

**CONTRACT BRIDGE
ASSOCIATION of IRELAND**

Newsletter

September, 2021
20th Edition (Digital)

Paul Porteous, who is retiring
after twenty-nine years at the
helm of the CBAI, pictured at
the European Championships
in Citywest in 2012



In this issue:

- ***President's Address***
- ***Regional Notes***
- ***Bridge Classes***
- ***Online Bridge***
- ***Win a weekend in the
Dromhall Hotel
(competition on P.25)***

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President hopes to see everyone back to “face-to-face” bridge soon



These are strange times that we are living in, after a twelve month delay my Presidency has finally started. With the COVID vaccine roll-out going so well hopefully we will be getting back to normal soon.

The President usually has a theme for their year, but the only aim I have is to get people back to face-to-face bridge as soon as possible all over the country.

It is a great honour for me to be this year's President and I would like to thank the members and the clubs from the South Munster region for the trust they have placed in me, and I will endeavour to perform my duties to the best of my abilities. I am looking forward to my year as President, and I am sure that Paul and his replacement Dermot, and all the staff at Headquarters, will be there for help and guidance.

I must congratulate Paul for his twenty-nine years of dedicated work for our organisation and wish him and Maureen a very happy and healthy retirement in September; I am sure he will still be available for an occasional phone call.

I just love our game, it has been a fantastic source of enjoyment for me for over twenty-five years, and while playing I have made fantastic friends all over the country. I would like to thank most sincerely all my regular bridge partners.

I intend to promote our game and I would especially encourage all clubs to get their Novice and Intermediate B players to play outside their own clubs in congresses and regional qualifiers, and if they do qualify for national finals to PLAY IN THEM, please.

They are fantastic bridge weekends, and you are competing against players from all over the country that are the same standard as yourself. I can assure people that if they play in one of these events you will definitely want to qualify again for more national competitions.

I look forward to making many new friends all over the country when we finally get the go ahead to resume. I look forward to many hours of enjoyment at the bridge table, and I hope I will be remembered as pleasant and approachable.

Pat O'Mahony
CBAI President.



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Michael Donnelly,
Irish Junior International

Perhaps you took advantage of lockdown to introduce your child or grandchild to cards. Maybe you even taught them the basics of bridge. Or maybe you meant to do this but never quite got around to it.

Either way, don't worry, the CBAI's Junior Committee is happy to help.

We are looking for children or grandchildren of bridge players to teach them the basics of bridge. Or if they already know how to play, we'll take them into our junior training group and provide them with a personal development plan.

Once we get enough newcomers, we will hold a special beginners camp. You're welcome to come along if you'd like, and maybe even lend a hand.

Anyone under 25 qualifies as a junior, but ideally we are looking for under-20s to give them time to benefit from our tuition. There is no lower age limit – our youngest junior today is aged 11.

Bridge is a great game for children and young adults to learn. It incorporates reasoning and problem-solving, maths, and communications, improves memory and concentration, and can provide a lifelong interest. And the earlier that someone takes it up, the more chance they have of being really good at it. **But you know all that.**



For more information, or to register your interest, please contact the CBAI:

email: irishyouthbridge@gmail.com
or telephone: 01 4929666

CBAI Officers for 2021/22

President:

Mr. PAT O'MAHONY
47 Westcourt Heights,
Ballincollig, Cork. P31VR70
Telephone: (087) 9052916
email: pf.omahony@ucc.ie

Vice President:

Ms. EMER KEE
9 Oaklands Park, Gortlee,
Letterkenny, Co. Donegal
F92 VX4D Tel: (074) 9125558
E-mail: emer.kee@lyit.ie

President Elect:

Mr. GORDON LESSELLS
8 Fielcourt, Parteen, Co Clare
Telephone: (061) 340489 email:
Gordon.Lessells@ul.ie

Hon. Secretary:

Mrs. RHONA BOLGER
6 Dalton Place, Salthill, Galway
H91 NV6V. Tel: (091) 585234
E-mail: rhonambolger@gmail.com

Hon. Treasurer:

Mr. BRENDAN MARTIN
Ailsa, 56 Raheen Park, Bray,
Co Wicklow A98 V0D4
Telephone: (01) 2763678
email: bamartin108@gmail.com

GOVERNING COUNCIL

Chairperson:

Ms. CIARA GLEESON
8, Chestnut Grove, Ballinteer,
Dublin 16.
E-mail: gleesoncg@gmail.com

Chief Executive

Mr. DERMOT O'BRIEN
National Headquarters
Templeogue House, Templeogue
Road, Dublin. D6W F822
Telephone: (01) 4929666
E-mail: dermot@cbai.ie
Website: <http://www.cbai.ie>

PRESIDENT EMERITUS

Mr. JOE MORAN
The Highlands, Scholarstown Road,
Dublin D16 K0N7.
Telephone: (01) 4933136.

Thank you from Paul Porteous

AND HERE we are, a few thoughts for the last round-up from me!

I would encourage everyone to keep their ear to the ground for any young person who might be even peripherally interested in bridge. Youngsters can manage extremely well in the online world and with our relatively small population, individuals can pair up with someone from the other side of the country, and develop successful partnerships – and we need them!

The online game which provided such engagement for us over the last 18 months will still have a place in the future – for people who may be too nervous to return to live bridge for a while, for playing with your sister who lives in Belgium, for those who prefer not to emerge into a snowy winter's evening – it's here to stay!

Returning to Live Bridge is now "on the cards"! Details of the possibilities are mentioned on www.cbai.ie – so do check what you need to have in place. Precautions will need to be factored in – screens, face masks, hand sanitation etc – for some time to come. Not everyone will want to be vaccinated and there is no certainty yet that vaccinated people cannot still be carriers.

Some clubs may not be permitted to return to their traditional playing venues – schools, care homes etc so they will need help in finding alternative venues. The same will apply to clubs who previously played in "cosy" conditions i.e. on top of one another and players will not be comfortable with that going forward. In terms of club equipment, we will do all we can to provide the best possible value for you to replace your club supplies – tables, cloths, cards, stationery.

Local input from your County Development Officer and Regional Committee members is very valuable as they will know the area and its potential. That is why committed individuals are needed now more than ever; if you think that you would like to volunteer to help in any way, tell your Regional Secretary and I have no doubt you will be welcomed with open arms. Everyone knows the individuals in your own club who are prepared to roll up their sleeves and get stuck in, if something needs to be tackled. Don't be afraid to suggest to them that there might be a wider role for them in the Region or Nationally – your game needs you.

The volunteer ethic of Irish players is the envy of every National Bridge Organisation across Europe ever since we organised the European Teams Championships in 2012 with 6 month's notice – so don't ever lose that – our generosity of spirit will keep shining through over the coming few years as we strive to restore the CBAI to the glory of its heyday!

We began to recognise our local "unsung heroes" some years ago with the presentation of an

Annual President's Award at the instigation of then CBAI President, Mary Kelly-Rogers. Individuals have been recognised for their work as teachers, quiet club organisers, tournament directors, schools co-ordinators, press correspondents – so there is scope for everyone to be recognised. The award winner for 2020-21 is Danny Liddy from Ennis – a tireless worker for bridge in his area, who once hired a bus to bring several Clare teams to the National 4Fun Inter County Teams competition, and of course one of them won! Congratulations Danny.

By the end of September, I will have completed 29 years working alongside you for the betterment of Irish bridge and have enjoyed almost every day! I think I will have been the longest serving hands-on bridge administrator in the world!

So, thank you for all your conversation and co-operation over the years and I know you will be well looked after by Dermot O'Brien, your new CEO and the current team in CBAI, Carmel, Eimir, Freda, Siobhan, Bernard. It has been an extraordinary experience – one that I have been privileged to have had. Through all the time I worked with you, I was able to do so with the complete support of Maureen by my side, and it's only in the last few years that she has come over to the dark side and taken up bridge! She has really taken to it and you will meet us at the odd Congress in the years ahead! Stay well - Sayonara!



Danny Liddy receiving the well-deserved award from Gordon Lessells, President Elect, CBAI.



There are 43 clubs in the Mid Leinster Region which covers North Kildare, West Dublin and part of Meath. Like other regions, with the support of head office, TDs and individual club members we gradually began to play online. This wasn't possible for some of our clubs but their members were welcomed into other clubs and our CDOs have kept in touch.

The bridge year 2019/2020 ended abruptly with 2 rounds of the Cunningham League still to play. These were completed in October and November of this year, followed by the 2020/2021 League with a larger than usual number of entries. Running the league on BBO proved more challenging than anticipated and we thank all the players for their support.

Without the difficulty of finding a venue, we introduced a new event, the MLR Pairs with sections for B/Novices, Intermediate A's and Masters. There were 4 separate competitions over the year, points were awarded and prizes given at the end.

