

ABF TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN SYDNEY 9th MAY 2010

1. PRESENT

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

Actions

2. CONSIDERATION OF ABF TOURNAMENTS

(a) Summer Festival

(a1) Player survey

The player survey was conducted at the 2010 Summer Festival and the 2010 Gold Coast.

1. A compiled spreadsheet is attached (Appendix 1).
2. 627 respondents. Coverage was at the Summer Festival, Gold Coast, and on the website.
3. Of the 627 respondents 178 rarely or never play the SWPT. The most significant reasons are preferences for the Gold Coast Congress (72) or playing the first week on the Summer Festival (40). This suggests the crowded calendar increase of seniors/restricted events is impacting numbers at the SWPT. SWPT cost was also sighted 40 times as a reason for not playing.
4. The most significant reasons for playing the SWPT related to the prestige of the event and strong, competitive matches.
5. There was a strong preference for retaining the existing format.
6. Only 54 people indicated a 10:00am start on Monday for the SWPT would inconvenience them.

There were two definitive results from the survey.

One was that a vast majority would prefer to eliminate night play and start play every day at 10:00, playing one match before lunch and two before dinner.

The second was that there is no clear preference for change to the overall format of the SWPT.

Since the prestige of the tournament rated highly among the respondents, it was felt that it would be advantageous if the ABF pursued the possibility of encouraging an overseas team to attend, to the extent of offering some sort of sponsorship. *(The ABF MC supports this idea and have had initial discussions with Mr Yeh with a view to securing an invitation for the winners of the NOT to participate in the Yeh Bros Cup at ABF expense.)* Ideally the ABF could sponsor a world-class pair or team who would add

interest for competitors and kibitzers, and who would engage with players via talks or Q&A panels. In addition there might be the possibility of an invitation to top class teams from NZ or Indonesia.

MS to
extract.

The overall survey results should be made available on the website, with a link to the raw data.

Some respondents made comments on various questions. These are yet to be extracted.

(a2) Venue for 2011

The Summer Festival will be held at Rydges in 2011. There is now additional conference space where the old swimming pool was housed previously although at present there is no access from within the hotel, except via the kitchen. The approximate capacities are: 1st floor ballroom 130; new ground floor 50; with possibilities of overflow into the other rooms on 1st floor and the old restaurant area on the 15th floor (which suffers from the problems of pillars and steps to access). *ABF MC concur.*

(a3) Further thoughts on format of the Festival for 2012 and beyond.

The survey in 2010 indicated that the format of the SWPT is the preferred one, but there is still the question of the number of qualifiers and the format of the NOT. *This matter should always include the TO of the event and be referred back to the ABF MC if any changes are proposed.*

SM may like to consider the possibility of starting the SWPT one day earlier, and therefore finishing the NOT one day earlier.

This would mean that the NOT would finish on Sunday.

However, it would not alleviate the problem of the long day for qualifiers on the 5th day of the SWPT.

There would also be problems associated with the running of the GNP finals which are held on Sat/Sun of the middle weekend. There is considerable overlap of personnel from the GNP final into both the 1st and 2nd weeks of the Festival, and this would therefore not be a popular choice with those people.

The future of the matchpointed pairs events currently held on the middle Saturday was discussed. The total field was 130 pairs, which was not insignificant, but it was noted that the Women's pairs attracted only 6 pairs. This particular field could be augmented by changing it to an 'Unmixed Pairs' event.

The teams events this year were plagued by odd numbers of teams, and therefore the need for several 'house' teams as triangles are not permitted under the supplementary regulations. In particular, the house team augmenting the Women's field from 17 to 18 was not of high calibre and so it was felt that those teams that played against them may have had an advantage. Possible solutions, for the future, might be to try to persuade a team from another 'odd' field to transfer one way or the other. Persuasion could include a reduction in entry fee.

Other possibilities for a small field in the NWT which might be considered are

to combine NWT with NST or to run a round robin of shorter matches.

(a4) Scoring Problem

We have been notified of a problem with the scoring of a match in the SWPT. The two teams could not agree as to the outcome of a board, and it was handed to a director to resolve. It was understood that a decision was made but was not passed on to both teams involved. It is imperative that where a director changes the score entered at a table by the players (agreed or not by the teams) that a corrected recap sheet be issued to both teams. This provides the opportunity for an appeal and natural justice. It also avoids last minute problems at the end of the SWPT when time is of the essence.

There should be a prescribed method of requesting a change of score, such as:

When the two teams agree, the captain of team A should sign the altered recap sheet held by the captain of team B, and then the captain of team B should present that altered and signed recap sheet to the scoring room.

Acknowledgement that the change has been accepted and made should be provided in the form of revised recap sheets for the two teams involved.

The ABF MC wish to point out that this matter has now been resolved.

The problem may arise after the last round, when there may be some delay in accessing the recap sheets, by which time the two captains may not be able to make contact. However it must be the captains' responsibility to check that the last result is correct.

