



A strategy to achieve the objective stated in paragraph 3E of the EBU's Memorandum of Association "...to elevate and maintain the status and procure the advancement of the game of Bridge in England..."

EBU Board

April 2008

Statement: This document contains the consolidated proposal for this the initial phase of the EBU Strategy. The information is intended to be complete; therefore reference to other material is unnecessary. It supersedes any other documents which have been circulated previously, particularly those which were provided in June 2007 and September 2007 primarily as a basis for discussion during the wide consultation across the EBU membership.

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Foreword

Dear Member,

Duplicate Bridge in England is in decline. It is, quite simply, the job of the EBU to address this problem.

The following strategy proposal is the first step and is the result of two and half year's extensive research, consultation and deliberation to determine a way in which to enable our game to grow. Reversing the current situation will allow us to move forward and develop our game for all people of all ages.

We are recommending the implementation of a system of universal membership, which is as fair as it can be. Each person only pays when they play but still receives the benefits and rights of full membership of the English Bridge Union.

But more than this, we are also looking at the good management of our organisation, at streamlining processes and ensuring efficiency, modernisation and reform of aspects of our operations that have never been addressed before.

You now have the opportunity to read this final proposal and put your views to your Counties whose representatives, our Shareholders, will vote on whether to accept the "Pay to Play" process at an Extraordinary General Meeting on 4 June 2008.

The future of the EBU and thus Duplicate Bridge in England is in your hands.

On behalf of the Board of the EBU, I commend this proposal to you.

Yours faithfully

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Introduction

The objective of this strategy proposal is to introduce a universal membership structure that unites all players at all levels. It is intended that this will lead to a new relevance and efficiency within the EBU to meet the needs of Duplicate Bridge players in the 21st century and develop the game for many more people to enjoy.

It will also stabilise and reverse the steady decline of the last few years and at the same time establish a substantial membership base in order to have a larger, more effective, influence in any approaches to Government, the Lottery, the media and sponsors.

This initial phase of the strategy addresses the players in a club who are not currently EBU members and has the potential to more than double the existing membership. This has been referred to as achieving “Universal EBU Membership” of all the members of any EBU-affiliated club.

Naturally, this requires the EBU to demonstrate that what it currently does, and is intending to do, is beneficial for the club and/or its players, thereby showing the National Organisation’s contribution to the club scene and its relevance to the club member. This is the essence of the “club re-invigoration” aspect of the strategy, to which your Board is committed.

The other aspect of the strategy is to enable efficiency improvements to be made in our operations, which will result in an organisation that can meet the needs of its members in an effective and well-organised manner. The immediate targets for automation in this strategy proposal are “membership administration” and “Master-Point registration”. However, it is recognised that any workload reduction in Aylesbury must not result in significant additional work elsewhere, particularly in the clubs.

If this proposal is accepted, a stable platform will be established from which the EBU can continue its programme of modernisation and reform. This enables the Board to fulfil the objective stated in paragraph 3E of the EBU’s Memorandum of Association, namely: “...to elevate and maintain the status and procure the advancement of the game of Bridge in England...”.

The document is in three parts:

a summary - page 5

detailed explanation - pages 6 to 15

appendices- pages 16 to 28

Summary of the Proposal

This overview of the strategy proposal is for the convenience of the reader and for quick reference. It does not contain all the detail, which follows in the body of this document and which in some places, is further augmented by material in the Appendices.

Please note that figures quoted in this document are complete, except for any County “Pay to Play” fee. The numbers are calculated so as to be directly comparable with today’s situation, i.e. no allowance for inflation or other contingency has been included.

- The annual EBU membership subscription is abolished, being replaced by a per person “Pay to Play” fee which applies to most club player sessions for most individuals.
- Members of an affiliated club will automatically become members of the EBU. As long as an individual’s affiliated club membership is current, that individual will continue to be a member of the EBU.
- Lifetime membership cards will be issued. Existing EBU members will retain their membership number.
- There are no charges whatsoever for Master-Points. However, Master-Points can only be registered electronically, i.e. paper slips are discontinued, but these will be accepted for the lifespan of the certificate.
- The EBU “Pay to Play” fee is predicted to be 29p based on the information from the recent Club Survey and will be levied for players participating in every eligible playing session at a club. ***Note that additionally there can be a County component of the “Pay to Play” fee.***
 - Charity, Club Party, Educational - under the auspices of an EBUTA teacher - playing sessions do not attract a “Pay to Play” fee.
 - There is only one “Pay to Play” fee irrespective of whether or not a club playing session attracts Master-Points.
 - Members under 25 years old are exempt from the “Pay to Play” fee.
 - Clubs will be billed two-monthly in arrears or monthly by direct debit attracting a £2 discount per month.
 - There can be an additional County component of the “Pay to Play” fee, as determined by each County according to its financial needs agreed by its membership. It will vary from County to County.
- Leagues and Knock Out competitions will be charged £5 for teams of four matches, £10 for teams of eight matches, and so on.
 - This is per team and not per person.
 - Leagues and Knock Outs played as club playing sessions will attract the normal “Pay to Play” fee instead.
- The annual EBU club affiliation fee is £30. This is irrespective of the membership size or number of sessions played at the club. A County may also levy a club affiliation fee.

For further clarification, please note that:

- The previously suggested one-time joining fee of £5 is no longer part of the strategy proposal.
- The concept of “competitive” clubs, i.e. all its playing sessions attract Master-Points, and “social” clubs, i.e. none of its playing sessions attract Master-Points, no longer exists. This is in response to reactions to our proposal and the Club Survey where a significant majority wanted only one “Pay to Play” fee.

The “Pay to Play” scheme does not have the objective of increasing the income available to the EBU; it is solely about an efficient and fair method of collection of money across an increased membership.

Assuming the members agree, the scheme will be implemented with effect from the financial year beginning in April 2010.

And finally, the Board of the EBU has made a commitment to the membership to ensure that Duplicate Bridge becomes a more accessible game for everybody to play and also that the organisation is effective and transparent in its operations.

The “Pay to Play” Scheme

Operation

The “Pay to Play” fee is levied for most participants in every eligible playing session held in a club. The “Pay to Play” fee replaces the current EBU annual membership subscription and any charges for Master-Points.

Based on the Club Survey results, there is only one “Pay to Play” fee. This means that Master-Points will be credited for all eligible playing sessions. Note that this implies that the concept of “competitive” clubs, i.e. all its playing sessions attract Master-Points, and “social” clubs, i.e. none of its playing sessions attract Master-Points, no longer exists.

The scheme depends on every playing session held in a club being reported electronically to Aylesbury. This may seem a very dramatic change, but in fact it is little more than a straightforward extension to the current electronic reporting of Master-Points, although this will be a requirement for every affiliated club. However, instead of providing information only on those individuals who have gained Master-Points in a particular session, the names and/or EBU numbers of all the participants are reported along with the scores, and club identification data. From this information, the EBU can calculate the amount to invoice the club for the previous playing period, usually two months. Clubs who choose to pay monthly by direct debit will receive a £2 discount on their “Pay to Play” Invoice each month. An illustrative sample of the Invoice is given in Appendix 3 on page 24, which will enable a club to see how the charge has been composed and reconcile this with its own records. It could also serve as an auditable account of its playing sessions.

In this way everyone who participates in a club playing session becomes associated with, and contributes to, the EBU, thereby achieving universal membership. Since not everyone will want their name to be recorded, an opt-out option is provided - see “Anonymity” on page 9 - although such an individual will still contribute the “Pay to Play” fee for each eligible playing session in which he or she participates.

