



Tournament Committee

MINUTES

Meeting held in Sydney (NSWBA)
Saturday 23rd June, 2018, 10:30-16:00

1. Present

David Morgan (Chair), Matthew McManus, Laurie Kelso, Peter Reynolds, Marcia Scudder, Sean Mullamphy, Warren Lazer, Sheila Bird.

2. Apologies: none

3. Matters arising from previous minutes

a. PQP Policies

MM has summarised the PQP policy changes that TC has recommended and MC has endorsed over the past few years, including PQP policy for superior international performances in Youth, Mixed and Supermixed Target events. A revised version is given in Appendix 1. This document will be available on the web, with links from the Tournament Regulations and from the PQP page on the website.

b. PQPs for pairs that fail the board rule

The TC was asked to review the unusual situation which occurred at the 2018 NOT where the only pair eligible for PQPs in one team in the NOT failed to comply with the board rule in the semi-finals. That team went on to win the event. Implementing rules already documented, that team became ineligible for PQPs and the allocation for winning the event went to the 2nd placed team and the PQP awards for the remaining teams in the NOT were augmented accordingly. The pair in question received half of the PQPs for a losing semi-finalist, without augmentation.

The TC considered that the rules had operated as intended.

The TC recommends that the existing rules be maintained.

MC requests that the TC reviews the existing rules.

c. Butler Pairs format consultation

WL has prepared a survey suggesting various formats for the Open Butler Pairs. In recent years, the quality of the field in Stage 2 has fallen, and pairs in the lower half of the field at the half-way point almost never recover. A smaller field in Stage 3 would make the last stage more rigorous. The survey will be promulgated on the web.

Consideration is being given to the following 3 stage format for the Open Butler.

- The qualifying stage (2 days) will qualify 20 pairs to the semi-final.
- The semi-final (2 days) will qualify 10 pairs to the final.

Semi-final would consist of separate NS and EW fields, playing 10 x 12 board matches.

Non-qualifiers can enter the parallel Congress side event.

- The final (2 days) will play a round robin of 9 x 12 board matches.

Non-qualifiers can enter the parallel Congress side event.

d. Swiss VP Scales

There has been ongoing consultation between MM and Peter Buchen, who was a member of the now defunct WBF committee determining the new VP scales for RR teams matches. The scales have since been used for Swiss Teams and Swiss Pairs events, but in Australia we have been using scales modified to take account of the Swiss nature of the format. However, there is still concern over the large rewards for a small win in these events, and PB is aiming to provide modifications that reduce this effect. PB and MM will continue to collaborate.

4. ANC Update

The format of the Open/Women/Seniors teams will be four days of qualifying (Sunday – Wednesday) via a double RR of 14 boards, followed on Thursday by a 2 v 3 playoff for the right to play 1 in the final.

The Youth format is different, having a triple RR over 4 days followed by a final on Thursday. Youth pairs are able to enter (or for the finalists, drop into) the Pairs events which will run on Thursday and Friday.

Players from any of the teams' repechages or finals who drop in to the Pairs will be awarded the average of the top 6 pairs in their division. Players must play with another player from their team, and they may opt to drop in to the Open field or into any division for which they are eligible.

Unless there is an entry of 10+ pairs in the Youth Butler, the entrants will be invited to join either the Open or Restricted Butler fields. [Note to this effect to go on ANC Website.]

For the W/S Butlers, the data sets used for determining the datum will be as defined in the previous minutes.

5. Player consultation on location and timing of Playoffs.

There was a relatively poor response to this survey. Two outcomes were clear. Players do not wish to pay higher fees to cover the cost of a more expensive venue, and they do not want night play. ***TC recommends that the timing and venue remain the same for the playoffs in late 2019, but that every effort would be made to avoid a clash with the American Nationals.*** The TC noted that, as originally proposed, there will be a more detailed review of the playoffs, including player consultation, in 2019.

MC accept the recommendation.

6. Mixed teams Playoff

This survey had a good response and favoured a stand-alone event. In addition, TC feels that to add this Playoff to an existing major event would impinge on that event and potentially reduce overall numbers attending. TC recommends a stand-alone event to be held over the Australia Day long weekend at the NSWBA clubrooms. The format would be along the lines of 2 day qualifying (Fri-Sat) followed by SF and F on Sun/Mon.

[MC has since endorsed this recommendation, the venue has been secured and MS has agreed to be the TO]

7. PQP allocations for 2019 year (commencing with 2018 Spring Nationals)

A request was received to allocate PQPs to the Canberra in Bloom festival. This was rejected, after considering the quality of the field relative to events that receive PQPs.

International performance PQPs for 2019 year should be the same as 2017. But in addition, it was agreed that PQPs of this nature for the Mixed Teams at the World Championships should mirror those for Youth events. Points would be allocated to the Open list, and then could be transferred to the Women's (and be doubled) or Seniors'.

Changes/additions to the PQP awards:

PQPs for the Mixed Teams Playoff should be 48/24/12/6, allocated to the Open list.

