



Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting held at West Midlands Bridge Club

Wednesday 9 February 2011

Present:

Darren Evetts (Chairman), Mike Thorley (Vice-Chairman), Leslie Reece (Treasurer), Elayne Meakin (Competitions Secretary), Myra Scott (Newcomers Development Officer), Adrian Knight (Match Secretary), Nicky Cook (Publicity Officer), Colin Lang (Ex-Officio Chairman), John Pyner, Carolyn Fisher, Stephanie Galvin, Jane Hall, Mike Meakin.

1) Apologies

Hylde Townsend, Peter Nicholds, Sandra Squires (Secretary and Membership Secretary), Jon Downing (League Secretary), David Jones, George Cuthbertson, Nick Woosnam.

2) Minutes of last meeting (7 December 2010)

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2010 were taken as read with one minor spelling correction in section 4 paragraph 8 'stand' to 'standard'.

The Chairman signed the amended minutes.

3) Matters Arising

- (a) Database for players – DE to progress this matter with interested parties
- (b) National Women's Teams – No progress as EBU Tournament Committee has not yet met to confirm arrangements.
- (c) Sponsorship – Colin Lang reported that he had successfully secured sponsorship of £750 with another Company when the current agreement with Bigwood ends in August 2011. Our thanks to Colin for his work in this area. Colin will continue the negotiations and the new sponsors will be announced at the AGM.

4) Treasurer's Report (Leslie Reece)

Income and Expenses look to be on a par with last year.

The reduced costs of running the WPL (two nights down to one) means we should be able to maintain entry fees at the current rates for the next couple of years.

The £500 donation to West Midlands in respect of usage of Bridgemates has been paid. We are also committed to one fifth of the running/maintenance costs.

Meetings of Shareholders have been reduced to two, which will result in reduced expenses.

We may be in the fortunate position of having three teams in the Inter-County League Finals this year, the downside will be an entry fee of circa £500.

We hope to be able to identify the percentage rebate rate at the April meeting.

Warwickshire Simultaneous Pairs was not as successful as previous years. £360 was raised for Warwickshire Air Ambulance compared with £800 last year. We are to look at date change and also asking clubs for their suggestions for our Nominated Charity for 2011-12.

5) Competition Secretary's Report (Elayne Meakin)

- a) Frank Cup - Plan to stay with a Sunday two session event but review the handicaps. Healthy entry has led to a really tight Goodman Competition. Currently Roger Bryant's team is in the final with George Cuthbertson's team still to play Colin Lang's team in the semi final.
- b) National Pairs - a poor attendance of only 5 tables. Perhaps moving the date to February will yield a greater turnout next year.
- c) Garden Cities - 10 teams entered from 8 clubs and the entry is now closed. John Pyner & Peter Nicholds will be directing. Barometer style scoring will be used.
- d) Mixed Pairs - 16 tables qualified with 4 heats yet to come.
- e) Championship Pairs - 15 tables qualified with 5 heats yet to come.
- f) Pairs Leagues - WPL, CPL & BPL all running smoothly at roughly the same levels as last year.
- g) Reservations were voiced about the presentation and selection of food at one of the venues. DE will liaise with the Club concerned.
- h) It was agreed that the 'Cock O' The County' entry fee be set at only £5 (to cover the cost of the tea).
- i) There is a Competitions meeting in early March to address:
 - (i) Qualification Criteria for Mixed Pairs & Championship Pairs
 - (ii) Handicap rules/scoring methods for Frank Cup
 - (iii) Possible Seniors event on a midweek afternoon.

If anyone has any other issues to raise please contact Elayne by the end of February.

6) Membership Report (Darren Evetts)

The county has 2297 members of affiliated clubs. In addition there are 119 BFA members and 30 direct members. No responses have been received to the letters sent to direct members asking them to join the county.

7) Match Secretary's Report (Adrian Knight)

Three county matches have been played since the last meeting on December 7. Results and league tables are displayed at <http://www.leicsbridge.org.uk/2010-11/midleagueres.htm>

The Dawes (first) team have had three big wins and are now favourites to win their league. There is one match remaining against Lincolnshire on March 27 and they need a 12-8 win or better to overtake Derbyshire and score 1VP less than Leicestershire do in their last match.

