



**MINUTES OF THE SHAREHOLDERS MEETING
HELD AT THE ROYAL NATIONAL HOTEL, LONDON,
ON WEDNESDAY 8th MAY 2013**

Present:	Sally Bugden	Chairman
	Jeremy Dhondy	Vice Chairman & Laws & Ethics Committee Chairman
	Andrew Petrie	Treasurer
	Barry Capal	General Manager
	Jerry Cope	Board Member
	Heather Dhondy	Board Member & Selection Committee Chairman
	Darren Evetts	Board Member
	Mike Hill	Board Member
	Ron Millet	Board Member
	Malcolm Oliver	Board Member
	Ian Payn	Board Member and Tournament Committee Chairman
	Gerard Faulkner	Vice President & Norfolk Shareholder
	Margaret Curtis	Vice President & Essex Shareholder
	Gordon Rainsford	Tournaments Manager
	John Pain	Minute Taker
	Kay Carter	Reception

County	Shareholders: Present	Apologies	Proxy	County	Shareholders: Present	Apologies	Proxy
Avon				Lincolnshire		Mr P Wokes	
Bedfordshire		Mr D Gilling		London	Mrs C Duckworth	Mr J Smith	Mrs C Duckworth
Berks & Bucks	Mr T Garrett Mr A Wallen			Manchester	Mr S Travers Mr M Newman		
Cambs & Hunts				Merseyside/Cheshire	Mr P Roberts		
Channel Islands	Mrs P Panter			Middlesex	Mr P Hasenson	Mr R Hillman	Mr H Patel
Cornwall		Mr W Thomson		Norfolk	Mr R Amey Mr G Faulkner		
Cumbria				North East			
Derbyshire				Northants	Mr G Hedley		
Devon		Mr T Treeby		Notts		Mrs J Burgess	
Dorset	Mrs A Sharples	Mr R Heath	Mrs A Sharples	Oxford	Mrs B Harris Mrs S Nicholson		
Essex	Mrs M Curtis Mrs J Hartley			Somerset			
Gloucestershire				Staffs & Shrops	Mr P Hackett	Mr J Withers	
Hants & IoW	Mr R Ray Mrs L Lewis	Mrs M Gale	Mr R Ray	Suffolk	Mr M Carey		
Herefordshire		Mr C Chowney Mr R Underhill		Surrey	Mr P Bentley		
Hertfordshire	Mr B Eddleston Mr M Minting Mr R Teesdale			Sussex	Mr P Bates		
Isle of Man						Mrs J Mayall Miss J Simpson	Mr R Wheeler Mr R Wheeler
Kent	Mr M Lewis	Mr B Crack		Warwicks	Mr R Wheeler Mr J Pyner Mr C Lang		
Lancashire	Mr B Brelsford	Mrs J Wright	Mr B Brelsford	Westmorland			
Leicestershire	Mr R Northage Mr J Wilcox			Wiltshire	Mr D Latchem	Miss K Hodgson	Mr D Latchem
				Worcester	Mr D Thomas	Mr P Hammond	
				Yorkshire	Mrs L Millet	Mr P Mason Mrs J Staniforth	Mr G Jepson Mr G Jepson

The Chairman welcomed shareholders to the meeting. She first congratulated the English teams for winning all the domestic international events this year – the Camrose, the Lady Milne, the Junior Camrose and the Peggy Bayer. She wished the team to play in the Seniors Camrose good luck and hoped for a clean sweep.

She mentioned with sadness the deaths of the following members: Ken Drane (Dimmie Fleming holder and Middlesex), Winnie Ling (Dimmie Fleming holder and Oxfordshire), Denny Davies (Derbyshire county secretary and former EBU employee), Jackie Clinton (Dimmie Fleming holder and Sussex), Terry Udall (Dorset, Dimmie Fleming holder and former L&E Member) and David Davenport (Portland Club). David, as member of the Portland Club Card Committee, had been instrumental in providing a free copy of the 2007 Laws of Duplicate Bridge to all affiliated clubs.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

See page 1 for County information.

