



Editorial

Welcome to all our readers to the reborn EBU!

With the advent of Universal Membership all members of our affiliated clubs will be receiving *English Bridge*, the EBU's member magazine, from the June issue. This will take over part of the role until now fulfilled by *Club Focus* with more articles for our club players. That means this is the last issue of our newsletter in its current form intended for a general readership. We do hope you have enjoyed our mix of entertaining, informative and instructive articles over the fifteen issues of its existence.

Club Focus will continue as an occasional newsletter squarely aimed at club administrators, providing useful information and helpful articles for club chairmen, secretaries, committee members and others involved with the running of our clubs. Clubs will be invited to pass the newsletter on to anyone they feel would be interested.

We thus say goodbye to those of you who simply come along to enjoy a friendly game of bridge without being involved in the actual running of the club. If you have never thought about it before, you might consider whether you have time to lend a helping hand with the activities of the club. Most committees will welcome an extra pair of hands.

We would welcome any articles and ideas for future issues of a new format *Club Focus*. Please do drop us a line to clubfocus@ebu.co.uk

We would like to thank all of those who have helped with the creation of CF over the last two or three years, especially our regular contributors and those who have helped in many ways behind the scenes.

We wish you all plenty of good and enjoyable bridge.

Matt Betts and Krys Kazmierczak



You and the EBU

Welcome to the new English Bridge Union. We are the governing body for duplicate bridge in England representing communities of bridge players at club, county and national level. We are funded by members for members and the development of duplicate bridge in England.

The Benefits of Membership

If you are a member of one of our affiliated duplicate bridge clubs, you automatically become a member of the EBU. You can find out about the services and benefits available to you on our website.

If you are a duplicate bridge club and would like to affiliate to the EBU, you can read on our website all about the many associated benefits including the security afforded to your club members through playing within our jurisdiction.

If you cannot join one of our clubs, you can still receive the many benefits of membership by becoming a direct member.

Membership of the EBU enables you to take part in a wide and varied programme of competitions, tournaments and simultaneous events. You can also receive our EBU diary and *English Bridge*, our bi-monthly, exclusive members' magazine. If you are an EBU member via a club you qualify for these benefits through earning magazine points (see: www.ebu.co.uk/pay2play/magazine%20points.pdf.)

Want to Learn? Want to Teach?

The EBU is England's national bridge organisation and it is committed to developing the game of duplicate bridge through an extensive education programme. If you would like to learn to play bridge, you can find a teacher on our website: www.ebu.co.uk/education/teacherspages/

If you would like to train to teach bridge, please look at our dedicated teacher training programmes and the English Bridge Union Teachers Association (see: www.ebu.co.uk/education/ebuta/)

Security for our members

Membership helps maintain the infrastructure of the game which provides development for the future and protection today for all those who play in our clubs and our national and county competitions.

If you require any help with playing regulations or the laws of duplicate bridge visit here: www.ebu.co.uk/lawsandethics for further information.

Young People and Bridge

We have a wealth of news on our website about our Minibrige teaching initiative for schools and the many activities available for those taking part in Youth Bridge. See: www.ebu.co.uk/minibrige/

International Competitions

As a national bridge organisation we select players to represent England in a variety of competitions. We are very proud of the success of our players on the international scene. You can read more about the players concerned by clicking on the biographies page: www.ebu.co.uk/general/biographies

Here to Help

We are here to help you get the best out of your membership of the EBU. There is always a friendly member of staff who can help.

Enjoy your bridge.

Sally Bugden, Chairman

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The NICKO and the Garden Cities

Those of you who are regular readers know that the main purpose of universal membership is to help develop duplicate bridge by revitalising our affiliated bridge clubs, bringing you more players and making the EBU more representative of club members.

The National Inter Club Knock Out Competition is specifically aimed at EBU affiliated clubs, and we want to ensure that the competition is truly representative of clubs and their players. In the past eight years, however, there has been a substantial decline in NICKO entries. We believe this is because the competition's main ethos of attracting bona fide club players has become clouded. In order to reverse the trend we are looking at a proposal to ensure that any player who represents a club has played in that club a certain number of times in the preceding year. We would like to hear from our clubs to find out the reasons why they enter/do not enter this competition, and what, if anything, would revitalise it for them. The EBU Tournament Committee has suggested that players who represent a club should have played 12 times in the preceding year. However, we have already had representations from clubs that understand the reasoning behind this

proposal but feel that the suggested number of 12 is too high. We will not be making a decision about this until October at the earliest when we will have a better idea of playing patterns and when you will have had time to tell us your views.

