

ABF TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN SYDNEY 11th MAY 2013 at 10:00 am at NSWBA

1. PRESENT

Kim Morrison (chair), Bruce Neill, Marcia Scudder, Eric Ramshaw, Peter Kahler. Sean Mullamphy, Matthew McManus and Laurie Kelso were also in attendance. Apologies: Peter Reynolds

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Standard format for ABF events – PR ongoing

Guideline document for training international teams – PR ongoing

Mutual Obligation Document

David Stern provided a document including many details that he considers relevant to this document. This was discussed at length at the meeting and modifications made. PK then added further details.

The document is now presented as Appendix 1 to these minutes.

Alerting Regulations and the System Card

The new ABF system card is now available to players on the ABF website. It is a pdf template which is able to be modified by the user, either by direct input or use of pull-down options. Both the new and the old Edwards card will be able to be used for some time, and in particular, it is possible to submit electronic versions in either format for the upcoming ANC.

Over the past three years there have been recurring discussions at committee level (both Systems & Tournament, as well as with NZ Bridge), in regard to the possible use of announcements with respect to the disclosure process associated with certain 1-level opening structures. Announcements are used widely in both the EBU and the ACBL and it is felt that a limited application of the same approach would be a beneficial addition to the current ABF Alert Regulations.

There are two particular calls (1C and 1NT) which at the moment remain problematical to many opponents.

1) 1NT problems are sometimes encountered where partnerships are playing variable HCP ranges at different vulnerabilities and in different positions. Also certain partnerships use quite different system constructs facing a passed partner.

2) The variable nature and length of 1C openings sometimes leads to uncomfortable questions by the opponents and also confusion in respect to the defensive measures agreed to by the opposition.

In a more formal sense the proposal is as follows:

That announcements in respect to the HCP range of natural 1NT opening bids and the nature of 1C opening bids be instituted as part of the ABF Alert Regulations.

1C opening bids:

- For natural (Green) systems; the appropriate length of the club suit ('2 plus', '3 plus', '4 plus', etc.) should be announced.
- For Strong Club (Blue) systems; the word "Strong" together with the minimum HCP holding (e.g. '16+') should be announced.

- For system options other than those above (e.g. a Polish 1C); the word “Unusual” should be used.

Natural 1NT opening bids:

- The appropriate HCP range should be announced (e.g. “12-14” or “15-17” etc.).

Notes:

- 1) Announcements should be made in the prescribed (consistent) manner.
- 2) A date for the formal introduction of these procedures will need to be agreed upon and there should be an appropriate 'lag-time' in order for effective player education to occur following the dissemination of the changes and prior to their implementation. Currently the System Committee's preferred commencement date is August 1.
- 3) Initially, Directors will be encouraged to exercise suitable tolerance in respect to inadvertent non-compliance and this will continue until most of the players become familiar with the newly promulgated procedures.
- 4) The Laws relating to mistaken explanations and unauthorised information will apply to incorrect announcements.

A paper was tabled by BN outlining a possible sequence of events which would document and appraise these duties. The exact performance indicators should be determined by the MC. The document is appended to these minutes.

Approved Changes Notification

It is apparent that changes approved for implementation are not widely publicised, leading to confusion or ignorance of players. This should be overcome by a readily accessible document on the ABF website, citing the changes, and the date of implementation. This would be similar to that currently in operation for changes to PQP matters.

In particular, there is occasionally a need to make a timely change that addresses an important issue before it has been formally incorporated into the Tournament Regulations. **AGREED.**
NTCs to action bearing in mind that approval to post must be sought from Sec of ABF.

NPC’s appointed for International Events

There are two documents (dated Dec 2011) available on the ABF website: Information for Australian Representatives and NPC’s; and Players and Captains Information Kit. NPC’s should be aware of these documents and their content. **ABF MC WILL CONTINUE TO SEND LINKS TO THE DOCUMENTS TO THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES WHEN ENDORSED.**

Appeals – document for members and chairs of committees – BN ongoing

Management Committee Items:

Penalties for failure to enter scores and input of incorrect scores.

