

ABF TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN SYDNEY

9 AUGUST 2009

1. PRESENT

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

Apologies: David Smith

Observer: Sean Mullamphy

Actions

2. CONSIDERATION OF ABF TOURNAMENTS

(a1) SUMMER FESTIVAL

Sean
Mullamphy

Lighting: Sean Mullamphy has negotiated with the NCC to have improved lighting in all areas of the NCC for 2010.

Service in the Gallery Rooms: Sean Mullamphy will ensure that tea and coffee service will be available in some form in the Gallery rooms for all events held there.

Round of 20 of the NOT: This will be located in the Gallery rooms or the Ballroom in 2010 as this is considered preferential to having such a small number of tables in the vast main room.

Subsequent stages of the NOT: These will be held in the Gallery Rooms as in 2009.

Scoring area: The issue of the location of the Scoring Room for the various parts of the Summer Festival was raised.

For the Women's and Seniors Last Trains, the scoring will be done in the Gallery Rooms

For the NWT/NST/SWPT the scoring will take place in the room behind the reception area or in a corner of the main room – but there will not be a constructed hut.

Electronic Screens: Sean announced that there are now three electronic screens available for use at the Summer Festival (two owned by the ABF, one by Martin Wilcox).

Bridgemates: In 2010 Bridgemates will be in use for ALL events. They are the new updated version which allow

Sean
Mullamphy

- Review of scores by the players
- Up to 8 boards' scores on the screen simultaneously
- Side by side scores in columns distinguishing NS scores from EW scores

Scoring errors: It was appreciated that the introduction of Bridgemates will result in higher error rate. Some innovations to compensate for this will be

EHR to
liaise with
Sean
Mullamphy

- All teams results will be input on both the Bridgemates and on a paper slip.
- At the conclusion of scoring a session, a caddy will correlate the results obtained by the two input methods and flag any discrepancies.
- On a roster basis, one Director will be allocated the task of manning a computer in the playing area where players can inform the scorers of

errors in score input.

- A document outlining 'Player Obligations' regarding scoring will be promulgated, both before and during the Summer Festival. The document will be published in the ABF Newsletter and on the Website, and a copy will be placed on each table before the commencement of any event. Obligations will include the necessity for players to check that scores for all boards have been input to the Bridgemate, and that they are correct. A representative of both NS and EW at each table should check the scores before departing the venue. *Details of this document should be included in the Tournament Regulations as a general issue for all ABF events.*

Directors: There was some concern that it is difficult to get the attention of a director when the need arises. SM reported that with 7 directors on the floor during the SWPT this should not be a problem. He will ensure that directors are mindful of the necessity to scan the room regularly and attend to calls promptly.

Results on the Web: This is the responsibility of the scorer and should be done as soon as practicable.

SM to liaise
with Martin
Wilcox

Tie Breaking: In 2009 ties occurring after rounds 1-12 of the SWPT (and corresponding rounds in the other events) were broken on total imps for the purposes of determining the draw for the next round. For the purposes of determining qualifiers to the subsequent round of the event, it is ABF policy that ties should be broken according to the sum of the opponents victory points. For 2010 the latter method will be implemented for ALL tie breaking including determining the draw.

Errors on the web: These fall into several categories. No results; incorrect results; incorrect lineups. It is not satisfactory to leave these errors. If there is some technical reason for the error, then a message box should be displayed indicating that the administration is aware of the situation and will sort it out as soon as possible. It is unlikely that this can be incorporated into MW's general scoring display and would probably have to be done by the ABF Webmaster (or her representative).

Evaluation of the running of the event: There are meetings each morning, for 2009 of SM and EHR – occasionally including the chief directors. It was considered that there was not much value in the debriefing breakfast held in the past.

Event report: This goes to the MC, a request was made that a copy be made available to the TC also.

(a2) Friday of the SWPT/NOT (round of 20)

In determining the ranking of the 20 qualifiers the scoring program will be modified so that ties will be broken according to the sum of the opponents' victory points.

Sean
Mullamphy
to liaise with
MW

In the brochure, it was pointed out that for 4 person teams who qualified for the NOT, this would be a long day. Additional problems in 2009 exacerbated this. Two sequential appeals meant delays in determining the draw options and then choices for the ro20.

If there is more than one appeal to be conducted in this time slot – they must

be concurrent, so it will be necessary to have a pool of suitable appeals committee members on stand-by. This will include good players who are not in contention, directors (preferably those who have not been consulted on the particular issue) and local players.

