



Nottinghamshire Contract Bridge Association



Newsletter July 2019

NCBA NEWS

At the NCBA committee meeting in May we agreed to re-structure into working groups to help achieve the primary objectives in the coming year of a) promoting Bridge through enhanced Communication and b) improving County Bridge through increased attendance and performance at County events/ competitions and cross County league matches.

We will update you with our on-going progress but we have already made some decisions to change our processes around County Matches and our monthly County Drives which take place on every second Wednesday in the month.

RE County Drives, we aim to hold a range of different events in different months such as SIMS, one off trophy/prize competitions, play with an expert or supervised play sessions as well as regular simple Duplicate. In this way we hope to attract more interest and excitement. We will send out more detail shortly about the actual events calendar, commencing September with a 'Big Bang Bridge' event on 11 September.

So this is indeed a date for your diary!! All are welcome.

But for now, county duplicate carries on over the summer and it is important to note that these events are NOT solely for County players- they are for any player- it is simply described as County events as Nottinghamshire Contract Bridge Association (NCBA) organises them to distinguish those events from say those events Nottingham Bridge Club holds in the same (their) venue. Look at the NCBA website for more details.

As to County Matches, the first will be held on September 8th and we will be shortly writing to all Nottinghamshire EBU players to seek expressions of interest to play in the County League. We have decided to change the way we organise County matches this year and want to support all new and developing County players with a package of

support so not only can playing in County matches be fun, exhilarating and challenging, we want it to be developmental as we have succession planning to focus on too. We have also agreed to have a selection committee to support effective selection comprised of three captains from each team. We also will be seeking volunteers for these key roles which will be focusing mainly on building team spirit and a supportive culture. Are you that supportive team player who can help us? Look out for the next missive on County Matches and get your name in quick!! Don't be shy.

Finally I draw your attention to a key July event that is fast approaching. This is Nottinghamshire Bridge Festival running from 20 to 28 July. A summary itinerary is below.

This concept was floated at the Clubs Conference and has club support- the aim is to promote Bridge across the County and seek interest from new and returning Bridge players boosting our numbers and classes. It also comprises events for all levels of Bridge and covers development activities. By making a splash in one week, we hope to raise the profile of Bridge ,which should in turn help all clubs and Bridge in general.

A key exciting new event that forms part of this Festival is the cross county SIMS on Monday 22 July. All bar one Nottinghamshire EBU Monday club, are joining in as are some Derbyshire clubs. This means players can compete against a wider range of player simply by turning up at their normal club drive saving travel and fees. Trophies & prize money are just the icing on what will prove to be an exciting annual event. Again this idea of a non-Nottingham centric competition received support from the clubs conference. Do join in- there will be a venue near you and all are keen for visitors to join in so you don't need to be a member of that club to partake. Everyone is welcome. See NCBA website and fliers for more details.

County Chair

Toni Smith

July 2019 Nottinghamshire Bridge Festival Summary organised by NCBA

Provisional Plan- see NCBA website for more details

20th Saturday: Nottinghamshire Green Points Event at Spondon

21st Sunday: Priday Cup at NBC

22nd Monday: Cross County SIMS at various venues (Mansfield, Newark, Woodborough, Nottingham, Keyworth)

23rd Tuesday TD training event hosted by a County TD at NBC

25th Masterclass by legendary Tony Sowter at NBC

27th Saturday: open events at libraries across Nottinghamshire to promote Bridge (if you can offer to help for an hour or two please volunteer!)

28th Sunday: Derbyshire Teams event at Spondon TBC

Teams of 8 League 2018/19

Jane Hall, County Teams of 8 Organizer reports

It has been a very closely contested season across the divisions. Nottingham A flew away with the league championship by an impressive margin and not a single match lost. The league is the qualifying event for the Garden Cities Trophy so the Nottingham Club will be representing Nottinghamshire in the Garden Cities Trophy. We wish them luck. In Division 2 Nottingham B and Sunday Tigers A

return to the top division; Sunday Tigers by the narrowest of margins. Division C was a close competition for second place, with Woodborough B just making the promotion along with Retford C.

We had 10 clubs playing in the league; fielding 21 teams. In the first and second divisions an average of 12 players represented each team over the season, in the bottom division this was 18 players. A total of 260 players, around a third of the NCBA membership, enjoyed league play. This is a good number of players. More is always better; a successful league is one with as many teams and players as possible taking part. So, if your club would like to enter another team please let me know by 21st July 2019. "

It is the first year that Mansfield have entered a second team (Mansfield B). Their captain, Val Hill was asked to comment on their experience....

