Minutes of Tournament Committee Meeting: 28th Jan 2020

**Present**: Irene Davies, Jeff Morris, Joan Lewis, Susan Triggs, Jeff Smith, Adam Wiseberg, Michael Byrne, Barbara Eastabrook, Rodney Lighton

**Apologies**: Alan Mould, Kevin Comrie, Barbara Lewis, John Roberts, Rhona Goldenfield, Ann Thornton, Joy Blakey

**Congress**:

We agreed to stay at the V&A for 2021

Heating – try to get the hotel to put on the day before and provide fan heaters for the cold end of the room.

Parking – make the leaflet and web site clearer about parking at the hotel and reduced price parking at the NCP on Stanley Street.

Try to arrange the tables better to provide more space.

Date 2nd/3rd Jan with set up on afternoon of 1st Jan.

Directors to be Henry Bissell and Nicholas Greer. Possibly ask them to do the Higson final for director practice.

Entry – emphasise prefer by BACS.

Pairs seeding – seed approx. top 10-12 pairs to distribute equally among sections.

**Intermediate Pairs**:

The PotY intermediate to be renamed the PotY non-expert.

Instead of trying to categorise Intermediate for the one session events, advertise event for non-tournament players, starting with the summer event 2020.

**Cantor Cup**:

Ray Ashleigh organising, but will be away on the event day (23rd Feb). Jeff Morris will run the event on the day.

**Tournament Secretary**:

Michael Byrne to attempt to recruit someone to fill this role.

Procedure documents for organising events to be supplied to Rodney and Michael and posted on the web.

**Ben Franks Report**

The 2019 Ben Franks Competition was held at Manchester Bridge Club on Sunday 1st Dec 2019. 31 Pairs entered, of which 2 were junior pairs. This was an increase over the 2018 event, which attracted 14 pairs. This year, the event was open to other county associations. There were 4 non-Manchester pairs (3 from Lancashire and 1 from Merseyside). 3 of these pairs finished in the top four places!

The winners were David Stevenson and Paddy Murphy of Merseyside. John Holland and Alan Mould of Manchester were runners up. The 4 highest placed Manchester Pairs qualified for the Corwen Trophy in June 2020. They were John Holland and Alan Mould, Peter Foster and John Roberts, Christopher Hine and Stephen Ward, and Joy and Irving Blakey

The event was directed by Henry Bissell who did a good job on the day (although was not great at responding to emails or texts !!). I received great help from a number of people, including Joan, Joy, Irene, Adam, Rhona, Rodney and Jeff Smith. All of whom I would like to thank. Apologies if I have omitted anyone. Adam was very helpful in doing two email shots. This, in my opinion, definitely helped to increase the entry. After each email shot, there was an immediate flurry of entries. This approach should be considered for other Manchester events.

Fifteen and a half tables made things a little cramped in the large room, but I received no complaints to that effect.

The increased revenue from the increased entry was largely used to increase the prize money. The event more or less broke even (approximate figures below, but I think Joy will have the exact figures). It would have made a small profit but for the fact that the handicap prize (4 bottles of wine) was initially awarded to the wrong pair (who provided an incorrect NGS score). This necessitated a further 4 bottles to be purchased and awarded after the event to the rightful handicap winners.

Table Money 186 **Entry income 720**

Director 80

Duplimated boards 40

Cash prizes 240

Wine and mince pies 123

Flyers 23

Extra prize 30

**Total expenditure 722**

All in all it was a successful event, played in a friendly atmosphere with no major hitches.

**John Roberts**

**Congress report January 2020**

**Congress numbers 2014 - 2019**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Pairs | Teams | Nov 1 | Nov 3 | Total players | **Profit £** | **Loss £** |
| 2014 | 74 | 36 | 14 | 12 | 344 |  | **367** |
| 2015 | 68 | 29 | 14 | 20 | 320 |  | **685** |
| 2016 | 65 | 29 | 19 | 14 | 312 |  | **945** |
| 2017 | 73 | 38 | 13 | 17 | 358 | **279** |  |
| 2018 | 66 | 33 | 15 | 14 | 322 |  | **209** |
| 2019 | 64 | 26 | 17 | 18 | 302 |  | **625\*** |
| 2020 | 61 | 33 | 21 | 27 | 350 | **C 1000** |  |

\*V&A forgot again to charge for parking so loss actually **£405**

The £1000 profit may reduce to £750 if the V&A charges us for parking. The hotel reduced the cost of the venue by £850 this year for fear of losing us and will charge the same price next year. (£2550).

It was a very successful Congress. The increase in numbers was due to better publicity this year. The roller banner advertising Congress was taken to most of the EBU clubs in the area along with leaflets. AW organised a mass e-mailing members for the event which also built the numbers. It was particularly good to see the increases in what we called the Jack High events. We styled the event as a Congress for all players. However, we had fewer young players this year as MB couldn’t attend and that had a knock on effect. Directing was good in the main. Nobody complained about the timings or slowness of play. Catering was fine.

**Problems:**

* The heating at the back of the room has always been an issue but it was worse than ever at the start of play. (and it wasn’t a cold day.) I put another heater in the area after 4 boards and asked staff to turn up the heating, but the area didn’t really warm up until the second session. I have complained many times to the hotel about this. I will suggest that the heating is put on the day before at least in that area.
* The set-up of the room meant that players on one side of the room found movement difficult. This was a serious concern for a number of players. If we stay at this venue we will either have to Limit numbers or find a better way of setting out the room. We could again look at other venues. The MMU Business school was the most likely alternative when we looked last year.
* There was some confusion over which car park had a half price offer agreed with the hotel. We need to clarify this in our leaflets next year.
* There were complaints about the directing of the Kevin Comrie Cup on the Sunday. There was some chaos at the start of the event and players complained of abruptness and even rudeness from the director. Though all the complainants said they really enjoyed the event. In the director’s defence it was his first time doing this event and the chaos at the start was not wholly his fault. But, I think we shall have to look elsewhere for a director for this event next year.
* There was a problem that the toilets were not cleaned and toilet rolls not refreshed before the start of play on Sunday. The hotel had to be prompted about this.
* The hotel had also forgotten to provide us with biros and a prize for the mixed pairs. This was rectified when they were prompted.
* Neil Morley has told us that he doesn’t want to direct next year as he is looking to retire from his directing duties. He thought that Nicholas and Henry could take over. They are keen to do the job.

Irene Davies 23/1/20