



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
THE ENGLISH BRIDGE UNION
HELD AT KETTERING PARK HOTEL, KETTERING
ON WEDNESDAY 11TH MAY 2005**

Present:	Denis Robson	(DR)	Chairman
	Philip G Mason	(PM)	Vice Chairman
	Sally Bugden	(SB)	
	John Carter	(JC)	
	Chris Dixon	(CD)	
	David R Harris	(DH)	(up to 12.30pm)
	Jeff K Morris	(JM)	
	Alan Nelson	(AN)	
	John D Neville	(JN)	
	Terry Collier	(TC)	General Manager
	Clare Farthing	(CF)	Minute Taker

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Tom Bradley (Treasurer).

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 16th March 2005

2.1 Accuracy (5)

It was noted that Hammonds had given advice, rather than a recommendation in regard to the length of lease.

2.2 Matters Arising

2.2.1 Master Points Discussion Paper and Ranking Proposal (2.2.1)

The Vice Chairman advised that this matter is on the agenda of the next Tournament Committee meeting. Therefore an update will be provided at the July Board meeting.

Ranking Proposal

The General Manager advised that Max Bavin is currently testing a Swedish scoring system, which offered a facility for ranking/handicaps. The Chairman agreed to look into this further and discuss with Chris Dixon.

The minutes were **approved**.

2.2.2 Membership Development (2.2.3)

Lancashire Membership Scheme

The Chairman has corresponded with Lancashire with regard to levies. Lancashire collects 80p per member from each of their affiliated clubs instead of charging a levy on EBU membership. They advised that they do not allow non-members of the EBU to play in any County event for which EBU membership is an entry requirement.

Brighton Exhibition Match

Chris Dixon advised that he had met with the potential sponsor, but unfortunately they are not in a position to offer funding at this time. The Chairman advised that we would therefore have to use the amount budgeted to invite the Netherlands team to play against our English Open Team.

Sponsorship

A Sponsorship Committee has been set up with Alan Nelson as the Chair, Sally Bugden, Chris Dixon and the General Manager as committee members.

2.2.3 Marketing Group (9)

Sally Bugden tabled a paper on the EBU's website, into which Jeremy Dhondy and Anna Gudge had input. It was agreed to discuss this at July's Board meeting.

The Board were advised that the University of Brighton will be approached to see if they are interested in undertaking some research on the educational advantages of Bridge.

3. FINANCIAL MATTERS

3.1 Treasurer's Report

The Chairman presented the Treasurer's Report, which was **noted**.

3.2 Accounts for 12 Months ended 31 March 2005

The Chairman and the Board were disappointed to note further adverse variances in some areas. The General Manager was asked to investigate this matter further and advise the Chairman of his findings.

4. NATIONAL BRIDGE CENTRE - Update

The General Manager advised that there are two options with regard to the offices;

1. Phoenix Leisure constructs the offices and we rent annually.
2. EBU construct our own free standing offices on land that can be leased from Phoenix Leisure.

The Board felt that we should await the progress of the outline planning application, (which includes the hotel, a key element from our point of view), prior to progressing matters further in regard to the offices. In the meantime there was still work to be done to ensure that the early competitions, which start with the Tollemache qualifier in November, run smoothly to the satisfaction of the players. Work could also usefully be done in the area of a draft contract of future agreement between both parties.

The General Manager confirmed that 14 events will now be held at KLV from November 2005.

It was agreed that the General Manager should investigate the provision of a Hotel Booking Service, to include transport and the provision of user packages to include 'Day Delegate' options.

5. COUNTY CHAIRMANS' CONFERENCE

The Chairman confirmed that it went very well and was pleased that those present felt it should be an annual event.

A number of Chairmen felt that four meetings of Shareholders a year were excessive both in terms of cost and what was achieved at these meetings. Following a show of hands it was agreed to raise this question at the next Shareholders' meeting. The suggestion finding most favour was two meetings a year, namely the AGM and a Conference, open to all interested parties. Such a conference would not necessarily be in London.

5.1 County Secretaries/Membership Secretaries Meetings

The Board agreed not to hold these meetings this year, and in future syndicate groups at the proposed Open Conference might accommodate the needs of County and Membership Secretaries.

6. REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

John Carter presented his paper. Accepting its recommendations, the Board agreed to discontinue honoraria and move to claim expenses instead, with immediate effect both for Officers and Committee Chairmen who would be notified accordingly in the near future.

7. ROLES OF COMMITTEES AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

It was agreed that Chris Dixon's tabled paper would be considered at the next meeting.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Under the new structure the Board is required to consider and ultimately approve the minutes of the three standing Board committees and agreed to refer any concerns, and/or suggestions back to the relevant Chairman.

