

# ABF TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE

## MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN CANBERRA, 23 NOVEMBER 2008

### 1. PRESENT

Kim Morrison (chair), Eric Ramshaw, Peter Reynolds, Marcia Scudder, John Brockwell. Neville Francis and David Smith apologised. The meeting started at 10.00 am.

### 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minor corrections were made to the minutes of the TC meeting of August 2008. As soon as the corrections are made, the minutes will be distributed.

### 3. CORRESPONDENCE

- i. Letters from David and Paula McLeish*  
Requests for consideration of eligibility to play in the 2009 Open Playoff were directed to the MC for resolution.
- ii. Letter from Peter Gill*  
Kim Morrison will reply to Peter Gill's letter about relocation of ANCs.
- iii. Letter from Bruce Neill*  
A draft reply to a letter from Bruce Neill about the schedule for the Australian Butler Pairs Championships was approved.
- iv. Correspondence from Therese Tully*  
A draft reply to correspondence from Therese Tully about PQPs for the Gold Coast Open Teams was approved. It was decided also that an informal meeting at the 2009 Gold Coast congress, between representatives of the TC and representatives of the Gold Coast Congress Committee, should be convened in order to resolve any misapprehensions about this matter that might have arisen in the recent past.
- v. Letter from Sheila Bird*  
A letter from Sheila Bird posed three questions relating to the allocation of PQPs for the NWT, *viz.* communication of rationale for changes, non-availability of information relating to PQP awards for the 2008 NWT, and publication of PQP awards on the ABF website. See paragraphs 11a, 11b and 11c below.
- vi. Letter from Sartaj Hans*  
A letter from Sartaj Hans dealt with Australian team selection. See paragraph 5d below.
- vii. Letter from Margaret Gibbs*  
A letter from Margaret Gibbs alluded to a perceived clash between the ASP and the New Zealand National Congress. See paragraph 7 below.
- viii. Communication from the ABF Management Committee*  
The MC asked the TC to make recommendations relating to the preparation of Australian teams. The meeting considered that this was as much a matter for

the players as for administrators, and was one that should be dealt with by the Players' Liaison Committee. See also paragraph 8 below.

ix. *Letter from Di Marler*

A letter from Di Marler expressed concern that the schedule for the 2009 Gold Coast Congress clashed with a major SABF event, and asked for enlightenment about the schedules for future Gold Coast Congresses. See also paragraph 9 below.

**4. PLAYOFF QUALIFYING POINTS (PQP)**

It was noted that a standing TC resolution directs that matters relating to the allocation of PQPs for each upcoming year be dealt with at the last TC meeting of each preceding year.

**a. S-WPT and NOT**

- i. It was reaffirmed that PQP awards for the S-WPT (one field) are: first – 36, second – 18. These awards are cumulative with awards won in the NOT.
- ii. PQP awards are made to the top eight eligible teams in the NOT. Awards are made only to PQP-eligible teams. Should there be less than eight eligible teams in the NOT, awards will be made only to those teams. (In other words, it is possible to “burn” PQP awards.)
- iii. The structure of the NOT, and the presence of several non-PQP-eligible teams, is such that the distribution of PQP awards may not be immediately clear. PQP compiler John Scudder is requested to determine an unambiguous formula for distribution of PQP awards from first place to eighth (or equal-eighth) place.

**b. NWT**

- i. It was resolved that PQP awards for the NWT (Swiss) shall be: first – 24, second – 12. These awards shall be cumulative with awards won in the NWT final series.
- ii. PQP awards are made to the top four eligible teams in the NWT. Awards are made only to PQP-eligible teams that participate in the NWT final series. Should there be fewer than four eligible teams in the NWT finals, awards will be made only to those teams. (In other words, it is possible to “burn” PQP awards.)

**c. NST**

- i. It was resolved that PQP awards for the NST (Swiss) shall be: first – 24, second – 12. These awards shall be cumulative with awards won in the NST final series.
- ii. PQP awards are made to the top six eligible teams in the NST. Awards are made only to PQP-eligible teams that participate in the NST final series. Should there be fewer than six eligible teams in the NST finals, awards will be made only to those teams. (In other words, it is possible to “burn” PQP awards.)

**d. Butler Pairs Championships**

It was resolved that PQP awards for the Open, Women's and Seniors Butlers be extended down to ninth place thus: first 65, second 60, third 55, fourth 35, fifth 30, sixth 25, seventh 15, eighth 10, ninth 5.