Every club member will be required to decide which club is his or her club of primary affiliation. A club will be required to provide the details: name, address - and, optionally, date of birth, email address, telephone number - of their current membership, any new joiners choosing that club as their club of primary affiliation and anyone who leaves their club of primary affiliation, in a timely way. After the first year of the “Pay to Play” scheme, Aylesbury will automatically send each club a record of its membership details which will have to be validated at the beginning of each membership year. Aylesbury will allocate EBU numbers to each primary member of that club - there will be a unique number for every individual, just as there is today. Existing EBU members will retain their current membership number. All members will receive an EBU membership card containing their EBU number and name or pseudonym.

There will be a club contract for affiliation to the EBU. This establishes the EBU’s responsibilities in its supply of services to the club and the club’s responsibilities regarding the operation of the “Pay to Play” scheme. It forms an agreement to continue the arrangement until revoked by either party. It is a commitment from the EBU to provide specific services in return for the “Pay to Play” payments received.

Applicability of the “Pay to Play” Scheme

Club Events

The “Pay to Play” scheme applies to all playing sessions in an affiliated club, with limited exceptions as follows:

- **Supervised Education Sessions.** However, teachers who will be running this type of session in our affiliated clubs must be registered with EBU Teachers Association (EBUTA).
 - **Charity Events.** Note that ordinary EBU Simultaneous Pairs events will incur the “Pay to Play” fee, whereas EBU Charity Simultaneous Pairs events will not.
 - **Parties and Celebratory events** - such as Christmas or significant Club Anniversaries.
- These exceptions will be identified on the electronic scoring return made to Aylesbury.

County, District and Club Leagues, and Knock Out Teams Competitions

Leagues which are played as club playing sessions attract the usual “Pay to Play” fee.

Leagues and Knock Out Teams competitions which are separate events will pay charges for their season as follows:

- For teams of four matches £5.00
- For teams of eight matches £10.00
- And so on

This will be part of the entry fee, noting that a league may have an associated Knock Out competition. Therefore these charges will apply to most County, District and Club Leagues, and Knock Out competitions.

As today, teams in the lowest division of any league need not be members of the EBU.

The reasoning behind these charges is that some players only participate in leagues and therefore it is appropriate that they make a sensible contribution to the EBU. Any contribution to the County will arise from the County setting the entry fee for its competitions.

County and National Events

County and national events have always effectively attracted a “Pay to Play” charge through the entry fee. There will no longer be an EBU charge for Master-Points, so in effect this portion of the entry fee can be regarded as an additional “Pay to Play” fee. It is also worth noting that EBU events make a positive contribution towards the general running of the EBU.

Education, Partner Teachers, Learn and Play Clubs, and Partner Clubs

The arrangements for Partner Teachers, Learn and Play Clubs and Partner Clubs are unaffected by the “Pay to Play” scheme. The free and discounted services available to Partner Teachers will be provided up to the point of the formation of the Partner Club, at which point the normal club affiliation and the “Pay to Play” fees become applicable.

No supervised playing session will attract the “Pay to Play” fee. However all teachers who will be running this type of session in our affiliated clubs must be registered as an associate teacher with EBUTA. This costs just £13.50 per annum and all members receive many benefits including insurance cover. Please note all methods of teaching Duplicate Bridge are welcome at EBUTA.

Individuals

Members under the age of 25 are exempt from the “Pay to Play” fee.

Individuals who have honorary status awarded to them by their club, and therefore do not pay table money and/or club membership fees, are not exempt from the “Pay to Play” fee. It is up to individual clubs to decide how they will deal with the “Pay to Play” fee for their honorary members.

The process for setting the “Pay to Play” fee

This is identical to today’s current budget process, except that instead of making a proposal for amendments to the various categories of annual subscription, a new “Pay to Play” fee will be proposed at the EBU AGM.

The Board will have determined this as a consequence of formulating the funding needs for any particular financial year. The “Pay to Play” scheme does not alter the way in which the required amount of funding for any particular year is determined; today’s budget process will still be followed.

The predicted “Pay to Play” fee based on the recent Club Survey

The Club Survey undertaken at the end of 2007 provided a good indication of the number of player sessions we would take into account to predict the “Pay to Play” fee. Using the data from the 67% of affiliated clubs who completed the questionnaire, and extrapolating that to cover all affiliated clubs, there are 2.77 million player sessions per annum that would be subject to the “Pay to Play” fee. This would mean a “Pay to Play” fee of 25p. Bearing in mind the Master-Points cost, albeit perhaps hidden, currently in clubs’ table money and/or annual subscriptions, this represents an increase per session of just 12p.

However, it is likely that, at least initially, some clubs will disaffiliate from the EBU. The completed questionnaires suggest that that could be as high as 20% and, if we make the prudent assumption that that will be so, the “Pay to Play” fee rises to 29p. Note that this is not quite linear because those indicating a likelihood of disaffiliating were predominantly smaller clubs – and the loss of 20% of those equated to a loss of only 15% of player sessions. If the number of player sessions changes this affects the “Pay to Play” fee.

Note that these calculations exclude the income from the fixed fee “Pay to Play” for Leagues and Knock Out events as we do not have any actual data on which to base it. However, we are confident that there is not enough league Bridge to generate income that would affect the ordinary “Pay to Play” fee by as much as 1p.

Effects on Clubs, Individuals and Counties

Individuals

Individuals who are members of an affiliated club automatically become members of the EBU. This will require the following:

- An individual nominating their club of primary affiliation. This does not affect their ability to represent another club of which they are a member.
- As long as an individual’s affiliated club membership is current, that individual will continue to be a member of the EBU.
- The club of primary affiliation will provide the individual’s contact information, including an email address where authorised.
- The EBU complies with the Data Protection Act which is augmented by its own Privacy Policy. This information is available on the EBU website or by post from Aylesbury. We will not distribute your personal information to third parties unless we have your permission or are required to do so by law. We may use your personal information to send you promotional information about third parties which we think you may find interesting unless you have informed us otherwise. However, this is managed in a way which does not expose your personal information to the third party concerned.

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- Each club member can nominate their County of primary allegiance and may be guided by the County allegiance of their primary club - existing declarations will be carried forward.
- An individual may also be a member of more than one County. This is known as Dual Membership. Currently, the EBU only deals with primary allegiance and this arrangement will continue. As today, it is a matter for any County to determine how its dual members are accommodated.
- Most importantly, there will be individuals who wish to remain anonymous. Those members who opt for anonymity will not receive any mailing from the EBU so they will not receive the diary or the magazine. Also, they will not be eligible for any “Pay to Play” rebates. See “Anonymity” on page 10.

Overseas membership will still exist by subscription, as will direct membership for those members in England who are not members of affiliated clubs. If an overseas or direct member chooses to play in a club they will still be liable for any “Pay to Play” fee.

Capping

It has been pointed out that under the “Pay to Play” scheme those who play several times every week could pay considerably more than they do under present arrangements. To avoid this, a principle of capping is proposed so that, in each year ended 31 March, those who have played more than 150 times in playing sessions which have attracted a “Pay to Play” fee will be exempt from further “Pay to Play” charges above that threshold and will be eligible for a rebate for any extra sessions played in that year. As we currently have little information on the extent of the issue, the threshold will be reviewed at the end of the first year to see whether it is appropriate.

Since many members play at more than one club and will exceed the threshold at different times in the year, it would be difficult, if not impossible, for a club to administer the capping process. Consequently, players exceeding the threshold will continue to pay their “Pay to Play” fee and will receive any rebate from Aylesbury at the end of the year.

This rebate will be paid by cheque but only for amounts of £5 or more, so as to avoid the disproportionate expense of issuing cheques for very small amounts. Rebates of less than £5 will be aggregated and given to charity.

