

AVON CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
held on 20/05/2012 at Bristol Bridge Club

Those Present: Eric Page, Mike Short, Stuart King, Sue O'Hara, Larry Bennett, Steve Tomlinson, John Styles, Mungo Jackson, Margaret Alner, Gerry Gowling, Mary McKenzie, Robert Glass, Bill Maddox, Jeanette Martin, Liz Butler, Andrew Smith, Cathy Smith, Anne Huddleston, Chris Selway, Pat Clowes, Chris King, Bill Maddox, Andrew Urbanski, Philip Seymour, Christopher Frew, John Brandon-Joyce, Vanessa O'Callaghan, Karen Monaghan, Christine May, David Gregory, Peter Owens, Steve Tomlinson, Shaun Day, Bill Crymble, Colin Cheek, Nelson Stephens, Laurie Barth, Jen Challoner, Stephen Stafford, Jim Corbett, Liz, Butler, Bob Curtis, Sandra Cooper, Alison McLean, Stan Rogowski, David Beacham, Hilda Ball, Brian Wibberley, Philip Channack, Mike Davies, Jack Terry, Judy Archer, Lesley Hood, Alan Evans, Bridget Johnson, Steve Bride, Gareth Evans, Alan Jones, Keith McIndoe, Shirley Brown, Sheilah Da Silva, Gwen Spear, Barbara Fowler, Becky Alexander Jackie Cole, Don Shears, Liz Thomas, Keith Rayford, Tom Nolan, Dorothy Hoyle, Pauline Hart, Jan Duncan, Lilian Skinner, Laura Caldow, Judy Holyer, Ian Holyer, Noreen Truscott, Tony Truscott, Barbara Bush.

Apologies: Gillian Davies, Margaret Harris.

The Chairman, Eric Page, welcomed everyone to the AGM and thanked Mary McKenzie for providing the tea.

1. Minutes of previous AGM

The minutes of the previous AGM were deemed accurate and were accepted (proposed by Mike Short and seconded by Nelson Stephens). There were no matters arising.

2. Chairman's Report (Eric Page)

This will be my last Chairman's report and I can honestly say that I have enjoyed my six years as Chairman. Five years ago, at the first AGM that I attended as Chairman, no-one turned up, so we have come a long way!

During this period the County has had noticeable successes at the table and I trust that the 76 ACBA members who are here today will support the County in future years. Other changes have seen the introduction of P2P and a complete revamp of the EBU.

I would like to thank everyone who has worked on the Committee with me during the last six years and for the support they have given me during this time. Please continue to support the County. I certainly will

3. Treasurer's Report (Mary McKenzie)

The year has been very successful for the County, not least in terms of profitability. The Green Point event raised over £1100 (£200 more than last year) and entry fees for our competitions was also up on last year, for which thanks is due to the dedicated work of Robert Glass and Gill Davies in advertising and promoting the events.

Our expenditure costs were also lower this year notably because we did not qualify for the Tollemache final, but also due to Bristol Bridge Club giving the County free use of the room and facilities on a few occasions to offset a financial adjustment elsewhere.

Accordingly, the increased income and decreased expenditure revealed a healthy net profit of £1,686.55 – which more than offsets the loss we encountered last year.

As we have some new faces at the AGM I thought that I would take the opportunity of explaining the income and expenditure of the County. Our income arises from P2P, where we receive a few pence from the table money and from the Green Point event held every March. The income enables the County to field competitions – the ACBA Leagues, Championship Pairs, Championship Teams, etc., as well as the Western League, where the County plays other Counties at home or away.

The entry fees that you pay for these competitions pays towards room hire, Director's fees and the prizes presented today. The County also pays for players to enter into national competitions organised by the EBU; e.g. the Garden Cities, the Tollemache Cup, the Pachabo and the Corwen. The Committee hopes to see more of you in our competitions, as that presents the opportunity for our members to represent the County at national level and from there, of course, internationally.

After ten years as Treasurer I am now stepping down. Mike Short has agreed to take over from me, unless someone else wants to stand for the post.

Chris Frew asked why we were increasing the ACBA P2P fee by 16% next year. Mary McKenzie reported that the ACBA were actually increasing the fee by 1p and that it was not possible to increase it by a fraction of a penny. This was the smallest increase possible.

