



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
HELD AT THE IMPERIAL HOTEL, LONDON, ON THURSDAY
5th MARCH 2009.**

Statement from the Chairman:

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank the team headed by Richard Fleet, supported by David Harris and Steven Barnfield, for the enquiry in to the Premier League in November 2008. Their excellent work had helped the Selection Committee, and thus the Board, in ensuring that the Premier League would operate in a more effective way in future.

Due to an oversight, the above statement had been omitted from the 15th January 2009 Board meeting.

Present:

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

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 15th JANUARY 2009

2.1 Accuracy

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

2.2 Matters Arising

2.2.1 National Grading Scheme

John Carter reported back from the working party meeting which had been held on Monday 2nd March. A Q&A document had been started and was progressing well. The business plan frame had been developed. The NGS would also need an in-house help-desk. John Carter requested that the effects on EBU congresses and other EBU activities be discussed; it was agreed that this should be deferred to the Tournament Committee and the Business Plan Team with John Carter providing the details.

2.2.2 One Day Joint Ventures

After much discussion the Board agreed that ODJV should continue as they were at present. This was put to the vote and was carried, 10 in favour with 2 abstentions. The Board noted that it would be difficult for HQ to go back to the old system, due to staff reduction in the Tournament Department. Alan Nelson was requested by the Chairman to speak on behalf of the Board on this subject at the March Shareholders meeting.

2.3 Review of action list

The Chairman said that all items on the action list had been completed and were reported in these minutes.

3 FINANCIAL MATTERS

3.1 Treasurer's Report

The Board approved the more detailed report the Treasurer proposed for the Shareholders' meeting, including the forecast outcome for the year and the new revised allocation of overheads.

3.2 Forecast 2008-09

The Treasurer informed the Board that, since the report and re-forecast they had seen earlier, some overhead costs (for temporary staff) had been moved to the Internationals cost centre.

3.3 Budget 2009-10

The Treasurer explained key aspects of the budget. In particular, he reported that, when the junior international events were moved under the control of the Youth Committee for the first time (in the current year), not all the associated salary and overhead costs had been transferred. This had been corrected for 2009-10 and accounted for over £12k of the apparent increase in costs, whilst the timing of junior international events accounted for a further £13k. Thus the requested increase in discretionary expenditure was about £9k.

The Board were concerned that the Junior Teach-In was running at a higher loss than in previous years and asked that John Pain review the matter.

Malcolm Oliver raised the possibility (for 2010-11) of bulk mailing of *English Bridge* via clubs to reduce postage. The Chairman informed him that it had already been investigated and those who had undertaken a similar task for county newsletters had reported that many members did not pick these up. Advertising and other promotional activities were dependent on the magazine reaching the readership and thus the decision for direct mailing had been taken. From April 2010 all members would receive the subsequent two issues of *English Bridge*. As this period covered 16 weeks and the majority of our members played once a week, the Universal Membership Project Board felt confident that the majority of members would fulfil the necessary 12 plays in an affiliated club and would therefore qualify to receive all 6 copies of the magazine. However, the situation would be reviewed again once universal membership had been fully established.

The Chairman requested that the Treasurer add £6,000 to the education budget for training extra teachers who would be able to provide the extra teaching services that we hoped to offer to our affiliated clubs. At present we did not have enough teachers to fulfil the projected increase in teacher applicants.

The Chairman felt the Board should consider the future of all ‘friendly internationals’ including the Corn Cairdis. In these straitened times, it did not seem appropriate that an Officials team for these weekend events should be funded by the EBU, nor that our limited resources should be used in the considerable effort required to organise them. Peter Stocken, who had agreed to organise the arrangements for this April’s Corn Cairdis in Ireland, said the original purpose had been to bring the CBAI and the EBU closer together so that we could both learn from each other’s organisations; the events were also intended to pave the way for Ireland’s re-entry into the Camrose. The latter had been achieved and, as for the former, we had now such excellent relations with the CBAI that the events could no longer be justified on that score. He felt Ireland probably had similar views on the subject and he would discuss the future of the Corn Cairdis with the Irish officials in April.

The international budget as presented was accepted. The Board noted that the Selection Committee had worked very hard on trying to fulfil the recommendations in the report that the Board had asked them to consider at their November meeting. However, as there were no additional funds available at the moment, some developments were on hold.

The Board approved the 2009-10 budgets.

The Treasurer had spoken to Tony Parks, the EBU Auditor, regarding his draft guidance notes on VAT registration for bridge clubs. He felt that more details were needed and was going to work with Tony Parks to expand the draft.

4 BUSINESS PLANNING TEAM

4.1 Business Planning Process

The Five Year Plan is on target to have all input for a first draft available by the end of March 2009. We already had data in from the competition department and the bridge shop.

4.2 BUMP

4.2.1 – Pay to Play Regulations (Draft)

The Vice-Chairman agreed to make the minor changes recommended by the Board.

4.2.2 – The Club Affiliation Agreement - formerly the Club Contract (Draft)

The affiliation agreement would be evergreen so that any variables in the document would be in a separate appendix. The County fees would be published with explanatory notes and the status quo should be kept with regards to which county a club affiliates.

The Board agreed to an EBU Pay to Play subscription of 0.29p for 2010-11.

The subscription for direct EBU membership needed to be decided. BUMP would review this, which would be discussed at next Board meeting.

