



Tournament Committee

MINUTES

Meeting held in Sydney (NSWBA)

Saturday 13 June, 2015, 0900-1630

Held in conjunction with the ABF Management Committee (MC)

1. PRESENT

David Morgan (Chair), Therese Tully, Laurie Kelso, Marcia Scudder, Eric Ramshaw, Peter Reynolds, Sean Mullamphy.

Apologies: Sartaj Hans, Matthew McManus

New members of the TC, Therese Tully and Sartaj Hans (in absentia) were formally welcomed.

2. JOINT MC/TC MEETING

Issues raised by MC

- How can we improve the performance of Australian teams overseas?

TC: The TC will provide further views on this issue as part of its contribution to the ABF Review of International Team Funding Policy. The TC noted that most events start with a RR qualifying, so there is no opportunity to warmup prior to a significant match. Players should allow sufficient time to prepare by arriving early at venue.

- What is the best way to manage logistics of travelling, especially when dates of events change?

TC: Improved liaison between Secretariat and captains/teams.

- Who is responsible for sending Charter and other relevant documents to players and captains?

TC: Secretariat to liaise with captains and, as appropriate, teams.

- Captains' reports on team performance

TC: These need to be considered by MC and held tightly to encourage frank, useful reports. Any issues that are the responsibility of TC or where the MC wants TC views should be forwarded to the TC for consideration.

Issues raised by TC

- The ABF needs to cover TOs under its officers' insurance to ensure they are insured against legal challenge to any disciplinary or related action they take (e.g. declining entries). [MC to consider]

- The TC will seek General Counsel's approval for wording of tick box on entry forms where entrants will agree that all members of the pair or team are in good standing. [Need to wait until there is an agreed definition of "good standing" or comparable term]
- Better defined processes re disciplinary action and accepting /rejecting entries [Legal Counsel developing comprehensive rules and procedures. Until then follow interim advice and contact General Counsel by phone.]
- Transfer of PQPs (see below)
- Playoff Dates for 2016 and 2017 Representative Teams (see below)
- Format for playoffs and consultation process with players (see below)
- Structure of fees and subsidies for playoffs (see below):

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Guideline document for training international teams – PR ongoing.

4. PLAYOFFS FOR 2016 AND 2017 REPRESENTATION

2016 Playoffs

The TC recommends that the Open Playoff be held separately from the Women's and Seniors', in time slots of 6-11 February, 2016 and 12-17 March 2016, respectively. This should not pose a problem for players as there will be neither a YEH cup, nor NEC tournament in 2016. The concurrent playoff for Women's and Seniors' would allow Women to contest the Open playoffs but, at the same time, precludes them from playing in the Seniors' Playoff. The TC will monitor player participation and feedback: If this grouping proves unsatisfactory with the players, then it is not difficult to revert to the previous grouping of Women's with Open for subsequent Playoffs.

The PQP calendar year would include all events played in 2015 (Summer Festival the first, and GNOT the last).

MC Approves.

2017 Playoffs

The proposed start dates are: Open 12th November 2016, Women's/Seniors' 3rd December 2016. The venue for these Playoffs has not yet been determined.

The PQP calendar year would change to include some events played in 2015 and some in 2016 (Spring Nationals first and Hans Rosendorff last). As a one-off occurrence, the 2015 Spring Nationals and the 2015 GNOT would count for the Playoffs to determine both the 2016 and the 2017 Representative Teams.

MC Approves.

[DM to prepare notice for ABF website advising players of this overlap, to be published immediately after MC approval.]

Format of Playoffs

After further discussion of the principles underlying the selection of teams to represent Australia and previous player comments, the TC recommends a Knockout format based on 112-board matches played over two days. Entries would be open to all players who have accrued at least 1 PQP. Ranking of teams will be according to the total PQPs earned by the members of the team. Higher ranking will result in benefits in terms of possible automatic qualification to a later KO stage of the event. A detailed outline is in Appendix One.

The proposed new format for the 2017 Playoffs will be published as a discussion paper on the ABF website to give players an opportunity to comment. In addition, the TC recommends that there is a consultative meeting at Fremantle in the Butler week to allow discussion.

[DM to draft paper.]

The TC notes that consideration may need to be given to changing the fee (and subsidy) structure if changes to the format are approved that result in participants playing fewer days.

5. PQP TRANSFERS

The TC discussed whether there should be any change to the current policy about transferring PQPs from one category (Open, Women's, Seniors') to another. The issue will be finalised at the September meeting.

6. ALTERNATIVE FORMATS WHEN SWISS EVENTS ATTRACT A SMALL FIELD

MM has proposed various options for events which are advertised as using a Swiss format but attract fewer entries than twice the number of rounds proposed.

The TC recommends that the formats to be used are those detailed in Appendix Two.

MC Approves.

SM to promulgate.

7. YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS

The TC has not previously had input into the running of the Youth Championships in Canberra in January. Phil Gue has suggested some input would be appropriate, but TC would need to know the extent of the input required, e.g. format of events, eligibility to enter etc.

DM to correspond with Phil Gue.

8. CHANGE TO MASTERPOINT AWARDS FOR MATCHPOINTED PAIRS EVENTS

There has been an (optional) increase in the masterpoint awards for matchpointed pairs events, to make them approach the total awards to Swiss pairs events of a comparable size.

However, there is a suggestion that this change is still not sufficient. The TC recommends that masterpoints could be awarded, if not board-by-board, then perhaps round-by-round. This would ensure that less experienced players would be rewarded for a good round, even though their overall results appear well down the list and outside the spectrum where masterpoints are awarded.

This change would require an update of scoring software, but could well result in encouragement for players (particularly the less experienced) to enter the Congress scene in Matchpoint events, a format with which they are familiar.

[LK to discuss with David Anderson](#)

9. STANDALONE RESTRICTED CONGRESSES

At present, it is not permissible to run a standalone Restricted Congress. Any Restricted Event must be scheduled to run alongside an Open event. The TC recommends that clubs be free to run Restricted Congresses if they wish, catering to the large proportion of bridge players in the country who are at this level of experience. This requires a change to the Masterpoint Scheme.

[LK to discuss with David Anderson.](#)

10. TESTING OF SCORING PROGRAMS

LK and MM have been testing the currently available packages that are used to score major bridge events in Australia. Tests aimed to ensure that the programs produced the same Swiss draw and that rounding did not lead to different packages producing different results. Where an inconsistency was found, the software writer was informed and requested to rectify the problem in a timely fashion, and release an update.

However, there is no system yet in place to ensure that all major events in Australia are scored by appropriately updated versions of the programs which would comply with testing.

Programs are being updated to reflect the latest options for masterpointing matchpointed events.

It was suggested that a list of approved packages should be available to TOs, so they can expect complying results. It was considered reasonable that TOs should receive, no later than 2 months prior to the event, assurance from the scorer that changes requested by the NTCs as a result of the testing, which are relevant to the event being run, have, in fact been implemented.

11. SWISS PAIRS EVENTS

The NTCs have now produced a list of the appropriate VP scale to be used for Swiss Pairs events. This is based on detailed research and simulations. The VP scale for Butler-scored Swiss pairs events should be the one used for teams matches with between 70% and 75% of the number of boards per match, i.e. for 14-board matches use the 10-board scale, for 12-board matches use the 9-board scale.

The TC recommends that the result display at the venue for a Swiss Pairs event should include a footnote indicating to the players which VP scale was used to compute results. This would eliminate player confusion when, for example, they play a 12 board match, but the scale used is that for 9 boards. It is also recommended that the number of outlying scores removed be indicated, along with the number of tables used to calculate the Datum scores (i.e. whether Leaders Butler was in use). This information could also be available on the individual player result slips.

MC Approves.

Leaders Butler

TC previously mandated using Leaders Butler when at least 24 tables contested a Butler event, with the number of tables included in the Leader definition decreasing as the event progressed.

The formula to be used is:

For events with 24 or more tables, scores from all tables will be used for the first n/3 rounds; the top half of the field for the second n/3 rounds, and the top 12 tables for the final n/3 rounds.

The number of outlying scores eliminated for each calculation should be approximately 1/5.

The TC received a query about following the above formula for the final third of the event when the field is smaller than 24 tables but larger than 12 tables. TC is satisfied that the original policy should be retained, as small fields will suffer from significant variation in player quality, which will not be overcome by using Leaders Butler.

LK to respond to MW

12. GNOT REGULATIONS

The NTCs will provide updated Regulations, defining the VP scale and carry-forward procedures to be used.

13. CALENDAR CHANGE

The Barrier Reef Congress is moving to May, removing the current conflict with the VCC, but now conflicting with the ANOT. This could impinge on numbers for both tournaments, as players from Adelaide commonly play at the Barrier Reef.

14. TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

At the ABF AGM Simon Hinge said that the Information Committee would welcome any views from the TC that related to the future presentation of information to ABF members. The Technology Committee expected that technological change would allow more information to be preserved, such as all bidding and play, during all ABF events.

TC agrees that this would be beneficial, but only when this could be recorded without player input.

15. NEXT MEETING

5th September 2015 at NSWBA in Sydney.

Appendix One

- The same format will apply to Open, Women's and Seniors' divisions.
- The format will use Knockout matches.
- Only teams of 4 or 6 players will be accepted.
- Teams will be ranked based on the total PQPs of their members, herein referred to as Teams 1 to n. The PQPs of any players added to a team after the close of entries will not alter the team's ranking.
- All matches will be over 112 boards, played as 4 x 16-board stanzas on the first day and 3 x 16-board stanzas on the second.