The Garden Cities Trophy is for the winners of each county association's inter club teams of eight competition for affiliated clubs and this would be subject to similar conditions as the NICKO.

Please email nickogc@ebu.co.uk and give us your views on our proposals.

Sally Bugden



Barry's Update

With Pay to Play processing almost four weeks old I thought it was time for a short update.

At the time of writing, around 560 clubs have completed their membership data upload to us in Aylesbury and are now able to submit their result files as they happen. I would like to thank all of those volunteers who have spent a great deal of effort getting this job done; the good news is that it will never need to be done again, plus we will always have an up to date membership database for you to utilise as required.

We have now received over 3000 result submission files; almost all of these have gone through without any issues at all, and any issues that we have had have been very small. We have received some suggestions for improving the process which we will consider and implement where and when we can.

Once again, thanks for the hard work and your patience.

Barry Capal

From Little Acorns

Oakfield Bridge Club is a new EBU affiliated club which begins operating on Monday 10 May. Our Monday sessions will start at 1pm prompt and will consist of brief tuition followed by assisted play.

On Tuesday evenings there will be a session of duplicate pairs beginning at 7.20pm.

We will operate a host system for all sessions, so you may come without a partner and be assured of a game. We will be using Bridgepads which produce automatic and instant scoring.

Table money for each session is £2.50 - no membership or joining fee.

The club is situated in Stamford Golf Club, Huddersfield Road, Stalybridge, Cheshire, SK15 3PY.

Everyone is welcome, so please come along. If you have any queries, phone the secretary on 01457-875122.

Rod Smith



Rugby Village

From the Maternity Ward - Rugby Village Bridge Club is born!!

As Club Focus in its present form ends, Rugby Village Bridge Club is born. We are one of the newest and youngest bridge clubs in England. Following the decision by Rugby Bridge Club not to affiliate to the English Bridge Union, Rugby Village Bridge Club was founded in March 2010, because we believed that affiliation to the EBU confers many benefits to both players and organisers.

Our current venue for several of the courses and playing sessions is Dunchurch Village Hall, which is a fantastic venue some three miles from Rugby town centre. Other courses, including the beginners' courses, take place at the teachers' homes. Dunchurch Village Hall was chosen because of the quality of its accommodation and parking facilities. It was opened in 2003 and complies fully with the building requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act, which is excellent news for any players with limited mobility.

Nicky Cook, the founder, wanted to establish a club where there is always a welcome for players of any level and genuine friendliness is paramount. Her aim is to encourage players to learn bridge with EBU qualified teachers and then to ease them into duplicate bridge through coached sessions until they find their feet. This will enable players to be integrated with the duplicate pairs sessions, held on Monday evenings currently, in a supportive environment when they feel ready. To this end the club holds events to suit all levels of play from beginners to Level 3.

If anyone within the Rugby area would like to learn bridge or attend our intermediate sessions, we would encourage them to contact us at villagebridge@btinternet.co.uk.

These are exciting times for us. There are many events we want to run and lots we want to do, but we are trying to walk before we run.

You are all sharing in the birth of a new club, and we hope to be able to give you updates as we go through the teething stages. If anyone would like to share their experiences with us to help us along our way, your advice would be very welcome at www.rugbyvillagebridge.co.uk!

Cassie Shaw



Really Easy Bridge

Bridge is a competitive, addictive, frustrating and HIGHLY SATISFYING GAME. If you know people who have been learning to play this great game, please let them know about the next step! REALLY EASY BRIDGE.

The transition between learning in a classroom and actually putting all your learning to practice can be a very daunting first step. In reality it is a natural transition, as the process of learning continues throughout the play.

The EBU have set up the Really Easy Congresses to assist new players in this first step. Filled with one or two lessons and workshops, the main raison d'être is getting out and meeting new bridge challenges. The congresses also provide a safe environment to stretch beginners' wings and practise interaction with others who feel the same. Remember that every attendee will be worrying about the same things: which card to lead, and what their partner thinks, etc, but with our Congress – you are not alone.

Bridge is a competitive game.

Don't let anyone tell you anything different.

Come and play at our Really Easy Congress in Brighton during August and discover your competitive side.

Gill Pain

Master Points

Master Points are extremely important to the majority of our players as they are the measurement of an EBU member's lifetime achievement for playing duplicate bridge. We want to ensure that our players get the recognition they deserve and we believe that this is just as important locally, amongst their fellow players, as well as nationally in the magazine. We will be providing your clubs with details of MP promotions so that this information can be used to announce your players' achievements in the club, in the club newsletter and on the club website. We will also be encouraging our counties to recognise the achievements of their members and to publicise their MP promotions on the county website and in the county newsletter.