It was agreed that incomplete scores and inaccurate scores should be treated the same. The penalty for the team/pair is warning (first offence) then 1VP (25% of top) for each subsequent offence. This applies to both pairs at the table. As there will be some variation for different events (eg Restricted) the supplementary regulations should specify the rules and penalties per event.

The timing of display of results and draw should also be specified in the supplementary regulations. A suitable statement would be that the draw “*will be done x minutes after the completion of a session (and scores posted) and incomplete scores/errors etc will be adjusted as soon as possible thereafter*”. As the size and format of events will affect these timings we feel it is best done this way and all players will know when to expect data. **NOTED and AGREED. NTCs to check.**

There remains a responsibility on the CTD to aim for the most complete and accurate data to be posted and used for a subsequent draw. Slow tables should be informed of their time status allowing them to speed up to complete the session. *Action: NTCs to include in a duty statement for directors.*

Results and Website display

Peter Busch provided a comprehensive document (Appendix 2) outlining the obligations of the scoring team at ABF events regarding display of results both at the venue and on the web. He emphasised the need for backup of all scoring data, allowing satisfactory continuation of an event should there be a catastrophic failure at some point. *Action: Please send to scorers at ABF and licensed events for their opinion.*

3. ABF EVENTS

(a) Playoffs

The dates for 2014 will be February 7-11 for the Open/Women's and April 4-8 for the Seniors'. Both run from Friday to Tuesday. *Open/Women's dates subsequently changed to February 5-9 to avoid the NEC.*

The format will be identical for the two series, with the possible exception of the number of boards played in each match. BN/KM to finalise details.

It is recommended that the target event be the Rosenblum/McConnell/Rand cups. The Rand Cup follows the Rosenblum/McConnell. The location and dates of these events are not yet available. The winners of the Seniors' Playoff can opt to enter either the Rosenblum or McConnell as well as the Rand, but there will be no additional subsidy. Similarly, the Open and Women's Playoff winners may enter the Rand, but with no additional subsidy. The winning teams **may/will** also play in the 2014 APBF. *The ABF MC agreed not to send a representative team in 2014 to any event. Rather a prize of \$5,000, \$3,000 and \$2,000 would be awarded to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd placed pairs in each of the Playoffs respectively.*

There will be a statement in the Supplementary Regulations for the Seniors' Playoff confirming that members of the Open or Women's Playoff winning teams may not enter the Seniors' Playoff.

In Bermuda Bowl years, the three Australian Representative Teams will play in the APBF AND the accompanying Zone 7 Tournament. The Zone 7 Tournament determines which countries will represent the Zone at the Bermuda Bowl/Venice Cup/Seniors' Bowl.

In Olympiad years Representative Teams will play in APBF and Mind Sports Games. **???**

(b) 2013 Butler Pairs

The use of Yellow Systems in the Butler Pairs was discussed. Previously they were not permitted in the first stage. However, this has led to some inconsistency in their use when the (e.g. Women's) Butler consists of just a single stage. It is recommended that Yellow Systems only be permitted in stages (if any) after the first. *NTCs to include in Supplementary Regulations of events as/when necessary.*

The issue of byes in ANC teams was discussed. It is strongly preferred that all states represent to preserve the integrity and history of the event but in practice this does not happen. It was reaffirmed that byes should be avoided by following the current policy of fielding an extra team (the first option goes to the host state). Given that a team of 6 plays 3 matches per day ie each pair plays 2 matches, then once byes are introduced there is insufficient play and many players feel that it is not worth competing for so little bridge. By not allowing the 2 state teams to qualify and ensuring that their matches are first in each round robin the integrity can be preserved.

