

Somerset Contract Bridge Association
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
Sunday 26th May 2019 at Woolavington Village Hall

1. A period of silence took place to remember the SCBA deceased members:
2. Apologies for Absence.

David Porter, Michael Whittaker, Rachael Brown, Ken & Ann Bawdon, Colin Simcox, Mary Carter, Daphne Wright, Sally Stuttard and Jackie Walters

3. 2018 AGM Minutes

The minutes of the 2018 AGM were approved nem.con

4. Matters Arising from the 2018 minutes

There were no matters arising.

- 5 Chairman's Report

The Chairperson's report was tabled on the day.
A copy is attached.

The Chairman stated that the County had a busy year as usual.
The Fast Forward to Bridge program had been piloted in 4 clubs Weston Super Mare, Street, Taunton and Castle Cary and was deemed a success with students from the course already playing in clubs.
The result economically were such that funds were available to appoint a Club Development Officer whose purpose is to assist affiliated clubs in recruitment or other areas needing help.

The County will continue its successful program of seminars and other events
The West of England Congress 2018 had a much lower surplus due to reduced table numbers possibly due to running of the event in September rather than the normal October date.
Entries to the 2019 event were already being made.

The County newsletter produced by Joan Pooley has been a great success and will continue to be produced in future by Paul Burgess replacing Joan who has retired due to ill health.
Several members of the Committee have stepped down leaving additional work for the remaining Committee.
Members were asked to offer assistance to the Committee in any way they could, to reduce the load.
The Chairman thanked the Committee for their hard work over the past year.

6. Treasurer's Report:

The Treasurers report was tabled on the day.
A copy is attached

The surplus for the year was only £1500 and below the previous year, due mainly to the reduced revenue from the West of England Congress.
Revenue from competitions was a success with a 6% revenue year on year.
The Coda Cup raised approximately £2000 for the nominated charity
County events continued to improve over the previous year with the Bruton Weekend and Andrew Robson events providing valuable income.
A contribution was received from the EBU towards the cost of the County Development Officer

The expenditure of the Fast Forward to Bridge was itemised separately in the annual Accounts. A surplus of £7800 will enable the program to continue.

£10,000 from the current account was to be invested in a second higher interest bond

Accounts were accepted, proposed and approved by Michael Wigmore and Alan Atkinson.

4. Tournament Secretary's Report:

The Tournament Secretaries report was tabled on the day.
A copy is attached.

Overall a successful year with numbers up in most events
The Individual pair's competition was cancelled due to lack of support.
The calendar for the County events is available on the website
The Tournament Secretary thanked Bob Warrender for his hard work on the County League, which remains one of the most popular events, and Tony Russ for organising the Pairs League.
Alan Atkinson was thanked for dealing of boards for **all** of the county events.
The attendance for the Championship pairs and teams was disappointingly low and the Committee will review the format of this event
Acceptance of the Tournament Report was proposed and seconded by Michael Martin and Ann Skinner

5. Election of Officers and other Executive Committee Members

The following were proposed by Caroline Macpherson and seconded by Mike Martin:
Tony Russ – Chairperson
Gina Howard – Vice-Chairperson
Richard Feetenby - Treasurer
Frank Coltman - Tournament Organiser
Daphne Greatorex – General Secretary/Membership Secretary

Ceri Pierce
Colin Simcox
Andy Ridgers
Eric Cummings
Simon Brooke
Paul Burgess - Representing Non- affiliated clubs

The above were all duly elected 'en bloc' for a further term.
The members expressed a show of appreciation to the Committee for their hard work

6. Special Resolution:

The Committee proposes a change to the constitution para. 3.2 replacing the words 'four times' with 'twice' to reflect that the work of the committee is now conducted principally electronically

Proposed and Seconded by Andy Ridgers and Anne Skinner

7. Any Other Business.

The Chairman thanked Caroline Macpherson for her work in organising the seminars, Bob Warrender for the County League and Alan Atkinson for the dealing of the boards.

Sheila Coda was awarded Life Membership of the SCBA in recognition of her 34 years service on the Committee.

Roy Rowe was awarded the Terry Girdlestone Cup in recognition of his services to bridge in the County

The meeting was closed at 13.30pm and was followed by the presentation of prizes, details of which are on the SCBA website

A Swiss Teams event then took place; the winners were a team consisting of Gina & David Howard and Ray Nicholson & Hazel Wootton

Minutes prepared by Daphne Greatorex 27th May 2019

Chairman's Report to the SCBA AGM 2019

This has been another very busy year for your association during which we have continued to deliver the various strands of our plan for the development of bridge in the county.

We have continued to promote an extensive tournament programme which offers something for all. Almost all the events have shown increased numbers and I was delighted to see the involvement of our non-affiliated clubs in the county league and inter club events. I am grateful for the efforts of Frank Coltman, our Tournament Secretary, Bob Warrender who organises the very successful County League and Gina Howard for the Michael Coda Cup.