(b) 2011 Open and Women's Playoffs

A problem arose in 2010 Open Playoff because a player failed to appear until about 30 minutes after the start of a morning session in Stage II. While no impropriety is suggested in any way, this could be construed as posing a security issue, as board results would have already been available on the web. The second issue that arose was the penalty, and how the scoring of the 'match' which was by this stage in its second half (being in StageII), should be dealt with. In the event, there were no unfinished boards and so this latter problem was avoided. The offender was fined 10 VPs.

It was agreed that the 2011 format would be the same as that in 2009, despite the fact that the anticipated high quality field in Tier 2 did not eventuate. This may have been due to the high entry fee and a recommendation is made that the entry fee for Tier 2 be reduced.

As yet no venue has been procured and Richard Grenside will be the Tournament Organiser. The Bowlers Club, which was in use in 2010, was considered to be too small for the possible 25-30 tables, and in addition, a substantial increase in daily charge is anticipated at that venue.

Sydney would be the preferred city, as more participants come from there than any other city.

A substitution policy is required in the case of a Teams Playoff format for 2011 to allow for the situation where a player, pair or indeed the whole team is unavailable for one or more of the Target Events. *The ABF MC awaits a substitution policy from the TC.*

Although an attempt was made to make personnel available if an appeal needed to be heard at short notice, this was not successful. It is vital, with the tight turnaround times in the Playoffs, that this problem be solved. Hopefully, RG (or his representative) will take on this important issue at future Playoffs.

Well in advance of the 2011 Playoffs, there should be notification via the web of the dates of the Playoffs, the likely format, and the fact that the requirement of 1 PQP in common with a proposed partner is no longer in operation.

(c) Seniors' Playoff

In the case of the Seniors' Playoff, the entry process occurs after the Last Train event at the Summer Festival. There are exactly 2 entries from the Last Train. The Last Train tournament administrator should confirm the 2 qualifiers and these pairs may not now enter the playoffs via the PQP system. This will avoid any confusion about filling the playoff field by either wildcard entries or proceeding down the LT.

Proposed dates for 2011 Seniors' Playoff is 6-10 April, to be held in Sydney.

There were some issues arising from the 2010 Seniors' Playoff regarding the cross imp scoring used, and the carry forward from Stage I to Stage II. The proposed procedure to be adopted at the Seniors' Playoff had been displayed on the web some months earlier with an opportunity for comment – none was forthcoming. The format was also agreed to by the TC before the Playoff.

In future, it is recommended that the Seniors' Playoff follows the format and procedures in force for the Women's Playoffs. This would include the fact that for 3 years in 4, the format would involve teams (if approved by the MC), while in the Rosenblum year, a pairs format would be used. Bridgemates (or equivalent) should be used.

3. ANC

(3a) Hobart, 2010

The format for Stage II of the Butler was discussed. It will be a 10 table Howell, but the exact format, and the existence or otherwise of a stationary table with half the boards arrow switched was considered. It was suggested that Ross Moore was an expert in the area and would provide a balanced movement.

The format for Stage I (of the Open and hopefully the Womens) would be a single field Swiss.

BN to
correspond
with Ross
Moore

(3b) Darwin 2012

The proposed dates are 7-20 July – *the ABF MC understands that the*

Convention Centre will be the venue.

4. SCORING AND HISTORICAL RECORDS

The TC is concerned about the variation in quality, presentation and timing of web information of scores at various tournaments around Australia. Players at the venue, and others who are taking an interest from home are entitled to expect accurate, timely access to results. This happens sometimes, but not on other occasions. We do agree that on some occasions, there are exceptional circumstances which prevent this from occurring.

The ABF MC requested the TC to provide a model for promulgation to Tournament Organisers – we are still waiting.

It is felt that there is a need for a Scorer Development Program, which would allow more people to become skilled in this area and therefore become available for performing, or assisting at the various events.

The issue of Intellectual Property, both of the scoring systems in use, and of the results which are currently archived needs to be addressed. Before there is a major catastrophe annihilating the results of past events, this needs to be acquired by the ABF, stored, backed up and maintained by the ABF. This may well require payment to the current ‘owners’ of this historical information. *The ABF MC agreed to write to all TOs asking them to provide historical data to the ABF web master.*

Paul Marston is interested in accessing past event data for use in his ranking scheme. This process would be facilitated, if all results were available from a central site.

5. CALENDAR REVIEW

As a matter of policy, the Playoffs should not be scheduled to conflict with the US Spring Nationals, which in 2011 will be held from March 10-20 in Louisville.

