



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
HELD ON TUESDAY 8TH JULY 2008 AT STUBBS COMMON FARM, DONCASTER.**

Present:	Peter Stocken	(Chairman)
	Sally Bugden	(Vice-Chairman)
	Michael Hill	(Hon. Treasurer)
	John Carter	
	Graham Jepson	
	Jeff Morris	
	Alan Nelson	
	Malcolm Oliver	
	Andrew Petrie	
	Martin Pool	
	Barry Capal	(General Manager)
	Sandra Claridge	(Minute Taker)

Opening the meeting, the Chairman paid tribute to John Armstrong, who was one of England's greatest players, and who had been an outstanding role model.

1 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 28TH MAY 2008

1.1 Accuracy

- *Item 1.2.3 Charitable Donations:* The first sentence to be amended to read "... money raised from licence fees from charity events run by clubs and counties during the year 2007/8."
- *Item 7:* The second sentence of paragraph 3 to be amended to read "Suggestions for the Gold Cup and Silver Plate were sent by the Laws & Ethics Committee to Bridge Great Britain." Malcolm Oliver assured the Board that these would be discussed by the BGB Core Committee.
- *Item 7.4.1.* The third sentence of paragraph 2 to be amended to read "A discussion took place on how our Youth Trust might attract donations. It was agreed that Jeff Morris would produce copy for Matt Betts for leaflets at the Brighton Summer Meeting, and advertising on an appropriate 'charitable causes' website."
- *Item 11.* The first sentence of paragraph 3 was amended to read "Jeff Morris reported on a very successful Bridge Awareness Day in York."

Subject to the above amendments, the minutes were signed as a true record.

1.2 Matters Arising

Item 1.2.2

Graham Jepson suggested that the exemption from Pay to Play should apply only to members in full-time education. It was agreed that this would be too complex to achieve, but that clubs could adopt different arrangements in this regard, if they so wished.

John Carter confirmed that the design of the Pay to Play system would need to be sufficiently flexible to cater for special categories, and this would be considered by the Project Board.

2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 11TH JUNE 2008

2.1 Accuracy

Item 3.2

Andrew Petrie's role to be amended to "Human Resources & Organisational Development".

Subject to this amendment, the minutes were signed as a true record.

2.2 Matters Arising

Item 6

The General Manager confirmed that the EBU Youth & Education Trust deed is now published on the EBU website under Official Documents.

3 FINANCIAL MATTERS

3.1 Treasurer's Report to 31st May 2008

The Treasurer said that although the net surplus at the end of May was broadly in line with expectation, both costs and income were slightly below budget, but this was likely to be only a matter of timing. No comparisons were available for the same period in 2007, and the figures to 30th June would provide a more accurate picture.

3.2 Draft Annual Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2008

The Treasurer reported that the final net surplus of £102K was a little less than forecasted.

A provision of £5K had been included for the large stock of Really Easy bridge books, and it was agreed to introduce special offers to realise their stock value, and to seek advice from the Education Strategist on bulk-ordering levels for the future. The overall

figure in the accounts for stock appeared to be high, but was realistic. Andrew Petrie stressed that the shop, which was efficiently run, should be viewed as a service to members, rather than as a commercial proposition.

John Carter queried the increased cost of Board Meetings, and it was confirmed that the figure included MDAG meetings, and would in the coming year also incorporate the Project Board and Club Committee. The increase in Legal costs was largely accounted for by advice on Charity Status. The Treasurer said that while the figures for trade creditors and debtors were high, the latter largely represented outstanding licence fees. He considered both figures to be acceptable, and the General Manager was pleased to be able to report that bad debts were almost zero.

Michael Hill reminded everyone that the draft accounts did not include the Youth Education Trust, which was independent and had to be reported separately. However, the Auditor had been asked to review these and provide the necessary sign-off.

He also reported that, now that raising subscriptions via Pay to Play had been approved, a meeting had been scheduled with the Auditor to begin the process of seeking clearance from HMRC for continuation of the existing VAT concessions when that was implemented.

The Accounts Manager had done an excellent job in producing a breakdown of expenditure on overheads, and she was commended for all she had achieved in her first full year in the job.

Andrew Petrie said that the Union as a whole should be aware of how much money was saved by the significant amount of voluntary help it received, at all levels.

The General Manager fulfilled his statutory obligations by announcing to the Board their responsibilities to the Union and the requirement for disclosure of information to the Auditors in accordance with the Companies Act 1985. The Accounts were then formally adopted, and signed.