4.3 Bye Law Change update

Martin Pool and Barry Capal were continuing to work on the updates, and asked for any discussion to be deferred to the May Board meeting.

4.4 Education Strategy

John Pain was currently re-writing text supplied by Fred Gitelman to produce an Acol version of the ACBL learning program for the EBU website, due to be ready in the summer.

Rob Lawy had been slightly delayed in delivering his education review. However the Chairman was sure it would be available for discussion at the next Board meeting.

5 NEW COMPETITIONS IN THE AGE OF PAY TO PLAY AND STAFFING NEEDS

This item was to be deferred to May Board meeting.

6 GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) had new requirements coming in to force from 1st April 2009. John Pain would investigate.

The General Manager raised concerns over members not rejoining this year but waiting until Pay to Play comes in next April. This would be brought up at next Tournament Committee meeting.

The General Manager, Chairman and Jeff Morris had met the CCPR representative Sally Barker at the Aylesbury offices. The CCPR were very excited about the re-launch of the Bingolotto scheme.

7 CHAIRMAN'S CONFERENCE

Alan Nelson reported that he was very happy that the counties had taken responsibility for addressing the way in which they operated as necessitated by the advent of Pay to Play. Thus, he felt, that a County Chairman's conference would be much more useful if it took place once Pay to Play had been implemented.

8 CONSTITUTIONS

Martin Pool asked the Board to accept the amended Gloucestershire and Yorkshire constitutions and these were approved nem con. The Company Secretary would confirm in writing to the two counties.

9 REPORTS ON MEETING

9.1 Law & Ethics Committee – 12th February 2009

The Board had no questions on the minutes. The Chairman thanked the L&E committee for their willingness to assist with making the regulation and the laws more accessible and thus more easily understood.

9.2 Selection Committee – 8th January 2009

The Terms of Reference of the Selection Committee were agreed by the Board.

The EBU Chairman and Vice-Chairman had met the Selection Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman and thanked them for the hard work the Selection Committee had put in to their budget; see item 3.3 above.

The EBU Chairman and Vice-Chairman suggested that the Selection Committee consider fund-raising initiatives to boost their budget, for example by the setting up of a Supporters Club.

Alan Nelson said he would like to raise the idea of a Chef de Mission again, in time for the next budget.

9.3 Club Committee – 19th January 2009

Graham Jepson reported to the Board that the members of the Club Committee, whilst aware that it was only an interim Committee, would like to stay on until the start of Pay to Play. The Board agreed and asked Graham to convey its thanks to the representatives, agreeing with Graham that they were a great team and very hard working.

The Club Committee reported that clubs were not interested in having regional meetings but they would like a calendar countdown to Universal Membership and Pay to Play on the front page of the website. The Club Committee members had been encouraging clubs to try Pay to Play rather than simply opting out.

9.4 Editorial Board – 10th February 2009

The February issue of *English Bridge* was reduced to 56 pages and a close eye is being kept on advertising income.

10 BGB MATTERS

Malcolm Oliver would be representing the EBU Chairman at the Camrose this weekend.

BGB Simultaneous Pairs currently allowed all bridge clubs to participate; the Board agreed that should continue but suggested that the removal of Green Points should be considered. This would be discussed at the next Tournament Committee Meeting.

11 EBL AND WBF MATTERS

The Treasurer and General Manager went to the biennial seminar meeting held in Rome in February. Michael Hill reported that the EBL would like to raise their reserves to 750,000 euro, which they would do via competitions. After a long conversation with the EBL Treasurer, Michael Hill felt that the EBL accounts were reasonably sound but he would continue to ask questions about the level of reserves needed and the proposed uses of them.

The Chairman reported that she had not received a reply from Gianarrigo Rona, President of the EBL, regarding subscription charges from the EBL as well as some of their activities.

The Treasurer informed the Board that over the last four years we had in fact sent incorrect membership figures to the WBF & EBL. We had included BFA students in full membership. The WBF had accepted our explanation and whilst they could not refund us for the last four years they had accepted our membership figures for the forthcoming year. We are also querying the 20% increase in the dues, which they said were largely due to the downfall of the Euro against the dollar for countries whose currencies had strengthened against the dollar. As our currency was sterling and had

weakened against the dollar, we had requested a 20% discount on the nominal rate, and we were still in discussion on this.

Jeff Morris asked what the EBL were doing regarding youth matters since he could find nothing in particular on their website.

12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Board discussed the email from Alex Wilkinson regarding the EBU Terms and Conditions of Juniors. It was proposed by Malcolm Oliver and seconded by Alan Nelson that “to qualify they must be aged under 22 or be first-degree students under the age of 25” this was carried, 11 for and 1 against.

The Chairman wished to record her thanks to Baroness Henig of Lancaster who had worked tirelessly on our behalf to set up the All Party Parliamentary Group for Bridge, the first meeting of which was to be held on 9th March 2009. A match between the EBU office and Parliament was being arranged for June.

An extra Board Meeting would be held on the 19th August 2009, at the Brighton Summer Congress.

Jeff Morris would be talking to the CCPR regarding drainage charges being levied at bridge clubs.

The timing of the issue and pricing of Licences was to be reviewed by Dawn Mertens, Max Bavin and Barry Capal.

The Board would be inviting Clive Owen to attend one of the days of the July Board meeting, being held in Yorkshire, to review youth matters.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING
Monday 11th May 2009 at 12.30 pm.
CCPR, Caxton Street, London.