

# IKBC NEWSLETTERS in LOCKDOWN

*On this page you can read all the letters sent to members while the club cannot meet. They are in reverse date order, starting with the latest letter sent*

September 1<sup>st</sup> 2020

So, here we are 5 months down the road and playing a weekly online game and a weekly Relaxed Pairs game but we are still a long way from sitting down together in the Ropes Hall.

The online community continues to thrive with 143 players registered for the Thursday evening game where we regularly attract around 20 tables. In addition, Chris Green and Jacks are running a Relaxed Pairs game on a Monday evening with 30 players registered for that event.

In addition to all of that, a new 2-year "Learn to Play Bridge" course is starting in September. Details will be available on the website shortly so if you know of those for whom the current situation is becoming a little tedious, let them know that they can learn a new hobby to keep them entertained. The course will be delivered online.

We are getting to the time of year when we need to plan to hold our AGM and this year the committee have decided to follow the example of the Suffolk Contract Bridge Association and run the event online. We will be in touch with all of you over the next two months sending you details of how we will manage this event and how you can take part.

It is also the time of year when your membership secretary starts constructing the blue receipt book, with which you are all familiar, to collect the membership fees for the new club year that starts on October 1<sup>st</sup>. Not this year, however.

The committee have decided that under the circumstances no membership fees will be charged for 2020-21. The membership list that existed on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 will be deemed to be the membership records for the coming year subject to members' approval at this year's AGM. Furthermore, no brochures will be distributed this year.

Negotiations are currently underway with the Kesgrave Community Centre to ensure that our regular bookings for Thursdays and Mondays (for classes and Relaxed Bridge) are not in jeopardy so that once we all feel that it is safe to do so, we can return to the much-missed face to face game.

The committee continually monitors the current climate regarding playing face to face bridge and we have heard of some clubs (usually those with their own premises) that have begun to open their doors again. However, in our case, as we meet in public premises, there is no way we can meet the restrictions being imposed on the venues and on the players by those pioneering re-openers.

We are now running some of our normal competitions online and we've made them available to all our online community. The plan is to continue to do that into the new club year although the details are still under development. As always – watch the website for news.

For those of you whom we don't 'see' regularly at the moment, do keep in touch and tell us how you are. We are always pleased to hear your news. And of course, if you'd like to play again and need help to participate in the online events please don't hesitate to contact us. A lot of help is available.

This week we heard that Robert Green (one of the long-time members of the club) had been in hospitals in Ipswich and London over the past two months because he suffered a heart attack and endured a by-pass procedure. The news is that he is home and recovering well according to our source. On your behalf, we have sent him a get well card and all of our good wishes.

Once more, we trust you are all coping as well as you can with the current circumstances, and we urge you to stay safe and well as we head towards autumn.

Very Best Wishes

Anne (for IKBC)

18/6/2020

IKBC committee send you all our warm wishes and hope that as lockdown starts to ease you are able to see some of your close family. Unfortunately, we still can't hug a grandchild and still can't sit inside to chat but thank goodness for small improvements and also thank goodness the weather has been kind so far.

We continue to work to make sure that one day we will all be back around the bridge table but again the message to you all is that situation won't happen anytime soon. Nevertheless our thoughts are with those of you whom we haven't met across the bridge table over the last three months. We sincerely hope you are staying well and safe. We again extend our offers of help to any of you needing assistance with online play, Zoom meetings or if you just need someone to talk to. No two ways about it, online bridge is great, but yes, we all miss the weekly face to face contact with members.

So what have we been up to?

### **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

We are holding these fortnightly Zoom meetings on Saturday mornings to make sure we keep track of all the events in the bridge world that affect our club. Clearly, at the moment, the issues concern our Virtual Club and the pros and cons of running that event weekly.

We continue to monitor the wider bridge community to make sure we stay abreast of national and international developments and to gain ideas of how we can continue to make bridge available to those who wish to play now and in the future.

### **ONLINE CLUB UPDATE**

As previously reported we are having considerable success with the Thursday pairs on BBO (23 tables last week). We have 67 club members registered to play and 37 from clubs around the county. We welcome them all.

We are running the Men's, Ladies' and Mixed Pairs competitions online this summer as well as the other three online competitions which are already taking place.

The host system is in place and so far running well. Host pairs are awarded BBO\$6 each for hosting (equivalent to our voucher system).

Chris Chambers has updated the results facility on the website. To see what is available check out the new 'replay' links on the travellers.