2 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF October 3rd 2012

The minutes were signed as a true record.

Matters arising:

- a) Mr Faulkner asked about the progress of claiming VAT from HMRC on competition entries. Andrew Petrie said that the Board had first approached HMRC two years ago to exempt competition entries from VAT. That approach failed, an appeal was lodged which also failed. There will be tribunal hearing before August 7th to determine the case once and for all. He paid tribute to Sarah Dunn and David Ewart who were acting pro bono for the EBU in the forthcoming tribunal.

3 TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer's Report had been sent to all of the Shareholder's in advance and the Treasurer therefore just highlighted a few issues:

1. Although the 2012/13 accounts have not yet been finalised the forecast would suggest a good year in terms of meeting the budget. The predicted deficit at £23K is some £30K better than budget. However this loss comes on top of last year's loss and in the future we should be aiming on average to have a net surplus of £20K annually.
2. The 5 year forecast indicates that the £20K average surplus will be achieved but if the Union wants to invest heavily in developing the game then increased income and reduced costs will be necessary.
3. The Brighton Summer Festival had been very disappointing and returned its first ever overall loss. Vigorous steps are being taken to reverse this decline. Not having a clash with an Olympiad in Lille should help considerably

The Treasurer then went on to cover some issues submitted by Bernard Eddleston in advance.

- (a) Event fees

The EBU makes a net surplus of only around 7% on entry fee income, so if the fees are therefore set to cover the high costs. Any surplus is ploughed back in to the development of the game.

Members should remember that entry fees are subject to VAT, therefore around 20% of their money goes straight to the taxman. The EBU is going to a VAT tribunal in September to challenge this levy.

(b) There are often too many TD's and should their fees go up each year?

A substantial amount of work has been carried out by the Chief Tournament Director, Gordon Rainsford, and the TD Development Group to reduce TD costs. As a proportion of entry fee income TD costs have reduced by 17% in the last few years

(c) The target improvement for the Competitions business looks very stretching.

The target is stretching but we believe we should set stretching but achievable targets. The improvement comes about as follows:

Increased entry fee income
Reduced venue fee hire
Reduced TD fees

Increased entries are likely due to a clash free Brighton Congress, an enhanced Brighton Lite congress, new venues and new formats for the Autumn Congress and Swiss Teams Congress

Peter Hasenson then asked a series of questions about the 2013/14 budget, suggesting that overall costs were too high. The Treasurer pointed out that in historical terms the EBU had probably never been so 'lean' and significant improvements in costs and efficiency had been made.

A question was asked about the provision of *English Bridge* online, given that the ACBL bulletin was available in that format. Sally Bugden mentioned that from the June issue onwards, *English Bridge* would be available to access online through the member's area of the new website. This new feature for members would be available through the new website which would allow current and earlier editions of *English Bridge* to be available online through the members secure login. Members would be able to opt out of paper editions. It was hoped the new online edition would have a 'searchable' facility. It will be possible to have a larger number of pages and thus entertaining information for the online edition. For example, the first online edition would have the full Master Point promotions rather than the landmark list currently in the paper edition.

She praised the contribution made by Michael Clark at the Aylesbury Office for the work he had done to get the new website up and running.

It was suggested that the magazine could be sent to clubs for members to collect. Sally Bugden said that had been considered but given that many clubs did not have their own premises and also the requirement by advertisers to guarantee all members would be provided with a copy it had been rejected. She acknowledged the great cost of printing and postage for the magazine and alternative postal providers were looked at on a regular basis to find the best available deal.

With regard to the Simultaneous Pairs arrangements for the British Sims it was confirmed that the 2-year interim arrangement with the SBU and WBU where they received a fixed sum to ease through the transition phase to the EBU system would come to an end in April 2014. Both countries had indicated they wished to continue after that date.