**e. ANC (Interstate) Teams Championships**

It was reaffirmed that:

- i. The board rule shall apply to the award of PQPs for first (30 PQPs) and second (12 PQPs) places.
- ii. The board rule shall not apply to the award of PQPs (6) for membership of state teams.

**f. Limit of allocation of PQPs**

Each year the TC determines PQP awards for the following year. These awards are absolute both in magnitude and in terms of the number of contestant teams or pairs to which awards are made. If the required number of teams or pairs cannot be obtained from the contestants in the final series, the requirement shall be filled from the highest placed contestants in the (Swiss) qualifying rounds. **Exceptions** are the NOT and the final series of the NWT and the NST. If the required number of teams or pairs cannot be obtained from the NOT, the requirement shall not be filled; that is, extra place(s) shall not be sought from the S-WPT. If the required number of teams or pairs cannot be obtained from the NWT/NST final series, the requirement shall not be filled; that is, the extra place(s) shall not be sought from the NWT/NST Swiss qualifying. It is implicit in the above that PQP awards can, in relevant circumstances, be lost ("burnt").

**g. Spring Nationals**

The meeting expressed concern at the general quality of the fields that participated in the Spring National Open Teams in the Sydney Festival. Notwithstanding, it was decided to retain the current PQP awards.

**h. Transferability of PQPs**

The meeting reaffirmed that the only permissible transfer of PQPs is (i) transfer of Open PQPs to the Women's PQP list and (ii) transfer of Open PQPs to the Seniors PQP list. These transfers are permitted only when certain published conditions are met.

**i. Eligibility of withdrawing contestants for PQPs**

It was resolved that, for the purpose of PQP allocation, any contestant that **withdraws** during the course of an ABF event is ineligible for PQPs. (It is noted that this needs to be inserted in the ABF Tournament Regulations from 2009.) See also paragraph 10b.

Note: Management Committee approves the result on the basis that a contestant that has withdrawn during the course of an ABF event is ineligible for PQPs and refers back to the TC the question of the effect of the withdrawal on the other members of the unit.

**j. Letter from Sheila Bird**

A letter from Sheila Bird raising questions about PQP awards for the NWT was dealt with as a separate item. See paragraphs 11a, 11b and 11c.

**5. 2009 PLAYOFFS**

**a. Systems**

- i. It is noted that the conditions of contest for WBF world championships specify certain restrictions on system according to (i) event and (ii) stage of event. The meeting considered that it is not sensible that systems not permitted at world championships, or at other international championships, should be permitted in Australian Playoffs. [Indeed, there is an instance on record where an Australian pair, and their team, that qualified for a world championship were considerably inconvenienced because the system that they had used in the Playoff was inadmissible at any stage of the (world championship) target event.]
- ii. Consequently it was resolved, that for Australian Playoffs, the only permissible systems shall be those that are permitted at some stage of the target event. This means, for instance, that a system that **is permitted in the final stage(s)** of a world championship event is automatically permitted in the Australian Playoff even though the particular system **is not permitted in the qualifying stage(s)** of the world championship event.
- iii. It is emphasised that this resolution does not apply to ABF events other than the Playoffs. (Systems permissible in ABF events are specified in the ABF tournament regulations.)
- iv. It was directed that the substance of the resolution be conveyed the Seniors Playoff convenor David Stern with all due haste.

**b. Open Playoff**

- i. *Division 2.*  
The entry date for Division 2 (no PQP restriction) was extended until 4.00 pm 16 March 2009.
- ii. *Format.*  
Should the entry for Division 2 be eight teams or fewer, the first stage will be played as a round robin. Should the entry for Division 2 be 9-12 teams, the first stage will be played as a 6-round Swiss movement. Should the entry for Division 2 be greater than 12 teams, the first stage will be played as an 8-round Swiss.

**c. Seniors Playoff**

- i. *Systems.* See paragraphs 7a(ii) and 7 a(iv) above.

- ii. *Draw.* Convenor David Stern has requested that a “blind draw” be used on the grounds that the WBF now makes use of blind draws. The TC approved the request but considered that a blind draw was probably unnecessary in any situation where a double round robin was to be played.

