



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EBU TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE
HELD AT AYLESBURY OFFICES ON THURSDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER 2004**

Present:	Margaret Curtis	Chairman
	Max Bavin	Chief Tournament Director
	Tom Bradley	EBU Treasurer
	Heather Dhondy	
	Philip Mason	EBU Vice-Chairman
	Alan Nelson	
	Malcolm Oliver	
	Paul Spencer	
	Nick Doe	Secretary

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Alaine Hamilton	
Denis Robson	EBU Chairman
Terry Collier	General Manager

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting (9th June 2004)

2.1 Accuracy

The minutes were agreed to be a true record and signed by the Chairman.

2.2 Matters arising

2.2.1 Age qualification for Seniors (item 2.2.2)

Mr Doe reported that, as anticipated, the EBL was to follow the WBF lead in raising the qualifying age, one year at a time, to 60. The precise formula is designed to ensure that eligibility from year to year does not depend on when in the year a tournament is held, i.e. for competitions held in the calendar year 2005, players must reach the age of 56 at some time during 2005, or, put another way, they must be 55 by 31st December 2004.

A discussion took place on the advantages and disadvantages of following suit, notwithstanding the Committee's initial inclination (at the November 2003 meeting) to make no changes even when the current year by year raising of the qualifying age from 50 to 55 is complete. The Committee concluded that Seniors events were still likely to be popular even if the age limit was raised. It decided to raise the age limit to 60, and to follow the model set by the WBF and the EBL, but with a time lag to reflect the fact that the raising of the age to 55 has not yet been completed.

Specifically, the new qualifying criterion will be reaching the age of 55 in calendar year 2005 for events in calendar 2005, 56 for 2006 etc., but the new rules will not come into operation for events played prior to 1st September 2005, in order that adequate notice can be given in next year's diary.

Mr Bradley asked if there was any problem for the European Brighton Seniors with the mismatch of age qualifications with those of the EBL. Mr Bavin was sure that there was not.

2.2.2 *Possible Congress in the South-West (item 2.2.3)*

The Committee noted that Mr Collier was due to have a meeting with Devon C.C.B.A. in the near future, and the County was believed to be extremely keen to host a new EBU Congress. Mr Bavin reported that he had co-incidentally received an approach from the English Riviera Centre in Torquay, which would be followed up.

The Committee's inclination was to schedule a new event on the same weekend as the Northern Summer Congress in Scarborough, which was currently well over-subscribed. Mr Bavin did not think that there would be undue logistical difficulties with such a clash. The Committee's target was to introduce the proposed new event in the Summer of 2006, although 2005 was not unthinkable.

2.2.3 *National Swiss Teams (item 2.2.5)*

Mr Bavin confirmed that the booking for 2005 had eventually been confirmed.

2.2.4 *Jersey Congress (item 4.12)*

The Committee understood that the Channel Islands Association still appeared to be keen on the proposed revised refreshment arrangements. If so, it was up to the Association to make the case for a change.

2.2.5 *Schapiro Spring Foursomes (item 4.14)*

Mr Bavin reported that a meeting had taken place between Mr Collier and Mrs Schapiro, and it had been agreed that both sides would endeavour to increase the publicity for the event. Mrs Schapiro was to seek publicity via the IBPA Bulletin. The Union would target leading Gold Point holders and include more publicity in *English Bridge*. The latter would endeavour to target tournament players generally as well as the top players.

2.2.6 *Garden Cities Regional Finals (item 4.18)*

Mr Bavin reported that the non-arrival of one team appeared to have been due to a breakdown in communication, and no further action was necessary.

2.2.7 *Possible Gold Point event (item 9.2)*

Mrs Dhondy reported that she had had a meeting with Mr Collier, and this had led to Mr Robson sending out an invitation to potential sponsors. It was too early to expect a response. The approach had concentrated on individual rather than corporate sponsors.

2.2.8 *Tollemache Cup (item 11.1)*

The Committee noted that Council had expressed a willingness for Welsh Districts to be accommodated if they wished, but was disinclined to allow participation by a team from Wales as a whole. No action was required unless the informal approach was followed by something more definite, which had not yet happened.

2.2.9 *Isle of Man Congress (item 11.2)*

Mr Mason reported that he had visited the proposed new venue, which was excellent and in easy reach of two suitable hotels. It was likely to be more attractive to the local players than the present venue, at which parking is problematic. Because the Congress, in contrast to the other island events, is over a single weekend, it is relatively expensive for players from the mainland. As the potential for increasing entries from the mainland is therefore perhaps limited, it is important to attract more local players.

The Committee noted that the new venue was not available on the dates required in 2005. Mr Bavin undertook to liaise with the Manx Bridge Union concerning a booking for 2006.

