

TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS, 12 & 14 JULY 2007 AND 4 & 5 AUGUST 2007

What follows is a precis of the proceedings of the Tournament Committee meetings in Fremantle, 12 and 14 July, and in Canberra, 4 and 5 August 2007. More detail can be obtained by reference to the full minutes.

(a) Resolutions

08.07.01 Eligibility to represent Australia

The Committee proposed the following regulations subject to endorsement by the ABF Management Committee. An eligible person is one who meets one or more of a through g below:

- (a) Holds an Australian passport and who demonstrably regards Australia as his home, even though he might spend much of his time working overseas.
- (b) Is an Australian citizen enrolled on Australian and/or Australian State/Territory electoral roll(s).
- (c) Is of dual citizenship (holds an Australian passport and the passport of another country) and demonstrably regards Australia as home, even though he/she might spend much of his/her time working overseas
- (d) Is of any nationality and holds a current Australian visa issued for not less than three years.
- (e) Is of a nationality that does not require an Australian visa to reside in Australia and demonstrably regards Australia as his home.
- (f) Is of a nationality that does not require an Australian visa to work in Australia and demonstrably earns a significant proportion of his livelihood in Australia.
- (g) Does not in any other way infringe WBF regulations relating to eligibility to represent Australia in WBF events.
- (h) Notwithstanding any of the foregoing, any player who seeks to represent another NBO in an international (target) event in a calendar year is ineligible to seek (*via* Australian Playoff) to represent Australian in the same target event in the same calendar year.
- (i) In the case of dispute, interpretation of these regulations is at the absolute discretion of the ABF Management Committee. Any player in doubt about his eligibility to represent Australia in any calendar year must seek clarification from the Chairman of the ABF Tournament Committee on or before 31 December of the previous year; the Chairman may in turn seek guidance from the ABF Management Committee.

08.07.02 2008 S-WPT and NOT

The Committee recommended that the format of the S-WPT remain unchanged but with earlier starting times on the Friday and recommended that modifications be made to the format of the NOT as follows:

Schedule for NOT 2008

In the schedule below, "A teams" are the eight qualifying teams (in finishing order) from the S-WPT at Rydges Lakeside; "B teams" are the eight qualifying teams (in finishing order) from the S-WPT at the Hellenic Club. The term "cross-over" refers to the procedure whereby draws are made to avoid, wherever possible, teams

from the same S-WPT venue playing one another in the ELIMINATION and QUALIFYING stages.

ELIMINATION STAGE 1 *Friday night – two 16-board stanzas played concurrently with QUALIFYING STAGE 1*

5A 5B 5A plays choice of 7B & 8B; 5B plays choice of 7A & 8A; draw for
6A 6B other matches automatic. Four winners go to ELIMINATION STAGE
7A 7B 2; four losers are eliminated
8A 8B

QUALIFYING STAGE 1 *Friday night – two 16-board stanzas played concurrently with ELIMINATION STAGE 1*

1A 1B 1A plays choice of 3B & 4B; 1B plays choice of 3A & 4A; draw for
2A 2B other matches automatic. Four winners go to QUALIFYING STAGE
3A 3B 2; four losers go to ELIMINATION STAGE 2
4A 4B

ELIMINATION STAGE 2 *Saturday morning – two 16-board stanzas*

Four winners from ELIMINATION STAGE 1 play four losers from QUALIFYING STAGE 1 with appropriate cross-overs (as defined previously). Four winners go to QUALIFYING STAGE 2; four losers are eliminated

QUALIFYING STAGE 2 *Saturday afternoon & evening – three 16-board stanzas*

Four winners from ELIMINATION STAGE 2 play four winners from QUALIFYING STAGE 1 with appropriate cross-overs (as defined previously). Four winners go to the SEMI-FINALS; four losers are eliminated

SEMI-FINALS *Sunday – four 16-board stanzas*

Four winners from QUALIFYING STAGE 2 drawn firstly with appropriate crossovers if any, then according to S-WPT finishing order. Winners go to FINAL

FINAL *Monday – four 16-board stanzas*

08.07.03 Open and Women's Playoffs – 2008

It was recommended that the 2008 Open and Women's Playoffs be held in Canberra from Wednesday to Sunday 26-30 March starting at 10.00 am on Wednesday 26 March. Subsequent scheduling is to be advised.

