

Minutes of Management Committee 13 March 2024 @ 10.00 am by Zoom

Present: Jean Cufley, Simon Gottschalk, Ceri Pierce, Steve Jarvis, Paddy Murphy, Alan Screen, Steve Webb, Gilly Clench (part), Paul Denning (part)

1. **Apologies – None**

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

3. **Matters Arising –**

Steve, Ceri and Jean are still to meet with the Area Treasurers to discuss license fees. Ceri has chased the EBU for a proposal to help with the Masterpoints system.

4. **Selectors Report**

The two Camrose weekends have just been completed. Paul Denning was NPC at the 1st weekend and reported that there were two English Teams in this year's Camrose which always makes it very difficult to do well. The two English teams had good wins over Wales. One thing that the weekend highlighted is that our pairs are not getting practice against strong opposition. The second weekend was much the same, and Wales finished 4th in the final table. The final weekend was blighted by one team member having to leave on Sunday morning for exceptional reasons. This resulted in one pair having to play all four sessions and a scratch partnership put together for the last session against the EBU. Wales won the match against the EBU but the result was overturned to a narrow loss following a Directors ruling on one board.

To remedy the lack of practice against strong opposition, the players need to be encouraged to enter events such as the Spring Fours. Most of the players are not really playing much weekend bridge. It was queried whether a policy could be put in place to remedy this – however there is no finance available to fund any entries to these high standard events.

There has been criticism of the Selectors recently and Paul was asked to respond. He noted that there will always be complaints. However, the selectors do their job to the best of their ability and with the utmost integrity. There are five selectors at present and two vacancies which will be advertised on the website.

Most of the Selectors' work is done for this year now that the LM, Teltscher and the Europeans teams have been selected.

Ceri reported that the Junior Camrose was a huge success. Behaviour by all countries was good. The match manager said that it was a delight to see young people enjoying playing bridge so much and making new friends. There was a speedball held on Saturday night (3 minutes a board!) which everyone enjoyed. This will be considered when we host the Junior Camrose in 2025.

5. **Constitution Changes**

The constitution changes were circulated and approved.

Abolishment of The Council - Alan suggested that instead of abolishing the Council, that it be suspended and responsibilities transferred to the Management Committee. Reinstatement of Council would be by members at a General Meeting. This would require approval as a resolution at the AGM, rather than a constitutional change.

Change in Area Eligibility – approved to bring in line with BGB eligibility regulations (in addition to being a member of the Area).

6. **Women's Co-ordinator Report**

Mia reported on the Women's initiative put in place in order to avoid having last minute scratch pairs entering the Lady Milne trials. This will encourage women's pairs to form in advance and to practice. As a result:

- There are now 17 pairs signed up, and each pair has been assigned a senior Welsh player as a mentor.
- Every month there will be a RealBridge IMP Pairs session – the mentors will be able to watch and discuss the boards with their pair at the end. Mentors are also available to discuss other things such as systems, difficult boards etc at other times. There are also women who want to play in the monthly RealBridge event but don't want a mentor. These players are also welcome.
- There is a monthly EBL training session where Wales can enter up to three teams (on RealBridge) and play against other teams throughout Europe. These sessions consist of 15 boards, then a top player from Europe goes through the boards with all the players at the end. This has already been running successfully over the last year.
- There are plans to set up a Women's bridge weekend. Feedback from the women players about this has been very positive.

Please could the clubs encourage their women players to take part. They should contact Mia Deschepper if they are interested.

Funding from the WBU budget was requested for the monthly Realbridge sessions – estimated cost is around £8 per month. Approved – to be reviewed in due course. This should be more than covered over the year by more women entering WBU events.

7. Treasurers Report

A report was circulated in advance.

As at 13.22 on 12 March 2024 bank balance were:

WBU	£6,169.98
StepBridge	£4,996.03
Building Soc	£66,462.44

Payments due before end of financial year:

- Lady Milne Trial – venue- still awaiting invoice – estimated at £306.80.
- Teltscher Trial – venue - still awaiting invoice - estimated at £306.80.
- Outstanding payments due from Camrose 2 weekend – Only 2 payments received so far. Total due £850.00.

