

Club Representatives' Meeting

The Blackbourne Community Centre
(Elmswell Village Hall) IP30 9UH

Wednesday 24th July 2019

12:00 noon

Attendees: See attached list.

MINUTES

1) Minutes of last meeting (25th July 2018) and matters arising

The minutes were accepted and there were no matters arising.

2) Update on suggestions from last meeting

Chris Rickard, Competitions Secretary, responded by email. It was suggested last year that players might be disinclined to play in County events because they didn't want to travel far or return home late at night or in the dark. Accordingly we have introduced earlier start times and added new events (Autumn Pairs and Bah Humbug), and the multi-event concept which was very successful for the Seniors Pairs.

3) 'Running a club duplicate'

Jacks Morecombe and Peter Bushby are offering one-day local courses in running a club duplicate. Topics covered include basic director training, refreshers for existing directors, scoring, table movements and the Laws. Courses can be tailored to suit particular club requirements, and they are available to affiliated and non-affiliated clubs. They are not intended to be an alternative to the formal EBU Director courses. Full details on the SCBA website, or from Jacks or Peter.

4) Security of boards – advice from Gordon Rainsford

Pre-dealt boards are supplied by the SCBA and a number of other sources within the County. We rely heavily on the integrity of those involved in handing pre-dealt boards and hand records, but clearly it makes sense to take precautions to protect their security. Guidelines have been provided by Gordon Rainsford and these are published on the SCBA website. Gordon is the Chief Executive of the EBU (and a former EBU General Manager and Chief Tournament Director). In so far as is practicable, boards supplied by the SCBA will comply with these guidelines.

5) SCBA Conduct Committee – extension to offer informal help to clubs

The SCBA has set up a Conduct Committee, chaired by Malcolm Pryor, to deal with incidents of behaviour that allegedly fall below the standard expected. As part of our review of the SCBA constitution we are looking to extend the services of this Committee, including providing an appeals process for club disciplinary rulings. This doesn't remove the need for all clubs to have written procedures to deal with conduct / disciplinary matters within the club, in line with EBU guidelines. In addition, clubs are welcome to consult SCBA Committee members on any aspect of Club organisation if they feel they need help or advice.

6) Contact details – 'My EBU'

Occasionally the SCBA wishes to contact members individually (for example, to notify a change in arrangements for an event they have entered). Often we find that the member's contact details are wrong or missing. This is plea from the SCBA to clubs to encourage their members to ensure their contact details (if they have agreed that we can contact them) are correct on 'My EBU'; they can do this on 'My EBU' > Account. Additionally, on 'My EBU' > Account > Club Membership, they can if they wish give their club(s) permission to view and/or change their details.

7) Insurance – learning from non-affiliated club's experience

A non-affiliated club contacted the SCBA to advise that they were being threatened with legal action from some of their former members alleging defamation. They had checked with their insurance and found that they may not be covered for this eventuality. If successful, the lawsuit could bankrupt the club and force closure. They were informing us so that our member clubs would be alerted and not be caught in the same situation. In the event, the threat did not materialise, but the message is still pertinent. Peter Bushby, when he was SCBA General Secretary, checked and confirmed that club insurance provided through the EBU did cover defamation. If your club does not have insurance through the EBU, please check that you have suitable cover.

8) County / Club event clashes

There have been a few instances in recent years where county and club events have clashed, to the detriment of both. We recognise that the calendar is quite congested and finding free dates can be very difficult, but we hope that further clashes can be avoided. The SCBA event programme is published 12-18 months in advance.

9) Constitutional and organisational changes within the SCBA

The SCBA has set up a small working group, chaired by Malcolm Pryor, to update our Constitution (necessary because of changes in technology and the EBU organisation). The updated constitution will be put to the Members for approval at the 2020 AGM. At the same time, we are looking at organisational changes within the SCBA – what is our primary purpose, do we have the right infrastructure to achieve this, etc.? If you have any suggestions as to how the SCBA organisational structure might be improved, please advise any SCBA Committee Member.

10) Our website features – ‘Play the hand again’, etc.

We’ve had a new website since the 2018 AGM, managed jointly by Richard Evans and Paul Rickard, and based on the Bridgewebs platform. It features many articles on bridge from various contributors, and photographs. It appears to be popular, with almost 50,000 hits so far this year. One of the lesser-known features is ‘Play it again’; Richard explained that clicking on any hand in the ‘Results’ section provides the facility to replay the hand; the software enables double-dummy analysis, to show how any contract could have been made or defeated. This is useful for those who want to improve their game.

Richard also reiterated the point he made last year – that the club website is an invaluable tool in communicating with members and attracting potential new members, but many clubs do not take full advantage of this. He repeated his offer to help clubs who wish to improve their website.

11) On-line bridge?

A small group of members have been playing on-line bridge informally and the SCBA is considering extending it as part of the County programme. It misses the social aspect of the game (very important for some) but against that it is cheap (i.e. free), quick (typically 24 boards in 2.5 hours, with no travelling), and ideal for those with mobility issues. Our concern was that clubs might feel threatened by this development, but the general feeling was that this was not the case. The SCBA will consider whether we should include on-line bridge in the events programme.

12) Mentoring?

This has been discussed previously, but not implemented because it was felt that novice players might feel intimidated if paired with an 'expert'. One way around this might be to have a list of volunteer experienced players from which novices could choose their partner. Mike O'Reilly suggested combining this with on-line bridge. Again, the SCBA will consider this.

13) AOB

a) Fraud

There have been a number of attempts to fraudulently access the SCBA bank account, none successful. Our bank details are freely available because we publish them for on-line BACS payment of entry fees. It was suggested that we might create a separate account just for receipt of entry fees, with no provision for payments out. Our Treasurer will consider this. Clubs are advised to be alert to possible attempts on their own accounts, and to this end it was suggested that clubs do not list the contact details for their treasurer on their website.

b) County training

There was some support for organising training for those who play in ECL matches. The Chairman will discuss this with the County Captain.

c) 'Find a partner' service on the website?

It was suggested that the SCBA website could be used to provide a clearing house service to find partners for non-county events. The web-masters will consider this.

The meeting closed at 3:10 p.m.

Jeff Orton

SCBA August 2019

Attendance list

Representing		
Abbeygate	John Bloomfield	
Aldeburgh		
Bury	Helen Mason	Mike O'Reilly
Clacton	Jenny Gittins	John Bowley
Clare	Jenny Bishop	John Symons
Colchester		
Dovercourt		
Felixstowe	Barbara Carey	
Framlingham		
Frinton	Caroline Blackler	Janice Bantock
Hadleigh		
Ipswich & Kesgrave	Anne Edwards	
Ipswich Hospitals	John Garbutt	
Little Clacton	Linda Thomas	
Newmarket		
Stansfield	Pauline Broad	
Stowmarket	Jan Wynne	
Stratford St. Mary	Christine Cooke	
Sudbury		
Woodbridge	Dave Walker	
SCBA	Malcolm Carey	EBU Delegate
	Richard Evans	Vice Chairman & co Webmaster
	Paddy Lockwood	Committee Member
	Jeff Orton	Chairman
	Jill Tattersfield	ECL Admin & Membership Sec
	Roger Tattersfield	Treasurer