



THE ENGLISH BRIDGE UNION
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15th October 2015

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Response from the English Bridge Union to Judicial Review ruling of the sporting status of bridge

Today Mr. Justice Dove has handed down judgement in this important case. Last April the English Bridge Union challenged Sport England's decision to refuse to recognise us as a sport. We argued that they had acted unlawfully in adopting a policy defining sport so that 'physical activity' is necessary to be recognised as a sport, with the result that model aircraft flying or darts are recognized as sports, but bridge is not. This very old fashioned definition of sport means that Sport England is unlikely ever to recognise bridge as a sport.

Unfortunately, Mr. Justice Dove has found for Sport England. His decision affects participants in many sports other than Bridge. We are very disappointed at the result and the judge's refusal to grant permission to appeal.

Ian Payn
Vice-Chairman
English Bridge Union

"The English Bridge Union are disappointed with the decision. An opportunity has been lost to enhance an activity which has substantial benefits to wide sections of the community. Current definitions of what is or is not a sport have little consistency or sense behind them"

Jeremy Dhondy
Chairman
English Bridge Union

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What is Bridge?

Bridge is a card-based mind sport, played in pairs against other pairs (the pairs are sometimes combined into teams of four or eight); The partners sit opposite each other at a table. There is an auction (often called bidding) and then the play, after which the hand is scored. The more tricks a partnership correctly predicts they will make the better their score - but if they do not make as many as they predict their opponents score points instead. In competitions the same hands are played at each table so you can compare your scores with the other partnerships and work out who did best with what they were dealt, thus almost eliminating the 'luck' aspect that exists in card games such as poker.

Playing bridge is one of the most enduring and popular pastimes in the world and for over 100 years it has fascinated people of all types and from all walks of life. It is one of the most popular leisure activities in Britain, with around 300,000 people believed to play on a regular basis. Famous players include Bill Gates, Martina Navratilova and members of the bands Blur and Radiohead.

About the English Bridge Union

The English Bridge Union (EBU) was formed on 23 May 1936 and is a non-profit making membership-funded organisation committed to promoting the game of duplicate bridge. It is also a National Bridge Organisation, affiliated to the European Bridge League and the World Bridge Federation.

The national headquarters of the EBU are in Aylesbury where around 20 professional people support and advise the committees, serve the membership, and help implement policy. There are around 55,000 members of the EBU, playing in around 630 affiliated bridge clubs in England.

For any further information please contact:

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