



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE YOUTH COMMITTEE
HELD AT THE WEST MIDLANDS BRIDGE CLUB, SOLIHULL
ON WEDNESDAY JANUARY 16TH 2008**

Present :	Clive Owen	Chairman
	Peter Stocken	EBU Chairman
	Jeff Morris	Board Member
	Graham Jepson	Board Member
	Chris Duckworth	Nominated Member
	Sandra Landy	U25 Women and Selection Committee
	Paul Bowyer	U25 Squad
	Michael Byrne	U20 Squad
	Mike Amos	EBU Youth Officer - Secretary

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All members of the Committee were present

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (24.10.2007)

a) Accuracy

Small changes for accuracy were made – date correction and spelling of a name

b) Matters Arising

Sandra Landy raised the issue of Terms of Reference for the Youth Committee. They had not yet been prepared by the Board. It was suggested that these should be broad and to include all matters related to Under 25 Bridge – and that a suitable itemised list should be prepared. It was agreed that this should include University Bridge where players under 28 were allowed, because most of our University teams would be made up of U25 payers. It was noted that the Selection Committee had begun the process of organising an U28 National team for the Mind Sports Olympiad.

c) Publication of Minutes

Youth Committee Minutes will be distributed as an attachment to the Board Minutes. It was agreed that it was appropriate for Minutes of the Youth Committee to be published on the alongside those of other Committees. It was noted that sensitive or personal material should not be included and agreed that public and private versions of the minutes should be prepared under the guidance of the Committee Chairman.

d) Junior Membership

Mike Amos commented that the Sims results showed many young players were taking part that had not joined the EBU. It was agreed that as the results were mailed out information and enrolment forms should be included.

In the same way, the team rosters for the Portland Bowl showed that not all these players were EBU members. In the short term again these teams could be mailed and encouraged to join the EBU. It was suggested and agreed that if the Portland Bowl entry fees were increased by £10 per team, membership could be included.

The Committee was of the opinion that variations in the amount paid in county subscriptions by Juniors was confusing and unnecessary and recommended to the Board and to Shareholders that there should be flat rates of £2 for Under 17 and £5 for Under 25.

e) CYO – Feedback from Clive Owen’s Research

The Committee received feedback on research undertaken by the Chairman on County Youth Officers. It was disturbing to note that a number of counties did not have a Youth Officer. It was agreed that the Chairman and the Secretary should organise regular mailing of CYOs, giving information about the work and targets of the Youth Committee and information about support that was available. For example, it was suggested that Cedric Cockcroft be invited to speak to a regional meeting of County Youth Officers to inform about his methods. It was noted that Cedric is successful in making the transition from Primary to Secondary as his primary schools are feeders for his secondary schools. It was also noted that his Saturday morning club is very popular.

It was agreed that the work and existence of Youth Educational Trust and how this could reflect in Youth Sponsorship, should be publicised to the EBU membership..

f) School Sims and Minibridge

The Committee received feedback on these competitions held before Christmas. 115 pairs took part in the Schools Bridge and 42 in the Minibridge from 12 and 4 centres respectively. These would be published on the web and through press releases locally.

g) Portland Bowl & University Teaching

It was reported that 18 teams had entered and the competition was underway. This was slightly down from an entry of 21 teams last year. It was reported that teaching under the University Teachers’ Scheme had been undertaken at 4 universities – (Warwick, Bristol, LSE and Birmingham). County Youth Officers could be encouraged to contact University Bridge Clubs with offers of support for the academic year beginning in the autumn 2008, drawing attention to the financial help offered by the EBU through the Teacher’s Scheme. This would provide time to prepare publicity for Fresher’s Week. Existing University Bridge Clubs should be offered support in their preparations for Freshers’ Week.

It was noted that the World University Bridge Championships would be taking place in Poland this August and that the winners of the Portland Bowl would be sent. English teams had done poorly in past years, because other countries selected national teams of University players. We are entitled to send two teams and a discussion about the possibility of selecting as strong as possible representative team composed of players from a mixture of universities alongside the winners of the Portland Bowl was raised. The Portland Bowl winners were not normally likely to be very strong. For the 2007 Championships held in Brugge, not all the winners had been available and a rather “ad hoc” team from Oxford had gone and fared very poorly. It was suggested that in this situation the runners-up should be asked to contribute a pair or pairs. The rules needed to be reconsidered. The World Championship was to be held in Poland in 2008 so costs would be relatively low.

