

Minutes of committee meeting of Somerset Contract Bridge Association
on the 3rd November 2023 via Zoom

In attendance:

Mike Letts (Chair)

Ceri Pierce

Colin Simcox

John Cockram

Sheree Pavey

Andrew Ridgers

Frank Coltman

Michael Wigmore

Alan Evans

Apologies

Richard Feetenby and Simon Brooke

Minutes of last meeting

Mike referred to the last minutes.

Matters Arising

None, although John referred to matters related to the last meeting covered in later in meeting.

EBU Matters

The matter of upcoming EBU elections was raised and the consensus was that the County would continue to support Tony Russ as vice chair and Adrian Darnell as chairman.

Andy R was considering attending the AGM, Ceri decided she would not and happy to appoint Mike L as proxy, Mike L being keen to attend.

Mike L referred to a recent EBU meeting he attended of the County chairs.

1. The Festival of Bridge. There followed some discussion. John C had already allocated an event during November 2024 but needed to consider the details of the Festival. The committee were unsure of the details. Sheree had discussed the matter with another Somerset County member who had declined to be involved. No "representative" was allocated although Sheree would be willing to be involved once it became clear what was expected. Ceri raised the issue of fees to be charged at the events and whether Somerset would have control.

2. Mike L reported that many counties were regularly running Jack High, 9 High and 7 High events with great success. John C says he was keen to organise another event as well as running a 9 high event at the Congress next year. Andy R asked whether it was feasible to run a 9 high event at every county event and John C believed this to be a possibility.
3. Mike L wanted the committee to consider offering financial assistance to the youth teams, up to 50% of other counties are currently doing so. Mike agreed to find out more, i.e. how much we should donate, and let the committee know.
4. Mike L also referred to the training course for County Directors to take place in early 2024.

Andrew Robson

AR's visit was scheduled for 13th March 2024. Simon had circulated details earlier. As Simon is away Sheree will monitor entries and liaise with Richard F as to payments.

Competitions

John C was under pressure to book Woolavington Village Hall quite early as they were quite busy with bookings. This presented an issue as numbers to county events were dropping and John C suggested we might want to look at other venues. Clearly the drop in numbers presented both logistical and financial implications.

Weston-Super-Mare Congress

The event was a real success and Frank and his team were congratulated.

In 2021 the congress made £250–350 profit (this included a £500 sponsorship contribution).

In 2022 the profit was just £12.97.

In 2023 a profit of £994.88 was achieved.

The dates put aside for next year 2024 are 11th, 12th and 13th October. There was a discussion as to venue.

Matters needed dealing with as to the physical work involved in setting up the Congress, the transporting of tables, boards etc. Mike L volunteered to assist next year.

Frank is away for a considerable period of time next year and help will also be needed in terms of administration, i.e. taking bookings, website admin, responding to emails on a regular basis. Alan E volunteered to deal with this aspect.

Treasurer's Report

Richard was unable to attend the meeting. The figures looked promising and nothing of note.

£1500 was spent recently on a dealing machine for Winscombe.

Any other business

Neighbouring counties should be asked to promote Somerset events as we do theirs.

Sheree to email all the club representatives and ask them to check that their club's entry on the SCBA website is still correct.

Mike L will speak to Paul Burgess about the possibility of circulating a bi-monthly newsletter. Andy R believed this was felt the optimal method of speaking to members directly when club representatives do not engage with the county or pass on information as to county events.

Michael W had recently emailed all club representatives but had not got a single response.

John referred to the upcoming programme and

1. Suggested that the stratified pairs be replaced with a 9 high tournament.
2. A date for the Michael Coda cup had not been allocated.
3. The programme would follow roughly that of last year with one or two changes.
4. Avoid a clash with the Tollemache Cup.
5. Also to include Andrew Robson's event in the programme.
6. Mike L reiterated the success of 7 high events at other counties as reported in the county chairs' meeting.

Minutes prepared by Sheree Pavey

6 November 2023