2.2.10 *Gold Point race (item 11.4)*

Mr Doe reported that he had confirmed the position with regard to the issue by BGB of Master Point certificates for the Gold Cup. No certificates are issued until after 1st July, although thereafter points are issued to each team as it is eliminated. The allocation of the Green points to Master

Point years for the purposes of the annual MP competition (and the Gold Point race) is therefore correct.

2.2.11 *Tournament Accounts (item 3)*

The Committee noted that due to an oversight the accounts for the last few events of 2003/04 had not been presented to the Committee. Mr Bradley said that 2003/04 had been a very successful year on the tournament front, and it was agreed that he would prepare a slightly more detailed statement to be included in the minutes, as follows:-

The figures below describe the situation before incorporating head office costs and overheads.

- Income rose by £33,951 to £593,516 (6.1%), exceeding budget by £15,516. This implies an increase in participation of some 2%, a pleasing situation in a year when we lost 1,000 members.
- Expenditure actually fell by £9,036 to £380,140. (Budget £400,390). Savings of £6,811 were achieved in playing accommodation costs and £5,986 in TD costs.
- The activities' surplus of £213,376, (last year £172,230), exceeded budget by £35,766.
- The company had planned a small surplus as our bottom line. The outcome was £7,257. Had our Tournaments just attained budget, the loss would have been £28,509!

It was agreed that the detailed summary of the year included in the Report and Accounts would be attached to these minutes, so that any questions could be dealt with as matters arising at the next meeting.

2.2.12 *General promotion of events (item 7.2)*

Mrs Curtis reported that she had discussed the matter with Virpi Ojala, and as a result leaflets for forthcoming events had been sent to two sets of One-day Joint Ventures. This had proved to be very successful and would be extended to all such events. It appeared that substantial numbers of entries were being received on the forms circulated.

A mailshot had also been sent to recent captains of teams in Crockfords and the Gerard Faulkner Salver in an attempt to ensure that the deadline did not escape the notice of potential entrants. The suggestion that impending events should be more prominently highlighted on the website was noted.

2.2.13 *Seedings (item 11.3)*

Mrs Dhondy drew the Committee's attention to the fact that Crockfords had been seeded in the old way (i.e. by the Selection Committee), rather than as the Committee had decided (by Gold Points). Mr Doe explained that he had unfortunately not appreciated that the seeding would need to be completed while he was on holiday, so he had not flagged up the change, and the Competitions Department had assumed that the seeding was to be done in the traditional manner. Future seedings would be done in the new way.

3. *Tournament Accounts*

Accounts for the first few months of the financial year had been circulated in advance. Mr Bavin drew attention to a mis-coding problem which meant that the loss made by the Schapiro Spring Foursomes was overstated. It was hoped that the efforts being made to promote the event would prevent the recurrence of losses on anything like a similar scale.

It was suggested that the relative figures of the two Easter tournaments were surprising. Mr Bavin commented that events in London were expensive to run, but he was satisfied that no unnecessary expenditure had been incurred. It had proved impracticable in the past to employ caddies for the Swiss events (which would reduce the number of TDs required), but he would look again at the possibility.

The Committee noted that some of the most popular Congresses are in fact those which are the least expensive to stage, and thus the most profitable.

4. Tournament Reports

4.1 Corwen Trophy

There had been 54½ tables in play. The event was won by Richard Davey and Richard Palmer of Berks & Bucks. Not for the first time, the hotel had some difficulties coping with the number of mid-day check-ins; also the bridge rate quoted was unavailable for late bookings.

4.2 Pachabo Cup

Only 28 teams had participated, which was a disappointment. There had been various reasons for Counties not being represented. The trophy was won by Cambs & Hunts on a split-tie. The hotel (the same as for the Corwen) had coped much better, probably due to the smaller numbers.

4.3 Garden Cities National Final

There were no problems to report. The event was won by the West of England Bridge Club, representing Avon.

4.4 One-day events (June)

The numbers of tables in play were as follows (Swiss Teams except where stated):-

Saturday

Northamptonshire	40	Swiss Pairs
Staffs & Shrops	23	

Sunday

Berks & Bucks	108	Flighted – 86 A + 22 B
Herefordshire	32	

There were no problems to report, although the numbers were perhaps slightly down on expectations.

4.5 Shrewsbury Summer Congress

The Congress had been very successful, with 85 tables of Swiss Pairs and 88 tables of Swiss Teams. An extra small playing room (8 tables) and tournament director had been booked to cope with the increased numbers. Generally, players were very pleased with the hotel, but there was one complaint.

4.6 Summer Seniors and Veterans Congress

The number of tables in play had been 59 (Friday), 100 (Saturday) and 93 tables (Sunday), which is fairly typical numbers for what has now become a very successful congress. The venue staff were particularly helpful. The venue is about to be closed for 9 months in order to undergo a major refurbishment.

