

ABF TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN SYDNEY 22nd JULY 2012 at 10:00 am at NSWBA

1. PRESENT

Kim Morrison (chair), Bruce Neill, Peter Reynolds, Marcia Scudder, Eric Ramshaw.

Sean Mullamphy and Matthew McManus were also in attendance.

Apologies: Peter Kahler

2. ABF EVENTS

(a) Summer Festival of Bridge (SFOB)

- i. **New Format for SWPT/NOT.** *The TC previously recommended making rounds 1 and 2 of the SWPT each 10 boards (using a 20 board VP scale), to increase the accuracy of the final 8 placings. The two rounds would be predrawn to allow for a seamless movement from round 1 to round 2. For the predraw, the seeded field will be divided into four quarters. For the first match quarter 1 plays quarter 3 (and therefore 2 vs 4); for the second match, the draw is quarter 1 playing quarter 2 (and 3 vs 4). This approach would increase the number of rounds, and therefore the overall validity of the SWPT as a determinant of the field for the NOT. However, it is recommended that it be trialled on a smaller event to see if there is general acceptance of the procedure and its disturbance of the first day of the Swiss, before implementation in a very large field such as the SWPT.*
- ii. **Black Friday** A one day event will be implemented to offer play.
- iii. **Publication of Datums.** It is recommended that Datums should be available at the Summer Festival. This requires input of player identities for each position in each round – unfortunately some players ignore the need for accurate information to be provided, therefore nullifying the Datum records. For such a large field it is recommended that no provision for correcting inaccurate input should be provided or it may fully occupy the time of the scorer. A consistent method of calculating datums is recommended. A capping of excessive scores is recommended such as maximising at 50 and then dividing additional imps by 10.
- iv. **TO/CTD at the Summer Festival.** BN will compile a list of functions that need to be performed at the event (and at other ABF events). These functions will be allocated to a responsible member of the staff at the Festival, to ensure that all details have been attended to. The detailed list will be provided to each responsible person (TO, CTD, Scorer, Caddy mother etc)

(b) Playoffs

The issue of a player's eligibility to participate in the Playoffs and the subsequent allocation of PQPs was looked into. ***This issue is still pending.***

The **2013 Open and Women's Playoffs** will take place on December 8-13, 2012. A suggested time for the Seniors' Playoff is 13-17 February 2013. In order to enter the Playoffs, each player must have earned at least 1 PQP in that category (Open, Women's or Seniors' (but see below)). Provisional Regulations would be similar to those adopted for the 2012 Playoffs (with minor changes as necessary).

An opportunity was given for players to provide feedback about the timing of the 2013 and 2014 playoffs. As expected there is no consensus regarding the dates, with some respondents happy, while others were not. A suggestion to separate all three events was discussed. There are advantages, the primary one being that the formats for the two events do not have to run parallel, making each event easier to organise. It was felt, however, that there would need to be a significant number of Women who would play in the Open Playoffs before it could be considered viable to separate them, with the added inherent venue hire costs etc. There was, however sufficient overlap between the personnel in the Open/Women's and the Seniors' to keep them separate.

Two lengthy documents were received from Barbara Travis regarding the 2013 and 2014 Playoffs, and the general issue of quality of Australia's representative Women's Teams.

Some operational issues occurring in the 2012 Playoffs were brought up. These included

- Timing (8.75 minutes per board was allowed in the Finals),
- Use of screens (playing area was too small to accommodate screens at every table in the preliminary rounds, but were used in the Semi-finals and Finals, and in Division 1 of the Open),
- Use of bidding boxes when on BBO (this was not done as the written record allowed details of the play to be put onto the Web). A possible solution to this issue is for each team to provide a scribe.
- Carry forward scores for subsequent stages of the Playoffs is at present inconsistent (none in the Open, as the format did not lead to a sensible carry forward; none in the Women's, but the round robin format would have allowed a meaningful carry forward; a carry forward in the Seniors' based on the VPs at the end of the RR, but differing from WBF policy where they use only the head-to-head matches). The TC recommends that there be no carry forwards for any of the Playoff stages. **ENDORSED**

Barbara Travis provided a detailed document outlining her suggestions as to how to raise the impact of the Australian Women's Representative Teams. This was intended to provide a constructive way to consider reorganising the 2014 Playoffs and beyond for Women. Her concept was to follow the procedure successfully used by the Youth, creating a Squad of players, which might change in composition with time, and from which Representative Teams will be selected. The Squad would undergo training – using time slots previously allocated to some of the National Women's Events. She felt that this approach might encourage more Women to play in Open events where the competition is tougher and more likely to mirror the strength of opponents at international events. This could also encourage more women to compete in the Open Playoffs, providing any women who are part of an Open Representative Team to experience international competition at that level. Adopting an approach along these lines was considered to be such a change that it would require extensive consultation with players and the ABF.

