



**MINUTES OF A ZOOM MEETING OF THE EXPANDED COMMITTEE OF BRIDGE GREAT
BRITAIN HELD ON MONDAY 9TH MAY 2022.**

Present:	Jeremy Dhondy (JD)	(Chairman, England)
	Ian Payn (IP)	(England)
	Helen Hall (HH)	(Northern Ireland)
	Ceri Pierce (CP)	(Wales)
	Liz McGowan (LMcG)	(Scotland)
	Dermot O'Brien (DO'B)	(Republic of Ireland)
	Sandra Claridge (SC)	(Secretary)

1. There were no apologies for absence

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN TO 31ST MARCH 2023

Ceri Pierce confirmed that she was not yet in a position to assume the Chairmanship on behalf of Wales, and it was agreed that Liz McGowan be appointed Chairman for the coming year. For the year to 31st March 2024 the position would be offered to Wales, and if declined, to England.

Jeremy Dhondy was thanked by all for his tireless efforts during his extended service as Chairman in what had been a very difficult time.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21ST MAY 2021

3.1 Accuracy

Subject to Ceri's initials being amended from CC to CP, the minutes were approved as an accurate record.

There were no matters arising not covered under the agenda for this meeting.

4. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS & AUDITOR'S REPORT TO 31ST MARCH 2022

The Chairman confirmed that there had been a small operating loss over the year, but that BGB's finances remained reasonably healthy. The Committee members expressed their gratitude to Ian Lindsay for his continuing preparation of the annual accounts.

4.1 Home International subscription for the year to 31st March 2023

It was agreed to maintain the status quo, i.e. £500, and review the situation at next year's meeting. Helen expressed Northern Ireland's appreciation of the donation of £500 to Northern Ireland and Wales towards the expenses of staging the Teltscher Trophy and Lady Milne Trophy.

Ceri said Wales' finances were in a dire position due to a lack of interest in competitive bridge since the pandemic, membership falling from 4000 pre-pandemic to 1350. It was noted that attendance at EBU competitions is currently around 50% of the figure of 3 years ago.

4.2 2022 Silver Plate

The Chairman reported that prior to 2011 the Silver Plate had been run by the BBL and BGB, and thereafter by the EBU in return for a fee. Due to organisational problems, this year's competition had not commenced six weeks after the due date, and it was therefore decided that BGB would assume responsibility for running it. A small fee for administering it would be agreed between the incoming Chairman and the Secretary.

Action: LMcG & SC

5. HOME INTERNATIONAL SERIES

5.1 Arrangements for 2023 series

The Chairman said that although it was clear that we would need to continue to be flexible and have contingency plans, it was expected that all Home Internationals would be played face-to-face in the coming year. It was clear that all participants in the recent Lady Milne had much enjoyed playing against, and socialising with, all the players and representatives of the HNBOs, and Ceri was pleased to say that there had been no reports of Covid infections thereafter, though there had been some nervousness beforehand. As many safety measures as possible had been put in place at the venue, including the provision of masks, hand sanitisers, and personal bidding boxes.

Noting the difficulty of some international players being able to play face-to-face, Liz raised the possibility of introducing hybrid arrangements, whereby one member of a partnership would play at the venue, and the other online. It was agreed to seek guidance from Gordon Rainsford and Fearghal O'Boyle on this point.

Action: LMcG & DO'Brien

5.1.1 2023 Schedule and Draws

Camrose Trophy 1: 6th/8th January – Northern Ireland

Camrose Trophy 2: 3rd/5th March – Ireland

Junior Camrose & Peggy Bayer Trophies: 17th/19th February – England

Lady Milne Trophy: 21st/23rd April – Scotland

Teltscher Trophy: 19th/21st May – Wales

Camrose

Team A:	Scotland
Team B:	England
Team C:	CBAI
Team D:	Wales
Team E:	Ireland
Team F:	Northern Ireland

Lady Milne

Team A:	Ireland
Team B:	England
Team C:	Scotland
Team D:	Northern Ireland
Team E:	SBU
Team F:	Wales

Junior Camrose

Team A:	Wales
Team B:	Scotland
Team C:	England
Team D:	Ireland
Team E:	Northern Ireland
Team F:	EBU

N.B. The draw for the Peggy Bayer Trophy will be produced when entries are confirmed.