The Playoffs will be played in two stages under a pairs format similar, but not identical, to the one used in 2006. Sixteen qualified pairs will contest stage 1; fourteen of those pairs will qualify *via* PQP and two *via* the Open and Women's Last Trains. At the conclusion of stage I, the four bottom pairs will be eliminated and the

remaining twelve pairs will contest stage II. There will be a carryover from stage I to stage II.

Entries to the Open and Women's Playoffs must be submitted by registered mail to: Playoff, Box 1105, Mountain Gate, Victoria 3156. Entries close at 5.00 pm on Monday 31 December 2007.

It was resolved that any system may be used in the Australian Playoffs (Open, Women's, Seniors), provided that the system is permitted in the qualifying rounds of the international event which is the primary Target Event of that particular Australian Playoff. It was noted that, because YELLOW (HUM) systems are prohibited in the qualifying rounds of the 2008 Olympiad (the primary Target Event for 2008 Australian teams), no YELLOW system is permitted in the 2008 Playoffs. Each pair must submit its system on an ABF standard system card in a form that can be posted on the ABF website. The deadline for posting on the website is 14 February 2008.

08.07.04 Seniors Playoff – 2008

It was recommended that the 2008 Seniors Playoff be held in Sydney from Wednesday to Sunday 9-13 April starting at 10.00 am on Wednesday 9 April. Subsequent scheduling is to be advised.

Entries to the Seniors Playoff to be advised. Entries close at 5.00 pm on Friday 28 March 2008. (In reaching this decision, the Meeting was conscious that, at the closing date, the Open and Women's Playoffs would still be in progress. However, this was not regarded as a serious problem since most, if not all, potential entrants to the Seniors Playoff would have already decided upon their options.)

Other arrangements are closely similar to those for the Open and Women's Playoffs.

08.07.05 Open, Women's And Seniors Last Trains

It was resolved that the Open, Women's and Seniors Last Trains be contested in 2008 (at the Summer Festival of Bridge), with two pairs from each Last Train to enter the fields for the respective Playoffs, and that the matter of the continuation of the Women's and Seniors events be reviewed after that.

08.07.06 International Target Events for 2008

The primary target event for 2008 is the World Mind Sports (formerly the Olympiad). Pairs finishing first, second and third in the Playoffs will form the Australian teams. Replacement pairs, if needed, will be taken in order down the line.

The secondary target event for 2008 is the PABF Congress. Pairs finishing fourth, fifth and sixth in the Playoffs will form the Australian teams unless such pairs have replaced higher finishing pairs in the Olympiad team. Replacement pairs, if needed, will be taken in order down the line. Approval will be sought from the PABF for Australia to field two teams in each of the Open, Women's and Seniors PABF Championships. Should such approval be granted, pairs finishing first, second and third in the Playoffs will form the second Australian team. Should one of those pairs not be available, the second team may play as a team of four.

08.07.07 ANC Brisbane 2008

It was resolved that the 2008 Seniors Butler Pairs revert to 2-stage event at the Brisbane ANC. It was further resolved that the matter of whether future Seniors Butler Pairs be 2- or 3-stage events should be decided on a year-to-year basis on the

recommendation of the ANC Convenor (who understands the aspirations of local players better than the Tournament Committee).

It was resolved that entry to the Open, Women's, Seniors and Mixed Pairs events at the ANC be open to any pairing irrespective of State affiliation.

It was resolved that the format of the Pairs events at the ANC be extended to three sessions, two sessions to be played on Saturday and the third session to be played on Sunday morning.

It was resolved that, provided it is viable to do so, the Women's Pairs Championship be played as a separate event but that the Open, Seniors and Mixed Pairs be played as one stratified event (with trophies awarded to eligible pairs in each category) unless the volume of entries permits separation of categories.

It was resolved that Teams matches in the double round-robin revert to 20 boards in length.

It was resolved that the timetable for teams matches in the double round-robin be: Sunday afternoon and evening – two matches; Monday – three matches; Tuesday – four matches; Wednesday – three matches; Thursday morning and afternoon – two matches.

08.07.08 PQP requirements for 2009 Playoff Panels

It was resolved that the minimum number of (2008) PQPs needed for a player to be eligible for the 2009 playoffs will be: Open 24, Women's 15, Seniors 15.

08.07.09 System disclosure

It was resolved that the exclusion method of system disclosure be abandoned and that the previous method of system disclosure, whereby a copy of a completed ABF Standard System Card is posted on the ABF website, be re-instated.