The last session on Friday runs from 1-3:30. Any team intending to lodge an appeal as a result of the last round of the SWPT must have all paperwork in the hands of the officials by 3:45 on Friday. The appeal will be held at 4:00. All appeals will be concurrent, so it will be unacceptable to lodge an appeal only to be heard depending on the outcome of another appeal.

The decision as to choice of opponents in the next stage will be made as soon as possible after 4:00 pm. There will be no formal meeting, so each team with choice (there are only 7 after the round of 20) will be approached by or will approach an official to select their opponents. Since selections are ordered, it will be possible to give the official an ordered list of preferences. All communication on this matter (between the team representative and the official) should be in writing to prevent errors. It is anticipated that by eliminating the 'meeting' it will be possible to have the draw available for posting both in the venue and on the web by 5:00 pm. The draw should include the names of all team members names to avoid any confusion as to the composition of the teams.

Accuracy of line-ups on web display: This is the responsibility of the chief scorer (MW). ER reports that there should be a dropdown box from which team members are selected. Line-up sheets, after confirmation of their veracity by visual inspection of the tables, should be forwarded to the scorer who must ensure that the contents are accurately transposed to the web view. All lineup sheets must be retained as part of the archive of tournament information. This is vital information for determining adherence to the board rule regulations and subsequent allocation of PQPs.

SM to liaise
with MW

(a3) Player survey

From 090509 minutes: A survey will be undertaken, both at the Summer Festival and on the web to try to ascertain the preferences of a large proportion of players, both attending and not attending.

PR to design

Possibilities might include:

- Start SWPT on Sunday (moving Swiss Pairs to Saturday and redesigning a matchpointed pairs event to take place Friday – Sunday (see below)), ending on Thursday [2 sessions only on Sunday, 3 on Thursday]. The NOT to commence on Friday. ***Note from ABF MC – please consider GNP national final when making any decision.***
- Start SWPT on Monday playing only 12 rounds (and a commensurate reduction in entry fee), finishing on Thursday then NOT from Friday to Monday.
- Possible new matchpointed pairs event to run over 3 days (Friday to Sunday) with cuts after 1 and 2 days, those eliminated having the right

to drop into the Mixed Teams.

The survey would cover other more general issues such as:

- why the players choose to come to Canberra,
- which events they like to play in,
- whether they also play at the Gold Coast.

The popularity, or otherwise of the late start and night play on the Monday of the SWPT (and Wednesday of NWT/NST) should also be polled. It might be possible to retain the late start (to allow travel to Canberra) but run two sessions in the afternoon/early evening – finishing at about 7:00 pm.

It might be informative to conduct this survey among the New Zealanders, both in Canberra and at the Gold Coast.

The survey would be designed to allow answers to all questions, by including alternatives such as 'do not know' or 'no preference'. An incentive to take part in the survey would be two lucky prizes to be drawn on Friday morning of the SWPT (to be eligible, you must include your name on the survey response).

(b) ANC REVIEW

Peter Kahler chaired a committee which produced a comprehensive review of the current ANC formats and made recommendations for the future. Some features of the ANC which did not appear to be considered by the Kahler committee were the possibility of reducing the number of stages in the Butler Pairs and eliminating the direct qualifiers from the states. It was also felt that there were some recommendations that might reduce the running costs, but in fact would not increase the overall revenue of the event.

The following is the TC discussion of some aspects of the ANC.

(b1) BUTLER PAIRS – Open and Womens

Stage 1 of the Butler pairs was considered to be highly desirable since it

- gave access to local players to a Gold Point event
- produced revenue for the host state

However consideration might be given to eliminating Friday evening play as in general this involved a full day of leave for interstate players.

The general issue of the need for a 3 stage event was discussed. There are two states when the entry in Stage 1 warrants the retention of a 3 Stage event – WA, Qld (and maybe Vic). When the ANC is held in the remaining states, the conclusion was reached that it would be desirable to reduce the event to 2 stages, with each Stage 1 covering approximately 3 days. For the sake of this discussion the two stages will be termed Stage 1 and Stage 3. Play in Stage 1 would cover Sat, Sun, and Mon morning while Stage 3 would commence on Mon afternoon or evening and continue into Tues, Wed and Thurs. This would free up one day at the conclusion of the Butler Pairs. A repercussion of eliminating Stage 2 is that the concept of direct qualification from the states

is also eliminated. However, it was suggested that instead, state bodies would be able to subsidise entry into Stage 1. There are two possible scenarios for Stage 3:

- 14 pairs could qualify from Stage 1 to Stage 3. 13 rounds of 14 boards could be accommodated, having 28/56/56/42 boards/day or
- 20 pairs could qualify from Stage 1 to Stage 3. 19 rounds of 10 boards could be accommodated, having 30/60/60/40 boards/day.

