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Committee Meeting Minutes: Thursday 29th January 2026 at 10.0 a.m.

Held via Zoom

1. Present:

Steve Jarvis (Chairman), Sophie Sheppard (Treasurer), David Nicklin (ATO), Christine Smith (Webmaster), Peter Milewski (Secretary), Tony Disley (Bridgend), Lee Collier (Haverfordwest), Nicky Hancock (Tenby), Nigel Astley (Merlin), Mike Reed (Carmarthen).

No apologies.

Documents attached for the meeting: draft Minutes of 24 October 2025, updated Agenda, Calendar, Porthcawl accounts, Porthcawl feedback report, extract from minutes documenting entry criteria for WWBA events, report of recent Management Committee meeting.

2. Previous Minutes and Matters Arising:

The minutes of the meeting held via Zoom on 24th October 2025 were passed by general assent as a fair record.

3. Matters Arising:

Tables. Steve confirmed that Peter had collected about eight of the large metal and plastic tables and three old wooden ones from Pendoylan courtesy of Simon Gottschalk, together with a box of about fifty bidding boxes. He took the tables to Mike Reed who is kindly storing them at his home. The bidders were taken to Porthcawl. We already have plenty and it's not clear what happened to them next.

Prize for winning Club League. The presentation of a sum of money, perhaps £100, for a charity of the winning club's choice, appears to be the most popular idea, together with a photo of the winning team members be placed on the website.

Free BBO event. Steve indicated his intention to keep this open to non-members until Easter, and would like to publicise by email and on the website, that the idea is for improvers to play with mentors as far as possible.

Porthcawl 2026. Steve will sort out with Lee and Sophie the financial details to be sent to Oliver Cowan to help him decide whether he is willing to run our event this year.

Action: Peter, Steve, Lee, Sophie, Chris



4. Secretary's Report

Club League. All clubs about to complete the first four matches. Captains and players appear to be happy with it, but a disappointment is that one inexperienced pair at Carmarthen has dropped out. It is hoped they may be persuaded to take part again later in the year.

Porthcawl feedback report (Appendix 1). Mostly favourable. Some comments re cramped tables, a couple don't like Swiss tournaments, some complaints about food etc. WWBA entry criteria (Appendix 2). The old minutes were consulted when considering the poster for the Mixed Pairs. We did decide to admit to our closed events WBU members who are not members of the WWBA, on payment of a subscription which is currently £2.

Action: Peter

5. Treasurer's Report

Current balance approximately £22,000. An auditor will be required. Similarly to last year, our business is so small that it is considered not necessary to employ a fully qualified professional, a scrutineer may be adequate. Lee's husband Richard may be willing to do it (can Lee ask him please).

Action: Lee

6. ATO Report

Mixed Pairs on Sunday 8th February. Currently 10 pairs have entered. Dealing machine OK at present. There is a need for next of kin phone number to be included in the website entry form, in case of an emergency during the day.

Action: Christine

7. Webmaster's report:

No issues identified.

8. Chairman's report:

Steve went through the Management Committee report compiled by Peter (Appendix 3).

Impressed by the turnaround to profit of the WBU and the success of the Dragon Swiss Pairs which is bringing in about £600 per month.

We have already approved via email correspondence, the appointment of Andrea Knox as President for a third term.

Peter to circulate offer to pay for a TD course (see website) plus travel expenses (35p per mile, or 45p with passenger).

Re club members not wishing to belong to WBU, the special arrangement for Chepstow with its proximity to England is not feasible for other clubs, this committee would not approve it. Lee suggested that a high proportion of members should be affiliated



(perhaps 90%+), Nigel suggested that visitors should be asked to join after a set number of attendances.

Re teaching, Lee has a pack from Swansea, and is looking into the possibility of setting up beginners' teaching locally.

Action: Peter, Lee

AOB:

none

Action: none

9. **Next Meeting (on Zoom): Friday 13th March at 10.0 a.m.**



Appendix 1

Porthcawl feedback report

1. 2025 attendees.

There were 45 with known email addresses, to whom I sent a request for feedback.

There were 11 responses, summarised as follows:

- Tables a bit close and table numbers a bit small not easy to see.
- Great success, very happy to play next year.
- Really enjoyable, well organised, but buffet a bit disappointing.
- Enjoyable and well run with good view from hotel room, but don't like Swiss competitions, would like a change from it for both pairs and teams.
- Great congress, shame that numbers down, perhaps more advertising would help.
- Appreciate how well run, but slight quibble about menu: would have preferred a more basic menu for the Saturday meal, but with wider choice.
- Too cramped. Prize money too low. Suggest drop the three matches on the Friday night.
- Only issue: crowded tables.
- Very enjoyable congress but not keen on the quality of the food, chose to eat out on the Saturday.
- Too much Swiss and doesn't like the span from Friday overnight to Saturday. Would prefer the old format: the traditional open and mixed pairs on the Friday evening, qualifiers on the Saturday and Finals plus Consolation finals on the Sunday.
- Organisation and advance information excellent, had an enjoyable time, hotel in excellent position with good parking and friendly staff.

