



Tournament Committee

MINUTES

Meeting held in Canberra (*chez* Peter Reynolds)
Saturday 8th September 2018, 10:20-15:45

1. Present

David Morgan (Chair), Sheila Bird, Laurie Kelso, Warren Lazer, Matthew McManus, Peter Reynolds, and Marcia Scudder.

2. Apologies: none

MC has decided to reduce the number of members of some committees. As a result, Sean Mullamphy is no longer on the TC. We thank Sean for his contribution to the TC over many years, and wish him well with his ongoing recovery.

3. Matters arising from previous minutes

a. Player consultation on location and timing of playoffs

Given the limited feedback, with no conclusive outcome, the MC endorsed the TC's recommendation that the current location and timing of the Open, Women's and Seniors' Playoffs should continue, and that a comprehensive review will be undertaken after the current format has been in place for the four-year cycle.

b. Player consultation on three-stage format for Open Butler Pairs

WL will proceed with the preparation and promulgation of a consultation paper.

c. Swiss VP scales

MM and Peter Buchen are continuing work on this. Peter is not happy with the scales proposed in the 9-11 VP region. Peter will also investigate whether players swing more when they are behind because of the nature of the WBF VP scales.

d. Appeals or alternative

The MC supported the TC's recommendation to move towards a review system for national events and agreed that successful implementation would require more education of directors and reviewers, and require appeals coordinators to be available for events.

4. ANC Review

The TC discussion drew on the experience of all members, as everyone had played at least one week of the ANC, and substantial feedback from players, captains and the organisers.

Overall:

- The venue was good, and spacious.
- A partitioned area allowed for segregation of the Closed Room in the Teams, the Restricted Butler, and stage II of the Open Butler.

- There was a problem with the setting sun on a few days, with no possibility of shading the windows.
- One item to be considered for future venues was the edict by the venue that no food be brought into the venue, in particular, no Coca Cola (as Pepsi was sold there)
- The organization by the committee was very good, with helpful staff from the venue also.
- The venue was used for a race meeting on the second Monday night. This necessitated a complete pull down of the venue on Monday after play and reset on Tuesday morning. To facilitate this, play started 1 hour earlier on Monday morning.

Significant problems, however, were evident in the *scoring* of the entire Championship event, resulting in a constant stream of complaints. In the Teams, lineups were not accurately transposed from the lineup sheets (vital for accurate assessment of board rule and PQP qualification), live scores on the web were not updated, and running results were incorrect on the web. Player datums were not available on the web. Most of these problems were eventually overcome, with correct results being produced finally.

The remaining outstanding issue was the calculation of datums in the Women's and Seniors' Butlers. The intent was that they would be a composite of results from their own field and the open field, as had been agreed for use by the MC. However, this did not happen, and the datums used for the two events were calculated solely from their own field. The Chief Scorer (Martin Willcox) was aware of this requirement, but failed to have the software updated and fully tested.

The Congress scoring was uneventful.

There was much critical feedback from players and captains about the revised *format*, including:

- Scheduling only two matches on day one meant two teams in each of the open, women and seniors' fields played only 14 boards of bridge that day.
- There was only limited interest in the ANC pairs.
- All three 2nd v 3rd playoffs were won by the teams that finished second.
- Having 2nd v 3rd playoffs increased the opportunities for teams to dump given the timing of matches in the second RR.
- Playing 14-board matches reduced the amount of bridge.
 - In conjunction with the byes, some teams wondered if they needed teams of six in the future.
- The Youth Butler did not attract sufficient entries to run.

The only compliment was that the 2nd vs 3rd playoff kept more teams competitive for longer than would otherwise have been the case, although in the open and seniors' any of the teams running 2-4 could have taken 2nd spot with different round 14 results, and in the women's fourth was not in contention for some time.

The TC recommends the following changes for future ANCs:

- *16 board matches throughout the Teams Qualifying.*
- *Elimination of the 2nd v 3rd Playoff*

- *A change in format of the Teams, so that the day of Qualifying with fewer than four matches is at the end (rather than the beginning) of the event, i.e. three days of four matches and one of two matches for O/W/S and three days of four matches and one of three matches for the Youth, all commencing at 9:30. The finals would be 5x12 boards, with one stanza played on the evening of day 4 and the other 4 on day 5.*

MC endorse the above recommendations.