David Beauchamp suggested in his email that allowances be made for the Northern Territory to allow former residents to represent. There may be some merit in this but the many issues arising would need to be addressed. The matter will be discussed at the upcoming AGM with the state reps.

4. INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW WBF VICTORY POINT SCALE

The TC recommends that the new WBF scale (0-20) be introduced into ABF events from the beginning of 2014. The Summer Festival will therefore be the first event to use it. This will require the scorer to use software which is updated to accommodate this scale, and to display results clearly, both at the venue and on the web.

It is recommended that the scale used for a Butler event be that appropriate to 2 fewer boards per match.

The DCOP which currently uses a conversion from Matchpoints to Victory Points, should simply change by subtracting 5 from each graduation.

The ABC teams scoring should remain unchanged.

LK to write an article for ABF Newsletter.

5. OTHER MATTERS.

(a) At a recent event, a team member asked if he qualified for the final, but then did not play, was he entitled to PQPs.

The Supplementary Regulations for the Gold Coast stipulate that “taking up a position in the final series means that the team will continue to compete until they are knocked out”. It was recommended that a regulation of this nature be added to the General Regulations. In the case above, failure to take part in the final is deemed to constitute a withdrawal and so no PQPs will be awarded to the team.

(b) The issue of alcohol consumption in the final of the Gold Coast Pairs was raised by Barbara Travis. The General Regulations stipulate, among other details, that alcohol cannot be consumed at the table in Finals of ABF events. This should be amended to read the “Final stages of ABF Teams events”. In the same communication Ms Travis raised a behavioural issue which the TC agreed should be handled by the ~~Rules and~~ Ethics Committee. *Amended to correct name.*

(c) The TC feels that PQPs have lost much of their significance as a result of open entry being permitted in Division 2 of the Playoffs when a Teams format operates. It was felt that this issue should be addressed.

(d) Most events no longer require the assignment of a Tournament Sub Committee. Issues that occur during the running of events should be handled by the National Tournament Coordinator present, along with the CTD, TO, and any members of the TC who are in attendance. The exception is the Playoffs where it may be important to have a formally constituted Tournament Sub Committee.

(e) An offer has been received from Sheila Bird to scrutinise documents, to ensure consistency between them and the current General Regulations. This offer will be accepted.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

- Incident at Gold Coast – B Travis
- Allowing the NT latitude with the ANC teams – D Beauchamp

7. NEXT MEETING

Joint meeting with the ABF Management Committee in Sydney on Sunday 23rd June.

INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE PLAYERS CHARTER

Purpose of this Document

The ABF commits to a major investment through its program of Australia Representative Teams (ART) at International Bridge Tournaments (IBT) devoting approximately XX% of its budget to international teams.

The ABF acknowledges that most Australian International Representative Players behave in a highly responsible and respectable manner but considers that more formal guidance is required to assist players and officials.

This Players Charter outlines the standard of behaviour that is required of any player or official who accepts a position in an international team. Such players and officials will be provided with a copy of this document upon ratification of the team. The players and officials are deemed to be aware of the requirements detailed in the document and have agreed to abide by its contents.

Failure to comply with this Charter may result in disciplinary action by ABF currently or in the future, which may include but not be limited to losing the right to represent or continue to represent the ABF. Such actions may also include losing the right to play any bridge sessions conducted under the auspices of the ABF or by any Affiliated Club.

This Players Charter is intended to outline:

- a. Minimum requirements which the ABF expects of its international representative players;
- b. Additional commitments which the ABF expects from the players and which it believes will enhance the performance of teams at IBTs; and
- c. Behaviour as bridge players from ratification until the return from the tournament.

General

Players are deemed to represent Australia and the ABF from the time of ratification until they reach their destination after completion of the target event(s). Behaviour at places such as airports, transit to or from the venue as well as the tournament is expected to be appropriate to the role of a player representing their country.