The EBU Chairman raised the question of trying to find sponsorship for a significant Youth or University event. The 2009 European Universities Championship was raised as the European Universities Bridge Championship, now under the auspices of EUSA, is looking for a venue for its championships in 2009 and England has been asked to look into the possibility of finding suitable accommodation. Jeff Morris reported that the event in Brugge had very cheap inclusive student accommodation as it was in a catering college. He estimated that the European competition organizers need between £15,000 and £20,000 of financial support to be able to hold the event in England in 2009. Also it would need the backing of a major prestigious University

h) Gift Aid

Clive Owen raised the issue of Gift Aid in relation to sponsorship and the Youth Educational Trust. It was important that sponsors were made aware that this opportunity turned £100 into £128 for our use. This was a possible item for a news letter to CYOs.

i) Squad Training at EBU events

Paul Bowyer reported that the idea of combining training with EBU events had not so far taken off in the U25 squad because the take-up from squad members had not been sufficient.

3. WEB PAGES

There was not a great deal to report at this stage. Chris Duckworth had looked at the Really Easy Bridge website and it would be easy to copy that model. Sandra Landy said that we needed to be clear about what structure and content was required; this was a top-down problem. There was a need for quizzes and interactive material such as a forum. Material needed to be prepared for different levels of players, but also teachers and CYOs. Michael Clark and Matt Betts need to be involved.

4. CODE OF CONDUCT

The Committee reviewed the Code of Conduct signed by Squad Members. It was found to be satisfactory. Michael Byrne reported that all members of the U20 Squad had signed the contract. Paul Bowyer said that most of the Squad had completed contracts, but he would check to ensure that all of the current squad were covered.

The draft letter to be sent to schools giving details of selection and success was regarded as a good idea and to be used where appropriate.

5. U20 DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

Michael Byrne reported that a problem had arisen at the Squad weekend in Harrogate held the week before the Channel Trophy. A player had behaved badly to his partner, using obscene and abusive language. His attitude had been uncooperative and disrespectful to the Squad Manager and his assistant. This behaviour did not improve on the second day and he was suspended from the Squad, losing his privileges of free entry and his selection from the Channel Trophy team was withdrawn. The Committee fully endorsed the approach taken with the player. Since then the player had participated in other tournaments and his attitude had been positive. He had met Clive Owen and expressed a desire to continue to play and participate in the U20 Squad. It was agreed that the deselection for the Channel Trophy and the loss of Squad privileges for the Year-End Tournament were sufficient punishment. The player concerned had not been selected for the Peggy Bayer team. Paul Bowyer and Clive Owen would co-operate to produce a letter to be sent to the player making it clear that no repetition of the inappropriate behaviour would be tolerated. *(The player has volunteered to help with the BBO transmission at the Junior Camrose weekend and this offer has been accepted)*

6. ANNUAL AWARDS 2007

A paper was received giving background and discussing procedures. It was agreed that the first meeting each year should receive nominations and select the individual/s for the awards. It was agreed that these awards should be widely publicised and that in future it would be appropriate to invite nominations towards the end of the previous year. After some discussion the following awards were agreed. The young player and pair award are for U21 players

Young Player of the Year

Tom Paske

Young Pair of the Year

Ed Jones & Ben Paske

Alec Salisbury Award

Richard Croot

This is awarded to an adult who has made an outstanding contribution to the development of Youth Bridge by a school teacher

Tom Bradley Award

Bomi Kavarana

An award given to a non- teacher for their contribution to the development of Youth Bridge

7. FINANCE

In response to an enquiry Max Bavin had produced the following data relating to spending on Youth Bridge

- 5.0K squad training (spent 3.7K last financial year)
- 1.8K Dutch invitation (spent 1.3K last financial year)
- 0.7K junior trials (spent 0.6K last financial year)

Although this provided some information, it was by no means the full picture only representing the International Budget. Clive agreed he would discuss with Michael Hill and Barry Capal to provide a fuller picture.

The Chairman presented a report of a meeting between Sally Budgen and a potential sponsor. The amount available is substantial - £20,000 a year for three years or equivalent for a sustainable project aimed a target group of 7-11 year olds. The Committee received this information with enthusiasm and agreed to go away and consider options which could be circulated and discussed by email.