Last year you will remember that we launched our Fast Forward to Bridge programme funded by our lottery grant. We have now delivered four courses as a result of which 59 students have gone through the programme. The age demographic has been disappointing with most 60+ . We have used media such as Facebook and Twitter to advertise these courses but still we fail to attract younger people. However, the objective of the project was to validate the concept of learning bridge more intensively and our review suggests that the programme is successful and that students are playing in clubs already. The next and final action from this will be the production of a course manual which will be available to Somerset's clubs for their own courses in the future.

I am really grateful to Ceri Pierce for master minding the project, to the clubs who took part and to those tutors who have delivered courses in Castle Cary, Street, Weston and Taunton.

The expenses of promoting these four courses was much less than expected and this has allowed us to appoint a Membership Development Officer (Gina Coltman) to address the issue of declining membership in EBU clubs. An inaugural meeting was held after which seven clubs expressed interest in participation in the project. Gina has been visiting these clubs and action plans are being formulated with these clubs. These plans must revolve around recruitment of existing players and teaching of new players with a clear link to the teaching programme mentioned above.

Financially we are in good health as Richard Feetenby will demonstrate later and the committee has no plan to vary the zero county component of the EBU subscription or to increase the county component of universal membership from 2p. I am pleased to acknowledge the continuing support of First for Bridge who sponsor our educational programme and also to welcome A L Fleming Play Bridge Shop who are now supporting our congress. The support of both these bridge related companies is very much appreciated.

This year we have organised two seminars delivered by Caroline Macpherson at Street and at Nailsea. In addition, we staged a day for scorers and directors for which I thank Colin Simcox and Frank Coltman. We also welcomed Andrew Robson back to Somerset for another successful day of bridge in addition to another Bruton weekend with Caroline, Jean and Daphne Greatorex. Jean Howard who has organised our events for the past few years is standing down and I thank her for her considerable efforts in organising these occasions.

Our annual congress ran smoothly but was much less successful financially than in recent years. The reasons were very clear- increased hire cost at the venue and reduced numbers for the two swiss events which attracted 76 rather than 84 tables. We can speculate about the reason for this- the event was in the last week of September and not as usual the first week in October and it clashed with the Ryder Cup. We are back to normal this year and have negotiated a reduced cost at the Winter Gardens so fingers crossed for a better return for our efforts this year although we are not helped by the EBU holding the first round of the Premier League on 'our' weekend.

Our county teams have not had great seasons finishing 3rd, 7th and 3rd in their respective divisions of the Western League. The Tollemache team finished 8th of 9 in a tough group but it was nice that at a later event the players publicly thanked captain Eric Cummings and presented him with some liquid refreshment. That was a nice touch.

We continue to communicate with our members and clubs via our website and our monthly newsletters which I think have been excellent. Joan Pooley has been a most enthusiastic editor and I thank her sincerely for producing about 20 newsletters but unfortunately, she is retiring owing to health problems and a successor is required. Any volunteers?

Replacing Joan will not be easy and the same goes for the whole range of our activities. We are an amateur organisation run by volunteers who are becoming increasingly hard to find. It really would be great if a few more people stepped up with offers to help with the newsletter, at the congress or even just to help. More and more is being done by fewer and fewer and this is unsustainable in the longer term.

Finally, I should thank my committee who have worked hard to support our programme. I should also like to highlight the work of Caroline Macpherson without whom we simply could not cope and Andy Ridgers for his constant support as our scorer. We say good bye to Jean Howard and subject to his election today we welcome Simon Brooke to the committee.

There is one further retirement and that is of Sheila Coda who is finally stepping down after 34 years on the committee during which she has been secretary and membership secretary in addition to becoming a Grand Master and playing regularly for the county. After yielding a couple of times to "just one more year Sheila" she has been resolute this time and could not be persuaded again. Thank you, Sheila, for all you have done for the SCBA over many years.

Competitions Report 18-19 Season

A very successful season with numbers up on last year by 37.5 tables. This is due to having a non affiliated section in the Inter-Club events and an increased entry in most other events.

The committee is concerned about reduced entries in our two championship events and is looking at how this might be reversed.

My thanks go to Alan for all the boards, Roger for the Calendar, Bob for the County League, Tony for the Pairs League & all the directors.

Frank

Event	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Barometer Pairs	7 Tables	10 tables	12 Tables
Paul Jones	10 Teams	11 Teams	11 Teams
Mixed Pairs	9.5 Tables	15 Tables	17 Tables
Mixed Teams	11 Teams	11 Teams	13 Teams
Stratified Pairs	N/A	N/A	7.5 Tables
Restricted IC Pairs	8.5 Tables	10 tables	19 Tables
Swiss Teams	17 Teams	18 Teams	19 Teams
Ladies Pairs	7 Tables	6.5 Tables	9 Tables
Men's Pairs	6 Tables	7 Tables	9 Tables
Swiss Pairs	13 Tables	17 Tables	20 tables
Restricted IC Teams	12 Tables	12 Tables	24 tables
Championship Pairs/Plate	14 Tables	16 Tables	13 Tables
Club Teams of 8	9 Teams	11 Teams	9 Teams
% Individual	7 Tables	6 Tables	Not run
KO Teams	13 Teams	9 Teams	10 Teams
County League	28 Teams	28 Teams	33 Teams
Pairs League	26 Pairs	26 Pairs	20 Pairs

