



Essex Contract Bridge Association

A constituent member of the English Bridge Union

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING REPORTS & ACCOUNTS 2017/18

Minutes of the 71st Annual General meeting of the ECBA held on Sunday 13 May 2018 at Barleylands

Present Paul Mollison (*Chairman*), Petra Bromfield (*Webmaster*), Linda Fleet (*Treasurer*),
Bernie Hunt (*League Secretary*), Pat Johnson (*Publicity Officer*),
Val Mollison (*Tournament Secretary*), Sue Thorburn (*Secretary*),
and 25 others (a list is available if required)

1. Chairman's opening remarks

Paul welcomed those present and said he was pleased to see so many attendees. He had received a number of apologies (see Appendix F for a full list).

See Appendix A for the text of Paul's remarks.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes had been previously circulated and are available on the website. They were agreed as a true record.

Proposed Peter Scotting; seconded Catriona Lovett. A copy was signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Secretary's report

I continue to provide support to the committee and have acted as a conduit for communication between the committee and the EBU on a small number of topics.

See Appendix B for full report.

5. Treasurer's report

As you can see from the accounts we have a surplus of £1,981 (£29- 2017). The difference has mainly been due to the increased revenue from the Essex and Herts Green Point events in July and September last year - this year £2,000 was received compared to £750 last year. The competition fees received are substantially increased (£10,323 this year compared to £8,996 last year)

See Appendix C for the report and accounts.

The report was accepted. Proposed Pat Johnson; seconded Sheena Millins.

6. Appointment of Examiner for 2018/19

Petra Bromfield was appointed as Examiner.

.

7. Tournament Secretary's report

This has been Val's first full year as Tournament Secretary. Alan Rodger has been our director for most events this year while she has concentrated on computer scoring.

See Appendix D for the full report.

The report was accepted without questions. Proposed Marc Chawner; seconded Sheena Millins.

8. League Secretary's report

Bernie summarised the league results. The finish to SE division 1 was extremely tight with a three-way tie.

See Appendix E for the full results.

9. Proposal to restructure the Essex leagues

Paul outlined the proposal to create a Premier league of five teams, two from the current West division and three from the South East division 1. Teams would play home and away matches. If a qualifying team has any problem playing matches they can opt to stay in their current area. This would then leave one West division and two South East divisions with 6 or 7 teams in each. Team captains had been sounded out and supported the proposal.

The only major outstanding issue was how promotion and relegation should be handled. The committee will produce a final proposal.

Proposal accepted. Proposed Marc Chawner; seconded Marcia Levan-Harris

10. Proposal to consider changes to the catering arrangements at the Cornell and Fletcher.

There was a discussion on the catering provided at the Cornell and Fletcher/Cup for Clubs events. The current cost is £26 per team and the entry fee for each club could be reduced by a similar amount. The general feeling was that the catering provided was not popular. From a show of hands, a majority agreed that there should be no catering and the entry fee should be reduced. Clubs will be notified of the change.

11. Election of officers

All current committee members are willing to stand for re-election. They are:

Position	Nominee
Chairman	Paul Mollison
Secretary	Sue Thorburn
Treasurer	Linda Fleet
Tournament Secretary	Val Mollison
League Secretary	Bernie Hunt
Publicity Officer	Pat Johnson
Education Secretary	
Webmaster	Petra Bromfield
Committee Member	Dennis Valtisiaris
Committee Member	

No nominations were received for the vacancies and the committee was re-elected as a whole.
Proposed Peter Scotting; seconded Sheena Millins.

12. Any Other Business

Alaric Cundy expressed concern about the impact the monthly Warboys competition has on club nights, particularly at Hutton. It was agreed there was no easy solution to this.

The competition has generated a lot of interest from qualified players. It runs for only eight months and Barleylands is available on Wednesdays. It was not practical to move the event to a weekend as there were very few dates available because the EBU discourage clashes with their events.

It was suggested Hutton could partially resolve the issue by moving their Friendly Wednesday from the first to second Wednesday of the month.

.

13. Presentation of trophies

Trophies were presented to the competition winners.

Paul then declared the meeting closed.

Appendix A Chairman's Opening Remarks

Looking back over the last 4 years – our focus has been on:

- a) Survival as an organisation (keeping Tournament Bridge alive in Essex.
- b) Try to break even financially over the year.