Consideration might be given to reversing the current order of events so that those eliminated from Stage 1 could go home. It might then be possible to run the event without the necessity to hire a venue for the third weekend.

It was noted that many of the side events held in 2009 had disappointing entries.

(b2) BUTLER PAIRS – Seniors

This was a disappointing event in 2009 with only 13 pairs entering the event. This led to a useless Stage A where no-one was eliminated, followed by Stage B where all entrants played each other again. It was considered that the Seniors Butler event should consist of only one Stage, coinciding with Stage 3 of the Open and Women.

(b3) Feedback from Players regarding the Butler Pairs.

The issue of the length of the lunchbreak was raised. It would be preferable to make this consistent throughout the event.

It was agreed that it is sometimes necessary to make score corrections after the commencement of the next round. These corrections at present occur via an update at the conclusion of the next round. So on the printed output in the foyer, the individual score that was in error is not corrected, but the total is corrected at the next available time. It was suggested that errors on the web should be corrected at least once a day.

It was felt that the fast turnaround time was perhaps a little excessive. It would be preferable to have the datums available on the notice boards before the commencement of play for the next round so that competitors could anticipate the result on the checking slip. This should facilitate discovery of errors in data input.

In 2009 many people did not bother to check their scores in Stage 1 and as a result there were many defective draws. Hopefully in 2010 there will be fewer errors as players would have to follow the more user friendly score checking procedure available with the updated Bridgemates.

(b4) TEAMS

The Kahler report commented on the situation where there are an odd number of entries in any section of the Teams events. It was felt that it was preferable for the Open/Womens/Seniors events to leave the bye as at present, but for the Youth to extend an invitation to a NZ Colts team (under 21).

It would be preferable to eliminate night play and structure the session times along the lines of those at the SWPT. This is possible now that the matches have been reduced to 20 boards (from 24 some years ago).

In 2009, the Youth teams to contest the final were locked in with one match to play and they were due to play each other. So a decision was made to incorporate the final match result of the third round robin into the formal final which was continued the next day, changing the final from 40 to 60 boards. This will be the policy for Youth only if this happens again in the future.

(c) OPEN, WOMEN'S & SENIORS PLAYOFFS (commencing with 2010 PQP year for 2011 teams playoff)

For Teams years, it will be possible to enter as 3 pairs, but the requirement to have earned at least 1 PQP in common with the designated partner will be removed. This will also carry forward for pairs years, so in future it will be possible to enter the playoffs without having earned any PQPs with the intended partner (although all individuals will have to comply with the minimum PQP requirement. *Note this does not apply to the current PQP year for the 2010 Pairs Playoff. The ABF MC endorsed the above recommendation – 20.9.09.*

The Playoffs in 2010 will be held at the Bowlers' Club in Sydney (subject to satisfactory inspection by EHR). The Playoffs will be in Pairs format and will incorporate two pairs from the Last Train events to be held as part of the Summer Festival in January 2010.

Stage 1 will comprise a Round Robin of the 16 pairs, playing 15 rounds of 10 boards over 2½ days (6,6,3 matches per day using an 8 board VP scale). This will reduce the field to 10 pairs.

Stage 2 will comprise a Round Robin of the 10 pairs, playing 9 rounds of 16 boards over 2½ days (2, 4, 3 matches per day). The head to head results from Stage 1 will be carried forward and added to the results from Stage 2 to give a composite 26 board match (with VPs allocated according to a 20 board scale).

For the five days of the event, the number of boards played will be 60, 60, (30 + 32 = 62), 64, 48 finishing late afternoon on the final day.

This format relies on having the full quota of 16 nominations in both the Open and Women's Events. If there are fewer nominations, it will be possible to change the format depending on entries – bearing in mind the security issue if the play in the two divisions do not run concurrently and with the same number of boards.

Nominations will be taken via a Web entry form, which must be received by Friday 19th December, 2009. The ranked list of successful nominations will be available on the Web by 31st December 2009. *The ABF MC endorsed this suggestion asking that a time of 7.00pm AEST be included in the deadline*

PG to be
advised

for receipt of entries.

The ABF Webmaster, Pauline Gumby will be asked to design the interactive web based form which will include the two names with ABF numbers for the pair, their individual PQP awards and the total PQPs for the pair.