Universal Membership will bring to the EBU up to 20,000 new members. Many of these will be experienced players who may have a significant number of Master Points waiting to be registered. Also many of these players will consistently win Master Points in the future. All this means that in the first two or three years we can expect a large number of MP promotions – up to 20,000 each year or even possibly more.

The current framework was designed for incremental increases not for a sudden change of this magnitude and simply cannot sensibly cope.

After months of consultation with Aylesbury and the Tournament Committee it was determined that to continue as we have done in the past would be too costly an exercise, even requiring an increase in Pay to Play subscriptions. It would also have resulted in us having to ignore the results of our consultation on the contents of *English Bridge* via the Club Committee, as the magazine would have been filled with lists of names drastically curtailing its editorial features.

It is intended instead to use the EBU website as the primary publicity vehicle, with *English Bridge* used more selectively. In addition, individual promotions will be posted in the member's personal area on the website.

As of 1 April 2010, all members of affiliated clubs get their Master Points credited automatically, but don't forget to send in those old paper ones.

There are three elements that affect club members:

- There will be four landmark promotions. When you accumulate 5000 local points (Master Rank), you will receive a good quality gift and free entry into the Masters event within the EBU Ranked Masters Pairs.
- All other promotions will enter a four-monthly Master Point draw with three prizes – 1st prize is two nights Dinner, Bed & Breakfast for two people at a Barceló Hotel.
- The winner of the most local (black) points in each affiliated club's events will enter the new Annual Prize Draw with a first prize of £400. The annual local and national awards will continue.

Details of the new framework are on the EBU website at www.ebu.co.uk/masterpoints/. Resources are finite, but we believe we have distributed them more evenly across the spectrum of players.

We intend to review the scheme within a year to take account of your feedback, which should be sent to mpr@ebu.co.uk.

Electronic Master Points

If you are from a club that currently sends us master points electronically, please do not send us any master points for events taking place after April 1st using this method. As of April 1st we will be using the new P2P submissions to update master points, and the current system will thus be redundant.

Training

Free TD Training and Club Teacher Training Courses for Affiliated Clubs

Under Universal Membership affiliated clubs are invited to send a second club member to a Tournament Director course free of charge where a club sends a full paying member to any of the club TD courses. The offer is on a 'like for like' basis - so when a club books a place (from 1 to 4 courses), it receives the equivalent free for another member of the same club. To take advantage of the scheme both the paying member and the free member must be booked at the same time, and the booking must be made by the registered secretary of the club.

The scheme applies to all courses that commenced after 1 April 2010. So the free place scheme does not apply to Bramhall and Trowbridge which both began before April 1st.

For course details see www.ebu.co.uk/lawsandethics/td-training/training_courses.htm

Each club will be offered one free teacher training session in any 24 month period to assist with the development of the club and to attract new members. These Club Teacher Training Courses will be of two days duration and are not yet finalised. Full details will be published on the EBU website as soon as possible.

The full three-day Partner-Teacher training courses (not free) are still available independently of the free club teacher courses. For full details see www.ebu.co.uk/education/partnerteacher/courses.htm

All clubs who take advantage of our free teacher training and tournament director training will agree to remain affiliated to the EBU for a further three full years after the year that the training course has taken place, e.g. if the training takes place in 2010-2011, the club must remain affiliated until the affiliation year beginning April 2014.

Master Points Booklets

The final date for accepting booklets of unused masterpoint certificates is Friday 28 May 2010. Clubs will be issued with a credit for unused booklets if returned by this date.

Play Your Cards Right Brackenborough

Sign up for Marie Curie Cancer Care's 15th Annual Bridge Tournament! You can help raise funds for essential home nursing care for terminally ill patients simply by playing your favourite game.

The Tournament takes place between October 2010 and March 2011 and welcomes entrants from across the UK. Focusing on Chicago and Rubber Bridge, the tournament is open to players of any standard with games being played on a social and fun basis. You can play in your own home or at a bridge club and can register in pairs or preferably, in groups of up to six pairs.

Susan Lee from Cambridge took part in last year's Tournament, she said: "We had immense enjoyment travelling to unknown villages, visiting a tremendous variety of houses and always being made welcome. It's a delightful way to spend grey, wet, winter afternoons."

It costs Marie Curie Cancer Care £20 to provide a Marie Curie Nurse for one hour in a patient's home. We hope that every entrant will pay an entry fee of £3 with a suggested donation of £17. Registration is open until July 2010.

For more information on Marie Curie Cancer Care's Bridge Tournament please visit <http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/Bridge> or call Philippa Cannon on 01371 876 731.

