

## OBC Education Strategy

### 1. Charity Status

- 1.1. With the transfer of the club to charity status from July 2014 it is an appropriate time to review the education strategy at the club.
- 1.2. As a charity, we have a responsibility to look out into the target community so our approach should have something for every ability level. Our objects include: *“The provision of facilities for the learning, teaching and playing of bridge for the benefit of the residents of Oxford and the surrounding area”*. This paper is intended to suggest how to outline an overall strategy for learning and teaching at OBC.

### 2. What are the educational needs – what are we trying to outline?

- 2.1. The needs of different parts of the community we serve are very different. They range from children playing bridge for the first time through university students to those developing bridge skills later in life. They range from those adopting bridge as a social pastime to those serious students of the game who want to play at the highest level.
- 2.2. We could reasonably outline a strategy that uses the following segmentation of the area of interest:
  - Junior Bridge
  - Level 1 – Beginners - Education for beginners [do not yet have an NGS grade]
  - Level 2 – Development - Those already playing duplicate (they have an NGS grade which is in the range up to 45%)
  - Level 3 – Intermediate (NGS grades 45%-50%)
  - Level 4 – Advanced (NGS grades 50%-56%)
  - Level 5 – Expert (NGS grade above 56%)
- 2.3. We can use NGS% as a rough and ready evaluation of the bridge skill of individual learners to provide an indication of the level at which they play. The NGS scheme indicates that some significant natural variation of the % so such usage is for convenience rather than rigidity.
- 2.4. We should recognise that the needs of different individuals vary widely. Compare for example the development needs of an individual who has been playing at the same standard for many years, with that of an individual who has yet to reach their level of incompetence.

### 3. Education strategy by level – notes, thoughts and suggestions

- 3.1. Junior Bridge
  - The county organisation has created a framework for Junior bridge based around schools
  - OBC encourages members to become involved with this program
  - OBC is willing to offer its premises to host events that are part of the county program
  - OBC is willing to provide resources for junior bridge
  - OBC offers its premises to host events for the national junior squad
- 3.2. Level 1 – Beginners - Education for beginners [do not yet have an NGS grade]
  - OBC has arranged that Oxford Bridge Learning carries out teaching for beginners at the club premises
  - The teaching is based on Bridge for All as defined by the EBU
  - People move to level 2 when they become able to participate in a duplicate bridge session
- 3.3. Level 2 – Development - Those already playing duplicate [NGS grade which is in the range up to 45%]
  - OBC has arranged that Oxford Bridge Learning carries out teaching for this category of learner at the club premises
  - OBL also organise friendly duplicate sessions on Monday evenings, and supervised duplicates on Thursday mornings, at the club for this level

- 3.4. Level 3 – Intermediate [NGS grades 45%-50%]
  - This is an area where Oxford Bridge Learning have courses
  - Supervised play is popular for this group but it is at this level where the disparity in willingness/ability to learn is most obvious
  - Jennifer’s October 2014 survey suggests a range of topics that need to be covered; further investigation is needed
  - Marketing the library of books or suggesting computer based learning may be of use
  - JP Sub Club has experimented at this level
- 3.5. Level 4 – Advanced [NGS grades 50%-56%]
  - This level includes all those playing in the lower divisions of the WL and most of those in div 2
  - At this level, there is a more diverse set of needs
  - OBL has run courses that reach into this level but it is challenging to get enough attendees to make courses viable
  - Coffee classes can cover topics at this level
  - The summer Thursday evening sessions for Wessex league players intend to address this level
  - Perhaps we should seek the views of the Club Captain
  - It may be that mentoring is appropriate and could be run within the club
  - Suitable books or software may be used
- 3.6. Level 5 – Expert [NGS grade above 56%]
  - This level includes those with aspirations to play for the county
  - At this level, it is difficult to see how there are enough experts to help within the club
  - Mentoring may be appropriate but who are the mentors
  - Perhaps this area should be ceded to the County

#### **4. How education is provided?**

- 4.1. Courses of teaching
  - Formal provision is via OBL
- 4.2. Individual seminars
  - Formal provision is via OBL
- 4.3. Supervised play
  - Sessions are already available and should continue
- 4.4. Availability of suitably qualified teachers
  - We should monitor to see if there is a sufficient pipeline of teachers and do something if there are insufficient numbers
  - OBL exercise quality control, to ensure that teaching is appropriate for the learners
- 4.5. Mentoring
  - We should see if there are members who are interested in being mentored and see if it is possible to set up a mentoring system
- 4.6. Mentors
  - We should see if enough members are interested to act as mentors
- 4.7. Library
  - The website should have a general information section dealing with the library
  - We should maintain and build a library for member use
  - We have a specific responsibility for our library of bridge books: Christina Hardymont is the current librarian
- 4.8. Website
  - The website should have a general information section dealing with education and subsidiary pages to accommodate the other items in this section
  - We should urge more members to write book reviews for the web site or reviews of CDs or software products

- We could include “interesting hands” with analysis
- And structured links to the numerous bridge website which have all sorts of information and learning material.

## **5. How is education marketed to the relevant audiences?**

- 5.1. For education activities that require groups of people to commit time simultaneously, the marketing of events is important. Whilst addressing the needs of the known group of members is relatively straightforward, we probably need to reach out to our community.
- 5.2. OBL carry out the marketing task for the Oxford beginner community
- 5.3. The general public
  - We may want to run taster sessions to encourage non-players to find out about bridge
- 5.4. University students
  - There is a case to be made for special encouragement to students who arrive in Oxford who may want to play bridge
  - Perhaps closer contact with Oxford University, Oxford Brookes etc. at the start of the academic year
  - Perhaps a special approach to students on education courses, who could provide the next generation of bridge-aware teachers in schools
- 5.5. We may also want to consider how to market to other groups such as:
  - Those who already play but socially only
  - Those who play at unaffiliated clubs
  - Those who are members of other affiliated clubs