We have a post-play Zoom meeting in what has come to be called the Post Mortem Arms that opens at 9:30 on Thursday evenings where members can drop in for a chat. **It doesn't matter if you haven't played in the event, you are always welcome to drop in.**

Here is the link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87094270351?pwd=R2VLcVUxeHVCTVFueGs3WWlyMGJ6UT09>

This is a great way for us to hear news of our members and respond to comments and feedback. From that source, I gather that some of our members are being helped to play on BBO by others already taking part. We look forward to welcoming you to the online table. Never be shy of asking for help – it's freely available.

### **FORTNIGHTLY FRIDAY SEMINARS - from 11:00 to 12:00**

These are proving popular. We're pleased to report that those joining the seminars are not necessarily all playing online bridge but are joining the seminars anyway. Participants report that the discussions keep the bridge brain alive! The website has details of the topics and how to take part and how to login. Our thanks go to Chris G and Chris C for all the work they do in hosting them.

### **NEW INITIATIVES – MENTORING AND RELAXED PAIRS**

#### **MENTORING**

From 1st July we are offering a new mentoring service to anyone who would like it. The new on-line world creates great opportunities for mentoring. The process will be that your mentor would "watch" a session of bridge that you have asked your mentor to watch and he/she will then provide feedback either via email and/or via a zoom call. If this sounds like a service you

wish to take advantage of please register via the IKBC website and a mentor will be in touch with you.

### **Mentors**

Anyone who would willing to be a mentor please contact Chris Green directly. You don't have to play to mentor, just be willing to kibitz an online event and give some feedback afterwards either on general approach, specific hands or specific topics.

### **RELAXED PAIRS**

Soon now, bridge classes come to an end and players need to be able to move on to playing. In July, we will be setting up a "Relaxed Pairs" event on BBO, separate from our 'Thursday Pairs' where we offer an opportunity for players to play a few hands online (12-16 initially) with help available from those running these events.

These sessions are open to all those whose bridge skills are still developing. Anyone can join in, but we ask that all players play simple systems only. Where necessary Robots will be used to complete a table and we will allow players to "UNDO" a bid or play made by mistake. We're being "relaxed" about this!! You don't have to be a member of any club to play but you do need to register online with IKBC. Details will be available on the website within the next couple of weeks.

### **FINALLY, INFORMATION FROM SUFFOLK**

Suffolk are holding the Felixstowe Congress online this year and early details are available on the Suffolk Website [SCBA website](#)

More immediately, the Suffolk AGM will be held via Zoom and starts at **2:00 on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June**. You are most welcome to participate in the meeting without necessarily playing in the pairs competition that follows at 3.30 pm on BBO. Here is the link for the AGM.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88387797356?pwd=c3hldVBEZnovQ2l2ZndlemVoYWcyZz09>

To register your interest in attending the meeting, and /or playing in the AGM pairs, hop over to the [SCBA website](#) where you will find full details of the AGM and also access help with Zoom meetings if your new to this technology.

22/5/20

Once more, IKBC committee send you our warmest wishes. We haven't forgotten you and we are doing all we can to ensure that you have a club to return to once it is safe for us all to sit around a table. Unhappily that situation still seems to be a long way into the future.

### **ONLINE CLUB UPDATE**

Our Online Club is proving to be remarkably successful. As of this moment, we have 89 players registered to play on Thursday evenings from our own club and from neighbouring Suffolk clubs. We have had 17 tables in play for the last two weeks.

Nevertheless, some very familiar faces are missing. We'd love to see you take part. Please don't hesitate to ask for advice and information about joining us. We have a team of people available to help. We also have a [Partnership Desk](#) where you can advertise your need for a partner for a particular week (updated weekly).

### **FORTNIGHTLY SEMINARS**

Chris Chambers and Chris Green are setting up **fortnightly seminars** starting on **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May**. There is a notice on the front page of the website [www.bridgewebs.com/ipswich](http://www.bridgewebs.com/ipswich) where you can find out more.

To take part, register your interest by completing the form [HERE](#) and you will be sent the ZOOM link.

Again, if you don't know about Zoom, contact Anne or any other committee member who will explain the very simple process of joining in a Zoom session using your computer. The committee are using this facility to hold our meetings – yes, they are on-going – and of course ZOOM is the way you enter Jack's "Post Mortem Arms" after play on Thursdays.

