



April Newsletter

This may necessarily be the last newsletter for a while. The current state of flux means that there will be precious little to report on and not a great deal in the way of upcoming events until waters are somewhat less stormy. Rest assured once we can see a more even keel we will be in touch to keep you updated.

One important notice is that **AGM** slated for **24th May** has been postponed to be held, all being well, on **6th September** prior to the **Mixed Pairs** at **Woolavington** – the bridge will start at 1pm for those that can't make the meeting.

In the meantime we are delighted to offer you the chance to play on-line in some **Somerset sponsored events**. These will take the form of tournaments on **Bridge Base Online** otherwise known as **BBO** (bridgebase.com) – the first one should already have taken place and the second one is scheduled for tonight at 7pm. Provided that there is sufficient interest these will continue on Mondays at 2pm and Wednesdays at 7pm.

The first few will be free – thereafter a charge of £1 per tournament is envisaged – charging details will be made available once formats have been finalised.

Initially the games will take place over 18 boards with an EBU director on hand to look after players. Masterpoints will be on offer to EBU members but there is no requirement to be EBU registered – just contact Tony on scbachair@icloud.com with your BBO handle to register for the games.

The first contest has been completed with **Bill Keeling** and **Rob Hobhouse** taking the honours with a smidge under 68% **Alan and Jette Bailey** also cracked the 60% mark to come in second with just under 62% Well done to both and look forward to seeing you all on-line soon. Full results on the website.

ceri.pierce@gmx.com is available to answer your queries. Further information available on the home page of the Somerset website.

There are videos at <https://www.bridgewebs.com/royalautomobileclub/> demonstrating how to join both **BBO** and BCL. Geoff Davies offered some useful advice on this in the last newsletter (available on the SCBA website).

Note: because of the huge numbers of people logging on there seem to be a few glitches on **BBO** recently. The site can lose your activity and will ask you if you are away from your computer even when you are playing. There may be times when searching for tournaments throws up an error message or the site tells you that there are no tournaments of that type. These tend to be temporary as are any delays in logging in. If you have problems there are site helpers (hosts) whose names are highlighted in yellow, whom you can approach with queries (**aurora** is frequently on line as is **ACBL**) – if all else fails then **kennyell** is often attempting to push the right buttons.....

There are many people working to ensure that you can enjoy bridge based activities while face to face play is suspended.

<https://www.bridgeshop.com.au/digital-bridge-care-pack> has a selection of highlights which may be worth investigating.

No Fear bridge which offers tutorials, has a six week free trial period provided that you register via the Yorkshire Bridge website.

funbridge.com has a variety of options available for playing and creating tournaments as well as 100 free deals initially and 10 free deals a week thereafter. The bridge is played with robots so partners are not necessary.

The **EBU** is running four tournaments a day on **BridgeBase Online** at 2pm 3.30pm 7pm and 9pm – 12 board contests with 10 minutes to play 2 boards (which can seem like a long time) for a cost of \$1.50 in BBO dollars. Play can be with a partner or a robot if you are willing to pay to hire one. One of the quirks of the system seem to be people offering to play with you if you pay their entrance fee. Not having availed myself of this option I have no idea if they offer value for money.

The EBU are also organising a new teams league format has also begun with four matches a week – this began on March 29th but new teams can still be accepted. All details are on the EBU website.

Bridge Club Live has issued a press release regarding the current state of affairs and this can be read here: https://www.bridgeclublive.com/BCL_PressRelease_01.asp
There are a number of opportunities to play here whether as a drop in or with friends.

Andrew Robson has a daily bridgecast available for subscribers. Tasters available here <https://www.patreon.com/AndrewRobsonBridge>

Bernard McGee has a new venture offering live broadcasts with seminars, chat and quizzes. Accessing this through YouTube will enable you to ask and answer questions.

Mr Bridge's library could be worth leafing through for those who are not subscribers. <https://mrbridge.co.uk/library/>

BRUTON WEEKEND

Now postponed until July 10th - 12th (subject to restrictions being lifted)
daphnegreat@sky.com can answer all your queries.

The **Championship Teams** event is cancelled for this year but entries are already open for next season so beat the rush! The qualifier is on October 18th and entries can be made here: https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwx/bw.cgi?club=somerset&pid=display_page87

Weston-Super-Mare Congress – hopefully this will run as planned from Friday 2nd October – Sunday 4th October at the Winter Gardens Pavilion. All the usual fun of the fair and a chance to get back round a table rather than staring at a computer screen.

Full details are available here:

https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwon/bw.cgi?club=somerset&pid=display_page22&sessid=512815388432233

RESULTS

Somerset Teams of Eight

This was won by **Wells City** comprised of Gina and David Howard, Ceri Pierce and Eric Cummings, Sheena Lanham and Andy Ridgers and Barbara Biggin and Anne Skinner with 62 VP's – **Nailsea** (John Cockram and Thomas Gibbard, Ken Bawdon and Michael Whittaker, Michael Powell and Christine Dean and Bridget Johnson and Alan Evans) came a close second with 58 VP's

Caroline Macpherson and Colin Juneman (Langport A) deserve a mention for topping the cross imps table.

