



Tournament Committee

MINUTES

Meeting held in Sydney (NSWBA)
Saturday 4th June, 2016, 10:00-16:00

1. PRESENT

David Morgan (Chair), Therese Tully, Laurie Kelso, Marcia Scudder, Peter Reynolds, Sartaj Hans, Matthew McManus who arrived at 12:00.

2. **APOLOGIES:** Eric Ramshaw, Sean Mullamphy.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR POSTING

The posting of TC minutes should be done as soon as possible after the MC have considered their stand on the recommendations. DM will liaise with ABF Secretary. LK/MM will promulgate approved changes to relevant parties.

MC will advise TC of MC meetings dates, with suggestion that TC meetings be scheduled approximately two weeks ahead to speed turnaround.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

a.) *Communication with Players*

The ABF website now includes a page where player input can be made. However, this page is not frequently used, and would benefit from a clear indication on the front page as to its location. When a new issue requires player input it is put on the ABF website as an item under Latest News. Players can then reach the input page by clicking a link, but it would be worthwhile including the path to the page, so players can find it later. It would also be beneficial if the item reappeared at the top of the Latest News section at, say, two week intervals until the closing date for submissions is reached.

MC agrees. To be referred to webmaster.

b.) *MC request for explanation of criteria used in PQP review*

LK addressed the MC at their meeting at the GCC, outlining the criteria used which include field size and field strength.

c.) *MC objection to changing the masterpointing of draws unless compelling rationale presented*

LK outlined the reasoning to the MC at their meeting at the GCC. MC did not accept this change. This issue will be further explored by consultation with David Anderson.

d.) *New VP scale in Swiss pairs*

The WBF VP scales were designed for round-robin matches. Peter Buchen, a member of the WBF Committee that devised those scales, has analysed event data provided by MM to create VP scales appropriate to IMP-scored Swiss events (pairs and teams). He has proposed a

formula based on the median IMP win margin and a blitz point of mean + 2 x standard deviations (same as used for original WBF scales). He is currently tweaking one of the parameters in this formula. Meanwhile MM has used the scale in some local events.

Peter is also reviewing the VP scales used for Swiss Teams events where the VP difference from 10 for a small win is considered disproportionately large by a number of Australian players unfamiliar with win/loss scoring.

In addition, MM has done work on a continuous 20 point VP scale for Matchpoint Swiss Pairs events: 1) for consistency and 2) to reduce the likelihood of ties common with the discrete scale. Various different possibilities were investigated. The most popular, the easiest to explain to the players (and arguably the most aesthetically pleasing) is one whereby a formula or formulae are applied to the pair's average percentage for the match. Although this means that a full percentage to VP conversion "table" is not practical, it does allow for a fairly simple formula for the conversion.

The details of the proposed formula are to be found in full in Appendix 1.

The TC

- *recommends that the proposed New Matchpoint Swiss Pairs scales be adopted;*
- supports in principle the move towards a different VP scale structure for IMP-scored Swiss Pairs but intends to wait for Peter Buchen to finalise his work before making any recommendations to the MC; and
- is divided about the desirability of moving away from the current WBF scales for team events.

MC requests further explanation of the proposals for new scoring scales at its next meeting.

e.) Apportioning PQPs for a multi-configurational team

Currently, pairs nominating for a Playoff event are able to count any points earned in the same team in a PQP event at full value, whether or not they actually played any boards together in a partnership in the event.

The TC considered a proposal that, in a teams event, a pair must have played together for a certain proportion of the boards (the "Pairs Board Rule") for PQPs to be claimed at full value in the Playoff. Otherwise, points obtained will be discounted by 50%, as they would in the current system for points earned in a different unit.

A number of issues were identified that need to be addressed before a workable set of rules can be drafted and instituted. These include:

* Accurate recording of player line-ups will be needed. This is in effect no different to the current situation regarding player eligibility under the board rule. We rely on the information entered by the players at the table. While possible, no-one was aware of any instances of manipulation, real or suspected (i.e. players' names being entered into Bridgmate units as playing when they are not in order for them to pass the board rule).

* TOs or CTDs in team events will need to collate accurate information about pairs and whether or not the "Pairs Board Rule" has been satisfied.

* The reporting of PQP information to the PQP Co-ordinator will, for teams events, be slightly more complex than currently.

* The calculation of weighting of PQPs for nominees for Playoffs could be significantly more complex than currently.

* A value will need to be set for the "Pairs Board Rule" (PBR). That is, what percentage of boards in an event must two players play as a partnership in order that any PQPs earned may be claimed at 100% value should they subsequently enter a Playoff in a nominated partnership.

