

BWS (Brierfield/Warrington/Stretford) Bridge Club

Organisers' Meeting held on Zoom

Tuesday 3rd November 2020

Present

David Tilley (B/W/S)

Linda Banks (Brierfield)

Norman Cope (Brierfield) to 1100hrs.

Jim Steele (Warrington)

Mike Dennis (Warrington)

Chris Collison (Stretford)

Alan Crabtree (Brierfield)

Apologies

Richard Aubery (Stretford)

1 Welcome and Chairman's Report & Update (Some topics are covered as agenda items)

David Tilley chaired the meeting.

It was agreed that formal minutes should be taken. Mike Dennis volunteered to do this.

We now have over 6 months' experience of running BWS. All agreed that it has been a resounding success. We have had 4 regular duplicate pairs sessions per week (Sunday mornings, Monday afternoons, Monday evenings, and Friday evenings) and with the addition of Wednesday afternoons (of which in Item 2) and Thursday morning Supervised Gentle Duplicates, introduced on 16th July, we now have 6. Numbers playing are generally on the increase, with over 60 tables per week. Typical numbers are Monday afternoon 10 tables, Monday evening 18 tables, Friday evening 12 to 15 tables, and Sunday mornings 10 to 15 tables. Thursday morning supervised duplicates are building nicely, now getting 7 tables most times.

There are some issues with start times coinciding with peak usage on BBO, so that some people have difficulty logging on. We will consider whether we should change some start times, eg evening sessions at 7pm or 7.15pm.

DT: David said that his circumstances now allow more time for bridge activities, but he has a lot of extra work to do because of

- the recent sudden and untimely death of Stretford Treasurer Don Monks. Irene Cooke is standing in as Treasurer in the meantime, but DT is having to try to retrieve all the records etc.
- a particular Stretford member being abusive and troublemaking, taking a lot of time to deal with, and causing stress and unpleasantness.

There continue to be some problems with people not using the correct alerting method on BBO, or omitting to alert altogether. Undo's for mis-clicks is also sometimes an issue. It was agreed we should communicate with members about the correct alerting procedure; that undo's are allowed for bidding mis-clicks but not in play of the cards; and that if an undo request is declined, the TD should be called. The over-riding message is that we are here to enjoy playing friendly bridge, so being considerate, and getting on with the play, rather than pursuing perceived "wrongs", is the ethos of BWS. **Action: Draft a communiqué for the three Clubs: DT**

EBU article: DT had recently been interviewed by the EBU Membership Development Officer, Tim Anderson, about the BWS initiative. You can read the article here

<https://ebumemberdevelop.org.uk/index.php/2020/10/31/half-a-year-on-getting-clubs-and-club-members-playing-online/>

It might also be published in the December edition of the EBU magazine.

2 Wednesday afternoon session

This had originated as Brierfield only, but due to inadequate support, it was widened to all three Clubs from 14th October. There was some difference of understanding about whether this would carry on, and if so, for how long. The Committee agreed it should continue until at least the end of November, then we would take stock. Subsequent to the meeting it was agreed to continue with the Wednesday afternoon duplicate pairs through December. This links to RealBridge (see item 3) and Children in Need Charity events (see item 4).

3 Real Bridge

There was unanimous support for rolling this out, as it offers a more natural bridge experience than BBO, since all four players round a table can see and talk to each other, to more nearly mimic normal face-to-face bridge. BBO are talking about introducing such a facility, but there is no timescale promised.

The following RealBridge events will be held:

Friday afternoon 6th November, 2pm, in association with Larkhill Bridge Club (18-21 boards)

Tuesday afternoon 10th November, 2pm, taster session (8 boards)

Tuesday afternoon 17th November, 2pm, taster session (8 boards)

Wednesday afternoon 18th November, 130pm, BWS duplicate pairs

These will be publicised at all three Clubs.

Action DT/LB/JS

(Note: after the meeting, an extra RealBridge session was run on Thursday evening 12th November, as a supplementary CiN charity event, due to a glitch with the SIM pairs hands on 9th November).

We will then take a view on which of our regular sessions to hold using RealBridge rather than BBO. DT is keen to also try it on our Thursday morning Supervised Gentle Duplicate sessions, as it is ideally suited for dialogue at the table with a Supervisor. The meeting concurred.

Costs: RealBridge is cheaper than BBO. The charge is 36p per player up to 20 boards, and 48p per player for longer sessions. This compares to 80p per player on BBO.

DT also reported that the Manchester Bridge Association is rebating the 7p per player charge, so that our EBU charges are now 40p per player, not 47p. This takes our total charge per player, excluding TD costs, to

- when using BBO: £1.20, from £1.27
- when using RealBridge: 76p when up to 20 boards, 88p when more than 20 boards.