A survey was conducted of the effect of the increase next year in the qualifying age for Veterans (from 65 to 70). There were 46 Veterans Pairs this year, qualifying 16 for an 8-table final. With the new age limit, there would only have been 30 pairs. Mr Bavin had suggested that this might call for changes to the format, such as playing all four sessions, rather than just the first two, with the Seniors and Veterans fields combined, with special prizes for the Veterans. The Committee preferred to leave the format unchanged for 2005 and to review it then on the basis of the actual numbers.

4.7 One-day events (July)

The numbers of tables in play were as follows:-

Saturday		all Swiss Pairs
Hertfordshire	64	
Lancashire	35	
Nottinghamshire	35	
Sunday		all Swiss Teams
Derbyshire	27	
Devon	47	
Essex	68	
Manchester	33	
Sussex	83	

The numbers were about in line with, or slightly below, expectations, and there was nothing of particular interest to report.

4.8 Northern Summer Congress

The Congress had been well over-subscribed, with about 20 tables turned away for the Swiss Pairs. The Multiple teams on the Friday had attracted 81 tables (about ten below capacity).

The Committee accepted Mr Bavin's recommendation that it would be a mistake to seek to move away from Scarborough in search of a larger venue, as it seemed clear that the current attraction is both Scarborough itself and the actual conference venue. The Committee concluded that it was actually a positively good idea to try to schedule the proposed South-Western Summer Congress on the same weekend, as it was hoped that this would give players in some parts of the country a choice and thereby relieve pressure on numbers at Scarborough, whilst tapping a market in areas of the country from which few currently play at Scarborough because of the distance.

Mr Bavin had reported that there was some demand for an extra match or two to be scheduled in the Swiss Pairs, but the Committee noted that realistically this would require the introduction of a break. This would lead to a considerably later finish, which would probably not suit many players. It was agreed to leave the format unchanged. Mr Bavin confirmed that it was not practicable to increase the number of matches by reducing from 8-board matches to 7, due to operational considerations arising from the fact that the event is played and scored in a single sub-field.

4.9 Brighton Summer Congress

The numbers had been virtually identical to the previous year. Midweek afternoons now had up to 100 tables in play, but this seemed to be partially at the expense of the second weekend, as some players seemed to prefer to play the first weekend and the Seniors rather than both weekends, possibly because bedrooms are much cheaper midweek than they are at weekends.

The Committee noted that it had appeared to be possible to obtain some package rates for accommodation at the hotel, which were very much more favourable than the quoted bridge rate. Although Mr Bavin planned to take this up with the hotel, he doubted that it would make much difference. He considered that it was a problem which probably applied only to this particular Congress. The Committee considered that it would be helpful for members to be advised in the diary that although quoted bridge rates are the best that the hotels are prepared to offer by way of pre-negotiated prices for significant numbers of rooms, it is often possible for members to get better deals by shopping around.

As previously noted, the Swiss Pairs had been run in 6 sub-fields rather than 5 in order to avoid using the playing area which was too hot last year. This was successful in that there were no problems with temperature control, although the weather was much cooler this year. One effect, also previously noted, was that it had been necessary to abandon the unique current round assigning in the top sub-field in the final session. There had been some criticism of this decision

from the players. Mr Bavin said that it would be possible to reintroduce the current round assigning, but only if this was done for the top two sub-fields as opposed to the top one (because they are played in the same room). However, the Committee thought that the disadvantages, particularly in slowing down the event, outweighed the advantages, and agreed to keep the round-in-arrears assigning for all sections.

It had also been suggested that the 3-session Seniors pairs should start on Monday afternoon rather than Monday evening, so that people could travel home after the pairs final. The Committee thought that such a change would adversely affect those who wished to travel to the event on Monday, and accordingly decided to leave the timetable as it is.

The Committee noted a suggestion to abandon the final Sunday evening open pairs and teams, which attracted only 13 tables in total, but decided to retain them.

4.10 Gerard Faulkner Salver Final

The final had taken place in some style at Howie's Bridge Club, and been won by Ian Monachan's team.

4.11 NICKO, NICKO Plate and Crockfords Plate Finals

The Committee noted that none of these had yet taken place, although dates for two had been agreed.

5. Entries for knock-out competitions

5.1 Crockfords Cup

The Committee noted entries slightly down at 165 teams.

5.2 National Inter-Club Knock-out

The Committee noted entries some 8% down at 375 teams, with the number of clubs also slightly down at 175.

5.3 Gerard Faulkner Salver

The Committee noted entries up nearly 20% at 93 teams.

5.4 Overall timetable for knock-out competitions

Mr Bavin reported that feedback from players to the Competitions Department did suggest that players had reduced the number of knock-out events which they entered because of the concentration of early-round draws at the same time of the year. This had been exacerbated by BGB's decision to bring the timetable of the Gold Cup forward. It was not known quite what the reason was for BGB's decision*, which did not appear to have been subject to advance consultation. The timetabling problem had been noted at Council and Mrs Curtis had given an undertaking that the Committee would examine it.