MM will draft a consultation paper which will be placed on the ABF website for player input. Some of the questions/queries/comments to be considered are in Appendix 2. The changes are proposed to be incorporated for the 2017 Playoff (first event the 2016 Spring Nationals).

f.) Number of stanzas for eligibility

Following MC endorsement of the TC's recommendations, these changes will be incorporated in the Tournament Regulations. The changes will apply to all events leading to the 2017, beginning with the 2016 Spring Nationals. (MM/LK)

g.) Masterpointing of simultaneous Open and Intermediate events

The Masterpoint range between Life Master and Grand Master is undefined. New master factors need to be agreed with DA.

h.) Explaining PQPs and Playoffs

The TC considered a Playoff Charter prepared by SH which comprehensively covers all aspects of PQPs and Playoffs. After finalisation, this will be placed on the ABF website for player input.

5. TC MEMBERSHIP

Since it is likely that SM will not be able to resume his position on the TC for some time, it was agreed that there should be a new member of the committee. Two names were recommended to the MC for consideration.

MC has considered and decided not to increase committee size at this stage.

6. SECURITY

At the recent seniors' and women's Playoffs, different boards were used in each of the concurrent semi-finals and in the different RR fields in an effort to eliminate inadvertent unauthorised information becoming available, either audibly between tables, or by proximity of the tables playing the same boards. This was met with disapproval by the players, and in particular by journalists, who could not compare actions in the matches.

TC feels that security is a high priority issue, which needs to be addressed. Security is achieved in many US events by providing separate playing rooms for each table, paid for by the players. This would not be viable here.

A large playing venue with baffle screens between tables would be considered as an improvement.

The TC recommends that the ABF purchase or hire screens for use in future Playoffs. The MC accepts in principle. Referred to T.O. of Playoffs for consideration and costing.

TC also recommends:

- *no smoking breaks*
- *ALL explanations be written*
- *no discussion or conversation at the table*
- *mobile phones should be left on the table if a toilet break is required.*

Continued breaches of these measures should incur procedural penalties.

MC accepts recommendation with addition of word “unnecessary” before “discussion”.

BBO of some matches in the Swiss Teams at the VCC is considered to be a security risk, which is hard to obviate given the format of the event and the large field size.

7. ANC

The venue in Brisbane is licensed. The playing area is separate from the gaming areas of the club, but it is possible that 8 Youth players who are under 18 will have to be escorted to or through parts of the venue, to avoid violating the law.

MS and TT will provide feedback to the TC from the ANC Teams week.

For the Butler week, a questionnaire has been prepared asking for feedback on the format of the event (see Appendix 3). It should be placed on all tables from the first day. The questionnaire will also be uploaded to the player feedback on the ABF website.

Any changes from the ANC format for incorporation at the 2017 ANC should be decided at the August TC meeting and decisions made should be made available to the organisers as soon as practicable after that.

8. ENTRY NUMBERS IN WOMEN’S AND SENIORS’ EVENTS AND INTRODUCTION OF MIXED TEAMS/PAIRS EVENTS

The number of entrants in both Women’s and Seniors’ events has been declining over recent years.

TC considered some ways this decline could be countered in future years. In conjunction with this is the likelihood that a WBF Mixed Teams event may continue after that scheduled at this year’s World Championships. This will require selection criteria to be established for selecting the Australian Mixed Team (after the Open, Women’s and Seniors’ Teams are determined).

Possibilities to be recommended to TOs include:

- Running additional Mixed Teams or Pairs events.
- Running flighted Teams or Pairs (Women’s/Seniors’/Mixed) where the highest placed teams/pairs that have nominated in advance for a specific flight are deemed the winners of those various flights.

Options to select the Australian Mixed Team include:

- Selectors
- An open entry mixed teams qualifying event, possibly to be run at the NSWBA in February, or as part of the Summer Festival.

- A PQP structure, with or without a separate selection event based on awards.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

The TC discussed the ABF website. There was general agreement that the site is not easy to navigate; in particular, the number of clicks required to get to a specific piece of information is often excessive. Much of the content of the site is positioned beneath tabs, and navigation is not intuitive for the users. SH will communicate the issues to the ABF technology committee considering the future of the site.

Meeting closed at 15:20.

10. NEXT MEETING

August 6 in Sydney, NSWBA.

APPENDIX 1

1. VP scales for Swiss IMP events - Pairs and Teams

Peter Buchen has proposed a formula based on the median IMP win margin and a blitz point of mean + 2 x standard deviations (same as used for original WBF scales). MM has provided him with data from which the median and blitz can be calculated. In the case of Swiss Pairs, these values differ markedly from those used in the creation of the WBF Scales for round-robin teams. To a lesser extent, there are also differences based on the Swiss Teams data. (For example, for 14 board matches, for round-robin teams median and blitz are 19 and 57, for Swiss Pairs 14 and 41 and for Swiss Teams 18 and 53.)

Technical information:

The formula PB is investigating is as follows.