### **HOST PAIRS**

For those of you who are playing on Thursday evenings, we are about to initiate a "host pair" system to avoid the difficulties that occur when we have to use random BBO substitutes who can simply just drop out when they feel they've had enough. This situation causes the directors and the players significant angst. The committee have agreed that any host pair who volunteers their services will be offered BBO\$6 each (equivalent to our host voucher system of two free sessions). If you'd like to volunteer, email Alison our host secretary ([contact details](#) on the club website).

Note that if you wanted a game and your services as hosts are not needed, the EBU run a competition on BBO starting at 7:30 on Thursdays in which you can play.

As always, we wish you everything good and nothing bad. We hope you are staying safe and well and continuing to cope in this very difficult time.

All the very best to you and to your family

6<sup>th</sup> May

## **NEWSLETTER**

As always, the club committee send you all our very best wishes for continued good health.

We are delighted that many of you have enjoyed your Thursday bridge game in our Online Club. In total, over the 4 weeks the event has been running, we have had 52 tables playing, averaging 13 tables an evening, and attracting players from many of our neighbouring clubs. We welcome them wholeheartedly into our Thursday games so, if your bridge friends are not members of IKBC , make sure they know that there is always room for guests – they just need to register. [Click here to Register your Interest](#)

Players who have taken part have given very positive feedback on the experience of online play. We know that it is providing a welcome break for many as we all abide by the lockdown rules. We are also only too aware that it is not like sitting down at a bridge table with others, but it is a great way of making sure we still keep our bridge skills honed.

This week we have a move towards more sociability. Jacks has made it possible for players to join the directors straight after the game on Thursdays for a “drink” and a chat in “The Postmortem Arms”, accessible through Zoom. Full details are in the joining instructions available on the club’s website. [Joining Instructions](#)

We are learning as we go along, so, also this week, we have opened a “Partnership Desk” on the website for members to advertise their need for a partner for any particular week.

Remember, help is on hand for all of you who feel in any way uncomfortable about playing online. As a convert myself, I truly understand the reticence to dip your toes into the virtual bridge scene. However, never hesitate to contact any of the committee about your concerns. We are all there to help and all of the committee now have experience of the whole process from registering with BBO through to taking part.

However, even if you are not playing, keep in touch and above all, keep safe.

Warm wishes

19<sup>th</sup> April 2020

## IKBC BECOMES AN ONLINE CLUB

As we intimated last week, we have been exploring our options to make sure that our Bridge Club can go on offering playing opportunities to our members so that we can all continue to enjoy our hobby in these challenging times.

Thanks to successful negotiations between the EBU and BBO (Bridge Base Online) we are now able to run our own Virtual Ipswich & Kesgrave Bridge Club online at the regular club time of **7:00** starting on **THURSDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> APRIL**. This is because we now have a license to run paid tournaments where table money is charged, Masterpoints are awarded (*but not NGS ratings*) and we have the right to book the time slot that works best for our members. For the moment we will stick to the current practise of playing 20 boards in a session. We may review that in time.

To play, you will be charged BB\$3 table money (equivalent of £2.40) where BB\$1 = US\$1 (*currently 0.80p*) If you think we are now supporting the American economy, rest assured: 70% of the table money you pay is returned to our club because of the new collaboration between the EBU and BBO.

Buying BB\$ is easy and just the same as buying any goods online. If you are at all uncertain, Peter Bushby has produced an excellent online video showing you exactly what you have to do. Here is the link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUoJ0MDGB7g&feature=youtu.be>

If you are using a Mac / Ipad, start by logging in to BBO using Safari (*this is very important*) then click on the 3  horizontal bars to find the BB\$ icon.

If you have not yet tried our online bridge events and are still feeling uncertain about playing, Jacks Morcombe is running a BBO web tutorial at 11:00 am on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April. Email [Jacqueline@ebu.co.uk](mailto:Jacqueline@ebu.co.uk) for joining instructions.

Peter Bushby also has a series of very good short videos showing different aspects of online BBO play. Here is the link. [https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwom/bw.cgi?club=littleclacton&pid=display\\_page134](https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwom/bw.cgi?club=littleclacton&pid=display_page134)

Please register your interest in playing in Thursday's event by completing the online form now available on the club website. Joining instructions for playing in that event will be posted on the website or directly to you later this week.

Please get in touch with Anne if you have any questions about any of the above.

Best wishes to you all

11<sup>th</sup> April 2020

## **IKBC- Online Bridge Update**

Firstly we hope you are well and staying safe – especially those of you who are vulnerable and being advised to stay in this lockdown for a long period of time. We hope that our efforts to provide online bridge is helping you deal with the isolation.