PR to discuss the issues with Barbara Travis. **NOTED. MC secretary asked to send proposal to senior female players for their comment.**

A request was received from Robert Krochmalik that he be allowed to play in the 2013 Seniors' Playoff, even though he has no Seniors' PQPs. Approval was not recommended, as other players in the same position had participated in the Seniors' Butler in Darwin in order to earn Seniors' PQPs.

NOTED

Augmentation rules have been compiled to be passed to the MC for modification and ratification before becoming final.

Preliminary version is

- If a team of four is successful in the Australian Playoffs, they must augment to a team-of-six.
- The team shall prepare an ordered short-list of eligible pairs for submission to the ABFTC.
- To be included on the list each member of the pair must have participated in the Playoffs
- The list should include a brief summary of each pair's experience (as a partnership) and a list of their most recent achievements. A statement from each nominee confirming his or her availability for the respective target event must also be included.
- The ordered short-list (consisting of at least three, but no more than six viable pairs) must be submitted to the Chair of the ABFTC within 10 days of the conclusion of the Play-Offs. The ABFTC will then make a recommendation to the ABF Management Committee for endorsement.
- If the ordered short list is not received within 10 days the ABFTC will make a recommendation to the ABF Management Committee on the basis of its own judgement.

(c) Australian National Championships (ANC)

Previously the TC recommended that scores in the ANC teams be +35 in order to avoid negative scores. This would mean that the range of possible scores for each match would be 0 to 67.5. This scale was used at the recent ANC in Darwin. It was felt that a lack of dissemination of the nature (and simplicity) of the change in scoring method meant that those at home had difficulty working out what the scores meant. It is felt that with time and education this problem will disappear. However, it was suggested that the states be offered a change so that the ANC teams be scored on a WBF Victory Point scale. The MC suggested that an additional column be included in the display to reflect the match result. The ABF MC hears that there are possible changes to the WBF teams scoring VP scale and the TC may reconsider the suggestion that the TC use this scale should it become available.

Matthew McManus presented a report on the ANC in Darwin.

He would like to see the Supplementary Regulations posted on the web sooner. So he is preparing SRs for all licensed events which will just require small amendments appropriate to recent changes and decisions.

Seating rights for the Youth when Yellow systems were in play became an issue, because the team playing the Yellow system wanted to relinquish any seating rights. The combination of Yellow systems and blind seating has problems. Please refer this issue to the ABF Youth Committee for their advice.

System cards need to be vetted before being uploaded to the web. Simply giving a convention name is not sufficient – all but the very basic conventions (a list of which should be compiled by the Systems Committee) should be described in detail.

Defences to Yellow systems should also be vetted prior to uploading.

In 2012, the entries to the Women's Butler numbered 22. There were insufficient entries to run Stage 1, so one non-contending pair was asked to move to the Open Stage 1 field. By direct approach, KM found a second pair who were willing to withdraw from the field and enter the seniors. This allowed the field of 20 to play alongside the Open Stage 2 and the Seniors' Butler. All pairs were offered a non-contending position in the Open Stage 1, playing one or two days, or not at all, as preferred. Entry fees which had been paid in advance were applied to any weekend play, with a fee of \$50 for playing just one day. All players then augmented any remaining funds to pay the full fee for Stage 2.

The TC has now considered various solutions to this ongoing problem and considers the following the preferred solution.

For up to 20 pairs play will be parallel to the Open Stage 2. The number of rounds may vary with the number of entries (and entry fees should be based on the number of boards). The option of part swiss and round robin may be necessary. For 21-25 pairs play would commence on Sunday with a RR format. For 26-30 pairs, play would commence on Saturday with a RR format. For both weekend starts, this would increase the length of Stage 2 to allow for the entries received. For an entry >30 a two Stage event would be held, corresponding to the Open Stages. **The MC would prefer that the events start on Saturday and finish earlier if appropriate, but that there be no cross pollination. This new format would require adequate promulgation on the Website.**

(d) ANOT

A new proposal for the format of the ANOT was put forward, 5 x 12 board matches on Saturday and 4 x 14 board matches on Sunday. This was approved, although it was felt that it downgraded the event and this may lead to a downgrade of the PQPs to be awarded. *It was recommended that a standard format for each ABF event be proposed to ensure sufficient rounds for a reliable outcome. Ross Moore may be able to provide guidelines here.*

3. CALENDAR

The possibility of running a new Butler Pairs event in conjunction with the GNOT final at Tweed Heads was considered, as this would allow players to take advantage of grants that they had been given to go to Tweed Heads. **The MC would be interested in hearing more of this suggestion.**

The Barrier Reef Tournament will continue to be held on the June long weekend (which has been reinstated by the new Qld Government).

4. OTHER MATTERS

(a) Appeals Committee training

The personnel who form appeals committees are generally selected ad hoc from quality players in attendance. Some of these may have experience on former committees, others not. There has never been an opportunity for interested parties to learn what is expected of them if they are called on to participate in a committee. The TC considered options, including opening appeals to a limited number of interested (but uninvolved) players to act as observers; invitations to observe only the deliberation of the committee; and the incorporation of non-voting participants who can take part in discussions only.