**d. Schedule of future Playoffs**

A letter from Sartaj Hans was considered. The letter presented data that indicated that Australian teams selected via a teams format were consistently more successful in designated target events than teams selected by a pairs format. Although the data were not incontrovertible, they were compelling. The meeting considered that selection by pairs format might, in future, be used each fourth year (the Rosenblum years, i.e. even-numbered, non-Olympic years) instead of each second year as is now the case. Player Liaison Committee chair Di Marler is requested to conduct a poll to test player reaction.

**6. ANC (INTERSTATE CHAMPIONSHIPS)**

**a. General**

Lynette Turner, convenor of the 2009 (Canberra) ANC, has submitted (i) a tentative programme of events and (ii) schedules. Eric Ramshaw advised the meeting that both programming and scheduling are sensible, and that scheduling of the Butler Pairs Championships takes cognizance of relevant TC resolutions.

**b. ANC Pairs**

The TC is gratified by the response to increasing ANC Pairs Championships from 2-session events to 3-session events. In the hope of increasing participation further, it was resolved that, for 2009, the ANC Pairs again be played over three sessions – on Saturday afternoon, Saturday evening and Sunday morning. The exact timing remains subject to negotiation.

**7. AUSTRALIAN SWISS PAIRS CHAMPIONSHIP (ASP)**

A letter from Margaret Gibbs asked the TC to consider moving the ASP to a later date to avoid clashing with the New Zealand National Congress. The TC is loathe to change the schedule for the ASP because (i) the ABF calendar in the latter part of the year is quite crowded, (ii) the timing of the New Zealand National Congress is movable (it has changed several times in recent years) and New Zealand Bridge is not in a position to guarantee that the existing timing is a fixture, and (iii) the present timing coincides with a long weekend in New South Wales. John Brockwell was directed to reply to Margaret Gibbs’ letter and to copy the reply to Andrew Richman.

**8. PREPARATION OF AUSTRALIAN TEAMS**

The MC asked the TC to make recommendations relating to the preparation of Australian teams. The meeting considered that this was as much a matter for the players themselves as for administrators, and was one that should be dealt with by the Players’ Liaison Committee.

## **9. TIMING OF GOLD COAST CONGRESSES**

A letter from Di Marler expressed concern that the schedule for the 2009 Gold Coast Congress clashed with a major SABF event, and asked for enlightenment about the schedules for future Gold Coast Congresses. The meeting directed John Brockwell to reply to Di Marler advising (i) that, while future Gold Coast Congresses are scheduled for approximately late February/early March, the precise schedules are a matter for negotiation between the Gold Coast Convention Centre and congress organisers, and (ii) that more reliable advice could be elicited from Gold Coast Congress convenor Therese Tully.

## **10. WITHDRAWALS**

### **a. General**

The meeting noted (i) that the matter of withdrawals during the course of ABF events is dealt with exhaustively in the ABF tournaments regulations, and (ii) that the tournament regulations empower Tournament Sub-Committees to deal with rare or unusual circumstances should and as they occur.

### **b. Eligibility of withdrawing contestants for PQPs (refer to item 4 i)**

## **11. NATIONAL WOMEN'S TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP (NWT)**

A letter from Sheila Bird posed three questions relating to the allocation of PQPs for the NWT:

### **a. Communication of rationale for changes**

It is not normal for the TC to publish the reasons for making any particular resolution. In the instances referred to, *viz.* (i) reduction in PQP allocation for the NWT final series and (ii) increase in allocation of PQP for the Swiss qualifying stage, the decisions were made quite independently:

- i. The rationale for reducing the PQP allocation for the NWT is the drop during the past ten years in the number of teams contesting the event – from 90-100 to 30-40.
- ii. The rationale for increasing the PQP allocation for the Swiss qualifying stage of the NWT is recognition that winning, and running second in, **the S-WPT** (particularly with one field) is no mean feat and deserving of increased awards. As a matter of consistency, the awards for winning, and running second in the Swiss qualifying stages of the NWT and the NST were increased correspondingly.

### **b. Non-availability of information relating to PQP awards for the 2008 NWT**

Leading up the 2008 Summer Festival of Bridge, information about PQPs for the NWT was available on the ABF website. While there was no specific link to the NWT, there was a link to PQP allocations for all ABF events.

**c. Publication of PQP awards on the ABF website**

There is an up-to-date PQP table published on the ABF website today. Whenever changes are made to PQP awards and endorsed by the ABF Management Committee, the table is updated with all due haste.

