

PROPOSALS FOR 2009 OPEN PLAYOFF

(a) **Timetable**

That the 2009 Open Playoff be played as 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.

(b) **Entry**

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.

(c) **PQPs and exemption**

That the four teams ranked first through fourth in PQP holdings (“exempt teams” 1, 2, 3 & 4) be exempted from the Swiss knockout stage.

(d) **Location**

That the preferred location is Sydney.

(e) **Schedule**

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

(f) **Format**

(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.

(g) Augmentation

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.

(i) The ABF Tournament Committee will appoint the Selection Committee.

(ii) Pairs from the semi-finals will be invited to nominate themselves.

(iii) The ABF Tournament Committee in its absolute discretion may invite other pairs from the Playoff or from the 2008 PQP list to nominate themselves.

(iv) The selection Committee will consider:

1. Form of the nominated pairs in the Playoffs and other major events
2. Compatibility with other members of the winning team
3. PQPs earned during 2008
4. Potential to optimise the winning chances of the Australian team in the 2009 Target Event

(h) Ratification

The team will be subject to ratification by the ABF Management Committee.

(i) Conclusions

It will be appreciated that the foregoing is merely a proposal, albeit a serious proposal, that represents 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.