Each additional IMP has a value of either d1 or d2, f is a constant (described below) and b is the blitz point

* For IMP wins of 0 to fb: $d1 = 5/fb$

* For IMP wins of fb + 1 to b: $d2 = 5/(1-f)b$

f will be a value between 0.33 and 0.5. Peter is investigating the most appropriate value given the empirical data. At the time of writing, PB's feeling was that this will be best served by using something like M/P, where M is the median (50th percentile) value and P is the 90th percentile value.

Rounding to two decimal places will usually mean that the blitz point does not come out at exactly 20.00 VPs. To cater for this, the value of d2 will be varied by +/- 0.01 at the appropriate points on the scale to get to a blitz of 20.00.

The data suggests that there will be consistent formulae which can be developed for estimating median and blitz points for matches of board length for which no or limited observed data is available.

MM has rescored a number of events using likely scales based on Peter's formula. Results are not inconsistent with what occurred "in real life."

2. Continuous VP scale for Matchpoint Swiss Pairs events

It has been suggested that there should be a continuous 20 point VP scale for Matchpoint Swiss Pairs events: 1) for consistency and 2) to reduce the likelihood of ties common with the discrete scale.

Analysis of the empirical data (from events of either 9 or 10 board matches) indicates that the median win is 56.90% and a blitz point - using the same formula/principle described above - is 69.78%. This ties in reasonable well with the current discrete scale which was developed "seat of the pants"-ly where the range for a 15-5 win is 56.75%-58.55% and the blitz 20-0 result is at 69.80%+.

Various different possibilities were investigated. The most popular, the easiest to explain to the players is one whereby a formula or formulae are applied to the pair's average percentage for the match. Although this means that a full percentage to VP conversion "table" is not practical, it does allow for fairly simple formulae for the conversion.

Using similar principles as for IMP to VP conversion (ie. the 15-5 result should be around the median value, so that there are similar numbers of results between 10 and 15 as there are between 15 and 20), the following is suggested:

Conversion of winner's percentage to VPs:

For scores from 50.00% to 57.50%: $VP = (\% - 35) * 2/3$

For scores from 57.50% to 70.00%: $VP = (\% - 20) * 2/5$

Loser's score is the compliment of 20.

These formulae may result in VPs to more than two decimal places. It would be appropriate if any displays rounded them two places (as with the other scales), but retained them for tie-breaking purposes.

APPENDIX 2

Notes on proposal to vary the value of PQPs obtained in teams events:

Questions/queries/comments:

- a 50% PBR would potentially mean that a team could have more than three pairs satisfying - eg. one player playing throughout with two different partners. This may or may not be desirable.
- a 50% PBR would mean that three players playing a strict rotation triangle would have no pairs satisfying the rule.
- a 51+% PBR would mean that potentially in order to satisfy the PBR for one partnership could mean that a player would completely fail the general Board Rule for earning PQPs from the event.
- it may be appropriate to have different PBRs for Qualifying and Final stages of events.

APPENDIX 3

PLEASE GIVE YOUR VIEWS ON THE FORMAT OF THE OPEN BUTLER

A growing number of players have expressed dissatisfaction with the two-stage format of the open Butler. A number of proposals have been put forward, including reverting to a three-stage event.

The ABF Tournament Committee is seeking player feedback on the current format and views on alternative formats. Please complete this questionnaire and return it to Laurie Kelso or go to <http://www.abf.com.au/member-services/feedback/> and follow the links.

1. Should the Open ANC Butler pairs be . . . ? (please choose one)

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Two stages |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Three stages |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other format |

Please describe

2. My decision about whether or not to play in the Butler would /would not be affected by a change to the format?

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | A change to the format would affect my decision about whether or not to play |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | A change to the format would NOT affect my decision about whether or not to play |

3. Is the length of the event . . . ? (please choose one)

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | About right |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Too short |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Too long |

4. Any other comments

THANK YOU

PLEASE GIVE YOUR VIEWS ON THE FORMAT OF THE WOMEN'S BUTLER

The format of the women's Butler was changed for 2016 to match that of the seniors'. This was in response to issues with entry numbers and concerns about whether the format was equitable.

The ABF Tournament Committee is seeking player feedback on the current format and views on alternative formats. Please complete this questionnaire and return it to Laurie Kelso or go to <http://www.abf.com.au/member-services/feedback/> and follow the links.

1. Should the Women's ANC Butler pairs be . . . ? (please choose one)

- Two stages
 Three stages
 Other format

Please describe

2. My decision about whether or not to play in the Butler would /would not be affected by a change to the format?

- A change to the format would affect my decision about whether or not to play
 A change to the format would NOT affect my decision about whether or not to play

3. Is the length of the event . . . ? (please choose one)

- About right
 Too short
 Too long

4. Any other comments

THANK YOU