

Manx Bridge Union

- Constitution -

Approved by the Members of the Union, 15th May 2011

1. TITLE, CONSTITUENT MEMBERSHIP AND DEFINITIONS

1.1 The name of the Union shall be the Manx Bridge Union and in this Constitution the words “the Union” and “the Island” shall mean, respectively, the Manx Bridge Union and the Isle of Man.

1.2 The Union, without prejudice to its general autonomy as an independent Union, is an Association as defined in the Bye Laws of the English Bridge Union Ltd. (which hereinafter is referred to as “the EBU”). It is a Constituent Member of the EBU and shall abide by the EBU Bye Laws, Rules and Policies.

1.3 The terms Association, Constituent Member, Duplicate Contract Bridge and Playing Members have the meanings set out in the Bye Laws of the EBU.

2. OBJECTS OF THE UNION

2.1 To maintain a central organisation for the promotion and management within the Island of all Duplicate Contract Bridge played under the auspices of the Union and clubs affiliated to the Union.

2.2 To promote Duplicate Contract Bridge in the Island generally and, in particular but not exclusively, through-

- (1) the encouragement of inter-club, inter-Association and English national competitions;
- (2) the selection, from amongst its members, of persons to represent the Union in competitions which the Union is invited or is entitled to enter;
- (3) the organising of an annual Island Bridge Congress licensed by the EBU;
- (4) the organising of Duplicate Bridge Competitions within the Island for its members and affiliated clubs.

2.3 To employ the funds of the Union in the best interests of the game of Duplicate Contract Bridge, having regard to the fact that the Union is a non-profit making body.

3. AFFILIATED DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUBS

3.1 Any bridge club on the Island that affiliates to the EBU shall, upon that affiliation, become affiliated to the Union and shall remain affiliated to the Union unless and until its affiliation to the EBU ceases. Only bridge clubs that are affiliated to the EBU shall be permitted to be affiliated to the Union.

4. MANAGEMENT OF THE UNION

4.1 The management of the affairs of the Union shall be vested in the Executive Committee of the Union (hereinafter referred to as "the Committee"), which shall comprise:-

- (a) Chairman
- (b) Secretary
- (c) Treasurer
- (d) Tournament Secretary
- (e) One representative from each affiliated club, appointed by each club
- (f) Not more than three other members of the Union.

All Committee members (other than the representatives of the affiliated clubs) shall be elected at an Annual General Meeting of the Union by a simple majority of paid up members of the Union and shall serve until the third Annual General Meeting subsequent to the meeting at which they were elected. They shall be eligible for re-election.

4.2 Within one month after each Annual General Meeting the Committee shall hold an initial meeting at which it shall elect from amongst its elected members a Chairman, a Secretary, a Treasurer and a Tournament Secretary who will hold office until the first Committee meeting held after the next Annual General Meeting.

4.3 The Committee shall meet from time to time as it deems fit, but not less than four times within a calendar year. A quorum shall consist of four members and, in the event of a tie on votes cast at a meeting, the chairman of the meeting shall have a casting vote.

4.4 The Committee shall have the power to co-opt and to fill any casual vacancies from within the membership of the Union and any person so co-opted may serve only until the next Annual General Meeting.

4.5 The Committee may from time to time appoint and disband sub-committees as may be deemed necessary, and may delegate to them such powers or duties as may be deemed to be expedient. Such sub-committees shall conduct their business as directed by the Committee.

4.6 The Committee shall elect one of its number to be an EBU shareholder and one, who shall be one of the club representatives, to be the Island's representative on the Regional Club Committee.

4.7 The Executive Committee shall make a report to each Annual General Meeting of the Union concerning the affairs of the Union since the previous Annual General Meeting.

5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE UNION

5.1 All members of the Union must be Player Members of the EBU.

5.2 A Player Member of the EBU shall become a member of the Union when his/her primary allegiance to the Union has been recorded with the EBU and the Union has been notified thereof.

