

THE NOTTINGHAM BRIDGE CLUB

Newsletter - March 2023

THURSDAYS AT THE CLUB

New Drive

We will be starting up a new face-to-face drive at the club on Thursday evenings, starting at the usual time of 7pm. The drives start after Easter, with the first being on Thursday, 13 April.

They will follow the format of our Friday drives. There will be Master Points and NGS awards. Although you can keep a reminder of the contract during play, you won't be able to refer to crib sheets or system cards except between boards.

There's quite an appetite amongst members for face-to-face play. Our Wednesday evening ACOL-only drives, where help is offered to beginners have attracted up to ten tables. Finding a suitable time to add another drive has not been easy, but we hope that Thursdays will fill the gap.

We are grateful to Lesley Sweet for providing the enthusiasm to get this off the ground. It takes a lot of work to keep our drives going. It's not just the directors. Somebody has to unlock the doors on time; empty the dishwasher; serve drinks from the bar; tidy the room and ensure windows are locked at the end of play; and set the dishwasher in motion before turning out the lights and locking up. If you can help in any way - it doesn't have to be every week - please have a word with Lesley.

Lots left to learn

One of the joys of bridge is that there is always more to learn so that you can improve. Andrew Scott has been running coaching sessions on Thursday afternoons at 2pm. A recurring exchange from participants has been: "But that's not what you taught us", with the reply: "Ah, but you were beginners, then!"

The next sessions are on 9, 16 and 23 March. Andrew welcomes examples of hands where you feel you could have done better - whether bidding, play or defence. They make a good subject for discussion and occasionally - maybe very occasionally - you find that you did exactly the right thing!

For those who would welcome some teaching on specific topics, Dave Nattrass starts his 7pm Thursday evening sessions on 9 March with three sessions on components of slam bidding: Blackwood, cue bidding, and splinters. There's rarely a drive without slams to be had for the taking and at teams a missed slam can have a big impact on the outcome of the match.

In April, the topics will be three-card major suit raises; bidding 4-4-4-1 hands; and the losing trick count. If there is anything else you would like covered, please have a word with Dave.

BROADHEAD BOWL

The Broadhead Bowl is a members-only competition traditionally run after the Annual General Meeting.

This year is no exception.

The competition will take place at the Club after the AGM, on 26 March starting at 3pm

The winners will have their names entered on the Honours Board. Master Points are awarded.

There will be no table fee. There will be a break for refreshments (sandwiches etc and cake) during the competition. The refreshments are also free. However, please register for the competition - either on the notice at the club or by email to the Chairman - by 17 March so that we can order the food.

SWISS TEAMS

We are holding a Swiss Teams competition at the club on Sunday 30 April, with a 2pm start.

Many people think that teams is the best form of the game, you get rewarded for bidding and making the right contract, rather than risking an extra trick.

With Swiss teams, as the event progresses, you end up playing teams of a similar standard as yourselves.

We will have a break at the halfway point for refreshments prepared by our excellent catering team.

Visitors are most welcome to enter a team.

Closer to the day, we will ask teams to register. In the meantime, please put the date in your diary.

Annual General Meeting

This year's Annual General Meeting will be held at the club on Sunday 26th March, starting at 2pm.

As well as on the club notice board, you can find full documentation on the Club web site. Go to the tab on the left called AGM Information. There you will find minutes of last year's AGM, the Annual Report (the review of the year has been extracted from this and is on the next page of this Newsletter), and the annual accounts. If you have questions on the accounts, please email them to NottinghamBridgeClub@gmail.com in advance of the meeting so that we can ensure a detailed response.

If members wish to propose a resolution to be voted on, this needs to be emailed (with details of seconder) to Chairman@NottinghamBridge.Club no later than 12th March. There is a form on the club notice board for nominations of Officers and Trustees. If there are new resolutions or more nominations than places, details will be emailed to members in advance of the meeting. Apologies may also be emailed to that address. Note that the Club constitution does not provide for votes by proxy.

**Many Hands
Make
Light Work**

At every Annual General Meeting, there is always thanks expressed to the army of volunteers who help to keep the club going. There's a reminder of some of the jobs needed to be done in the piece on the front page about our new Thursday drive. We want to keep growing our offering and for that we will always be looking for more offers of help.

If you are comfortable with using a computer, please consider joining our band of scorers. There's a very clear set of instructions of how to "drive" the scoring program and people soon master it. The more people who volunteer, the less work there is for everyone who does it.

We are also on the lookout for people to carry out the machine dealing of boards. Once trained, it takes around 20 minutes to deal a set of boards: something that could be fitted in either before or after a drive. At the moment, we regularly deal four sets of boards each week. But our plans

to expand what we offer at the club will see this grow to at least six each week. So, as before, the more people who volunteer, the less everyone needs to do.