08.07.10 Zone 7 Championships – Links with PABF Championships

It was announced that, arising out of a meeting of Zone 7 held in Christchurch in May and out of subsequent developments, Zone 7 Championships in their present form will be abandoned. Instead, from 2009 Zone 7 Championships will be staged in odd-numbered years concurrently with Pacific-Asia Bridge Federation (PABF) Championships. Among other things, this will mean (i) that the finals of Zone 7 Championships (and Playoffs to determine which NBOs represent Zone 7 in the Bermuda Bowl/Venice Cup/Seniors Bowl) will be held concurrently with Zone 6 Playoffs to determine that Zone's representation at the World Championships, (ii) that French Polynesia and New Caledonia will become PABF members, and (iii) that Oceania Congresses will be resumed in even-numbered years.

08.07.11 Withdrawal from ABF events

It was resolved that a withdrawal for a single round, either authorised or unauthorised, is treated as a forfeit.

It was resolved that a withdrawal, either authorised or unauthorised, from more than one round or from the remainder of the event shall be dealt with by adjustment of scores. In events with round-robin and Swiss formats where the withdrawal occurs during the first two-thirds (rounded up) of the event, all scores obtained by the offending team or pair up to the point of withdrawal shall be expunged and the remaining scores, including datums, shall be recalculated from and including round 1. In events with round-robin and Swiss formats where the withdrawal occurs during the last one-third (rounded down) of the event, the scores

obtained by the offending team or pair up to the point of withdrawal shall be expunged and all remaining scores shall stand. For round-robin formats, each remaining match scheduled for play by the offending team or pair shall be treated as a forfeit.

08.07.12 Mobile phones

It was resolved that mobile 'phones must be switched off during session time. If a player's mobile 'phone rings during session time, that player, his partnership or his team shall be receive a warning for the first offence and shall be penalised 3 VPs (9 IMPs) for each subsequent offence in teams events (including Butler pairs).

(b) Other matters discussed

- (i) Tie-breaking procedures
- (ii) Recategorisation of ABF events
- (iii) PQP awards for 2008
- (iv) ABF Tournament regulations

(c) Proposal for 2009 Open Playoff

A proposal for the 2009 Playoffs is put forward as a starting point for debate by the wider bridge community. Firm decisions about the format for the 2009 Open Playoff and for the 2009 Women's and Seniors Playoffs will be made in due course and will be influenced by the outcomes of the debate and by any relevant submissions that might be made to the ABF Tournament Committee.

It is proposed that the 2009 Open Playoff be played in a teams format over five days comprising five stages, *viz.* a Swiss knockout stage, a qualification stage, a repechage stage, semi-finals and a final.

It is proposed that entry be open to teams of four or six (but not five) players irrespective of PQP holding. There will be no automatic entry from the Last Train. The four teams ranked first through fourth in PQP holdings ("exempt teams" 1, 2, 3 & 4) would be exempted from the Swiss knockout stage.

It is proposed that the schedule be Saturday & Sunday (qualification stage & Swiss knockout stage), Monday (repechage stage), Tuesday (semi-finals), Wednesday (final).

It is proposed that the format be as follows:

(i) Days 1 & 2

Qualification stage

Exempt teams 1, 2, 3 & 4 play a double round-robin of 20-board matches. First and second proceed direct to the semi-finals; third and fourth proceed to the repechage stage

Swiss knockout stage

All other teams play an 8-round, 16-board Swiss. First and second proceed to the repechage stage; the remaining teams are eliminated

(ii) Day 3

Repechage stage

The third and fourth teams from the qualification stage play first and second from the Swiss knockout stage in two independent 64-board matches (with the third team from the qualification stage having choice

of opponents from first and second in the Swiss knockout stage). The two winning teams proceed to the semi-finals

(iii) Day 4

Semi-finals

The first and second teams from the qualification stage play the winning teams from the repechage stage in two independent 64-board matches (with the first team from the qualification stage having choice of opponents from the winning teams in the repechage stage). The two winning teams proceed to the final

(iv) Day 5

Final.

The winning semi-finalists play a 64-board final.

It is proposed that in cases where augmentation is required, i.e. to a team of four or if a pair from a winning team of six should become unavailable, the aim is to select the best possible team to represent Australia. A Selection Committee of three eminent players will select a third pair from a list of nominees.

The proposal will be widely promulgated in order to stimulate maximum debate. (Adoption of the proposal would invalidate the application of resolution 08.07.08 to the 2009 Open Playoff and, perhaps, to the 2009 Women's and Seniors Playoffs.)