



Tournament Committee

MINUTES

Meeting held in Sydney (NSWBA)
Saturday 3rd March, 2018, 9:50-15:45

1. Present

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

The resignations of Eric Ramshaw and Therese Tully from the Tournament Committee were accepted at the recent MC meeting. Thanks were expressed to both of them. Eric has been involved in bridge administration since his arrival in Australia in the 1960s and will remain available as a corporate memory of the ABF. Sheila Bird and Warren Lazer were welcomed in their place.

2. Apologies: none

3. Matters arising from previous minutes

a. Datums for Butler Pairs at the ANC

The MC asked for clarification of the recommendation to expand the number of scores considered in deriving datums for the various events.

Stage I

Open Butler	Open datums only
Women's Butler	Women + Open
Seniors' Butler	Seniors + Open
Youth Butler	Youth + Open

Stage II

Open Butler	Open datums only
Women's Butler	2 x Women + Open
Seniors' Butler	2 x Seniors + Open

The TC clarified what would happen in the finals: all scores in the women's (or seniors') field would be entered twice and all scores from the open would be entered once before removing the top and bottom 10% of scores. The intention was to increase the number of data points while ensuring that there were the same number from the women's (seniors') field as from the open – the open final having twice the number of tables as the women's (seniors').

The TC also clarified that the rationale for using a larger data set was not only the smaller numbers in the women's (seniors') compared to the open but also the range of standard of pairs and consequent spread of scores, which had been a source of complaint in previous years.

b. PQP Policies

MM has summarised the PQP policy changes that TC has recommended and MC has endorsed over the past few years. These are 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.

An 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. PQPs for second and third place were then allocated to the teams that came 3rd and 4th. PQPs for fourth through seventh place were then allocated to the remaining eligible teams. As per previous policy, the PQPs for eighth place were not awarded. Also in accord with existing policy, the pair that failed the board rule received half of the PQPs for a losing semi-finalist.

c. 2018 ANC format: Youth Butler

The Tournament Organiser proposed running the Youth Butler on the weekend alongside Stage I of the Open Butler, instead of Stage 2. This would enable:

- the Australian Youth Team, which is playing in China on Aug 7, to use the Youth Butler as practice; and
- the state representatives in the Youth Teams to play in the Youth Butler without a four or five day wait.

The TC, concerned that some of the youth players would like the opportunity to play against stronger competition in the Open Butler, identified reasons why this is not desirable:

The TC recommended that the TO consult youth players as quickly as possible. It noted that there is an imminent opportunity to conduct such a survey amongst the NSW and ACT youth players at the Bateman's Bay Congress on 10-11 March.

DM to convey this recommendation to Dallas, copying in WL.

The TC noted that the TO has decided to run the Interstate Teams with 14 board matches.

MC notes that the survey was conducted and the youth butler was changed to the weekend.

4. 2018 Playoffs and Target events

The format of the 2018 Playoffs was discussed, with particular reference to the carry forward from Stage I to Stage II. Players feedback from the W/S Playoff was that the large spread of the carry forward made it virtually impossible for the lower ranked pairs to climb into contention. By comparison, the Open players wanted a wider spread.

The TC recommended that future pairs Playoffs should be held over 6 days. This would allow for longer matches. The TC also discussed whether the field could be divided into two, eliminating the luck factor involved in the direction of seating for various matches. This requires accurate seeding, but would allow 20-board matches.

MC supports this recommendation subject to any other changes which might arise from the review of the playoff format.

TC considers that it is important for each year to have a Target Event. The problem lies in the Pairs year (2018, and subsequent 4 year cycles). In light of the uncertainties surrounding the Asia Cup this year.

The TC recommends that the Rosenblum (and associated McConnell and Rand events) be the Target Event in non-leap-year even years.

MC will consider the addition of the Rosenblum (and associated events) when the international program for 2022 is more defined with respect to the Asia Cup and Asian Games.

The TC noted that it had previously foreshadowed consulting players in early 2019 about the revised format of the playoffs. *The TC recommends that the survey revisit the question of a pairs playoff, especially if target events are adopted in non-leap-year even years.*

MC support this recommendation

5. Player consultation on location and timing of Playoffs.

Players found that the W/S Playoffs were too close to Christmas. If the GNOT could be moved a week earlier then this may be alleviated.

The venue for the Playoffs was discussed. Sydney is not considered viable, as even for local players, the peak hour travel time can be excessive, in light of the necessity for an early start to play. (This could be alleviated, but only by a later start with play following a dinner break.)

Other possibilities discussed were Tweed Heads/Coolangatta and Canberra. An advantage of Tweed Heads/Coolangatta is the ready availability of nearby accommodation and dining options for players. A disadvantage of Coolangatta is that there would be no local players able to accommodate players from other regions, as happens when playoffs are held in Sydney or Canberra.

DM will construct a survey on these points in consultation with Di Smart.

6. Selection format for Women's team

A paper has been prepared by Kim Frazer, Marianne Bookallil and Renee Cooper after consultation with players at both the Playoffs and the Summer Festival. It has been published on the ABF website under Feedback. Responses closed on March 2. The TC noted that it would need to consider any recommendations that emerged relating to the format of playoffs and selection processes.

7. Summer Festival Format

The Canberra Rex was not favourably received by players as a venue this year. The playing area was cramped and the venue was clearly too small, with the unsatisfactory effect that teams and pairs found that their entries could not be accepted. The TC considers it imperative that a different venue that can accommodate all players wanting to enter be found as soon as possible.