5.3 A Player Member of the EBU whose primary allegiance is with another Association may become a dual member of the Union with the approval of the Committee, for one year at a time, but a dual member shall have no right to attend or vote at any General Meeting of the Union.

5.4 A Direct Player Member of the EBU resident on the Island may become a Direct Member of the Union.

5.5 The Union membership categories shall be as follows –

5.5.1 Ordinary Member – a Player Member of the EBU who has their primary allegiance recorded with the Union and who has paid a Member subscription to the Union.

5.5.2 Dual Member – a Player Member of the EBU who has their primary allegiance recorded with an English Association and has had their membership of the Union approved by the Committee and has paid a Dual Member subscription to the Union.

5.5.3 Direct Member – a person who is not a member of an affiliated club, but who is resident on the Island and is a Direct Player Member of the EBU and who has paid a Direct Member subscription to the Union.

5.6 A person shall cease to be a Member-

- a) On resignation; or
- b) On ceasing to be a Player Member of the EBU or otherwise ceasing to meet the qualifications of membership; or
- c) On failing to pay the annual subscription or
- d) On being expelled from the Union in accordance with Article 9 of this Constitution.

5.7 A member of the Union must be a paid up member for the relevant membership year in order to vote at its Annual General Meeting and to participate in its main competitions within that membership year.

5.8 A member of the Union becomes a paid up member through payment of the annual subscription for their Union membership category.

5.9 The Membership Year shall run for the twelve month period from 1st April to 31st March.

6. FINANCE

6.1 The Committee is responsible for the control of all monies and assets of the Union.

6.2 The Treasurer shall be responsible for the collection of all monies due to the Union, payment of all accounts and for keeping the books of account. The Treasurer shall account to the Committee for all financial transactions as and when required.

6.3 The signatures of the Treasurer and one other authorised member of the Committee shall be required on the paperwork for the payment of monies out of the Union.

6.4 Members of the Union shall pay an annual subscription to the Union which may be wholly or partially payable through the Union Pay to Play county component when participating in Union Competitions or in events at affiliated clubs. The amount of this annual subscription and/or the Pay to Play county component shall be determined at the Annual General Meeting of the Union and different levels of subscription may be determined in respect of different categories of member.

6.5. Entry fees for any events organised by the Union shall be determined by the Committee.

6.6 The Treasurer shall arrange for annual accounts to be prepared in respect of the financial affairs of the Union for the year ending on 31st March. These accounts shall be audited by an auditor elected at the previous Annual General Meeting and be presented for approval by the members at the next subsequent Annual General Meeting.

7. GENERAL MEETINGS OF THE UNION

7.1 An Annual General Meeting of the Union (hereinafter referred to as "AGM") shall be held in May of each year, or as soon as possible thereafter. The place, date and time of the AGM shall be determined by the Committee. The ordinary business of the meeting shall be confirmation of the minutes of any general meeting the minutes of which have not previously been confirmed, the submission of the annual report of the Committee, the adoption of the Accounts, the election of the Executive Committee members, the determination of annual subscriptions and/or pay to play county component and the appointment of an Auditor.

7.2 A request for a Special Resolution from a paid up Union member, which shall require a vote of the paid up members at the AGM-

(a) may be sent in writing to the Secretary no later than four weeks before the date of the AGM; such request must be supported in writing by not less than two other paid up members of the Union or

(b) may be proposed at the AGM, if not less than two thirds of the members present agree to the proposal being considered.

7.3 Nominations for paid up Union Members to serve on the Committee (other than club representatives), all of whom shall be proposed and seconded, shall be made at the AGM.

7.4 An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Union (hereinafter referred to as "EGM") shall be convened on the instructions of the Committee or within fourteen days of receipt of a requisition signed by at least six members of the Union and stating the purpose of such a meeting. The notice convening the Extraordinary General Meeting shall state the purpose of the meeting and no other business shall be transacted at the meeting.

