



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EBU SELECTION COMMITTEE
HELD AT AYLESBURY OFFICES ON WEDNESDAY 6TH JULY 2005**

Present:	Richard Fleet	Chairman
	Roger Amey	
	Raymond Brock	(from item 2)
	Pat Davies	(for the latter part of the meeting)
	Chris Dixon	Committee Chairman (for the latter part of the meeting)
	Gerard Faulkner	
	Denis Robson	EBU Chairman
	Mel Starkings	Appointed member (for items 2-4)
	Tony Priday	Vice-President
	Nick Doe	Secretary

Mr Dixon (and Miss Davies) being delayed, Mr Fleet as Committee Vice-Chairman took the chair. Mr Dixon arrived at the start of item 6, and invited Mr Fleet to remain in the chair for rest of the meeting. Part of items 1 and 4 was deferred until after the arrival of Mr Dixon and Miss Davies.

1. Women's Trials 2005/06

[This item had been placed first on the agenda to be discussed prior to the arrival of Mr Brock, pursuant to the decision minuted at item 7 of the previous meeting. A discussion took place at the start of the meeting, but was adjourned in order to allow Mr Dixon and Miss Davies to participate. The discussion was resumed at the end of the meeting, after the departure of Mr Brock.]

The Committee noted that seventeen of the leading women players had signed a letter expressing their intention not to enter the Women's European Championship Trial if the dates were not changed to eliminate the clash with Stage III of the Open Trials. The effect of the clash was to prevent players seeking to represent England in both the Camrose Trophy and the Women's series of the 2006 European Championships.

Following a discussion at some length, Mr Fleet proposed that if the letter was withdrawn the Committee would undertake to explore whether it was possible to avoid the clash without detriment to other women players. The proposal was seconded by Mr Faulkner and carried by 5 votes to 1.

Mr Doe was asked to contact both the players who had signed the letter and a number of specified players who had not.

2. Apologies for Absence	Paul Bowyer	Appointed member
	Philip Mason	EBU Vice-Chairman

The Committee wished to place on record its great sadness at the recent death of Tom Bradley, and to offer his family its condolences. Whilst he had only been an elected member of the Committee for a few months, he had been closely involved in selection matters in BBL days and in junior matters since then, and his contribution had been enormous.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting (16th November 2004)

3.1 Accuracy

It was agreed that “all mobile phones should be switched off” was a more accurate wording than “it was preferable for all mobile phones to be switched off” in the last paragraph of item 2.1. Subject to this alteration, the minutes were agreed to be a true record and signed by Mr Fleet as Chairman of the meeting.

3.2 Matters arising

3.2.1 Team preparation – possible invitation to the Lederer for Juniors (item 2.2.2)

Mr Doe reported that he had spoken to Mr Cochemé, the principal organiser of the Lederer, who did not envisage any departure from the present policy that an invitation was only likely to be extended to a junior team which had won a championship. It was noted that the timing of the event is not particularly convenient in terms of preparation for junior teams.

3.2.2 National Youth Officer (item 2.2.8)

The Committee noted the Board’s decision that to the extent that it is necessary to designate a person to hold that title, John Pain is the appropriate person.

3.2.3 Seniors events (item 4.4.4)

Mr Doe reported that the timetable of the 2005/06 Gerard Faulkner Salver was not particularly convenient for its use for selection for the 2006 European Championships, but the difficulty had been overcome by deciding to hold a separate play-off between such of the quarter-finalists as were eligible for and interested in selection for the European. In future years the problem would not arise, as the 2006/07 competition could be used as a basis for selection for the 2008 European, which would leave plenty of time.

The Committee noted that a criticism had apparently been voiced of the use for selection purposes of a competition which was not seeded. The Committee felt that it would be preferable for the competition to be seeded, but recognised that this was unlikely to be considered a practical proposition in the light of the current size of the competition. The Committee hoped that the Tournament Committee would see its way to seeding the competition if the number of entries increased sufficiently to make it practicable to do so.

3.2.4 Future trials – venues (item 10.3)

The Committee noted that the Tournament Committee had scheduled a substantial number of events at the Kettering Conference Centre in 2005/06. It thought that it was appropriate to gauge the success of this move before making a final decision about the venue for trials in 2006/07.