**[Secretary's Note – I now understand that BGB's decision was made to give more time for the later rounds, in the light of the fact that they are played at the same time of the year as most England Trials – NJD.]*

The view was expressed that the lack of a Club Newsletter might have affected entries to the NICKO, although it was noted that there had been a big push to promote the competition this year. It was agreed that having a closing date for the NICKO in August might be inconvenient for many clubs. It was possible that some clubs might have missed the deadline because either the Club Secretary was away or the players likely to be interested in the competition had not resumed playing bridge at the club after a summer break.

It was agreed to make two changes to the timetable for knock-out competitions, but only with effect from the 2006/07 season, so that proper advance notice could be given:-

- the closing date for the NICKO would be moved back to October, with a longer than usual period for playing the first round to counteract any difficulties associated with having to play it in the run-up to Christmas.
- the closing date for the Gerard Faulkner Salver would be moved forward to June, with a longer than usual period for playing the first round to counteract any difficulties associated with having to play it over the summer holiday period.

6. Master Points

6.1 Master points Sub-Committee

A paper from Mr Cochemé, summarising the conclusions of the Sub-Committee, had been circulated in advance. Mr Mason said that the conclusion was that the present scheme had sufficient flaws that it was desirable to restructure it in the interests of increasing awareness, enthusiasm and participation. The plan was to circulate the proposals (but not discuss them) at the October Council meeting, with Mr Cochemé then to make a presentation at the January Council meeting. The principal new departure which was proposed was the introduction of an element of depreciation of Master Points over time, a concept hitherto confined to Gold Points.

It was noted that if the changes were implemented, the Committee would need to consider the effect on competitions for specified ranks of player. It was also noted that it was considered feasible to bring the changes into operation at the beginning of the 2005/06 Master Points year, although deferring implementation to a later date had not been ruled out. Although the implementation would impose some administrative burden at Aylesbury, Mr Cochemé had had some discussions with Harvey Fox, and the transition was thought to be manageable. One effect was that the Master Points Handbook would need a complete revision.

Mrs Dhondy thought that the principal criticism of the present scheme of which she was aware was that the top ranks were devalued. She did not think that the current proposals addressed the point. Mr Bavin pointed out that players would hold fewer Master Points under a fully-depreciated system than under the present non-depreciated scheme. At the point of transition, therefore, everyone would hold “too many” points. The Sub-Committee had worked out, however, that it would be quite tough for many existing Grandmasters to maintain their status under the new system. This was part of the reason for the proposal to have honorary ranks for players who had once earned a particular rank, and maintained it for a time, even if they had subsequently dropped down the rankings.

The Committee was happy to note the proposals and for Council to consider them in the way which was envisaged.

6.2 Trials

The Committee considered a paper from Mr Bavin with outline proposals for the number of Green Points which might be issued for international trials. The Committee agreed to accede to the Selection Committee’s request for authority to issue Green Points for trials. Mr Bavin was authorised to produce detailed scales, as required, based on the figures in the paper.

It was agreed that the scales for Senior trials should be the same as those for Women’s Trials. Whilst noting that it was illogical to issue Green Points for Junior Trials when only Local Points were awarded in the Junior Camrose Trophy, the Committee considered it desirable that modest Green Points should be issued, and thought that BGB should be invited to reconsider the question of Green points in the Junior Camrose.

[Secretary’s note – I have now discovered that the discussion on the last point was based on a mistaken assumption as to the BGB Regulations. Currently, Green Points are issued for the Junior Camrose Trophy (under 25), but not for the Peggy Bayer Trophy (under 20) – NJD.]

7. EBU diary

It was noted that Aylesbury had received feedback about the new diary, but the Committee's concern should be limited to questions of the editorial content in areas relevant to its responsibilities. It was encouraging that there were few concerns to be addressed. The only suggestion considered (apart from the need for a statement about hotel prices, as noted at item 4.8) was that it would be helpful to have page numbers and an index.

The Committee did think that players would find wider dissemination of entry forms a convenience, as not all members wanted to submit credit card entries over the telephone.

8. Regulations

8.1 Permitted methods

The Committee considered a request from the Laws & Ethics Committee, which was considering possible changes to the structure of regulation of permitted methods, which it hoped to bring into effect in a new *Orange Book* to come into force some time in 2006. The Committee readily agreed to two recommendations from the Laws & Ethics Committee, namely:-

- that there should be one level of permitted conventions applicable to all events at each EBU congress (except for lower-flighted events or other events specifically designed for less-experienced players); and
- that the vast majority of EBU events should be played at one of only two levels of permitted methods, broadly equivalent to the present Levels 2 and 4, although special arrangements might have to be devised for a small number of tournaments.