An attempt should be made to avoid a clash between the 2011 Spring Nationals and the Bermuda Bowl/Venice Cup, although no dates are yet available for the latter. The tentative dates for the 2011 Spring Nationals are October 19-27.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

- David Thompson was dissatisfied with the appeals process at SWPT. The recommendation of the TC is that RG, in his capacity as ABF Tournament Coordinator (or his delegated representative), should organise appeals, but in order to retain impartiality, should not be a member of any appeal panel if at all possible. *The ABF MC endorsed this suggestion however sees the benefit of the NTC being able to observe the process.*
- Sartaj Hans wrote, commenting on the consistently better international performance by Australian teams selected via teams, rather than pairs, format. This issue was discussed, and the recommendation to the MC is that teams format Playoffs be in use for 3 of the 4 year cycle. These would be the years in which the Bermuda Bowl/Venice Cup, or Olympiad occur. For the year in which the Rosenblum is the

KM to
respond

MC approval
required

KM to

international event, all Playoffs would be in pairs format. *The ABF MC endorsed this request on the understanding that the Women's Playoffs be opened up to Tier 2 Team applicants.*

respond

- David Stern wrote concerning many issues relating to the Summer Festival. These included the declining numbers, the possibility of rotating the venue around the country, the Monday finish, the lack of a dinner/dance, possible change of Festival format, the bulletin, lack of interest in masterpoints, sponsored pairs and teams, yellow systems, the scoring and facilities at the Convention Centre. Some issues are more appropriate to the convener but some TC suggestions are: increase the profile of the event by inviting high ranked international players; the possibility of providing free drink vouchers to be redeemed at the bar (increasing ambience); a recommendation that yellow systems regulation be revisited by the Systems Committee; possible increase in scoring staff to reduce scoring problems and time delays. *The ABF MC wish it noted that this request has already been made. We will expedite a response.*
- John Brockwell distributed a letter outlining some of his feelings regarding the efficacy of the Tournament Committee.

KM to
respond

7. GENERAL

(7a) Ron Klinger's blog

There was some concern regarding the fact that directly under the heading for each ABF event, the website provides a link to Ron Klinger's blog. There are two issues which arise. The ABF has no control over the content on its own website and this could create some legal problems. Does the opportunity exist for others also to have their blogs on our website? *The ABF MC endorses the Klinger Blog which always carries a disclaimer. We suggest that any other applications are made to us and that the decision rests with the ABF MC.*

(7b) House contestants

This is a matter for the Regulations (LK). A house team with rotating constitution is different from a complimentary team. The latter is eligible to place and to accrue masterpoints. The house team should always be ranked last for the purposes of the draw. There should be consistency with the application of rules regarding house teams across all ABF events. *The ABF MC endorses the recommendation of the TC and will instruct all TOs via the NTC to adhere to this request.*

8. NEXT MEETING

The meeting finished at 4:00 pm.

The next meeting will be held on Sunday 8th August at the NSWBA (DS will be away).

Appendix 1 SWPT Survey results

Do you play in the SWPT?

	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total					
week 2 SWPT	155	31	15	5	206					
week 1 NWT etc	111	19	19	39	188					
gold coast	98	35	30	70	233					
				178	627					
	Wrong time of year	SWPT is too long	SWPT venue	Canberra location	SWPT entry cost	Overall Cost	I prefer to play week 1 of the SF	I prefer to play at the Gold Coast	Other	
week 2	0	0	0	2	7	0	1	3	0	
week 1	0	7	0	3	17	0	34	11	7	
gc	23	3	0	27	16	0	5	58	7	
Total	23	10	0	32	40	0	40	72	14	

How do you rate these criteria?

		1 (Not important)			5 (Important)	
week 2	Gold Masterpoints	65	26	31	26	44
	qualifying for the NOT	90	31	22	17	40
	prestigious event with competitive matches	11	9	40	57	82
	playing matches against strong opponents	12	16	42	60	67
	Social reasons / Holiday	43	21	40	50	28
	PQPs	107	23	25	14	19
week 1	Gold Masterpoints	39	13	29	24	33
	qualifying for the NOT	57	21	23	12	22
	prestigious event with competitive matches	9	8	26	37	58
	playing matches against strong opponents	8	3	13	51	58
	Social reasons / Holiday	37	16	37	28	24
	PQPs	86	18	9	9	9
gc	Gold Masterpoints	53	17	32	13	23
	qualifying for the NOT	42	9	29	20	34
	prestigious event with competitive matches	7	7	23	43	60
	playing matches against strong opponents	6	6	18	43	65
	Social reasons / Holiday	33	22	28	30	24
	PQPs	61	15	13	15	13

What are your feelings on the SWPT format?

week 2	Current Swiss format	15	21	45	26	82
	2 fewer Swiss matches	60	23	42	33	32
	Knock-Out with Swiss Repechage	63	18	37	30	29
week 1	Current Swiss format	8	10	38	31	56
	2 fewer Swiss matches	55	17	36	15	18
	Knock-Out with Swiss Repechage	47	26	44	11	12
gc	Current Swiss format	20	12	28	21	36
	2 fewer Swiss matches	32	16	28	16	19
	Knock-Out with Swiss Repechage	31	11	28	14	20

Overall summary

Incentives

Totals	Gold Masterpoints	157	56	92	63	100
	qualifying for the NOT prestigious event with competitive matches	189	61	74	49	96
	playing matches against strong opponents	27	24	89	137	200
	Social reasons / Holiday	26	25	73	154	190
	PQPs	113	59	105	108	76
		254	56	47	38	41

Format

Current Swiss format	43	43	111	78	174
2 fewer Swiss matches	147	56	106	64	69
Knock-Out with Swiss Repechage	141	55	109	55	61