



Malahide Regional Bridge Club

Annual Council Message and Subscription Renewal Notice. 24 Aug 2021

Dear Fellow Members,

As might be expected, the dominant topic of Council discussions has revolved around Covid and its consequences for club activities.

Your council is determined that, as soon as official guidelines permit, live play will be available to members. Virtual sessions on BBO will continue, in parallel, for some time. Live and Virtual Programs will be issued to provide equitable opportunity for all members, regardless of grade, to play preferred formats. It is planned that all major club competitions for 2021/22 season will be run on BBO.

To that end, your Council has:

- Completed and updated Covid Risk Analysis.
- Drafted Covid Risk Mitigation Plans for activities on club premises.
- Drafted Scheduling Plan to provide equitable access for all members to play 'live bridge' while numbers are restricted by authorities.
- Carried out a review of Heating/Air Con/ventilation systems.

All of the above are being subjected to constant review/update and all activities will be in compliance with both government and CBAI guidelines.

It is anticipated that the burden associated with preparing for and cleaning up after each live session will be significant. Among the temporary restrictions anticipated are:

- Pre-booking for live sessions to manage number restrictions. Members may have noticed a Competition Pre-Entry tab on the club web-site which is currently undergoing testing.
- The bar will not operate during 'restricted live play'.
- Table money will approximate that on BBO (€3), and will be by credit/debit card only. No cash will be accepted and no cash prizes will be awarded.
- Once play commences, the only movement allowed, apart from toilet access, will be E/W at the end of each round and that of the captain/assistant in the course of running the session.
- Vaccination certs to be shown at time of entry to premises.

Full details on the carrying out of live play, including sanitisation protocols and pre-entry requirements will be published prior to going live. Special thanks is due to Graham Cure for his research, advice and updates on Covid related matters.

Voluntary Support

The council is deeply indebted to those members who have volunteered to manage sessions on BBO. The club will not be able to provide parallel live and virtual play unless the number of members volunteering as captains/tournament directors etc. **significantly** increases. The council is confident

that members can be relied upon to be understanding of volunteers getting to grips with such roles, especially in the present circumstances, and the support of experienced members can be counted upon. A specific call for volunteers will be issued outlining functions and training.

2021-22 New Season

The new season will formally commence on Friday 3rd Sept with our virtual 'Gala Night' comprising three on-line tournaments to cater for all grades. On-line sessions suspended during summer months will be reinstated although the grades being catered for on any given night will be subject to review. Accordingly, a hard copy diary will not be issued for the 21/22 season. Details will be posted on the club website.

2021-22 Subscriptions

As confirmed at the AGM, the annual Subscription (**due 1 Sept**) remains unchanged at €60.00. After CBAI affiliation of €12.50 is deducted, this amounts to €47.50 to the club which equates to less than €1 per week. Having its own premises does mean that the club is ideally placed to resume live bridge as soon as national guidelines permit. That same facility does, however, bring with it large fixed costs as well as considerable anticipated additional variable costs associated with Covid mitigation, and Council is anxious to ensure that the club is well placed to thrive well into the future.

**Subscriptions should be paid by bank transfer to Malahide Regional Bridge Club,
IBAN: IE62AIBK93252360679034 BIC: AIBKIE2D**

Please include your **3 digit Bridgemate Number** on transfer details, (and two numbers if paying for a second member). Bridgemate Numbers can be checked on the club website – Tab: CBAI, NBID & MRBC Numbers.

As was the case last year, to facilitate members who wish to make a cash or cheque payment, council members will attend the club house between 10.30 and 11.30 am on the following dates:

Sat 18th Sept	Wed 22nd Sept	Sat 25th Sept	Wed 29th Sept	Sat 2nd Oct	Sat 9th Oct
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Please also note that membership will be deemed to have lapsed if payment is not received by Friday 22nd Oct. Should you subsequently wish to rejoin, you will be added to our waiting list and a €100.00 joining fee will apply.

Communications

Email/web-site are the preferred methods of communication and the club is phasing out An Post as a method of communication. This means that it's the responsibility of each member to ensure that the Club has their correct email address. Queries in this regard should be directed to technology@mrbc.ie.

WhatsApp, for GDPR compliance reasons, is not a platform the Council will use to communicate with members.

Technology

Planning is ongoing for the future introduction of Member Smart Cards to facilitate entry to premises, payment of competition entry fees, bar payments, prizes, member administration and

annual subscriptions. This will streamline non playing activities during bridge sessions as well as the general administration of club affairs. However considerable IT set-up is required.

Player Development.

Preliminary scoping is being carried out for a Player Development program directed at club players and a Mentoring Program directed at ambitious players. A specific communication will be sent shortly to members inviting contributions to the discussion with initiatives anticipated to commence on line in November.

Rules Review

As the compliance burden increases on voluntary organisations and some shortcomings in our Rules have already been identified, a Rules Review Sub Committee, comprising current Club President, Paul O'Brien, previous President, Margaret Cure and Peter Wilson, has been convened to draw up proposals for consideration by the Trustees and then the membership at the next AGM.

Feedback

The Council is available to answer any questions and address any concerns regarding the above and other relevant matters. This is a particularly challenging time in the club's history and the Council is counting on the continuing constructive support of the membership in its effort to promote the activities of Malahide Regional Bridge Club.

Stay Safe.

Your Council.

Paul O'Brien, Donat O'Brien, Siobhan Stanley, Tom Gilligan Peter Wilson, Declan Cahill, Catherine Sargent, Maureen Haines