

ABF TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN SYDNEY 8th AUGUST 2010

1. PRESENT

Actions

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

Apologies: David Smith

Lunch: Kindly provided by Ed Barnes who was running a catered improvers session.

2. Minutes of January and May meetings.

MS to send to DM

These are ready to be uploaded to the web after a few minor corrections and changes.

3. GENERAL PQP ISSUES

(a) There has been some correspondence (see 6 below) regarding the level of PQP's for the Gold Coast Open Teams.

There are various criteria which are indicators as to the appropriate level for PQP awards. These are:

- i) The field size.
- ii) The strength of the field considering only PQP eligible units
- iii) The reliability of the event recognising the impact that non-PQP-eligible teams have on the final PQP allocation
- iv) Event specific considerations.

The Gold Coast Open Teams scores highly on i), but in past years the impact of non-PQP-eligible teams has led to the awards being given to teams not making the finals, and therefore have passed into the less precise placings of the event.

A decision was made to watch the GC Open Teams with a view to increasing the awards.

For the present, TO's will be asked to provide a previous year total of the Open PQP's for each individual in their top 20 seeded teams. This was felt to be a measure of the strength of the contending fields in different events.

(b) The allocation of PQP's for the Seniors Butler came under scrutiny. In 2010, in Hobart there was a single stage with only 14 pairs. It was felt that the popularity of this event (considering that Senior pairs failing to make the final stage of the Open or Women's Stage I could have opted to play in the Seniors Butler) was waning and the PQP awards will be reduced from 2011 so that they are available to the top 6 placegetters only and will be in descending order from first to 6th: 48 42 36 24 18 12.

4. ABF EVENTS

(a) 2011 Open and Women's and Seniors Playoffs

The Open and Women's Playoff will be held from Saturday, March 26 to Thursday, March 31, 2011 (TO Richard Grenside) and the Seniors' Playoff will be held from Wednesday, April 6 to Sunday, April 10, 2011 (TO David Stern). The four teams with the highest total PQP's at the date of the close of entries will contest Tier 1 of the Open Playoffs, while the **five** teams with the highest total PQP's at the date of the close of entries will contest the Women's and Seniors' Playoffs. The field will be augmented by a sixth team from the Last Train event held at the Summer Festival. The requirement of 1 PQP in common with a proposed partner will no longer operate, however the 50% reduction for PQPs earned with other partners will continue.

KM to liaise with PG to post rules for the players on the website

There will be no declaration of availability to be signed by the players. Entry into the Playoffs will imply intent to play in the Target event(s) except in the case of unforeseen circumstances.

Both the O/W and Seniors' Playoffs will be held at the Sydney University Village Conference Centre, Carillion Ave, Newtown, near the corner of Missenden Rd. As space is limited, it was recommended that the Open Tier 2 would be played without screens. Discounted parking will be on offer for \$15 per day, and accommodation is available nearby.

(b) Open Playoff

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 it is recommended that the entry fee for Tier 2 be reduced.

The ABF MC has forwarded this request to the ABF Finance Committee for consideration and recommendation.

(c) All Playoffs

In 2011 the Target events will be the Bermuda Bowl (to be held in Veldhoven, Eindhoven, the Netherlands, Oct. 15-29, 2011) and the PABF (to be held in Malaysia 15 to 24 June 2011, at Genting International Convention Centre, Genting Highlands Resort, Malaysia). The Zone 7 Championship will accompany the PABF and (Z7 + BB) is considered to be a single Target event. (?? – does Aust have automatic right of entry to BB this year? VC?)

The team placed first in the 2011 Playoffs will be offered the right to represent Australia at both Target events. If only two pairs from Team 1 wish to attend a Target event those players may make an ordered short list of additional pairs to be drawn from those pairs that playing in the Semi-finals or Finals of the Playoffs.

The MC will have the right to choose the third pair from the submitted list.

The ABF MC do not believe it is in the impromata of the MC to choose the 3rd pair – a recommendation should come from the ABF TC that they can endorse.

If there are not 2 pairs from Team 1 willing to attend a Target event, the right to represent Australia will pass to Team 2. If Team 2 only has 2 pairs willing to attend the Target event, they may elect to accept augmentation by a pair from Team 1 in the first instance, then other finalists. The right to represent Australia will pass down the teams, with the two losing semi-finalists being

ranked on their PQP's on entry to the Playoffs. *The ABF MC concurs with this recommendation.*

As it is now likely that a third target event may be included in the calendar every second year, the ABF MC wishes to have reassurance that attendance by Australia at this event will be endorsed by them as/when required.

(d) Seniors' Playoff

In the case of the Seniors' Playoff, the online entry process occurs after the Last Train event at the Summer Festival. In a Pairs Playoff year 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.

The ABF MC instructed the TO of the Seniors Playoffs to concur with this instruction.

