

## **How to write a Press Release (Draft extract from the forthcoming EBU Club Management Handbook)**

Providing press releases to the media can produce valuable extra publicity for your bridge club. A press release, news release, media release, or press statement is a written or recorded communication directed at members of the news media for the purpose of announcing something of news value.

A press release provides reporters with the basics they need to develop a news story. Press releases can announce a range of news items such as: scheduled events, personal promotions, awards, news products and services, sales, etc. For example, you could send a press release to your local media if your bridge club or one of its members has won a competition, is celebrating a special anniversary, has been given a medal, is organising a new course, raised funds for a charity, or achieved something else which might be newsworthy.

Essentially, a press release is a one or two page, typed document of news or information. It's a mini-article that you prepare and then send to the media (newspaper, radio, television, magazine, etc.) for their use. The press release will be used either as background information or verbatim.

### ***What you need in a Press Release***

- Contact information: Bridge club name; the name of the contact; phone number and email address.
- Release Date: When the press release can be released (if immediately, simply put: For Immediate Release).
- Headline: Quick snappy headline to get the Editor's interest.
- Body: The information you want to tell the media about.
- For more information: Always add this at the end to help remind media about contact details.

### ***News in the Press Release***

It is so important to put news in your Press Release. Editors get hundreds of press releases during the week, and will throw away 99% of them. However, a good press release (especially locally) is one that has content which will be read and used. These tips will assist you in having that perfect press release:

- The subject of your press release needs to be important for the publication's readers: If it's a local newspaper – is your press release interesting and relevant to locals? Or is it relevant to potential bridge players?
- Make sure the release is news and not just an advert. Editors will not publish advertisements and will discard anything that is an obvious advert.
- Make sure the release benefits readers; the release is more likely to get published if it contains something of benefit to the publications readers – so maybe mention the health benefits of bridge, etc.
- Keep it short and to the point. Space is always limited, especially in local newspapers. Tighten the writing and keep sentences concise.
- Include the facts to back up statements. The editor needs the who, what, when, where, how and why details too.
- Make sure the press release stands on its own. Never include a covering letter - anything you want to say in the letter should be in the press release.

- Keep your news at the top. At the start of the press release make sure you mention the news. Don't hide it in paragraphs or summary.
- Use straightforward headlines.
- Send in your press release before the news 'goes cold'.
- End releases properly. End each release with contact details and a generic paragraph about your club, as the media may choose to use it.

### ***How to send a Press Release***

Always try and send as an email, but paste the release into the body of the email and not as an attachment. Afterwards, follow up the press release with a phone call to confirm the receipt of your email.

### ***Further help and information***

For further assistance in dealing with the media contact the EBU's Press and Communications Officer Matt Betts on [matt@ebu.co.uk](mailto:matt@ebu.co.uk). Matt is always willing to help and will be happy to check your proposed press release before you send it out.