

Minutes of the YCBA Tournament Committee meeting held on Tuesday 5th December 2023 at 7.00 pm by Zoom video conference.

PRESENT: Nick Woolven (Tournament Chair), Lesley Millet (Treasurer), Robin Jepson (Assistant Secretary), Ron Millet, Pauline Stout and Stuart Davies.

1) Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

Apologies had been received from Dani Hyman and Stephen Cordingley. No declarations of interest.

2) and 3) Minutes of previous meeting on 14th September 2023 and matters arising

The minutes were approved and no-one had anything to add. Matters arising:

- It was accepted that the proposed RealBridge competition will not be taking place and this issue is now closed.
- Trophies. NW reported the Waddington Shield trophy has been returned with a new plinth added by Richard Winter, and it has been passed on to the York team who were the winners in 2023.
- RJ has not had the opportunity of pursuing further the issue of the missing trophies but will do so before the next meeting, including circulating a list of the current whereabouts of Yorkshire League and Congress trophies so far as known. It was also agreed that a working group of RJ, SD and NW will consider and advise the TC on future arrangements for recognising the achievements of competition winners including whether or not the existing silver trophies ought to be retained at all.
- NW also reported the proposal by Lancashire to revive the bilateral inter-county matches is not proceeding.

4) Review of competitions played since the last meeting

The Great Northern Swiss Pairs was a successful competition with an increased number of entries and positive feedback about the venue, which has been booked again for next year.

5) Arrangements for forthcoming events

- New Year Bonanza. - NW taking entries, Ken Johnston appointed as TD with responsibility for BBO setup. PS will devise a flyer to be sent out to clubs and NW will ask Jim Edwards to post a News Flash on the website. Event will be blue pointed. Closing date 30th December for both pairs and teams.
- Yorkshire Pairs. Jim Edwards will be TD.
- Harrogate Spring Congress and Northern Easter Festival. Entries are already coming in.
- Yorkshire Congress. At last year's Congress held at York Bridge Club, some players gave feedback that they would prefer the event to be played at a hotel. LM and RM have approached the Marriott Hotel, York which is a very pleasant venue adjoining the racecourse and has excellent car parking. However the cost of hiring the playing rooms is expensive and the entry fees, assuming a similar number of players as last year, would be in the region of £80 for the Pairs (with a meal) £52 for the Teams and £22 for a one session Nine High event (again no meal). SD commented that this was above the going rate for such events and the cost might deter some from entering. Consideration was given to holding the Nine High event in the morning but the players would not be able to attend the AGM taking place at the

same time. After discussion, a decision on whether or not to proceed with the Marriott was deferred to the next meeting - meanwhile LM and RM will enquire about the availability of another hotel in York.

- Affiliated Teams (18th April) - NW to enquire about the availability of Wakefield Bridge Club and, failing that, Keighley. Last year the competition was played at Doncaster but, though only seven teams took part, there were complaints that the playing area was cramped.
- Yorkshire Mixed Pairs - it was noted that the allocated date of 12th May was very close to the dates of the Nelson Rose Bowl and the first match day of the summer season of the Online Yorkshire League, so it was decided to move the date to 16th June. Last year the event was run online and attracted an entry of only 10 pairs, and it was felt that playing the event face-to-face might revive its fortunes, so NW will enquire about the availability of Wakefield and Keighley.
- Waddington Cup final (14th July) - to be played at York Bridge Club again.

6) Report from Yorkshire League Committee

Approval was given to the proposed dates for:

- Online Yorkshire League Summer 2024 - 19th May, 23rd June, 7th July
- Yorkshire league 2024 - 13th October*, 27th October, 17th November, 1st December, 16th February*, 2nd March*, 16th March*. The dates marked * are provisional and might have to be moved to avoid clashes with the EBU's Great Northern Swiss Pairs in the autumn and the Harrogate Congress and National Pairs (regional heats) in the spring.
- Online Yorkshire League Winter 2025 - 5th January, 19th January, 2nd February.

The 2023-24 season of the Yorkshire League is under way with four rounds of matches played and no major problems, though three matches scheduled for 3rd December were postponed owing to bad weather conditions.

Entries have closed for the Winter 2024 season of the Online Yorkshire League with 36 teams taking part. There will be three divisions of 10,10 and 16 teams. Each team will play nine matches, so the third division will not be a complete round robin but, as there is an even number of teams, there will be no bye rounds.

7) Other Business

- NW initiated a discussion on a proposal by Gill Copeland and Stuart Davies that YCBA should reintroduce prize money for its competitions. LM commented that when entries for competitions are low, awarding prizes can have a significant impact on entry fees, assuming that competitions are not run at a loss. There was a general feeling that the achievements of competition winners should be recognised in some way, for example free entry to another competition, or the award of a 'glass trophy', and it was decided to refer the issue to the working group on trophies for further consideration. The engravings on the silver trophies are the only record we have of previous competition winners and it was suggested that lists of such winners should be compiled and kept in an archive on the website.
- It was agreed that RJ as acting Secretary would write to the organisers of the Northern Bridge League about the fourth match day of the Northern Bridge League on 12th October 2024. This clashes with the Jewish holy day, Yom Kippur, and some players in the Yorkshire teams would be unavailable.

8) Date of next meeting

Wednesday 14th February 2023 at 4.30 pm by Zoom video conferencing.