

Oxford Bridge Association
Meeting of the Management Committee
8 September at 7.30

Present:

John Slater	Chairman
Mary-Ann Sheehy	Secretary
Lynne Hayes	Treasurer
Stephen Brown	Chief Tournament Director
Brenda Harris	EBU Shareholder/ Publicity Secretary
Maxine Henry	Membership Secretary
Geoff Nicholas	President/Chester/Wessex League Secretary
Alan Grunwald	Tournament Secretary
Alison Nicolson	Education Secretary

Esme Alden	Oxford
Peggy Manuell	Oxford
Kathy Talbot	Oxford
Richard Sills	Oxford
Gordon Carroll	Abingdon
Ian van Maanem	Abingdon
Norman Gascoyne	Wallingford
David Marsh	Witney
Keith Robbins	Wantage

Apologies:

Erica Sheppard
Sandra Nicholson
Clive Keep
John Briggs
Nick Smith
Peter Baxter
Ina Merriman
John Barlow
Sue Maxwell

1. Approval of Minutes.

The minutes were approved subject to the rewording of 2a which should read as follows: "It was agreed that it was worth continuing with the Seniors competition in its current form for the moment but that discussions as to costs would be needed in the near future". Norman Gascoyne to provide Lynne Hayes with 11 months' data on which to base a financial decision.

2. Matters arising

(A)2.b raises the question of how the OBA will collect subscriptions and account for them and it had been agreed that this would be decided at the next AGM in June 2009. It was pointed out that because of the latest initiative from the EBU, June was too late. The Chairman then spelt out the latest initiative which is called

BUMP: Board for Universal Membership Board. There are basically 3 ways to proceed:

- a. Counties make their own arrangements to collect membership fees.
- b. Counties make arrangements with their own clubs to collect membership fees.
- c. Or something could be added on to the P2P and then the county element to be reimbursed to the counties.

This last would be subject to some form of capping and work would have to be done to deal with those who play so very often that their contribution to the County becomes absurdly high.

All these matters will be discussed by the new subcommittee (see below) and will report at 11 December meeting (Working papers to be distributed before the meeting).

(B) Dates and times of meetings:

These are as follows: Thursday 11 December 2008 – OBC in the old bar.
 Wednesday 25 March 2009 - at Roke
 Monday 15 June 2009 - OBC

(C) JS has discussed the question of Shareholder status with Sandra Claridge but discussions inconclusive and the matter will be dealt with. Does anyone want to be Shareholder?

3. **Officers Reports:**

Chairman

JS reported that the Camrose events would take place 6-8 March at a hotel in Oxford. Sandra Claridge will need volunteers including keyboard operators. Please contact either Sandra or John Slater.

Treasurer

LH reported that at present the OBA has approximately £18000 in the bank. Questions were raised as to what the purpose was of holding such a large amount of money and whether it could be put to better use by funding clubs to purchase certain items. It was pointed out that a large amount of money had been spent by the county on Bridgemate and the duplimate machine. It was agreed that the new subcommittee (see below) will review this matter and it will be brought back to the meeting. The Congress had produced a profit of £446.39. Thanks again to all who had helped organise it: Esme, those who produced and helped put out and put away tables, Stephen.

Secretary

MAS reported that she had had requests for the new Law Book (Red Book) which is being provided by the EBU free of charge for those who had paid their affiliation fees. She promised to follow the matter up.

Chief Tournament Director

SB reported that he had put the new laws on his website. The OBA Prospectus had been distributed and so far had only one amendment. It was pointed out that County Pair heat winners were promised pens (see the Prospectus) but this had not happened for some years. JS promised to organise pens for the next winners and SB could present them at the County Pairs semi finals. Gordon Carroll raised the fact that the

Mens/Ladies pairs event clashes with the EBU Seniors Congress at Coventry. Agreed too late to do anything about it this year but will try to avoid it next year. Draft Calendar had been on the website since before the last meeting. Stephen does need people to help him proof read and check for clashes ahead of print time.

Membership Secretary

MH reported that she had indeed sent out the prospectus. She had obtained the labels from the EBU. She discovered that Bridge for All members had been omitted and that the labels were for the members as per the previous year rather than the current year. (670 paid up: 51 bridge for all; 8 juniors and 39 dual members). It has since emerged that this is EBU policy, hoping that by the end of year the same people will have rejoined.

We also discussed the possibility of reducing costs of distributing the brochure. Suggestions: opting in to receive by e-mail; distribution by clubs. To be addressed by sub-committee.

Tournament Secretary

AG reported that there are currently 31 entries for the September Congress, and he was hopeful that we would reach 40. At this point Alison Nicolson was asked to report on how the congress arrangements were progressing. She was confident that everything was in order: catering, tables etc.

EBU Shareholder

BH reported that the minutes of the EGM (to discuss and vote on P2P) are posted on the EBU website and make interesting reading. Particularly in regard to the strength of feeling against the proposals (there was a clear majority in favour of the proposals). She read out excerpts from round robin letter from man called Keith Palmer who was very against the proposals and felt that some counties (including Oxfordshire) had behaved improperly in the way they ran the meetings and voted on the proposals. The matter was discussed: it was agreed that JS would respond to the criticism in the letter. It was strongly felt that Oxfordshire had behaved entirely properly. The manner by which the Shareholders would be mandated would be in accordance with the number of delegates to the OBA management committee each club had. The fact that thus some clubs were thus disenfranchised was regrettable, but there was nothing to be done about this. It was pointed out that in future once the p2p came into force then there would be universal membership and the matter of delegates and how many each club should have would have to be revisited, but all affiliated clubs would necessarily have sufficient members to enable them to have a delegate to the OBA meetings. It was also pointed out that some of the clubs listed as affiliated in the prospectus are not affiliated. This too will be sorted out under the new proposals.