" Mansfield B 's first season in the league was seen as a practice run to give those new to teams an experience of match play. The response from those wanting to take part was unbelievably high, but of course as each match was played it soon became obvious who were team players and who were not. The first two matches were 20-0 defeats, but then we settled down. Overall the season was a success for us and will make it easier to manage the team next season.

I was quite surprised at how high the standard of the team players was in the other teams, most of them appeared to be 7/8s whereas our team were mostly 4/5s. However, this has only made the chosen team members for next season more determined to become better players."

NOTTINGHAM CAFÉ BRIDGE: Tony Brook sends this fact packed report.

24 April 2019

Despite the earlier dire weather warnings, the gods shined on us with a mainly sunny and dry day when Café Bridge returned to the Weekday Cross and Victoria Street area of Nottingham.

94 intrepid bridge players turned up at All Bar One at half past nine to register, enjoy a coffee and get their instructions for the day. Moving so many people between 6 different cafés creates its own logistical issues but fortunately no one went missing as they played 30 boards of bridge, interspersed with enjoying lunch at one of the venues, before returning to All Bar One for a well-earned glass of wine, or juice, drawing the raffle and presentation of prizes.

The winners were John Edwards and Paul Morris scoring 67.50%, closely followed by Ray and Julia Furlonger on 65.14%. The day is much more about enjoying a friendly game of bridge among friends than a serious competition, so prizes are also awarded to those scoring closest to 50%; these were won by Pam Wakefield and Derek Poole and by Stefka Samus and Anna Harper.

In addition to people having a thoroughly enjoyable day, the event is also an opportunity to raise money for a very worthwhile charity, so raising £1750 for our chosen charity – Rainbows Children’s Hospice – who are celebrating their 25th anniversary this year, was a very satisfactory achievement due entirely to the generosity of all concerned.

Thanks, must also go to the six venues, who hosted us for the day – Head of Steam, Pitcher & Piano, Cross Keys, The Loxley, Lloyds No 1, and particularly All Bar One who pulled out all the stops throughout the day.

Diary Date for the next Café Bridge – Newark (date to be confirmed by Tony Brook)

National Inter Club Knock Out (NICKO) 2018/19

David Bonnelo Team Captain reports on an exciting journey for his intrepid team. Beware; his report contains some really technical stuff which may tax your brain, it certainly did mine, but thankfully no flash photography.

For those who are unaware, NICKO is probably the most popular of all the EBU tournaments. It’s probably the most popular of all tournaments. The NICKO is open to all affiliated EBU bridge clubs. The early rounds are of 24 boards, increasing to 32 boards for the

quarter-finals and semi-finals and 48 boards for the final, with the draw regionalised to reduce travelling.

Why not get together with your regular partner and a couple of teammates from your club and ask your club secretary to enter your team for the NICKO? An unlimited number of teams can be entered by a club.

Seeding for top teams (usually 16) will be based on Gold Points, except that the previous year's finalists will be seeded if known in time. Seeded teams will be exempt from at least the first round and will not be eligible for the Plate competition.

In order to avoid excessive travel, seeded teams may be drawn against each other from round four.

The Plate competition is open to all unseeded teams defeated in their first match of the main event, either in round 1, or in round 2 following a Bye.

So what happened in 2018/19?

Back in September 2018, the EBU contacted us to say that no Nottingham team had entered the NICKO this year which was disappointing. £75 later the usual quartet of Irene & John Auld and Rob Sharpe & Richard Bonnello were in the first round.

Drawn at home against Wakefield we progressed and then had the luxury of a bye in round 2, followed by another home tie against Doncaster which was successfully completed.

Round 4, being the round of 32, produced another lucky home tie but this time against Chris Jagger's seeded team. It was a tight match where the swings were on aggressive bidding and selecting the right opening lead.

Board 1 got us off to a flying start when we successfully bid and made 4 spades which only a diamond lead defeats and we picked up some other useful part scores all offset by a slam going down, to be ahead by 5 at the interval.

Then came board 14. At one table they opened 2 diamonds showing a weak 2 in either major, a routine pass from us was followed by a raise to 3 hearts showing support for both majors. You hold:

S 9753

H 9

D AKQ2

C AJ53

Do you bid with a take out double – it must be a weak heart bid, or do you pass? We passed - they doubled and were raised to 4 spades! No defence beats 4 spades so that was 9 out.

Amazingly in the second half all twelve hands had difficult decisions and for 9 of them both teams matched each other.

Then came board 23. We were 7 imps down with 2 to play. East West for Cambridge held:

S A9865

H K9872

D 53

C J

Opposite:

S Q4

H A10

D QJ1076

C KQ75

After an opening bid showing both majors the Cambridge pair settled in three no trumps whereas the Nottingham pair played in two no trumps making an over trick.

