

Kent Youth Bridge Report – 6 July 2024

New impetus in Youth Bridge is being affected through two “drivers”, viz.; 1) Changes in EBED with Tony Cherrett, Abbey Smith and Charlie Bucknell, pushing for greater numbers, improved outreach, rapidly getting “players to the table”, and increasing the opportunity for representation, and 2) Douglas Wright coordinating a Three Counties approach to rekindling bridge in schools. I would like to see these initiatives strongly aligned and well supported.

While EBED is looking to recruit a new CEO, Tony and Abbey (new Trustees) and Charlie are looking to roll out a new system of County Youth Squads (starting with an Under 21 group and progressing to U18, U16, U 13 and U11) headed by incentivised Youth Officers. Charlie is currently looking for suitable candidates. This will afford all players the opportunity of representing their county and better structure progression to the English teams. Training will be largely online with EBED offering support wherever possible. In addition, Youth Camps and Youth events will be all administrated by EBED. Tony intends to ensure teaching focuses on getting players playing bridge as soon as possible.

Douglas is coordinating the rollout of a “recipe” for bridge in schools – taking volunteers through enrolment in the school, through the initial tuition. A lot of thought and experience has gone into ensuring the best and most effective practices are applied. Currently, we are advertising for volunteers who will be invited to attend one of Douglas’s ‘How to teach Bridge in Schools’ courses. These can be booked through the Three Counties Website (which also contains useful information on the drive to rekindle bridge in schools – https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwor/bw.cgi?club=3counties&pid=display_home). A course suitable for Kent volunteers is being planned on 18 August in Eastbourne. I have encouraged Douglas to video record this so that it can be used as a reference and referral, and he is looking into the possibility of offering it as a webinar (although face to face attendance is strongly recommended). In addition, Douglas is offering “Taster Sessions” to any school with an identified Bridge Champion (maths Teachers being targeted). He can be contacted on 07801 989630.

A focus area for EBED and Douglas, linking with schools that are to be developed as “bridge hubs” for youth in the area, is the idea of driving Bridge as a DOE Skill. As well as having a Bridge Club which acts as “bridge centre” for all youth, not just from the hosting school.

The Surrey, Sussex and Kent **Autumn Junior Bridge Camp** is taking place from Fri 1 – Sun 3 Nov, at Woldingham School, Caterham CR3 7YA. The price is £150 for the weekend including 2 nights’ accommodation, all meals, bridge tuition and competitions, plus other activities. Non-resident £75. Tony, who will be running the camp is offering 20% Early Booking Discount: Price will be £120 for any bookings made and paid before 30 Aug. EBED, as mentioned above, will be doing all of the Admin and, Lisa Miller 01296 317 217, lisa@ebu.co.uk (working hours are 8-3, Mon–Wed) is the contact for bookings. As usual the JBC will be looking for county support and sponsorship and I will return to the committee with a motivation and budget from Tony, once I have received this, to request.

Yours in Bridge, Anton