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.

4. ABF EVENTS

(a) ANC Hobart, 2010

The Open Butler was well supported with 56 pairs taking part. In contrast, the Women's Butler struggled to reach the level at which a 2 stage event would be run. In the end, there were non-contending pairs in the Women's field that meant that all pairs wishing to play in Stage 2 were accommodated. The support for the Seniors' Butler was poor, with only 7 pairs pre-entered and an additional 6 pairs entering after the Open and Women's Stage 1. With the addition of a House pair, the field was 14. The event was run as a 5 round (1 day) Swiss with 8/6/4/3/2/1 VP carry forward to the subsequent 13 round Round Robin.

For future Butler Pairs it will be a requirement that non-contending pairs inform the director of their status within the first session of play. It was also recommended that for fields of greater than 26 pairs a 2 stage event is viable. For fields of 26 or fewer, a single stage event, concurrent with the Open Stage 2 event, will be run in the form of a Swiss with carry forward followed by a Round Robin. The carry forward will be 50% of the VP's earned in the Swiss.

A change in the PQP structure for the Seniors' Butler from 2011 is recommended (see 3(b) above). *The ABF MC endorsed the change to the PQP structure.*

The scheduling of the Butler pairs should be adjusted to ensure that there is sufficient time before the final round to ensure that all pending appeals can be heard.

The scheduling of the ANC Teams should be adjusted to ensure that there is sufficient time between the 1st and 2nd round robins to allow Captains to check their team's scores and make any corrections in consultation with their opposing Captain. The obligation to check scores should be emphasised as a duty of all captains. Problems such as these will be exacerbated when captains handle multiple teams.

Richard Grenside provided a list of suggestions for improving the ANC, based on his observations in Hobart.

- That a photocopier should be available for players in or near the playing area

This was felt unnecessary.

- That the movement schedule for the 2nd stage of the Butler be given to each pair (this was done in Hobart)

This was done after the early rounds in Hobart – although it was available on the notice board as a small page. It is recommended that the draw be included in the score book and additionally displayed on the board in LARGE print.

- That the results from the ANC teams be displayed during the Butler (and vice versa should the Teams be played second)

The results of ALL events should remain on display till the end of the tournament.

- That wallets be put out to pasture as they are prone to error

The ABF MC has instructed the NTC to do away with the use of wallets at all ABF events.

While wallets are prone to some errors, they may be necessary to supplement the organiser's supply of plastic boards. The use of dark red and dark green boards (on which it is difficult to read the identity of the dealer and in some cases the vulnerability) should be discontinued.

- That the practice of taking boards off tables be discontinued.

The above suggestion by the NTC was referred back to the ABF TC by the MC for further consideration, recommendation and/or resolution.

- That Directors give more announcements of time remaining.
- That Directors keep track of slow tables. Easy to do with Table Top scorers

The issue of slow play remains. With scores coming in electronically it should be possible for the directors to advise teams when they are significantly behind time (or discover that they have failed to enter one or more result).

- That eating and drinking be prohibited at the playing tables, spillages destroys both cards and equipment

This cannot be implemented – the venue typically provides water and hot

beverages – it is up to the players to be careful.

- That for the Butler stage 1, non-contenders are advised before the 1st match.

During the first session should give sufficient time for repeated reminders to the players.

- That if possible non-contending pairs do not play critical matches at the end of each Butler stage.
- That provision be made for the cleaning of tables in between matches in both teams and Butler.

Tournament Organisers should insist that their venue is cleared of rubble between matches.

- That in the final stages of the Butler that anticipated critical matches be avoided.
- That the programme, state that events may be subject to change. eg: Seniors effectively played 2 stages when only 1 was stated.
- That if possible player computers be made available.
- That bidding boxes be the norm, in preference to Bidding pads.
- That system card spots be supplied
- That a new policy be promulgated re mobile phones. Off as is required no longer works as everybody puts phones on silent.

The ABF MC endorses the NTC recommendation that NO electronic devices may be taken into the room/venue used for ABF of licensed event finals. TC should send this regulation to John Brockwell for inclusion in the ABF Tournament Regulations.

It was considered unwise that the ABF Onsite Representative should play in the event. ***The ABF MC asks that the TC recognise that the ABF Onsite Representative understands that he/she carries no authority while he/she is playing. If there is a perceived potential for conflict then he/she will step aside and deputise another to stand in for him/her.***

(3b) ANC Darwin, 2012

The proposed dates are 7-20 July - ***Convention Centre, Darwin.***

(4) SPRING NATIONALS

It was felt that the drop-in score for the losing semi-finalists of the Open Teams proceeding to the DCOP was too low. The score should be the average of the top 6 pairs after round 6, with the proviso that the score be no more than 10VPs from the leader. Opponents of the drop-in pairs would be selected by lot. ***ABF MC endorses this recommendation.***

(5) BARRIER REEF CONGRESS

There were scoring problems encountered early in the tournament. These may well have arisen from compatibility issues with the wireless access. In future it is recommended that hardware facilities are checked out for compatibility before events commence. This is an issue that should be handled by the ABF Onsite Representative.