Full results are available here: https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwon/bw.cgi?pid=display_rank&event=20200314_1&club=somerset

INTERNATIONAL SECTION from Richard Feetenby

The county treasurer and partner have just returned from a wonderful trip to New Zealand where we extended the spread of the good work being done by the County committee by twinning 2 regions, one in Canterbury and another in Southland with SCBA. This was successfully achieved through visits to

Christchurch and Queenstown respectively. I would like to thank the committee for funding our trip. The £7000 was very good value and I have no doubt the county will see a good return on its investment. We were careful not to overindulge at the county's expense. We, the committee, did take the view that the county was affluent enough to do this.

Unexpectedly, we bumped into a long standing Somerset member, a certain **Ernie Sutton** who plays for Southland. He asked us to extend his good wishes to everyone in the county who knows him. His contact details are tenniseboy2@gmail.com should you wish to contact him.

Mike Rothwell's Bridge Timer

Graham Daniels has asked me to mention that this product works with EBUscore and Bridgemates as well as Scorebridge and tabs.

He is happy to take calls from interested parties who wish to find out more on 01275 856786.

Michael Coda Cup

The Michael Coda simultaneous event raised £1,580.50, which included £15 generously donated by the Chew Stoke Methodist Church, who waived their rent on the night of the competition. The county have rounded this up to £1,700 and this money will be donated to BIBIC, a children's charity based in Langport.

Big shout out to those who put so much effort into the organisation including Gina Howard in overall control, Eric Cummings for the scoring and Colin Juneman for the hand commentary.

We have received thanks from BIBIC as follows:

'Thank you for your very kind donation of £1,700.00 from the Somerset Contract Bridge Association which will go straight towards making a difference to children in great need.

You have provided smiles and your support will have a hugely positive impact on the lives of families dealing with the profound effects of disabilities. With your help our therapists can provide individualised family programmes that quite simply change lives.'

That hand from the Championship Pairs

♠ A 10 6
♥ A 6 5 4 3
♦ 10 8
♣ A 7 4

♠
♥
♦
♣

♠
♥
♦
♣

♠ K Q 7 5 2
♥ -
♦ A K Q J 7 5 4 3
♣ -

Roger Sweet offered a simple auction which works well on the layout, of 1NT 4C (Gerber) 4NT (three) 7nt. How does one proceed if the answer only shows 2 aces or even one? Responder is looking for the ace of spades and three spades or more for the grand in spades or diamonds if the wild distribution makes declarer worry about a diamond ruff.

Ivan Gerstel offered this:

My wife and I play Nottingham Club (5 card majors) so would open 1D as North (12-15 points and no 5CM)

South would jump to 2 Spades (12pts+ and a 5 card Spade suit)

North would simply settle for 4 Spades (unaware of the extra strength in South.

4NT - simple Blackwood

5 Spades showing 3 Aces

7NT - 8 Diamond tricks, 3 top spade tricks and 2 outside aces! Where is the problem?

Again – responder would be in a quandary with a bid showing less than three aces.

Geoff Davies put the problem to his computer programme Jack:

Here's Jack's bidding for the slam hand. (Benji, weak NT with 5 card majors)

Version 1, 1NT - 2H, 2S - 3D, 3S (3+) - 4C (cue bid), 4H (cue bid) - 4NT, 5D (0 or 3) - 7D, 7S

Note that in Jack's system, 1NT - 3D would show only around 11 points with 6+ diamonds so Jack takes the practical route of showing spades first which works well here. The 3S bid by North confirms at least 3 card support since with two they would have bid 3NT or supported D. The 3 key card response now makes 7NT look promising but this could fail on a 4 - 1 spade break so he offers 7D as a possible contract. Partner, not visualising such a strong diamond suit, corrects to 7S. Jack's analysis is more teams based so he doesn't see 7NT as more profitable than 7S.

Version 2 1H - 2D, 2H - 2S, 2N - 3C (4th suit), 3N (club stop) - 4NT (RKCB), 5D (0 or 3) - 5NT (K ask), 6C (0) - 7D.

This sequence fails to identify the spade fit because the response to the 4th suit force gives preference to showing the club stop for 3NT rather than showing 3 card support for partner's second suit so Jack ends in the practical choice of 7D. This is bid on a simulation, looking at many hands with the same bidding and choosing the best practical bid.

For those clubs that are suffering with the current strictures meaning outgoings continue while income ceases, the EBU will soon be inviting applications for grants to assist with capital expenditure. In the past this has included help buying dealing machines or wireless scoring systems with the largest grants being in the region of £1000. Further details should be available soon on the EBU website or refer to page 25 of the EBU magazine for April.

Thank you to all our contributors. I will leave the final words to Simon Brooke who wrote in to suggest that we should think how we can assist the players in our locality.

Being a member of our club means more than just meeting to play cards. It also means looking out for each other, so if you need help with anything at this tricky time then please reach out to us. Assistance could be with, but not limited to, dog walking, fetching prescriptions, shopping, a general chat or perhaps how to use your technology to contact loved ones better. If you would like some help please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Take care. Stay safe.