We hosted 2 regional meetings on Zoom, one in November where we exchanged information on how we were managing online bridge and keeping in touch with members and the AGM in May. The Zoom facility is available to all clubs, and was used extensively to host committee meetings and AGMs.

John Crimmins was appointed to the honorary position of Official Chief TD for the Region; his role will be to advise the regional committee on issues relating to the laws and regulations of bridge, to advise the committee on running competitions that are fair for all, to advise on training and upgrading TDs and to advise clubs on running competitions and what Club TDs need to do.

Congratulations to the Winners of our Major Competitions: Cunningham League 2019/2020 (42 teams): Master - Westmanstown JCM. A1 - Cnucha NMCM. A2 - Confey BMCH. B1 - Maudlins CD. B2/Novice - Confey Castle BL. Naas Pairs: David Melody & Tony Smyth. MLR Pairs: Master David Redmond & Liam Gaynor. A1 - Gary Windebank & Catherine Mahon. A2 - Joan McAndrew. B & Novice - Mags Kelly & Paddy Cooney. Novice - Shokri Raoof & John Donnelly. President's Cup: Joe Coyne & Mary Greene. Cunninghams League 2020/2021 (49 teams): Master - Castleknock TS. A1 - Leixlip PH. A2 - Cnucha MTB. B1 - Roselawn MK. B2 - Confey Castle BL. Novice - Naas Maudlins AF.

Westmanstown Bridge Club Cup:

Westmanstown - Tomás Roche, Mary Roche, John MacNamara, Ian Baker.

Rory Cunningham Shield:

Cnucha - Mary Flynn, Joan McAndrew, Rosaleen O'Loughlin, Marie O'Brien.

Very well done also to David Redmond & Liam Gaynor who won the CBAI's Master Pairs.

County Development Officers' Report

Wuhan will be remembered for many things, and not just for Bridge. It will be COVID-19 that most of us will remember. Was it the bats or was it the virus that escaped from the test labs in China? Our roles as Development Officers and our activities from March 2020 are briefly summarised by the following bullet points:

Contacting the clubs and talked to them about setting up virtual clubs

- Offering support to clubs that were interested
- Running Zoom meetings on the process for joining, and

how to setup BBO sessions

- We made ourselves available to run events on BBO for Local Clubs
- We arranged and travelled to agreed venues to distribute club packs in September
- We attended Governing Council, Regional, Club, Cunningham League Meetings.
- We organised Improver classes for Novices and Intermediates on Zoom and BBO
- We maintained communications with the regional officers.

As CDO's would like to wish Paul Porteous, his wife Maureen, and their family every good wish in their retirement. We have worked with Paul for many years now, and whether that was at meetings or over in the office we always found Paul to be a gentleman, and always helpful. Paul has always been available to give advice, and very dedicated to his role. Paul has always been knowledgeable and efficient in his days as director of operations in Templeogue, and in latter days as CEO of the Contract Bridge Association of Ireland. We all agree that down the road Paul's career could probably inspire a book. Paul will be extremely difficult to replace maybe even irreplaceable. Best wishes to Paul and Maureen.

Bert McKay, Marian McKay, Barbara Burke.

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REGIONAL SECRETARIES

NORTH MIDLAND

Mrs. Lorraine Barry, Cartrontroy, Athlone,
Co. Westmeath. Tel: (086) 8302607.

E-mail: jameson.lorraine@gmail.com

MID LEINSTER - Ms Blanaid Morris,
4 Stockton Park, Castleknock,
Dublin 15. D15 W5XA

Telephone: (086) 8381825

E-mail: mlrsect@gmail.com

SOUTH MUNSTER - Mrs. Linda O'Riordan
Lissacreasig, Macroom, Co Cork.

Tel: (026) 40097 / (085) 7671632

email: oriordan5@hotmail.com

NORTH MUNSTER Mrs. Ann White,
26, Tullyglass Court, Shannon, Co. Clare.

Tel: (061) 361704. (086) 8307966.

E-mail: cbainorthmunsterbranch@gmail.com

SOUTH EASTERN - Mrs Oona Dwyer,
Houseland, Fethard-on-Sea,
Co Wexford. Y34R850

Tel: (051) 397270 / (087) 9893025

E-mail: oonadwyer@gmail.com

SOUTH MIDLAND

Mr Hugh Donnelly-Swift,
Trenchardstown, Tullyrowan, Co Kilkenny.
Tel: (085) 7118753

E-mail: hughdonnellyswift@gmail.com

WESTERN - Mrs. Peggy Cheevers,
Banogues, Castleblakeney,
Ballinasloe, Co. Galway. H53HN25

Telephone (087) 6448546

E-mail: peggycheevers@gmail.com

DUBLIN SOUTH - Brid Kemple,
17, Christchurch View, Nicholas Street,
Dublin. D08 R659.

Telephone: (087) 1954528.

E-mail: kemplebrid@gmail.com

NORTH WESTERN - Dr. John McCrohan,
Mollymore House, Cuillaun,
Swinford, Co. Mayo.

Tel: (087) 2422945.

E-mail: norwestbridge@gmail.com

EASTERN - Mrs. Bernadette Rountree,
7, Marlton Grove, Marlton Road,
Wicklow A67 VF57.

Telephone: 086-1045848.

E-mail: brountre28@gmail.com

NORTH EASTERN - Mr Seamus Costello,
Barnageera, Balbriggan, Co Dublin.

Tel: (01)8492280. shaybridge@gmail.com

NORTHERN-DONEGAL

Mrs. Margaret Doherty
Bredagh Glen, Moville, Co Donegal. F93KP83
Tel: (074) 9382420 / (086) 3936255.

E-mail: margaretmmdoherty@outlook.com

DUBLIN NORTH

Mrs Mary Breen, 16 Oakwood Avenue,
Swords, Co. Dublin, K67 R9K4.

E-mail: marycarmelbreen@gmail.com

REGIONAL NOTES South Munster Secretary: Linda O'Riordan ♣♦♥♣

It is a great honour for the South Munster Region to have Pat O'Mahony (Cork Bridge Club) as President of the CBAI for 2021-2022. The AGM was held in the Silver Springs Hotel in Cork on 3 July 2021, limited to 25 attendees. The meeting was also held on Zoom for regional delegates to attend. This was confined to 100. As a region we were disappointed that we could not invite more to support Pat on this very special occasion but we are looking forward to the year and wish Pat every success and enjoyment. It will be a different year, as we don't know when we will be able to return with face-to-face bridge and when Pat will be able to attend any congresses or national events.

The year has been challenging on all fronts for the bridge community. Clubs have not been able to return and in September of last year, the committee worked with club secretaries, getting out packs and encouraging members to pay their affiliation fees to the CBAI. With support from many members, we encouraged clubs to uptake the option of playing online, and members to join.

A special thanks to all the players that helped with getting fellow members playing online. Every club, I'm sure, has a story of someone, who didn't have the internet or a device and was completely new to this, but with the support of their friends they soon were playing. It has been a lifeline for many during the year and we are all grateful to those who gave their time freely to get as many as possible playing.

There are currently 22 BBO clubs online from the South Munster Region and it is with great pleasure we welcome a new club SMA Wilton.

As a region we did not run any regional competitions but were fortunate to have held competitions during the 2019-2020 season and these players were offered the opportunity to play in the national competitions that were carried over to this year.

Congratulations to Claire Ryan and Michael Doherty (Ballincollig) with Clare Jones and Mary Murphy Doyle (The Mills), who came third in the Intermediate B teams, and Alf Davis and Martin Delaney (The Mills) with Dermot Houston and John O'Donovan (Collins), who won the Intermediate B Plate. South Munster held their first online competition and it was for Novices. This was held on 11 April with 29 pairs. Well done to the winners, Helen Hallissey and Catherine Jackson, and thanks to all that participated.

The region held an Intermediate B competition on 27 June, with 20 pairs participating and congratulations to winners Flor Horan & Patricia Horan (Midleton). Results are on our Bridgewebs site "South Munster Region".

The interregionals were held on BBO on the weekend 20-21 February and Munster came second in all competitions. We would like to thank Derek O'Gorman for his time as captain and we wish Diarmuid Reddan well on taking up this post for the next two years.

South Munster held their Regional AGM on 8 June 2021. This was also held over Zoom and we had over 60 members attending. Paul Porteous was invited, as this was his last meeting as CEO, and we would like to wish Paul well on his retirement. Bart Van Oyen (Kenmare Bridge Club) is South Munster President 2021-2022 and Bernie O'Halloran (Ballinhassig) is President-Elect. Carmel Connolly is retiring as Master Points and Affiliation secretary but is continuing as Regional TD. A huge "Thank You" for all Carmel has done, from everyone in the region. Clubs are now requested to send their affiliations fees directly to the CBAI.