Anonymity

Anonymity will be available to any member. An individual who wishes to be anonymous to the EBU will provide a pseudonym which is unique within his or her club of primary affiliation. An EBU number will be allocated to the individual and the record in Aylesbury will contain that individual’s chosen pseudonym and the club of primary affiliation. No other personal details are required, so only the club of primary affiliation will know the link between the artificial membership record held in Aylesbury and the details of the individual.

When a member who has opted for anonymity plays in any club’s playing session, they will only have to supply their EBU number, so that the club where they played will be billed for their player sessions as normal.

Those members who opt for anonymity will not receive any mailings from the EBU so they will not receive *English Bridge* or a diary. They will not be eligible for “Pay to Play” rebates. However, their Master-Point accrual and their National Rating will be recorded in Aylesbury. Their membership cards will be delivered to their club of primary affiliation.

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Clubs

The “Pay to Play” scheme is dependent on electronic processing. Modern technology will support the “Pay to Play” scheme. Accordingly, every club must have access to a computer which can communicate with Aylesbury by way of the Internet. Aylesbury will provide help as necessary on a case by case basis.

Any electronic scoring programs that can upload Master-Point results will be effective in the new administration, although they will need some adaptation in order to provide the more extensive information required in both the “Pay to Play” and the National Rating schemes. Your supplier will inform you when the revisions to the scoring program are available. If your supplier is not intending to make the necessary alterations, or if you did not score your club playing sessions electronically previously, then the EBU will provide the appropriate software free of charge.

The EBU will make available the IT specification, when it has been developed, necessary for the changes to be made and also will provide an acceptance test to ensure that the implementation is correct, before that software is approved by the EBU for use.

If required, the software will be provided in advance of the implementation of the “Pay to Play” scheme in 2010 to assist with familiarisation. Assistance will be provided from Aylesbury for this aspect of club operation for all of those who require it.

Counties

The EBU is the association of the Counties. The County will still provide services on behalf of its membership, in particular the provision of regional tournaments and communication.

Existing EBU members will retain their County of primary allegiance, although they will have to indicate their club of primary affiliation. Each club member can nominate their County of primary allegiance and may be guided by the County allegiance of their primary club. Anyone can choose to become a primary member of any County by request to the EBU and approval by the County concerned just as they can today.

The centralised membership database, which the majority of Counties are now using, eases the membership management process.

Dual membership has never been, and will continue not to be, a matter for the National Organisation. Counties can make whatever arrangements they choose with regard to charging individuals for dual membership.

The County will continue to have financial autonomy from the National Organisation as today. A County will determine its financial requirements for the next financial year. A County can determine its own method of collection to cover its financial needs, be this through an annual subscription from its members, its tournaments, affiliation fees from its clubs, or by having a component of the “Pay to Play” fee applied to all the eligible playing sessions in its affiliated clubs, or any combination of the above.

It is expected that many Counties will choose to have their own component of the “Pay to Play” fee, so that the EBU does the collection on their behalf and disburses these funds to the Counties in a timely manner.

To determine the amount in “Pay to Play” fee terms, the County will need to have a value for the number of player sessions within its affiliated clubs. This information will be provided initially by the EBU as determined from the consultation with the clubs; in future years the County will know this number based on the outcome of the previous year. The County “Pay to Play” fee is reported to Aylesbury and will be billed as part of the Club Invoice.

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Note that this means that the “Pay to Play” fee will vary from County to County.

No County events, other than the leagues, will be subject to the “Pay to Play” fee. Heats of County events held as club playing sessions attract the usual club “Pay to Play” fee, i.e. there is no “Pay to Play” fee added by the County. However, the County may apply its own entry fee for heats of its own competitions held in clubs.

This means that Counties will no longer pay for the Master-Points that they give out and it is expected that this saving will be reflected in the County component of the “Pay to Play” fee. The £25,000 which the EBU received previously from this source represents about 1p of the “Pay to Play” fee and, although this revenue will need to be made up, some of this will be through the “Pay to Play” fee for leagues.

Implementation plan

Between June and September 2008 we will undertake the ground work for the creation of the new technical infrastructure for the “Pay to Play” scheme and its attendant parts, including the National Rating scheme. Between September 2008 and September 2009 both the National Rating scheme and the EBU management software amendments will be specified and tested.

During this period the information technology needs of our clubs will be identified and the appropriate support plans put in place. The start date for the implementation of “Pay to Play” is April 2010. For details please see Appendix 4 on page 25.

Benefits to Clubs and Individuals

Benefits

Duplicate Bridge clubs are dependent on enthusiastic volunteers, who make our game an inexpensive and enjoyable pastime, and everyone in the Duplicate Bridge world is very grateful for their effort and commitment. These individuals are pivotal to the success of the clubs, but they may need assistance with some aspects of club activities and this is where the EBU can help.

The EBU can assist clubs and their members by helping with certain activities that may require resources that are not available either within the club or locally, if only as a consequence of “economy of scale”, thus making them more viable to undertake. There are items which benefit the club, and, in their turn, indirectly benefit the club member. Also, there are items which are of more direct benefit to the individual. They are listed below in alphabetical order.

Access to other Duplicate Bridge events: Individuals become eligible for other Duplicate Bridge competitions provided by the County or by the National Organisation. Some of these are club based, such as the National Inter-Club Knock Out (NICKO) and the Garden Cities.

Charitable Status for Duplicate Bridge: If successful, although success is not likely to be immediate, this has the potential for significant financial benefits for eligible affiliated clubs. This is a complex area of legislation, so any benefits which might arise will need to be determined very precisely and with legal guidance. Early indications are that the following would be available:

- Rebates of Council Tax rates and possibly reduced rents from Local Authority landlords.
- Allowing club members to make a donation to their club from their estate which would be free from Inheritance Tax.

In addition, there are further possibilities such as:

- Involving the use of “gift-aid”, gaining the club 28p in the pound on eligible donations.
- Enabling higher rate tax payers to claim a tax rebate of 18p in every pound spent on some aspects of Duplicate Bridge.

Club Location Service: The EBU can advise a member of Duplicate Bridge clubs in his or her vicinity and also advise the club of the member’s request for the location of a club.

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Competitions: The EBU is committed to developing and providing different competitions for our clubs providing different levels of access for different levels of Duplicate Bridge experience. We will be looking at this aspect of club activity through our Club Panel (see “Commitments” on page 14).

Education: The English Bridge Union Teachers Association, Bridge for All, and the recently initiated Partner/Teacher scheme, will be continued. In addition, approaches to Schools and Universities will be supported. The EBU is already investigating an on-line teaching vehicle based on English bidding methods.

General Club Assistance:

- Advice on any aspects of club management.
- Advice and assistance on disciplinary matters.
- Advice on implementing Best Behaviour at Bridge.
- Advice on any aspects of tournament direction.
- Availability of Club Tournament Director Training and support.
- Advice on EBU education programmes, including “Learn and Play” and “Partner” sections.
- Advice and assistance on promotion of club activities.

Infrastructure: The EBU provides the general infrastructure in which Duplicate Bridge can be enjoyed at all levels. In particular, it:

- Provides training of teachers and students so the game can be enjoyed at all levels.
- Ensures the regulation of the game’s laws to enable uniform conditions of play.
- Has a procedure to cover disciplinary matters.

The above have been established over many years. Every player in every club benefits from the security and development provided by the infrastructure.

Measure of Duplicate Bridge Achievements: Some individuals like to know how their Duplicate Bridge skills compare with those of others. The EBU:

- Provides a **Lifetime Achievement** through the existing Master-Point scheme.
- Is introducing a **National Rating Scheme** which provides a measure of an individual’s current performance. See “National Rating Scheme” in Appendix 6 on page 26. This is more like a “handicap” in Golf. Also, it offers the opportunity to take part in the new “Club Player of the Year” competition.

