

## CAPTAIN'S COMMENTS - FIRST CAMROSE WEEKEND

### 1. Convention Cards

*Ref: Regulation 7.1 – Submission of Systems*

*System cards are subject to a review. When the system card has been reviewed and accepted, it will be published on the BGB website prior to the event. It is the responsibility of Captains to ensure that their players' systems are submitted on time.*

*The deadline for submission of systems is two weeks prior to the start of the event (but three weeks for the first Camrose weekend because of Christmas), and a reminder will be sent by the Secretary seven days before the deadline. **An automatic fine of 1 VP will be imposed on any pair not submitting their system by the due date.***

*The relevant dates submission of systems for the 2021 Home International Series are:- Camrose Weekend 1 - 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020*

The BGB website shows a date of 21<sup>st</sup> December 2020 for the system card submission for Hillman & Bennett, but when I asked at the Captain's Meeting whether any fines were being incurred by England, but I was told that all the submissions had initially been submitted on time and the date related to when it was uploaded onto the BGB website. No time/date stamped records were available to confirm this and allow verification of the initial submission date.

I have noted that the following text has recently been added to the BGB website. *Please note: Effective for the rest of the 2021 series, cards which are submitted with merely the names of conventions (rather than an explanation of the bids made) will, as well as being returned for amendment, regarded as not submitted on time if they then subsequently miss the final date whilst being corrected.*

### 2. Disabilities

The Scottish Camrose team for this weekend was selected without a specific Camrose trial (i.e.: pre-COVID) and were the team that would have played in the Europeans in Madeira that was scheduled for June 2020. There are further trials taking place shortly to allow selection for the second Camrose weekend.

The NPCs were advised of the following request the day before the event (Note: The Scotland NPC did not attend the Captain's meeting).

*Patrick Home is a player who has problems with manual dexterity. He is 79 and this is his first cap. He has never owned a PC or laptop as he can't use a mouse, so he uses a tablet with a stylus, which gives him great difficulty, especially when trying to alert with an explanation.*

*He has played a little on BBO this past year, but apparently managed never to alert anything! His partner has always tried to keep opponents informed.*

*It's not that we haven't tried - Wednesday evening was our third practice session on RealBridge and honestly, it was a nightmare, as I was making him practise alerting. He was utterly confused by the process and it affected his entire game which was full of misclicks, and at one point he managed to disappear completely.*

*Technology is definitely not his strong point. After last night's session, I realised he wasn't getting any better, in fact he seemed worse, and thought I'd ask about getting help.*

*His friend and neighbour is a bridge player called Archie Bouverie.*

*His membership of SBU has actually lapsed and I don't think he's been playing much, but when he was active I believe he reached the rank of National Master, not nearly the same level as Patrick.*

*Archie would be willing to use his laptop and mouse, and simply follow Patrick's instructions. He fully understands the security issue and is willing to follow any guidance offered or conditions set.*

The NPCs (and the Welsh Team) did not raise any issues with this request but there was some general disquiet as to why this manual dexterity had not been raised earlier and effectively managed by the SBU.

In practice, the problems did not arise as Patrick Home's partner had no internet access all weekend (see Point 3 below).

### 3. Substitutes

At some stage on Friday Finlay Marshall lost his internet connection and Open Reach did not resolve the internet access issue during the course of the weekend. As a result his broadband was non-functional all weekend and, as he lives in a rural locality, tethering to a smartphone was not an option.

*It was noted that Regulation 6 states - Subject to the approval of the Director in Charge, the members of a team may be changed up to the posting of the line-up for the first session of the event, but not thereafter. Immediately before the commencement of the first session the Captain of each team shall nominate to the Director the members of his team. Thereafter no substitute or reserve player shall be permitted to play.*

As this was not enacted on promptly, no reserve pair was nominated and, as a consequence, Scotland played four-handed over the weekend, playing 160 boards over 2.5 days whilst staring at a computer screen!

As a result, the SBU is to ask BGB to consider allowing a standby pair for the remaining International events that being held online and this pair would only be used only if one of the main pairs had serious connectivity issues

### 4. IT Issues

Separate to the above, Tony Disley lost his internet connection 10 minutes before the last stanza. It was planned that Tony Ratcliff and Julian Pottage would sit out the final stanza of this round but Tony Disley's internet connection went down shortly before play was about to start and he could not reconnect in time. We managed to get Tony Ratcliff and Julian Pottage back to play this stanza but were fined 1VP as all of the planned line-up were not seated at the table at the designated start time. As a consequence of this, things were not ideal and Wales went on to lose this stanza.

Whilst the fine is accepted, Tony Disley (as Lady Milne NPC) did note that there was a more light touch approach being promulgated at the last Lady Milne.

It was noted that Regulation 9.3 states that *All players are encouraged to log-on as early as possible to Real Bridge, and inform the TD of potential internet connection problems. In the absence of any such notice, the following will apply:-*

*An emergency EBU mobile number will be available to NPCs to inform the Tournament Director of any problems relating to the start of a stanza.*

*All players are advised to have a reserve device available in case of technical failure or connection problem, but should the need arise a substitute will be permitted. The third pair of each team should be on call and, with the agreement of the Tournament Director, the pair will be permitted to act as substitutes.*

This does not help if the ISP service goes down and there should be some flexibility made for connection issues.

Tony Ratcliff and Julian Pottage stepped in and we were about 7 minutes late in starting that stanza – but they still finished on time. They played as substitutes with the agreement of the Tournament Director, but the Irish NPC was not happy in that Ireland had seating rights in that stanza. In order to move things on I had to offer to give up on both seating rights for the next weekend but this may need to be reviewed.

## 5. RealBridge Security

I have a number of concerns about the security of the hands on RealBridge and would be happy to expand on these further with interested parties. Having said that, I do not think anything untoward went on but one of the Welsh team stated that he could see the scores at one stage. As he might have inadvertently logged on using the Captain's link, the Player links and Captain's links should be provided separately to the relevant parties in order prevent players logging on through the wrong portal.

It was also possible for me to see hands due to a Score button being accessible when using the Captain's link.