In a discussion about attendance at national and county events, Mrs Millet asked why tournaments were failing at County Level as well as dropping off at National Level. She said that the Yorkshire Congress had added a novice session to the event and advance entries were so far at 16 tables. Sally Bugden congratulated her on the success and said that was precisely the type of topic to be addressed at the County Chairman's conference in June. Jeremy Dhondy said that marketing was one area where it was hoped to do better than in the past. Promotions for Brighton and Brighton Lite already meant there were better entries than this time last year. There was also no clash with Lille so that should also help numbers to recover. A marketing email from Gordon Rainsford had increased the number of entries in the Masters Pairs from 50 to 80 pairs which was a significant improvement on last year. However one thing had become apparent – members' emails were often not correct and this was highlighted by the large number of bounce-backs that Gordon received. The opportunity to remind members to update their email addresses will be taken within the pages of the June issue of English Bridge.

Sally Bugden made it clear that any questions for the Treasurer should be submitted in advance so that full answers can be supplied.

4 EBU Strategy Document

Sally Bugden introduced the new 5-year strategy document – Bidding for the Future 2013 – 2018 as follows:

In October 2008 I presented our first strategic plan, Bidding for the Future. I am delighted to be able to inform you that in the past five years we have achieved the majority of the aims that we set ourselves. We have become a more accessible and accommodating organisation for all levels of duplicate bridge players and we want to build on this to meet the needs of all our existing members and potential members in the years to come.

Bidding for the Future 2013 -2018 strengthens our intrinsic values:

To act always in the best interests of our membership
To take pride in delivering quality and value for money
To respect each other and celebrate diversity so that everyone can give of their best.

We have a great opportunity, in a country where the average age of the population is increasing, to embrace our demographic and encourage more people to play the game.

We have identified three strategic objectives to achieve this expansion of the game.

- To get closer to and stay in touch with our membership
- To promote the value bridge to players and potential players alike
- To harness improvements in technology to make the game more enjoyable and accessible.

We have identified 9 broad areas of activity on which to focus our energy and resources within a prudently managed financial framework and efficient organisation.

- **Governance and Charitable Status**
 - Continued development of good corporate governance to be transparent in all we do
 - Launch a charity for education by April 2014
 - Provide good communications, advice and support to all
- **Supporting Bridge and Securing the Future**
 - Generate a surplus to invest in all aspects of the game
 - Promote the benefits of playing duplicate
 - Develop and support internationals
- **Relationships with our counties and clubs**
 - Address key development areas with counties
 - In partnership with counties, grow the number of clubs we support
 - Extend our influence to attract players in non-affiliated clubs
 - Address the need for a low cost or free way for citizens with limited income to learn and play bridge
- **Education**
 - Continue to measure and develop Minibridge in schools
 - Continue to promote and develop learning to play the game to all
- **Tournaments and regulation**
 - Develop tournaments that appeal to all
 - Be the leading provider of online competitions in England
 - Ensure that our regulations are appropriate for the current game and easy to understand.
 - Provide engaging ways to ensure that new players understand the laws and regulations of bridge
- **International Teams**
 - Secure funding to develop and support the players in our international teams
 - Host one major international tournament

- Support our fellow National Bridge Organisations to help the European Bridge League and World Bridge Federation in their efforts to become more effective and transparent.
- **Technology**
- Use technology to enhance all our services including:
 - Communications
 - Tournaments
 - Accessibility
- **Our Employees**
 - Support and develop our workforce through appropriate employment packages, succession planning and accommodation.
- **Archives**
 - Collect and collate our history, making it accessible to all.
- Review, report and communicate our progress of this plan to our members and shareholders

She invited questions whilst acknowledging that delegates had only just received the document.

Mr Latchem thanked the Board for the document – it would be very helpful for forthcoming County AGMs.

It was confirmed that it would be on EBU website by the next day.