The National Swiss Pairs Championship at the SF should be added to the Open list, with 32/24/16/8 PQPs.

The Gold Coast Seniors' Teams should be reduced to 24/12/6 PQPs.

There are several events for which the field quality has been falling over recent years, and should be considered for downgrading. These are VCC Women's Swiss Pairs, ANOT Seniors' Pairs and McCance Trophy Seniors' Swiss Pairs. A watch will be kept on these events.

8. Appeals

a. Reviews

Very few countries still use Appeals for resolving issues when players are dissatisfied with a director's ruling. Different jurisdictions are using different methods of handling the entitlement players have in the Laws to a review of any ruling they have received.

The WBF has moved to a review process, where directors consult extensively before ruling, including polling players where necessary, and the review is conducted by an independent reviewer. Importantly, the review is not a de novo consideration of the issues (unlike an Appeals Committee) but checks that the correct process has been followed (like an appeal in administrative law).

The EBL and most European countries are using this review process in top-level events. Australia has used the review process in recent playoffs where LK was the [offsite] reviewer. Very few rulings have made since the introduction of the review process. New Zealand does not involve its CTD in rulings so that the CTD can act as a reviewer. The ACBL has recently changed to a system where a panel of three TDs, not involved in the original ruling, examine complaints. Unlike the WBF and EBL review process, this panel is entitled to undertake a de novo review if the process or ruling is flawed.

The TC recommends that Australia move towards a review system for all ABF-licensed events. This should be introduced over a number of years as it will require:

- *appropriate training of directors, including in the need to gather all the relevant information from players, and how to poll players appropriately;*
- *training of potential consultants who could undertake the reviews;*
- *proper training and use of appeals consultants to ensure that players who are vexed about a ruling have someone independent they can discuss their concerns with and receive appropriate advice on whether to ask for a review; and*
- *education of players about the changes, the rationale for them and the implications for players.*

MC accept these recommendations.

An additional advantage is that Australia's international representatives will get to experience the review system in action at home before they are confronted with it in an international competition.

b. Impact of appeals/reviews and other scoring adjustments on the draw for Swiss events

Appeals (or equivalent) can have an impact on the draw in a Swiss event. This can be compounded if the result of the appeal/review is not available until after additional matches have been played. In general, the time when a draw will be published should be announced, and is not dependent on all scores being in and correct. This draw will stand with the proviso that the CTD can correct the draw prior to the last round of an event. As well, the TC agreed to amend the tournament regulations so that the CTD will have the option of delaying the publication of a draw (especially in respect to the end-of-the-day recess)

9. Youth Team Selection

Leigh and Bianca Gold are now the Youth Development Officers and are in favour of the Youth Team being selected from a squad of players who commit to completing work and being mentored by experienced players. They have produced a document outlining their proposal for 2019 and for 2020 and this is shown in Appendix 2.

TC considers this a good approach, but offered a number of suggestions to improve the proposal:

- Any process that is based on selection by one or more selectors needs to be, and to be seen to be, as impartial as possible.
- The process needs to reward players for their performance not just "doing their homework".
- Participating in the squad should deliver improved performance by players, so there should not be any need to further reward them by giving them preferential treatments in any selection events.
- Youth players often change partnerships, so consideration should be given to making individuals rather than partnerships participants.

10. Tournament Calendar

Current indications are that the 2019 World Championships will take place in Sanya, China from Oct 18-Nov 2. This would clash with the proposed dates for the 2019 Spring Nationals. The TO for the Spring Nationals is considering moving the SN to Sept 11-19. This may require adjustments to the timing of the HGR and maybe the Territory Gold.

As this would be a one-off relocation of the SN, *the TC recommends that there be no changes to the PQP year*. Instead, the PQP year would treat that event as taking place after HGR, as is the case now.

MC accepts this recommendation

A clash of the VCC with APBF is also possible in 2019, but the dates for APBF are yet to be confirmed.

Meeting closed at 16:00.

11. Next meeting dates

Saturday 8th September, 2018 in Sydney (nominally at the NSWBA).

