

## National Council Competition Review Sub Committee

### APPENDIX B – AMENDED

#### Senior National Championships

Alan Ransome: Chairman  
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Karen Tonge  
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The National Council Competition Review Sub Committee have submitted a report to the last meeting of National Council which included Appendix B, copy attached, with proposals for the National Senior Championships. The majority of the committee who were present throughout the National Championships in Nottingham last month felt that we could add to our proposals with regard to the National Senior Championships with the objective of making improvements for future seasons.

The committee were pleased to see that there had been some good improvements with regard to the National Senior Championships last year, in that all of the top players participated and that the majority of the television coverage on the final day was very well received by members, that we have talked to, who watched it on line. The Fan Zone was also a significant improvement.

The David Ross Sports Village situated on Nottingham University campus is an excellent venue for the National Championships. The facilities and playing conditions in the hall are very good and the location is ideal with it being in the middle of the country so avoiding too much travel for both the participants and the spectators.

The National Championships is the best chance in most years to present the sport to the public be they members of the association or people interested in table tennis. In this respect the construction of the playing schedule and the arrangements of the tables and seating in the venue can be better designed to achieve this.

With regard to spectators, the Saturday afternoon and early evening should be two of the most attractive times in the Championships, however, for a considerable period of time on Saturday afternoon only para matches were being played on the show courts and clearly from the number of empty seats in the hall and the fact that many spectators were visibly not watching the matches, indicated that this was not an attraction option. The committee welcome with the para matches being involved in the Championship the majority of the public are coming to see the main events and the top England players. Therefore, to highlight them for such a long period at such a key time is not in the best interests of promoting the competition. They used to be spread across different time slots so that those wanting to watch para only also had chance to take in every match.

On Saturday evening, which in previous Championships has been a really good period for spectators, play finished early. The quarter final matches for the men's singles and women's singles were all played at the same time, some on outside courts which denied television audiences and the spectators the opportunity of watching some of these games, which were clearly very good matches and should have been a highlight. Previously we played the quarters in pairs as these are often very good matches.

On Sunday, the finals day was adversely impacted by the holding of the Pride Awards, which meant there were many empty seats in the spectator stands as people were invited into the Awards. In the past the Pride Awards have been held on the Saturday morning or lunchtime which would clearly have avoided this and this also meant that some of the presentations were adversely affected because the presenters were tied-up in the Pride Award session.

There was a shortage of available tickets and seats for the spectators and before and at the event the Championships were being advertised as sold out when there seemed to be many empty seats in the arena. A different layout in the halls would increase the number of tickets available and improve this. There should be a minimum of 8 tables for the National Championships and this would improve the schedule from the players perspective. The U21 Championships, for example, started at 9:00am on Friday morning, this could have been later which would have avoided significant extra costs for a number of players and, in any case, the semi-finals and finals of the U21's are some of the best matches from a spectator point of view and for these to be played late Friday morning when very few table tennis spectators are present is a waste of good spectator opportunity.

There were also problems with the programme. The programme itself was very well presented with lots of good articles and a host of attractive photographs. However, it's quality was diminished by the fact that the times in the programme for some of the events were wrong. It seemed as if the programmes were pretty much taken off sale. It was very difficult to find where programmes were being sold and, in fact, they were only available under the counter where officials registered their attendance. Careful checking of the programme should take place. It is an important part of the competition and is a souvenir for people who have attended.

From the information in the Competition Review it seems that the costs are very high. It seems that a very large number of Table Tennis England staff were present, much more so than in previous years, and this adds to the cost.

A review of the costs should be considered in the same way as starting play at 9:00am in the morning adds to the cost of the participants and their supporters, and in this respect, as stated above, a larger number of tables would help as well. A full review of the National Championships to consider all of the above and perhaps a number of other points.

**National Council Competition Review Sub-Committee**  
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