A proposed schedule is in Attachment A.

There are two possible time slots for the teams and pairs championships:

- a) Sunday – Thursday, with the ANC pairs on Thursday and Friday, with all finalists able to drop in on Friday if they wish. This has the disadvantage that players competing in the ANC teams would not have a warm-up event.
- b) Monday – Friday, with the ANC Pairs to precede it on Saturday and Sunday. This has the disadvantage that players from the Butler would most likely not compete in the Pairs.

5. Accreditation of scorers and scoring programs

The TC discussed a number of issues related to scoring, some of which had been highlighted by issues at the ANC. The TC concluded that there were advantages in implementing a more regulated environment regarding scorers and scoring programs used at ABF events.

Just as directors are accredited to work at various levels of event, scorers and scoring programs should also be regulated by accreditation. The TC noted that the complex ABF events are the Summer Festival, the Gold Coast Festival and the ANC.

At present there are four scoring programs in use at ABF events. They are those used by Peter Busch, David Anderson, Matthew McManus and Martin Willcox. The ABF might want to consider the sustainability of these programs in the future.

The TC recommends that the ABF should fund interested parties to take the role of Trainee Scorer at major events and provide an appropriate training payment for the supervisor.

MC will refer this recommendation to a working group who will consider this issue as a whole.

6. 2019 Playoffs

Open, Women's and Seniors'

The TC addressed some key issues relating to playing in partnerships, timely submission of accurate system cards and withdrawals after the close of entries. It reaffirmed that teams must nominate as either two or three pairs, and play in those partnerships throughout the event unless authorised by the CTD for due cause, and agreed that:

- Failing to lodge system cards within the time required in the regulations will result in IMP fines to be applied in the first match played. The penalty would be 5 imps per day overdue (max 35 imps) for the first match. Failure to submit a satisfactory amended card may incur further penalties.

- If a team is either disqualified or withdraws after the qualifying teams are declared and before November 3:
 - the highest-ranked team which entered but failed to qualify (if any) will be invited to participate; and
 - any choices of opponents previously made will be voided, and the process will be repeated with the new field.
- System requirements are to mirror those for the KO stages of the Bermuda Bowl. Yellow systems and brown sticker conventions will therefore be permitted. The Tournament Regulations will be used for yellow sticker seating rights.

Some additional slight modifications of fine details to the regulations were discussed. MM to amend the document and put it on the website.

Mixed Teams Playoffs

The TC thanked Marcia Scudder for the preparatory work already undertaken for the event (to be held from Fri 25th - Mon 28th January 2019, over the Australia Day long weekend at the NSWBA), noting the interest shown by players at the ANC.

The TC:

- noted that non-contending teams comprising mixed pairs are encouraged to enter, but cannot proceed to the semi-finals;
- agreed entry should be open to teams of 4 or 6 where each pair is mixed and will play throughout in mixed partnerships;
- noted the emphasis being placed in marketing the event that there is no requirement for any player or pair to have won any PQPs in other events in order to enter;
- agreed that there will be no requirement to lodge systems, and that system restrictions will mirror those in the knock-out stages of the Target Event; and
- confirmed that Open PQPs will be awarded for the teams that contest the semifinals and final (48/24/12/6) and noted that women would be able to transfer these to the Women's list at double the value.

7. Timing of Swan River Open Pairs

The TC noted the issues facing the organisers of this event given the clash with the Perth City to Surf race, for which there are multiple road closures, and the proximity of other national events in the calendar. Following discussions with other convenors the event will be scheduled for August 10-11 in 2019.

8. Entry to Restricted Events

There is some concern that the same players are winning multiple restricted events.

The TC recommends that:

- *if a player wins a Gold Point Restricted event, they cannot subsequently enter that event again; and*
- *if a player wins any two Gold Point Restricted events then they are no longer eligible to enter any such event with the same masterpoint restriction.*

MC endorse this recommendation.

The decision will apply to events from 1 October 2018.