It was all over if the Cambridge declarer could match the Nottingham declarer – even one off vulnerable would win the match for Cambridge by a single imp.

Some accurate defending by Nottingham and a couple of wrong guesses by Cambridge and the contract was 3 off – Nottingham were through to the next round by the small margin of just 3 imps. The match was played in a wonderful and friendly spirit and both teams enjoyed a chat over supper.

Now elevated to being a seeded team the reward is an away trip to face Michael Byrne's talented Manchester squad. Over only 24 boards anything is possible – can the underdogs strike again?

As a footnote the Nottingham team were unable to get their four players available against Cambridge so thanks to Bill Whalley who stepped in at the last minute.

How much easier it might have been had a slam in the first half made – it was on a 50/50 finesse looking for the diamond queen which was behind the ace king so 1 off and minus 13 as against plus 13 if the finesse had worked or if the queen was singleton, fine margins! In fairness it was a poor slam and seeing all 4 hands not even 5 Spades can be made but neither pair found conceding a ruff and discard at trick two being the only way to defeat 5 Spades (the contract at the other table) – how often do you see that!

Postscript. Our doughty team triumphed against the mighty Manchester team earlier this month and now stride confidently into the quarter finals in September. For reasons of space Richard's match report has had to be deferred until the next issue.

Young Bridge Challenge 2019

This event was held at Loughborough Grammar School on 16 March 2019. It included Swiss teams, playing for the Schools' Cup, Schools' Plate and Harry Scully Trophy and Minibridge, attracting teams from all over the country.

There was a record attendance of 9 tables for Minibridge including two pairs from Keyworth Primary School, Albert Freestone & Jakob Logan who finished 3rd with 63.10% and Robert Attewell & Joseph Ibbotson who finished 11th with 45.14%.

This is a tremendous achievement for the boys and thanks are due to Frances Linehan and her colleagues from Phoenix Bridge Club for the teaching and support given to the children at Keyworth Primary School over the last couple of years. The schools they competed against had in most cases been playing Bridge for many years and the standard was very high.

The observant among you will have noticed the surname of one of the contestants is the same as that of one of the Bridge Buddies, Mo Logan, and it is indeed her grandson who took 3rd place!

So, congratulations all round on an excellent result.

New Tournament Directors

Sue Wright (South Mansfield & Blidworth, Mansfield Mechanics) and Bob Laughton (South Mansfield & Blidworth) have successfully completed the TD course at Solihull, Sue achieving a distinction. Congratulations to them both and hopefully both will attend future local TD events.

Nonagenarians – more celebrations in Mansfield

Mike Gyles, secretary at South Mansfield and Blidworth recently reported;

We've been blessed this year in having two of our loyal and long serving members reach their 90th birthday. In January, Fay Buckley was the first to reach this milestone and was followed on 30th May by her junior (well she is four months younger!) playing partner,

Dorothy Beaves. In addition to having members of their respective families gather in Nottinghamshire around the respective dates to celebrate, the Club made sure that the occasion was suitably recognised.

As can be seen from the first of the accompanying photographs, the Club's outgoing chairperson, Jan Fraser presented Dorothy with a floral gift in recognition of her special birthday. Dorothy is joined by her playing partner Fay, in the second photo. Let's be honest here, if we hadn't mentioned it, you'd never have believed that there was 180 years of combined experience on show in that second picture!

All at the Club, even those members who without exception are younger, and who regularly find that Fay and Dorothy have made their 'three no trumps' contract go 'two off' when sitting E/W, wish them well in the future and look forward to doing battle with them for many years to come.





Nottinghamshire Contract Bridge Committee members and their roles

Toni Smith Chair and shareholder Woodborough and Nottingham bridge clubs

Clare Batten Secretary and shareholder Nottingham bridge club

Ian Dovey Treasurer West Bridgford and Keyworth bridge clubs

Keith Spencer County TD Woodborough and Nottingham bridge clubs

Mark Goddard County Captain Nottingham bridge club

Graham Brindley Events manager Nottingham bridge club

Maciej Lejman Woodborough and Nottingham bridge clubs

Sue Wright Trophies Mansfield Mechanics and South Mansfield bridge club

Sue McIntosh Chair of County bridge sub committee Retford bridge club

Chris Frost Phoenix bridge club

Paul Sweet Safeguarding officer Nottingham and Woodborough bridge clubs

Shirley Ashtari Teams of four league organiser West Bridgford and Keyworth bridge clubs

Jane Hall Teams of 8 league organiser Woodborough bridge club.

Please send any correspondence to the county secretary at CPBatten@yahoo.com