



PRESS RELEASE

Teaching bridge in Botswana

The most popular sport in Botswana is football, closely followed by cricket and rugby. However additionally, and maybe surprisingly, many people in Botswana are also dedicated to the learning and playing of the card game bridge!

In October 2007, the Botswana Bridge Federation contacted the English Bridge Union's Education Department manager, John Pain and asked him to visit Botswana and teach their bridge teachers and tournament directors. Such a unique opportunity was not to be missed and John will start a full week of teaching on 17 May 2008 in Botswana.

The Republic of Botswana is a landlocked nation in Southern Africa, which is bordered by South Africa to the south and southeast, Namibia to the west, Zambia to the north, and Zimbabwe to the northeast. The most popular sport in Botswana is football, closely followed by cricket and rugby. However additionally, and maybe surprisingly, many people in Botswana are also dedicated to the learning and playing of the card game bridge!

Bridge was first played in Botswana thirty years ago, but it was the 1980's when the game really took off with many British expatriate school teachers teaching bridge in Botswana's Secondary Schools. They were not qualified "bridge teachers"; simply enthusiasts who wanted to pass on their own passion to another and younger generation. The result was the foundation of the Botswana Bridge Federation (BBF) in 1988 and so the official organisation of tournaments for the pupils to play.

Since then bridge has continued to be popular in the country and is a fixture of many people's lives, for example the BBF can currently boast over 800 members. At its peak there can be as many as 600 children playing bridge – something which is unique in Africa.

In England, bridge continues to be one of the most enduring and popular games with people from all walks of life being fascinated by the game. Over the last decade and in order to promote the game to non players, the English Bridge Union has developed a bridge teaching programme called *Bridge For All*, which provides user-friendly course material and effective methods for bridge teachers. Additionally the EBU conducts a very successful Tournament Director's course and boasts over a thousand graduates.

John is excited about the opportunity to experience the country of Botswana, "I can't wait. It's a unique chance to go somewhere I never thought I would go to and see things I never thought I'd see. It really is going to be a great opportunity to share expertise and see the world of Botswanan bridge". Each day John will produce a daily blog at www.ebu.co.uk to provide a full insight into this unique experience.

For further information on this press release, bridge or the English Bridge Union please contact Matt Betts, Communications Officer on 01296 317 200 or by email, Matt@ebu.co.uk.

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Notes to editors:

Who is John Pain?

Education manager; look after *Bridge for All* teaching scheme; look after 850 members of the EBU Teachers Association; National Tournament Director; Secretary of Laws and Ethics Committee

About Bridge

Bridge is one of the most enduring and popular games in the world; for over 100 years, people of all types and from all walks of life have been fascinated by the game. It is one of the most popular leisure activities in Britain, with around

300,000 people playing on a regular basis. Bridge is a trick-taking card game of skill and chance. It is played by four players who form two partnerships (sides); the partners sit opposite each other at a table. The game consists of the auction (often called bidding) and play, after which the hand is scored. Please click here for more information on bridge.

About the English Bridge Union

The English Bridge Union Limited (EBU) is a membership-funded organisation committed to promoting the game of duplicate bridge. It is also a National Bridge Organisation in its own right affiliated to the European Bridge League and the World Bridge Federation. New players are the lifeblood of the game and the EBU are keen to encourage them. For more information on the English Bridge Union please visit: www.ebu.co.uk

About the Botswana Bridge Federation

The sport of Bridge was introduced in Botswana more than thirty years ago, and has since enjoyed rapid growth throughout the country. The Botswana Bridge Federation (BBF) was established in 1988. Their vision is "Sports for all, for leisure, health, employment and National Pride". The BBF'S mission is to develop and promote Bridge throughout the country; to develop competitive national teams, improved standards of all Bridge players across the country and large numbers of secondary school students playing the game. Our aim is to make Botswana one of the best bridge playing countries in the region by 2012.