I would like to extend our sympathies to all clubs and members who have lost loved ones during the year and hope all who have been ill will make a speedy recovery.

Thanks to Anne Maria Bourke for continuing on as President for 2021-2021. She has been a great support with any issues during the year and we wish Bart Van Oyen all the best for next year. Thank you, to the regional committee and club secretaries for all their hard work and commitment during this year.

South Munster would like to wish Dermot O'Brien all the best on taking over as CEO of the CBAI and to thank all the staff in Templeogue. At the time of writing, we do not have any further guidelines as to when clubs will be able to re-open, but we will keep clubs informed with any new developments.



Pat O'Mahony, President, CBAI with Bart Van Oyen, Incoming President, South Munster Region

*I've learned....
That making a 'living'
is not the same as
making a 'life'
— Maya Angelou*

REGIONAL NOTES Dublin North Region Secretary: Mary Breen ♣♦♥♣

Congratulations to all the Bridge clubs / members who embraced the changes to our world in 2020/21. Of the thirty clubs in the D.N.R. only two clubs did not affiliate but we did not lose all their members as clubs within the region welcomed in those members who wanted to continue playing. We also welcomed three new clubs into our region, Heron's Nest, Howth Golf Club and Broadmeadows, we wish them every success in the future.

With the expertise of Aidan Synnott, aided by his team of TD's we were able to run all our regional events online. As it was not possible to complete the Kirwans league in the previous season, it was decided to hold a Gala Teams event for all those teams that did compete. The winners of all our events are as follows:

Novice Pairs: Edel Lynch and Aidan Seery (Iona Bridge Club)
The McLoughlin Cup (Intermediate B's) Noel Hughes and Anthony McMackin (Malahide)
Norma Madden Trophy (Intermediate A2's) Mick and Mary Connell (Clontarf and Raheny)
Maureen Meade Trophy (Area Masters & Inter A1's) Aileen James and Mary McNamara (Malahide)
Marie Cummins Plate (Master Pairs) Sheila Rafter and Ann O'Reilly (Malahide)
Kirwans Gala Team event:

Novices: Gerry Creighton, John Hynes, Orla Murnane and Ray Wall (St. Anthony's)
Intermediate B's: Simon Keane, Helen Waugh, Declan Cahill, and Frances Daly (Malahide)
Intermediate A's: Mary Breen, Anna Murray, Linda Garland and Patricia Brennan (Malahide)
Masters: Paddy English, Mary Kelly Rogers, Ciaran Mulhall and Justin Mulhall (Malahide)

When the time is right, we will have a Gala evening for all our winners and look forward to presenting our Trophies and congratulating our members in person. All these events were very well supported, and we hope this will continue.

Our President, Ria Malone for

the 20/21 season was a hardworking, committed President. Ria had been nominated by Iona Bridge Club and she did her club proud. She did all she could to encourage as many members as possible to embrace the changing times and to promote our competitions. She was instrumental in setting up Sunday afternoon Bridge, which has proved very successful.

We would like to thank those members stepping down from the committee: Rodney O'Hara, our President for 2019/20, representing Baldoyle Bridge club, for all his arduous work and commitment and to Frances Scally who has

been a very hardworking committee member and to Barbara Vaughan for her brief but helpful commitment to the region.

We wish Jim McCormack, nominated by Lush Bridge club the best for the coming season.

We are always indebted to Norma Madden, our President Emeritus, Norma's advice, and expertise on the committee is invaluable to us.

We wish Paul Porteous the best in his retirement and every good wish to Dermot O'Brien as he takes on the role of CEO.

As a return to Bridge still seems a little way off, we look forward to seeing all our members at the virtual table in 21/21.

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Bridge players in Dublin South Region breathe a sigh of relief as we anticipate meeting each other again face-to-face after a year and a half. The time to re-open just has to be soon! We can see light at the end of the tunnel. Clubs have received instructions on how to reopen for live bridge and we can't wait for the 'all clear'.

We will have to get used to the feel of the cards in our hands again, taking out the bid from the bidding box and placing it on the table, seeing dummy laid out on the green baize and of course, as Seamus Dowling would say, Thank you partner!

As we plan for the 2021-22 bridge season, we can tell you that the Dublin South Region Management Committee is organising our calendar as usual – for face-to-face bridge. We anticipate that some adjustments will have to be made. We will have to see how things pan out over September. The Fanagan League will not return until such time as it can go live – face-to-face. This is our highly successful Regional Teams League covering all levels of bridge. The principle behind the League is competitive bridge played socially where one club visits another to play teams bridge. It would not be the same if it was held virtually.

The Regent Bridge Club is, however, organising Open, Area Master and Intermediate Leagues. Starting towards the end of September, these Leagues will be on-line on Realbridge to begin with and will be open to all players countrywide. It is intended that later, when the Regent reopens for live bridge, the Dublin based teams will have the option to play in the Club on Waterloo Road. Keep an eye on the [Regent Bridge Club, Dublin, Ireland \(bridgewebs.com\)](http://www.bridgewebs.com).

The Bankers Bridge Club continues to run its two weekly games on Realbridge. It hopes to run another open event this autumn. See <http://www.bankersbridgeclub.com/>

Looking back at the year 2020-21, Dublin South Region has had another successful year - comparatively speaking. We are lucky to be based in Dublin City. With clubs located close to each other we have much intermingling between club members. Very few players have not availed of the multitude of on-line games available across the Region. It was quiet as regards Regional Competitions as the qualifying events were held in 2020.

We ran Novice and Intermediate Gala Pairs competitions in the Autumn and the Spring and finished the year with the annual Kay Downes Trophy for Novice Pairs in June. This was won by a Ballyroan Club pair Maria Connolly and Brenda Moriarty. Our President, Niamh Gormally, Kay's grand-daughter, looks forward to presenting the trophy to Brenda and Maria in her home club of Ballyroan in due course.

While they were held virtually and titles were not awarded in respect of National Competitions, we congratulate our Dublin South Region national and international winners and acknowledge their contribution to winning bridge during the year.

Duais an Uachtaráin CBAI Master and Inter. 'A' Pairs: Thomas MacCormac & Marcin Rudzinski.

Spiro Cup CBAI National Mixed Pairs: Kevin O'Dea & Breda Synnott.

Coen Trophy CBAI National Mixed Teams: Anna Onishuk & Karel DeRaeymaecker and Partners.

CBAI Master Pairs: Liam Gaynor & David Redmond.

Jackson Cup CBAI National Women's Pairs:

Gráinne Dunne & Mary Lindopp.

McMenamin Bowl CBAI National Women's Teams: Valerie



One of the first functions the incoming Regional President, Niamh Gormally (above) will have is to present her grandmother's trophy to the winners of the Regional Novice Pairs. Kay Downes (pictured below), is a former President of the CBAI and recently celebrated her 90th birthday. Wonderful to see the baton being passed down the generations. Good luck Niamh we know you will do a great job!



Hand & Miriam McConville, Elva Gannon & Mary Trench.

Geraldine Trophy CBAI National Men's Teams: Ranald Milne & BJ O'Brien and Partners.

Holmes Wilson Trophy CBAI Teams: Nick Fitzgibbon & Adam Mesbur, Tom Hanlon & Hugh McGann, Mark Moran.

Davidson Cup CBAI National Master Pairs: Conor Boland &



Karel De Raeymaecker.

Lambert Cup CBAI Area Master Teams: Marie James & Anthony Maloney, Sue Power & Collette Stokes.

Tierney Trophy CBAI National Inter. B Teams: Gavin Doyle & Tom Flood, Kathleen Ingoldsby & Anna Frances Murphy.

Kelburne Trophy CBAI National Open Teams: Karel DeRaeymaecker & BJ O'Brien, Brid Kemple & Terry Walsh.

Marie Cummins Trophy Best Performing CBAI Region in the National Teams: Dublin South Region.

Egan Trophy IBU All Ireland Teams: John Carroll & Mark Moran, Nick Fitzgibbon - Adam Mesbur, Tom Hanlon & Partner

Teltscher Trophy Home Nations International Senior Teams Peter Goodman & Terry Walsh, Ranald Milne & BJ O'Brien, Pádraig O'Briain & Micheal O'Briain, NPC Derek O'Gorman.

Our larger clubs were busy too with the Regent Bridge Club running a Congress in March and the Bankers Bridge Club

running a mini-Congress on Realbridge over the May Bank Holiday weekend. Both proved to be highly successful. And congratulations to Railway Union Bridge Club which celebrated its 10th Anniversary in January with a Gala Pairs event.

Before moving on, let us acknowledge that we have not come out of the Covid-19 crisis unscathed. Most have been touched by the illness or loss of someone close and let's face it, life will never be the same again. We hope our wonderful game of bridge will go some way in restoring our spirits. Dublin South Region Management Committee will be there to provide direction to any of our clubs which needs assistance in re-opening. Please do not hesitate to contact your Secretary Brid Kemple at 087 1954528.