Ultimate approval could not be given, of course, until the draft minutes had been approved by the individual committees.

8.1 Tournament Committee – 8th March 2005

9.1 Summer Festival (Scarborough)

It was noted that the restrictions to the number of tables on Friday, no longer applies.

9.5 It was noted that a special page for events will appear in future editions of *English Bridge*.

The minutes were **approved** by the Board.

8.2 Selection Committee – 20th April 2005

2.1 Accuracy

The Chairman advised that he had received a letter from Andrew Kambites and that he would write to Mr Kambites regarding the Selection Committee minutes. It was agreed that as the minutes were correct; the Board were unable to comment further on this matter.

A statement will be issued to all Counties relating to the recently circulated paper from Mr Kambites to County Secretaries.

2.2.8 National Youth Officer

It was noted that EBU's National Youth Officer is John Pain.

10.1 *Review of restrictions on entering more than one series.*

A letter from Jeremy Dhondy containing a complaint regarding a clash of dates between Stage III of the Open Trials and the Women's trials for the European Championships and a suggestion for a modification was considered. CD reported that the trials dates had been published on the website since July 2004 and to announce changes at this stage would disadvantage players who had already made arrangements. The Selection Committee had reconsidered the situation but had decided that it would be inappropriate to make any change to previously published arrangements. The issue of the format for trials would be considered in detail at the next meeting of the SC. This was generally welcomed by the Board.

10.2 *Conditions of Contest*

The General Manager advised that there are two important ways of reducing the Secretary's workload; the first is to reduce the length of minutes and reports, which at present take up far too much time. This was agreed and secondly, to introduce a 'Bridge Help Desk' at Aylesbury in the form of a 'Voice Mail' and 'Email' service. This will be managed by Max Bavin and will allow him to direct issues to an appropriate member of staff, rather than swamping an individual. This was also agreed.

13.2 *Commonwealth Championship 2006*

The Board was unhappy with the SC minute recording the event to be a meaningless one. The previous event in Manchester was extremely successful and the 2006 event in Melbourne should be supported, even if applications are invited with minimum funding.

15.1 *Possible Challenge Match against Scotland*

The Board do not feel that this is appropriate.

The minutes were **approved** by the Board, on the assumption that they would be approved at the Selection Committee's next meeting.

8.3 ***Laws & Ethics Committee***

26th January 2005

It was agreed that the Vice Chairman would speak with the Chairman of this committee to explore ways of reducing the workload of the Secretary.

The minutes were **approved** by the Board, on the assumption that they would be approved at the Laws & Ethics next meeting.

13th April 2005

The minutes were **approved** by the Board, on the assumption that they would be approved at the Laws & Ethics next meeting.

8.4 Editorial Board – 12th April 2005

Sally Bugden expressed some concerns over the production values of *English Bridge*, in its structure and look. A Competitor analysis is being compiled and a full report will be presented to the Board in September.

Jeff Morris raised the point of publicity for the EBU's Educational Trust and volunteered to write an article.

9. BGB MATTERS

John Neville talked about the draft minutes of the last meeting. The Camrose format was discussed and it was suggested that perhaps a 6th team could be involved from 2007. EBU needs to decide what we want to make of the competition.

The General Manager outlined the current position in regard to British teams participating in University Bridge Championships. In this regard, we need to gain the approval of the British University Sports Association (BUSA) who, at present, is finding difficulty in giving their approval due to bridge not being recognised as a sport. Negotiations in this respect continue.

10. EBL AND WBF MATTERS

In the absence of David Harris, the Chairman advised that there were no matters to raise.

Jeff Morris asked that it be noted that a message from the recent EBL Seminar was to encourage all NBO's to actively encourage Youth Development.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman advised that he now had 8 recommendations for the Disciplinary Panel; John Armstrong, Graham Jepson, Peter Stocken, John Williams, Bill Pencharz, Don Smedley, Jeff Smith and Keith Stanley. The Board approved the panel.

Seven Seas – A joint promotion is currently being planned and will result in the staging of 10 Open Bridge days with professional media support.

Senior Camrose – Bernard Teltscher is prepared to donate £3,000 a year, initially for five years. The Vice Chairman will consider how this matter might be progressed.

The General Manager advised that despite considerable effort, we have been unable to record membership renewals onto Enterprise, if payment of subscriptions does not accompany the notice. A letter has been sent to Counties advising that in future memberships will only be processed when payment is available for banking. The Board agreed with this approach.

(THESE MINUTES WILL BE APPROVED AT THE NEXT BOARD MEETING)

***The next Board meeting will be held on Tuesday 12th July 2005
at the Kettering Park Hotel, Kettering***

(All meetings commence at 12.30 p.m. unless otherwise indicated)