



Tournament Committee

MINUTES

Meeting held in Sydney (NSWBA)
Saturday 1 July, 2017, 9:55-16:20

1. Present

David Morgan (Chair), Laurie Kelso, Eric Ramshaw, Therese Tully, Marcia Scudder.

Also in attendance Bruce Neill

2. **Apologies:** Matthew McManus, Sean Mullamphy, Peter Reynolds.

3. Matters arising from previous minutes

- a. Revised ABF Tournament Regulations

Changes flagged in the previous minutes have been incorporated.

- b. 2017 Laws: Review of laws which require a decision by the Regulating Authority
LK circulated a list of all laws which gave the Regulating Authority discretion. The TC agreed that the existing elections for Australia should remain for most laws but recommended some changes:

40B2(c) Right to consult opponents' system card during auction and play

Players may only consult the opponent's system card at their turn to bid, play or respond to an opponent's request for an explanation. Dummy may not consult the opponent's system card after the conclusion of the auction.

TC recommends a change whereby players may consult their opponents' system card at any time (with the rider that this may lead to UI)

73A2 RA may require mandatory pauses after skip bid warnings (ie. use of Stop Cards)

ABF Regulations for Written Bidding and Bidding Boxes authorise the use of Stop Cards, but they are not required

TC recommends removing Stop cards from the ABF Regulations for Written Bidding and Bidding Boxes.

78D RA may approve other scoring methods

The use of VP scales as determined by the WBF is authorised. Other approved methods include X-IMPs and Butler when scored against a datum.

TC concurs with the addition of variations for X-Imps and Butler scoring as approved by the NEC.

80A3 RA may delegate powers

The ABF has delegated its powers to State and Territory Associations for Red and Green Masterpoint events held within their geographic boundaries for the period 1 August 2017 until 30 September 2022.

The word 'delegated' should be changed to 'assigned'.

93C(b) RA may authorise modification, omission or alteration of the stages of the appeals process set out in the Laws.

Any request for a qualified review by the ABF National Authority of an appeal committee ruling made at a tournament conducted under the auspices of the ABF shall be forwarded in writing to the ABF General Counsel.

The ABF National Authority may review any Appeals Committee decision arising from any tournament run under the auspices of the ABF. The National Authority will however limit its functions to the interpretation of the said Laws of Bridge and will not decide facts or change or purport to change any ruling that has been made under those Laws. It follows that the Authority will not overturn the result of an event but may issue an opinion in order to establish or confirm a legal precedent or procedure.

TC recommends removing the word 'Appeals' from the beginning of paragraph 2, in order to include rulings made by the review system.

12C2(d) and 86B2 RA may provide for circumstances where a contestant fails to obtain a result on multiple boards during the same session

See Appendix 1 for recommended scales to be used.

LK to take TC recommendations to the National Authority, and to consult with RH as to how they should be promulgated and implemented.

c. 2018 Playoffs

The Playoff format will be as in 2014, with 3 days of qualifying (5+5+5 matches), reducing the 16 pair field to 10 pairs who will play two further days of final (5+4 matches).

LK and MM proposed the following dates for entries and system card submission for the 2018 playoffs.

Open Play-Off

Entries Open	Tuesday 12 Sep
Entries Close	Saturday 7 Oct
System Cards Submission Deadline	Friday 13 Oct
System Cards Re-submission Deadline	Friday 20 Oct
Play Commences	Sunday 12 Nov

Seniors'/Women's Play-Offs

Entries Open	Thursday 5 Oct
Entries Close	Thursday 23 Nov
System Cards Submission Deadline	Tuesday 28 Nov
System Cards Re-submission Deadline	Friday 1 Dec
Play Commences	Sunday 3 Dec

The TC recommends that these dates be adopted.

MC agrees.

Target event

It now seems very likely that there will be no Target Event for 2018 as the Asia Cup is still set down for Bangladesh. The TC recommends that the winning pairs be invited to

represent Australia in the Commonwealth Nations Bridge Championships. This will be held from Feb 14-18 2018 at Broadbeach, Qld. The event is being organised by the QBA and will precede the GCC. The target entry is 28 Teams. At present 19 National Teams have been entered, along with an additional five private teams.