And finally, a warm welcome to Dermot O'Brien at CBAI HQ and a farewell and sincere thank you to Paul Porteous. See you at the bridge table, Paul.



Maria Connolly (top) and Breda Moriarty, winners of the Kay Downes Trophy for Novice Pairs in Dublin South Region.

Bridge Events Killarney 2022

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REGIONAL NOTES North Eastern Secretary: Seamus Costello ♣♦♥♣

Over the past year many members have survived by playing bridge online, be it on a virtual club set up by their own club or on other virtual clubs who were open to outside players. There were also regional, national, and international events held online during the year.

The big question that bridge players have been asking for a long time is "When are we getting back to bridge in the club?" We now know the Government has given the 'green light' for bridge clubs to return to 'Live Bridge' from September 20th. There will be challenges for many of our clubs as apart from a small number who have their own premises; the majority have to rely on hiring premises for their club sessions. All clubs will have to have player protection measures in place so that people can feel they are safe as possible from the dangers of contracting COVID-19. The CBAI have issued guidelines to help clubs return to live bridge.

We weren't able to hold an AGM for the past two years; however, we will now be holding our AGM in the Newgrange Hotel, Navan on Monday 13 September. On 19 May we did go ahead with a changeover of Regional President when Eileen McEntegart handed over the chain of office to Peter Byrne in the ABCD Bridge Centre, Drogheda.

We did get to hold two regional Executive meetings on zoom in April and May of this year to finalise the yearly accounts and discuss plans for the return of live bridge.

During the past year we experienced the sadness of a num-

ber of members who passed away. May they rest in peace. Two members, Bernie O'Reilly (died December 2020) and Cathal McSherry (died July 2021), were great supporters of regional events over many years. They also competed in many national events.

We wish Paul Porteous a very happy retirement after 29 years both as Secretary and CEO of the CBAI. To Dermot O'Brien we extend our good wishes as he will become the new CEO when Paul retires on 30 September. We wish Pat O'Mahony a very enjoyable year as our National President for 2021-2022.



The late Bernie O'Reilly



The late Cathal McSherry



L – R Eileen McEntegart (outgoing President), Seamus Costello (Regional Secretary), Peter Byrne (incoming President for 2021-2022) and Kay Goldsworthy who will become President for 2022-2023.

REGIONAL NOTES Northern Region - Donegal Secretary: Mrs. Margaret Doherty

This 2020/2021 bridge season has been relatively unchanged for this Region. All of our committee members have remained in place, due to the current restrictions in place, however we remain very positive that this situation will improve in the very near future.

ONE BIG CHANGE - During 2020 this Region has set up online clubs for all of our members. A huge thank you to all who have been involved in the setting up and running of the online clubs on a weekly basis and especially to all of our players who have embraced the online games so welcomingly. On Monday evenings Letterkenny Online Club run both a Senior and Intermediate Competition. On Tuesdays Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Raphoe Online Club hold a weekly game for members. On Wednesday evenings we have an Inishowen Online Club (covering Buncrana/Northwest, Carndonagh and Moville Club members) and play on Wednesday evenings all year round and on Thursdays we have West Donegal Online Club - Senior and Intermediate games, and again this is an all year round facility requested by players.

Details on entry to any and all of the above competitions is detailed on our website –

<https://www.bridgewebs.com/northernregioncbai/>

SUCCESS IN NATIONAL COMPETITIONS (VIRTUAL)

The CBAI Simultaneous Pairs were like all other competitions, played virtually again this year. This Region had some success in this national competition with high scoring in the Top 10 places.

Monday 1st February 2021

Eibhlin McCracken and Aidan McLaughlin

(Regent Bridge Club) Buncrana Northwest Club members

3rd place Nationally - 71.15% (1016 PAIRS).

Wednesday 3rd February 2021: Anna Carr and Margaret Farren (Inishowen Bridge Club). 4th place Nationally 72.16% (1294 PAIRS)


Thursday 4th February 2021: Sheila Ward and Mary A Gallagher (West Donegal Intermediate Pairs) - 7th place Nationally 69.03% (1043 PAIRS).

For all information and updates on competitions and whats happening within the Region,

see <https://www.bridgewebs.com/northernregioncbai/>

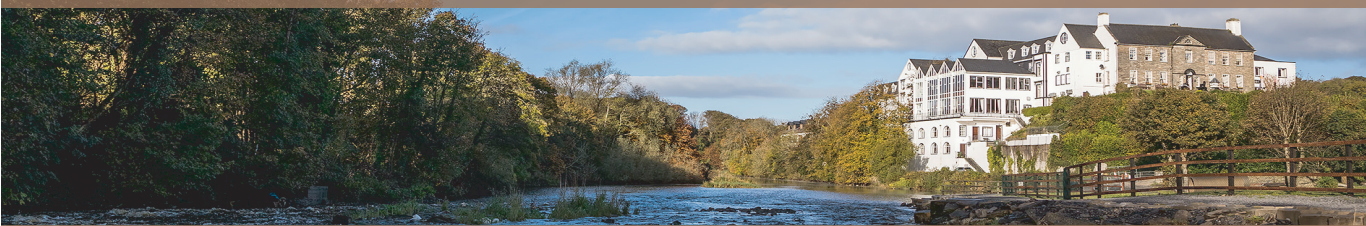


Anne Gallagher - Northern Region - Donegal Regional President CBAI.



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REGIONAL NOTES North Western Region *Representative: Fearghal O'Boyle*

March 2020 will forever be ingrained in our minds - the Irish lockdown begins and for bridge players this would mean a sharp and sudden end to face-to-face club bridge. Not meeting friends that we would normally meet two or three times every week would lead to severe withdrawal symptoms for some of us or even worse.

Thankfully at least 70% of us managed to move our bridge online - mostly to Bridge Base Online (BBO). In the early days, it was difficult for us all (players and directors) but after 18 months online we can all be amazed at ourselves and at how much we've progressed.

While this online alternative pales in comparison to the face-to-face game, there were many advantages to this much appreciated alternative. We were able to keep in contact with our friends. We were able to make new online friends. We were able to play with people we would not normally be able to play with e.g. we had four sisters (three in Ireland and one in New Zealand) who were able to play regularly with one another - thanks to online bridge. We have another mother and daughter partnership in Derry and America who were able to play online together.

Another advantage of the online game was that there was no need to dress up - on top of that the bar and kitchen was always open - and of course we could arrive at the last minute without disturbing anybody.

Many players have reported that they played better bridge online than in the club because they were better able to concentrate and focus on their game. Some even said they could keep one eye on the TV while playing bridge. Playing online also meant that we did not have the added stress of dealing with traffic or finding a parking spot. Another player remarked "Why would I rush to go back to face-to-face bridge when I can play online against some of my bridge Idols like Barnett Shenken and Zia Mahmood?"

Then there was the huge advantage that results and score records were instant and contained extensive detailed data. Not only could we see every bid made by every player at every table but we could see every card played by every player at every table as well. This data is absolute gold-dust to the improving player, also to the advanced partnership. We were able to run special 'themed nights' to help players improve various aspects of their game e.g. declarer play, defensive play, slam bidding, competitive bidding, Lebensohl etc.

The online game meant that life was easier too for the Tournament Director. For starters, it was a lot less labour intensive - we no longer had to leave home an hour or two before the event started, load up the car with boxes of cards, computers, printers, then unpack the car at the venue, setup tables and computers only to have repack the car and then offload it all again at home five hours later.

Directing online also means that we have a bit more time to say "Hello" to people - in the face-to-face game there would never be a free moment to say "Hello" to anybody. We have met some really lovely people online and made loads of new friends that we hope to meet in person someday.

So are there any disadvantages to playing online? Yes, there are few. As we get older social interaction becomes more and more important and you can't beat playing in a face-to-face bridge club for that. Then there is the fact that there are healthier things to be doing than sitting down and looking at a

screen for two hours. Then there were the stories that some partnerships were cheating because they were contacting each other during the game.

Do these disadvantages outweigh the numerous advantages? That's a decision for each of us to make. Maybe a mixture of both will suit some? But all-in-all online bridge becomes more and more attractive with each passing day.

It looks like face-to-face bridge will slowly start to return in the near future, but in any case, we will continue to run our friendly nightly online 'Sligo and Friends' game. All are welcome any night - see www.fob.ie for our full schedule. On another positive note - our Yeats Country Bridge Congress will be live and face-to-face over the weekend of 10 to 12 June next. So book your accommodation early in the Radisson Hotel Sligo (071-9140008). If we don't see you all before then we will have a good catch up at the Congress.