7.5 A notice convening any General Meeting of the Union shall be sent to each member of the Union at least 21 days before the date of the meeting and multiple copies of an agenda listing the ordinary and special or extraordinary business to be transacted shall be sent to each affiliated club at least 21 days before the date of the meeting.

7.6 The Chairman shall preside at all General Meetings of the Union and in the absence of the Chairman, the General Meeting shall elect a paid up Union member to serve as Chairman of that General Meeting. 12 paid up members of the Union shall form a quorum.

7.7 Voting at General Meetings of the Union shall be by show of hands (or by ballot if the meeting so decides) and, in the event of parity of voting, the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote.

7.8 If there is no quorum at an AGM or EGM, the Secretary shall be required to arrange a reconvened meeting, and any such reconvened meeting shall be scheduled to occur within the period of 28 days to 42 days after the aborted AGM or EGM. The Secretary shall publish at least three weeks in advance the date, venue and time of the reconvened meeting and at any such reconvened meeting such number of members as are actually present at the adjourned meeting shall constitute a quorum.

8. RECORDS

8.1 The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping minutes of all General Meetings and all Committee Meetings. Each set of minutes shall be presented for approval as a correct record at the next General Meeting or Executive Committee Meeting as appropriate.

9. MEMBERS' BEHAVIOUR

9.1 Each member of the Union shall be required in connection with the game of Duplicate Contract Bridge, to conform to the standards of fair play, courtesy and personal deportment prescribed in the Bye Laws and regulations for the time being of the EBU

9.2 The Union shall have the powers and the procedures for the enforcement of the requirement in Article 9.1 They are set out in the Schedule to the Constitution and shall stand as part of the Constitution.

10. THE CONSTITUTION

10.1 Copies of this Constitution shall be supplied to each affiliated club for display in the club's premises and shall be supplied, on request, by the Secretary, to any member of the Union.

10.2 No alteration shall be made to this Constitution except at a General Meeting of the Union and no alteration to this Constitution shall have effect unless at least two-thirds of those voting cast their votes in favour of the alteration.

11. WINDING UP

11.1 The Union may be wound up on the authority of a resolution of a General Meeting of the Union. In order for such a resolution to have effect at least two-thirds of the votes cast on the resolution must be in favour, and in addition the number of votes cast in favour of the resolution must exceed one-half of the number of members of the Union entitled to attend and vote at the General Meeting at which the resolution is put.

11.2 If a resolution that the Union shall be wound up is effectively passed, the Committee shall be responsible for winding up the affairs of the Union and for -

- distributing any surplus assets and funds equally amongst the members of the Union or
- transferring any surplus assets and funds to such registered or charitable body as shall have been directed by the terms of the resolution to wind up the Union.

12. INTERPRETATION

12.1 On all questions of interpretation of this Constitution the decisions of the Committee shall be binding until or unless rescinded at a General Meeting of the Union. The Committee shall have power to determine any issue arising in connection with the affairs of the Union which is not specifically provided for in this Constitution.

Schedule

Procedures Dealing with Members' Behaviour

1. Requirements of the Schedule

The Union shall comply with and follow the EBU disciplinary procedures and any variations thereof that are made from time to time and shall act through its Conduct and Disciplinary Committees for the enforcement of the standards prescribed in Article 9.1 of this Constitution. The Union shall have the additional powers set out in the paragraphs below.

2. Conduct Committee and Disciplinary Committee

The Committee of the Union shall appoint a Conduct Committee and a Disciplinary Committee, each of which shall be a sub-committee under Article 4.5 of this Constitution.

The Conduct Committee shall be responsible for investigating complaints against the Union's members and for determining whether a Disciplinary Offence should be referred to the Union's Disciplinary Committee.

The Disciplinary Committee shall consider any matter referred to it by the Conduct Committee.

The Conduct Committee and the Disciplinary Committee shall each consist of no fewer than three members of the Union and no more than five. A quorum for any meeting of either Committee shall be three of its members. Each Committee shall act by simple majority vote and its appointed chairman, or whomsoever in his absence the relevant Committee shall select to chair a meeting shall have a second or casting vote in the event that there is parity of voting.

