



## Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to show the present position of Youth Bridge in NI. It also contains information and contacts arising from research carried out by Norma and Norman. Finally it presents a plan for a Pilot Scheme to develop School Bridge.

## Active schools

The 3 active Schools are Carrick Grammar, Bangor Grammar and BRA. The teachers involved, John, Andrew and Stuart, have planned a series of inter-school leagues in which they will take part and identified other Bridge competitions in which they will take part. Support needed includes TDs, Boards and possibly some financial support. Details of total requirements to follow. Norma and Norman will work with these schools.

### School Bridge Competitions 2018/19

Ulster Schools League 1(Bangor) – Wed 12<sup>th</sup> Sept – 2.15 -5.15

Ulster Schools pairs (BRA) – Wed 17<sup>th</sup> Oct - 2.15pm – 5.15pm

Irish Schools pairs (Malahide) – TBC

Ulster Schools League 2(CGS) – Wed (TBC) Nov – 2.15 -5.15

Ulster Schools teams (BRA) – Wed 30<sup>th</sup> Jan - 2.15pm – 5.15pm

Ulster Schools League 3(CGS) – Wed (TBC) Feb – 2.15 -5.15

Irish Schools teams (Galway) – Fri 1<sup>st</sup> - Sun 3<sup>rd</sup> March

Carrick Grammar has asked Norman to assist in the school and has arranged Access NI clearance for him. The other schools are being encouraged to follow a similar route. Diane, Sandie and Jeff have worked with the other 2 schools previously and closer contact may be beneficial. The schools cannot be forced to accept this help but the standard of play would probably improve if the help was accepted.

## No Fear Bridge

Free membership of NFB has been arranged for teachers to teach school children. Norma has looked at the site and deems it provides suitable material at this level of teaching. John Reid (CGS) has used it and is liaising with the other teachers as he feels it will provide very worthwhile support.

## Junior Internationals

Diane, Sandie and Pat are all working with the PB and JC teams, and liaising with CBAI. These ladies put in a lot of time and effort. Diane is involved with some online coaching for these teams. Work is also proceeding between NIBU and CBAI for coaching using BBO. Details of coaching planned would be of interest and possibly help from some other Senior/Expert players to assist her may help these young people. Some feedback highlights that more practice would enhance communication at the table for the players. It is difficult for Diane to ensure that players will turn up at scheduled practice and this point may need to be addressed.

Information of how to use BBO with groups could be used with students in other sectors.

## Bridge Clubs in University

Initial contact has been made with relevant SU Presidents at QUB, UU, Stranmillis Teacher Training College and St Marys Teacher Training College . Rosemary has contacts in these

Institutions and EANI. She is willing to help arrange meetings with her contacts if a proper plan is developed. This should be addressed. Norma and Norman would prefer to focus on the schools program but would be willing to work with the Further Education team.

### **Catholic Council of Maintained Schoole.**

Initial contact has been made with Gillian McGrath who is the Director of CCMS. She has been sent information on playing Bridge in schools and has expressed interest. This contact will be followed up as part of the schools program by Norma and Norman.

### **Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme**

Bridge is one of the skills in D of E Scheme. Information on Bridge has been sent to Joanna Clarke ( EANI Youth Development Officer ). She has passed it on to the director of Operations for D of E and arranged for it to be displayed on their Facebook page. This may provide an entry for Bridge with schools who are active in the D of E Scheme.

### **David Davenport Foundation**

This is a charitable trust providing practical and financial support to teach schoolchildren to play Bridge. They have a website 'Bridge4kids'. Simon Stocken is their liaison officer and he agrees that NIBU plans to teach bridge to schoolchildren in NI meets the Foundations criteria for support. He is coming to NI in September to meet us and intends to visit the first Grammar Schools League Match. We will also discuss how we will move forward and agree what support they will provide.

### **Schools Pilot Project**

Norma and Norman intend to run a pilot scheme to teach Bridge in the Carrickfergus area.

- Carrick Grammar and BRA already intake children from this area and are actively playing bridge.
- Ulidia College in Carrickfergus are active in the D of E scheme and we have made initial contact with them about teaching Bridge.
- We will identify feeder Primary Schools in Carrickfergus who send children to these 3 schools and talk to them about teaching bridge. Most of them run After School clubs and our goal is to encourage 4 or 5 of them to become involved. This contact will start early August.
- Norma is preparing a teaching program which we will use in the schools.
- Davenport Foundation is willing to cover costs involved in teaching teachers and equipment costs. They will also provide further support including coaching as required.
- Helpers will be required to work in the schools. Probably about 3 per school. We have already circulated NIBU Clubs asking for support from members. KMBC has circulated their members to make them aware of the request for help. Derryvolgie BC have also agreed to put a notice on their notice board which can be seen by all who use the club. Norma and Norman have also spoken to some people who are willing to support the project.
- Norman will arrange a training program for these helpers.
- Access NI clearance will need to be arranged for all involved.
- Bridge clubs in Primary sector can start after the children have completed 'Transfer Tests' i.e. Mid November and Spring term. This would give the Autumn term to 'train' our helpers.
- As this project grows we will require more assistance including, Senior Players, to coach children as their standard of playing improves.
- BBO playing can be used to get our students more experience. Experienced players would be a help for this.
- Sam Jones is willing to include suitable students in his Novice training in the summer.
- Local Bridge clubs may provide an opportunity for suitable students to get experience by playing in clubs. Care must be taken regarding child protection if this proceeds.

We believe that there are many opportunities to develop Youth Bridge in NI. One important factor is to ensure that there people are made aware of what is happening and stimulate their desire to become involved. This is also important with the general public. We would prefer to remain focused on School Bridge and would suggest that another team could work with the Further Education Sector. We are prepared to help them but not become too closely involved.

Creating awareness and stimulating interest through Web sites, newspaper articles and other media would be beneficial. Facts about the benefits of playing Bridge should also be made known. We intend to get business cards providing our contact details and request approval to use the NIBU logo on the cards.

Norma Irwin

Norman Lacey

E: [youthbridge.ni@mail.com](mailto:youthbridge.ni@mail.com)