I've learned....
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liking what you do,
and liking how you do it."
— Maya Angelou



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Tribute to Paul Porteous

Joe Moran, President Emeritus, CBAI

You may have heard that the CBAI is about to lose the services of a man who has done more than most - maybe more than anyone - to develop the Association and to promote bridge in Ireland. It is a bit of a cliché to say that an organisation would not be in the shape it is in without the efforts of some individual or other ... but in the case of Paul Porteous's influence on the CBAI, it is undoubtedly true.

I have had the pleasure of working closely with Paul on bridge matters for more than thirty years, and I am delighted to pen this short tribute to him on his retirement.

Paul was the first full-time employee of the CBAI, and was appointed General Secretary (later to be Chief Executive) in 1992. Newer members of the Association will be surprised to learn that, until the CBAI offices in Templeogue were opened in 1999, Paul ran the Association from his home in Clonskeagh.

He recalls long treks in the rain carting bridge tables down to his car from the basement of Joe Murray's house, which was our storage depot at the time, and people calling to his house at seven o'clock on Christmas Eve to buy last-minute gifts for their bridge friends. The annual masterpoint records were printed in an overnight run on an old dot-matrix printer in the garage. Apparently Paul could sleep through the pinging noise when the printer needed new paper, but his wife Maureen was not so fortunate. No doubt she was even more pleased than Paul when he moved over to the comforts of Templeogue. And of course Paul has been the driving force behind a significant modernisation of the Association since then, which continues to this day.

In 2012, when Greece withdrew as hosts of the European Championships at late notice due to the fallout of their financial crisis, the CBAI stepped up and delivered a fantastic event in Citywest. Paul was at the very heart of all the planning, preparation, and delivery of an event that is remembered fondly by all who took part in it, and by all the Irish bridge players who travelled out to watch the experts or take part in the side events. Paul made sure that we showed our visitors that the Irish reputation for hospitality is fully justified. He tells me that at European bridge meetings, he regularly meets a pair from Cyprus who continue to be in touch with the landlady of the B&B near Naas in which they stayed for the duration of the event.

These organisational abilities, and the calm determination that underlies them, did not go unnoticed, and within a few years Paul had been elected to the Council of the European Bridge League, ultimately serving as its Secretary, the only Irish person to date to reach such high office within the EBL.

Paul has always been a people person with a fantastic memory for personal details - invaluable attributes in a role such as his. The CBAI office staff will tell you that it was as if he knew every bridge club officer in the country, and indeed every bridge club member, personally. Nothing was ever too much trouble for him, and bridge players in every



parish in Ireland will have reason to remember Paul's help and generosity in the cause of local bridge.

I'm sure there was also the odd crisis along the way over the thirty years, but no-one remembers them now, because Paul was always able to defuse them in his calm and unflappable way.

In addition, Paul was able to build a fantastic relationship with our friends in the NIBU, which was warmly reciprocated, and has made the confederation of our two bodies, the Irish Bridge Union, work more harmoniously and more effectively than ever before.

And of course Paul was, and continues to be, an excellent player who has represented Ireland at junior level and in mixed events, and has won several national titles. And there might well have been more ... it is probably fair to say that his career in bridge administration meant that his playing career took a back seat for quite a while.

On behalf of all the members of the Association over the past thirty years, I thank Paul most sincerely for all he has done for Irish bridge, and wish him and Maureen a very long, happy, and healthy retirement together. He tells me that they plan to do some travelling, but I am sure that we will continue to meet him at the bridge table, and that he will make his counsel available to us generously whenever we need it.

Paul, "go raibh míle míle maith agat."

Online Bridge - Your Feedback

Online bridge (or “digital bridge”, as it has become known) has been the only game in town for us over the past eighteen months. Just as we have all had to get used to meeting friends and transacting business over Zoom, Skype, or equivalent, so we have had to adapt to playing bridge on BBO, RealBridge, or one of the other platforms to emerge. It was either that or not play bridge at all.

Digital bridge, of course, has existed for some time. The most popular platform, BBO, was launched in 2001. For a long time, it was used mainly by teachers for individual or small-group tuition, and by top-level players for online practice sessions. There were also some casual foursomes, but very few tournaments were played on the platform. In pre-pandemic days, a total attendance of more than around 10,000 at any time was an irregular occurrence. But 2020 saw the whole world migrate online, and lots of virtual clubs spring up, including more than 200 here in Ireland. Now all of a sudden it was common to find more than 50,000 players or more online simultaneously on BBO, a fact which caused some strain on their computer servers in the early days of lockdown, although the company responded rapidly with an improved service.

Given that everyone has played, and indeed attended classes, exclusively online since March 2020, we felt it would be a useful exercise to seek feedback from CBAI members on how they have found the experience, what they have liked and not liked about digital bridge, what changes they would make if they could, and how they see the future. At the same time as the CBAI sought this member feedback, Mid Leinster region did a similar exercise, and the views reported here include those opinions also.

We should stress at the outset that this is NOT any kind of scientific survey. In particular, it is skewed by the fact that only people who did play digitally are represented. Although a significant cohort of CBAI members did not play online, none of them gave us any feed-

back, so we don't know why that was the case. Our assumption is that it is some combination of lack of desire and wariness of new technologies. On the other hand, lots of our respondents commented that while they were initially nervous or not keen to try online bridge, once they did, they got used to it very quickly. One person said she had avoided it for months because she knew she'd get addicted, but then gave in to temptation, and now is addicted! So even if you are still amongst the holdouts, it is never too late. And the age-range of those playing online is huge; we heard from of several people in their mid-90s who have gone online

(several of whom expressed their gratitude to their clubmates for the help they received in doing so) while the youngest player we are aware of is an 11-year-old in the midlands who was taught bridge by a relative, loves it, and now plays regularly at the local virtual club and has appeared at one or two virtual congresses.

Your feedback suggests that most people who have tried digital bridge feel that, while it is not quite the same as face-to-face bridge, it has nevertheless been a godsend (the word “lifesaver” appeared very regularly in our correspondence) in a very difficult time, and that we are lucky that our chosen hobby, unlike some, translates so easily to a virtual world.

BBO was the most-widely used platform, followed by RealBridge, with a small number of votes for Funbridge and one or two for NoFearBridge for its quizzes and tuition. All the platforms deserve great credit for their response to the explosion in online bridge, and the new demands of clubs for tournaments in a multitude of formats. From the CBAI's perspective, BBO has been very easy to deal with on behalf of our virtual clubs, and it has provided a very welcome revenue stream both for clubs and for the Association itself.

BBO has also been very responsive in terms of enhancing their offering in response to requests. The developers of RealBridge did a great job in bringing their new product to the market so rapidly; while the platform is less widely used than BBO, the camera and microphone facilities offer an experience that some players prefer as being closer to real bridge (hence the name), and also provide a greater level of security.

It was very interesting to learn that, while all of our respondents were looking forward to the prospect of returning to face-to-face bridge, the majority of them also felt that digital bridge offered certain advantages that might

be retained in the future. In particular, many people commented on the ability to go over a deal card-by-card afterwards (the “Double Dummy” function) to see exactly where you went wrong (or occasionally right!) as a very useful learning tool. One player described it as giving you the ability “to keep revisiting your nightmares”. Our bridge teachers all agree that this facility is extremely useful for those wishing to improve their game. The other big plus for online bridge is convenience – no travel, no need to get dressed up or apply the make-up, the ability to sit in your own house and ply yourself with your favourite beverage as you play,

and competitions that finish promptly rather than running the usual fifteen or twenty minutes late. The charges were felt to be good value, and players saved money by not having to pay for the travel, accommodation, and meals associated with bridge congresses and gatherings. A number of you commented that it was great to be able to play at times that suited you, and with friends from all over the country and overseas. We also saw a large number of overseas players

playing in Irish competitions, and vice versa. Finally, several correspondents noted the phenomenon of clubs banding together in combination to form amalgamated virtual clubs, which was welcomed.

But the advantage of not having to leave the house is also the biggest negative of online bridge. We all missed the social aspect of the game, the ability to chat with friends, to enjoy a cup of tea or a glass of wine, and catch up on all the news of the day. Typing can only get you so far. RealBridge added to the social aspect, but even at its best was felt to be a bit artificial – still not quite “real bridge”, as it were. In addition, there was a tendency for all bridge events to become the same; while congresses and major competitions were welcome additions to the calendar, playing in them no longer felt much different to playing in the regular club night.

