

Newsletter

November 2023



The next event run by the Somerset Contract Bridge Association is on 10th December at Woolavington and includes:-

- Men's Pairs
- Ladies' Pairs
- Seven High Pairs

The formats on offer mean that virtually anybody can join us, and we hope that you will.

There was a time before Covid when the entire hall plus side rooms were wall to wall with tables. Attendances at clubs have picked up but, for some unfathomable reason, not at county level. It would be a terrific shame if this trend continued. There is something to be said for competing against new faces, and the opportunity to exchange stories and swap tips. No evaluation has been undertaken, but my gut feeling is that people feel the level at County events is too high, and inevitably that may be true of some of the competitions but certainly not all. Somerset Contract Bridge Association have committed to running lower level competitions, as Mike discusses in his piece below.

Sheree

SCBA Secretary

From the Chair

Now that we are all returned from our summer activities, we are getting back to our autumn and winter bridge.

Our clubs are reporting improving attendance and there seem to be more people wanting to play. This was borne out by the numbers who played at the West of England Congress at Weston-super-Mare in October. With the improvement in attendance, we were able to deliver a healthy profit for our county funds.

Events

The 9-High event, held at Woolavington in July, was a great success with many comments received as to how enjoyable the event was. Several pairs played in this as their first county event and found it not as daunting as they had feared.

As your chairman, I attend the EBU county Chairs' meetings, where we share ideas, successes and failures. One thing I took from the last meeting was that several counties are running 7-High events with great success. Historically, players ranked NGS 7 and below have rarely played county events due to a fear of embarrassing themselves – well, 7-High is the answer: an event designed for the more novice player to experience a competition especially for them. Your committee is working to find dates for these, going forward, and the first event is planned for 10th December, so please enter and dip your toes in the water, and also sample the wonderful teas provided. So that the more experienced players do not feel left out we are looking to run a J-High event soon.

A new initiative from the EBU is the Festival of Bridge in the autumn of 2024. It is intended that there will be some national events but all clubs are being encouraged to run a special event under the Festival of Bridge banner. The SCBA would like all clubs to appoint a liaison person to be the point of contact so we can share ideas and give assistance. When you have decided who will undertake this for your club, please communicate this to Michael Wigmore, who will be your liaison with the SCBA committee: mjwigmore@hotmail.co.uk. The EBU will give more detail in the new year.

A further reminder for your diaries: Andrew Robson's next seminar for our members will be held in Street on 13th March 2024. For those who are not very familiar with Andrew, in my opinion, he is the foremost teacher currently, being particularly relevant to the club player. He is also an extremely nice person without the typical arrogance of many top players.

People and Progress

Some happy news: it is with great pleasure that I can convey that Tony Russ, a wonderful servant of this county, is now Vice Chair of the EBU. Many congratulations and good wishes for his continued service to bridge.

Your committee became aware of the oversight that we did not have an appeals committee in place on behalf of our members should they have a disciplinary issue with their club. This is now in place.

There is a limit to how much work your committee members can or should have to undertake in order to provide bridge for our members. Occasionally we reach out for assistance, but sadly, few members offer help. Paul Burgess, after giving excellent help with this, has decided he no longer wishes to provide your newsletters in the future. Is there any member who feels they could undertake this role? It does not need to be particularly arduous. You need to badger the committee for news to convey. Additionally, Ceri Pierce, Michael Wigmore and myself will provide interesting hands for the members to consider. Meanwhile Sheree Pavey and myself will do our best to keep you up to date with news. Also, please read our committee minutes, which are always published on our website at the foot of the homepage.

Further, going forward, Tony Russ reached out last year trying in vain to find someone prepared to take over the Chair when he retired at last year's AGM. No one was forthcoming and it fell to me to step in. It was always my intention to do this only for one year. I have a very busy year planned for myself in 2024 and will not be standing at the AGM. Please can I ask you all to look at yourselves and your club members to identify my replacement so as to take the county forward. It does not have to be terribly onerous as you have an excellent, hard-working committee delivering great service on your behalf. Being Chair is a great honour and an opportunity to provide bridge for all of us who love the game.

This will be my last communication of 2023. May I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and enjoyable bridge in 2024.

Mike Letts

Email: mikeletts@sky.com

Don't Forget...

Calendar

The regularly updated Calendar of Somerset events is on our website at www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwor/bw.cgi?club=somerset&pid=display_future

EBU Master Point Promotions

These are published monthly in the second week after month-end, so about 9th December for November promotions, and those for Somerset members will appear on our homepage.

www.bridgewebs.com/somerset/