Action: SC

Teltscher

Team A:	England
Team B:	Northern Ireland
Team C:	WBU
Team D:	Ireland
Team E:	Wales
Team F:	Scotland

5.2 RealBridge

There was general agreement that following the problems with RealBridge at the Lady Milne, improvements needed to be made before the forthcoming Teltscher Trophy. In particular there was no perceived need for a 30-minute delay, and it was imperative to have commentary. Ceri reported that Shireen had confirmed that the system was designed to have a one board delay from the moment that it was opened, and that it was therefore imperative not to open the session until the players were ready to start. Helen said that Fearghal is confident that he can run it without delays, and that Shireen will be on standby to assist with any problems. Dermot agreed to ascertain whether or not it is possible to view the live action at the tables.

Action: DO'B

Liz offered to commentate on the Teltscher Trophy, and would try to attract further volunteers.

Action: LMcG

5.3 Hotel Rates 2023

It was agreed to increase the hotel rates to £330, or the equivalent in Euros, for a single room package comprising three nights' dinner, bed and breakfast, plus sandwich lunches on Saturday and Sunday for the Camrose, Lady Milne & Teltscher Trophies.

For the Junior Camrose & Peggy Bayer Trophies the rate would be increased to £230, or the equivalent in Euros, which may be calculated on a shared room basis. If single occupancy is required, the rate is increased to £330, or the equivalent in Euros.

5.4 Captain's Meetings

It was noted that it was the preferred option of all HNBOs that Captains' Meetings continue to be held a few days before the relevant competition, by Zoom.

5.5 Friday evening start times

It was agreed to maintain the status quo in regard to Friday evening starting times, i.e. 19.00 for the Camrose, Lady Milne & Teltscher Trophies, and 17.00 for the Junior Camrose & Peggy Bayer Trophies.

5.7 Revision of Sections 5.7 & 7.1 of the Home International Regulations

The Chairman expressed his thanks to Richard Fleet for his second season monitoring convention cards. There had been problems with late submission of cards, some very much “last-minute” and one fine had been imposed. In addition there were many examples of methods being inadequately explained.

Some of the difficulties had been caused by England not appointing their NPC until shortly before the deadline for system submission. Ian apologised on the EBU’s behalf, and agreed to take the matter up with the Chairman of the EBU Selection Committee to ensure that all deadlines were met, and in good time.

Action: IP

It was agreed that the regulation would be amended to require **finalised approved convention cards** to be submitted by the deadline. An exception clause would be included to cover unforeseeable situations. It would be confirmed that the fine for late submission would be a **minimum of 1VP**, which could be increased in the case of aggravated circumstances.

There was general agreement that the regulations should also be strengthened to highlight the responsibility of NPCs to ensure that their players were fully aware of the arrangements in terms of travel and hotel accommodation, and the deadline for producing a pen portrait.

Action: JD/LmcG

5.8 BGB Trophies

The Secretary reported that the Camrose Trophy had been damaged again, and had recently been repaired. Ian suggested that when the trophy is received and signed for by a Match Manager, it was their responsibility to ensure that it was returned undamaged. If this was not the case, then the cost of any damage should be borne by the host HNBO. It was agreed that trophies and their plinths were of significant interest to the participants, and that they should continue to be available at the event.

Action: SC

6. ONLINE JUNIOR EVENT

It was noted that the Scottish event in 2021 had attracted over 20 pairs, but due to a lack of publicity only 10 pairs had competed in England’s event in 2022. Dermot said that Ireland would be delighted to host the event in 2023 on a date to be agreed in due course, and urged all HNBOs to promote it. Liz was of the opinion that April was not the ideal time to hold the event, and suggested a possible move to early January. If numbers were sufficient, the event would be divided into U26 and U21. Whilst trophies had been offered by Liz and Paul Porteous, no progress had been made, and it was decided instead to investigate medals for the winners.

Action: SC

There appeared to be confusion over the issue of masterpoints for both the 2021 and 2022 event, and this would be investigated, and the scale confirmed. The Secretary confirmed that she provided a spreadsheet annually to the HNBOs of all the masterpoints earned at Home International events, and the Junior Online event could be included.

Action: SC & LMcG

7. WEBSITE

The Chairman indicated that he would be happy to continue to manage the website, and he was thanked for all his work in this regard.

Before moving to items on the Gold Cup and Silver Plate, the Chairman thanked Helen and Dermot for their attendance.

8. GOLD CUP

It was confirmed that the closing date for entries would be Monday 3rd October, and that the entry fee would be increased to £92 per team (half price pro rata for players under 26). The regulations would be updated to confirm that the default would be for face-to-face matches, except in the case of matches requiring a half-way venue, when the default would be online. It is strongly recommended that the default setting is for no kibitzers during online matches.

Action: JD/LMcG

The 2022 Finals will be held at The Mindsports Centre in London on 8th & 9th October, and subsequent to the meeting, the booking was confirmed including the staging costs.

9. AOB

Liz thanked Jeremy for his service to the Committee in what had been very challenging times!