



Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting held at West Midlands Bridge Club

Tuesday 23rd October 2012

Present: Darren Evetts (Chairman), Sandra Squires (Secretary and Membership Secretary), Elayne Meakin (Competitions Secretary), Leslie Reece (Treasurer), Adrian Knight (Match Secretary), Ron Birch (League Secretary), Myra Scott (Players Development Officer), Mike Thorley (Vice-Chairman), John Pyner, Jan Eden (Publicity Officer), Mike Meakin, Chris Harris (Club Representative), Colin Lang, Nick Woosnam, Stephanie Galvin.

Congratulations were given to Susan Stockdale on winning a gold medal as part of the Women's team in the recent World Mind Olympiad. The team defended their title which they won in Beijing four years ago.

1) Apologies

Hylda Townsend, George Cuthbertson, Jon Downing, Peter Nicholds, Carolyn Fisher, Jane Hall, David Jones.

2) Minutes of last meeting (25 July 2012)

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2012 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman

3) Matters Arising

- i. National Women's Teams – The number of teams was down on last year. However the feedback from those participating was very positive. The EBU is to be asked if the event in 2013/14 could be moved to February 2014. The event made a small profit of about £150 to be split 50/50 between the county and West Midlands BC.
- ii. Advantages of County Affiliation – Darren Evetts had circulated a schedule detailing a number of points. Colin Lang commented that players can only accumulate master points if they are a member of an affiliated club. It was agreed that this was a useful ongoing document.
- iii. Charity Sims Pairs Format – It is proposed that the event be held on two separate nights eg Tuesday and Thursday with different hands on each night. However, this would mean two separate commentaries. Clubs to be asked if they would be willing to participate on those days and whether they wished to have printed handouts or would be willing to print hand copies for their own members. It was pointed out that this format would mean the event is no longer a countywide Sims event, but as players may wish to play twice more money could be raised for the charity.
- iv. Succession planning – Nothing new to report.
- v. Shareholder visits to clubs – Darren Evetts had visited Stratford upon Avon and Heathercroft and felt that both experiences were extremely positive. All clubs have now been visited. It is proposed to repeat these visits after a 12 month gap.
- vi. Sponsorship – Sponsorship of £750 has been received from Nicklins LLP.
- vii. Air Ambulance Donation – A cheque for £756 had been sent and a letter of thanks received. It was agreed to publish this on the website.

4) Publicity Matters (Jan Eden)

- i. The October Newsletter has been circulated. It will be a quarterly publication. The format will be kept simple. There will be an editorial, a list of forthcoming events, results from previous three months, a section on player development matters and two hands with detailed commentary on bidding/playing. There may be an additional section on charity events and club matters. It was noted that some clubs have newsletters and they provide additional material for the newsletter.
- ii. It has been sent to all clubs and approximately 110 competition players. It is also published on the website. The distribution list could be significantly increased as the database has around 2,200 members on it with about 30% having email addresses. Clubs are encouraged to put a copy on club notice boards and to circulate the website link to their members.

- iii. Copies of all notices for all events are sent to clubs and they are asked to display them on their notice board.
- iv. Jan Eden was thanked for all his work on the newsletter.

5) EBU AGM (John Pyner)

- i. Club Matters – clubs are to be reminded that they need to keep the EBU and the County informed of changes to membership, particularly when members have died. Clubs should also ensure that they have a Governing document that includes procedures for dealing with disciplinary matters, including any appeal process.
- ii. P2P is to be increased by 1p from April 2013. Cubs will, therefore, be paying 41p per player session (EBU 34p and Warwickshire 7p). The 2012 EBU accounts showed a profit of £63K which was a significant improvement on the budgeted loss of £69K. The picture for 2013 is not so rosy with a budgeted loss of £35K to £40K expected.
- iii. Charitable status – after extensive research the EBU have decided that it is not possible to obtain charitable status for the organisation as a whole. They are proposing to establish a charitable company limited by guarantee for the advancement of education and the promotion of amateur sport. It is hoped to raise external funds to help train teachers and develop bridge.
- iv. Orange Book – this is to be revised and hopefully simplified in 2013. Members and clubs are asked to comment/make suggestions on the changes to Jeremy Dhondy at the EBU.

6) Treasurer's Report (Leslie Reece)

- i. P2P income is 3 - 4% higher than this time last year. As reported earlier the sponsorship money has now been received. The income from WPL is currently £250 down on last year but second half fees are still to be received.
- ii. The county P2P fee for 2013/14 will remain at 7p with the usual rebate intended in April 2013. This fee will need to be ratified at the AGM in 2013. Sandra will confirm this with the EBU.
- iii. The league fees for Rugby Village, Northfield and Silhill are still outstanding.

7) Competition Secretary's Report (Elayne Meakin)

- i. There is no change to the format of the competitions for the coming year.
- ii. The Frank Cup had been played. The number of teams was down on last year. Four teams are playing in the Goodman Cup and the winners will represent the county in the Pachabo.
- iii. **Fees Payable** - The fees payable to clubs for hosting events in the current year had been circulated and were agreed unanimously. It was noted that Birdgemates were now a requirement at WCBA events.
- iv. **Rules Update** - The changes to the rules for the following competitions were taken as read and were agreed unanimously.
 - a) Championship Pairs
 - b) International Relay
 - c) The rules common to all competitions need to be updated to allow the county access to NGS data for all entrants. The changes were agreed unanimously.
- v. **Cups for Competitions** - The County has cups for the Frank, Goodman, Men's Pairs, Championship Pairs and the Cock O' County. There are no cups for the Mixed Pairs and the Ladies Pairs. Elayne has collected in all trophies. Some of the trophies are silver and others silver plate. She has obtained an estimate of the sale value. The silver plated cups have little value. Leslie Reece advised that he may have more obsolete cups which he will give to Elayne.
 - a) Myra Scott has three trophies for the newcomer events.
 - b) Elayne Meakin proposed that silver trophies should be sold. This was seconded by Ron Birch and agreed unanimously.
 - c) The competitions committee will submit proposals for the use of the money raised at the next meeting.
- vi. **Current competitions** – The next competition is the senior pairs which will be a one-and-a half session competition. The entrance fee does not include food.