The QBA has invited the ABF to send two 'Australian' Teams (Sponsoring Nation Teams) and further additional teams (Private Teams). A request has been sent by the ABF for a third official Australian team to be included. If that request is accepted then the MC proposes that this place would be taken by the Youth Team.

It is hoped that this offer can be finalised prior to the Open Playoffs.

The TC noted that changes were required to the travel and acclimatisation time information provided to players representing Australia internationally. At present it assumes that all players will be flying to the venue from Australia; it needs to specify the number of days required for time zone differences.

d. PQPs by pairs

This request for feedback has been on the ABF website with a request for responses by 12 June. No responses were received.

e. PQPs for all female pairs.

This request for feedback will be placed on the ABF website soon.

4. ANC Format

For the ABF AGM Ben Thomson summarised the results of a survey of players regarding the future of the ANC. The TC was asked to consider a number of options for restructuring the first week of the ANC. If there support for any of these options they could be considered by the convenor of the 2018 ANC being held in Tasmania.

TC came to an agreed view on a number of issues but thought that consultation was advisable on many if not all of them and that this consultation should include the state associations as well as individual players.

- TC thought there were advantages in running a double RR of 14-board matches, with the matches starting on the Sunday and concluding on the Wednesday. One option that might appeal to players would be an afternoon start on Sunday (with only two matches that day) with four matches on each of the following three days. This could allow some players to fly in on Sunday morning.
- TC was of the view that 3.5 days of qualifying in order to run semifinals was an inefficient use of time. However, the views of players should be sought.
- TC's preference was to run a two-day final, either with an equal number of segments on each day (say 3*16 or 3*14) or an uneven number (options include 4*12 + 2*12, and 3*16 + 2*16). The advantage of uneven segments is that it would allow play to finish comfortably in time for the dinner, an important consideration for those states that convert the playing space into the dining space.
- TC thought reinvigorating the ANC pairs would be a good idea. A number issues would need to be resolved:

- Is the event flighted by category but played as a single field? (TC thought this format had many advantages.)
 - Is the event open entry (so pairs playing in the Butler, for example, could enter) or restricted to pairs nominated by each state?
 - Would the event be run as a one-day qualifying and a one-day final? (TC thought this best.)
 - If there were semifinals should players from losing teams be allowed to enter the final? (TC thought “yes” and could draw on past experience to determine an appropriate drop-in score.)
- TC supported the idea of a restricted teams but thought the states needed to be consulted given the costs involved. One suggestion was that the states send a team which includes the two pairs whose entry to the restricted pairs is subsidised by the ABF. States could choose to fund an additional pair.
 - TC supported the idea of a youth butler but thought feedback from youth players would be critical to determine whether the idea would attract sufficient entries. If it were to proceed then some issues would need to be resolved (open entry or entry by state? open to NZ?)

The TC noted that Ben will be present at the forthcoming ANC in Canberra both in the Teams week and the Butler week to brief players and state association representatives on the outcome of the initial consultation and to seek further views.

5. Summer Festival Format

Roy Nixon asked for TC views on a proposal to change the format of some events in the 2018 Summer Festival. These proposed changes were driven by a continuing fall in numbers for the SWPT and some other events and the change in venue from QT to the Canberra Rex. (LK considers that the total number of tables which can be accommodated is 140 in two separate areas.)

The TC noted that the structure of festivals is the choice and responsibility of tournament organisers. It recognised that the Summer Festival is different because it is an ABF event rather than a licensed one. The TC was happy with a number of the proposals.

Given that this would be the first time at the new venue, it would be very important to make as favourable an impression as possible on punters, both to get them to return and to tell others about how good the experience was.

The TC was strongly of the view that marketing the SWPT/NOT as THE premier bridge event in Australia was critical. Part of that should about the things that are different: longer RR matches, more teams in the KOs, the highest-calibre field of any Australian event (as shown by data on the number of entrants who had won PQPs).

