

SUFFOLK CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

1. TITLE AND CONSTITUENT MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1 The Suffolk Contract Bridge Association ("SCBA") is an Association as defined in the Bye Laws of the English Bridge Union Ltd ("EBU").
- 1.2 The SCBA is a Constituent Member of the EBU. It shall abide by the Bye Laws, Rules and Policies of the EBU.

2. OBJECTS OF THE SCBA

- 2.1 To promote Duplicate Contract Bridge in the County of Suffolk and amongst the SCBA's affiliated clubs, including inter-club, inter-county and national competitions.
- 2.2 To employ the funds of the SCBA in the best interests of its members and affiliated clubs in the context of the game of Duplicate Contract Bridge and having regard to the fact that the SCBA is a non-profit making body.

3. MANAGEMENT OF THE SCBA

- 3.1 The management of the affairs of the SCBA shall be vested in an Executive Committee elected annually at the Annual General Meeting. The Executive Committee shall consist of a minimum of ten and a maximum of sixteen people. The Executive Committee shall include the following Officers who shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting:
 - a) Chairman
 - b) Vice Chairman
 - c) General Secretary
 - d) Treasurer.
- 3.2 As long as they are re-elected each year, there shall be no limitation on the length of time any individual may remain on the Executive Committee, except that the Chairman shall not hold this office for more than five consecutive years.
- 3.3 The Executive Committee may assign to individual Executive Committee members additional Officer roles as it deems appropriate.
- 3.4 The Executive Committee may assign roles to individuals and remove roles from them; and may appoint and disband sub-committees; it may delegate to individuals and sub-committees such powers or duties as it deems appropriate. Such individuals and such members of sub-committees shall not be required to be members of the Executive Committee.
- 3.5 The Executive Committee shall have the power to co-opt Full Members to the Executive Committee.
- 3.6 The Executive Committee shall appoint EBU Shareholders.
- 3.7 The Executive Committee shall meet from time to time as it deems fit, in person or on-line, but not fewer than four times within a Membership Year. The meetings shall be chaired by the Chairman, or if absent the Vice Chairman. A quorum shall consist of six members and, in the event of a tie on votes cast, the chairman of the meeting shall have the deciding vote. Any affiliated club (see clause 4 below) shall be entitled to add a matter to the agenda of the next Executive Committee meeting, and to send a club delegate to attend the meeting while the matter is discussed. The club delegate may speak but not vote at the meeting.
- 3.8 The Executive Committee is responsible for the control of all monies and assets of the SCBA.
- 3.9 Accounts comprising a statement of income and expenditure and a balance sheet made respectively up to March 31st shall be approved by the Executive Committee and certified by the independent examiner (see clause 6.1 below) and submitted to the following AGM.

4. AFFILIATED BRIDGE CLUBS

Any Duplicate Bridge Club may affiliate to the SCBA, unless in its discretion the Executive Committee decides otherwise, and all such Clubs shall be affiliated to the EBU. The annual club affiliation fee (if any) to be charged for the twelve month period from the following April 1st will be determined by a simple majority of the Full Members at the preceding Annual General Meeting.

5. MEMBERSHIP

- 5.1 All members of the SCBA must be Player Members of the EBU and be fully paid up in respect of subscriptions and all or any other monies due to the SCBA or EBU.
- 5.2 A Player Member of the EBU automatically becomes a Full Member of the SCBA when their primary allegiance to the SCBA is recorded with the EBU, and they are a member of one or more clubs affiliated to the SCBA.
- 5.3 A Player Member of the EBU may become a Full Member of the SCBA when their primary allegiance to the SCBA is recorded with the EBU, even though they are not a member of any club affiliated to the SCBA, unless in its discretion the Executive Committee decides otherwise.
- 5.4 A Player Member of the EBU whose primary allegiance is to another Association or does not have primary allegiance to any Association may become an Adopted Member of the SCBA, unless in its discretion the Executive Committee decides otherwise.
- 5.5 Full Members of the SCBA shall have the rights indicated below. They:
 - may play in all SCBA competitions;
 - may represent the SCBA in national or regional competitions by qualification or selection;
 - may vote on, propose or second motions at general meetings;
 - may serve as officers or Executive Committee members of the SCBA.
- 5.6 Adopted Members of the SCBA shall have the rights indicated below. They:
 - may play in all SCBA competitions except those designated by the SCBA as qualification for representation of the SCBA in national or regional events.
- 5.7 The Membership Year shall run for the twelve month period from April 1st to March 31st.
- 5.8 The SCBA Pay to Play county component and each of the SCBA member category's annual subscriptions (if any), for the Membership Year starting April 1st, shall be determined by a simple majority of the Full Members at the preceding Annual General Meeting.
- 5.9 The Executive Committee of the SCBA may honour long-standing members for their service to the SCBA by electing them to Life Membership of the SCBA. Life members will automatically become paid up members of the SCBA for each Membership Year whilst they remain Playing Members of the EBU, and as a group may be given additional concessions as the Executive Committee shall determine.