The exact format and length of the Playoff will depend on the number of entries:

3 entries – the highest-ranked team, Team 1, will qualify direct to the 112-board Final. Teams 2 and 3 will play off in a single KO match of 112 boards. Team 1 need not attend the venue on days 1 and 2.

Length of event – 4 days

4 entries – Team 1 chooses its KO match opponent from amongst the other entries, with the proviso that the second-ranked team may elect not to be chosen.

Length of event – 4 days

5 entries – Teams 1, 2 and 3 qualify directly to the second KO round. Teams 4 and 5 will play off in a KO match of 112 boards. Team 1 then chooses its round 2 KO match opponent from amongst the other teams, with the proviso that the second-ranked team may elect not to be chosen. Round 3 will be a final KO of 112 boards. Teams 1, 2 and 3 need not attend the venue on days 1 and 2.

Length of event – 6 days

6 entries – Teams 1 and 2 qualify directly to the second KO round. Teams 3-6 will play off in two KO match of 112 boards. Team 3 chooses its round 1 KO match opponent from amongst Teams 4-6 with the proviso that Team 4 may elect not to be chosen. Team 1 then chooses its round 2 KO match opponent from amongst the other teams, with the proviso that the highest-ranked team remaining may elect not to be chosen. Round 3 will be a final KO of 112 boards. Teams 1 and 2 need not attend the venue on days 1 and 2.

Length of event – 6 days

7 entries – Team 1 qualify directly to the second KO round. Teams 2-7 will play off in three KO matches of 112 boards. Team 2 chooses its round 1 KO match opponent from amongst Teams 3-7 with the proviso that Team 3 may elect not to be chosen. Then Team 3 selects its opponent from the remaining teams. Team 1 then chooses its round 2 KO match opponent from amongst the other teams, with the proviso that the highest-ranked team remaining may elect not to be chosen. Proceed as for four teams. Team 1 need not attend the venue on days 1 and 2.

Length of event – 6 days

8 entries – Teams 1-8 will play off in four KO matches of 112 boards. Team 1 chooses its round 1 KO match opponent from amongst Teams 2-8 with the proviso that Team 2 may elect not to be chosen. Then Team 2 selects its opponent from the remaining teams. Then Team 3

selects its opponent from the remaining teams. KO matches then follow for two further rounds, proceeding as for four teams.

Length of event – 6 days

>8 (8+n) entries – The first KO round will reduce the number of teams to 8. The bottom ranked n teams will play against the next lowest n ranked teams. The highest ranked of the teams contesting KO round 1 will have choice of opponent etc.

e.g. for 11 entries ($n = 3$) – the 6 ($n \times 2$) lowest ranked teams will play KO match 1, with Team 6 having first choice of opponents, then Team 7 etc with the usual provisions about the next-ranked team being able to elect not to be chosen. The 3 matches in KO round 1 will reduce the field to 8 with subsequent play in KO rounds 2, 3 and 4 (as for 8 entries above) to determine a winner. Teams ranked 1-5 will not be required to attend the venue on days 1 and 2.

Length of event – 8 days

APPENDIX TWO

Alternative formats for small fields

In Teams or Pairs events consideration ought to be given to using an alternative format where an originally planned Swiss movement may not be appropriate because the number of rounds is more than half the number of units entered.

a) In events where the number of units is just less than the number of rounds, run a full round robin, but with two or four of the original scheduled rounds cancelled. (Where rounds are cancelled, the TO may consider whether for public relations a small refund of some part of the entry fee may be appropriate.)

b) Where the number of units is equal to the number of rounds, run a complete round robin then have playoffs for positions in the final round, with full carry-over and the final round only determining relative placings of the units involved. (e.g. second can overtake first, but cannot be overtaken by a lower ranked team.)

c) For teams events, which are followed by finals:

Seed the field into two equal groups and play a round-robin either (a) within the groups, or (b) with teams playing all teams in the other group. Then use the final round(s) of the qualifying as semi-finals pairing the two leading teams in each group against a team they have not yet played. The remainder of the field continues in a Swiss movement (playing teams they have not yet played) to determine placings 5th and above.

d) The following formats have been in place for the last two years as contingencies for small numbers of entries to the Seniors Butler Pairs (19 rounds):

Pairs	Format	Rounds	Bds	Notes
12	RR + Swiss	11 + 8	12	Full carry-over ^^
14	RR + Swiss	13 + 6	12	Full carry-over ^^
16	9 round Swiss	9	24	played as half-matches
18	RR	17	12	
20	RR	19	12	
22	Mitchell + Swiss	11 + 8	12	Field seeded into NS and EW - play 11 round Mitchell ** ^^
24	Mitchell + Swiss	12 + 7	12	Field seeded into NS and EW - play 12 round Mitchell ** ^^
26+	Swiss	19	12	

** After Mitchell, scores of NS and EW pairs factored so that average each direction is the same, then combined into one field for Swiss (for last 8 or 7 rounds).

^^ Pairs may each other twice.