Feedback on proposed changes would be helpful both to attune punters to what might happen and to find out in advance if any proposal was on the nose.

While data on numbers was useful what would equally necessary was some qualitative assessment on why people were no longer attending. Was it because they were coming for shorter periods, or attending the first week, or going elsewhere (Surfers?), or . . . ?

TC was not keen to see the SWPT (which is the qualifying stage for the NOT) reduced to three days. Alternative formats should be considered so as to keep the SWPT special and not yet another three-day Swiss of 4*14-board matches. These included a KO with Swiss repechage (including a possibility of promotion back to the KO section), a double KO with Swiss repechage.

The TC wondered whether re-ordering events would make any difference to player attendance.

6. Feedback on Directors

The TC discussed the role of directors and how their performance might be improved. It noted that directors are the face of the organisation from a player point of view. It is therefore important that the interaction between directors and players should not be abrasive.

The TC encouraged tournament organisers to provide players with an opportunity to supply feedback regarding their interaction with a director, either in written, verbal or electronic form.

The TC discussed whether directors should also be subject to some form of performance review, and how training could be provided to address shortcomings. It asked that these issues be considered by John McIlrath given his responsibility for director development.

The TC recommended that all officials at a Tournament should receive induction as to their duties and have their performance reviewed. This would include Directors, Recorders, Floor Managers, and Caddies.

MC agrees and will ask LK to include in agenda for Tournament Organisers' Workshop later this year.

7. Other business

Promulgation of outcomes. Recommendations made by TC are sent for approval to MC. Relevant approved changes are then sent to NECs who will promulgate to TOs.

Meeting closed at 16:20.

11. Next meeting

Sunday 29th October in Sydney (nominally at the NSWBA)

Appendix 1

Calculation of Multiple Average Plus Awards During a Single Session/Match

Law 12C2(d) permits provision to be made for when a contestant (i.e., a pair) is unable to obtain a result on multiple boards during the same session. This Law allows (via regulation) for the award of something other than just a series of, for example, 'Average Plus' scores.

Law 86B2 addresses the same situation in teams where there exist multiple boards with no comparable result (i.e., due to fouling etc.) and Law 86B3 again allows the default procedures laid down in Law 86B2 to be varied by regulation.

The equation below is presented with the intention of using it for both pairs and teams. The proposal provides what we believe to be reasonable recompense without unduly distorting the outcome in relation to the rest of the field.

The artificial adjusted score awarded per board would be:

10% (Matchpoints) or 3 IMPs (Teams) times the square root of the number of boards divided by the number of boards.

For matchpoints this would be added to the 50% per board that is associated with an average.

The formula for MPs is:

$$= 0.5 + 0.1 * \text{SQRT}(\text{number-of-boards}) / \text{number-of-boards}$$

For (Team) IMPs it's:

$$= 3 * \text{SQRT}(\text{number-of-boards}) / \text{number-of-boards}$$

Number of Boards	MPs per board (Pairs)	IMPs per board (Teams)
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1	60.00%	3.00
2	57.07%	2.12
3	55.77%	1.73
4	55.00%	1.50
5	54.47%	1.34
6	54.08%	1.22
7	53.78%	1.13
8	53.54%	1.06
9	53.33%	1.00
10	53.16%	0.95

For pair events scored against a datum or events scored via X-IMPs it would be:

$$= 2 * \text{SQRT}(\text{number-of-boards}) / \text{number-of-boards}$$

It is also important to specify at what point the number of boards missed becomes such that the most appropriate action would be to cancel the encounter and instead award an artificial match result in VPs. This we suggest should occur whenever the number of unplayed or non-comparable boards exceeds 50% of the total number of boards scheduled to be played for the relevant session/match.

The ABF Tournament Regulations currently specify an award of 13 VPs in lieu of a scheduled match that is cancelled or unplayed through no fault of the contestant(s) involved.

The application of the above formula, followed by a conversion to VPs using the relevant WBF scale, also produces an outcome of ~13 VPs (which is actually independent of match length).