Mr Travers asked about the policy towards non-affiliated clubs and what was being done to try to get them on board or to return. Sally Bugden said that this was an area which was constantly under review and that a balance had to be struck to ensure that those clubs that contributed to the security and continuity of the game were provided with services and support whilst we encouraged those in unaffiliated clubs to come in to the fold of the national bridge organisation. Jeremy Dhondy noted that about 15 clubs had either joined or returned. It was confirmed that the new provision to allow clubs which played fewer than 26 times a year to become affiliated was now in place and at least two clubs had come in through that route. The new arrangement was welcomed by delegates.

Mr Bates asked about the provision of low cost/free tuition. Sally Bugden said that this would be considered by the new education and development charity when it is set up.

Mrs Nicholson asked for a précis of successes from the previous 5-year plan could be made available and this was supported by Mr Latchem. Sally Bugden said she had given a progress report annually in *English Bridge* but she would see what could be done to assist counties.
Note: A summary has now been made available.

5 CHARITY REGISTRATION APPLICATION PROCESS

Sally Bugden presented the Board's revised plan for the EBU Youth Education and Development Fund Charity. It was clarified that 'The advancement of amateur sport..' meant "education provision for adults', so that all ages were embraced within the charity's objectives.

Sally Bugden confirmed that the plan is to move all education activities to the new charity.

It was also confirmed that umbrella charitable status for all clubs was not part of the EBU's application for charitable status. It provides support for clubs wishing to make the application for charity status, through the model constitution available based on those clubs which has successfully made the transition. There were about six clubs which had become or were applying to have charity status and the process was now moving quite quickly – about six weeks. Clubs interested in applying should obtain information from a club which had successfully applied. The Club Liaison Officer would be able to put clubs in touch with each other.

Mrs Nicholson asked what proportion of funding would be diverted to the charity. Sally Bugden said she would provide that information at the AGM after the Board had completed its discussions on this aspect of the new charity's operations.

6 EBU Shop

Malcolm Oliver reminded delegates that the EBU Shop was there for the benefit of all members and affiliated clubs, yet about 25% of clubs don't use it for their supplies. He reminded members of the excellent service provided by Sue Humphris and Liz Goodchild and they were always open to discussions regarding prices from competitors. Although the shop doesn't provide 'loss leaders' they will try to match competitors on a like-for-like basis. He reminded delegates that all affiliated clubs receive a 12% discount on their orders.

Mrs Curtis mentioned that Essex had recently started at least two U3A bridge groups which had bought supplies from the EBU Shop but it was unlikely they would affiliate. Barry Capal said at least two of the new affiliated clubs had been from U3A groups, so perhaps they should be encouraged to join.

7 MINUTES OF BOARD MEETINGS

October 31st 2012

Mr Faulkner asked about EBL Statute 14 – Sally Bugden explained that it dealt with the organisations that can put on competitions in specific geographic locations within the EBL. The EBL had declined to be specific on the questions raised.

Jeremy Dhondy mentioned the move to archive a large amount of EBU documentation. A new scanning machine had been purchased so the move to turn over to electronic storage would start shortly.

January 16th 2013

Sally Bugden noted that the reported minute Item 10 was incorrect and would be corrected at the next meeting. The Board has discovered, thanks to Gerard Faulkner that it has misinterpreted the current situation due to the custom and practice that has occurred over the past seven years. She confirmed that Vice Presidents were entitled to attend Standing Committee meetings, however they could only claim expenses if invited to attend by the Standing Committee Chairman.

Mr Hasenson asked about sponsorship for the proposed European Champions Cup. Sally Bugden said they were working on finding a major sponsor for it. The possibility of running competitions to raise funds will be considered. It was confirmed the event would be held in London.

8 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE LAWS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

Jeremy Dhondy summarised points of note from the two meetings on January 23rd and March 27th 2013.

He said that the two meetings had been mainly to do with updating the Orange Book which had last been fully revised in 2006. There had been annual changes but it was time for a major revision to reduce the size of the book and make the content easier for members. To coincide with the changes, which would take effect on August 1st the new book would be the BLUE BOOK. This would make it clear that it was a new edition and not just another revision of the old one. At the same time, the Tangerine Book would be discontinued. The new Blue Book was likely to be about half the length of the old Orange Book. However, Jeremy confirmed that the new Blue Book would remain as an online book only. It was suggested that in addition to page numbers the Blue Book footers include a version number or date which would make amending it on an annual basis easier for members.