Publicity Secretary

BH reported that there had been a couple of important errors in the August newsletter and she wanted to be able to circulate the draft newsletter to a

few committee members for checking anomalies before passing it on to Sandra Nicholson for lay-out etc. It was agreed. She also had been unable to advertise several events in the August newsletter owing to lack of space and wanted to do posters for distribution to clubs for these events. It was agreed that she should do so.

Match Secretary

Nick Smith was not present but had sent in a report: to the effect that the County B team had won the National Competition and complaints by Manchester that too strong a team had been sent could be refuted by the fact that on the same day the A team were playing in against Worcestershire.

Lynne Hayes raised the fact that she had not been asked to provide funds for any of the Invitational teams events and wondered whether the match secretary had sent any teams to these events. It looked as if there was a conflict between a Dawes League event and a County Pairs Final. NS to check it out. A request was made to avoid the middle of December for home events as OBC wishes to hold its Christmas party around then. It was pointed out that this might not be in the hands of Nick Smith but rather whoever organises the Dawes League.

President/Chester/Wessex League Secretary

GN reported that there were 12 teams for the Presidents Cub, 8 for the Chester (up by 2) and therefore there were 2 divisions and then a final, and 39 for the Wessex League.

Education Officer

AN reported that with regard to Juniors on Sundays at the OBC she was having a rethink. Up to now it had been mainly teaching and a small amount of play. Now the plan was to switch it to mainly play, and then focusing on teaching in schools. We are focusing on Oxford City first and need door openers, either from inside the school or a parent. And OBA will run the sessions in the school and that is where the teaching will happen with a view to those pupils then coming to OBC on Sundays for practice. With this in mind wishes to purchase some kind of uniform for the supervisors at the Sunday school to ensure they can be recognised as such and distinguished from parents or other adults who may be there. Also she made a request for duplimated boards to be left at the club for the Sunday school.

Issues had been raised regarding who was responsible for the Sunday school. Clear that it is an OBA function and the OBA's responsibility. It might be best if the OBA pays the OBC some small sum to make it quite clear what each function is. Also necessary to appoint a Child Welfare Officer to ensure the implementation of the EBU Child Protection Policy. Kathy Talbot proposed and Peggy Manuell seconded the proposal that Alison Nicolson be appointed as Child Welfare Officer. Agreed. The question of insurance was also raised. OBA has no insurance. This matter needs to be looked at.

4. **Business to be dealt with**

- a. **Seniors:** The average number of tables is 5: costs: 37.50 for room hire and £60 for catering. It meant that basically the event runs at a loss. Agreed that the fee would stay at £7.50 for EBU members and £8.50 for non-EBU members for October November and December. That matter would be looked at at the 11 December meeting: Data for the year Jan to November will be provided (by Norman Gascoyne who will send to LH for analysis) and maybe Alison Nicolson could look at the catering costs which it might be possible to reduce.
- b. JS proposed: "Having done appropriate research, we have discovered that "a" and "b" were not qualified to compete in the Sandra Landy Competition as "b" was a life master. Accordingly we will seek the return of their second prize money, upgrade the third prize to a second prize, and award the third prize to the pair finishing fourth". This was agreed. In future, people wishing to enter an OBA event will be asked for their EBU numbers and a check can be made to avoid a repeat of this.
- c. Constitution sub Committee: JS proposed to set up a sub-committee to communicate essentially by email to attempt to draft a new constitution in time for the December meeting, using the Gloucestershire constitution as a guide. Volunteers were requested. Kathy Talbot volunteered and it was agreed to approach Nick Percival Price. A lawyer would also be welcomed.
- d. Future direction of the OBA Sub-Committee: JS proposed that this be set up to look at the following:
 - To make recommendations on the future of OBA competitions and events
 - To make recommendations on the fees that will be charged for them, and the mechanisms for collection (or at least a mechanism for determining them).
 - To make recommendations on the role of the county in supporting the activities of the clubs including such areas as teaching, recruitment etc.
 - To make recommendations about supporting young players (e.g. could we propose or host an under 25s one off competition between Dawes league counties?)
 - And to try to consider matters raised earlier at this meeting which it is felt are appropriate to be handled this way.

Volunteers were asked for: Chris Cooper

John Briggs

Lynne Hayes

Alan Grunwald

Gordon Carroll

And it was hoped a junior.

Proposal agreed. Report on progress at 11 December meeting.

Recommendations for March Meeting.

- e. Website: Richard Lonsdale wishes to retire. Has someone in mind. Any volunteers: Should we pay for a designer? Might someone like to do it for free. There is a generic website for counties provided by EBU. Alan Grunwald agreed to find out exactly what it entailed from JS and might consider it.
- f. OBC. Given that the OBA uses the OBC premises for so much and matters do arise which it is important for them know, it was agreed that there would be a meeting for 20 minutes ahead of each OBA meeting with the OBC committee members to discuss any issues which might have arisen.
- g. AGM: should we continue the format which we had for the 2008 AGM e.g. bridge and free refreshments. Matter to be discussed by the sub committee.
- h. 2nd October EBU meeting. Do we know what is on the Agenda. (Not yet). A request was made that the OBA Shareholders should at the meeting ask questions with regard to what the money under the head 'overheads' goes towards. A desire for transparency was the motive.
- i. Honours Boards: Richard Sills apologized for the fact that the honours boards had not yet been updated but this would happen shortly. Is changing the signwriter.

Date of next Meeting: 11 December 2008 at 7.30 at the OBC