

WBU Management Committee

Minutes of Meeting 6th March 2012

Meeting held by telephone conference, 2pm to 3.45pm

Present

AT: Adrian Thomas (President), Chairman
BA: Bob Alderdice (West Wales nominee)
LG: Linda Greenland (Treasurer)
JH: Jean Hand (National Tournament Organiser)
JK: Jill Knight (North Wales nominee)
KR: Ken Richardson (East Wales nominee)
NR: Neville Richards (Chief Executive)
MT: Mike Tedd (Mid Wales nominee), Minutes Secretary

1 Apologies

2 Review of Actions from Previous Meetings

November 6 Finance Committee

LG is arranging a meeting

Action: LG

November 7 Investigating Celtic Sims

Ongoing.

Action: NR

January 3.3 Licensing of Bridge Holidays

We have responded to the EBU with our proposals and await their response. NR and LG are handling this.

February 4

AT has identified a possible nominee as auditor. LG will explain more to him.

Action: LG

February 6

The Mind Sports Games venue has not been decided. Another city has now been mentioned, so the possibility of Cardiff is receding.

February 9 Bad Behaviour Working Group

AT & MT will discuss this with Alan Lightbody soon.

Action: AT, MT

3 Camrose

The performance of the Welsh Open team in the Camrose was applauded. The contribution that the selectors have made to the preparation of the team, in particular by Julian Pottage, was praised. AT will write to the selectors thanking them.

Action: AT

4 Consultation with Members

Anne Evans, who has analysed the questionnaires, joined the meeting for this item. Anne was thanked for her efforts.

The questionnaire could have been better designed – there were too many open questions, making analysis difficult.

Some lessons were identified. The availability of good bridge teaching is important. Many club players feel little connection with other WBU activities (“us” and “them”). It is felt that top players should put more into the game in Wales. Bad manners affect ordinary club members, who feel very uncomfortable when the director is called to their table.

We will look at how more of the analysis could be made public.

Action: AT

We should send out another smaller questionnaire with next year’s Journal addressing extra issues.

5 Council Meeting

A paper summarising Management Committee progress over the last year has been circulated to Council with a request for agenda items for the possible meeting on March 18th. Since there have been no suggestions, it was decided not to hold a Council meeting in March. A meeting will be held before the AGM, to include the Council’s annual responsibilities for appointing committees etc. NR will inform Council.

Action: NR

6 Master Point Uploading

More & more clubs are submitting points online. Llandudno and Cardiff are about to start.

7 Competitions

A report was received from the Working Party. It recommends:

- All WBU National events should be scored by Bridgemates and area events/ congresses should be encouraged to do so.
- The Cambria Cup event should return to its original format as this year’s 4 team final was not proving popular. **If** entries did not improve in 2012-13, the group recommend that a new weekend mixed pivot teams event be considered further

- In the Welsh Cup, the triple format should only be used if entry numbers are sufficient to see that 2 teams from group stage proceed to the next round; if this is not possible straight knockout should occur.
- Graded Masters: *If* the event returns it should have sections one and two run as a two day central event and lower sections should be one day area events scored simultaneously. It should be moved later in the calendar year, June probably.
- The Ladies Weekend should continue in whatever format the ladies wanted.
- Events aimed at social players – “no fear”: The group completely agreed to the continued encouragement of this within areas and running at national events alongside main events. These events can clash with other WBU events, being aimed at attracting a different group of players.
- Area one day events: again each area should run events for area interest and not be hampered by National events running at the same time in other parts of Wales
- Simultaneously scored events: the group encouraged these and recommend that at least the National Mixed pairs area qualifiers be scored in this way, as well as the National Open Pairs qualifiers.
- Webber cup: No specific recommendations here as yet but the group noted changes to this event may well be needed.
- Club “captains” promoting events: The group all agreed that, especially for larger clubs, a specific person should be responsible for encouraging members to take part in area and national events.
- There should be an annual review group to review the competition programme.

The Management Committee endorsed all these recommendations.

8 Constraints on Venues

There has been a suggestion that we should only use hotel venues (for WBU events, and when hosting international weekends) that provide the option of smoking bedrooms.

It was noted that it is quite difficult to find suitable venues even without such a constraint, and so we could not support this suggestion.

A further difficulty arises with international weekends, where the arrangement with the hotel is typically dependent upon a minimum expected number of participants staying in the hotel. In such circumstances a participant choosing to stay in another hotel would be expected to meet (out of any WBU support) any extra costs incurred by the WBU. It was also noted that it is desirable for team morale that teams stay together whenever reasonable.

9 Data on Congress Attendance

Joan Jenkins has done some interesting analysis of congress attendees. 351 WBU members played in the 29 congresses analysed. There is a striking tendency for players not to travel to events outside their own area, especially from the North to the South and vice-versa. Only congresses in Mid Wales attracted a reasonable number of entries from all over Wales, which has implications for where we hold national competition finals.

10 Writing to Universities

Gwen Hurst has suggested that we try again to raise interest within Welsh universities. This is certainly worth trying, but it would be important to identify people who could take an interest in their local university before contacting student unions. AT will liaise with Gwen.

Action: AT

11 Any Other Business

11.1 Master Points Meeting

JH and MT are meeting with the EBU and SBU to discuss the different countries' master point schemes, including the new EBU 'blue' points. Reciprocity between the schemes is important.

11.2 Grading System

The EBU is introducing a grading system for their members. The MC believes such a system could be beneficial, but we should be careful to consult members before introducing anything like this.

11.3 Self-funding Teams Representing Wales

We have decided previously that the WBU can only afford to support one team in European championships, except in very exceptional circumstances (such as this year, when Wales won both the Camrose and the Seniors Camrose in 2011). The possibility of a self-funding team, without any WBU financial support, has again been mooted.

Remembering past difficulties of such teams seeking funding after the event, and how badly some Welsh teams have done, the Management Committee are not enthusiastic about this possibility. {Subsequently, it has been decided to discuss this further at the next meeting.}

12 Next Meeting

This will be on Tuesday April 3rd 2012, between 2 and 4pm.

MT 8/3/12, revised 18/3