5. SCORING

The problem of inaccuracy of scores entered at the tables electronically occurred at the ANC. The scorers were successful in picking up some anomalous scores, and in chasing people who left the table before entering all scores. The view was that at least some problems resulted from the fact that first generation scorers were in use. These do not allow easy recap of all results entered. It is therefore recommended that when these older scorers are in use that they be accompanied by paper results for checking purposes. It should be impressed upon the players that they have an obligation to ensure that scores input are as accurate as possible – and this obligation lies with both NS who enter the score and EW who check the score.

Suggestions have been made that incorrect scores result in penalties, but this was not adopted as it was too severe. Instead, a list of chronic non compliers should be compiled by the directors, and eventually these players would have to face the ABF to explain their inability to input or check scores correctly.

The ABF MC suggests that these issues will be alleviated with the continued education of the players.

For pairs events, it must be possible for competitors to review their scores. Frequency tables or individual board scores should be accessible in some form.

The scorer and/or the software should be able to identify ‘obvious’ scoring errors or check ‘blatant outliers’ by reference to the paper scoring at the table in question. For example where 6C is made 10 times E/W and once by N/S. This would help avert the major errors and improve the quality of the draw for the next round.

Standards for Scoring.

Scoring needs to be:

As accurate as possible – when errors are notified, corrections should be made to all available displays and on the internet within a reasonable length of time. Accessible by the players as soon as practicable. This needs to be displayed in a format that is easily read from a reasonable distance – i.e. not a single A4 page

Accessible on the web as soon as practicable. A possibility might be a column for pending corrections which will be applied in the display for the subsequent round.

As comprehensive as possible giving the type of input received. For matchpointed pairs events, frequency tables or individual scores should be available on the web for later analysis. For teams and swiss pairs, individual results should be available for subsequent checking.

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 is actioning this issue.*

5. CALENDAR REVIEW

In order to avoid a clash between the 2011 Spring Nationals and the Bermuda Bowl/Venice Cup the Spring Nationals have been moved to November 9-17.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

- Ron Klinger raised the issue of the PQP allocation for the Gold Coast Teams (see 3(a) above) KM to respond
- Seamus Browne has written supporting Gulzar Bilal in his efforts to be classified as an Australian for the purposes of international representation. He fulfils the requirements, but Mr Bilal will need to notify the ABF that it is not his intention to enter any Pakistani events which might lead to international representation. This notification will have to reach the ABF before the end of 2010 if he wishes to be credited with the PQPs earned in 2010 in order to enter the 2011 Playoffs. ***This matter has been resolved by the ABF MC.*** KM to respond
- Dianne Marler has proposed that from 2011 South Australia run an Open Swiss Pairs alongside the Seniors'/Women's and Restricted events prior to the ANOT. She suggested that this event would be named after a prominent SA player (such as Keith McNeill). She also requested consideration for PQP status. KM to respond

We recommend that the event be held, but as there are sufficient PQP events on the calendar, the allocation of PQPs would depend on the support shown for the event.

KM to respond

- BFACT have requested a time in the calendar for them to hold a Gold Point Event commencing in 2011.

This was not recommended as it was felt that the current calendar is too crowded to conveniently add another weekend event. The proposed Calendar Review may change this. It was also felt that ACT residents have had and continue to have easy, cost effective access to the Summer Festival of Bridge. ***The TC is directed to comply with this request and find a suitable time for such an event to be held.***

7. TOURNAMENT REGULATIONS

It would appear that the latest TRs are not on the Web (those uploaded are dated 1st June 2008). Laurie Kelso has been asked to follow this up with John Brockwell and promulgate them as soon as possible.

The regulations need to be updated regarding the status of the Last Train events held at the Summer Festival:

For a year in which there is a pairs format Playoff:

The Open, Women's and Seniors LT will provide two pairs for the Playoffs of that year. In addition, the LT will provide PQPs which are valid for the subsequent year's Playoff

For a year in which there is a teams format Playoff:

The Open and Women's LT will provide just PQPs for the following year. The Seniors' LT will provide a team for the forthcoming Playoffs (comprised of the top three pairs in the LT) and PQPs for the following year.

For the Seniors' Playoff in a pairs year, entries will be filled first by the PQP entry format, then 2 places from the first available pairs (down to 6th) from the Seniors' LT and finally by wildcard nominations.

8. NEXT MEETING

The meeting finished at 4:00 pm.

The next meeting will be held on Sunday 7th November at the NSWBA.