As those of you who tried to play online on Thursday (9th) know, the tournament failed to start even though all our players had logged in. This was no-one's fault. BBO had too many tournaments ready to start at 7:00 that night and we were the victims of the popularity of this online game.

We are following some other possible solutions but meanwhile, as a compromise, we can play online on Thursday afternoons logging on at 12:45 for a 1:00 start. This is a less popular time for tournaments so Peter and Jacks are confident we will be able to play. We are aware that this time won't suit everyone – in particular those of you who are still working either in the workplace or from home. It is not an ideal solution, but it is the best we can offer at the moment. We all hope that you will want to try again at this new time, and we will see you online on Thursday 16th April. Please register to play as before by using the online form on the website.

As always we wish you all well

6<sup>th</sup> April 2020

## **IKBC- ONLINE THURSDAY BRIDGE EVERY WEEK FROM 9TH**

Today, Jacks Morcombe and Peter Bushby extended their kind offer to run our bridge club online from fortnightly to **weekly**.

We had 13 tables last week and given that response, we hope members will want to play every week given our current lockdown situation.

So there WILL be online bridge on Thursday 9th April but you need to enter yourself and your partner quickly so that Jacks and Peter know what they need to provide. Go to the club website [www.bridgewebs.com/ipswich](http://www.bridgewebs.com/ipswich) to find the link to the entry form.

Thanks to Chris Chamber's efforts, you will be able to see your results on the club website in your normal way together with the hand records every week. Chris permitting, they would be available on Friday morning.

We are only too aware that online bridge isn't for everyone but it is proving to be an excellent way of continuing to participate in our game in spite of being unable to meet. Personally I'm a convert. I've gone from disliking the thought to loving the process. If you haven't tried it yet, you might like to consider having a go - there's lots of help available as you can see by going to the club website

Above all of that we all hope that each one of you is keeping safe, feeling well and managing to cope with the currently difficult situation. The committee sends you our warmest wishes. Do get in touch if you think we can help in any way.

Very best wishes to you all

27<sup>th</sup> March 2020

### **IKBC to RUN FORTNIGHTLY ONLINE EVENT**

We hope you will excuse us emailing you twice in one week but it is in a good cause. We are extremely fortunate to have had an offer from Peter Bushby and Jacks Morcombe to run a fortnightly event for our club on Bridge Base Online starting on Thursday 2nd April - we can't thank them enough.

We hope as many of you as possible will take part and to this end, our website has help on how to join BBO and if you have any problems with this get in touch with Anne.

To participate on Thursday, please complete the online form available on the website and you will then be sent joining instructions.

If anyone wants a practice on BBO before Thursday, contact Anne and we will get together on a practice table

All our best wishes and hope to see you online on Thursday

26th March 2020

### **IKBC- It's Thursday - time to say Hello**

Hi! First of all we hope you are all keeping safe and well and managing to handle the current extraordinary situation.

It's Thursday, so naturally it's Bridge Day. We thought we'd get in touch and ask how you all are. To help us stay in contact, the club website is presenting some information which may help you all continue to keep your bridge brain going and even to help you to play online if you haven't tried this before.

We've set up a message board for you to ask questions, share views and make requests or just simply tell us how you are. As well as bridge being a great game, our club also has a strong social side and I for one miss the contact we all have each week, so do use the website to keep in touch. Chris Chambers is putting up a daily quiz on the website. Also, twice a month, Chris Green and Chris Chambers set two challenges to anyone who wants to take part - 16 hands to bid, and 16 leads to find. Let Chris G know if you want to be added to the list of people included in the challenge.

You can play in the Suffolk online bridge competition on Sunday evenings, or, if you don't want to enter a competition you can use Bridge Base Online ([www.bridgebase.com](http://www.bridgebase.com)) for free to set up your own table and get together with friends for as many hands as you want to play. Get in touch with Anne if you'd like to do that and don't know how to start - help will be on hand. Links to online bridge are on the website.

Do let us know if the club can do anything else to help you get through these difficult times.

Best wishes to you all, and stay safe!

16<sup>th</sup> March 2020

## **IKBC- Coronavirus measures**

The committee are sad to announce that with immediate effect we are cancelling our bridge evenings until further notice in light of the Prime Ministers request today (Monday 16th March) that we all avoid social contact as much as we can.

Bridge will re-commence as soon as we get the green light to open again. Meanwhile we all wish you well and hope that you don't have to experience this very disruptive bug.

We look forward to welcoming you back to the club once this crisis has passed.

All our best wishes

Anne (for IKBC)