If you arrive early at the club and the dishwasher is full of clean mugs and glasses, feel free to empty it and put things back on shelves and return glasses to the bar. You don't need to ask permission!

And, of course, everyone can help in little ways. At the end of a session, close up your bidding box. Open curtains and close windows near your table. Take the boards, tablet and table number to the table outside the office. And put mugs and glasses in the dishwasher: there should never be anything left in the sink or on the draining board. It really is a case of many hands make light work.

Many thanks for all your help. Just speak to any of the Trustees and they will sign you up to our army of volunteers.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Presentation of Trophies
3. Minutes of the AGM of 2022
4. Matters Arising
5. Nominations for Officers and Committee
6. Chairman's Report
7. Treasurer's Report & Receive Annual Accounts
8. Appointment of Independent Accounts Examiner
9. Membership Secretary's Report
10. Announcement of the Officers and Committee
11. Honorary Life Members
12. Date of Next AGM

A Look Back at 2022

Face-to-face play

We have run four face-to-face drives each week. The Wednesday evening gentle ACOL drives have proved particularly successful, building up to a peak of nine tables.

A total of 193 players took part in at least one drive, compared with 144 last year.

Three teams of four sessions, including one Swiss teams event, were held during the year and these will continue in 2023.

Online play

We ran two drives on BBO each week although the decision was taken at the end of the year to discontinue the Saturday evening drive, which generally attracted no more than four tables.

A total of 90 players took part in at least one of our Tuesday evening drives, compared with 201 playing online the previous year. There has been a slight tailing off of support over the year, but we generally still manage to have nine tables to provide a Mitchell movement.

The club again entered five teams for the county's teams of eight competition.

Teaching

Andrew Scott continued teaching beginners, with two classes on Mondays.

Graham Brindley gave many years of service both to the club and to the County Association and, following his untimely passing after a short illness, he is missed in many ways. However his sayings will continue to echo at tables, especially for those who deny their four card major. Graham made a major contribution to supervised play and teaching of improvers, and the trustees are reviewing what can be offered to fill the resulting gaps.

The Wednesday evening ACOL drives have incorporated a variety of teaching aimed specifically at consolidating beginners' knowledge and preparing them for playing in other club drives.

During the lockdowns, Andrew Scott provided coaching sessions in a variety of ways. These have now become a regular Thursday afternoon session for more those who are no longer beginners and wish to improve their bridge.

Financial Position

Considerable maintenance work was carried out during the year. This included: roof repair, paving to the front of

the building, installation of multiple electric sockets both inside and outside the office, replacement of sound system, a radiator inside the office and a replacement water heater in the ladies toilets.

Our day-to-day expenditure has also been higher than in previous years. There have been several events, notably to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee and fund-raising in support of Ukraine, where the club provided free food to players.

The club sponsored five members to attend the EBED course for directors.

Our move away from cash continued with a very smooth transition to taking contactless payments in the bar. Payments to suppliers are made by bank transfer and refunds to members are made either by bank transfer or via credits in the cashless system.

The holding in cash and bank accounts declined by £725 over the year. The accounts, which are prepared on an accruals basis, show a deficit for the year of £6,485. This reflects depreciation charges (i.e. past expenditure spread over several years) of £4,000 and pre-payments under the cashless system of £2,400.

Each year the Club makes a formal report to the Charity Commission. This is the section for Achievements and Performance in 2022, and is to be taken as read as part of the Chairman's report at this year's AGM.

Social

A group of members, led by Marian Donaldson, has provided the catering for a number of events during the year, including our celebration of Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Directing

The club paid for five members to be trained as Club Directors on the EBED course, also hosting the course at the club. As well as helping the club expand its range of face-to-face drives, they will also no doubt be of value to other clubs where they play.

Risk Register

During the year, the trustees embarked on a programme to establish a Risk Register for the club. This highlighted a need - evidenced by the hiatus caused by the pandemic - to draw up a series of procedures detailing how things are done at the club. These range from maintenance of the defibrillator to how to use the scoring program for drives, and much more besides. This work is expected to continue throughout the coming year.

Learn & Play

As you can see from the above report, the club offers teaching in a variety of ways to suit players at most stages of their playing career from outright beginner onwards. Perhaps you know people who play social bridge and would like to improve their game or try their hand at duplicate? Or just looking for a slower pace of game? If so, we now have a one-stop shop for enquiries. Just email Learn@NottinghamBridge.Club and it will prompt a reply from someone who can help them find what they are looking for.