6. MEETING OF THE SCBA MEMBERS

- 6.1 An Annual General Meeting ("AGM") of the SCBA shall be held, either in Suffolk or on-line, not later than the end of June every year. It shall be chaired by the Chairman, or if absent the Vice Chairman, or if absent a member of the Executive Committee, and shall transact the following business:
 - a) to receive the Chairman's report of the activities of the SCBA
 - b) to receive, and if approved, to adopt a statement of the SCBA's accounts for the year ending the previous March 31st
 - c) to fix the SCBA Pay to Play county component and SCBA member and affiliated club annual subscriptions for the Membership Year starting on the following April 1st
 - d) to elect Chairman, Vice Chairman, General Secretary, Treasurer and other members of the Executive Committee
 - e) to appoint an independent examiner, who shall not be a member of the Executive Committee
 - f) to deal with any Special Resolutions that have been submitted
 - g) to deal with any other matter which the Executive Committee or any Full Member may desire to bring before the meeting.
- 6.2 Nominations for Chairman, Vice Chairman, General Secretary, Treasurer and other members of the Executive Committee and for Special Resolutions to be included in the agenda, with names of the proposer and seconder, should be sent to the General Secretary at least 28 days before the AGM.
- 6.3 An Extraordinary General Meeting ("EGM") shall be convened either in person or on-line on the instructions of the Chairman or on receipt of a requisition signed by not less than 20 Full Members and stating the purpose of such a meeting. The EGM shall be held no earlier than 28 days and no later than 42 days after the General Secretary has received the written request.
- 6.4 Notice convening an AGM or an EGM shall be given by the General Secretary at least 21 days before the meeting via publication on the SCBA website, specifying the time, date and venue (or if on-line the method of access) of the meeting; in the case of an AGM the notice shall specify the Agenda including details of Special Resolutions and nominations to serve on the Executive Committee; in the case of an EGM the notice shall include details of the motions or a statement of the matters to be discussed. The General Secretary shall arrange for copies of such notices to

be emailed to affiliated clubs. The General Secretary shall endeavour to widen the circulation of such notices using available individual Full Member email lists.

- 6.5 The quorum for an AGM or EGM shall be twenty Full Members.
- 6.6 An EGM shall be chaired by the Chairman, or if absent the Vice Chairman, or if absent a member of the Executive Committee, and shall not discuss any items other than those specified in the notice.
- 6.7 Any vote at an AGM or an EGM which is tied shall be split by the casting vote of the chairman of the AGM or EGM.
- 6.8 The General Secretary shall be required to arrange a further EGM, if an AGM or EGM respectively fails to reach a quorum. In both circumstances the additional EGM shall be scheduled to occur within the period of 28 days to 42 days after the aborted AGM or EGM.
- 6.9 If the additional EGM once again fails to reach a quorum, the Executive Committee shall be able to take any decisions necessary so that it can continue to manage the affairs of the SCBA.

7. MEMBERS' BEHAVIOUR

- 7.1 Each member of the SCBA shall be required, in connection with the game of Duplicate Contract Bridge, to conform to the standards of fair play, courtesy and personal deportment prescribed by the Bye Laws, regulations and guidelines for the time being of the EBU.
- 7.2 The SCBA shall have the powers and the procedures for the enforcement of the requirement in clause 7.1. They are set out in the Schedule of Disciplinary Procedures, and shall stand as part of the Constitution and be subject to the same provisions of the Constitution for its amendment.
- 7.3 A member of an affiliated bridge club found guilty of a disciplinary offence by their club may lodge an appeal to the SCBA if such an appeal is permitted by their club's constitution; this is set out in Clauses 8.1 to 8.8 of the Schedule of Disciplinary Procedures.

8. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Alterations to the Constitution shall be made only at an AGM or EGM through the positive votes of at least two thirds of the Full Members present.

9. DISSOLUTION OF THE SCBA

Dissolution of the SCBA shall be made only at an EGM through the positive votes of at least two thirds of the Full Members present. The assets of the SCBA on dissolution shall be donated to a charity or charities, or distributed amongst the affiliated clubs, as decided by the Full Members attending the dissolution meeting.

10. INTERPRETATION

On all questions of interpretation of the Constitution the decisions of the Executive Committee shall be binding until or unless upset at an AGM or EGM. The Executive Committee shall determine any point or matter that is not covered by the Constitution.

11. DEFINITIONS

The terms "Association", "Duplicate Contract Bridge" and "Player Member" have the meanings set out in the Bye Laws of the EBU. All terms that imply a specific gender (e.g. "Chairman") shall be interpreted to include both male and female equally.

SCHEDULE OF DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

1. REQUIREMENTS OF THE SCHEDULE

This Schedule is referred to under clause 7.2 of the Constitution and prescribes the powers and procedures for enforcement. It will comply with and follows the EBU disciplinary procedures and any variations thereof that are made from time to time. The SCBA shall act through its Conduct and Disciplinary Committees for the enforcement of standards prescribed in clause 7.1 of the Constitution. The SCBA shall have additional powers as set out in the clauses below.

2. RECEIPT OF ALLEGATION

Any person making a complaint against one or more members of the SCBA, under the terms of clause 7.1 of the Constitution, must do so in writing to the General Secretary or the Chairman of the SCBA.

3. CONDUCT COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee of the SCBA shall appoint its Conduct Committee through its powers to appoint sub-committees under clause 3.4 of the Constitution. The Conduct Committee shall be responsible for investigating complaints against the SCBA's members and to determine whether a Disciplinary Offence should be referred to the SCBA's Disciplinary Committee. The Conduct Committee shall consist of no fewer than three members of the SCBA and no more than five. A quorum for any meeting shall be three of its members. It shall act by simple majority vote; its appointed chairman, or if absent whosoever the Conduct Committee shall select to chair a meeting, shall have a second, or casting, vote in the event that there is parity of voting.

4. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee of the SCBA shall appoint the Disciplinary Committee through its powers to appoint sub-committees under clause 3.4 of the Constitution. The Disciplinary Committee shall determine sanctions for offences admitted by the defendant, hear charges of offences and determine whether those charges are proved and if proved, to determine the sanction imposed. The Disciplinary Committee shall consist of no fewer than three members of the SCBA and no more than five. At least three of its members must be present when it makes a decision to uphold a complaint and impose sanctions on the offending member. It shall act by simple majority vote; its appointed chairman, or if absent whomsoever the Disciplinary Committee shall select to chair a meeting, shall have a second, or casting, vote in the event that there is parity of voting.

5. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND INDEPENDENCE OF THE CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEES

Any member of either the Conduct or Disciplinary Committee who is in any way personally involved in the allegations within a complaint will be disqualified from participating in either Committee's handling of the complaint. A member of the SCBA cannot be a member of both the Conduct and Disciplinary Committees.

6. THE COMPLAINTS PROCESS

6.1 Notice of Meetings

Where a written complaint is made, or a matter otherwise comes to the attention of the Conduct Committee, it shall first consider whether such complaint or matter falls within the scope of the disciplinary Rules and whether further action is warranted. Normally no action will be taken in respect of a complaint relating to an alleged offence which occurred three months or more prior to a formal complaint in writing being made to SCBA. If the Conduct Committee considers further action is warranted the Conduct Committee secretary shall first write to the Defendant, seeking the defendant's comments on the substance of the complaint or matter that has been raised. The Conduct Committee shall also be entitled to make such further investigations and enquiries as it in its absolute discretion considers appropriate. The Conduct Committee shall also be entitled to seek advice both from within the SCBA and from the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee, and to obtain external legal advice.

