

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Cheltenham Bridge Club on Sunday May 12th 2019 at 1:30 pm. The President (Patrick Shields) was in the chair and 40 members attended.

AN EXTRACT

Cleverly League Report

As most of you know, the Cleverly League is a County-wide Teams League where you can play in the informal surroundings of your own homes of Clubs. I understand it all started in the late 1970s as a Business League and rapidly expanded to 5 or 6 Divisions with 7/8 teams in each at its peak. This included Leyhill Prison who, understandably, only played Home matches!

However, with more and more Bridge available in clubs, numbers began to decline and GCBA eventually took over the running. I am not sure when, but David Hauser kept it going very successfully on behalf of the County for a good few years until I took it over two years ago.

One of the biggest issues is travel, and we tried to solve this by disbanding the Division Structure, apart from the First Division, and introducing regions. With such a large geographical area to cover the structure has to be flexible and in 2017/18 we were able to increase the overall number of teams taking part, grouping into a NW, NE and S Region. Sadly, for various reasons entry for 2018/19 reduced again and we regrouped to N and S Regions whilst retaining the First Division, of course.

One of the main jobs of the organiser is to prepare a schedule of fixtures for the season and allow Captains to organise precise dates and venues. This can only be done once entries are finalised and Teams allocated to Divisions, allowing Captains to have plenty of time to arrange matches over the autumn and winter. The dates when matches were played seems to have been more of a problem for the Regions than the First Division and one match was never played.

Congratulations to Wanderers, captained by Mike Lewis, for once again winning Division 1 in what looks like a very close finish. Congratulations, too, to North Cotswolds, captained by Ian Sidgwick and Acolytes (from Stroud area) captained by Mike James. These two teams will be promoted to the First Division; both were runners-up the previous year so well deserved. The bottom two teams from the First Division will be reabsorbed into the Regional Pool of teams. It remains to be seen how entries hold up next season; we hope to have newcomers from the south.

We do hope all have enjoyed the Team format of this competition and please do everything you can to encourage others to join in. Team Bridge is, after all, the usual format for Inter Club, Inter County and International Bridge. Many players in the smaller Clubs only ever experience Duplicate Pairs and know nothing of the excitement and different tactics of Teams Bridge.

Richard Harris