

# The first year of the BBL

It is not generally known that the British Bridge League was founded by Bridge Magazine and originally of two members the editor and sub-editor of Bridge Magazine. The editor, Mr AE Manning-Foster, was the Honorary President, and the sub-editor Alex T. Hasler, was the Honorary Secretary.

One of the aims of the League was "To unite players throughout Great Britain and the Overseas Dominions-for the advancement of the interests of the games of Contract and auction on a strictly amateur basis".

With regard to a Constitution, it was stated by the Honorary President that "committees lead to endless talk, difference of opinion and to nothing being done". He stated that if it seemed desirable a committee would be appointed by election by the members

As a first step in the promotion of the scheme Bridge Magazine presented The Gold Cup for annual competition by teams

Within a couple of months, there were 30 local secretaries throughout the country and many overseas secretaries as well

The annual subscription was a modest half crown and members could obtain special discounts of ten per cent from a Regent Street jeweller, a Piccadilly cigarette and cigar shipper, various wine and spirit merchants, and a number of publishers. Another perquisite was that members could obtain playing cards with the League monogram from Messrs. John Waddington Ltd. at a specially low price.

There were 78 teams in the first ever Gold Cup contest. The draw was made in October 1931.

A meeting of B.B.L. honorary local secretaries was held in December 1931, when it was stated that more than one thousand members had been enrolled.

The first National Pairs contest was announced in February, 1932.

In March 1932, the President announced that an Advisory Council had been formed, the members of which were Viscount Doneraile, Lord Tollemache, Sir John Rhodes, Captain Jack Dalton, Mr. Frank England and Dr. Melville Smith.

The first Gold Cup contest was won by Mr. Edward Mayer, Colonel H. M. Beasley, Mr. Horace Renshaw and Mr. P. V. Tabbush. In the final they defeated Mr. T. E. Morel, Mr. W. C. Robinson, Mr. W. P. Nicholls and Mr. R. Washington-Gray by 2,565 points. In those days no-trumps scored 35 per trick.