

# CYMDEITHAS BOWLIO MAT BYR CYMRU

## WELSH SHORT MAT BOWLS ASSOCIATION

The Governing Body for the Sport in Wales

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### Minutes of meeting held at The Radnorshire Bowls Stadium on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2024

**Present:** Craig Evans (CE) Chair, Gerald Hands (GH) Vice-Chair, John Matthews (JM) Treasurer, Wyn Jones (WJ) Secretary, Paul Hudson (PH) Pembrokeshire, Jac Edwards (JE) and Chris McWhinnie (CW) Montgomery, Ted Gittoes (TG) B&R, David Williams (DW), Terry Batt (TB) and William Bowcutt (WB) West Glamorgan, Gethin Edwards (GE) Carmarthen, Richard Palmer (RP) Bowls Wales Adviser

1. The Chair (CE) welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.
2. **Apologies:** Wrexham, Swansea (Stephen Williams (SW)), Arwel Nicholas, Darren Davies (Cards)
3. **Minutes of previous meeting (28/07/24):** GE proposed and TG seconded and the meeting approved the minutes as a true and accurate account of the meeting.
4. **Matters Arising:**
  - Point 8 – Code of conduct for umpires; it was confirmed that this is not yet on the WSMBA website and is still ongoing;
  - Point 8 – GH asked if there has been confirmation as to whether any Welsh umpires are required to officiate at the BI Championships in Scotland. CE was waiting for final confirmation but it was unlikely as he (and WJ) believes that Scottish ‘indoor long mat umpires’ will be given training in short mat rules and procedures to enable them to officiate;
  - Point 8 – it was confirmed that juniors would be allowed to wear appropriate shorts for all Welsh National competitions. It was also clarified that this rule (for all categories) refers to Welsh events only and not international matches and championships.
  - Point 8 – advertising boards; to be discussed later in the meeting.

#### 5. Correspondence

WJ had received an e-mail from the Welsh Indoor Bowls Association (WIBA) suggesting a coordinated response to the issues currently being experienced at Bowls Wales with staffing changes. RP informed the meeting that several directors, and some operational staff, had left Bowls Wales recently and Sport Wales had appointed a consultant (James Allen) to investigate the reasons for this and how Bowls Wales should move forward. RP felt that the best approach was to work with the consultant in a positive and constructive way to support Bowls Wales to resolve any issues there might be. The executive committee resolved to support this approach and asked RP to continue working positively with the consultant.

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### 6. Financial Report:

As usual JM presented a very thorough report supported by a handout for each county rep. He was disappointed that, at the current time, only 36 clubs had returned their registration forms (the final figure last year was 82) and asked county reps to follow up within their counties. There were some counties where no clubs had been registered yet and one explanation could be that these are collated by one person within the county (Secretary/Treasurer/Membership Sec) who then submits them all to WSMBA 'en-bloc' which is currently giving a false picture.

JM went through items of income and expenditure since the last meeting and illustrated likely income and expenditure through to November\*, including the amounts due for coach transport and hotel for the BI Championships in Scotland.

Current account balance @ 28 <sup>th</sup> September	£23,414.33
Reserve account balance @ 28 <sup>th</sup> September	£17,668.68
Cash in hand	<u>£ 373.00</u>
	£41,456.01

\*N.B. There is £9891.49 accommodation and transport costs and £5,500.00 player subsidies to be paid which are included in these balances and which will reduce the total accordingly.

Sheet 4 of JM's handout contained a very interesting breakdown of the registration forms that had been submitted so far and of the 607 registered players, 34 were new to short mat bowls which augurs well for the future.

JM also presented the breakdown of costs and players' payments for the ladies' BI event in October and the main BI event in November which are discussed under agenda item 7 below.

### 7. British Isles:

#### Ladies BI event:

RP confirmed that all payments had been received from players well in advance and all organizational aspects were on-track: trophies, programme, etc and there had been an excellent response from sponsors purchasing advertising space in the programme such that additional pages had to be added. Bowls Wales support funding had been used to subsidise players with £50.00 hotel and £15.00 travel allowances.

#### British Isles Championships Scotland:

Some payments were still to be received from players attending the BI Championships in Scotland and CE/SW to chase up as a matter of urgency and it was resolved that any player who had not paid by 6<sup>th</sup> October (first practice session) would be withdrawn from the championships. All accommodation and transport had been booked with WSMBA having to cover the accommodation costs for two bus drivers (which is the norm). JM drew attention to the fact that four people (one player and three supporters) had withdrawn without having paid and there will now be a shortfall as costs (accommodation and travel) were calculated based on the number of people who had said they were attending. After a long discussion, the committee resolved that it was not fair to pass this extra cost onto the remaining players and reluctantly decided that it should be borne by the WSMBA. However, it was also resolved that, as this situation had happened before, the association must implement a process where payments for any competition are required to be made before the deadline imposed by the hotel(s), so as not to leave the WSMBA in a vulnerable position. RP and PH confirmed that this approach had been successfully adopted for both the BI ladies' event and the

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Top Team event. CE volunteered to contact one of the supporters who had withdrawn to try to recover payment. CE also confirmed that the travel arrangements will be confirmed via the WSMBA Facebook page.