The Committee noted that Mr Bavin had had to depart from the norm of holding round robin trials in Solihull, by holding the first weekend of the 2005/06 Lady Milne Trials in London due to the unavailability of the West Midlands Bridge Club.

Action Points (other than those featuring elsewhere on the agenda)

3.2.5 Letter to Mr Kambites (item 2.1)

The Committee noted that Mr Dixon had written to Mr Kambites, and received what he had described as a relatively conciliatory response.

3.2.6 Future arrangements for Girls Squad (item 5.2)

The Committee noted these were under ongoing consideration by Aylesbury management.

3.2.7 Publicity in English Bridge (item 5.2)

Mr Starkings reported that he was very happy to publicise the arrangements for junior trials in the magazine.

3.2.8 Laundry allowances (item 6)

The Committee noted that Mr Bavin was aware of the need to resolve this issue.

3.2.9 Conditions of Contest (item 10.2)

The Committee noted that the Conditions for the Open Trials had been published shortly after the previous meeting. Mr Faulkner queried whether copies should not have been circulated to Committee members with the papers for the present meeting. Mr Fleet suggested that Committee members who wished to see the detail were probably happy to look them up on the website or ask Aylesbury for a copy, and there was general agreement that this was satisfactory.

3.2.10 Feedback on new Camrose format (item 11.2)

Mr Doe reported that Mr Neville was aware of the Committee's views, but did not anticipate any significant changes to the format for next season.

Other matters

3.2.11 Conflicts of interest – close relatives (item 7)

Mr Faulkner asked the Committee to consider whether it wished to make NPC reports available as a matter of course to all team members, as otherwise there was a danger of the matter, which had been raised but not decided at the last meeting, being overlooked. The Committee did not think that its interests would best be served by putting captains in the position where they might feel inhibited from expressing opinions which the Committee might find useful, because they knew they would be seen by the players. The Committee therefore decided to maintain the status quo, namely that NPC reports are confidential.

3.2.12 Possible Challenge match against Scotland (item 15.1)

The Committee noted that the Board had not considered this a good idea.

4. Junior Events

4.1 European Youth Championships, Riccione 2005

Mr Dixon reported that a possible problem had arisen with the participation of one of the selected players, but that he was now satisfied of the readiness of the player concerned to take his place in the team. Various training and preparation activities had been put in place, along the lines of those undertaken last year. This had included participation – very successfully – in an event in Croatia. Mr Dixon considered the team to be well-prepared and very keen.

Mr Starkings reported that the under-20 team appeared to be in good shape despite the relative inexperience of some of the players and some difficulties with fitting preparation round examination commitments. A practice match, with screens, had taken place between the under-20 team and the girls team.

The Committee wished all three teams well for the Championships.

4.2 World Youth Championships, Sydney 2005

The Committee noted that the anticipated invitation had been received some weeks ago, and duly accepted. Unfortunately, the appointed NPC, Alan Mould, had had to decline the invitation due to work commitments. Availabilities to replace him had been sought from members of the panel, and availabilities for the position of coach from panel members and a number of others. Committee members had then circulated for a decision, which had led to the appointment of the following officials:-

NPC – Paul Hackett

Coach – Paul Bowyer

The Committee noted that the practical arrangements were in hand.

4.3 Trials and squad activities – future arrangements

Mr Starkings reported that under-20 trials had been organised within a squad weekend in May, and that he had been pleased that the numbers taking part had been well up on the numbers entering the trials in their traditional form the previous year. Further trials were planned in September, for both age groups, and there was a possibility of using two venues.

Mr Starkings drew the Committee's attention to the large proportion of his budget which was currently devoted to meeting players' travelling expenses. He proposed a new policy of making contributions only rather than meeting the full expenses, although there would be scope for flexibility in case of financial need. The Committee was happy to endorse the proposal.