Players and Team Officials:

- a. are expected to maintain a proper standard of behaviour at all times;
- b. must not behave or do anything that may bring any team member, the team, the ABF or any sponsors into disrepute;
- c. must observe the authority of and comply with the decisions of tournament officials and appeals committees and refrain from any type of inappropriate dissent, threats or other form of bad behaviour towards same;
- d. are required to show proper attitude and respect for all fellow team members and team officials;
- e. must comply with all proper directives given by the team captain and any team officials of an IBT at which they are competing;
- f. must not be in possession of or use any illegal drugs or materials and, by acceptance of team membership confirm that to the best of their knowledge and belief will comply with and pass all drug and illegal substance testing regimes applying at the IBT by the WBF and/or any other sponsoring organisation;
- g. are to compete in all events scheduled in the IBT as required by the ABF;
- h. are required to be aware of and comply with all Tournament Regulations of any IBT in which they compete;
- i. are expected to observe proper health and hygiene standards while overseas; and
- j. are not permitted to wager on any tournament in which they are competing.

Pre Tournament Requirements

Once the composition of an ART has been confirmed, typically following a playoff, the team should submit a nomination for captaincy of the team to the ABF Management Committee. The captain must satisfy all relevant ABF and IBT requirements.

Recognising pre-commitments and professional obligations, the ABF has a distinct preference that the team partnerships participate in as many ABF National Events (ANOT, VCC etc.) as possible between the time of selection and the IBT in which the team will compete. This is especially important as practice for individual pairs. The ABF encourages participation as a team unit in order to build the team bond that the ABF believes is a pre-requisite for international success.

The captain is required to be responsible for:

- a. Ensuring that all players and his officials in his team are aware of this instruction.
- b. Developing in conjunction with team members a practice plan that has the objective of preparing the team for IBT for which they have been selected. The plan should address issues such as where practice is to occur (tournaments, BBO and team practice sessions), availability of a team coach to provide advice to assist the team and any other matter.
- c. Addressing issues that may impact on team morale.
- d. Ensuring the team is aware of their obligations and administrative issues including:
 - i. Knowledge of regulations for all events in which the team is required to compete;
 - ii. Functions that need to be attended including dress and other functions;
 - iii. The amount of subsidy to be provided by the ABF;
 - iv. Arrangements for fitting and collecting team uniforms;
 - v. Travel arrangements to and from the venue including ancillary requirements such as the need for Visas; and
 - vi. Accommodation options at the venue and, where appropriate, selecting a team hotel;

Dress

Uniforms

The WBF has a policy that requires Teams, which participate in World Championships, to be dressed in appropriate uniforms that incorporate a badge or emblem identifying the country which those players represent.

The ABF will provide team members with sufficient changes of clothing to ensure that they look presentable at all times while at the playing venue. If sweaters, cardigans and sweatshirts are used they must be of the same colour and display their NBO's logo or name. All players are expected to be respectably dressed in the team attire.

Everyone entering the playing rooms is obliged to wear the official identification badge which may be provided by the IBT.

The ABF requires players and officials to adhere to these regulations in ALL IBTs in which they compete.

Tournament Functions at IBTs

At these events where uniforms are not appropriate, participants are expected to be smartly dressed at formal events and ceremonies, with jacket and tie (or equivalent national dress) for male participants and equivalent style of dress for the women participants.

APPENDIX 2

VENUE AND WEB SITE RESULTS DISPLAY FOR ABF CONGRESSES – Peter Busch

For purposes of this report, I have divided ABF events into 3 categories:

- Small congresses – less than 30 tables (e.g. play - offs)
- Medium congresses – between 30 and 80 tables (e.g. Barrier Reef Congress)
- Large congresses – over 80 tables (e.g. Summer Festival)

Congresses are classed as small, medium or large based on the number of tables in their largest session. In such congresses, all events, no matter how small, need to comply with the requirements applicable to the appropriate class of congress, except where specifically exempted below.

The numbers above, and other hard values in this report, are simply my suggested values, and it may be appropriate to vary these before the policy is adopted / approved.