Membership Development: To produce prospective players to assist with maintaining club memberships levels. Please see “Membership Development” on page 13.

Online Club Session: Each affiliated club will be offered a free online club session in its own online club room each week for every member of the club. This will not clash with existing club playing sessions.

Player Experience in the Club: New tournaments can be offered either in their own right or as a consequence of the National Rating scheme. For example:

- Inter-Club Leagues played at club sessions could be encouraged in a more widespread manner.
- Less expensive simultaneous pairs events could be provided for use in a club based on the store of such hands which the EBU possesses.
- Provision of computer-generated deals with hand records.
- A number of other possibilities are being explored, which could be offered to give more variety of competition in the club, in the hope of thereby enhancing the player experience. This will be done through consultation so that these initiatives are truly relevant to the club players involved.

Public Liability Insurance: Reduced Public Liability Insurance as a consequence of being negotiated on a group basis. The EBU will continue to ensure that our clubs benefit from the best package.

Publicity: The EBU can help clubs through publicity locally, regionally and nationally.

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Publications:

- Every club and member receives an EBU diary and 6 copies per annum of *English Bridge*, whose style is being re-balanced with content for the club player. Note that ways of distribution at reduced cost are being investigated.
- The EBU has started to produce an electronic newsletter for clubs, with letters, quizzes and club event information.
- Also the EBU will be working on updating and refreshing its publications for students and teachers to assist clubs in recruiting new members.

Scoring Software: The EBU will provide free of charge scoring software for any club requesting it. In addition, the EBU will provide assistance and training for any club who otherwise would not have an IT capability.

Supplies of Equipment: The EBU offers discounted equipment, such as stationery, books, boards, bidding boxes and tables, to members or clubs.

VAT Information: This may have benefit to some clubs who may be near the VAT registration threshold. It may well be advantageous for a club to be registered for VAT even if it is below the threshold (£64,000 for 2007/8), as it will be able to claim the VAT back on the “Pay to Play” fee and the annual affiliation fee.

Website Hosting: This would enable any club to have a website for its use which could be employed to communicate with its membership, for example displaying results of its playing sessions and producing news items. Also. it could be a vehicle for publicising the club to visitors or prospective new members.

All of these activities can assist the clubs, and make a valid contribution to the “health of Duplicate Bridge” in the country. The EBU Board has already signalled its intent to help with the club scene by employing the Club Liaison Officer, who assists the clubs directly and enables the sharing of “best practice”, the Communication Officer targeting the local press, the National Rating scheme and the changing style of *English Bridge*.

Membership Development

Membership Development is an essential role of the National Organisation. Aspects of the activities of Education and Publicity combine to support Membership Development in order to ensure players for the future, which has the obvious payback of producing members for those clubs who cannot conveniently undertake membership development for themselves.

There are a number of plans that we have in mind to develop the popularity and awareness of the game. The following are areas that we intend to investigate once we have developed the existing membership base:

Youth Duplicate Bridge

Duplicate Bridge in schools is currently dependent on the good will and enthusiasm of volunteers which we appreciate greatly, but this does not provide consistency or continuity.

The EBU wishes to commission a robust and rigorous research project, incorporating previous studies, to prove that Duplicate Bridge helps children in various aspects of their development, such as mental arithmetic, strategy formulation, and inter-personal skills, and use this to persuade the government that Duplicate Bridge should be part of the national curriculum. This study would embrace determining the most effective way to take Duplicate Bridge into schools.

This will involve determining the most successful ways to promote Duplicate Bridge in universities and to set up university Duplicate Bridge clubs.

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Duplicate Bridge and the Over 40s

The EBU wishes to investigate and research, in partnership with a university or commercial organisation, the health benefits of Duplicate Bridge, and use this to promote the game amongst the over 40s.

This age group, may be seeking a stimulating, social and beneficial recreational pastime. The EBU will develop its activities and education programmes to focus on:

- Teachers in clubs
- Introduction for individuals online
- Promotion of the game locally amongst (current) non-players

Duplicate Bridge and Older People

Develop partnerships with organisations like the University of the Third Age (U3A), Help the Aged and others to create initiatives for older people to enjoy the benefits of Duplicate Bridge.

A Commitment to our Membership

The current Board of the EBU is determined to ensure that Duplicate Bridge becomes an accessible game for everybody to play. We are committed to:

- Having an extensive education programme, with support and subsidy for students and teachers alike. We have already sought and been granted approval to develop the American Contract Bridge League's (ACBL) online teaching programme for English needs.
- The simplification of regulation and we will try to avoid major changes in the future on those aspects of regulation over which we have total control. We are currently investigating the separation of the conduct aspects from the technical aspects of the Laws and Ethics committee.
- The creation of an accessible tournament framework which goes beyond the current national Really Easy Congress and develops a structure of tournaments for clubs and individuals who wish to enjoy the game through this route.
- Continuing to consult our membership on issues that affect the majority as we have in the past few years via research groups and surveys.
- Creating a sub-committee of the Board which will address club matters and include club members.
- Running an effective, streamlined organisation through constant review of our activities and operations.
- Developing the game along the lines described in the Membership Development section.
- Investigating charity status for the EBU and its clubs, which will necessitate change of the EBU's Constitution.
- Debating the governance of the EBU and the appropriate representation for all its members.

Finally to prove our commitment, we will report on the progress of all the above on an annual basis, informing our membership of the progress we have made on each key issue. This will be done at each shareholders meeting in June, and on our website and in the pages of each August issue of *English Bridge*.

Next Steps

This document will be circulated electronically or by post to all our affiliated clubs and our Counties and will be freely available on our website.

We expect our Counties to consult with their clubs and members to gauge their reactions to this proposal.

The Shareholders, who are your County representatives, will vote on the acceptance of this proposal at an Extraordinary General Meeting of the EBU on 4 June 2008. The results of this vote will be posted immediately on our website and will be reported in the August issue of *English Bridge*.

Appendices

1. Summary of results from the recent Club Survey

Introduction

As part of the “Pay to Play” project, the EBU sent the questionnaire presented below to all Counties and asked them to forward it to all affiliated clubs. This produced a survey population of about 950 clubs. At 27 February 2008, 634 returns had been received (two thirds) and this report is based on this sample. Aylesbury continued to accept returns up to this date and we believe that all these have been included in the analysis. We apologise if inadvertently any return has been missed, or any data transcription errors made, but are confident this will not significantly affect the validity of the findings. Any additional returns will be added as they are received but not included in the overall analysis. In terms of a typical postal survey 67% would be regarded as a very good return. Because of the consistency of the survey population and the importance of the topic to the clubs and Counties, the Membership Development Action Group (MDAG) was somewhat disappointed by this return rate. However, MDAG is not able to ascribe any one main reason for the 316 non-returns.