(b) BBO

A paper was tabled compiled by Matthew McManus and Laurie Kelso dealing with BBO matters. In particular, the chain of command and responsibilities of the National Coordinators, the Tournament Organiser, the Chief Tournament Director, a local BBO Organiser etc need to be clarified.

The two National BBO Coordinators (Trian Chira and Ray Ellaway) should be responsible for ensuring that each ABF event for which PQPs are awarded has the resources necessary to carry out BBO presentation of, at least, the finals of its major events. The issue of responsibility for the myriad of details involved in BBO was discussed.

The TC recommends that each state have a Local Coordinator, who would be able to provide local personnel capable of taking the role of operators, for each table and each session for which BBO is scheduled by the National Coordinators. Either the Local Coordinator or his nominee should be present at each event in that state where BBO is scheduled, to ensure the correct setup and to be available to troubleshoot should the need arise. Notwithstanding this, one of National Coordinators should be present at the Summer Festival, the Gold Coast and the ANC to ensure smooth running of BBO at these flagship events. **Noted, please send to Trian Chira and Ray Ellaway for comment.**

Operators and their training – an opportunity should be made available for training of people interested in becoming operators. The names of trained and therefore competent operators who are available for a particular event should be supplied to either the Local or National Coordinator.

Commentators – need to be provided for each session. Nice to have rather than a must have.

The selection of events and tables to be broadcast – this is probably the domain of the TO in conjunction with the CTD. The MC agreed that all Australian events broadcast on BBO would be advertised on the front page of the ABF web site. This has been done for the last couple of months.,

Provision of equipment – computers, stools, power cords, power boards etc – this will vary from event to event. In some instances, the box of equipment will need to be brought from Canberra.

Testing of venue to ensure adequate, fast, reliable internet – testing of the suitability of the internet access should take place well before the scheduled time of broadcasting. The LC, together with the TO and CTD should be able to ensure that testing is done and is satisfactory.

A meeting of relevant and interested parties with the two BBO coordinators was suggested to take place in Canberra before the Summer Festival in 2013.

(c) **Mutual Obligation Document between International Representatives and the ABF**

NZ players sign a code of behaviour, which is like a formal contract, as part of their mutual obligation document. (PR - still pending)

(d) **Training of International Teams.**

Various possibilities exist for this, including internet based practice, seminars and mentors. A document will be prepared outlining the approaches which would be feasible for a given budget (say 10-50 K). (PR – still pending)

(e) **Publication of Appeals**

It is necessary for all appeals to be viewed by General Counsel before they can be published in, for example, the bulletin associated with a tournament. There the concept of immediate publication of appeals becomes impractical.

(f) **PQP Allocations for 2013**

No changes were considered necessary at this time. The Open Pairs at the VCC and ANOT are still on watch.

(g) **Non-financial members at ABF events**

There seem to have been several incidences of non-financial players participating in ABF events. Most occurrences have been rectified, but occasionally one has slipped through scrutiny. **In future, the NTC's will be making these checks before each event starts.**

(h) **Alerts with Announcements**

The change in alerting regulation so that for some bids, alerts are accompanied by announcements was raised at the Zone 7 meeting in January. This is now in use in New Zealand, and it was considered time that it was trialled in Australia. However this is a decision for the Systems Committee. **The MC will await any recommendation from the Systems Committee, but we will not be agreeing blind.**

(i) **Super Vets event in WA** Approval was given for WA to conduct an event which would be restricted to players over 80. This would be held during Seniors Week (11-18 November) and would attract Gold Masterpoints at A3 level.

(j) **Gold Masterpoints for State Events** Input from the TC was sought by the MC regarding the advisability of allowing states to allocate Gold Masterpoints for their major state events, possibilities being the State Pairs, State Teams or ANC Qualifying events. The aim was to increase participation in these events by raising their profile. This would also provide an opportunity for players from regional areas to obtain Gold points. As far as the states are concerned this would lead to an increase in revenue from the events, as the reduction in the number of gold points awarded at a weighting of 3.75 would more than offset the current red point cost at a weighting of 5. However, the end result might be a general devaluation in Gold points.

5. Correspondence

- **2014 Playoff format – B. Travis & S. Lusk**
- **2013 Playoff format – B. Travis**
- **Seniors PQP regarding playoffs – R. Krokmalik**

6. NEXT MEETING Sunday 18th November.

ACTIONS:-

- KM to liaise with EM regarding question re eligibility of a player. Ross Harper eligibility still unresolved.
- LK to inform MW to post provisional scores quickly at the SFOB with markers indicating incomplete results. pending
- Summer Festival issues – LK to approach MW regarding the publication of datums. pending
- Mutual Obligation Document – Players and the ABF for International Events – PR to prepare. pending
- Training of International Teams – PR to consider and produce a guideline document. pending
- NPCs for International Events – BN to produce guideline document pending
- Appeals – documents for members and chairs of committees – BN to draft documents pending
- KM to communicate with DM regarding Krochmalik request.
- PR to respond to Barbara Travis