The term “congress” in this document applies only to ABF events. Convenors of other congresses may choose to voluntarily adopt these standards.

AT THE VENUE

Use of data projectors or TV screens

- Small congresses – optional
- Medium and large congresses – mandatory

[It has been suggested that some venues may not lend themselves well to electronic displays. The ABF may decide that all medium or large congress venues must accommodate screen displays, or they may change the requirement 2 from “mandatory” to “preferred”. My recommendation is mandatory for large, preferred for medium.] The use of data projectors is preferred over TV screens in view of the amount of data available per view. In addition to the use of electronic displays, all congresses must have a notice board or similar where paper documents can be viewed.

For smaller events that are part of large events e.g. Super Novice at the Summer Festival, or Teams finals consisting of only a handful of tables, these requirements regarding use of electronic displays below can be relaxed.

What to display on screens

- Initial seating (when seating plan done): For Teams events, display a list of teams showing team name and number. For Pairs events, show either a full list of Pair Names and Numbers with seating (medium size events) or an alphabetic listing of all players showing pair number(if known) and initial seating.
- Draw for subsequent matches in Swiss events: as a minimum, just pair/team numbers and their opponent or seating need to be shown. Display of names is optional, and not recommended for large congresses.
- Latest results – showing cumulative matchpoints, imps and/or VPs for the event per pair/team, in ladder format (i.e. first to last). In Swiss events, also show latest round score (matchpoints, imps and/or VPs).
- Display of slow tables – mandatory for large congresses, recommended for others. Display slow / incomplete tables during matches of 7+ boards. Slow tables should be shown until about the three-quarter mark (ideally with very slow tables highlighted), then the display should switch to tables with

missing results. Different reports can be on separate screens, or reports may be displayed on the one screen either in automatic or manual rotation e.g. draw to display at round change, then switch to results display once all players are seated.

What to display on notice board

- Supplementary Regulations
- For Teams events: full list of teams (team name and number) and team members (optionally including ABF Numbers), in team number sequence. For Pairs events: show either a full list of Pair Names and Numbers with initial seating and optionally ABF Numbers, or an alphabetic listing of all players showing name, pair number and initial seating, and optionally their ABF Number
- Latest results (in addition to whatever electronic displays shown). Where the notice board results constitute the official posting of results for purposes of Law 79C correction period, the date and time of the results must appear on the displayed results. [It has been suggested that future ABF Events may define the Law79C time official posting as the time the results are available on the web site, in which case then upload time should be shown on the website results display.]
- In Teams events, if pair datums are being calculated, they should be displayed after each match. It is recommended that only the top portion (say 50%) of the field be listed to avoid embarrassment, however the full list must be available on the web site.

Personal results sheets distributed to players

- In all events, personal results (“personals”) should be distributed to tables either at the start of the subsequent match / session, or in the case of the last match / sessions of the event, they should be placed in a central location previously advised to players. However, in sessions where boards are not being played simultaneously, distribution of personals will be limited to once per session. This requirement is relaxed for the last match / session of an event, whereby personal results don't need to be produced for all, but players should be able to request their copy.
- Personals should contain board-by-board results showing contract, tricks, score andimps or matchpoints. The opponent's name (pair names or team name) should also be shown, and in Pairs event, seating (NS or EW) should also be documented. In Teams events, individual player names should be shown if this data is collected.
- In Teams events, pair datums should be shown per board if computed.
- Where boards are played in different rounds at different tables, personals should only be produced and distributed once per session.

Scoring Enquiries Desk – large congresses

- Large congresses should have a highly visible Scoring Enquires Desk, and players make scoring enquiries and lodge requests for score changes with the Desk in the first instance. The Desk should have access to the web site display of results to assist with queries.