Survey results

A summary of the survey results is presented in Tables 1 and 2. It should be noted in considering these results that many people belong to more than one club and therefore the 58643 members does not represent 58643 different people. From these results MDAG highlighted the following:

- The average club size was 92 members
- 41.3% of club members were EBU members
- The above figures compare well with a previous EBU survey of 433 clubs (86 average size, 44% EBU membership)
- Clubs report that on average members play 0.61 times per week. Even taking into account that people may belong to more than one club this contrasts with the EBU online survey of members which found them reporting they played on average 2.22 times per week.
- On the question of whether clubs expected to continue to affiliate if “Pay to Play” was introduced:
 - 59% said YES
 - 20% said NO
 - 21% did not answer directly either YES or NO
- The total number of player sessions per year in the 634 clubs is 1.8M
- The total number of Master-Point sessions per year in the 634 clubs is 1.5M

Extending the results to the full population of 950 clubs

Having received returns from only 634 clubs, MDAG was left with the task of deciding how to extend the survey to the full population. The obvious way to do this was to simply factor the number of player sessions by 950/634 and this was the method adopted by MDAG. However, it must be remembered that there is a significant assumption in this namely that the remaining 316 clubs are statistically the same as the 634 that replied. Using this approach leads to:

- The total number of player sessions per year is 2.7M
- The total number of Master-Point sessions per year is 2.2M. This compares well with the 2.01M used in the original “Pay to Play” Strategy paper.
- A total of 36300 EBU members in clubs. Since we know there are in fact approximately 23500 individual EBU members (or 27500 including Bridge for All) this suggests EBU members belong to between 1.3 and 1.5 clubs (36300/27500 or 36300/23500). This compares to the 2.13 clubs reported in the EBU online membership survey.

Strategy Proposal for the Future of the EBU and Duplicate Bridge in England

“Pay to Play” implications

The factoring of 950/634 applied to the number of player sessions differentiated by the answer to Q6 (Would you expect your club to continue to affiliate to the EBU?) results in the following:

No of player sessions	No of clubs	Comment	Pay to Play Fee
1194590	374	Clubs answering Y to Q6	£ 0.57
1588312	507	Clubs not answering N to Q6	£ 0.43
1790001	560	Clubs answering Y to Q6 - extrapolated	£ 0.38
2379963	760	Clubs not answering N to Q6 - extrapolated	£ 0.29
2765246	950	All clubs affiliate	£ 0.25

Please note the “Pay to Play” fee has been rounded up to the nearest penny.

Key risk areas

MDAG identified two key risk areas:

- The method of extending the analysis from the 634 actual returns to the 950 full population namely factoring by 950/634.
- The reliability of the returns – work will continue to resolve obvious anomalies.

CLUB QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Name of Club	
County of affiliation	
Contact person	Name: _____ Address: _____ Tel No: _____
<u>Excluding league matches , teaching sessions, Rubber Bridge, Chicago and parties/social events, how many tables do you get at your club each year:</u>	
A) From sessions that give Master-Points?	
B) From sessions that don't give Master-Points?	
2. How many members does your club have?	
3. How many EBU members do you have? Please indicate whether this is reasonably accurate or an estimate.	_____ A / E *
4. What is your club's annual membership fee?	_____
5. What is the average table money per person per session?	
A) From sessions that give Master-Points	_____
B) From sessions that don't give Master-Points	_____
6. Would you expect your club to continue to affiliate to the EBU?	Y / N *
7. Would your club prefer a single average Pay to Play fee (1) or a higher one for Master-Point sessions and a lower one for non-Master-Point sessions(2)?	1 * 2 *

TABLE 1 – FULL SUMMARY

NB Q6 is “Would you expect your club to continue to affiliate to the EBU?”

FULL SURVEY - SUMMARY	
Number of responses	634
Number of club members	58643
Average club size	92
Number of EBU members	24210
% EBU members	41.3%
% EBU members in clubs answering Y to Q6	46.8%
% EBU members in clubs answering N to Q6	26.0%
% EBU members in clubs not answering Y or N to Q6	34.8%
Total number of player sessions - clubs answering Y to Q6	1194590
Total number of player sessions - clubs answering N to Q6	257126
Total number of player sessions - clubs not answering Y or N to Q6	393722
Average number of player sessions per year at a club	2910.8
Total number of player sessions per year	1845438
Total number of Master-Pointed sessions per year	1510672
Average no of sessions per member per week	0.61
Number of clubs answering Y to Q6	374
Number of clubs answering N to Q6	127
Number of clubs not answering Y or N to Q6	133
Number of clubs preferring 1 “Pay to Play” fee	390
Number of clubs preferring 2 “Pay to Play” fees	95

Strategy Proposal for the Future of the EBU and Duplicate Bridge in England

TABLE 2 – SUMMARY BY COUNTY

NB Q6 is “Would you expect your club to continue to affiliate to the EBU?”

SURVEY SUMMARY	ALL	AVN	BED	BRB	CAH	CHI	CRN	CUM	DER	DEV
Number of responses	634	1	7	46	13	6	6	5	15	23
Number of club members	58643	96	462	6901	639	591	435	402	983	1794
Average club size	92	96	66	150	49	99	73	80	66	78
Number of EBU members	24210	10	246	2215	428	430	191	148	357	687
% EBU members	41.3%	10.4%	53.2%	32.1%	67.0%	72.8%	43.9%	36.8%	36.3%	38.3%
Total number of player sessions - clubs answering Y to Q6	1194590	3400	12172	92416	9056	9692	8600	800	15664	35752
Total number of player sessions - clubs answering N to Q6	257126	0	2400	8428	3400	0	0	800	2648	2408
Total number of player sessions - clubs not answering Y or N to Q6	393722	0	1688	35276	1920	200	4396	11080	13472	20688
Average number of player sessions per year at a club	2910.8	3400.0	2322.9	2959.1	1105.8	1648.7	2166.0	2536.0	2118.9	2558.6
Total number of player sessions per year	1845438	3400	16260	136120	14376	9892	12996	12680	31784	58848
Total number of Master-Pointed sessions per year	1510672	1700	11332	97268	14376	8492	11876	8920	25104	46576
Average no of sessions per member per week	0.61	0.68	0.68	0.38	0.43	0.32	0.57	0.61	0.62	0.63
Number of clubs answering Y to Q6	374	1	5	26	9	5	4	1	10	11
% clubs answering Y to Q6	59.0%	100.0%	71.4%	56.5%	69.2%	83.3%	66.7%	20.0%	66.7%	47.8%
Number of clubs answering N to Q6	127	0	1	4	1	0	0	1	2	2
% clubs answering N to Q6	20.0%	0.0%	14.3%	8.7%	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	13.3%	8.7%
Number of clubs not answering Y or N to Q6	133	0	1	16	3	1	2	3	3	10
% clubs not answering Y or N to Q6	21.0%	0.0%	14.3%	34.8%	23.1%	16.7%	33.3%	60.0%	20.0%	43.5%
Number of clubs preferring 1 "Pay to Play" fee	390	1	2	26	9	6	5	3	8	10
Number of clubs preferring 2 "Pay to Play" fees	95	0	3	7	1	0	1	2	6	5

Dorset did not return any club survey data.

TABLE 2 (contd) – SUMMARY BY COUNTY

NB Q6 is “Would you expect your club to continue to affiliate to the EBU?”