At present international competitions are running at a loss of £11, 466.18 (Does not include payments/receipts due as above). Note this includes Wales hosting both the Teltscher and the Camrose in one calendar year, although they were in two competition years. We also funded the two junior teams to play in Belfast in the Junior Camrose.

National Teams – venue and director invoices not received yet - estimated at £150.00 each.

At present WBU (national) events are running at a profit of £2,604.37. (Does not include payments which may need to be made as above). Most of this profit is from Premier League and Welsh and Cambria cups.

If these invoices are not received and paid before Thursday 28 March, they will be in next year's accounts, so we will start next year with losses before any events played. It should be noted that if

payments are made over the weekend, they do not appear on the bank statement until the following Monday. If that Monday is in the next month, it does not get registered until the following month. Easter this year is last weekend of March – Good Friday 29 March – Easter Monday 1 April, so any payments made on these dates will be in next year's accounts as wont register in Bank until Tuesday 2 April.

StepBridge did not upload any MPs in February 2024 so February and March payment will not be received until April 2024.

Celtic Sims in December 2023 gave us a profit of £286.00.

If all above are paid/received, we are looking at the bank account closing the year at £6106. If any membership payments are received before end of month they will obviously add to the above figure.

8. NTO Report

The National Pairs had to be cancelled last weekend – only three entries were made. The National Teams had six entries but one withdrew due to illness. Five teams was not a good number but it turned out to be a great event and has been timetabled for next year.

Feedback was that mostly people had forgotten to enter. Simon is hopeful that we will do better next year with enough warning.

The next event is the National Mixed Pairs at the end of April. Please could anyone entering make their entry ASAP as some players do not enter until they know that enough pairs have already entered to make sure that it goes ahead.

Three emails have already been sent out. Another email is to be sent out and clubs asked to recirculate them. Mia offered to do a poster as these tend to be more effective.

The Premier League will be at Gwent. Gwent have confirmed the venue. Ceri will email the Webmaster with details.

9. Newsletter

Suggested that the Juniors could produce something on why they enjoy playing bridge so much. (The Juniors are playing in club sessions and all have mentors).

10. Area Reports

West Report

Porthcawl has been confirmed and brochures have been printed. Poster to be sent to Paul Lamford for the Newsletter. Need as much support as possible. Need to try and rent out 45 rooms on Friday and Saturday. Halliwell Centre deposit has been paid. Teams need to be organised

Action SJ

10 teams have entered the Area event on the weekend.

Pembroke Club has disaffiliated. Members will be encouraged by the Club to become direct members. Steve has offered that they can rejoin through him rather than the Website.

It was noted that players will not be eligible for the Perry and Spickett if they are not WBU members.

North Report

Llandudno Congress will be 2-3 August at Craig y Don Community Centre. The Laszlow Pairs will be held on 28 April and a 1-day Swiss Pairs event will be held in September to generate money to cover the costs of the congress.

East

Mia has only just taken over the chairmanship and there has been no meeting as yet. Sophie will continue to pursue crowdfunding options to support the juniors.

Mid

Mid Wales have a pairs event this weekend with five tables entered so far.

11. Lisvane

The letter from Lisvane Bridge Club who are discussing disaffiliating was discussed and a response reviewed by the committee. Noted that players can enter Club events and Area events. This is one of the main benefits, along with a structured ranking and Masterpoints system. Gilly noted that more should be done with Masterpoints e.g. congratulate people on their promotion etc. Our Masterpoints system does not easily facilitate this though. They have been contacted to attend Area meetings but they don't come. Alongside the letter – it is intended to send the 'What Has WBU Ever Done for Us' which is also on the website.

12. AOB

It was also noted that The Internationals are a drain on resources Maybe each area should contribute £500 each towards the cost. To be discussed at a future date.

13. Date of Next Meeting

24th April 2024 at 10am by Zoom.