**12. NEXT MEETING**

The meeting finished at 3.45 pm. We are grateful to Peter Reynolds for making his apartment available and for his hospitality. The next meeting will be held at 8.00 am on Sunday 18 January 2009 in Bobby Magee's restaurant in the Rydges Lakeside Hotel.

**13. RESOLUTIONS OF THE MEETING – A RESUME**

**a. PQPs**

*i. S-WPT and NOT*

It was reaffirmed that PQP awards for the S-WPT (one field) are: first – 36, second – 18. These awards are cumulative with awards won in the NOT. PQP awards are made to the top eight eligible teams in the NOT. Awards are made only to PQP-eligible teams. Should there be less than eight eligible teams in the NOT, awards will be made only to those teams. (In other words, it is possible to “burn” PQP awards.)

*ii. NWT*

It was resolved that PQP awards for the NWT (Swiss) shall be: first – 24, second – 12. These awards shall be cumulative with awards won in the NWT final series. PQP awards are made to the top four eligible teams in the NWT. Awards are made only to PQP-eligible teams that participate in the NWT final series. Should there be fewer than four eligible teams in the NWT finals, awards will be made only to those teams.

*iii. NST*

It was resolved that PQP awards for the NST (Swiss) shall be: first – 24, second – 12. These awards shall be cumulative with awards won in the NST final series. PQP awards are made to the top six eligible teams in the NST. Awards are made only to PQP-eligible teams that participate in the NST final series. Should there be fewer than six eligible teams in the NST finals, awards will be made only to those teams.

*iv. Butler Pairs Championships*

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*v. ANC (Interstate) Teams Championships*

It was reaffirmed that the board rule shall apply to the award of PQPs for first (30 PQPs) and second (12 PQPs) places, but that the board rule shall not apply to the award of PQPs (6) for membership of state teams.

*vi. Limit of allocation of PQPs*

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contestant teams or pairs to which awards are made. If the required number of teams or pairs cannot be obtained from the contestants in the final series, the requirement shall be filled from the highest placed contestants in the (Swiss) qualifying rounds. **Exceptions** are the NOT and the final series of the NWT and the NST. If the required number of teams or pairs cannot be obtained from the NOT, the requirement shall not be filled; that is, extra place(s) shall not be sought from the S-WPT. If the required number of teams or pairs cannot be obtained from the NWT/NST final series, the requirement shall not be filled; that is, the extra place(s) shall not be sought from the NWT/NST Swiss qualifying. It is implicit in the above that PQP awards can, in relevant circumstances, be lost (“burnt”).

vii. *Transferability of PQPs*

The meeting reaffirmed that the only permissible transfer of PQPs is transfer of Open PQPs to the Women’s PQP list, or the Seniors PQP list. These transfers are permitted only when certain published conditions are met.

viii. *Eligibility of withdrawing contestants for PQPs*

It was resolved that, for the purpose of PQP allocation, any contestant that **withdraws** during the course of an ABF event is ineligible for PQPs.

**b. Systems permissible in Australian Playoffs**

- i. It is noted that the conditions of contest for WBF world championships specify certain restrictions on system according to event and stage of event. The meeting considered that it is not sensible that systems not permitted at world championships, or at other international championships, should be permitted in Australian Playoffs.
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**d. Schedule of future Playoffs**

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**e. ANC Pairs**

In the hope of increasing participation in the ANC Pairs Championships, it was resolved that, for 2009, the ANC Pairs again be played over three sessions – on Saturday afternoon, Saturday evening and Sunday morning.

**f. Australian Swiss Pairs Championship (ASP)**

The TC is loath to change the schedule for the ASP because of the current clash with the New Zealand Nationals. The reasons are (i) the ABF calendar in the latter part of the year is quite crowded, (ii) the timing of the New Zealand National Congress is movable (it has changed several times in recent years) and New Zealand Bridge is not in a position to guarantee that the existing timing is a fixture, and (iii) the present timing coincides with a long weekend in New South Wales.

**g. Preparation of Australian teams**

The meeting considered that “preparation” of Australian teams was as much a matter for the players themselves as for administrators, and should be dealt with by the Players’ Liaison Committee.

**i. Publication of PQP awards on the ABF website**

There is an up-to-date PQP table published on the ABF website. Whenever changes are made to PQP awards and endorsed by the ABF Management Committee, the table is updated with all due haste.