SURVEY SUMMARY	ESX	GLO	HIW	HRF	HRT	IOM	KEN	LAN	LEI	LIN
Number of responses	52	10	31	10	27	3	40	22	18	5
Number of club members	3692	1062	2204	848	2446	169	3540	3184	1278	380
Average club size	71	106	71	85	91	56	89	145	71	76
Number of EBU members	1533	459	874	432	1232	115	1753	678	743	120
% EBU members	41.5%	43.2%	39.7%	50.9%	50.4%	68.0%	49.5%	21.3%	58.1%	31.6%
Total number of player sessions - clubs answering Y to Q6	62336	11996	22050	20012	49644	4940	87724	88264	29604	12120
Total number of player sessions - clubs answering N to Q6	29112	4600	16598	1632	15800	560	22784	24332	4056	800
Total number of player sessions - clubs not answering Y or N to Q6	21048	14064	18404	2700	6880	0	3100	34288	5800	1000
Average number of player sessions per year at a club	2163.4	3066.0	1840.4	2434.4	2678.7	1833.3	2840.2	6676.5	2192.2	2784.0
Total number of player sessions per year	112496	30660	57052	24344	72324	5500	113608	146884	39460	13920
Total number of Master- Pointed sessions per year	99228	25224	50730	22432	67204	5500	106620	84444	37556	13520
Average no of sessions per member per week	0.59	0.56	0.50	0.55	0.57	0.63	0.62	0.89	0.59	0.70
Number of clubs answering Y to Q6	29	5	10	8	17	2	28	10	9	3
% clubs answering Y to Q6	55.8%	50.0%	32.3%	80.0%	63.0%	66.7%	70.0%	45.5%	50.0%	60.0%
Number of clubs answering N to Q6	13	3	11	1	5	1	10	6	5	1
% clubs answering N to Q6	25.0%	30.0%	35.5%	10.0%	18.5%	33.3%	25.0%	27.3%	27.8%	20.0%
Number of clubs not answering Y or N to Q6	10	2	10	1	5	0	2	6	4	1
% clubs not answering Y or N to Q6	19.2%	20.0%	32.3%	10.0%	18.5%	0.0%	5.0%	27.3%	22.2%	20.0%
Number of clubs preferring 1 "Pay to Play" fee	37	6	15	5	16	1	29	7	10	4
Number of clubs preferring 2 "Pay to Play" fees	4	1	3	2	3	0	4	7	2	0

Strategy Proposal for the Future of the EBU and Duplicate Bridge in England

TABLE 2 (contd) – SUMMARY BY COUNTY

NB Q6 is “Would you expect your club to continue to affiliate to the EBU?”

SURVEY SUMMARY	LON	MAN	MER	MID	NFK	NHM	NOE	NOT	OXF	SOM
Number of responses	17	15	6	16	14	7	13	4	13	7
Number of club members	1175	1442	979	1687	933	505	1193	500	1023	377
Average club size	69	96	163	105	67	72	92	125	79	54
Number of EBU members	545	500	225	539	369	188	730	193	613	132
% EBU members	46.4%	34.7%	23.0%	32.0%	39.5%	37.2%	61.2%	38.6%	59.9%	35.0%
Total number of player sessions - clubs answering Y to Q6	23020	17864	27632	17328	15960	17804	21188	9344	23560	8584
Total number of player sessions - clubs answering N to Q6	1200	14880	1920	20780	4620	6880	3200	0	3400	2296
Total number of player sessions - clubs not answering Y or N to Q6	11996	13536	6000	21700	3904	0	1320	12720	0	0
Average number of player sessions per year at a club	2130.4	3085.3	5925.3	3738.0	1748.9	3526.3	1977.5	5516.0	2073.8	1554.3
Total number of player sessions per year	36216	46280	35552	59808	24484	24684	25708	22064	26960	10880
Total number of Master-Pointed sessions per year	27900	33724	12200	53820	16644	21960	22264	18064	22360	9584
Average no of sessions per member per week	0.59	0.62	0.70	0.68	0.50	0.94	0.41	0.85	0.51	0.55
Number of clubs answering Y to Q6	9	7	4	4	9	6	10	2	10	5
% clubs answering Y to Q6	52.9%	46.7%	66.7%	25.0%	64.3%	85.7%	76.9%	50.0%	76.9%	71.4%
Number of clubs answering N to Q6	2	5	1	7	3	1	2	0	3	2
% clubs answering N to Q6	11.8%	33.3%	16.7%	43.8%	21.4%	14.3%	15.4%	0.0%	23.1%	28.6%
Number of clubs not answering Y or N to Q6	6	3	1	5	2	0	1	2	0	0
% clubs not answering Y or N to Q6	35.3%	20.0%	16.7%	31.3%	14.3%	0.0%	7.7%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Number of clubs preferring 1 "Pay to Play" fee	9	8	3	8	9	5	10	3	9	4
Number of clubs preferring 2 "Pay to Play" fees	0	4	2	2	2	2	2	1	3	2

TABLE 2 (contd) – SUMMARY BY COUNTY

NB Q6 is “Would you expect your club to continue to affiliate to the EBU?”

SURVEY SUMMARY	STA	SUF	SUR	SUS	WAR	WES	WIL	WOR	YOR
Number of responses	17	18	35	29	13	3	10	20	37
Number of club members	1422	1221	3713	3574	1871	270	778	1328	3546
Average club size	84	68	106	123	144	90	78	66	96
Number of EBU members	441	426	1751	1668	597	77	271	662	1632
% EBU members	31.0%	34.9%	47.2%	46.7%	31.9%	28.5%	34.8%	49.8%	46.0%
Total number of player sessions - clubs answering Y to Q6	32456	28476	84088	128232	15600	6020	13164	30260	97768
Total number of player sessions - clubs answering N to Q6	6248	4304	9324	2960	8448	2000	4216	980	19112
Total number of player sessions - clubs not answering Y or N to Q6	10220	1052	22440	2450	37120	0	8768	24200	20292
Average number of player sessions per year at a club	2877.9	1879.6	3310.1	4608.3	4705.2	2673.3	2614.8	2772.0	3707.4
Total number of player sessions per year	48924	33832	115852	133642	61168	8020	26148	55440	137172
Total number of Master-Pointed sessions per year	29064	32636	110684	128442	48356	6020	22260	44132	112456
Average no of sessions per member per week	0.66	0.53	0.60	0.72	0.63	0.57	0.65	0.80	0.74
Number of clubs answering Y to Q6	9	14	20	26	7	2	3	13	21
% clubs answering Y to Q6	52.9%	77.8%	57.1%	89.7%	53.8%	66.7%	30.0%	65.0%	56.8%
Number of clubs answering N to Q6	4	3	7	1	3	1	3	1	11
% clubs answering N to Q6	23.5%	16.7%	20.0%	3.4%	23.1%	33.3%	30.0%	5.0%	29.7%
Number of clubs not answering Y or N to Q6	4	1	8	2	3	0	4	6	5
% clubs not answering Y or N to Q6	23.5%	5.6%	22.9%	6.9%	23.1%	0.0%	40.0%	30.0%	13.5%
Number of clubs preferring 1 "Pay to Play" fee	10	15	24	24	7	2	6	15	19
Number of clubs preferring 2 "Pay to Play" fees	3	2	2	4	3	0	1	1	8

2. EBU Finances

Budgets and Outcomes

In the last three years (including the current one) the annual turnover of the EBU has been consistent at between £1.62 and £1.65 million, net of VAT. The principal components of it have been equally consistent – and this is a typical breakdown:

	<u>£000</u>
Competitions	630
Subscriptions	380
Master-Points	240
Other	<u>390</u>
	<u>1640</u>

These figures can be seen in the audited annual accounts of the company and the summarised management accounts, both of which are on the EBU website.

Over the same period, operations have been streamlined, with the result that annual costs have fallen from £1.63 to 1.57 million - after an adjustment for the periodic fluctuation in the costs of international events. In the short term, inflation may more than offset the benefits of streamlining, so the present level of income will need to be maintained, but not increased.

The strategy outlined in this document does not generate any change to the existing pattern of expenditure. That is controlled by the Board and by the existing process of shareholder approval. The only change is to the method of collecting income, not to the amount.

Income under the headings of “competitions” and “other” above is not affected by the proposed introduction of “Pay to Play”, which is intended solely to replace the income currently derived from Master-Points and individual membership subscriptions. The numbers above are, as stated, net of VAT so, for a true cash income figure, the VAT needs to be added back. Actual charges for Master-Points currently include VAT at 17.5%, whilst subscriptions include VAT at about half that rate (because of allowances). Our understanding is that the introduction of “Pay to Play” will not affect our current VAT position.