CE informed the committee that there is likely to be a resolution at the BI Council meeting stating that leads will not be allowed to 'run the jack into the ditch' with their first, or possibly their first two woods. It is unclear at this stage what the actual proposal(s) will be at the Council meeting as the agenda has not yet been circulated. CE further explained that if a team did try to run the jack on their first wood(s), any toucher that followed the jack into the ditch would be regarded as a dead wood and removed from the mat, whereas the jack would stay in the ditch. The toucher must stay in the live area on the mat. There was also a query as to whether the whole of the toucher must be in the live area – what if part of it is intersecting the ditch line? CE asked for a decision on how the WSMBA delegation should vote in respect of two questions – i) just the first or first two woods and ii) toucher intersecting the ditch line.

There was quite a lengthy discussion and it emerged that WSMBA had already submitted a resolution, which had not been discussed with anyone on the Executive Committee, that players (singles and leads) could not run the jack with **only the first wood**. There was no explanation as to how this resolution was submitted without discussion but the committee felt that, having submitted the resolution, our delegation had no option other than to support it at the meeting.

On the second question, RP proposed, GE seconded, **that if any part of the toucher is in the live area, then it should be regarded as a live wood** otherwise it will be regarded as dead and removed from the mat. The committee unanimously approved the proposal.

### 8. Umpires:

WJ informed the meeting that he is still waiting on new badges but he does have certificates and badges for those umpires who qualified pre-COVID.

GH informed the meeting that there are several umpires that are struggling with various issues i.e. age, mobility and should probably be encouraged to step aside but that he would like to have a session with umpires for standardization and re-affirmation of the rules.

GH also sought clarification of how the rule on following a wood up the mat is to be enforced at the upcoming ladies' event in Carmarthen, which had proved to be an issue at the BI Championships at Prestatyn last year. GE confirmed that the rule has been clarified in the programme for the event as a warning for the first offence and the opposing skip can request that the wood be removed on second, and any further instances. The committee resolved that the approach that umpires should take for the ladies' event is one of facilitating and supporting the play and not be overly intrusive.

### 9. Policies for WSMBA website:

Some committee members thought that the policies would have been circulated prior to the meeting for discussion at the meeting. WJ explained that RP had been customizing Bowls Wales policies to WSMBA headings, etc. RP informed the meeting that he had, in fact, collated information from several sources into approx. 12 policies which were important for WSMBA to display prominently. The meeting resolved that RP should send the policies to PH for circulation to executive committee members for discussion at the next meeting and to GE for uploading to the website. Any changes could then be made after discussion at executive meetings.

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### 10. AOB

#### County Reps:

West Glamorgan: note new Secretary – William Bowcutt – who had attended this meeting and should be included in circulation list;

Pembrokeshire: PH informed the meeting that the WSMBA subsidy for the Top Team event will be used to subsidise players' hotel costs;

Montgomery: CM was going to raise the issue of 'ditching the jack' which has already been covered and he confirmed that, following the discussion at the last meeting, there is no need to consider re-naming the county;

Brecon & Radnor: TG confirmed that Brecon & Radnor will be continuing as a county for at least another year and it is their intention to play in the Welsh County Competition. The committee was delighted to hear this news;

#### Competition Secretary:

GE informed the meeting that he had received an e-mail in his role as Competition Secretary to say that the bowls hall in Llandrindod was double booked on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> April next year when the Senior Trial and the League Winners cup are due to be played. They had offered some alternative dates but these would clash with other events. GE had checked that Bro Myrddin is available as an alternative and the unanimous view was that rather than cause several other problems by changing dates, the trial and League Winners Cup will be moved to Carmarthen on the planned dates. GE to confirm with venue and amend website.

#### Sponsorship boards:

This had been partially discussed earlier in the meeting. CE re-iterated that the cost of producing each board would be £40.00 and he asked the committee to set a price to be sought from potential sponsors. After some discussion, the committee resolved that we should try to obtain £200.00 per board (i.e. profit of £160.00 per board) for a three-year advertising period, which could be split into 2 sponsors @ £100.00 each or 4 @ £50.00 each or some similar combination e.g. 1 @ £100 and 2 @ £50.00. There was a suggestion that each county should be responsible for sourcing sponsors for one board each but PH was not convinced that this would work given that some counties will not contribute to "buying" advertising space in international programmes when championships are held in Wales. Each sponsor would also be identified by having a presence on the WSMBA website as well. Feedback and progress will be reviewed at the next meeting.

#### Dates of next meetings:

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2025

Draws for the National Finals will take place at the next meeting – 15/12/24

#### Election of selectors:

County reps were reminded that the selectors' terms of office expire in January so selectors will need to be elected at the next meeting. Nominations must be made in writing to either CE, WJ or PH by no later than Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November so that they can be circulated to each county for consideration in good time for the meeting. There are 5 selectors to be chosen but there can only be one selector from a particular county.

The meeting closed at 12.20 pm.