Appendix 1

PQP changes

- 1) Open PQPs are able to be transferred to the Women's and/or Seniors' PQP list without restriction.
- 2) Open PQPs, however earned, will count double when transferred to the Women's PQP list.
- 3) PQPs earned in a Women's PQP event run concurrently with a Seniors' PQP events (including Playoff events) may be transferred to the Senior's PQP list without restriction.
- 4) PQPs earned in a Seniors' PQP event run concurrently with a Women's PQP events (including Playoff events) may be transferred to the Women's PQP list without restriction.
- 5) Individual players are responsible for requesting a transfer of PQPs earned in a different category (Open, Women's, Seniors'). They must request such a transfer by emailing pqp@abf.com.au. Any such request will remain in force until the player requests that it be revoked.
- 6) In order to earn PQPs in the NOT, players must have also satisfied the board rule in the SWPT. PQPs which are not awarded in the NOT due to ineligible teams may only be won by teams which have played in the NOT.
- 7) PQPs will be awarded for superior performance in international target events as defined by the TC/MC each year. Where a placing in a certain top subset of a field (e.g., half, quarter, etc) is required, any fraction will be rounded down.
- 8) PQPs earned by international representation in Youth Teams, Mixed Teams and/or Super-Mixed Teams events which are defined as Target Events will be allocated as Open PQPs with the usual provision for transfer to the Women's or Seniors'.
- 9) In addition to any Open PQPs they may be awarded, 12 Women's PQPs will be awarded to the top three all-female pairs in the South West Pacific Teams, the Gold Coast Teams and the Spring National Open Teams, provided that these pairs:
 - * met the PQP board rule;
 - * met the pairs board rule; and
 - * finished in the top 20% of the field on modified datum calculated as IMPs/board. (The field will be deemed to consist of all pairs who played sufficient matches to satisfy the PQP board rule for the relevant stage of the event.)
- 10) Pairs may earn a PQP Partnership Bonus provided they play a designated number of stanzas in each stage of an event. The designated number is calculated by subtracting one from the number of stanzas in the stage and dividing by two (rounded down if necessary). Both players must also satisfy the PQP board rule in order to be eligible for PQPs. The current 50% discount for PQPs not earned in the Same Unit will be discontinued. The PQP Partnership Bonus of double will be applied to those PQPs earned as a pair at the time they enter the Playoffs in that partnership. As a consequence, an entry to the Playoffs must designate the partnership in which the entrants will play.

Appendix 2

Youth Teams Selection

Leigh Gold –Youth Development Officer 23/05/2018

Australian youth teams have traditionally struggled at World Junior Teams events. While our skill levels are quite high, and we can usually dominate our local arena (PABF) we fail against the better prepared countries like China, USA, Europe and Israel. While it's true that these countries/regions invest a lot more than the ABF historically has in youth bridge, all of the selected teams have certain criteria that has to be met before their players are allowed to play in the above event.

The change in selection is to bring us in line with best practices, while investing in pairs to deepen and expand future youth pools, while giving squad members much needed partnership practice against strong fields before major events are held.

Details of 2019-2020 & 2020-2021+ Australian Youth Team Selection 2019-2020

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Transition year

1st-6th in the Youth Butler selection event will form part of the Australian youth squad. Each pair will be required to do the following to be considered for selection in the final team:

- Pick a mentor from an approved ABF list who will sign off on each pairs work.
- Sign an agreement saying they will complete all work and be available for at least 2 major events.
- Complete a training book provided at youth week. The book will include partnership agreements in competition, exact meanings of doubles in different situations, bidding hand sheets and other material that has been used in European and USA teams.
- Play 100 hours over different mediums. Nationals and congresses are 8 hours/day while duplicates are 3 hours. These can easily be tracked. BBO hours will need to be confirmed and signed off by mentor. A list of hands bid (twomin/hand) from BBO will be acceptable) While weekly practice is preferred, dispensation for heavy school/university work periods will be granted.
- Play at a minimum of two Nationals (funded within budget). There will be a strong emphasis on the Gold Coast, but if players have commitments two out of TFOB, ANOT or VCC will be acceptable. If possible, assuming main event is after ANC, attendance at the youth butler will be strongly encouraged.
- Attend a minimum of two training camps (funded within budget).

If pairs do not complete any of the above, they will not be considered for a place on the final team. The top three placegetters from youth week that have completed all work will be nominated for ratification by the Management Committee as the 2019 team. Initial nomination will be done by Youth development officers in conjunction with mentors, coaches, NPC and state youth co-ordinators.

2020 Selection

As above, but only 1st will get automatic selection.

2nd-5th will be selected not only on work done, but results achieved before selection event. Results will be taken from State and National events that the partnership has participated in within the calendar year.

Why do we have 6 pairs for 2019?

The most important aspect for a strong selection event, and a strong youth scene, is partnerships and experience. For the three pairs who do not make the team in 2019, getting to work with a mentor, attend two nationals together in a partnership and completing all the partnership work, will significantly strengthen the 2020 field and the pair's skills and experience.

Any pair that completes the above work will also have an advantage in the 2020 playoff with automatic qualification to either (to be decided by TC/MC)

- a) Qualification to Stage 2 of selection
- b) VP advantage
- c) Tie break win

Recommendation from YDO is B, on the basis that all the good pairs qualify to stage 2 based on last 20 years data. The field depth is such that a number of players in the final are really just making up the numbers. This can't be helped at the moment, until depth is strengthened. A VP Advantage (or carry forward) in the finals is a very valuable reward and one which recognises long term partnerships. Players not placing in the top six in the trials can still apply to work with a mentor and have access to the book. Approved applicants may also attend training camps at their own expense. If pairs complete the same work, the above reward will also apply to them. (This is also part of the new youth progression system that form part of this process).