The strategies to ensure this have been:

- a) Total focus on Barleylands as it has permanent facilities suitable for most competitions.
- b) Marc Chawner's seminars which have been informative and entertaining
- c) Reappearance of the Warboys (thanks to Rob Elliot and Jon Ward). The Warboys is now established as a "super club" in Essex.
- d) More County Directors coming forward (Marcia and Graham Beeton)

Thanks to the committee members, particularly Val who does a lot more work behind the scenes than people realise. In the past the ECBA seemed to mostly operate as a "one stop shop" with one person taking full control over everything. We can't do that anymore – things have become too complex for one unpaid volunteer to do all this (and we really shouldn't expect it). We have to work as a team.

How can you help?

- a) Make up teams and pairs to regularly play in our events.
- b) Accept that we don't always get every single thing right.
- c) Help us set up and put away chairs/tables/etc at all larger events.
- d) Any other suggestions welcome.

Did you know that:

Our membership for the whole county is 54% women. Our committee is now roughly the same (ie a majority of women). This is not how things were four years ago.

Appendix B Secretary's report

General Data Protection Regulations After reading the various documents about the new regulations which come into force on 25 May I feel there is a danger of over complication and that the essence is to ensure individuals know how their personal data will be used and give permission for that to happen. Data should then be kept on password protected websites or secure personal devices and contact should be via mailshot or blind copy. Passwords should be changed when personnel changes.

The prime responsibility for collecting data is at club level. Most of the personal data used by the ECBA is from clubs via the EBU and thus complies with the regulations. The majority of communication is by mailshot. There are some instances where the Treasurer or Tournament Secretary mails individuals. This will be via blind copy and a phrase should appear on entry forms and the website that no personal data is routinely held and that all communication will be by mailshot or blind copy.

An outline of my thinking and a membership form now in use at Lingwood, was circulated to Essex club secretaries. Communications to club secretaries will be via a mailshot or blind copy but they will be reminded their details are shown on the website.

Bridge in schools Val Poter and Ted Cockle have just started an initiative to introduce bridge in primary schools. This follows a similar scheme in place in the Stamford area which has over 1000 children learning bridge. The taster day on 9 May went very well. The ECBA will provide any support needed.

Appendix C Treasurer's report and financial statements

Bank Balance at year end

£10,514- Barclays

£15,826 - Skipton

Competitions Overall the competitions during the year made a surplus of £993 compared to a deficit last year of £27. During the year we subsidised the hotel expenses for the Corwen players and the Tollemache team.

P2P Total for the year £2,574 (£2,665- 2017). The EBU portion has increased from 37p to 38p from 1st April 2018. The amount of the Essex portion has remained the same as last year.

I would like to thank Tony for his help in compiling the list of clubs and the amount of P2P collected.

Essex & Herts GP We are starting to get the entries in for this July's event – Alan Woof took over as Herts organiser and has brought some clever ideas which has resulted in an increase in the surplus. This year we are reinstating the free coffee and tea.

Independent Examiner I would like to thank Petra Bromfield for her examination of the accounts.

Appendix C

**Essex Contract Bridge Association
Income and Expenditure Account
For the Year Ended 31st March 2018**

		<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>
INCOME			
P2P & Other EBU income	2,748.00		2,842.28
Less Life Members	<u>-84.00</u>		<u>-84.00</u>
			2,758.28
		2,664.00	
Competitions Fees	10,323.00		8,996.00
Collected at County Matches	360.00		360.00
Sponsorship	200.00		200.00
Seminars	545.00		450.00
	<u>11,428.00</u>		<u>10,006.00</u>
<u>Competition Expenses</u>			
Accommodation & Catering	5,336.20		5,365.00
Boards & b/Mates	804.60		675.00
Directors & Expenses	1,321.95		1,527.70
Pay to Play	310.88		480.16
EBU Competition Entries	971.00		268.00
Prizes	989.84		1,162.00
Paid to ECL for County matches	28.80		28.36
Sponsorship	200.00		
	<u>9,963.27</u>		<u>9,506.22</u>
Surplus on Competitions		1,464.73	499.78
League Fees	460.00		600.00
Prizes	<u>-160.00</u>		<u>-160.00</u>
		300.00	440.00
Sundry - Interest		140.94	168.33
Essex & Herts Joint GP Events		<u>2,000.00</u>	<u>750.00</u>
		<u>6,569.67</u>	<u>4,616.39</u>
EXPENDITURE			
County Matches & Tollemache	3,426.20		3,180.30
Tollemache Contributions	-619.60		-575.00
Printing & stationery	0.00		2.72
AGM (Current)	350.00		180.00
AGM (Previous)	0.00		40.00
Seminars	729.50		1,119.00
Parking Expense	46.88		40.00
Trophies & Engraving	213.60		300.00
Website	109.55		91.00
Playing Cards	0.00		225.05
Directors Course	55.00		245.00
Miscellaneous	277.24		90.69
		<u>4,588.37</u>	<u>4,938.76</u>
EXCESS OF EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME		<u>1,981.30</u>	<u>-322.37</u>
Plus transfer from Development Fund		<u>0.00</u>	<u>351.00</u>
	£	<u>1,981.30</u>	£ <u><u>28.63</u></u>