While most bridge teachers simply chose to postpone their classes once the pandemic struck, a small number took the plunge and moved into the digital world, and offered classes using a combination of one of the bridge platforms and one of the conferencing tools. And to good effect, judging by the excellent feedback their students have given us. The move online also saw some additional teaching materials developed. We have seen the emergence of the [New Tricks Bridge Club](#), a YouTube channel dedicated to the promotion of bridge education at all levels, while our very own [Thomas MacCormac](#) has also created his own YouTube channel with a wealth of instructive material. If you haven't used either of these resources, take a look at them when you have a chance. We cannot discuss digital bridge without mentioning the elephant in the room ... cheating. Obviously, it is much more difficult to be sure that your opponents are behaving ethically when playing online, particularly without using cameras; a number of our correspondents commented that they saw some “unusual” bids and plays made online. Of course, there may be entirely innocent explanations for these – misclicks, distractions, lack of concentration, or even just plain bad bridge. Nevertheless, there were a number of high-profile online cheating convictions across the world in the early days of the pandemic, when the phrase “self-kibitzing” (using

a different account to watch yourself playing online, with the result that you could see all four hands) came into the lexicon. Some big fish were caught in the net, including several world champions. Self-kibitzing was quickly banned, but the issue of partners communicating illegally with each other continued to raise its head. Within the CBAI, we elected to take a pragmatic approach to this matter. We flagged at the start of the season that any events played online would essentially be for entertainment, with no prizes and no national titles up for grabs. And we issued frequent notices reminding players of their ethical responsibilities. While it would be naïve to think that no cheating took place in CBAI events, we have received no formal allegations to date, and our sense is that we have been successful in keeping the lid on this.

It was truly heartening to see so many people work so hard to get up

to speed on digital bridge so quickly. In many cases virtual clubs started small but mushroomed as word spread and confidence grew. We had lots of cases of clubs starting with just 3 or 4 tables and growing rapidly; many of the bigger clubs ended up running multiple competitions simultaneously for their different grades. We all owe a great debt of gratitude to those who threw themselves so wholeheartedly into the cause, many of them unpaid volunteers. We asked you to nominate

your unsung heroes; we got a long list of people who, in the words of one correspondent “changed challenges into opportunities”. Eamonn Galligan was identified as having been first out of the blocks using a historical licence that enabled him to get going even before the virtual clubs to offer a high-quality nightly game (complete with the occasional caustic analysis). Fearghal O'Boyle and Diarmuid Reddan likewise offered very regular games, and along with Mairead Basquille and others ran most of the CBAI congresses and competitions. Other club or tournament organisers mentioned in dispatches included Peter Byrne, John Crimmins, Carol-Anne Cummins, Brendan Doyle, Declan Doyle, Pat Egan, Margaret Forde, Marion Gallagher, Thomas MacCormac, O'Keeffe Bridge, Deirdre O'Sullivan, Peter Pigot, Bernie Rountree, Paul Scannell, Denis Sheehan, Gareth Simpson, and Paul Williams. Mike Gowie was commended for his work in developing an online payment system to by-pass the BBO wallet. And we're certain there are lots and lots of others from all over the country – well done and thanks to you all!

It was not all plain sailing – we had to get to grips with self-alerting, undo's and whether or not they should be granted, robots playing at the speed of light, humans playing at a glacial pace (funnily enough, often when they found themselves in a hopeless contract!), misclicks, and lost connections. And we all had to learn the initially bewildering lexicon of online bridge – “*typ, glp, hlo, opps, brb*”, and so on. But it was all worth it and on the upside, we had no revokes, insufficient bids, or bids or leads out of turn. It makes you wonder how we will manage whenever we get back to the real bridge table, which we all hope will not be too much longer. But overall, our correspondents felt that there were certainly good aspects to online bridge, and the majority wanted to see at least some online activities continue even once we do get back to live bridge. Food for thought for clubs, regions, and the Association.

Finally, we also asked for your feedback on how the CBAI had helped you during the pandemic. We were delighted to learn that you feel that we have done a good job, by establishing the virtual club licences and managing the virtual clubs, by helping to train up virtual club organisers and TDs, by running lots of events ourselves, and by using our website and social media to publicise them and to keep members in touch with everything that was going on.

As a result of all these activities, along with all the usual ones apart from actually running live events, we found ourselves as busy as ever. Our thanks to all the clubs and members who made every effort to support the CBAI by paying their affiliation fees promptly last season; we would welcome the same support in the current season when (we very much hope) we expect to be very busy again in helping clubs get back to live bridge.

A big thank you to all who took the time to respond to our request for feedback on your online bridge experiences. It has been very helpful for us, and we hope you have enjoyed reading this short summary.



The Laws of Bridge in the on-line world

This article is an update on last year's article now that we all have 15 months experience of playing and directing in the 'Virtual' bridge world.

One of the nice features of playing online is that the computer software makes it impossible for us to bid out turn, play out of turn, make insufficient bids or revoke. Nonetheless, there are still a few online irregularities that can occur that the Director needs to be prepared for; such as players forgetting to alert, mis-explaining their agreements, mis-clicking, having to deal with unauthorized information and of course slow play.

In order to handle these 'online' infractions we need to add to the face-to-face 2017 'Laws of Bridge' by stipulating proper procedures and good practices in relation to alerting, ethics, etiquette etc. Thankfully, the English Bridge Union (EBU) has already published helpful procedures in a document called the 'Sky-Blue-Book' and we in CBAI land may as well look to that document and edit it to produce our own 'Sky-Grey-Book'.

The following is my own personal modification of the EBU document – and it is merely that – a personal opinion – later in the year the CBAI Tournament and Play Committee will meet to discuss official CBAI procedures.

Meanwhile feel free to submit feedback to me or to CBAI HQ on what you would like to see in our final document

Disclosure of Systems

Ideally each pair should upload a system card to BBO, which should be available to the opponents during the round. The system card should include agreements for both bidding and defensive signaling.

In the absence of an online system card, the pair should 'pre-announce' at the beginning of each round – their basic bidding system and defensive carding arrangements.

Players may consult their own system card and other notes at any stage.

This might sound strange but any other provision is regarded as being unenforceable. This general condition could be overridden by the specific conditions of contest, in cases where it might be possible to enforce such a regulation e.g. in games where the players are being monitored by observer or camera.

Alerting and announcing on BBO

CBAI online games on BBO use the concept of 'self-alerting' i.e. players alert their own calls, not their partner's. Players must alert even if they have a system card uploaded.

All alerts are made by the player making the call, not by their partner.

Players 'alert' by typing an explanation into the Alert box before making the call and then when the call is made the explanation will become visible to both opponents. There is no problem with over-alerting online because

partner does not see the alerts, so players are encouraged to alert/explain as much as possible. If in doubt - alert.

Players should:

- Alert/explain the range of NT opening bids, NT overcalls, NT responses and NT rebids; and alert/explain responses to NT bids, including Stayman and Transfers.
- Also alert/explain if a 1NT opening bid can have a singleton (by agreement).
- Alert/explain bids and passes with artificial or unexpected meanings - alert/explain if in doubt.
- Alert/explain opening bids which are unexpected e.g. 'canape' or 'always unbalanced'.
- Alert/explain the minimum length of short-suit bids, and other distribution.
- Alert/explain weak bids which may sound strong.
- A Double should be alerted and explained unless - It is a takeout double of a natural suit bid.
- It is a penalty double of a NT bid or of an artificial suit bid.
- Alert/explain doubles of a suit bid that are lead-directing but ask for the lead of a suit other than the suit doubled.



By Fearghal O'Boyle

- Alert/explain doubles of no trump bids that ask for the lead of a specific suit.
- Above 3NT, bids and passes continue to be alerted/explained if artificial or unexpected.
- You must still 'alert' even if you have a system card uploaded.

Asking questions

Whether or not a call is alerted, and whether or not an explanation is provided, an opponent can request a (fuller) explanation by clicking on the call. The opponents can also ask (further) questions by chatting to the player who made the call - when answering a question, a player should send the answer to both opponents (using 'chat' to 'Opponents'); and not send a message to the 'Table', which partner would then be able to see. Asking questions of both players

It should not be necessary to ask the partner of the player making a call to explain the call. Players are not allowed to try to establish if the other side are having a bidding misunderstanding.

If the opponents ask such a question, in the first instance, the partner should (politely) point out that it is the 'player who made the call' who should answer the question. If the opponents insist that the partner answer questions, then the TD should be called.

Mis-explanations on BBO

Players sometimes give the wrong explanation, even when explaining their own calls. It is likely that the explanation will be a description of the player's hand but not the correct explanation according to the partnership agreements. This can occur if the player forgets the system, or if they 'mis-click' and therefore do not make their intended call.

If there is a misexplanation, the opponents are entitled to a correct explanation of the agreement. If the player giving the explanation becomes aware of their error, then they must correct the explanation. The correction needs to be available to the defenders before the opening lead. The suggested procedure is for the player who knows that his explanation is incorrect, to replace the incorrect explanation with 'WRONG explanation' as soon as possible, and later (if requested) give the correct explanation to the opponents, making it clear that this is the explanation of their agreements, not the player's intended meaning.

BBO robots: agreements and explanations

When robots are playing on BBO, the explanations of the calls of both members of the partnership (robot or human) are provided by the platform: the explanation of the call made by a human playing with a robot is not the human player's explanation.