3. Conflicts of Interest and Independence of Conduct and Disciplinary Committees

Any member of either the Conduct or Disciplinary Committee who is in any way personally involved in the allegations within a complaint shall be disqualified from participating in either Committee's handling of the complaint.

No person shall be a member of both the Conduct and the Disciplinary Committees.

4. The Complaints Process

4.1 Receipt of Allegation

Any person making a complaint against one or more members of the Union, under the terms of Article 9.1 of this Constitution, must do so in writing to the Secretary of the Union, who shall forthwith refer the complaint to the Conduct Committee.

4.2 Proceedings of Conduct Committee

The Conduct Committee shall first consider whether the complaint falls within the scope of the Disciplinary Rules and whether further action is warranted. If further action is considered to be warranted the Conduct Committee shall write to each member of the Union against whom a complaint has been made, seeking comments on the substance of the complaint. The Conduct Committee shall be entitled to make such further investigations and enquiries as it in its absolute discretion considers appropriate. The Conduct Committee shall also be entitled to seek advice both from within the Union and from the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee, and to obtain external legal advice.

If the Conduct Committee decides that the complaint is not justified, all parties shall be notified and the matter ended.

If the Conduct Committee decides that a complaint is justified, it may, in its absolute discretion, offer a verbal caution to any member which it considers to be at fault. If the verbal caution is accepted the matter is ended.

If any member considered by the Conduct Committee to be at fault does not accept the verbal caution, or the Conduct Committee decides that a verbal caution is inappropriate, the Conduct Committee shall refer the complaint to a hearing by the Disciplinary Committee and shall notify any member considered to be at fault that they have done so.

4.3 Proceedings of Disciplinary Committee

Within two weeks of receipt of any matter referred to it by the Conduct Committee, the Disciplinary Committee shall write to any member considered by the Conduct Committee to be at fault in the matter advising that member of his right –

- To make a written submission to the Disciplinary Committee and*
- To attend the hearing and*
- To be represented by legal counsel of his choice or be accompanied by a person to speak on his behalf.*

The Disciplinary Committee shall give at least two weeks notice of the hearing to all those who are to be involved in the hearing.

If, after the hearing, the Disciplinary Committee decides that no Disciplinary Offence has been committed, all parties shall be notified and the matter ended.

4.4 Disciplinary Committee's Sanctions

If, after the hearing, the Disciplinary Committee decides that one or more Disciplinary Offences have been committed, it may in its absolute discretion:

- (a) Give a written reprimand to any member it finds guilty of a Disciplinary Offence, or*
- (b) Suspend any member it finds guilty of a Disciplinary Offence; such suspension may be from all or some of the competitions which the Union organises and for such period as the Disciplinary Committee shall determine.*

If any member found guilty of a Disciplinary Offence is a member of the Union's Committee then in addition to any other sanctions applied, the Disciplinary Committee shall have the power to suspend that member from the Union's Committee and any of its sub committees for such period as it may determine.

Any sanctions imposed by the Disciplinary Committee must be communicated to any member found guilty of a Disciplinary Offence within twenty one days of the hearing.

No sanction shall come into effect until the time limit for an appeal has expired. If an appeal is made the sanction will not come into effect until the appeal has been determined, and will be modified or cancelled if that determination so requires.

4.5 Appeal

Any member found guilty of a Disciplinary Offence by the Disciplinary Committee has the right to appeal to the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee. Appeals must be in writing and lodged with the Secretary of the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee within twenty one days of the member's receipt of the written communication of the Disciplinary Committee's decision.

4.6 Referral to the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee

At any time the Disciplinary Committee may refer a complaint to the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee for its consideration. In doing so the Disciplinary Committee shall have fully discharged its responsibilities under this Schedule.

4. Definitions

The terms Disciplinary Rules and Disciplinary Offence have the meanings set out in the Bye Laws of the EBU

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