4. Secretary's Report (Sue O'Hara)

I just want to mention a few items regarding the EBU that affect the County. From this year all County events will be charged a P2P fee at half the normal rate. This includes League and Knock-Out matches. The EBU have reported a profit for the last financial year, rather than the forecast loss. Hopefully this means that they will not increase the P2P fees this year. They are also pursuing the establishment of charitable status for the EBU as a money saving device.

They have introduced the National Grading Scheme this year, which we are using today to produce everyone's handicaps. This has generated a lot of interest. The Committee is also considering ways that the new Blue Points could be used.

5. Tournament Secretary's Report (Robert Glass)

This is my first year as ACBA Tournament Secretary and I would like to thank my predecessor, Mike Short, for his help and advice while I have been learning the ropes.

We had a good entry again this year for our League and Knock-out competitions. This year, we started the competitions a month early, in August. While we did not expect many matches

to be played then, it gave teams the opportunity to fix up their initial matches, so that people started playing in September rather than October or November, as has been the case in the past.

This is the second year of running the No Fear League, which was successfully kicked off by Mike Short last year. This has seen a number of new teams participating, and we hope that they have enjoyed the experience. Eventually I would like to create a League IV, which will lie between the No Fear League and our current League III. There are clearly a number of teams too good for the No Fear League but who would struggle in League III.

This year, for the first time, we added an extra round to the Knock-out Plate, inviting teams in the No Fear League to play in round I, with teams eliminated from the Main Knock-out joining this event in round II. This was successful and I will be looking at doing something similar again next year.

The rest of our events were not so well supported and one of the things that I will be looking at next year is to try and introduce more events that appeal to our members. The EBU National Grading System has given us an opportunity to hold handicapped events for the first time, and the EBU will be introducing "blue points", which are equivalent to a fraction of green points. We will be looking to assign those to some of our events next season.

I am extremely pleased to see so many of you playing in today's event and I hope that you have an enjoyable day. Obviously we cannot afford to be so extravagant for all of our events but this has given us an indication of what will get people playing. We are all too aware that, at present, the money that we receive via P2P only seems to benefit a small proportion of our members and we hope to widen that by holding events such as the one today.

We will be presenting the trophies for the winners of our events later in this meeting, so I will announce the winners at that point. However, in national events, a number of our members have had particular success:

- **Katy Lee**, currently studying at Southampton University, was part of a team that won the EBU Portland Bowl, beating Oxford University A in the final (round 4).
- In the EBU National Pairs Final, **David Jones** (with Miles Cowling) came 3rd in the A Final.
- **Suzy Lawson** (with Andy Jarvis) won the Mixed Pairs at the York Easter Festival.
- In the EBU Grand Masters Pairs, **Andy & Ralph Smith** were runners-up.
- The team of **Phil Channack, Brian Dyde, Peter Sherry & Brian Wibberley** have so far reached the sixth round of the EBU NICKO competition (last 16).
- The teams of **Gareth Evans, Marc Lee, Tony Letts & Andrew Urbanski** and **Mike Best, Simon Richard, Trevor Towers** (and Mark Roderick) have reached the fourth round (last 32) in the BGB Gold Cup.

- In the EBU Crockfords Cup, the team of **David Jones, Rob Lawy and Trevor Ward** (along with Patrick Jourdain, Tony Ratcliff and Andrew Thompson) reached the final round of the EBU Crockfords Cup.
- **Andy & Cathy Smith** won the EBU Portland Pairs, in a field of 389 pairs.
- And finally, in the Avon/Wilts/EBU Swiss Pairs, **David Jones & Rob Lawy** successfully defended their title.

Player success is recorded on our website, provided that someone has told me about it.

Finally, I would like to thank all those members who have supported one or more of our events this year, and I hope that this support will continue next year. I would very much welcome feedback from our members on our Tournament Calendar and Events, and how we can improve what we offer to our members. At the end of the day we put on these competitions for our membership, so please tell us what you think.

6. Western League Report (Margaret Harris)

A very mixed season, with highs and lows. Despite a good win in their last match the A team finished 6th in their division. Thanks to an excellent win in the pressure final match against Somerset, the B team won their division. The C team finished 5th although they were in contention going into the last match. Overall Avon were 5th.

Avon can now send a team to the B division final in Solihull on Sunday 8th July. A total of 20 people played in the B team this season and I will shortly be e-mailing them to find out who is able to play in the national final and then a team will be selected. My intention would be to give priority to those who have played in more matches unless anyone thinks this is the wrong approach. I'm open to alternative views.

