

POWER AND DUTIES OF CAPTAINS FOR WA TEAMS

Introduction

A Captain's main objective is to obtain the best possible performance from the team at the designated event.

To achieve this objective, the captain is responsible for arranging and/or managing the training, discipline & welfare of the team prior to and during the championships and for planning and executing optimum competitive stratagems. To this end it is recommended that the Captain performs as many functions as are reasonable to allow the players to focus **solely** on optimising their bridge performance.

The term of the Captain is from the appointment to the position until returning to WA after the completion of the event.

Matters relating to being a State Team Captain are covered by Reg 25 *BAWA Supplementary Regulations*. It is recommended that all potential Captains familiarise themselves with that as well as the contents of this document before applying for the role.

Liaison with BAWA

The Captain will act as the contact point between the team, BAWA, and the tournament organisers. The Captain represents BAWA at all official functions of the championships.

The Captain can, upon presentation of receipts, be reimbursed by BAWA for any reasonable administrative costs up to \$100 incurred in preparing the team for the event. Any expenditure above this amount needs to be approved by the BAWA Treasurer before the expense is incurred.

Travel

The Captain is not the travel agent to the team. The Captain may choose to investigate fares and options and make recommendations for the team but the team members are totally responsible for making their own bookings.

The Captain should be aware however of the final travel arrangements including arrival times, whether the organisers intend to transport players from the airport, and if so, make the necessary arrangements for that to happen.

The Captain should ensure the team gets to the tournament early enough to rest and become acclimatized to the venue before play starts. In general terms, BAWA expects the team to arrive at least 24 hours prior to the commencement of the first match.

Before the tournament

The Captain should ensure that all members of the team have adequately prepared for the event. This includes:

- (a) Arranging team practices as appropriate;
- (b) Ensuring attendance at any Team Days scheduled by BAWA;

- (c) Ensuring that all players are playing regularly in their partnerships; and
- (d) Where appropriate, arranging a mentor for pairs who may benefit from it.

The Captain is also responsible for the timely submission of System Cards for each pair. This includes ensuring that all players have fully documented their systems before submitting them, as many players are prone to submitting deficient or incomplete system cards and supplementary notes. Players should be informed that once the cards have been submitted, any changes need to be approved by the process set out in the Event Regulations.

Once submitted, opponents' cards should be procured from the ABF website at www.abf.com.au and given to each player so they can become familiar well before they leave Perth. In consultation with each pair, arrange for suitable defences to be prepared. If necessary, consult leading players for their ideas on specialised defences.

It is recommended that the Captain takes ample supplies of spare cards to the event for each pair.

The Captain should also become familiar with the Event Regulations and, where necessary, inform the players of relevant Regulations.

Personal Issues

It is critical that the Captain obtain and maintain the respect of the team. Management of the team in the following areas is also vital:

- Maintain control over individuals and partnerships.
- Prevent players from dominating discussions.
- Be aware of seating preferences (N,S,E,W)
- Be aware of any particular times that players believe that they perform optimally or otherwise.
- Not allow players to allocate blame for errors.
- Ban discussions during play including post mortems at the table.
- Ensure that players respect cultural and language differences which may exist either before, during or after the event.

The Captain needs to say whatever will encourage/influence the players to play at their best in their next session/day.

During the event

The Captain should ensure the team is kept motivated, even when well ahead or well behind in the event, keeping in mind the long-term objectives of the team.

(a) Line-Ups

Prior to departure determine if any of your player have issues with any of the opponents such as previous good or bad results or personal experiences that may influence the line up. Players may be reluctant to express these views at the venue so soliciting them in advance is more appropriate.

The Captain must provide line-ups to the tournament staff on time and in accordance with the Event Regulations. The Captain should consider strategy in the selection of which pairs to play and the placement of those pairs.

The Captain should observe how each pair performs against particular opponents and be aware of any psychological issue with any opposing pairs. Where possible, the Captain should keep datums of individual pair's performance and consider these when deciding line-ups.

The Captain should decide the manner in which line-up decisions are made. This will very much depend on the relationship that the captain establishes with the team and the relationship between the players themselves. However, the responsibility for line-ups ultimately rests with the Captain.

(b) Team Rules

It is recommended that the captain establishes a principle with the team of not second-guessing line-ups and other decisions, In other words, once decisions are made, that should be the end of the discussion and the captain and/or players should not subsequently discuss what they would have or should have done.

Some rules that will assist with team harmony include:

- Do not offer or solicit comments from players as to how they went prior to the score up even from pairs who may have sat out.
- No comments between players prior to scoring up.
- No comments during the score up.
- Ensure that players avoid comments like "I thought we had done much better" or similar. Players at this level know when they have done badly and don't need to be 'reminded'.

(c) State Representatives Code of Conduct

Captains are State Representatives and are hence personally subject to the State Representatives Code of Conduct outlined in Reg 28, *BAWA Supplementary Regulations*. The Captain is also BAWA's representative for the team and so is responsible for reporting to the BAWA Management Committee on any apparent breaches of the State Representatives Code of Conduct by any member of the team. This may be done via the Captain's Report for the team where the transgressions are of a less serious nature.

Administrative duties

The Captain should endeavour to create an environment where players feel that they will give their best. That is helped by ensuring:

- All travel plans are in order.
- Players are aware of their first point of contact when they arrive.

- Players know how the team will be run before leaving WA.
- All players have satisfactory accommodation.
- The team has somewhere where they can eat and rest comfortably.
- The players can be reached at all times particularly in the case of an emergency. In this regard, the Captain should encourage players to bring their mobile phones as SMS messages are a good means of keeping in touch.
- Having a common meeting point as players leave the playing area.

(a) Score up

Try to allocate a meeting point for score up so that players do not have to search for team members after completing play. This should be done quietly with no comments about particular hands, particularly where a pair has got a bad score. Some discussions after the score has been tallied can be productive, but no 'finger pointing' should occur.

(b) Appeals

Appeals should be a team decision. If players intend to appeal, they should merely advise the Director of the possibility of an appeal and then discuss this with the team and the Captain. The Captain must represent his/her team in all matters pertaining to appeals. However, it is important to not appeal unless the grounds merit an appeal. Remember that even if the team is not in contention, it may be appropriate to appeal to protect the field.

(c) Captains Meetings

The Captain must attend all meetings and report relevant information to team members. The conditions of contest are very important and all players must be made aware of them, and any changes that occur throughout the tournament.

(d) Report

On return to WA, a full report of the tournament and the team's performance is to be provided to the Tournament Committee and the Management Committee within eight weeks. The Report will be confidential to BAWA and its officers. The Report should cover the following areas:

- preparation for the event;
- training and practice;
- performance of team at the event on a match by match basis including, where possible, the datums for each pair;
- overall results;
- morale, behaviour and presentation;
- any matters arising under the State Representatives Code of Conduct
- any other significant issues; and
- recommendations.