8.2 Draw policy for knock-out events

The Committee noted that this is a subject on which representations are received fairly frequently from players, and the matter had also been raised at the last Council meeting. It thought that it would be helpful to set out the present position.

There are two different draw programs in use in the competitions department. They are separate and not currently interchangeable. The one used for the NICKO (the "postcode program") was designed for a club-based competition, and involves draws being made on the basis of a nominated postcode for each team's home venue. Under the postcode program, there is no restriction on teams meeting others from the same County, only from the same club or postcode area. The program used for all other knock-out competitions (the "County program") involves draws being made on the basis of the home County of each team. Under the County program, teams cannot be drawn against others from the same County until the stage of the competition is reached where an unrestricted draw is prescribed by the regulations, unless it is impracticable to do otherwise in order to avoid excessive travelling.

Whilst it is not currently possible to switch the draw for a competition such as Crockfords from the County to the postcode program basis, it is not considered likely to be a difficult matter for software to be written to enable draws to be made on the basis of whatever criteria, within reason, the Committee wishes. The Committee decided that it would be preferable for draws to be made on the basis of a system similar to the current postcode program, albeit with some improvements, and urged that resources be allocated to providing the necessary capability. Any new software should be readily customisable, to provide a much greater degree of flexibility than under the current programs, so that modifications to or refinements of the draw procedure can be introduced if and when considered appropriate.

8.3 Disabled regulations

The Committee considered correspondence with a disabled player whose condition was such that his ability to travel was severely restricted. He had requested that his team be given only home draws in knock-out events. The Committee readily endorsed Mr Bavin's response to the effect that the request would be accommodated wherever possible, but without any guarantee, because it

would be unreasonable to expect opponents to travel very long distances, and impossible to accommodate two teams with a similar problem. In particular, the Committee decided that:-

- teams wishing to make such requests should be prepared to produce a doctor's letter in support (which the player concerned had willingly done); and
- an opposing team's right to request a half-way venue if the distance between the two venues is more than 100 miles should specifically remain in place.

9. One-Day Green-pointed Joint Ventures and Green-pointed County Congresses

9.1 Possible alternative financial arrangements

The Committee noted that at the previous meeting it had not been entirely clear exactly what Suffolk were proposing. It was now apparent that their proposal was to include the provision of refreshments in the standard entry fee. Suffolk had indicated their belief that sufficient extra entries would be attracted to allow a reasonable profit to be made by both the County and the Union. However, the Committee did not think that there was any justification for allowing what were effectively substantially lower than standard entry fees for the bridge element of a One-day event.

Mrs Curtis reported that during the discussion at the last Council meeting, the possibility of moving to a licence fee, rather than a profit-sharing, basis of charging for One-day events had been raised once again. As it was some time since it had last been considered, she had agreed that the Committee would look at the matter again.

The Committee noted a summary of the history of such proposals, which had been circulated in advance. On the previous occasions on which a possible move to a licence fee arrangement had been considered for Joint Venture events, a "break even" figure had been calculated. This was the amount of the licence fee which the Union would need to charge in order for the events over a year to contribute the same overall revenue as at present, assuming no changes in overall entry numbers. On the last occasion, the break-even figure had been closely comparable with the licence fee payable by a County exercising the Congress Option (currently £13.20 per table per day).

The Committee noted that there are considerable variations in the cost of putting on a One-day event. On the previous occasion when the proposal had been considered it had been obvious that few Counties would be unaffected by a change to a licence fee system – there would be winners and losers. This had two effects. First, the potential losers would be likely to stop staging events. It did not seem likely that the entries lost as a result would be counterbalanced by an increase in entries to the events staged by Counties who were potential winners. Accordingly, the assumption of unchanged numbers on which the break-even figure was based was unlikely to be realised. This would lead to a reduction in the Union's revenue, quite apart from the effect on the Counties which could no longer run events at a profit. In order for the Union to break even, it was therefore likely to be necessary to fix the licence fee at a somewhat higher figure than the so-called break even figure.

Second, the potential losers would undoubtedly vote against the proposal in Council, and might well be supported by unaffected Counties and possibly even by some of the potential winners on the grounds that the proposal was unfair.

Ultimately, the Committee did not really think that the problem of potential winners and losers was one which could be overcome.

Two other options were, however, suggested. The first was to offer Counties a choice between profit-sharing and licence fee arrangements. Under such a system, Counties would inevitably opt for the basis which was likely to maximise their revenue. Accordingly, in order to preserve the Union's expected revenue, the licence fee would have to be set higher than it would have been if the licence fee basis applied to all events, and probably much higher than the so-called break even figure. The other option suggested was a licence fee on a sliding scale. Whilst the Committee

could see certain attractions in this, it felt unable to conduct a meaningful discussion, still less reach any decision, without some financial model to consider. Mr Bavin was asked to produce a paper with a view to a further discussion at the next meeting.