Limerick Competition

With this being the final issue of Club Focus in its present form, the limerick competition we set in the February issue is our last one. We are pleased to announce that the winner of the competition is John Thompson from Leicester with the following fine composition:

*The unfortunate Vicar of Bradley
Plays the hands he declares very badly.
His bidding is fine,
But he takes the wrong line,
And goes down every time, rather sadly.*

John's prize, a copy of *Moments of Truth at the Bridge Table* by R. Jayaram, will be on its way to him shortly.



Newly affiliated to the EBU, the recently formed Brackenborough Bridge Club consists of a friendly group of individuals who enjoy and are passionate about the game of duplicate bridge.

You will find us in the Brackenborough Arms, just off the A16 at Cordeaux Corner, on the outskirts of Louth. We are within easy reach of Grimsby, also nearby for those living in towns and villages between Grimsby and Louth. For those living towards the East Coast, the route, although a little longer, consists of main roads which are well maintained during those long winter months.

The Brackenborough Bridge Club meets every Monday and Wednesday evening, 6.45 for 7pm, in a well appointed room just off the foyer and near the bar, where tea and coffee is available. Some of our members have eaten in the bistro before the evening's bridge commences and have commented on the quality of the fare available. For those less able bodied, the Brackenborough has a Disabled parking space and wheelchair ramps. The staff are very friendly, approachable and courteous, providing table service if required.

If you would like to join us but need a partner, we have a partnership finder service run by Sue York, who can be contacted on 01507 477122.

One of our founder members - David Stoddart - runs a Tuesday Night Group, for beginners and improvers, which is supervised. You do not need to have a partner to join this group as David acts as a host. Phone David on 01507 480407.

We also have a web site for information and results at <http://www.bridgewebs.com/louthtuesdaybrackenborough>

We extend a very warm welcome to those wishing to join us for a lively game of bridge and look forward to meeting you.

Sue York

Minibridge

Are you a Primary School teacher or do you know a Primary School teacher in London? Why not come along to our next Minibridge event on 18 May 2010 from 1pm in London and discover how it can help children with their Maths and English.

Please visit our website: www.ebu.co.uk/minibridge/ for more information

Bridge Tales

Getting a kick out of bridge...

Our hero sits South and hears the following sequence.

South West North East
2NT No 3NT Dbl

He plays East for the missing points and goes one off when East has a Yarborough. The following week he plays against the same pair and has the same sequence. This time he spots West kicking East under the table before East doubles. He plays West for the missing points and makes an overtrick.

The third week he again plays the same pair. His partner opens 2NT, and he has to decide whether to look for a slam or settle for 3NT with this borderline hand:

♠ K 7 6 ♥ Q 7 4 3 ♦ 8 7 2 ♣ A Q 7 5

No problem! He passes 2NT and kicks East. Do you know the score for 2NT redoubled plus three overtricks?

Andrew Kambites

Bridge Tails

Two final Bridge Tails in this edition:



Sybil the cat wonders if that was the correct move..



Whilst, Sammy decides that enough was enough, and Erica would not be playing any more on-line bridge today!

Forthcoming EBU Events

Spring Bank Holiday Congress, Bournemouth, 29 – 31 May 2010

English Riviera Congress, Torquay, 2-4 July 2010

Summer Seniors Congress, Eastbourne, 9-11 July 2010

The EBU Summer Congress, Brighton, 6-15 August 2010

For more information and future events, please email comps@ebu.co.uk or see the EBU website.



Bridge Shop!

Since April the EBU Shop discount for affiliated clubs has been increased to 12% on most items. Please visit our website for current special offers and price list: www.ebu.co.uk/bridgeshop/

Our new members might like to know that the EBU shop discount on most items for individual EBU members is 10%.

Plus... Bridge Quiz Challenge Cards: Price £10 each set. (RRP £11.99) No discounts. 104 Bridge Quiz Cards. Achieve amazing results quickly. Use alone or with friends. Questions on the face, answers on the reverse. Perfect as a gift for bridge playing friends.

Goodbye, see you again soon!



It's the end but the moment has been prepared for...

Photographer © Tim Loseby

...If you want to write something for the new Club Focus, please contact us on: ClubFocus@ebu.co.uk or 01296 317200, or to our EBU postal address.

Club Committee Regional Representatives

Need some advice regarding club matters? Why not try contacting one of your helpful volunteer Regional Representatives from the Club Committee (details below) or Krys, the EBU Club Liaison Officer on krys@ebu.co.uk or 01296 317 206.

Margaret Eddleston:

mee.hitchin@ntlworld.com

Beds, Essex, Herts, Middx

Tom Garrett:

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