2. 2024 attendees who didn't come to the 2025 congress

There were 82 names from Sophie of those were at the 2024 congress but not the 2025 one. Chris had 31 email addresses but only 15 of those were on Sophie's list (possibly many were lost in BESS or something), to whom I sent a request for the reasons they didn't come back.

There were three responses, as follows:

- In 2024 venue too hot and crowded. Had booked a double room with single occupancy but got a twin, though hotel insisted it was a double, which it wasn't. Didn't say whether that was the reason for no return.
- Enjoyed 2024 and would have come again but partners not available.
- Didn't come back because of poor experience. Terrible food. Messages about allergies not relayed. No checks on food allergies by servers, who when asked didn't know what was in anything. Bar not open after evening session, water not available in gaps between sessions and after a request to refill delay in responding so not in sync with the needs of the players. Therefore decided not to come again.

Peter



Appendix 2

Entry criteria to WWBA events

I looked up the minutes for Chris after submitting the poster for the forthcoming Mixed Pairs, and found these entries, but couldn't find a later reference to the topic.

Extract from Minutes of Extraordinary Committee meeting 4th December 2024
Without a vote, it was apparent that there was a majority in favour of excluding non-WBU members from our events and the mechanism for doing this was discussed. Peter and David have access to the most up to date version of the WBU membership database, courtesy of the Masterpoints Secretary Steve Webb. Therefore David as ATO is able to pick up non-members' applications. Other attendees expressed a wish to have access. However in its present form anybody with access can alter it, and this could occur inadvertently. Therefore a request is to be made via Steve Webb for a read-only version to be made freely available. There was tacit agreement that all events require membership of WBU, but to charge non-WWBA members a subscription for our closed events which are the Laidlaw Murray Teams, the John Isaac etc. and the Vince Bevan Pairs. The remaining events are open, i.e. the Mixed and the Swiss.

Extract from Minutes of Committee meeting 24th January 2025
Event entry criteria. Nigel identified inconsistencies which were discussed and eventually, after Steve's arrival, clarified as follows. Entry to all Area events requires WBU membership or alternatively another NBO membership combined with membership of a WBU-affiliated club. Our closed events which are the Laidlaw Murray John Isaac and Vince Bevan also require Area membership. Players from outside the Area can enter on paying a £2 subscription for a year's membership.

Actually we have been inconsistent in application of these, as we (in retrospect, wrongly) excluded Jenny Vaughan from the Vince Bevan, though we should have allowed her in for the payment of £2.

Peter



Appendix 3

WBU Management Committee 14th January 2026

I attended b/r Steve who was not available.

Financial report: Dragon Swiss making about £600 per month. Juniors' budget in £2289.12 out £3043.90. WBU is now making a profit. Andrea wishes to keep balance to £80,000 and to spend excess over that on clubs. Planning to offer free packs of cards and bidding inserts (not boxes) to affiliated clubs.

Presidential term: Andrea is willing to do a third term, but only if Areas are willing for this. She still has ongoing projects that she would like to fulfil, for example relationships with EBU and EBED (of which she has become a trustee) which can benefit Welsh bridge. It would require a change in the Constitution. Would like views from Areas asap.

Playing cards: A new design has been approved and the plan is to order up to 10,000 packs.

TD training: Every affiliated club to be offered one free TD training place.

Laws and Ethics: there is an ongoing issue related to online bridge that remains confidential.

* Juniors: there is a group going to Barcelona congress but so far no applications for the Spring Camp to be run by EBED, cost £130. Areas asked to circulate, and could clubs place on notice board.

Chepstow club: a compromise solution which is to keep the club affiliated as long as those members who don't wish to affiliate are treated as visitors to the club. Financial implications for the club are up to the club to sort out.

Strictly Come Teaching/Cake Club: Cake club going well, Strictly a bit low in numbers, maybe run with EBU?

Area reports: I mentioned that our John Isaac will probably be run online this year, but other f2f events are continuing, plus we are now running a Club League, and Free BBO sessions. Andrea would like to know if Philip Skinner is interested in a M.C. role.

Perry and Spickett: Will be at Sarn Village Hall (near Newtown). There is a move to make mid-Wales a permanent venue, whichever area is hosting.

Bridgesteddfod: no locations yet, West Wales still under consideration, it is thought that hotels advertising as conference rather than holiday ones may be available in August.

Schools bridge: positive developments, Sophie Cunningham and Maggie Pierce v. active in the East, and there are also minibridge classes in Crickhowell.

AOB/Next meeting: not present

Peter