9.2 Direct crediting of Master Points

The Committee noted that at present a small minority of One-day Joint Ventures have their Master Points direct credited. In principle, there is no objection to more events being direct credited, but it is only feasible if the Counties can provide accurate EBU numbers for 100% of the players concerned and take responsibility for dealing with queries. Even then, players are prone to address queries to the Master Points Department at Aylesbury which it does not have the resources to deal with. The Committee therefore concluded that in practice it was not feasible to extend the facility.

The Committee noted that it would be a lot easier if scoring software could be developed for EBU events with an interface to the Master Points system (as with CASS for clubs). It may not be widely realised that EBU scoring software does not do this, and that direct credits for EBU events are calculated by the Competitions Department and manually entered by the Master Points Department.

9.3 Geographical clashes between Green-pointed County Congresses and other licensed events

The Committee noted correspondence concerning an alleged clash between an approved Green-pointed County Congress and a licensed Club Congress. It saw no basis for requiring any change to the dates of the County Congress, and other licensed events are not its responsibility. If the matter could not be resolved by the administration at Aylesbury, it should be referred to the Board as the body with responsibility for licensing.

9.4 Outstanding scheduling matters

Mr Doe reported that the relevant neighbouring Counties' consents had been obtained to the exercise of the Congress Option in respect of the Midland Counties Congress, so the approval was now confirmed.

10. 2006 events

10.1 National Newcomers Pairs

The Committee considered a paper from Mrs Curtis. The suggestion that a second tier of the event might be introduced had been discussed at the previous meeting. Two suggestions were made in the paper:-

- that the Master Point limit for the lower tier be set at 2,500, in contrast to the present 5,000, with the limit for the higher tier set at either 7,500 or 10,000; and
- that some formula be introduced to cover players who may have earned but not registered Master Points, "limited duplicate experience" being one possibility.

The Committee decided to gauge reaction at Council before making a decision.

10.2 Overseas Congress

The Committee noted that during his visit to Brighton Dr Nissan Rand had expressed enthusiasm for taking the event to Israel. The Committee thought that other ideas should be solicited so that a decision could be made as early as possible, bearing in mind the press date for the diary. Mr Mason agreed to speak to Mr Collier on the subject.

11. Mind Sports Olympiad

The Committee noted that there had been an average of 22 tables in play in the Green-pointed events, which was at the lower end of its expectations when sanctioning the award of Green points. It was agreed that Green points would be sanctioned for a further year, assuming that the

organisers wished it, with a further review after the 2005 event. The Committee noted that it would wish to see some growth in the size of the events if Green points were to be awarded on a continuing basis.

12. Development Plan – new events

The Committee noted that there was general agreement that the number of simultaneous pairs events in the calendar was nearing saturation point, and the award of considerable numbers of Master Points for the overall result of such events had come in for some criticism. In view of the Revenue implications, the Board had considered the matter and decided that as a matter of principle it did not wish to encourage the creation of any more simultaneous pairs events in the traditional mould. It was however proposing to introduce three weeks into the calendar where clubs would have the opportunity to play centrally-produced sets of hands. Instead of awarding Master Points for an overall result, it was proposed that there would be enhanced Master Point awards at club level, i.e. at District scale.

The Committee noted that the application from a French-based sponsoring organisation of an event for inexperienced players, which had been considered and rejected two years ago, had been renewed following a change to the format of the event to remove the element of manipulated hands. The Committee was content to note that the Board had considered the matter and decided that the application should not be approved.

13. Miscellaneous correspondence

13.1 Possible Seniors Congress in the North – R.J. Rowlands

The Committee noted a letter from Mr Rowlands drawing attention to a perceived gap in the programme of Seniors events, namely the lack of any event in the North of England. The Committee was happy to consider the possibility, and thought that the most appropriate date would be the weekend of Crockfords final in May. Mr Bavin was asked to investigate the availability of venues for a possible new event in 2006. Harrogate and Buxton were considered as possible venues, but the preference was for Scarborough.

13.2 Gerard Faulkner Salver – Plate competition

The Committee noted that a player had telephoned to say that his team would be entering the Gold Cup rather than the Gerard Faulkner Salver because the latter had no free Plate competition. The Committee considered that there were sufficient travelling difficulties associated with a knock-out competition of the relatively small size of the Faulkner Salver, and that to introduce a (by definition even smaller) Plate competition would be completely impracticable. The matter might be reconsidered if entries to the main competition continued to rise.

14. Any other business

14.1 Prize awards

Mr Nelson asked that a discussion of the distribution (rather than the overall amount) of prizes for EBU events be scheduled. Of particular interest was the question of category prizes under the proposed changes to the Master Point rankings considered under item 6.1. It was agreed to consider this at the next meeting.