The robots will try to make the right call and will also provide an explanation, but the call will not always match the explanation. A player playing with a robot may choose to make a call which does not match the explanation that the robot will give. Such departures from the robots 'announced understandings' are legal, as they cannot lead to an implicit understanding.

If a player makes a call knowing that it does not match the explanation, and the player does not want inexperienced opponents to be misled by the explanation, the player can tell the opponents (in 'table' chat) that the explanation was not the player's intended meaning.

'At the table' communication (on BBO)

It is possible to communicate to 'the table' - visible to all players at the table; or to one opponent - visible only to that opponent. It is possible to send a message to both opponents, but a reply from one opponent will not be seen by the other opponent. It is possible to communicate privately with partner

between rounds.

General questions about general bidding methods and carding agreements can be addressed to all at the table so that either opponent can answer, and all can see the answers.

Specific questions about particular calls should be via the alert/announcement mechanism (in which case both members of the opposing pair will see any revised explanation), or through private message to the opponent making the bid. Legal communication is cheating and is not allowed.

Do not communicate anything to partner in public which may influence their choice of calls or plays.

Do not communicate with partner during the round in any way which is not visible to the opponents: 'The gravest possible offence is for a partnership to exchange information through prearranged methods of communication other than those sanctioned by the 'Online Laws of Bridge'.

Skip bids

There is no online STOP card or other skip bid warning. Following a jump bid (i.e. a bid at a higher level than the minimum in that denomination), the next player should pause before making their call. If a player is consistent in their length of pause in these positions, a similar pause will usually not be considered to constitute unauthorized information. Otherwise, a break in tempo will be judged by comparison with the player's habitual actions.

As there is no skip bid warning, inexperienced online players will inevitably sometimes call quickly over a jump bid. Although this is not correct procedure, and in principle this variation in tempo can create unauthorised information, the limitations of the online playing environment mean that it is not expected that such violations will be automatically penalised.

The 'auto-play singletons' on BBO (whether with or without 'click to confirm') should not be used in CBAI games (except 'fast' games) because selecting this option is not consistent with playing in a steady tempo.

Calling the TD

Most mechanical problems will be dealt with by BBO and there will be no need to involve the TD (i.e. it is impossible to bid or play out of turn and it is impossible to revoke).

However, it is necessary to call the TD when:

the software has not dealt with a mechanical issue satisfactorily;
a player is unresponsive, or the play becomes 'stuck' in some other way;
there is conflicting information about the meaning of a call or play, e.g. when an alert/explanation is different from the system card or does not reflect the partnership understanding;
there appears to be use of unauthorised information;
there is a dispute over a claim/concession;
there is any bad behaviour.

Note To call the TD on BBO, there is a menu option 'Call TD'. The location of the menu with the 'Call TD' option depends on the version of the BBO interface – most likely it can be found by clicking on the 'hamburger' icon (blue button with three white bars).

Behaviour

The disciplinary provisions of the laws as well as the CBAI Bye Laws apply to online bridge.

Ideally players should greet one another in a friendly manner prior to start of play in each round, players must have their names available to their opponents (in their 'profile') or must give their names at the start of each round.

If there are cameras, the players may not eat while 'at the table'.

Appeals

Appeals are possible in CBAI/BBO events, and are subject to a deposit and possible sanction if deemed to lack merit. Appeal of a ruling given during a session must be lodged with the TD online within the 20-minute correction period. The arrangements for lodging an appeal of a ruling given after the end of the session will be set by the TD.

Participants

Robots can play in some CBAI pair's events, and robots can play in more than one partnership. However, in some events, players will not be permitted to register with a robot partner.

By contrast, real players can only play as one user person – not as two players in a pair, nor in more than one pair! Players may not play as one user and kibitz as another user.

Replacement of Players in pairs events

In a pairs event, players may be replaced by a substitute at the instigation of the TD. Robots can be used as replacements, where this is provided by the platform, even in events where players are not allowed to enter with robot

partners. Over the course of the session a pair may comprise any number of players (and robots).

All scores obtained by a pair where one or both players have been replaced stand for the pair and for the opponents.

If the player originally entered does not play half the boards, they will not appear in the final ranking list, and, in this case, if a substitute player does play half the boards, they will appear in the final ranking list.

Withdrawal and late arrival in pairs events

Pairs who are not online when the session starts will not play, even if registered. Players who are not present/responsive will be replaced (see preceding) and may be allowed to resume on their return.

Time Limits – Correction Periods

The correction period for rulings and scoring errors is 20 minutes after the end of the session.

At that point the results become final as far as BBO is concerned but a score correction, ruling or appeal which is decided after that time might change the result for CBAI purposes.

Weighted scores on BBO

When the TD awards an assigned adjusted score which is weighted, the BBO platform does not allow this adjusted score to be entered. Instead, the TD will enter a score as a percentage of the match points on the board – this artificial score is attempt to recreate the effect of the assigned adjusted score.

If a ruling or appeal is decided after the end of the 'BBO' correction period, then this decision can (exceptionally) be entered as an assigned adjusted score, to appear in the CBAI results only. The CBAI results will then differ from the results shown on BBO.


Unauthorised information

Significant hesitations and remarks ('table chat') are unauthorised information, which will constrain the player and can be subject to a ruling.

There can be reasons for pauses in an online game, due to the environment, but the TD is entitled to determine that a significant hesitation is nevertheless unauthorised information and rule accordingly.


Unintended calls and plays on BBO


BBO has an 'UNDO' facility whereby calls and plays can be withdrawn on



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the request of the player and with the agreement of the opponents. This facility can be restricted by the tournament organiser. In all CBAI national events, UNDOs are allowed in the bidding but not in the play of the cards.

In events where 'UNDOs are allowed' then these undos are allowed in the auction for genuine 'misclicks' - a 'mislick' corresponds to a 'mechanical error'. An 'undo' will not be allowed for a 'change of mind'. UNDOs are allowed even if partner has called as long as the situation has not got completely out of hand.

When enabled, UNDOs should also be requested (and allowed) when there has been a correction of a mistaken explanation where the laws allow for a non-offending player to change the last call by their side. The TD should be called.

In events where 'UNDOs are not allowed' then there are no UNDOs in the auction (or play). When UNDOs are not allowed in the auction, there will be no adjusted score or other rectification for 'mislicks', however obviously unintended.

When UNDOs are not allowed, and there has been a correction of a mistaken explanation, the TD will rule as if it had been too late to change the call by the non-offending side and possibly adjust the score later.

Claims on BBO

If there is a claim and the opponents object, play continues. The opponent can call the TD at the end of play but the TD will be inclined to accept the table result. However, if the claimer has adopted a line not obvious in the original claim statement, which seems to have been informed by the objection to the claim, the TD will rule on a contested claim rather than rule as if the players had agreed to play on after the claim. Exceptionally, if there is a claim and the round ends and play is curtailed before acceptance/rejection of the claim, then the TD will rule on the claim as if the opponents had objected to the claim.

If there is claim and the claim is accepted but the opponents subsequently disagree, the TD will return a trick if a player has agreed to the loss of a trick that his side would likely have won had play continued.

If one defender concedes and the other objects but the declarer accepts the claim/concession, then play ceases – there is no option for play to continue. In this case, or any case where one side object to their side conceding tricks, the TD will return a trick if a player has conceded a trick that could not be lost by any normal (including careless or inferior) play of the remaining

cards.

If there has been a claim that the opponents have rejected (so the claiming side's cards are visible to the other side) and then a subsequent claim/concession which requires a TD ruling, determination of 'likely' and 'normal' will take into account that one side can see all the cards.

Slow Play in pairs events on BBO

Pairs events on BBO are 'clocked' i.e. the round ends after a fixed time and the play of any unfinished boards is curtailed. If there are only at most four tricks remaining, BBO will assign a result based on the outcome from robots playing on from the point where play was curtailed. If there are more than a few tricks to be played, the TD will assign a score based on the auction and play that occurred.

It is possible for slow play to result in an advantage for one side; for example, if declarer can avoid taking a two-way guess until the last four tricks and the round ends before the board is finished, the assigned score will be the outcome where declarer always 'does the right thing'. If the side that was responsible for slow play gains an advantage in this manner, the TD can assign an adjusted score: for example, a weighted outcome between normal lines.

Information available from the proper use BBO or RealBridge is authorized.

Where BBO or RealBridge allows players to view the auction after the final pass, players are allowed to do so.

Where BBO or RealBridge allows players to view the previous trick, players are allowed to view the last played trick up until they play a card to the next trick.

