

## **Women's Team Selection Review**

A review of women's team selection methods has been in progress for some time. The review was undertaken to identify changes to the current selection and preparation methods for women teams. As part of the review, the review team determined that the following goal should be the objective:

### **Goal: For the Australian Women's Teams to win a medal at a world event within 5 years**

In order to achieve this goal, the following recommendations are proposed:

#### **1. A women's squad will be formed:**

A training squad will assist with development of all aspects of pair/player skill levels.

- A women's squad should be formed of about 10 pairs, the number to be determined by pair applications (a process needs to be developed to facilitate this) and based largely on merit (for current high performing pairs) and potential (for developing pairs)
- The squad will have a coach/co-ordinator who will be responsible for the overall program who will receive a small remuneration.
- Individual squad pairs will be expected to meet a number of pre-defined criteria (e.g. work with a mentor, play major events together, work on system refinement/notes, work on addressing specific performance areas, etc.)

#### **2. Selection of teams will be by an independent panel in alternate years.**

Providing developing high potential developing pairs an opportunity to contest international events will assist in building a stronger women's team overall.

- Selection of teams in alternate (non-Venice Cup years) should be by panel to allow development and exposure to international bridge for stronger emerging pairs (subject to those pairs demonstrating the required work ethic, commitment and competition results). This doesn't mean the team will comprise only emerging pairs, and different teams may be selected for different events in a calendar year.
- The selection panel will comprise a group who will be generally seen as impartial – i.e. not related to potential players or otherwise involved with them - but who will have or who could gain adequate knowledge of the potential pairs. The panel needs to include well-respected players from around the country.
- Transparency of decision making is important. So, a team selected to contest events in alternate years may not be the best female players of the year but may represent the best development potential for future years. Consideration will be given to the amount of effort pairs have put into programmed squad work (e.g. practice together, results in competitions, development of system agreements, etc.)
- PQP's should not be awarded for events in panel selection years. We believe this will assist with mitigating potential criticism over why specific players are included/excluded from a team, but more importantly give women players the freedom to contest stronger open events, rather than chasing PQP's.

#### **3. Funding.**

The ABF commits significant funding to the international team program. The review considered how a women's squad will be funded. Moving to a hybrid format as proposed above will resolve this concern since there will be no playoff for women's teams conducted in alternate years, the available funds can be used to fund the squad program.