8) League Secretary's Report (Ron Birch)

- i. There are twenty-two teams playing in three divisions.
- ii. After a reminder to some captains of the consequences of not offering dates to the opposing teams, or at least contacting the opposing captain, the season seems to be running to schedule.
- iii. Payment has been received from all players who did not have Warwickshire as their primary county of allegiance. Two players are changing their allegiance to Warwickshire. All teams are now fielding only eligible players.
- iv. The EBU league management system has caused a few problems:
 - a) The draw for each division's matches was totally random resulting in some teams having six home matches and only one away. The EBU say that this problem will be resolved for next season. Meanwhile, the draw was redone manually and the new fixture list was sent to each captain explaining the problem and telling them to ignore the list on the EBU website.
 - b) Most captains are now beginning to enter results using the site. However, it has been a problem getting some captains to indicate who represented their team in the match and the date the match was played. Reminders (with full instructions on the procedure) have been effective in all but one case.
- v. Sixteen teams have entered the Handicap Knockout.

9) Secretarial

- i. **Correspondence**
 - a) The date for the Green Point event in 2014 has been agreed with the EBU. The form for county membership fees has been received and will be completed as agreed in 6 above
- ii. **Website Usage** – There have been 299423 hits to date, an increase of 14,589 since the last meeting. It was noted that Bridgewebs now provides a year to date hit count. This is currently 84783.

10) Club Representative Report (Chris Harris)

- i. Chris had circulated the draft minutes of the MRCC committee. He thanked Sutton Coldfield club who had hosted the meeting. The Warwickshire committee had raised three points for consideration by the MRCC. The points and the MRCC response are detailed below.
 - a) What is the Master Point scale for assisted sessions? These are sessions where a teacher or supervisor answers questions and provides assistance during the bidding and/or play. Currently the same Master Points are awarded for an assisted session as are awarded at a normal Club session. Is this fair?

Response:

The MRCC feels that the Master Point scale should be different for assisted events and questions whether Master points should be awarded at all. Chris Harris asked to raise this at NCC.

- b) The TD can exclude one pair from the NGS at each session. If more than one pair request exemption the TD has to make an arbitrary decision between the applicants. This appears to be unfair on the TD and other players. Should any exception be allowed?

Response:

The MRCC feels that whilst this isn't perfect this is probably the best compromise and should be left unchanged.

- c) Green Points for Club heats of the National Pairs competition are being withdrawn from 31 December 2012. They are being replaced by Blue Points. If Blue Points are not equivalent to the same scale this seems unfair.

Response:

The MRCC feels that, whatever the details of the Blue Points Scheme are, the points awarded should be equivalent. Chris Harris asked to raise this at NCC.

- ii. The new EBU club liaison Andrew Urbanski has stated that he wished to visit as many clubs as possible. Warwickshire would assist with this if required. Darren Evetts and Sandra Squires agreed to produce a contact list for all the clubs.
- iii. There are to be changes to the Orange Book next August and clubs and members are asked to make comments on ways in which the OB regulation can be simplified. It was noted that the alerting of doubles causes many players problems.
- iv. The next NCC is 20 November 2012.

11) Midland Counties Congress - Members were asked to take copies of the Congress entry forms back to their clubs and to encourage members to participate.

12) Player Development Report (Myra Scott)

- i. **Competitions** - Chick O' the County - Winners – Jim Pedersen & Rod Jones, Arden BC, Runners-up – Marijke Rodrigo & Gerri Draysey, Northfield BC. As expected, a small entry with 10 pairs representing 4 clubs/teachers.
- ii. **MiniBridge** - Our MiniBridge pilot scheme is continuing in Coventry and Dorridge schools. A new group has just started at Wheelers Lane Junior School where the lead tutors are Prue & Adrian Knight. All the children taking part are finding it a challenging but very enjoyable experience.
 - a) It was noted that NW and Coventry club had held a seminar on child protection matters.
- iii. **New teachers** - We are again pleased to welcome two newly accredited teachers – Zella Storey (Nuneaton area) and Steve Clarkson (Stratford Bridge Club). Good links are also being developed with a number of teachers in our neighbouring counties whose catchment areas often overlap with our own.

13) Conduct Committee (Mike Thorley)

The Chairman of the Conduce Committee (Mike Thorley) and the Chairman (Darren Evetts) had considered the matter of a player playing in the Charity Simultaneous Pairs at two different clubs. The player concerned has been written to and the matter is now closed.

14) Match Secretary's Report (Adrian Knight)

- i. All three teams are currently lying mid table. The teams have played the stronger teams in the league and, therefore, it is hoped that the current placings will improve.
- ii. The Team for the Tollemache has been selected and they will play on 17/18 November 2012.

15) AOB

Honours System - The EBU has an honours system for outstanding service to bridge at a county level. It may be appropriate to have a system at county level to honour outstanding service at club level. Mike Thorley has agreed to review and outline an appropriate system for consideration by the committee.

16) Next meeting - Wednesday 23 January 2013 at 7pm @ WMBC. Coffee available on arrival.

Sandra Squires – December 2012