

Avon Contract Bridge Association

Minutes of AGM held on 22nd June 2014 at Bristol BC

1. **Present** – Andrew Urbanski, Robert Glass, Sue O’Hara, Stuart King, Larry Bennett, Suzy Lawson & members of the ACBA who played in the Handicapped Pairs.
2. **Apologies** - Mike Short, Alan Williams, Mike Letts
3. **Minutes of 2013 AGM and matters arising**
Agreed by Aidan Schofield, seconded by Delia Stephens
4. **Chairman’s Report (Andrew Urbanski)**
It has been a successful season – moving weekend events to weekdays have improved attendance of County Events. Also the introduction of the ‘Non Expert Pairs’ event was well received.
Disappointment was raised about the lack of support in the Western League from the top ranked players. An appeal was made for them to put their names forward for this, although a lot of the top players were not present at the AGM
5. **Treasurer’s Report (Mike Short)**
In MS absence, AU went through the accounts for last year. ACBA competition expenses are down due to Avon not going as far in events. Accounts are stable
6. **Tournament Secretary’s Report (Robert Glass)**
Tournament-wise it has been a relatively good year for the County, with events played on a Thursday evening at Bristol BC proving popular. I would like to thank Bristol BC and its staff, Directors and volunteers for again hosting our events and providing a top quality service as usual.
 - The ‘Championship Teams’, which moved from a Sunday to a Thursday evening, increased from 4 teams to 16 teams, and we added a wine-prize for the winners after handicap.
 - The “Non-Expert Pairs”, aimed at less experienced players, was added to our Calendar this year and we had a good turnout out of 24 pairs.
 - The Mens’, Ladies’ and Mixed Pairs were again well-attended, with table numbers around the same as last year.
 - Numbers were down in the Championship Pairs, played on a Sunday in February, so next year we are seriously considering playing a qualifier on a Thursday evening followed by a final on a Thursday evening, if Bristol BC can accommodate that.
 - We had 16 teams enter the K/O this year, a perfect starting number.
 - We had a good entry for the top three leagues this year, 19 teams in total. Sadly, however, there was not sufficient interest to hold the No Fear league this year as only two teams put themselves forward. This is partly down to the fact that four teams who initially started out in the No Fear League have now moved up to play in League III but there does seem to be significant inertia in getting less experienced players to play in the No Fear League. We are currently trying to address that problem. One initiative is playing teams on a Friday evening at Bristol BC, which kicked off recently.
 - This last year, in the leagues, in order to take some of the hassle out of fixing up matches, we introduced default dates. League I and League III have welcomed the move. The majority of teams in League II did not go for them, mainly because they contain players who have

uncertainty about their long-term availability and wish to arrange their matches privately. But we will be keeping with default dates for next year. However, the final league night may be abandoned, as for the last two years at most 50% of teams have been able to play on that night, despite us changing it to a different night of the week this year to see if it would help.

- In the Tollemache, which is the inter-county teams-of-eight championship, Avon narrowly missed out on qualifying for the final.
- At the request of Nelson Stephens and others I will be looking to update our rules and regulations in time for next season, mainly regarding the rules for our leagues and knock-outs, which have moved on since our document was last updated a number of years ago.
- Now I would just like to highlight those external competitions in which our members have had success, either as winners or runners-up, and that I am aware of. There are other successes as well. These are regularly highlighted in the Avon report in the EBU magazine and on our website.
- The West of England 'A' Team (David Jones, Alan Jones, Tim Brierley, Robert Covill & Steve Tomlinson) were runners-up in the 2013 EBU NICKO.
- The West of England 'C' Team (Irene Robinson, Tony Gammon, Mike Huggins, Jeremy Rickard & Aidan Schofield) won the 2013 EBU NICKO Plate.
- Suzy Lawson & Aidan Schofield were runners-up in both the EBU Autumn Congress Swiss Pairs and the Devon Congress Swiss Pairs.
- Chris King, Sue O'Hara, Nelson Stephens & Steve Tomlinson were joint winners in the Malvern Congress Swiss Teams.
- Mike Davies & Jack Terry won the Torquay Bridge Club Congress Championship Pairs.
- Sue O'Hara & Nelson Stephens won the EBU Malta Congress Swiss Pairs.
- Shaun Day & Suzy Lawson were runners-up in the EBU Regional Masters.
- Mike Letts & Andrew Urbanski won the EBU Premier Life Masters.
- Andy Smith & Cathy Smith won both the York Spring Congress Swiss Pairs and the Welsh Open Swiss Pairs.
- Tony Gammon & Huw Oliver (with Philip Howard & Dave Latchem) won the Avon/Wilts/EBU Swiss Teams.
- David Jones (with Miles Cowling) were runners-up in the EBU National Pairs 'A' Final.
- Suzy Lawson (with Alan Jarvis) were runners-up in the York Northern Easter Festival Mixed Pairs.
- And finally also worth a mention as it is a very strong competition, David Jones, Rob Lawy & Trevor Ward (with Warner Solomon) reached the quarter-finals of the Shapiro Spring Fours.

Trophy Winners

The winners of our competitions:

League I	Tim Brierley, Mike Elliott, Graham Hartley, David Jones, Rob Lawy & Trevor Ward
League II	Andy Smith, Cathy Smith, Ralph Smith & Steve Tomlinson
League III	John Brandon-Joyce, Carol Gregg, Marguerite Lihou, Oli Espitalier-Noel, Vanessa O'Callaghan & Deb Ogilvie
Knock-out	Brian Goalby, Tony Gammon, Mike Letts, Tony Letts, Huw Oliver & Andrew Urbanski
Knock-out Plate	Ray Mardon, Sheila Montgomery, Sue O'Hara & Nelson Stephens
Championship Teams	Tony Gammon, Robert Glass, Tony Ratcliff & Trevor Ward
Championship Pairs	Ralph Smith & Steve Tomlinson
Mens' Pairs	Mike Davies & Nelson Stephens

Ladies' Pairs	June Forte & Julienne Holder
Mixed Pairs	Shirley Brown & Keith McIndoe
Non-Expert Pairs	Hilda Ball & David Beacham

There are no personalized trophies for the Garden Cities qualifier, Handicapped Teams and Handicapped Pairs. For the latter two we give out prizes instead. But the winners should still be congratulated:

- The Garden Cities qualifier was won by the West of England BC 'A' team (Jeremy Rickard, Robert Glass, David Jones, Andrew Urbanski, Gareth Evans, Mike Short, Robert Covill & Steve Tomlinson).
- The Handicapped Teams was won by Mick Brown, Colin Lennox, Nora Mallett & Clive Pengelly.
- The Handicapped Pairs was won by Gareth Evans & Mike Short.

7. Youth Officer's Report (Stuart King)

Stuart continues to teach bridge at the University but, unfortunately, had to pull out of the league this year due to issues getting a team together due to the students work commitments.

8. Motions to be discussed – Encouraging newcomers to play in ACBA events (including League and Knock-out)

Feedback was given about the trialling of Teams held on Friday 6th June. It was suggested that a Wednesday night might be used to introduce teams, playing less boards and follow up the play with a discussion about the hands.

9. Election of Officers and Committee

Since last year, there are 2 fewer members on the committee with Nelson Stephens stepping down as Vice Chairman and Jan Duncan stepping down as a member without portfolio.

No nominations were received. Re-electing standing members was proposed by Gill Davies and seconded by Jackie Cole

10. Any other business

Oli Noel advised that ACBA events need to be advertised better. It was suggested that leaflets could put on the tables as well as posters on the notice boards for upcoming events

11. Presentation of Trophies

Was made.