The Sponsorship of £200 was kindly provided by Barbra Cornell in memory of her late husband Ray Cornell and presented to the club entering the Garden Cities Trophy

Appendix D Tournament Secretary's Report

It has been our intention to use EBU Panel directors who have more experience, particularly of the computer scoring side, for our larger, less straightforward events. We were not able to do this for the Swiss pairs and Cornell events this year because the directors who live within reasonable travelling distance were not available on the relevant dates. However, this year I decided to dispense with separate Summer and Winter competition programmes and produce one programme to cover the whole competition year. Whilst I did this initially for reasons of efficiency in preparation, printing and distribution (or you could say laziness on my part) it has had the added benefit that I am booking directors and venues sooner which means I have been able to get directors for all 4 of the main competitions next year before they get snapped up by some other county.

We have 2 players, attending the County TD training, now called Advanced Training, with the EBU and this will help to ensure we have a number of TDs with sufficient experience to direct an ECBA event or provide rulings at County matches. I would also like to thank Cath Fox who is starting to help with the computer scoring side of events. Now that I am starting to go through events for a 2nd time, I am in a position to refine my Essex events specific instructions and hope to finish that soon.

This year saw the introduction of some major changes to the law book. Most of you should now be aware of the changes. We did organise training for club TDs on these changes. Places were limited but all clubs who expressed interest were able to send at least 1 TD and given that many TDs help at more than 1 club, many clubs have more than 1 TD who has been trained in the changes. It was explained to us that the reason for these changes is to try and increase the number of situations where a "normal" result can be obtained after an infraction. Out of the norm results don't just affect the players at the table. They have a knock-on effect on results of everyone in the room. The intention of the laws is not necessarily to penalise someone who makes a mistake, but to stop players being able to find loopholes to gain unfair advantages by dubious means.

We have used computer scoring of most of our home County matches. At least 2 other counties are also now doing computer scoring. The main problem is having enough players who know how to run it so that there is always likely to be someone available. This a situation I will try to work on this year.

Unfortunately, the Mixed Pairs had to be postponed in December due to snow. This had a small effect on numbers. Also, numbers were down for the Championship pairs and the B flight pairs had to be cancelled due to insufficient interest. This might have been in part due to the clash with the Jersey Congress and also the SBU overseas congress. The available dates for events is limited by weekends left available on the EBU calendar. The date of Easter tends to dictate which date in April is available for the Championship pairs. Next year the available weekend is earlier in the month and will not clash so hopefully we will see some recovery in numbers.

The Really Easy Pairs also had to be cancelled due to lack of interest. Interest in the EBU Really Easy events has also waned so at the moment we have no plans to run this event

I would like to remind everyone that entries for the knockout teams' competitions, the Teams of 4 and the Switch Cup are due soon. It would be nice to see more teams in both of these competitions. Last year we did introduce an option for teams to enter directly into the teams of 4 plate. One team took us up on this and got through to the final, so well done to Cathy McNaughton and her team. I hope this will encourage more teams to have a go at either of the main knockouts or dipping their toe in the water with an entry in the plate competition only. If anyone here doesn't currently play in these competitions, please consider giving it a go. Also, it would help if you could spread the word at clubs where you play.

Congratulation to all those Essex players who go further afield to play in various EBU events and congresses. Petra reports the successes she knows about on the website so I won't go into detail here. If you or any Essex player you know does well in any such event, be sure to let Petra know.

Appendix E League Secretary's Report

All matches played in main leagues

West Division

Winners Waltham Foresters

Runners Up Loughton O'Gara

South East Divisions

Division 1

Winners Ultra Llama/Hanley/Barleylands

Division 2

Winners May & Baker

Runners Up Propnugtores

Division 3

Winners Hadleigh Castle

Runners Up Chelmsford Blue

The proposed league re-organisation means there are effectively no relegations in the south-east divisions

League tables are available to view on the EBU website with a link from the ECBA website

Friendly Fours

Winners Sally Ann Huk

Appendix F Apologies for absence

Albert Kitchen

Audrey Hartley

Dennis Valtisiaris

John Sutcliffe

Pat O’Gara

Ray Clarke

Tony/Sue French