9. Separate fields for the Open Butler

A correspondent had suggested that the open Butler be run with two separate fields so as to reduce the impact of variations in the total number of honour cards held by different pairs. The TC noted that there is an inherent element of randomness in any IMP pairs event, and saw no compelling reason to change the current format.

10. PQPs for State Representatives

The current regulations have been applied correctly for the pair that failed to comply with the board rule in the recent ANC Teams in Hobart. However, in the future, 6 PQPs will be awarded to all players who represent their state in the ANC teams and play at least one match.

11. PQPs for Girls' Team and U21 Team

The TC agreed that no PQPs should be awarded to either of these teams, including if either team does well in international competition, because, unlike the U26 team, there is no rigorous selection procedure for the Girls' Team or the U21 Team at present.

12. VPs to two decimal places

The recent Open Butler Pairs resulted in the first two pairs being separated by only 0.01VP. Correspondence was received (RDK) analysing the significance of the very small margin in terms of imps and suggested that the two pairs should have been declared equal winners. The TC noted that prior to the introduction of VPs to two decimal places the regulations included detailed tie-breaking procedures and concluded that the current VP scale eliminated the need to use alternatives, except in exceptional circumstances.

13. Revised Tournament Calendar

There are possibilities that the GCC may be able to move nearer the middle of the year. This could lead to a reshuffle of major events, such as the VCC, the ANC, and the Playoffs. Such a major change would have to have the full agreement of all states involved.

14. Youth Selection Policy

In response to a request from the MC, *the TC recommended that the ABF distinguish between APBF and WC events, to which the ABF should send its best team, and other events, for which development could (or should) be one of the selection criteria.* Such development events should be integral to Youth Training.

MC endorse this recommendation.

15. Other business

MM made an interesting observation that for a period of several years the attendance at ABF events has risen by an average of 5%. But this year, there has been a 5% fall.

16. Next meeting

Saturday 2nd February, 2019, in Sydney (nominally at the NSWBA).

Attachment A
2019 Proposed ANC format

Qualifying: 14 (15) x 16 bd matches
Final: 5 x 12 bd stanzas

Timing

Days 1-3

9.30 - 11.30

11.45 - 1.45

Lunch

2.30 - 4.30

4.45 - 6.45

Day 4

9.30 - 11.30

11.45 - 1.45

2.30 - 4.30 (Youth only)

Final - Stanza 1

5.00 - 6.40

Day 5

Final Stanzas 2-5

9.30 - 11.10

11.20 - 1.00

Lunch

2.00 - 3.40

3.50 - 5.30

Attachment B

Mixed Teams Championship

Entries

Entries open 15th December and close 15th January. Late entries may be accepted at the discretion of the TO.

Payment by 17th January. There will be no subsidies for travel to the Playoffs.

Target Event

Mixed Teams at 2019 World Teams Championships and any event that might be a precursor, such as Zone 7. There will be Mixed Teams at the APBF, but it is not known if there will be a Zone 7 Mixed Teams competition.

Format

2 days qualifying, 1 day Semi-Final, 1 day Final

Qualifying

2 days Swiss 10 x 12 board matches.

If necessary, a House Team will ensure that the number of teams is even.

If the number of entries allows, it may be possible to play a round robin.

The TO reserves the right to vary the format depending on the number of entries.

Semi Finals and Finals

64 board semi-finals and 64 board final. All screened tables with BBO coverage.

Consolation Sunday Pairs

A Swiss Matchpointed Pairs with cash prizes run by the NSWBA

Entry fees

\$720 per team paid to ABF by 17th January. Entry fee to the Consolation Pairs on Sunday for any pairs not proceeding to the semi-finals is also included. There will be no refunds. 50% Youth discounts apply.

Catering

Lunch will be included each day. In addition, tea, coffee, cakes and biscuits will be available throughout the day.

Website

Information and the entry facility will be on the website in due course.

Eligibility to represent Australia

Teams proceeding to the semi-finals must comply with the ABF Eligibility to represent Australia Policy and must also comply with the conditions of eligibility set forth in the WBF's Eligibility Code. These teams also declare that they are available to represent Australia at the target event if they win the Playoff.