

## **Minutes of MC 27 Sept 2023 @ 10.30 am by Zoom**

Present: Jean Cufley, Simon Gottschalk, Ceri Pierce, Sophie Cunningham, Alan Screen.

Apologies : Steve Jarvis, Steve Webb, Gilly Clench.

1. **Minutes of last MC Meeting** - accepted.

2. **Selectors Report**

The selectors will be selecting the team for the Home International Series. 2 Premier Leagues weekends (face to face) are coming up, to aid selection, with 10 teams entered. Well done to Simon who has put in a lot of hard work organising this..

The Lady Milne and Teltscher trials will be held end Jan and beginning of Feb.

The entry forms for the LM is on the website and the Teltscher entry forms will be up shortly.

Venues and TDs are all booked.

Simon added that the Freshers Fair is on at Cardiff University this afternoon and it is hoped that we will recruit more juniors. The EBU have donated 200 packs of really nice playing cards and 3 training manuals for each junior that comes on the free training course at Cardiff Bridge Club.

2. **CEO Report**

**Camrose 1<sup>st</sup> Weekend**

Ceri is having to renegotiate the Camrose weekend with the Holiday Inn in Newport as it is likely that people (England x 2 teams and Wales) could leave on Sunday night and will therefore only be there for 2 nights not 3. It would obviously be better to charge less for 2 nights The contract was based on a minimum number of people for 3 nights.

Alan suggested that the BGB regulation regarding proximity to airports be scrapped. Ceri will raise with BGB.

Sarah Amos is not available to direct. Enquiries are underway to identify an alternative TD.

**Premier League**

6 more trays have been made.

The cloth screens are missing. We may need the tables from Crossgates as the cloth screens will not fit the tables at Cardiff Bridge Club.

There are 10 teams entered and Simon forecasts a healthy profit.

Simon is travelling through Crossgates on Tuesday.

The Camrose screens are starting to deteriorate - Porthcawl lockup is not the best place to store them.

**IT Systems**

We have had problems with the Masterpoints database as it links to a 'deepvault' server which does not belong to the WBU. The link was broken last week after an Virmach upgrade was reinstated for us, but for a limited time only until we can migrate away from the deepvault server. We do not have the expertise to carry out this change without quite a high risk of breaking it. The author of the system has provided the files but is not prepared to help with the

migration and an email has been received withdrawing support (paid or unpaid) for the Masterpoints database. Alternatives are being investigated to outsource the admin of masterpoints to the EBU. Steve agreed 100% to move to the EBU system if feasible as the current system is very fragile.

The list of IT systems and related subscriptions (domain names etc) has been compiled and access tested following the review held last month. The aim is to have all systems documented so that we are not dependant on one person.

Neville has been asked to transfer ownership of the PayPal and Dropbox account to Ceri but he is unable to do so for various reasons. There may be similar problems with the Virmach and Scala Servers.

Simon agreed that the system was written a long time ago and is on unsupported technology and is a massive risk.

### **Hybrid Proposal from Andrea Knox**

The selectors met on 5<sup>th</sup> Sept and discussed the hybrid proposal made by Andrea Knox for trials. They decided to reject the proposal because of security issues. Andrea has been informed.

### **BGB**

New BGB regs for 2024 have now been published and eligibility for representing your country now extends to having (Welsh) grandparents.

### **Proposal from David Parry**

David Parry has contacted Ceri. He is a candidate for the EBU board and he and some others, if they are elected, are interested in forming a England and Wales Bridge Union.

They are hoping to revamp the tournament calendar and give counties more autonomy.

If elected they will publish a proposal but want to act quickly so have approached us to sound us out on our views. We would likely lose our International status in EBL and WBF events.

Unanimous view of the MC was that we will not want to lose our International status. We are very happy to co-operate and support a joint calendar, but do not wish to not join up completely – a joint tournament calendar does make sense to get more people playing in events.

## **3. Treasurers Report**

A report was circulated beforehand.

As at 13.30 on Tuesday 26 September 2023 bank account balances were:

WBU	£23388.69
Step Bridge	£6208.68
MBS	£66,462.44

Simon queried the interest rate that we receive at the Monmouth Building Society - Jean outlined the difficulties we have experienced setting up a WBU account in the past- it is not straightforward to set up new accounts. She will check the rate we have at MBS and will report back.

National Savings and Investments are offering 6%. Jean to investigate.

## **4. MP&M Report**

The Master point database is very fragile and we are investigating options to resolve this issue.  
This month we had more masterpoints registered than last month - looks like things could be picking up.

## **5. NTO Report**

Simon circulated a list of events. Queries have been received about venues, as many of the events are located in South Wales. Simon has suggested that events are shared with other areas, but support from the areas from people with local knowledge and willing to help set up these events is required.

Simon (working with Sophie and Steve J) would like to bring back the East Wales, Llandrindod and Porthcawl Congresses. Each needs a 1 year lead time and a decent venue. He has been talking to different venues - room hire is not too bad - it's tea coffee and overnight accommodation that is ramping up the price.

It was emphasised that when we run a congress we need the organisers to keep contact details for marketing the congress in future years.

Ceri thanked Simon for all his hard work.

## **6. Area Report**

**East Wales** – advice from the Management Committee was requested regarding a problem encountered recently.

It was suggested that a meeting of the officers of EWBA (Chair, Secretary, ATO, Treasurer) is convened to discuss the situation and then it should be taken to the full EWBA committee. There is no constitutional guidance available, but perhaps an email from the committee to the relevant club would be in order if the committee agreed.

It was agreed that no member of any committee, nor indeed any member of the WBU, should be subjected to disrespectful behaviour.

Paddy asked if the Patrick Jourdain Teams was the Patrick Jourdain Invitational Pairs. It was clarified that this event replaced the Louis Lerman.

**Mid Wales** – a report was circulated.

**North Wales** - have changed the venue for the Llandudno Congress as the current venue is too expensive. The new venue is in In Craig y Don Community Centre. They are having problems getting a TD. Dermot Reddan was suggested as an alternative, if necessary.

**West Wales** – a report was circulated – the WWBA Swiss Pairs went well with 12 tables. 4 more events have been organised.

Vince Bevan pairs	29/10/23
Mixed Pairs:	4/2/24
Laidlaw Murray:	17/03/24
John Isaac:	12/05/24

Porthcawl will be online on 25/26 Nov 2023 - Pairs Saturday and Teams Sunday.

Peter has contacted Oliver Cowan for next years congress. The Heronston Hotel may be the venue. Oliver's promotion of events is excellent.

Dave Nicklin has been TDing for events and is gaining experience. He is being mentored by Tony H.

It was requested that a nominated representative from the WBU is present at the Champion of Champions and the Teams of 8. Simon G was there this year, and will be there next year.

Tony H has reported that he feels that the issue of prizes raised at the AGM was a resolution rather than AOB. Simon G has been costing up events so that there can be prize money – entry fees will need to rise to accommodate this. It is anticipated that some events will be offered with prizes and some will not.

## **7. AOB**

Venues - everyone missed Llandrindod. It is difficult to locate events in the Mid as there are not so many people there to help organise and there are fewer players there. We would likely have lower numbers than if held in the South. The Commodore remains a good venue.

Simon reported that we can hold hybrid events if the areas do not want to travel - ie simultaneous event (heats) – he may explore running a trial hybrid online/face to face event with the West.

He is willing to consider all options providing there is support from the local areas.

## **Next Meeting**

8<sup>th</sup> November 2023 10am.