Scoring corrections

- All requests for a score change must be made in writing, either by the players or a director.
- Scoring corrections should be notified to the scorers by the Scoring Liaison Desk (if there is one) or to the Scorers directly (where there is no Scoring Liaison Desk). Corrections favouring the player should be signed by both parties, but changes that worsen a player's result only need to be signed by that player. [There has been a suggestion that all correction requests require both signatures.]
- Directors should lodge scoring requests on paper, preferably on a pro forma prescribed by the Scorer. The pro forma should provide space for all relevant details, as well as the director's name.
- Any paperwork giving rise to a scoring adjustment should be marked accordingly by the Scorer once the adjustment has been processed (including date/time of correction), and the paperwork should be

retained. For scoring corrections submitted by players, a new copy of the personal results should be made available to the player if requested.

Use of Bridgemates

- All congresses must use Bridgemates or other approved table-top scoring devices. Approved devices are[to be advised].

On site backups

- The central scoring database must be backed up to an external storage device at least once a day, at the completion of play, and taken away from the scoring area whenever the scoring area is not staffed. The files backed up must be sufficient for the scoring of the event to be continued if those backed up files are restored to a different PC.

WEB SITE DISPLAY

All congress results must be available via a web site, and a link must be shown on the ABF web site. This will require convenors to contact the ABF webmaster in advance of the event with the URL of the Results page. Convenors are not necessarily required to use the ABF web site to show results if they have a suitable alternative. Such alternative should be on a commercially hosted server with 24/7 management and should conform to the below requirements concerning level of results detail. Web site results should be kept and be publicly available for a minimum of 2 years after the event. Beyond that, a summary of the final results of all events (ladder only, board details not necessary) should be provided to the ABF archivist in PDF form for permanent retention. Uploading should be done as a minimum at the end of each session, but for Swiss events, uploading after every match is recommended. For any event, results of any boards that have yet to be played at any tables must not be uploaded until all players destined to play that board have played it. However, this requirement may be relaxed for finals and similar events when it is desirable for the web site to show board and play information during a match, typically when BBO coverage is provided, though appropriate other security must be in place to ensure no contestant can view that information. For large congresses (as defined above), there must be at least one mirror web site, hosted on a different web server, and displaying the same information as the main Results site. Data must be uploaded simultaneously (or as close as practical) to all web servers throughout the event. A link to the mirror site should be offered wherever there is a link to the main Results page, including on the ABF site, and cross-links back to the other site/s should be available from each results site.

Draw / initial seating display

For medium and large congresses, where there is seating in advance, the initial seating (e.g. the draw) must be displayed on the web site in advance of each session.

Results display

The principle here is to offer 100% transparency in reporting of results. The web site results display should include:

- the cumulative or final ladder for the event;
- full drill down reporting
 - (a) by pair/team (i.e. personal score sheet) and
 - (b) by board(i.e. traveller).

The Personal Scoresheet web page should display each board played, showing the contract and result, opponent's name/number, and matchpoints/percentage orimps. For teams events, the contract, result and score at both tables should be shown together with the calculated netimps.

The Board web page should show all contracts and results on the board, NS and EW pair/team names, and withimps or matchpoints where appropriate. Display of the opening lead should also be included if this data is captured at the table. Artificial adjustments (i.e. averages) should also be shown. The page should also show the actual hand record in graphic format, including dealer and vulnerability, HCP count for each hand, and the makeable contracts as computed by Deep Finesse or similar. When the final event results are published, the ladder should show the Masterpoints earned by each pair/team. Display of masterpoints on interim results is optional. Pair datums should be shown (if calculated) on a separate page, and datums for the entire field should be listed.

Uploading of hand records

Hand record information (e.g. BRI files etc) must not be uploaded for sessions / matches not yet played, as hand information may be available to players or others who have access to the host server or who guess the login/password, or who fudge URL parameters or posted form fields. However, this requirement may be relaxed for finals and similar events when it is desirable for the web site to show board and play information during a match, typically when BBO coverage is provided, though appropriate other security must be in place to ensure no contestant can view that information.