Signed declaration of availability forms must be with the ABF Secretariat by the end of January (allowing submission of this form during the Summer Festival). ***The ABF Webmaster to send the pro-forma entry form to the ABF General Counsel for review prior to being posted to the ABF Website.***

3. TARGET EVENTS FOR 2010

It was recommended that there be only one Australian Team and that that team should have the first option on all proposed Target Events. If the team does not wish to attend a Target Event then the option will move to the next placed team or pairs from the Playoffs. In the case of teams selection this will not go down further than 3rd and in the case of pairs selection this will not go down further than 6th.

The subsidies to the various events will be determined by the MC (Finance Committee) and in some instances, it may be possible that no subsidy will be offered.

A team which wishes to attend a Target Event with a constitution which differs from that participating in the Playoffs, may apply to the Management Committee for ratification. Each application will be dealt with on its merits.

The ABF MC asked that the Playoff Regulations include this possibility.

The MC will only consider applications from players in exceptional circumstances.

Target Events for 2010 will be:

1. PABF in Hamilton, NZ
2. Commonwealth Games in India. ***The MC notes that there may only be one team invited to this event. If it is only one team, then it will be an Open Team.***

Note: The Rosenblum Cup (***note this is the World Series***) in Philadelphia, USA is an open entry event.

The MC approved the recommendation that there be only one Australian Team in each of the three categories. That team will have the right to represent Australia at all targeted events. The detail for withdrawal will be covered in the Regulation documentation. The MC does not wish to be put in the position of considering each application on its merits.

In the case of the Seniors, it is likely that it will be possible to send more than one team to the PABF. The Australian Team resulting from the playoffs would be the first team (with subsidy) and other contenders would be determined by a Call for Nominations.

Correspondence from Ishmael Del'Monte concerned the current clash of the Playoffs and the GNOT final with American Nationals. While nothing can be done for 2010, it was determined that in the future, all efforts will be made to ensure that major events do not coincide with major events overseas, such as the American Nationals, the Yeh cup, the NEC cup, the European Championships or NZ Championships. Consideration for timing will include the dates for Easter, Passover and the football Grand Finals.

4. ABF TOURNAMENT REGULATIONS

Laurie Kelso is chairman of a committee responsible for the upkeep of the ABF Tournament Regulations.

LK will be invited to attend the November TC meeting at which any changes are discussed. LK will also be provided with the latest JB version of the Regulations and all subsequent sections of the minutes which involved changes. A decision is required as to the date of implementation of the updated Regulations (Jan 1 or June 1).

KM to liaise with LK

(4a) Player Obligation Document

A new clause should be drafted and inserted into the Regulations regarding player obligations regarding checking the completeness and accuracy of scores entered at the table via Electronic Scoring Devices (see 2a1).

(4b) Fines for Slow Play

Warnings and fines for slow play should carry forward into later stages of any multistage event.

(4c) Electronic Scoring Devices

A new clause should be drafted and inserted into the Regulations regarding the use of electronic scoring devices, safeguards and accuracy.

Tournament organiser to liaise with scorer

From 090509 minutes: Promulgation of periodic changes to the ABF Tournament Regulations

In order to better communicate revisions to the Tournament Regulations, a "box" system appended to the regulations document (analogous to the one used by PQP Compiler John Scudder for communicating changes to PQP regulations) will be introduced.

The appointment of 'Regulation Monitors' has proved to be a positive initiative and we recommend that this continue.

5. OTHER MATTERS

(a) New Member of the Tournament Committee

The MC has made the point that consideration should be given to choosing a councillor as a replacement following the resignation of John Brockwell. The TC decided to resubmit its original suggestions for MC approval.

The ABF MC will poll the Councillors for interest and experience in filling the vacant position on the TC. Should there be no suitable applicant, then the recommended candidate of the TC will be considered by the MC.

(b) Tournament Reports

As requested, these reports are now being forwarded to **KM**.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

- Bruce Neill wrote regarding choice of opponents following the qualifying stage of an event. The situation which arises where a strong team finishes in the group of teams which do not have the choice can disadvantage a high qualifier. He suggested that the disadvantaged selector should have the right to swap positions with a lower qualifying team to avoid this. Whilst acknowledging that the suggestion has some merit, the committee decided that it would overly complicate and slow down the selection process. This may be reviewed later.
- Feedback from the Butler Pairs – see above.
- Ishmael Del'Monte requested that in deciding on the timetable for events consideration be given to minimising clashes with international events - see above.

7. NEXT MEETING

The meeting finished at 4:30pm. The next meeting is scheduled for 15th (or 8th) November. Laurie Kelso will be invited to attend this meeting to participate in matters relating to the upkeep of the regulations.