

Dear Members

Christmas party planning is in full swing and the menu choices and payment system is online this year, although those who can't pay online can still pay cash to a committee member at the club. You don't need to come with a partner to play with but if you want to find a partner before the party (isn't playing with someone new in the party spirit?) then Julie Godbold will try to find you someone.

We are entering our first winter with a new heating system and upgraded radiators. They certainly heat the rooms up more quickly and get to the desired temperature faster and then the thermostat turns the radiators turn off, with the old radiators they seemed to be on nearly all the time. After we have all been sat sedately, playing for around an hour, the heating comes on again as this is the usual time people think it is getting cold. The temperature hasn't actually dropped (the thermostat would kick-in if this were the case) but we boost the temperature to counteract the sedate nature of the game. Please bear with us while we get the settings correct. It's difficult to please all the people all the time (we would all like 18 HCP every hand).

We are hosting two Children in Need bridge charity events as usual this year. These are simultaneous pairs events where all the boards you play will be played across the country, therefore not only will you get a score in the club but also a score against the rest of the country. This is great fun and raises money for good causes. There will be hundreds of scores for each board so you will be able to see how well you have done against a much bigger field than usual, which also means extra masterpoints! (Wow wee). The dates are Monday 6th November in the afternoon and Wednesday 8th November in the evening. We hope to fill the club and have set a maximum of 14 tables so get your name down on the list at the bridge club.

I mentioned last month about the rule changes regarding alerting and announcing. While the subject is fresh in our minds, we all need to remember to alert all conventional bids, bids that don't necessarily mean we have at least 3 cards in the suit we have just bid, such as a prepared 1C opening bid in a 5 card major system which means we don't have a 5 card major. Interestingly you don't alert a better minor bid which can have as little as 3 cards! All players should alert conventional overcalls (Landy, Astro, unusual 2NT, Michaels cue bid etc) and announce the common conventions like Stayman and transfers. Please, also leave the boards in place on the table to avoid cards being replaced in the wrong slots after the board has been played, this has happened a number of times and causes great problems with the scoring as the subsequent tables will have different hands to the previous tables and the board could well be cancelled.

We are getting the chairs refurbished and recovered during November, this will be done in batches so we won't be without somewhere to sit all month. A fixed leg table will be in the club soon to see if it is an improvement on our current slightly wobbly tables, if it is a popular replacement, we will get a new set for the ground floor.

I'm going on a well-deserved holiday for the first week of November so don't email me if you have left your glasses in the club that week, but don't worry I will be back for the next committee meeting.

Thanks for reading
Rob