being held on Wednesday 23 April. We wish them well.
- **Calendar Updates**
 - The draft calendar for 2008/9 was circulated. It was noted that the WMBC Doyle Plate is the 15TH April and not the 8th.
 - It was noted that the GolfPrint is cancelled and the National Newcomers Pairs is suspended for the coming year.
 - Clubs are reminded that when organising 'open' events (ie those attracting players from out side their club) they should obtain consent from the County and a License from the EBU.
- **Website:** Hits since May 2005 are 31212 (an increase of 1677 since the last meeting)
 - Darren asked for Council approval to explore an alternative hosting company for our Website. BridgeWebs is a site devoted to Bridge clubs and counties. Darren indicated that the reason for moving would be based on the ability to devolve access and responsibility to those responsible for certain areas. – This was agreed and left to Darren to explore.

11. Green Point Event – 11 May 2008

To date we have 6 entries. Arrangements proceeding as expected.

12(a) EBU Shareholders Meeting 5 March 2008 – John Pyner.

- The EBU are looking to produce Countdown style programmes to be broadcast via U-Tube. This is a three year project aimed at 7-11 year olds and must continue beyond the sponsorship period. Costs are £60K over 3 years.
- The Financial Report projects a surplus for 2007/8 of £90K.

- Change in policy regarding the reporting of disciplinary matters which will now see people named.
- Premier League to be formed with 16 teams.
- Changes in EBU Tournaments – Blackpool Easter Congress will be discontinued unless it can be moved to Harrogate or Burton. National Swiss Teams will cease if numbers fall below 70 teams. GolfPrint discontinued. Newcomers Pairs – suspended for one year. Ranked Masters – proportional green points per round and the ability to play in higher ranked events with partner of such rank added. Seniors to move to Birmingham (Metropole) from 2009.
- Optimistic that Charitable status will be obtained, but no details available.

12(b) EBU Strategy proposals Update – John Pyner/Colin Lang/Leslie Reece

- Amended document with final results of Club questionnaire now circulated to Counties and clubs with proposed P2P fee of 29p. All comments welcome.
- It was reported that of our 22 Clubs, 13 responded, which was about the national average. Of these, 7 (mainly smaller) Clubs indicated a desire to remain affiliated, and 6 indicated an intention to disaffiliate. Concerns expressed at likely intentions of those which did not respond.
- County is not included in the P2P fee. We have to calculate a P2P supplement and we believe this would be circa 8p. The final figure overall is dependant on how many clubs would disaffiliate. Jon Downing pointed out that County funds could be raised from other sources than P2P.
- It was clear that the majority of Warwickshire Clubs and members are on the whole still opposed to the proposals and our shareholders invited comments in preparation for the final vote on 4 June.
- Clubs becoming charities – Concern was expressed as to how clubs will be able to spend their money if they become a registered charity. Agreed that more information was needed on this matter.

13. Treasurer's Report – Leslie Reece

The projection for the end of year looks to be a surplus of between £300 and £400. We still have an amount of sponsorship money left, which will be carried forward. Leslie has received membership information held by John Birch.

14. AOB

Sponsorship 2008/09 – Colin reported that a positive response had been obtained from Bigwoods, but remains to be finalised, possibly at a reduced level. .

15. Date of next Council Meeting – Wednesday 11 June 2008 @ 7.00pm – West Midlands Bridge Club. Coffee available upon arrival.

D Evetts
16 April 2008