	<u>Excl VAT (£000)</u>	<u>Incl VAT (£000)</u>
Subscription income	380	410
Master-Points income	<u>240</u>	<u>280</u>
Total	620	690
Club affiliation included above		<u>(20)</u>
Amount to be funded by “Pay to Play”		<u>670</u>

Using the data from the 67% of affiliated clubs who completed the strategy questionnaire, and extrapolating that to cover all affiliated clubs, there are 2.77 million player-sessions per annum that would be subject to “Pay to Play”. To generate the required income of £670,000, this would mean a “Pay to Play” fee of 25p. Bearing in mind the Master-Points cost - albeit perhaps hidden - currently in clubs’ table money and/or annual subscriptions, this represents an increase per session of just 12p.

However, it is likely that, at least initially, some clubs will disaffiliate from the EBU. The completed questionnaires suggest that that could be as high as 20% and, if we make the prudent assumption that that will be so, the “Pay to Play” fee rises to 29p. Note that this is not quite linear because those indicating a likelihood of disaffiliating were predominantly smaller clubs. That is the loss of 20% of these equated to a loss of only 15% of player-sessions.

Note that these calculations exclude the income from the “Pay to Play” fee for leagues and knock out events as we do not have any actual data on which to base it. However, we are confident that there is not enough league Bridge to generate income that would affect the “Pay to Play” fee by as much as 1p.

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Ongoing Cost and Cash Flow Implications

Implementation of “Pay to Play” would lead to an increase of about 30,000 in EBU membership. Because the implementation would involve a streamlining of administration processes, the expectation is that there would be no overall increase in administration costs. Indeed, in the longer term, a cost reduction is envisaged. It is also anticipated that the additional costs from a larger print-run of *English Bridge* will be more than offset by increased revenue from advertising. This will help to offset the increased costs of postage, which could be as much as £35,000, although this may also be mitigated by distribution via clubs where possible. However, if necessary, this cost can be financed from the expected net surplus of £60-70,000 expected from existing operations as shown above.

It should, however, be noted that there is a negative implication for cash flow. At present, although Master-Point income is spread evenly over the year, the bulk of subscription income is received at the start of the financial year. Under “Pay to Play”, all income will be spread evenly over the year but received about two-and-a-half months in arrears. This could be a problem, particularly in the first year of implementation as, even assuming prompt payment it creates a gap of about £150,000, which would need to be funded from cash reserves. Therefore clubs will be billed two monthly in arrears or monthly by direct debit attracting a £2 discount per month.

Reserves and Implementation Costs

At the end of the last financial year, 31st March, 2007, the EBU’s reserves were circa £720,000, of which circa £500,000 were fixed assets - the HQ office and its facilities - and the balance liquid assets. Actual cash balances were, deceptively, rather more than this £220,000 because of the early receipt of some annual subscriptions. We expect these liquid resources to be of the order of £300,000 at the end of the current financial year and would look to increase them slightly via small operating surpluses over the next two years.

The indications we have obtained of the likely costs of the various developments needed to implement “Pay to Play” show figures of £110,000 +/- 10%. It would be normal to add contingency of at least 50% to the initial costs estimates for IT projects and that leads to projected costs very close to the average of £170,000 incurred by other National Bridge Organisations implementing similar changes. We therefore consider that we have a robust estimate which cannot be refined further until precise costs can be obtained from a tendering process. These costs will have to be funded from reserves.

Risks

As currently estimated, the implementation costs of “Pay to Play” will use slightly over half of the EBU’s liquid reserves. Whilst this is perfectly acceptable, any significant increase in implementation costs could reduce reserves below the prudent level. In addition, about half of those reserves are earmarked, in year one, to cover the adverse timing of cash flow – and the two amounts together could not be covered from liquid reserves. It is therefore intended, if necessary, to take out a loan, secured against the asset of the Aylesbury office building, to support the funding of the implementation.

There is an obvious risk that more clubs than expected will disaffiliate. If the “Pay to Play” fee is set at 29p in line with our current projection of 20% disaffiliation, but a further 20% of clubs disaffiliate, the loss of revenue in a year would be over £150,000, which could not be covered from liquid reserves if the implementation was being funded without recourse to the loan. It would be possible - but not desirable - to manage the risk to some extent by increasing the “Pay to Play” fee during the year. However, all the evidence suggests that the projected loss of 20% of clubs may be pessimistic and the chances of a 40% loss are negligible.

MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS SUMMARY

YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2007

Activity	Income (£000's)	Expenditure (£000's)	Profit/(Loss) (£000's)
Bridge Shop	192.3	192.6	(0.3)
Master-Points	236.2	79.4	156.8
Membership	375.6	65.8	309.8
Competitions	619.3	589.3	30.0
Licences	51.9	15.6	36.3
Bridge for All	50.5	45.8	4.7
Education	41.0	63.5	(22.5)
Internationals	0.0	111.8	(111.8)
NBO*	31.2	16.9	14.3
English Bridge	1.9	83.5	(81.6)
Overheads	20.6	280.0	(259.4)
TOTAL EBU	1,620.5	1,544.2	76.3
<u>Taxation</u>	0.0	0.3	(0.3)
OVERALL TOTAL	1,620.5	1,544.5	76.0

** National Bridge Organisation. Income is derived from Bridge Great Britain Simultaneous Pairs and expenditure is the per capita subscriptions to the World Bridge Federation and the European Bridge League.*

This table summarises the audited accounts of the EBU for the year ended 31st. March, 2007 in a format which shows the net costs or contributions of each significant activity. It is already accessible on the EBU website alongside the audited accounts for the year.

As far as possible, the costs for each activity include related salary costs and other directly attributable overheads as well as the direct costs. Currently only about half the overheads are allocated which we will address in the next financial year.

Note that the figures for income from membership and Master-Points are net of VAT, so correspond (rounded) to the "Excl VAT" figures quoted under "Budgets and Outcomes" on page 21.

The full accounts can be accessed on our website by following the link from the front page at www.ebu.co.uk

3. Club Invoice – Early Draft Sample

This is an early draft sample of the Club Invoice to illustrate the nature of the information which every club will receive from Aylesbury regarding their “Pay to Play” billing. For the moment the sample below ignores any County component of the “Pay to Play” fee. It will almost certainly be refined further before the actual implementation.

It will be sent electronically two-monthly in arrears and should enable a club to ensure that the billing request is accurate; indeed, it may be very useful for the club administration in its own right.

Club Name: <i>Affiliated Duplicate Bridge Club</i>						Club Code: <i>ABC</i>	
Venue or Contact Address:							
Club website URL (if any):							
<i>Etc.</i>							
Billing Period: <i>Start Date --- dd/mm/yy End Date --- dd/mm/yy</i>							
Date of Playing Session	Time of Playing Session	Section Number	Number of Players	Number of Juniors	Status of Playing Session	Space for other information	“Pay to Play” Charge
01/04/2010	1	32	1	Normal		<i>9.30</i>
08/04/2010	1	24	2	Party*		<i>0.00</i>
“	2	22	2	Party*		<i>0.00</i>
15/04/2010	1	28	0	Normal		<i>8.40</i>
22/04/2010	1	22	0	Normal		<i>6.60</i>
“	2	12	4	Education		<i>0.00</i>
29/04/2010		<i>.....</i>
.....							
.....							
TOTAL (To be taken by direct debit from your club account on dd/mm/yy)							<i>80.00</i>

* Silver Anniversary celebration.