Some content from the new Blue Book would be removed to the White Book, but that in turn was getting a makeover so would be no longer than at present, and possibly shorter.

He highlighted the first changes to announcements since their introduction in 2006 – 2NT openings and responses would be announced using a similar style to that over a 1NT opening and also 'short minor suit openings' which would be announced as 'may be 2', 'may be 1' or 'may be 0' depending on the arrangement.

There will be very little change to alerting; no changes to the regulations relating to alerting doubles but some change to natural suit bids above 3NT on the first round of the auction. The final tidying up would be undertaken at the meeting on May 29th. He was asked to clarify what was meant by 'very light take out doubles being alerted'. He said that a take out double of an opening bid on slender values e.g. 9 HCP or fewer was unexpected and therefore needed an alert.

Jeremy said the time had come to remove Level 3. There are no EBU tournaments held at Level 3 and the number of differences between L3 and L4 was quite small. A list of suggested exclusions would be included in the Blue Book to assist clubs that still wished to use methods that fell short of L4.

Finally he advised delegates of changes to the VP scales for Teams events as promulgated by the WBF, which would take effect from August 1st. The EBU would use the whole number scales for almost all of its events. The continuous (2 decimal point) scales would be used in Trials and the Premier League. John Pyner asked about scales other than 20-0 scales (e.g. a 12-0 scale). Gordon Rainsford explained that the formula will allow for the production of such scales. Gordon and Max Bavin are finalising details of scales to be used in Swiss Teams events where there is an odd number of teams.

Mr Hasenson asked about the schedule of misdemeanours. It was currently in the White Book and also on the website. It had been devised to ensure a uniform approach by TDs.

Jeremy was asked whether the National Club Committee had approved the announcing and alerting changes. He said that the Committee had offered its views on what should be changed,

but the L&E Committee had made the final decisions. He would be reporting these changes to the National Club Committee meeting on 15th May.

9 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SELECTION COMMITTEE

Heather Dhondy summarised the meetings of November 15th 2012.

Mr Hasenson asked whether more notification of Premier League could be given to avoid late clashes with other events. Paul Hackett explained that it was not possible to provide dates as far in advance as requested (18 months) as the EBL and WBF were not organised in providing details of dates for their competitions. For example the 2014 European Champions Cup would be held in the autumn of 2014 but no firms dates yet existed. The meeting agreed that 'provisional dates' would be helpful and Heather said she would see what could be done.

Mr Faulkner asked whether the EBL had replied to the constructive comments made and was advised that they had done so and welcomed them.

10 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE

Ian Payn summarised the meetings of November 14 2012 and March 12 2013. He said that Brighton was being given a big push to attract new players without detracting from the existing format. There were already positive signs.

He spoke about the idea to introduce online tournaments which had generated a large amount of interest. Some had expressed concern about security. He said that a trial would be run liaising with Ed Scerri which would address the security issues. He said that, in any case, when introduced the online facility would only be an option if both sides agreed – face-to-face fixtures would remain.

Mr Faulkner was concerned about the suggestion of a variable number of seeds in the Gerard Faulkner Salver. Ian explained that this would always guarantee non-seeds at least two matches through the introduction of a repechage.

It was confirmed that only EBU branded holidays would be entitled to award Blue Points.

Mr Hedley asked whether it was likely to make pre-dealt hands compulsory for head-to-head matches. Ian said it was not.

It was also confirmed there were no plans to reintroduce the National Ladies Pairs. It had had its chance and numbers had declined to a point where it was no longer viable.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 3.25pm.

**Date of the Annual General Meeting is Wednesday 2nd October in the Tudor Room,
Imperial Hotel, Russell Square, London, Start 1pm**