5. Bermuda Bowl and Venice Cup, Estoril 2005

5.1 Practice matches at Brighton

The Committee noted that the Dutch had accepted invitations to send Open and Women's teams to play in practice matches at Brighton against their English counterparts. All the necessary arrangements (including for internet vugraph) were in hand, although in the event the hoped-for sponsorship had not materialised. All three pairs from each of the England teams would be involved.

5.2 Other Bermuda Bowl preparation

Mr Brock reported that all three pairs were well in practice, and the Committee congratulated David Gold and Tom Townsend on winning the bronze medal in the recent European Open Pairs. There were plans for the team to play in a new event sponsored by the Young Chelsea Bridge Club, for which a strong field was expected.

5.3 Other Venice Cup preparation

The Committee noted that following the withdrawal of Israel, an invitation to contest the Venice Cup had been received and accepted. There was nothing particular to note by way of preparation apart from the practice match already considered.

5.4 Practical and financial issues

All necessary arrangements were noted to be in hand.

6. Open Trials 2005/06

6.1 Entries

The Committee noted that fourteen teams had entered by the closing date, and one had entered late.

6.2 Cancellation of Stage I

The Committee noted that – with the approval of Committee members who had been circulated about the matter – it had already been announced that Stage I of the trials was to be cancelled in view of the number of entries. All but three of the teams were eligible for direct entry to Stage II on the basis of their Gold point qualifications. The Committee agreed that the three teams who had entered in time but did not have the requisite Gold point qualifications should nevertheless be invited to contest Stage II.

6.3 Exemptions to Stage III

The Committee noted that two teams included players who were included in the team to be sent to an invitation event overseas (see item 8.2), so there was no practical alternative to exempting those teams to Stage III. The Committee exempted the following teams to Stage III:-

ALLFREY	Alexander Allfrey and Andrew McIntosh, David Bakhshi and Andrew Robson
DE BOTTON (NPC)	Jason Hackett and Justin Hackett, Artur Malinowski and Nick Sandqvist
SIMPSON	David Gold and Tom Townsend, David Price and Colin Simpson

Five teams would qualify from Stage II so that Stage III comprised eight teams. As there would otherwise be an odd number of teams in Stage II, the team which had entered late would be invited to play in Stage II, which would therefore comprise the following teams:-

BELL	Mike Bell and Greg Moss, Andrew Murphy and Tom Slater
BOWDERY	Richard Bowdery and Waseem Naqvi, Jerry Harouni and Ray Robinson
BYRNE	Ollie Burgess and Andrew Woodcock, Michael Byrne and Alex Morris
DHONDY	Keith Bennett and Jeremy Dhondy, Rob Cliffe and Heather Dhondy
FORRESTER	Tony Forrester and Jack Mizel, Gary Hyett and Alan Mould
GRAHAM	Philip Andrews and Michael Graham, Jon de Souza and Hugo Steckelmacher
GREEN	Ben Green and Duncan Happer, Peter Heatherington and Glyn Preece
HACKETT	John Armstrong and John Holland, Paul Hackett and Tony Waterlow
HINDEN	Jeffrey Allerton and Frances Hinden, Jon Cooke and Graham Osborne
MONACHAN	David Burn and Brian Callaghan, Ian Monachan and Victor Silverstone
ROSEN	Gus Calderwood and Dick Shek, Martin Jones and Neil Rosen
WOLFARTH	Espen Erichsen and Brian Senior, Nevena Senior and Geoffrey Wolfarth

7. Format of future trials

The Committee noted that the disappointing England performance in the 2005 Camrose had followed a set of trials over just two weekends. On the previous occasion on which trials had been held over only two weekends, a similarly disappointing Camrose season had followed. However, the Committee did not think that holding longer trials could be justified in seasons in which the Camrose Trophy, over just two weekends, was the only event at which the trials were targeted.

The Committee therefore decided to dispense with trials for the 2007 Camrose, on the assumption that the present two-weekend format for the Camrose was to remain in place. Instead, pairs would be invited to apply to the Committee to be considered for selection for the Camrose. They would be requested to provide details of recent domestic and international bridge achievements.

The Committee was minded to run extensive Open trials for 2008 (when there will be a European Championship and a World Teams Olympiad), and player input would be sought prior to a discussion at a later date.

