

# GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

## Minutes for the GCBA committee meeting held online on Thursday 3rd December 2020.

In attendance were Patrick Shields (President), Andrew Bull (Secretary), Mike Wignall (Treasurer), Richard Butland, Jan Kinane, Nigel Mortimer, Ian Sidgwick, Roger Williams.

### Finance

1. All payments for the Cleverly League have now been received (circumstance, plus more entries than usual with new teams, have meant this required more organisation than previously).
2. Mike noted that from a financial viewpoint there are three types of online play:
  - a) privately arranged matches, for which we can only collect money by asking the players to send it directly
  - b) organised matches on BBO, for which we can arrange for payment via BBO: typically a set fee of \$4, of which we get 70%
  - c) organised matches on Real Bridge, for which again we would need to ask for payment directly.

It was agreed that to cover UMS charges each team should make a single payment of £10 to GCBA per series of matches, to reduce the number of payments to collect, for types (a) and (c).

3. Monday night BBO sessions are making a profit, which we agreed should be used to subsidise other sessions, e.g. the County Knock-Out, for which collecting payments would be inconvenient.
4. It was observed that other counties have raised money via online congresses, and we agreed to raise this idea with CBC. Patrick will check whether Newent have plans to run the Newent Bowl online in 2021.

### GCBA programme

5. We intend to continue with the Monday night Swiss Teams and League, and the other Swiss Teams and 9-high Swiss Pairs in the next quarter. The 9-high Swiss Pairs is very popular, and we do not charge the players.
6. It was agreed that we should run the County League on Real Bridge to see if people prefer it to BBO. It was confirmed that Real Bridge does allow the hands to be seen after play, and we agreed that their Terms and Conditions are acceptable. It was noted that if we have it set up for the county, we can add taster events for individual clubs to try it out. However, it does not currently allow social bridge. Mike proposed that we should urge Real Bridge to add a money collection facility.
7. The Friday night Learners' Duplicate has had limited take-up, apparently due to most learners being capable of and preferring to play at the very popular Gentle Bridge sessions, so Patrick is considering whether or not to continue it into 2021. It was left to him to decide.
8. It was suggested that the special free event that had been proposed for Sunday 27th December should be moved to the bank holiday on Monday 28th instead, and this was agreed. It was agreed that this would be a handicap Pairs event, and that we should e-mail GCBA players directly with the invitation, since feedback has been that many players are unaware of what the GCBA does for them.
9. The Midlands Counties group is organising an Open 8-High Swiss Teams on Real Bridge at the end of January, with each county score being the sum of the scores of their top 3 teams. The charge, aiming just to cover expenses, is £10 per team, and it was agreed that GCBA would pay for the Gloucestershire participants.

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## **EBU AGM**

10. The EBU AGM took place on 25th November. Most of the debate was around disciplinary measures in the event of cheating; the proposal that people should be suspended once formally charged was passed with a small majority. While there are issues with this, there had been cases of people stringing the case out after being formally charged, and continuing to play for months while under suspicion, which is similarly unsatisfactory.
11. All the candidates for whom Ian voted on GCBA's behalf were elected.
12. We were pleased to see that there was strong support at the AGM for counties refunding the UMS fees to clubs, as we have been doing this throughout the lockdown.

## **Other business**

13. Garry Watson will be devoting part of future GCBA newsletters to club reports. Nigel confirmed that Tudor bridge club would be happy to be involved with this. He also confirmed that their Gentle Bridge sessions were open to the rest of GCBA; it was suggested that we should publicise such sessions throughout the county [Note: now done].
14. Patrick reported that he has been too busy recently to make any progress on the proposed experiments with online teaching.
15. There was some discussion about how we should proceed once face-to-face bridge resumes. It was noted that some people may continue playing online rather than returning to their clubs, so some clubs may struggle with reduced numbers. The possibility of suggesting that clubs might want to merge was raised, and the idea of having combined online/face-to-face sessions might prove popular.
16. It was noted that some bridge teachers have retired during lockdown, so may need replacing. It was felt that our role should be giving financial support to people who wished to undertake the EBED training. It was also noted that running online learning for beginners has not proved popular with teachers, though courses for improvers have been successful.
17. The next meeting will be on Thursday 7th January 2021.