6.2 Complaint not Justified

If the Conduct Committee decides that the complaint is not justified, all parties shall be notified and the matter ended.

6.3 Complaint Justified

If the Conduct Committee decides that the complaint is justified, it may, in its absolute discretion, offer a verbal caution to the offending member, which if accepted, ends the matter. If the Defendant does not accept the verbal caution, or the Conduct Committee decides a verbal caution is inappropriate, the Conduct Committee shall refer the case to a hearing by the Disciplinary Committee. The defendant shall be notified, in writing, within two weeks of this decision and of their right to make a written submission to the Disciplinary Committee and to attend the hearing. The Defendant shall have the right to be represented by legal counsel of their choice or may be accompanied by a person to speak on their behalf. The Disciplinary Committee shall give at least two weeks notice of the hearing to the Defendant.

6.4 Disciplinary Committee's Sanctions

If after the hearing the complaint is upheld, the Disciplinary Committee may in its absolute discretion:

- (a) Give a written reprimand to the offending member(s), or
- (b) Suspend the offending member(s) from all or some of the competitions sponsored or licensed by the SCBA for such period as it shall determine.

If the complaint is against a member of the Executive Committee then in addition to any other sanctions applied, the Disciplinary Committee shall have the power to suspend such member from the SCBA's Executive Committee and any of its sub committees for such a period that it shall determine. Any sanctions imposed by the Disciplinary Committee must be communicated to the offending member in writing within 21 days of the hearing. No sanction shall come into effect until the time limit for an appeal has expired. If an appeal is made the sanction will not come into effect until the appeal has been determined, and will be modified or cancelled if that determination so requires.

6.5 Appeal

Each member found guilty of a Disciplinary Offence by the Disciplinary Committee has the right to appeal to the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee. Appeals must, unless the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee waives these requirements, be in writing and lodged with the Secretary of the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee within twenty one days of the written communication of the Disciplinary Committee's decision to the offending member.

6.6 Referral to the EBU Laws & Ethics Committee

At any time the Disciplinary Committee may refer a complaint to the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee for its consideration. In doing so the Disciplinary Committee shall have fully discharged its responsibilities under this Schedule.

7. DEFINITIONS

The terms "Disciplinary Rules", "Disciplinary Offence", "Appellant", Respondent and Sanction have the meanings set out in the Bye Laws of the EBU.

8. PROCEDURES FOR APPEALS FROM DECISIONS MADE BY DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEES OF SCBA AFFILIATED CLUBS REFERRED TO THE SCBA

- 8.1 If the affiliated club's constitution so allows, a defendant found guilty of an offence under the club's disciplinary procedures has the right to appeal to the SCBA. Appeals must be in writing and lodged within twenty one days of the written communication of the club's decision to the offending member.
- 8.2 When such an appeal has been received by the SCBA the Executive Committee shall appoint a Disciplinary Committee through its powers to appoint subcommittees under clause 3.4 of the Constitution; and that Disciplinary Committee shall constitute itself as an Appeals Committee to determine the appeal.
- 8.3 At any time the Appeals Committee may refer a complaint to the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee for its consideration. In doing so the Disciplinary Committee shall have fully discharged its responsibilities under this Schedule.
- 8.4 The Appeals Committee shall organise a date, time and venue for the hearing of the appeal. The Defendant shall have the right to be represented by legal counsel of their choice or may be accompanied by a person to speak on their behalf. The Appeals Committee shall give at least two weeks' notice of the hearing to the Defendant.
- 8.5 The Appeals Committee shall have broad discretion to regulate its own procedure and shall be entitled to make investigations and enquiries as it in its absolute discretion considers appropriate.

- 8.6 The Appeals Committee may confirm or vary the findings and decisions of the club but may not impose any penalty which is not within the powers of the club. Where the Appeals Committee varies the sanction upon the defendant it may impose any or all of the sanctions set out in the club's constitution and shall not be fettered in its choice of sanction by the sanction imposed by the club's Disciplinary Committee.
- 8.7 A decision of the Appeals Committee shall be deemed to be a decision of the club and be final and binding and recognised by all members, officers and officials of the club.
- 8.8 The appellant and respondent are responsible for paying their own costs.