4. Draft “Pay to Play” Scheme Implementation Plan

If the “Pay to Play” scheme receives approval the EBU will immediately establish a “Pay to Play” Implementation Group whose first job will be to define the entire project and produce a detailed project plan. To help people understand some of the issues involved, MDAG has identified the following key activities that will need to be included in that plan:

Activity	
Start up	
06/08	“Pay to Play” proposal put before EGM
07/08	Establish “Pay to Play” Implementation Group
	Define project scope
10/08	Produce detailed project plan
IT and Software	
07/08	Produce IT project plan
07/08	Finalise agreement with suppliers
04/09	Develop software and systems
01/09	Define hardware and network requirements
	Order servers and other hardware
04/09	Update Aylesbury hardware and networks
07/09	System test software
10/09	Beta test software
12/09	Update & finalise systems and software
04/10	Go live
Finance & Administration	
05/09	Finalise EBU/Club contract
07/09	Send contract to clubs for signature
09/09	All contracts returned to Aylesbury
10/09	Finalise 2010 “Pay to Play” fee (October AGM)
National Rating Scheme (NRS)	
07/08	Set up NRS sub-committee
09/08	Define NRS structure
03/09	Embed NRS in Software
06/09	Trial NRS and amend as necessary
Governance	
07/08	Define changes to Bye-Laws and Articles of Association
06/09	Shareholders asked to agree changes

5. The National Rating Scheme

The National Rating scheme allows all players to have a National Rating, which will provide a current evaluation of a Duplicate Bridge player's skills, running alongside the life time achievement offered by the existing Master-Point scheme.

Although the details are not yet finalised the basic principle is that the result of every board of every rated session is reviewed taking into consideration the National Rating of one's partner and the National Ratings of the opponents. In this way an individual's contribution - good or bad - to the overall result at a duplicate session can be assessed and a weighted (i.e. the immediately previous results are taken into account, the older results carrying a progressively reducing influence) adjustment to that individual's overall rating made. The adjustment is **NOT** solely based on the percentage score obtained at a rated session.

Note that this allows a good player to partner a less good player without significant risk to the better player's National Rating, or increasing the lesser player's National Rating by an unwarranted amount.

Also, it will be possible to declare – but only before the start of a playing session - that a pair's results are not to be included in the determination of the National Rating. This will accommodate the potential randomness that could arise where a club has a “hosting” individual on “stand-by” to make up a partnership, i.e. without much opportunity to discuss methods. It would also allow an emerging pair to practice without jeopardising their current individual National Rating.

National Rating schemes exist in the Netherlands and France and are being introduced in the USA and these will be studied.

It is possible to start this scheme with everyone having the same rating and allow it to adapt naturally. Alternatively, it might get it to a meaningful state more quickly if it was seeded, perhaps based on current Master-Point rankings. Note that the scheme is **NOT** intended to produce a percentage value, but a position in a list (since the former might carry the unintended connotation that any individual whose rating was less than 50% was a below average player). County and National tournaments will be included in the National Rating scheme.

There is considerable scope for the applicability of a National Rating. For example, it will be possible to develop regionalised or local Ratings, thus allowing clubs to stratify and handicap their own events through their own local Rating data.

Similarly, it would allow County and National stratified and handicapped events. Finally, it will allow a new competition to find the Club Player of the Year in the various strata of the National Rating scheme, so as to provide opportunities across the playing ability.

Note that the information provided by the playing session returns is very much the same (if not identical) to that which would be required to provide the National Rating scheme, in that the result of any pair over some number of boards within the standard of the field can be determined to contribute to a player's current National Rating.

6. Questions and Answers

What happened to the £5 joining fee?	This was scrapped for simplicity and fairness.
What happened to the concept of “social” and “competitive” clubs?	This was too divisive for players and led to two different “Pay to Play” fees, which was disliked in the responses to the Club Survey.
What happened to the extra 13p for Master-Points	The figures in this document are all inclusive with no hidden extras to avoid confusion
So is the 29p all inclusive?	Yes, in terms of money to the EBU, but it does not include any money levied by the Counties over which the EBU does not have, or wishes any control.
How will we pay our County subscription?	This will be up to the Counties themselves to decide. It is expected that the majority will choose to use an additional “Pay to Play” fee. However, Counties will be free to operate alternative systems if they wish.
Do we have to pay this “Pay to Play” element directly to the County?	No, the EBU will disburse these payments to the Counties in a timely manner.
What personal details will be required by the EBU?	To avail themselves of the full benefits of membership, the EBU will need to know a minimum of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name • Address • Club of Primary Affiliation • County of Allegiance
How will these details be obtained from individuals?	By the clubs (the vast majority of clubs will already do this for their own administrative purposes).
Will multiple play per week players pay more than they do now?	A “threshold” has been set, after which these players will get a rebate directly from the EBU.
What IT systems will be available to help clubs?	There will be a membership administration and scoring system made available free of charge to clubs. This system will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide clubs with a system to administer their membership details. • Automatically upload these details to the EBU membership database. • Score a Duplicate Bridge session (or take in results from a Duplicate Bridge session) and pass the results automatically to the Master-Point, Rating and “Pay to Play” systems.
How will these details get to the EBU?	Automatically, through the system described above.
How will these details be kept up to date?	By the individual advising the club Membership Secretary who will update their membership data.
What about Data Protection issues?	The EBU does already, and will continue to, follow the guidelines set out in the Data Protection Act and its own Privacy Policy.
Will the EBU pass on any of my personal details to 3 rd parties?	The EBU never passes personal data on to 3 rd parties. We may use your personal information to send you promotional information about 3 rd parties which we think you may find interesting unless you state otherwise.

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What about individuals who wish to remain anonymous to the EBU?	The club will use a pseudonym to the EBU and they will be allocated a Membership Number in the usual way. From then on, they will only be referred to by this number.
What about clubs who have no computer equipment at the club?	We are confident that the vast majority of clubs will have someone who has a computer and an internet connection and will be prepared to undertake the necessary work. The EBU will give individual support on a case-by-case basis to any clubs who find there is no one available to do this.
Which events will attract a "Pay to Play" fee?	All events in clubs but parties, charity events, seminars and teaching sessions will be excluded. County and EBU events will not incur an additional "Pay to Play" fee.
Are County and EBU events excluded from the "Pay to Play" fee?	County and EBU events are subject to an entry fee which is a form of "Pay to Play".
Will club team events attract a "Pay to Play" fee?	Yes.
How will the club members find out their membership number?	The EBU will issue a lifetime membership card to each club member.
What information will a club need from visitors?	Their EBU number or their club of primary affiliation plus their name or pseudonym.
Will Master-Points always be assigned?	The system will automatically assign Master-Points, but a club need not pass on any information to individuals.
What details will be provided on a "Pay to Play" invoice?	These are shown in the example invoice presented in the appendices.
How will any invoice disputes be settled?	Because the "Pay to Play" invoice is a seamless process starting with the session results, disputes should be infrequent. In the event of any dispute, it will be resolved by going back to the session results and discussing these with the club.
How will clubs be able to pay the "Pay to Play" invoice?	Clubs will be billed two-monthly in arrears or monthly by direct debit attracting a £2 discount per month.
How will County/league/district events credit their Master-Points?	Through an electronic spreadsheet, a sort of electronic version of the card systems currently used by Counties and clubs.
What information about competitors will be required for County/league/district competitions?	Their EBU number or their club of primary affiliation
Will all club members receive a copy of English Bridge and the annual diary?	Yes, unless they have requested anonymity.
Will English Bridge change to reflect the broader membership?	Yes. There will be more content particularly aimed at club players.
What other changes will the EBU make to reflect the new membership system?	Some of these are covered in this report. Others will be developed in the period leading up to implementation.