



Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting held at West Midlands Bridge Club

Wednesday 25 July 2012

Present: Darren Evetts (Chairman & Shareholder), Sandra Squires (Secretary and Membership Secretary), Elayne Meakin (Competitions Secretary), Jon Downing, Ron Birch (League Secretary), Myra Scott (Newcomers Development Officer), Mike Thorley (Vice-Chairman), John Pyner (Shareholder), Jan Eden (Publicity Officer), Mike Meakin, Chris Harris (Regional Club Representative), Peter Nicholds, Colin Lang (Shareholder), Carolyn Fisher, Phil Jones.

Congratulations were expressed to Susan Stockdale on winning the Gold Medal as part of the Women's team in the recent European Championships.

Darren Evetts welcomed two new attendees, Ron Birch and Phil Jones.

1) Apologies

Hylda Townsend, George Cuthbertson, Leslie Reece (Treasurer), Adrian Knight (Match Secretary), Jane Hall, Nick Woosnam, David Jones and Stephanie Galvin

2) Co-option of League Secretary

Ron Birch volunteered to take over from Jon Downing as League secretary. Ron's appointment was unanimously agreed. Darren Evetts thanked Jon for all his hard work over many years. Jon is to remain a member of the Executive Committee and of the newly formed League Management Committee.

3) Minutes of last meeting (30 April 2012)

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2012 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman

4) Matters Arising

- a) Green Point Event – Went well with 34 tables – no adverse comments. Next year's event to be held at Coventry & North Warwickshire Bridge Club.
- b) Succession planning – Ron Birch has been co-opted, as detailed above.
- c) National Women's Teams – Nine teams have registered so far. It is hoped that the number of teams will exceed last year's total.
- d) Constitution – The EBU agreed the revised Constitution on 22 June 2012. The new Constitution is available on the website. Darren thanked Colin Lang for his work on revising the document.
 - i) The EBU require Counties to self-certify that their Constitution is up to date. Darren Evetts (Chairman) and Sandra Squires (Secretary) signed the form on behalf of the County.
- e) Shareholder visits to clubs – Darren visited Rugby Village for their 2nd Anniversary with Malcolm Oliver, an EBU Board Member. Darren is to visit Stratford upon Avon and Heathercroft in August and September respectively. Colin Lang visited Silhill and Stratford upon Avon Bridge for All clubs. It was felt that the visits were well received. It is proposed to make such visits a regular occurrence.
- f) Charity Simultaneous Pairs – The feedback from players has been circulated. It was agreed to contact the clubs to find out whether they would prefer printed commentaries. It was suggested that the event should be run on just one night, rather than over a week. The clubs who participated this year will be contacted for their views.

- g) Sponsorship – Nicklin LLP had agreed to sponsor the County for two years, but the company has recently merged with another company. Colin Lang agreed to contact Nicklin to confirm that this year's sponsorship will be paid.

5) Committees 2012/13 (Darren Evetts)

Darren Evetts proposed and Sandra Squires seconded the list of committees to include a new League Management Committee. These were accepted unanimously. The committees for 2012/13 are as follows:

Competitions Committee

Elayne Meakin (Chair), George Cuthbertson, Darren Evetts, David Jones, Mike Meakin

Conduct Committee

Mike Thorley (Chair), Jon Downing, Paul Loweth, Leslie Reese, Nick Woosnam

Disciplinary Committee

Darren Evetts (Chair), Colin Lang, Robin Ogg, John Pyner, Sandra Squires

EBU Shareholders (*Representatives*)

John Pyner (Reporter), Darren Evetts, Colin Lang, (Leslie Reece reserve)

League Management Committee

Ron Birch (Chair), Lin Birch, Jon Downing

Match/Selection Committee

Adrian Knight (Chair), Darren Evetts, John Pyner, Mike Thorley

Midland Counties Congress Representatives

Jon Downing, Darren Evetts, Leslie Reece

Player Development Group

Myra Scott (Chair), Pete Nicholds, Mike Thorley

Publicity Working Party

Jan Eden (Chair), Stephanie Galvin, Elayne Meakin, Myra Twyman (Notice board), Roger Twyman (Website)

Website & IT Working Party

Ken Crane, Darren Evetts, Mike Meakin, Roger Twyman (Website)

Regional Club Committee Representative – Chris Harris

6) EBU Chairmen's Meeting (110712) Report (Darren Evetts)

Darren had circulated a paper of the main points arising from the meeting. One area of discussion was the role of EBU Shareholders. Are EBU Shareholders delegates and, therefore, vote as directed by the County Executive Committee, or are they representatives, therefore voting according to their conscience. It was agreed that our Shareholders are representatives.

The EBU is continuing its discussions on Charitable Status. It was noted that the proposed Bridge England company cannot be supported by charitable funds, and would need to be dealt with outside the charity.

The EBU will be circulating papers on the financial benefits and costs, and a proposal will be made to the shareholders at the AGM in October.

7) Treasurer's Report (Leslie Reece)

There is little to report at this time of the year. The surplus on the Green Point event was a little higher than last year. P2P income is 3% higher than at this time last year.

It was noted that all county competitions attract a 16p per player P2P charge.

Leslie Reece to be asked if the Air Ambulance donation had been sent.

8) Calendar 2012/13 (Darren Evetts)

The calendar is correct as at today's date. As there are frequent changes, dates should always be checked on the website which displays the most up to date information. The calendar was adopted, and is to be made available to clubs.