4 COMMITTEE REPORTS

4.1 Laws & Ethics Committee Minutes of 5th June 2008

Martin Pool reported that the delegation of regulatory powers to clubs and counties under the 2007 Laws would be in force from 1st August, and the following statement was approved by the Board:

“For the avoidance of doubt, the assignment or delegation of Regulatory Powers under Law 80 of the Laws of Duplicate Bridge 2007 does not include removing the EBU’s control of its disciplinary powers under the Bye-laws which remain a matter of contract between the EBU and its player members.”

With the valuable assistance of Gerard Faulkner, progress was being made in producing a model County Constitution, and it was expected that all County Constitutions would be ratified in the not too distant future.

The Committee was currently working on a shorter and simplified version of the Orange Book, for clubs. Peter Stocken said that he had attended the meeting on 5th June and said that the new Club Committee would be grateful for this initiative. It was agreed that the fourth sentence of item 2 of the minutes should be amended to read “The Board desired to move the centre of gravity of the union’s activity to the club level.”

4.2 Tournament Committee Minutes of 29th May 2008

Alan Nelson reported on the disquiet expressed at the recent Eastbourne Seniors Congress in regard to the amalgamation of the north and south events next year, in Birmingham. In view of the reaction, Brian Crack was discussing with Max Bavin, as a priority, the implications of cancelling the Birmingham venue and continuing to run the event in Eastbourne in 2009. The Seniors Congress in Harrogate, which continued to be in serious decline, would be cancelled. Figures for the two venues were noted as follows:

		<i>Pairs</i>	<i>Teams</i>
Eastbourne:	2008	93 tables	92 tables
	2007	87 tables	87 tables
	2006	104 tables	101 tables
Harrogate:	2008	23 tables	27 tables
	2007	35 tables	35 tables
	2006	39 tables	42 tables

The General Manager asked that a decision be made as quickly as possible, which needed to be communicated to participants, and published in the Committee’s blog.

It was hoped that another event could be arranged at the excellent venue in Birmingham, but in view of the high cost of the function areas, a high level of entry must be guaranteed.

4.3 Editorial Board Minutes of 12th June 2008

Sally Bugden reported that advertising revenue had increased, with no discounting, and the matter of copyright had been clarified. There would be a 64-page bumper issue in August, which as promised, would inform the membership of the current status of future plans.

4.4 Youth Committee Draft Minutes of 25th June 2008

Sally Bugden reported that £60K, over 3 years, had now been donated to the Youth & Education Trust to undertake a project to train teachers to teach Minibridge to 8-13 year-

olds. The donor was very impressed with the proposal, and a project group was being set up for administering the scheme.

A condition of the donation was that the project could be ongoing, and it was agreed that efforts would be made to interface with the Government via the Education Secretary to seek to demonstrate that the project had educational value, benefits could be obtained by linking it into the national curriculum, and that it therefore deserved investment.

David Adelman was congratulated on his production of the proposals.

Jeff Morris said that it was vital to maintain an ongoing dialogue with Government, and in conjunction with Matt Betts he would produce a lobby list for possible attendance at key events, e.g. the Channel Trophy, and the Summer Meeting in Brighton at which two Dutch junior teams were competing.

Jeff also drew attention to a new organisation entitled BUCS (British University & College Sports) to whom application must be made in future for permission to run junior events such as the Portland Bowl. It was agreed that the Union would register with BUCS. Andrew Petrie pointed out that there was a plethora of new events, and the Union needed to adopt a strategy for determining which would be supported.

Michael Hill confirmed that the Youth Committee budget and actual expenditure would be identified separately in future management accounts. He had also arranged for the Committee's Chairman to receive detailed reports of the actual expenditure on a monthly basis for control purposes.

5 WBF & EBL MATTERS

The Chairman reported that he and the Vice-Chairman had visited the European Championships in Pau for the purpose of attending the General Assembly Meeting of the EBL. They were extremely perturbed that despite an assurance that papers for the meeting would be available well in advance, half the countries present did not receive them until the day of the meeting. They were even more concerned that the agenda contained a substantive motion on the indexing of subscriptions. At the meeting, Peter suggested that there should be a postal vote in four months' time to give countries an opportunity to discuss such a fundamental change with their boards of management. This was not approved, and, despite England and Denmark voting against the proposals and a number of other countries choosing to abstain, they were adopted. The financial implications for the Union for the future had not yet been determined, but would not be beneficial, particularly if the current unfavourable exchange value of sterling and the Euro continued.

Alan Nelson said that England's dissatisfaction at the way in which the matter was handled, and the inefficient administration, should be made known. It was agreed that the issues and the options available would be debated in full at a future meeting.

Michael Hill agreed to analyse the EBL accounts and prepare a tranche of questions that would be put to the EBL Executive.

The Chairman informed the Board that the Vice-Chairman had gone to Pau at her own expense.

Next meeting:

Thursday 18th September 2008 at 12.30 pm
40 Bernard Street, London