14.2 Announcements

Mr Oliver wished it noted that he welcomed the fact that the Laws & Ethics Committee was considering the possibility of introducing announcements in place of some alerts. Having played in North America where announcements are used, he considered that their use added to players' enjoyment of the game.

THE ENGLISH BRIDGE UNION
COMPETITION RESULTS BEFORE OVERHEADS

EVENT	INCOME					EXPENDITURE					NET RESULT			
	Entry Fees	Table Money	Sponsors/ Donations	Share of Profits	TOTAL	Accom.& Transport	Prizes	TD Costs	Other Expenses	Donations	TOTAL	2003/2004	2002/2003	2001/2002
Autumn Congress	22,090	0	0	0	22,090	5,203	4,530	6,219	377	0	16,329	5,760	6,182	7,522
Autumn Sim Pairs	20,255	0	0	0	20,255	0	190	830	3,798	0	4,818	15,436	14,450	12,520
Blackpool Easter	13,214	0	0	0	13,214	689	2,480	2,320	338	0	5,828	7,387	4,201	8,630
Blackpool Year End	16,614	0	0	0	16,614	3,317	3,015	2,913	880	0	10,126	6,487	6,412	7,273
Brighton Summer	120,036	0	0	0	120,036	28,722	22,660	32,789	9,554	0	93,724	26,312	19,562	16,531
Corwen Trophy	6,500	0	0	0	6,500	409	1,250	1,235	26	0	2,919	3,581	2,864	1,722
Crockfords Cup	7,632	0	0	0	7,632	600	3,100	701	340	0	4,740	2,892	4,061	3,760
Easter Festival	30,346	0	0	0	30,346	10,406	5,475	7,657	611	0	24,150	6,196	3,953	5,636
Spring Sim Pairs	13,494	0	0	0	13,494	0	0	1,627	3,884	0	5,510	7,983	9,468	8,021
Garden Cities Trophy	4,665	0	0	0	4,665	911	760	1,191	1,356	0	4,218	447	(182)	262
Golf Club Knockout	623	0	500	0	1,123	360	200	449	484	0	1,493	(370)	67	(367)
Great Northern Swiss	11,969	0	0	0	11,969	1,559	2,400	2,391	294	0	6,645	5,325	4,682	5,878
Guernsey Congress	13,465	0	0	0	13,465	761	2,570	3,482	929	0	7,741	5,723	7,174	7,847
Hubert Phillips Bowl	7,365	0	0	0	7,365	100	1,100	0	200	0	1,400	5,965	3,518	4,650
Inter-Club KO	15,751	0	0	0	15,751	0	2,920	0	0	0	2,920	12,831	11,172	11,435
Jersey Festival	19,583	16	1,000	0	20,600	660	4,030	3,165	6,624	0	14,479	6,122	6,088	5,806
National Mens Pairs	4,473	0	0	0	4,473	1,364	960	489	22	0	2,835	1,638	1,836	2,654
National Mens Teams	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
National Newcomers	1,437	0	0	0	1,437	0	100	(101)	526	0	525	912	(486)	133
National Pairs	14,138	0	0	0	14,138	5,875	2,720	2,882	242	0	11,718	2,419	1,482	4,364
National Women Pairs	4,892	0	0	0	4,892	1,406	960	757	63	0	3,187	1,704	1,363	3,157
National Women Teams	5,464	0	0	0	5,464	3,380	1,160	1,561	136	0	6,237	(773)	(889)	259
Pachabo Cup	4,412	0	0	0	4,412	419	860	1,394	125	0	2,798	1,614	707	531
Ranked Masters Pairs	12,092	0	0	0	12,092	2,200	2,360	2,770	129	0	7,460	4,632	1,434	5,088
Scarborough Congress	16,917	0	0	0	16,917	604	3,410	3,160	416	0	7,590	9,327	6,854	9,968
Seniors Congress	24,335	0	0	0	24,335	3,363	5,450	3,464	545	0	12,823	11,511	10,792	11,971
Silver Plate	3,052	0	0	0	3,052	(60)	1,100	(100)	137	0	1,077	1,974	1,971	2,247
Spring Bank Holiday	23,577	0	0	0	23,577	5,333	4,545	5,350	347	0	15,576	8,001	5,363	7,734
Spring Foursomes	8,900	0	0	0	8,900	2,764	2,000	2,804	129	0	7,695	1,205	(324)	1,054
Swiss Teams Congress	9,782	0	0	0	9,782	4,794	1,900	1,714	322	0	8,729	1,052	2,915	3,575
Tollemache Cup	7,091	0	0	0	7,091	3,951	291	3,196	301	0	7,738	(647)	(635)	(1,125)
Year End Congress	32,427	0	0	0	32,427	10,866	6,760	6,839	223	0	24,687	7,741	11,023	7,774
Harrogate Congress	18,165	0	0	0	18,165	2,734	3,600	2,921	513	0	9,769	8,396	7,129	7,544
Isle of Man	3,605	0	1,000	0	4,604	1,840	790	1,181	77	0	3,888	716	1,662	945
Portland Bowl	306	0	0	0	306	107	0	370	11	0	488	(182)	(145)	591
Portland Pairs	11,186	0	0	0	11,186	850	2,240	2,036	95	0	5,221	5,965	1,598	3,361
Schools Cup	0	0	0	0	0	(389)	40	364	9	0	24	(24)	(1,374)	(625)
Seniors and Veterans	17,631	0	500	0	18,131	3,187	3,575	2,931	396	0	10,089	8,042	4,768	5,297
Shrewsbury Congress	16,528	0	0	0	16,528	1,959	3,200	2,961	58	0	8,178	8,349	6,466	6,854
Special Sim Pairs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(531)
Seniors K.O	6,072	0	0	0	6,072	0	700	0	20	0	720	5,351	0	0
U25 Pairs	217	0	0	0	217	596	152	481	214	0	1,443	(1,226)	(1,538)	(775)
Overseas Congress	20,726	0	0	0	20,726	2,083	2,735	2,354	7,386	0	14,558	6,169	2,438	5,386
Joint Ventures	0	0	0	23,329	23,329	0	0	0	0	0	0	23,329	22,952	21,207
Overall Total	591,021	16	3,000	23,329	617,368	112,924	108,289	118,746	42,137	0	382,095	235,272	191,034	215,764