9) Competition Secretary's Report (Elayne Meakin)

The final senior teams event went well and will be repeated next season.

The competitions committee are proposing 3 changes to the format of the competitions for next year.

1. The three seniors' events (two pairs and one teams) will become long sessions (ie one and a half sessions).
2. The handicaps for the Frank Cup will be reviewed.
3. For the Club Championship and Mixed Pairs heats the top 50% of the field can qualify providing that they achieve a 50%+ score.

The eligibility of who can enter teams into the league was raised. It was noted that although historically most teams were entered via clubs, some teams had been entered with members belonging to more than one club. This had been addressed in the 2011/12 amendment to the League Rules.

Rules Updates

The changes to the rules for the following competitions were taken as read and were agreed unanimously.

1. Championship Pairs
2. Senior Teams
3. Frank Cup
4. WPL
5. Mixed Pairs
6. Teams League

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10) Match Secretary's Report (Adrian Knight – written report)

The Midland Counties League season resumed in May. Staffordshire requested postponement of the May fixture. The June fixture against Oxford was postponed to July 1 and resulted in losses for the Dawes and Markham teams. The Porter team drew.

The format of the Midland Counties league has been under review, at Lincolnshire's request, to reduce the number of matches. The majority of Counties prefer the present format. Warwickshire was prepared to consider alternative formats. The league will continue in its present format.

A reminder was given that County selection is open to all via participation in Warwickshire events, especially WPL.

11) League Secretary's Report (Ron Birch)

Ron Birch expressed many thanks to Jon Downing for all the work he had put in during his time as League Secretary. He also thanked him for the support he has offered for the coming season.

EBU League Management System

The new EBU League Management System being tested over the coming season. It will allow the setting up of divisions and will randomly assign matches. The problem of a team possibly being given all home matches will be addressed by the EBU providing a facility for league secretaries to change home/away designations. At present there is no facility to specify when matches should be played. This will have to be dealt with separately. For this reason all team entries should be in by the 19th August 2012.

The system will allow team captains to enter results and players through their EBU member area. This will not be compulsory this year. Ron will be able to enter the results for teams who are unable to do so.

The system will not be able to cope with the Handicap KO so this will be managed as before.

There are also some outstanding IT issues to be addressed.

Arrangement and playing of matches

Ron will check with team captains to ensure that they have arranged dates for their matches in accordance with the rules.

Teams events for less experienced players

It has been suggested that less experienced players would benefit from playing teams. This could be in the form of one-off events, inter-club events, or a team's league. These possibilities are being explored and, hopefully, some form of teams event can be arranged for early in the New Year.

12) Club Representative Report (Chris Harris)

The tournament committee do not wish to change the scale of the fees for Blue point events. It was noted that Blue pointed club competitions can be closed, but this must still be over two sessions.

The following points were raised, which Darren asked Chris to discuss at the Regional Club Committee:

1. What is the MasterPoint 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 MasterPoints are awarded for an assisted session as are awarded at a normal Club session. Is this fair?
2. 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?
3. 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.

13) Player Development Report (Myra Scott)

Competitions

Chick O' the County - Results

Winners – Julia Parsons & Roger Golsby, Arden BC

Runners-up – Gillian & Mike Bell, WMBC

There was a smaller entry than last year with 10 pairs representing 4 clubs.

Player Development Meeting with Club Reps (030712)

A set of papers to support teachers of new and less experienced players was presented. This may be put into an information pack for teachers.

Card play was identified as a common weakness among players who had completed lessons relatively recently. The committee are preparing a series of lessons, including both declarer play and defence, and will look at how MiniBridge can be used to help in this area.

MiniBridge

Dorridge Primary School students (Yr 5 going into Yr 6) have made an excellent start. Lunchtime does not give sufficient time to make a great deal of progress each week, so the group will be run as an after school club from September. The volunteers have all enjoyed, and learned from, the experience.

New Year 5 students will have the opportunity to join in during the year. Other schools are interested in introducing MiniBridge, and we hope to give similar support, which is mostly needed during the first few weeks/months. We will need to consider how we can continue with these students when they move to Secondary School.

New teachers

Warwickshire has three newly accredited EBUTA teachers: Liz Bretherton (Heathercroft), Penny Dawson (WMBC) and Val Young (Stratford). They are being supported by experienced teachers.

14) Publicity Matters (Jan Eden)

Jan Eden distributed a copy of the proposed newsletter to be available for all players. There was considerable discussion as to what information should be included, and the purpose of the newsletter. It should not, in general, include information that is already available elsewhere.

It was felt that clubs should be able to highlight achievements and events. There may be question and answer sections, explanation of difficult play problems, and perhaps a quiz or competition. It was agreed that the newsletter would be on the website and clubs and players would be circulated with a link to it. Club secretaries will be asked to put a copy on club notice boards. The newsletter would be 3 monthly.

15) Secretarial

a) Correspondence

- i. Darren had recently been asked by a club what the advantages of County affiliation were for Club. Darren would compile a list asked the Committee to consider the question and contact him with their thoughts.
- ii. The EBU self-certification document was dealt with under 4(d) above.
- iii. Annual return of post holders to the EBU had been completed and returned.

b) Website – 284834 hits to date. An increase of 13287 since the last meeting

16) AOB

None

17) Next meeting - Tuesday 23 October 2012 7pm @ WMBC. Coffee available on arrival.

Sandra Squires – August 2012