

GCBA Hon Treasurers Report 2020/21

This entire year has been affected by the social distancing and other restrictions resulting from COVID. No face to face bridge has taken place. As it became clear that the restrictions were likely to continue for some time, GCBA was instrumental in promoting the adoption of on-line bridge in the County, both to replace the “Monday night” GCBA program and in supporting Gloucestershire clubs, by financing the online accreditation of our CTD (& President) for online games. Patrick was then able to cascade that experience to encourage and facilitate member clubs in the steps necessary to provide on-line games for their members, within the EBU structure.

Initially only BBO (the dominant USA based online bridge platform) was available to enable games, and EBU were able to arrange for authorisation of member clubs as organisers for BBO games and for transmission of part of the BBO charges for players participating in online games to the organising club (via EBU). This method gathered volumes as the year progressed and has now been supplemented by the English based RealBridge platform. GCBA uses both of these platforms and our CTD has facilitated clubs in using either platform – and remains happy to help clubs needing assistance.

RealBridge has not, at present, developed a charging method for players, and organisers (inc GCBA) have to make their own arrangements to collect entry money, before paying RealBridge their platform charges. I hope and expect that this aspect will be improved over the coming year.

GCBA has borne in mind two guiding principles during a year in which we feared that COVID represented a serious risk to the future of Bridge, not just in the UK, but internationally. A year on, this risk is not as threatening, but we do believe that the excellent on-line facilities which have been utilised by a wider range of players may result in a change in the balance of Face to Face and on-line games, even following a return to wider normality.

Firstly, that our immediate and main objective must be to keep bridge going by arranging, facilitating and encouraging games of any form.

Secondly that we hope and expect that the majority of Bridge played in Gloucestershire is, and will remain, organised by our member clubs – and our intention is to be supportive.

It is clear that on-line Bridge is less costly to organise and, some would say, more convenient for players. Many will, however, wish to resume face to Face Bridge and GCBA is keen to support the re-opening of the excellent club facilities, in Gloucestershire. Whilst GCBA has rebated the “County” element of the EBU Universal Membership (Pay to Play) charge for Gloucestershire clubs arranging on-line games, to further encourage bridge activity during the restrictions, it seems possible that restarting Face to Face Bridge will be challenging following a return to a pre Covid environment. GCBA is keen to assist any member club in any difficulties.

On a financial point, whilst your committee has felt that encouraging bridge, during this difficult year, has been a rather higher priority than saving costs, and that the available charging methodologies for online games have been restrictive, GCBA does try to apply the principles of not competing on price with its member clubs, and of charging players fairly for participation in GCBA games and teams. There have been issues and I don't claim a faultless performance here - we've perhaps erred on the side of fair rather than encouraging - but the arrangement of inter-county events for a wider range of abilities has been a step forward, which I hope we can continue.

Your Committee do hope (and believe) that Gloucestershire has done well (amongst its peers) in continually and successfully promoting bridge through the restrictions – and keeping bridge in focus to put clubs in a good place to resume Face to Face activities. We hope for a resurgence of such activities throughout the County as restrictions ease.

GCBA did not run its normal range of “weekend” events in 2020/21 – County Championships and other cups - but is intending to do so in 2021/22 – and has, as I write this, completed the 2021 County Pairs Event. The Midland Counties League has carried on as the MCOL and Richard Butland, and others, were instrumental in arranging several inter-county events for various skill levels during Lockdown. Our President was a key man in organising 8 high & 9 high (NGS) games on behalf of the Midland Counties Working Group, and we used the GCBA bank account for the various financial transactions, resulting in a Credit balance of £395.60 which we are holding for MCWG.

Neither the Cheltenham Congress nor the joint Glos/Hereford event took place – the change to the Cheltenham Congress assets (shown in the acs) is simply the payment of the amounts provisioned at last year end, from the bank ac. The 2021 Cheltenham Congress has, however, been successfully run on-line, and will have a positive effect on next year’s revenue.

Yet again, I regret that GCBA has shown an excess of income over expenditure – despite the committee taking a clear view early in the year that the priority was to promote and encourage bridge (if necessary, at the expense of revenue) in the difficult circumstances pertaining, and in the hope of a return to normality. This surplus has resulted from the relatively low cost (to organisers) of on-line bridge in comparison with Face to Face.