THE ENGLISH BRIDGE UNION LIMITED**RESULTS FROM JOINT VENTURE COMPETITIONS****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2004**

All figures in £

EVENT		Income	Expenditure					TOTAL	EBU Income after VAT
			Room Hire	Prizes	TD Costs	Other Expenses	County 50% Share		
Avon	March	3,543	237	670	274	606	878	2,665	747
Bedfordshire	June	5,550	700	1,010	772	1,024	1,022	4,528	870
Bedfordshire	March	3,192	1,000	570	412	657	277	2,916	236
Channel Islands	March	1,470	100	245	499	0	313	1,157	266
Cornwall	September	2,880	180	510	345	150	848	2,033	722
Derbyshire	July	2,837	250	485	462	261	690	2,148	587
Derbyshire	September	5,231	500	1,000	836	317	1,289	3,942	1,097
Devon	June	4,167	505	780	297	545	1,020	3,147	868
Essex	June	4,124	1,447	670	389	1,174	233	3,913	198
Gloucestershire	September	3,006	1,058	500	264	452	366	2,640	311
Hampshire & IoW	September	17,587	3,372	3,150	2,189	1,999	3,438	14,148	2,926
Herefordshire	June	3,300	830	420	360	1,382	154	3,146	131
Hertfordshire	September	5,402	750	1,020	572	859	1,102	4,303	938
Kent	March	7,332	1,300	1,225	1,068	1,249	1,245	6,087	1,060
Lancashire	May	2,276	600	490	432	274	240	2,036	204
Lancashire	July	2,798	640	470	722	291	338	2,461	288
Leicestershire	September	see Derby				0		0	0
Leicestershire	March	see Notts				0		0	0
Lincolnshire	June	1,879	100	240	242	553	372	1,507	317
London	May	4,612	1,490	1,000	681	1,062	190	4,423	162
London/Middlesex	July	11,914	1,737	2,205	1,374	1,655	2,471	9,442	2,103
London/Middlesex	March	6,390	1,270	1,110	1,122	1,216	836	5,554	711
Manchester	July	2,858	630	560	476	200	496	2,362	422
Manchester	March	2,033	600	520	384	299	115	1,918	98
Merseyside & Cheshire	May	3,169	600	635	758	375	400	2,768	340
Merseyside & Cheshire	March	3,710	600	670	648	430	681	3,029	580
North East	June	1,748	345	200	271	136	398	1,350	339
Northamptonshire	May	2,671	100	420	335	766	525	2,146	447
Nottinghamshire	July	2,358	250	430	276	261	570	1,787	485
Nottinghamshire	March	6,977	660	1,250	928	826	1,656	5,320	1,409
Somerset	May	4,841	700	800	501	749	1,045	3,795	889
Suffolk	July	1,584	205	300	234	577	134	1,450	114
Surrey	June	8,766	1,645	1,520	743	1,544	1,657	7,109	1,410
Surrey	September	See HIW				0		0	0
Sussex	May	6,048	1,333	1,130	520	985	1,041	5,008	886
Warwickshire	May	2,925	1,250	520	308	507	170	2,755	145
Wiltshire	March					0		0	0
Worcestershire	September	2,498	300	400	319	209	635	1,863	540
Yorkshire	September	2,711	345	455	462	314	567	2,143	483
		154,387	27,629	27,580	20,475	23,904	27,412	126,999	23,329

Overall Total carried forward to
Competition Results (page 14)**23,329**