[Mr Brock withdrew for consideration of the format of Women's trials].

The Committee decided that it was helpful to have Women's trials notwithstanding the fact that the Lady Milne Trophy was the only target event, and trials would be held along the same lines as in 2004 and 2005 (i.e. a Butler-scored pairs trial over two weekends).

8. Friendly internationals and invitations

8.1 Amsterdam International Tournament

The Committee noted a report from Mr Dixon, from which it was apparent that the size of the event had been very disappointing this year. It noted Mr Dixon's view that it is necessary for there to be a non-playing official to get the full benefit of taking up such invitations.

8.2 Invitation from Indonesia

The Committee noted that a well-funded invitation had been received to send a representative Open team to what appeared likely to be a strong event in Indonesia in September, which was designed as a warm-up event for the Bermuda Bowl. Two of the three pairs comprising the England Bermuda Bowl team were available and keen to go. As the deadline for acceptance had been prior to the meeting, Mr Dixon, as Chairman, had consulted other members of the Committee and then arranged for the invitation to be accepted on the basis that the England team would comprise:-

David Gold and Tom Townsend
Jason Hackett and Justin Hackett

[Secretary's note – following the meeting one of the pairs withdrew. Mr Dixon, having consulted Mr Fleet as Vice-Chairman, took the view that it was not appropriate to send pairs from outside the Bermuda Bowl team to a pre-Bermuda Bowl preparation event, and the acceptance of the invitation has therefore been withdrawn with regret.]

8.3 European Champions Cup

The Committee noted that an invitation was expected imminently, and that Mr Dixon had sought to ascertain from the EBL whether it was a problem that the national teams champions of England are determined by a competition which is neither club-based nor in league format. Assuming that a satisfactory response was received on that point, the only possible decision was to send the winners of Crockfords Cup (Alexander Allfrey and Andrew McIntosh, David Bakhshi and Andrew Robson).

[Secretary's note – although a formal response has not yet been received from the EBL, it is understood that the matter was considered at meetings at the recent European Open Championships, and the upshot is that the nature of the qualifying competition is not a bar provided that it produces genuine national champions. Crockfords clearly qualifies on this basis.]

8.4 Commonwealth Bridge Championship 2006

The Committee noted that two applications had so far been received, despite the fact that it had not been possible to advertise the precise financial basis on which the team would be sent. It appeared, however, that to limit the EBU funding to the entry fee and the basic accommodation package provided by the organisers, would be consistent with the extent of funding which the Board wished to provide. The applications would be considered following the closing date towards the end of August.

9. Lady Milne Trophy 2005

The Committee noted Mr Williams' report with thanks.

10. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 15th November at 1 pm in London (40 Bernard Street if available).

11. Any other business

11.1 Terms of reference

Mr Dixon informed the Committee that he had made some proposals to the Board which would involve the following changes to the composition and terms of reference of the Standing Committees:-

- reduction of the number of voting members from 7 to 5;
- elimination of ex-officio members as voting members;
- discontinuance of attendance rights for Vice-Presidents and Board members;
- discontinuance of rolling elections;
- for the Selection Committee, amendments to the terms of reference to allow Committee members to play in an event used as a trial for international Seniors events.

Mr Faulkner thought that such proposals were undesirable for a number of reasons.

11.2 End of Committee year

Mr Doe was requested to ascertain which Committee members' terms of office expire at the forthcoming AGM.

[Secretary's note – three Committee members' terms expire in October 2005: Messrs Dixon and Fleet (elected for three years in 2002), and Mr Amey (elected for two years in 2003); in addition there is a vacancy for the two year unexpired portion of Mr Bradley's term of office.]

Appendix – Action Points

Item	Action	Responsible
1	Women's Trials – contact with players etc.	Nick Doe initially, then Chris Dixon / Richard Fleet
3.2.6	Future arrangements for Girls Squad	Aylesbury management
3.2.8	Laundry allowances	Max Bavin
7	Future trials – publicity and request for player input	Nick Doe
8.3	European Champions Cup – confirmation of eligibility	Nick Doe
8.4	Commonwealth Championship – publicity for applications	Nick Doe