Bridgefully yours, FOB



SUNSHINE BRIDGE

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BRIDGE

made simple

Máire O'Keeffe



Junior Bridge Report

**Dermot O'Brien, Convenor,
Junior Committee**

Season 2020/21 was a relatively quiet one for junior bridge, with no face-to-face events held. Juniors, however, are more used to online bridge (we have been holding practice sessions that way for many years, to minimise travel) so the move online has probably been easier for them than for most bridge players.

All the major championships were cancelled, apart from the home internationals (for the Junior Camrose (U-26) and Peggy Bayer (U-21) Trophies) which were held online on RealBridge in February, with the Scottish Bridge Union hosting. We had high hopes for both Irish teams, but a big defeat to the victorious English team, at different stages of the competition, took a heavy toll on each of them. In the Junior Camrose, it happened in the very first match, and while the team went on to win six of ten matches, they never got back on terms, and finished third. The Peggy Bayer team, on the other hand, started very well, winning their first five matches to lead at the halfway point; their loss to England came in the first match of the second round-robin, and, while they won seven of their ten matches overall, a narrow defeat to Wales in the final match saw them pipped for second place by the Scots.

Our teams were: Peggy Bayer - Leah Finnegan & Denise Walsh, Matthew O'Farrell & Luca Crone, Tom Gorey & Adam Murphy, with NPC Margaret Murphy Junior Camrose:

Conor Boland & Michael Donnelly, Stephen Barr & John Connolly, Isabel Burke & Sheila Walsh, with NPC Thomas MacCormac

Even though the results did not go as we had hoped, there were some notable achievements. In the very first session of the Peggy Bayer, Matthew and Luca bid a very good grand slam that eluded all the other competitors in their event, and indeed



Leah Finnegan

was only bid by three of six Junior Camrose pairs, which contributed 13 IMPs to a win over the pre-tournament favourites, England. And in the Junior Camrose, Sheila and Isabel, although they did not play many sessions, extended their unbeaten run in the competition, having played for the first time last year.

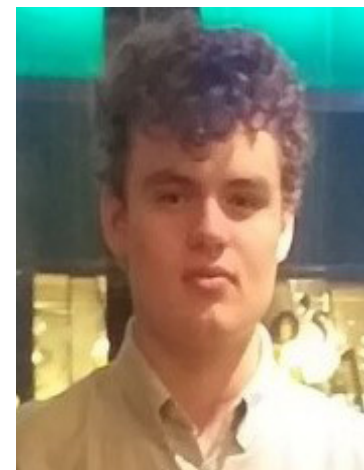
We have received confirmation from Bridge Great Britain (BGB) that the 2022 junior home internationals will take place online, not in person. This is both good news and

bad news; it is a shame that young players, who perhaps benefit most from meeting and interacting with their counterparts, will be denied that opportunity for a second year, but it also means that the CBAI, as this year's hosts, will avoid the work involved in organising a venue and staff!

BGB held two new junior competitions online during the year – the Liz McGowan Under-26 Pairs and the Paul Porteous Under-21 Pairs.

We had a few Irish entrants, but unfortunately none featured among the prizewinners. Maybe next season.

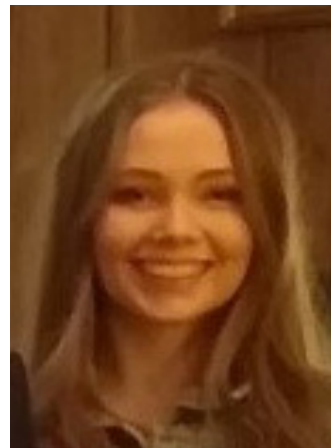
In the absence of in-person bridge, we have kept the juniors practicing hard and playing online wherever possible. The CBAI runs a junior game and follow-up Zoom analysis every Thursday night, managed by Karel De Raeymaeker, who continues to devote great time and effort



Matthew O'Farrell

to juniors in his role as unpaid coach. We are always looking for experienced players to provide stiff competition for the juniors; if you're free on Thursday nights and are interested, let us know and we'll give you details. It's short (usually around 12 boards), and, best of all, it's free! We also rolled out a new mentoring process in which we asked established players to work closely with some of our most promising junior partnerships. Our thanks

to the volunteers to date – Martin Brady, Paul Delaney, Mairead Haugh, and John Phelan, who have done a great job. We received a number of donations to the Junior Committee during the year, for which we thank the donors, and we were able through the connections of Thomas MacCormac to arrange a fundraiser involving the screening of "Aces & Knaves", a very interesting bridge film. Unfortunately, the screening period coincided with a



Denise Walsh



Luca Crone

junior bridge, we'd love to hear from you – please feel free to contact any of us or to email irishyouthbridge@gmail.com. There is a notice elsewhere in this newsletter asking bridge-playing parents and grandparents to sign up their children or grandchildren to learn bridge with us. Thanks to all the committee members for their efforts during the year: Karel De Raeymaeker, Hugh Gormally, Mairead Haugh, Margaret Murphy, John Phelan, Dermot O'Brien, with John Connolly as player representative, along with Pat Johnston, Sandie Millership, and Wayne Somerville repre-

notable heatwave, so viewer numbers were a bit lower than we had hoped. We may be able to have a second effort with the film in the autumn, so if you didn't get to watch it in May, you might have another chance.

If you know of any junior players who might benefit from our programme, or you have any feedback or ideas in relation to the development of

senting the NIBU where relevant. For 2021/22, John Connolly has gone overage, and will be replaced as the player representative by Luca Crone.

Finally, it would be remiss of us not to note the departure of the "Gonzaga Team" from the junior ranks. Conor Boland, Michael Donnelly, Stephen Barr, and John Connolly, guided by their mentors Thomas MacCormac and Jade Barrett, have represented

Ireland excellently as juniors, and will doubtless continue to make their presence felt in open events.

They remain Ireland's only winners of the Peggy Bayer Trophy (in Scotland in 2016), and came close several times in the Junior Camrose, although a victory unfortunately eluded them. If there had been a best-dressed prize, they'd have won it every time! We thank them for all their hard work and dedication as juniors.



Adam Murphy



The winning Peggy Bayer team of 2016, with NPC and team Mentor Thomas MacCormac

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DROGHEDA & DISTRICT BRIDGE CONGRESS

Live Bridge Face-to face

ABCD Bridge Centre, Fairgreen, Drogheda

From Thursday, 30th Sept. – Sunday, 3rd Oct., 2021

Thursday: B Pairs/Novice @7.30 pm. – One Session

Friday: A Pairs – 1 Session @ 7.30 pm.

Saturday: Master Pairs – 2 Sessions @ 12 noon

Sunday: TEAMS – 2 Sessions @ 11.00 am.

Entries to: peterbyrne1entries@hotmail.com 086-8049531

All entries must be accompanied with partner/partners (for teams) and NIBD Number

If you do not get a reply confirmation – entry not received, no exceptions

LIMITED TO 24 TABLES – FIRST COME FIRST SERVED

Win a Weekend in Dromhall Hotel Killarney



The 4* Dromhall Hotel has re-opened with a transformed new look and a new chapter in the hotel's story has been added with the changes. Since it first opened its doors in 1964, the Dromhall has been a wonderful venue for many bridge events. The redecorated lobby has created a warm and luxurious atmosphere, with a timeless palette of silvers and blue offering a seamless transition in mood from day to night. Bespoke furniture pieces, accented by the wood panelling, will welcome guests into a relaxing social space within the hotel. The 72 refurbished guest rooms include three spectacular luxury king rooms which feature layered textures, modern technologies and a chic contemporary colour palette. The renovation is a stunning success and all the team at the Dromhall are looking forward to showing it off to bridge players in general, and in particular to the lucky winner of this competition. Their prize is a voucher for 2 nights B&B for 2 people, valid September 2021 – May 2022, excluding bank holidays and special events.

For a chance to win this lovely prize, simply unravel the following anagrams of two well-known Irish international bridge players: (1) which female player might otherwise be known as PEDALING RED, and (2) which male player might masquerade as BINOMIAL ARCHIE? Send your answers to info@cbaie.ie; we will draw the winner from all the correct answers received as of 30 September. We will post some clues to both names on our Twitter and Facebook pages on 22 September, so keep an eye out for those.

CBAI & IBU Calendar

(to 31 December)

Members will appreciate that it is very difficult in the current circumstances to be definitive about our plans. At time of writing, these events are planned, where marked * probably as multi-venue events. However, things may change, so please make sure to check our website regularly.

30 Sep-3 Oct Drogheda Congress

8-10 Oct Limerick Congress

16 Oct Spiro Cup *

17 Oct Coen Trophy

1-5 Nov CBAI Simultaneous Pairs

5-7 Nov Donegal Congress

12-14 Nov Kenmare Congress

20-21 Nov IBU Interprovincials

26-28 Nov Kilkenny Congress

4-5 Dec Regional Pairs Weekend *

11-12 Dec Master Pairs

17-19 Dec Tralee Congress