One suggestion was to examine the successful approach of Cedric Cockcroft in Harrogate and consider if this could be replicated. County Youth Officers could be asked to contribute ideas

8. JUNIOR INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

a) **Channel Trophy** Reports were received from the three NPCs. The Committee congratulated the teams and their captains on a fine performance. It was especially pleasing to win the inaugural Girls' Tournament. The U25 team were hampered by the health problems of one of the team. The three teams had integrated well and were genuinely supportive of each other.

b) **Junior Camrose and Peggy Bayer 2008** Mike Amos reported on progress so far. He had visited the venue and had discussions with Manchester CBA relating to volunteer help and publicity for the event. It was widely agreed that it was an opportunity to promote bridge and its teaching. Plans were in hand to invite Schools and teachers. Concerns were expressed about the short time scale that now existed to publicise this event adequately to schools and teachers. Matt Betts would be asked to help in the preparation of a suitable promotional leaflet as soon as possible. Jeff Morris said it would have been productive to have had Matt Betts present at this meeting
The Committee were reassured that discussion between Mike Amos and Matt Betts had taken place in December and that he was fully briefed. The only problem with the venue was that there were unlikely to be enough bedrooms onsite because the majority of rooms were doubles. This problem would be overcome either by hospitality offered by MCBA members or booking bedrooms in a nearby Travelodge which was reasonably priced. Vugraph onsite would be managed by Michael Clark and broadcast on BBO would be arranged for one match.

c) **Peggy Bayer Team Selection** Michael Byrne proposed that the following team should be selected:-

James Paul	Graeme Robertson
Liz Roberts	Jennie Marvin
Tom Rainforth	James Thrower
NPC	Michael Byrne
Assistant NPC	Alan Shillitoe

This was agreed. Michael preferred not to select reserves because if a pair was unavailable at the last minute his chosen replacement would depend on the pair that had to drop out.

d) **Whitehouse Tournament** The early timing of Easter meant that the dates of this tournament were not convenient for several of our players. Both the U25 and U20 Squad Managers had two suitable pairs at least available but it was not felt that there was sufficient availability to make entry of a third team a viable proposition. Michael Byrne would liaise with Sandra

Landy about the possibility of adding a pair to the team. Mike Amos stressed the urgent need to confirm these details so that cheap flights could be booked and accommodation confirmed.

- e) **Mind Sports 2008 – U20 Mike** Byrne reported that team training was going well. He had some pairs in mind although others were in contention and with the sponsorship received had been able to take two teams to Llangollen to the WBU Swiss teams in November. Further sponsorship to the amount of £1000 had been received and this would enable further practice as a team.
- f) **Channel Trophy 2008** The Committee was reminded that the Channel Trophy was due to be held in England in 2008. The search for a suitable venue needed to be begun as soon as possible. The chosen date is close to Christmas so hotel accommodation is not straightforward. Max Bavin should be involved. Steve Eginton had made some suggestions about approaching Euro Tunnel for sponsorship in terms of free tickets. While London and the South East might seem the best location for the event, in practice, the Midlands or even Manchester with local airports with cheap airfares, might provide more reasonably priced hotel and conference facilities.
- g) **Trials** Paul Bowyer produced a paper relating to U25 Trials in 2008. He was proposing the same format as he had adopted in 2006 but had received what he had thought unfair criticism so sought the Committee's opinion on the proposals.

Two weekends had been set aside

September 20th 21st 2008

October 25th 26th 2008

The first weekend would be an open trial for the Junior Camrose team. The second would be for the European Junior Championships in 2009. This would be closed in the sense that entries would need to apply and the Squad Manager would be in a position to reject applications if he felt the pair were too weak. The problem had arisen in 2006/7 not with the four pairs selected for the Championship, but with the rest of the Squad which effectively disbanded itself and discontinued training. Although there were some dissenting voices, the Committee broadly supported the idea of two trials and some guarantee of places in the Junior Camrose Team or the Squad from which the European Team would be selected. It was recommended that a more flexible approach was adopted so that the Squad Manager was not forced to exclude pairs that he wanted to include. A final squad of six pairs was thought to be more appropriate than four.

9. AOB

Graham Jepson said that with so many items in the meeting relating to communications it would have been very worthwhile having the EBU's Communications Officer present. Mike Amos was asked to prepare a paper for the next meeting outlining the areas of Youth Bridge work which were still being undertaken by John Pain in the EBU Office.

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

9th April

11.00am - 2.00pm

West Midlands Bridge Club