GCBA understands that the future of Bridge for players in the County may change after Covid. Many players will have engaged in online bridge and this will, as we see it, remain an alternative option. Whilst clubs are now preparing to resume Face to Face sessions, GCBA will await the implementation of resumption to assess whether, and what sort of, Face to Face events are viable in the light of the actual restrictions on use of premises, and how these restrictions develop. Whether Face to Face, or online, GCBA has a clear objective of promoting Bridge within Gloucestershire and supporting clubs in providing games for their members.

M J Wignall
Hon Treasurer

GCBA Accounts year ended 31st March 2021

2020 (£)	Expenditure	2021 (£)	2020 (£)	Income	2021 (£)
5468.50	Rent		8246.05	Table Money	1615.00
1194.93	Catering		1480.00	Weekend Entry Fees	
220.00	Director's Fees		1211.50	Match Fees	
1330.67	Entry Fees Payable	484.00	52.00	EBU Affiliation/Membership	60.00
196.43	Prizes		2314.86	UMS receipts	1069.10
127.00	Printing / Publicity		895.11	Green Point Event Surplus (50%)	
1196.00	Stationery & Equipment		649.11	Congress Surplus (50%)	
336.50	Travel			BBO Income	1881.50
109.50	Computer /Duplimate			Other Income	12.00
623.50	Engraving/Honours Board		436.00	Donation for Youth Bridge	
525.00	Duplimating Service		150.00	Donation	51.20
	Real Bridge Charges	258.00	250.00		
	Refunds of UMS receipts	1069.10			
103.76	Youth Bridge				
858.34	Pay to Play & Licence fees	1893.20			
807.72	Charitable donations				
684.45	Miscellaneous	129.50			
1902.33	Excess (deficit) of income	855.00			
15684.63	Total Expenditure ytd	4688.80	15684.63	Total Income ytd	4688.80

Balance Sheet					
16170.06	Accumulated Surplus b/f	18072.39	2332.00	Trophies	2332.00
1902.33	Current Year Surplus	855.00	225.28	Credit Balance @ EBU	
				Entry Fees receivable	154.00
148.24	Provisions	1631.30	14613.67	Current Bank Account	17547.35
	Creditor (MCWG)	395.60	20.00	Cash Float	20.00
			52.78	G&H Weekend Assets (50%)	52.78
			774.72	Congress Assets (50%)	645.98
			202.18	Youth Account	202.18
18220.63	Total	20954.29	18220.63	Total	20954.29

Entry Fees		Table Money	
Tollemache	£352.00	All (7/20)	£900.00
Manchester	£60.00	ST1	£180.00
9hi	£72.00	ST2	£150.00
Total	£484.00	Cleverly	£115.00
		SP	£270.00
Real Bridge		Total	£1,615.00
December	£40.80		
January	£84.00	UMS	
February	£55.60	CBC	£732.00
March	£77.60	Tudor	£113.40
Total	£258.00	Thribb	£2.20
		Stroud	£18.10
P2P		Som Keynes	£65.40
EBU invoices	£1,476.80	Newent	£133.10
Lincs invoice	£25.60	Churchdown	£4.90
Uninvoiced	£390.80	Total	£1,069.10
TOTAL	£1,893.20		
		BBO Inc	
Misc		Pre	£110.58
Easily	£7.50	Aug-20	£151.45
Dir Tng	£50.00	Sep-20	£270.35
Bridgewebs	£72.00	Oct-20	£291.73
TOTAL	£129.50	Nov-20	£282.93
		Dec-20	£185.63
Provisions		Jan-21	£285.36
Realbridge	£289.20	Feb-21	£303.47
Director 9hi	£158.00	TOTAL	£1,881.50
UMS refunds	£634.90		
EBU P2P	£549.20	MCWG	
TOTAL	£1,631.30	8hi Table Money	£288.00
		9hi Table Money	£424.00
		GCBA players (9hi)	£72.00
		less Directing	-£158.00
		less P2P	-£158.40
		less Platform (RB)	-£72.00
		Total	£395.60

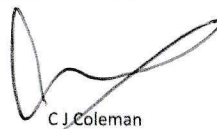
The unique circumstances prevailing throughout the financial year have meant that physical bridge playing at Cheltenham BC has been impossible; as such, whilst the financial results for the year reflect the GCBA operations in the year, comparability with the previous year is very limited.

Post balance date event: GCBA has offered and Cheltenham BC accepted a grant of £1,000 to facilitate the reopening of Cheltenham BC and face-to-face bridge.

The accounts are in agreement with the books and records of GCBA.



M J Wignall
Hon Treasurer



C J Coleman
Auditor