Alan Watson (visiting from US, but originally an Ozzie) felt that there was an opportunity to add a significant event on the final Fri/Sat/Sun. TC thought that this might provide an opportunity to include a Mixed Teams event on the calendar as they are becoming increasingly included in international events.

8. Date clash between ANOT and Barrier Reef

The TC noted that these two events are programmed for the same weekend in 2019 and 2020. This clash was the result of venue availability and other considerations. Absent a major reorganisation of the tournament calendar such clashes could occur again.

9. GNOT

A request was received for an additional team from the Canberra region to be included in the final.

The TC noted that the allocation of places in the National GNOT final are the responsibility of the GNOT TO in consultation with the ABF MC.

10. Selection for events of teams with mixed pairs

The TC noted that it was likely that Mixed Teams would be included in future world championships (since confirmed) and, if that were to happen, in the APBF. Such a change would require the ABF to develop a reasonable selection process: the approach adopted for the 2016

event was an ad hoc one. However, this would require confirmation from the MC that sufficient funding was available to support an additional representative team; the TC noted that the cost of sending a team to international events was non-trivial.

The TC agreed that it was not feasible to use PQPs as a basis for determining entry to a mixed pairs selection event as there were no gold point events for mixed pairs, and that the format used for selecting the open, women's and seniors' teams would not be appropriate. It further agreed that selection by teams would be preferable to selecting three pairs.

The TC agreed that any selection event for a Mixed Team must take place after the Open, Women's and Seniors' Playoffs and so would have to take place in the already crowded January – March timeslot.

Options included:

- A three-day event to be held in conjunction with the NOT. (The TC noted that this would affect the quality of the field, even if drop-ins were permitted.)
- A Fri/Sat/Sun event at the NSWBA clubrooms, maybe over Easter (although for 2019, Easter falls well outside the preferred timeslot).
- A three- or four-day event at the NSWBA clubrooms over the Australia Day weekend.

The TC recommended that, to select a team for the 2019 WCs, the ABF run a selection event over the 2019 Australia Day weekend. The event would consist of a Swiss teams over the weekend, qualifying (OPTION A) two teams for a 56-board final on Monday or (OPTION B) four teams for 56-board semifinals on Monday and a 56-board final on Tuesday. To make the event break even (or be profitable) it could be designated the Australian Mixed Teams Championship (and offer gold points) with entry open to any team of mixed pairs. The TC confirmed that the NSWBA clubrooms were available on the weekend and that the (semifinals and) final could be held with little disruption from (or to) regular weekday events in the NSWBA.

The TC thought there would be little interest among players in the Supermixed Teams concept (i.e. where a pair of men plays against a pair of women). If such events were held the TC noted that self-funded teams could register through an “expressions of interest” process.

MC will discuss the Mixed Pair selection in more detail at the June meeting

11. NPC for non-representative teams

The TC's view was:

- NPCs are useful for any team competing in an international event as there is a non-trivial admin burden.
- This burden is greater when there is a team of six as someone must make decisions about which pairs play.
 - Such decisions can be tricky for a playing captain, even in a self-selected team that gets along well.
 - The level of trickiness increases significantly if the team has been chosen from a pairs trial rather than self-selected.
- For events where the ABF is not funding an NPC the ABF still had the right to decide whether or not to appoint someone, and should ensure that any NPC would represent the ABF appropriately.

- The ABF's ability to impose its normal requirements on NPCs (including the absence of any familial connection with any member of the team) was constrained given that the position was not being funded by the ABF.
 - It was better, in the TC's view, for each team to have an NPC who has a connection with one of the players than no NPC.
- There could be advantage in situations like the Asia Cup -- where late changes meant the ABF was assisting many representative teams, but where some would not be able to find a self-funded NPC -- in the ABF appointing a *chef de mission* whose role would be to assist all teams and their self-funded NPCs (if any) and -- most importantly -- to help with choosing which pairs play if there were any issues within a team or between one or more players and a self-funded NPC (who was likely to have a familial connection with at least one team member).
 - The *chef de mission* could also represent the ABF in any discussions (formal and informal) with representatives of zones 4 and 6, the various national bridge federations, and the WBF (if any WBF representatives were present).

12. Scoring scales for Swiss Pairs events

DM to follow up with Peter Buchen.

13. Other business

- a. The TC noted the critical feedback from some players about the change in format of the ANC Open Butler Pairs from a three-stage to a two-stage event. The TC agreed to consult players; WL agreed to prepare a survey.
- b. In response to the further request from the MC, the TC encouraged players to be made more aware that open events do not have a minimum masterpoint requirement. It was concerned that some players were under the misapprehension that the running of restricted events prevented players who were eligible for such events entering open events.

Meeting closed at 15:45.

11. Next meeting dates

Saturday 23rd June, 2018 in Sydney (nominally at the NSWBA).

Appendix 1

- 1) PQPs earned in Open events are able to be transferred to the Women's and/or Seniors' PQP list without restriction.
- 2) PQPs earned in Open events by female players will count double when transferred to the Women's PQP list.
- 3) PQPs earned in a Women's PQP event run concurrent with a Seniors' PQP events (including Playoff events) may be transferred to the Seniors' PQP list without restriction.
- 4) PQPs earned in a Seniors' PQP event run concurrent 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 only be awarded for superior performance in the Target events as defined by the TC/MC each year. Where a placing in a certain top subset of a field (eg, half, quarter, etc) is required, any fraction will be rounded down.
- 8) PQPs earned by international representation in Mixed Teams and/or Super-Mixed 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'. [To commence in the 2018-9 PQP year]
- 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.) [To commence in the 2018-9 PQP year]
- 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.