4 Children in Need and other Charity Events

We agreed that we will run two CiN SIM Pairs events, Monday evening 9th November, and Wednesday afternoon 11th November, both on BBO. We will have an extra 10 tables on 9th November, as we are hosting a Preston club to join in our event.

(Note, subsequent to meeting: because of a glitch with the SIM pairs hands on 9th November, a 3rd CiN Charity SIM Pairs event was held on Thursday evening 12th November, using RealBridge)

We agreed not to run any additional BWS Charity events in November, and probably into the New Year.

There was general agreement that for CiN, the charge per player should be uniform at £5.00.

The EBU will charge 50% of the normal rate, but BBO will charge in full. DT will offer the TD at nil cost, so our costs will be £1 per player, with £4 going to CiN charity.

The Clubs can each decide whether to fund the £1, so that the full £5 per player can go to CiN.

Action: Club Committees (Brierfield/Warrington/Stretford)

5 Charging and Invoicing

Stretford have been paying all the BWS costs so far, and Warrington and Brierfield have yet to be invoiced for their share of the costs since the inception of BWS. DT is working to catch up with the task, and is using QuickBooks to manage the process.

DT is aiming to get the first invoices out within two weeks or so (bearing in mind other issues he has to deal with) which will cover the period up to end August 2020. The 7p per person rebate from Manchester Bridge Association amounts to ~£270, and will not be included in the Club invoices, either retrospectively or going forward.

The bill for the costs of the CiN events will be invoiced to the Clubs separately.

It was noted that the Clubs have different arrangements for recovering costs from their members. Brierfield charge monthly in arrears; Warrington charge in arrears every 2 months, for Sep & Oct, Nov & Dec, etc.

The meeting agreed that the payment of the full going rate (presently £40) should be charged by DT for each event he acts as TD, with the exception of charity events and supervised duplicates, though DT is free to start charging for those as well, as he deems appropriate.

The present charges per person per event are the same at Stretford and Warrington, from the start of November, at

- £3.00 for standard duplicate pairs
- £1.00 for Supervised Gentle Duplicate pairs

However, Briarfield's' charges for standard duplicate pairs have been a little lower, currently £2 per person.

We might wish to revisit these charges in the future, for example in the light of the slightly lower costs of running events on RealBridge.

Payment to Charities of the money raised: there was lack of clarity on which charities had already received the amount raised on their behalf by our Charity events. DT will ensure we are kept informed. **Action DT**

There is a potential issue of some players dropping between the slats on being charged for. For example, there are a number of players from Liverpool who have started playing regularly in BWS events. It is not clear which Club if any has those people on their books and is therefore charging for them to play. The intent was that they would be directed to join whichever Club is geographically nearest (in this case Warrington) but this has not happened. **Action DT**

Members are permitted to play with a guest, and the Club charges the member for the person and for their guest. This is working fine. However, there are some possible issues where a Club member is playing with a person not from the same Club, and assumes they are a member of one of the other two Clubs. There is one particular example which needs to be followed up to check the correct arrangements are in place.

Action JSS/DT

6 Education

Lessons on Zoom have been running on alternate Thursday mornings, from the start of October, followed by Supervised Gentle Duplicate with prepared hands on the theme of the lesson. The lessons are topic based, aimed at Improvers, and take-up has been encouraging, with about 30 attendees.

Jim Steele has delivered the first three, in October; Dave Tilley will deliver the next one, on 5th November.

Lessons will also be posted on the Club websites, so will be forwarded for this to happen. **Action JSS/DT**

We currently do not have any course or provision for beginners or near beginners. Mike Hickling might be available to run such a thing.

We will set up a BWS Education sub-committee. The first meeting (on Zoom) has been arranged for Tuesday 10th November, at 10.00hrs.
DT/JSS/ AC/CC + Mike Hickling

7 Festival of Bridge Week and Other events

It has been mooted at Brierfield that we might hold a Festival of Bridge week. The meeting agreed that this could be a good idea, and probably best around Christmas, say between Christmas and New Year.

Committee members were asked to come up with ideas of events we might hold. **Action: all**

Jim Steele also suggested, in the light of the ongoing lockdown, we might offer a BWS Teams of 4 Lockdown league to be held over the winter months. He agreed to circulate a proposal which Committee members could use to publicise within their Clubs to invite entries.
Action JSS

8 Date of next BWS Organisers' meeting

The date proposed is Tuesday 1st December at 10.00hrs.

(later revised to 12th December, 10.00hrs)