

Kent Youth Bridge Report – May 6, 2019

We are about to wrap-up the 2018-2019 School's "Bridge Season" with the completion of the JAS levels (mostly Minibridge and Bronze) and preparation for the May 17 Interschools. During the last quarter we: 1) continued to develop the alignment for the Southern Counties (coordinated by William Bourne), 2) started a new school's BC at Skinner's West Kent Primary, 3) furthered planning for the Southern Counties Junior Bridge Camp (to be held at Bowls Rocks this year), and 4) set up marketing and planning for the Interschool's Tournament. The focus remains Kent Youth's strategy of building a critical mass of school bridge clubs, rolling out EBED's JAS and increasing the number of Interschool's Tournament participants.

Southern Counties Youth Bridge Alignment

We have continued to drive the marketing of junior events (on the combined calendar of events for Kent, Sussex and Surrey) across the region, and are starting to benefit, in terms of numbers participating, from this alliance. Besides the Interschools on May 17, Kent will offer the Real Easy Congress and assist William Bourne in making a success of the Summer SCJBC (see below). Julia Davis has been signed on as a Youth Development officer at Richmond BC, to boost junior events and activities in Surrey, and ENED have appointed Giles Ip as a new Youth Officer to assist counties and regions in this area.

Schools Bridge Clubs

One new school BC was added to Kent's bridge clubs this quarter – Skinner's West Kent Primary (in Tunbridge Wells) – with Peter Edkins taking the lead in running the sessions. I estimate that there are a total of between 200 and 250 children now playing MB or bridge at the various schools in the Kent and East-Sussex areas. It is therefore disappointing that we are only likely to see about 50 to 60 participants in the Interschools Tournament on May 17 this (this may change as we get closer to the event, but is unlikely to be over the targeted 100). The reasons for this are varied, but "SATS Parties" and early Summer sports events seem to be the common theme. As a consequence, if we decide to hold the event again, it seems to make sense to further reduce the "bridge Season" to end before the Easter break (with the Interschools being held on the week before schools break up). On the volunteering side, we are creeping

up in numbers with at least four new volunteer champions (David, Peter, Cathie and Gill) on board this season. Helen, Diane, Jess, Shirley, David and Brian all continue to do a great job with their existing schools BC's. Obviously, the more recruits in this area, the more we can expand to new schools and ease the load on existing champions.

The Southern Counties Junior Bridge Camp

Planning is now well underway for the 2019 event to be hosted at Bowls Rocks (a junior activity center near Tunbridge Wells), coordinated by William Bourne. Full details are on the KCBA website Kent has sponsorship of £500 to the event (at least matched Sussex, Surrey and EBED). At this stage it looks like we will have record numbers attending.

The Real Easy Kent Congress (including Ray White Trophy) will be held for the second time during the Kent Congress on Saturday the 27th October and we expect to build on the 10 pairs that participated in 2018. For this year's event we will look at a stratified system for NGS grading so that low NGS graded participants are encouraged to take part.

Yours in Bridge

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