I went to the end of season meeting last weekend and there are no major changes proposed for next season. There was a discussion of whether counties should stop providing a substantial "high tea" and just provide tea/coffee/biscuits but a clear majority were in favour of continuing with the current system. Somerset are keen to play teams of 8 matches in the B division but other counties doubted they could raise a sufficient number of players.

7. Youth Officer's Report (Stuart King)

The University Club is doing well with 8 members. They are progressing well and hope to play at local clubs. In the Portland Bowl, the EBU University Knock-Out competition, Bristol was defeated by the eventual winners. They organised an inter-University competition but it was poorly attended, so they will change the date next year.

8. Election of Officers

The following people were elected to the Committee for 2012-13:

POST	NAME
Chairman	Andrew Urbanski
Vice- Chairman	<i>vacancy</i>
Treasurer	Mike Short
Secretary	Sue O'Hara (until July)
Membership Secretary	<i>Post removed</i>
Tournament Secretary	Robert Glass
Publicity Officer	
Youth Officer	Stuart King
Western League Organiser	Margaret Harris
Committee Member	Nelson Stephens

9. Motions for Discussion

Eric Page read out the motions to be discussed:

a) **ACBA Vision Statement.** The ACBA Committee have written the following vision statement and wish to discuss the idea and how it may be achieved at the AGM:

The Avon Contract Bridge Association would like to achieve the following in order to provide bridge to its members:

"To have the flexibility to run any ACBA bridge event it wishes on any day (or evening) of the week as it sees fit, at whatever cost it sees fit. It would like (if possible) not to have to rely on a third party to help it achieve this. Examples of this include a "county night", a Western League match, or an ACBA qualifier/final."

b) **Teas at ACBA Sunday Finals.** The cost of providing tea at ACBA Sunday Events will increase by 30%. (Bristol BC has raised the cost of tea per person from £5 to £6.50 for Sunday events and £6 for Saturdays). The ACBA Committee wish to discuss whether to continue providing tea in future or whether to just provide a break (and free biscuits) and significantly reduce the table money for playing in these events (players buy their own drinks).

c) **Disciplinary Procedure in our Constitution.** We would like to change the section "Schedule of Disciplinary Procedures" in our Constitution to simply say that:

"The ACBA will follow the latest procedure as laid down by the English Bridge Union".

This is because we adopt the EBU procedure and as the EBU may amend this from time-to-time, it currently requires an EGM or AGM to update it.

d) **Membership Secretary Post.** The ACBA propose that this post is removed as an officer of the Committee and the Constitution amended appropriately. Following the implementation of Universal Membership by the EBU there is no requirement for this role at a County level as all membership is handled via the Affiliated Clubs.

The motions a), c) and d) were agreed and motion c) was discussed.

Andrew Smith asked for clarification regarding the County's plans for obtaining its own premises. These were outlined but it was stated that the plans will take some time and there will be no decisions before next year's AGM. Any proposal will be put before the membership in due course.

A show of hands was taken on whether teas should be provided at County weekend events by those who attend such events. There were 4 votes for teas and 7 against providing teas.

The Chairman also asked for a show of hands on what had encouraged people to attend today's Wimbledon event.

- It was free - 15 votes
- It used a handicap - 10 votes
- It had a Wimbledon ticket draw - 25 votes.

10 Any other Business

A gift was presented to Eric to thank him for all his hard work as Chairman. Andrew Urbanski took over as the new Chairman. He thanked Eric and the meeting was closed.

Eric presented the trophies to the winners of County events (that were present) after the end of play:

League I	Andy Smith, Cathy Smith, Ralph Smith & Steve Tomlinson
League II	Tim Brierley, Mike Elliott, Mike Davies, Paul Keightley, Peter Sampson & Jack Terry
League III	John Brandon-Joyce, Carol Gregg, Marguerite Lihou, Oli Noel, Vanessa O'Callaghan, & Deb Ogilvie
No Fear League	David Gregory, Peter Owens, Margaret Randell & Peter Randell
Knock-out	Robert Covill, Robert Glass, Jeremy Rickard & Aidan Schofield
Knock-out Plate	Phil Channack, Brian Dyde, Peter Sherry & Brian Wibberley
Championship Teams	Andy Smith, Cathy Smith, Ralph Smith & Steve Tomlinson
Championship Pairs	David Jones & Trevor Ward
Mens' Pairs	Aidan Schofield & Nelson Stephens
Ladies' Pairs	Judy Archer & Pauline Hart
Mixed Pairs	Andy Smith & Cathy Smith