The Porter (second) team have had two big wins and a small loss and are in an even stronger position, needing a 12-8 win against Lincolnshire to win their league.

However, pride of place must go to the Markham (third) team with three more wins have won their league with a match to spare, winning all of their 7 matches. This is particularly pleasing as 11 pairs have played and contributed to this success – it is not just a select group.

I do believe that much of the improvement in results can be attributed to the revamped WPL, the CPL and the BPL. These events provide players with regular teams scored bridge to enable them to gain experience and improve at this form of scoring. These events also aid the selection process.

Everyone involved in setting up and running events are to be congratulated. This includes directors, scorers and helpers on the night, those who organise the entries and the leagues, those who make the boards and those who write the commentaries which we can all learn from.

8) League Secretary's Report (Darren Evetts)

Cup and League are progressing well. League Division 2: two Sutton teams withdrew, one due to serious illness/cruise, and the other unable to make up a team.

9) Secretarial (Darren Evetts)

- a) **Correspondence** – The Interim Club Committee have moved to form a Regional Club Committee and have asked that Counties approach each of their clubs for a representative (requests will go out in the coming Club Newsletter)/. Counties are also asked to nominate a County representative. So far we have received confirmation of representatives from Rugby Village, Northfield and Stratford upon Avon.
- b) **Calendar Updates** – None
- c) **Website** – 194431 hits to date.

10) Publicity (Nicky Cook)

A players' newsletter will be sent out shortly with a Club newsletter to follow in due course. It is vital that we compile a database as soon as possible to enable us to manage the distribution of information. DE is on the case.

It was suggested that we conduct Player Satisfaction Surveys. This could be through various newsletters and feedback forms placed on the tables. It is important to canvas the views of those who do attend events and those who do not.

11) Newcomers Development (Myra Scott)

The EWG (EBU Education Working Group) has completed its research into the Education Opportunities and Needs of all counties and has published its report.

The main conclusions are that Education has developed in an ad-hoc way with clubs and counties introducing initiatives as and when possible. It was felt that some direction/advice would be welcomed by counties. All counties responding highlighted the importance of the input given by many volunteers.

The main recommendation is that a new Committee will be set up and an Education Officer appointed. This person will then liaise with a Learning Co-ordinator in each County.

A summary of conclusions and recommendations was distributed at the meeting and is available from the Website.

University Bridge - We are keen to promote Bridge at local Universities. In the first instance we will try to get a presence at Birmingham University's Freshers' Week. If this is not possible we have a possible contact at the City of Birmingham University. Mike (Thorley) is leading on this so any ideas, or offers of help, to him please. Support with teaching costs may be available from the EBU.

Competitions - Clubs have been reminded about these. Numbers to be confirmed in next 2 weeks. It was agreed that Newcomers' competitions will start 30 minutes after any main competition being held on the same date at the same venue.

The plaques in memory of Steve Byrne will be awarded to the winners of the Fledgling Pairs.

12) Green Point Swiss Pairs – Sunday 22 May

Concern was expressed about what food would be provided for the £7.50 per head charge. Sandwiches, Cake & Tea/Coffee is normally charged at £4.50 per head, so it appears that soup is being charged at an extra £3.00 per head.

13) AOB

The question of stratification was raised. The EBU has published the following summary in relation to Stratification. *It was explained that the idea is that players are divided into categories based on their Master Point rank. A ranking list is produced for each category. Any pair that finishes in the top third of their own category earns Master Points. If they do well in relation to pairs that are more highly ranked than them, they could earn Master Points for that instead, if that would have been more beneficial (ie pairs are not penalised for being in a lower category).*

Of course, it might take a few years for this system to actually yield the desired result, but the premise seems sound. More information can be found via the link on the website.

14) Next meeting - Tuesday 19 April 2011 (@ 7 pm @ WMBC. Coffee available on arrival.

D Evetts (February 2010)