

## BWS (Brierfield/Warrington/Stretford) Bridge Club

### Organisers' Meeting held on Zoom

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021

#### Present

David Tilley (B/W/S)- chair  
Richard Aubery (Stretford)  
Linda Banks (Brierfield)  
Chris Collison (Stretford)  
Norman Cope (Brierfield) (until 10:55)  
Alan Crabtree (Brierfield)  
Mike Dennis (Warrington)  
Jim Steele (Warrington)  
Helen Wright (Warrington)

#### 1 Welcome

David Tilley chaired the meeting, which opened at 10am.

#### 2 Apologies

Janet Jagan (Warrington)

#### 3 Minutes of Last Meeting (19 Dec 2020)

There were various actions from last time which were outstanding and needed to be picked up, but these were on the agenda. Otherwise the minutes were accepted.

#### 4 David Tilley's Report

The existing set-up of sessions is working well, with continuing growth in table numbers, and all events are popular. There is no obvious need to change anything. Stretford are continuing with the work to calculate the invoices for Brierfield and Warrington. (see item 5). Irene Cooke is continuing to stand in as Treasurer for Stretford, pending a replacement for Don Monks.

#### 5 Invoicing

Stretford's work to prepare 2020 invoices for Brierfield and Warrington is still ongoing.

Both Brierfield and Warrington are happy that they have robust and documented data to self-bill for the payments owed to Stretford for 2020. It was agreed that both Brierfield and Warrington would proceed on that basis, and pay Stretford the amounts they have calculated, excluding the 2020 charity events, which will be dealt with separately *\*(see below)*. David Tilley will provide the Stretford bank account details.

#### Action DT

Any discrepancies which arise between the Stretford calculations for 2020, and those of Brierfield or Warrington, can be resolved by checking through the data at a later date, and reconciling. Any such discrepancies are likely to be minor.

Both Brierfield and Warrington continue to operate running accounts of what is owed to Stretford, for 2021. Jim has already shared his spreadsheet for doing this with Stretford and Brierfield; it includes a colour-coded player list, so that players can be readily allocated to the correct club. David Tilley said that for 2021, Stretford will invoice Brierfield and Warrington on a monthly basis. **Action DT**

Charging for stand-by players and robots on BBO: DT confirmed that the charge for stand-ins and robots is the same as for our club players, ie includes the EBU and BBO charges. It is £1.20 per occasion, split three ways between the clubs, so we each pay 40p. DT said that now BBO allows sit outs/half-tables, we will move from having stand-by players and robots, so the issue will go away. DT will ensure that the other TD's we use are aware for our policy. **Action DT** (Note: in BBO, sit-outs are always EW).

*\* Not all the payment to the respective charities have been made for the 2020 charity events, complicated by the death of Stretford Treasurer Don Monks. This will need to be resolved and documented to the satisfaction of all three Clubs; once this is done, Brierfield and Warrington will pay the relevant amounts to Stretford.*

## **6 Current sessions: review**

There was a discussion on the balance between RealBridge and BBO. Some people have strong views in favour of one or the other. The meeting agreed that the balance is about right as it is, roughly half and half, and that we would retain the present arrangements for now, pending canvassing of members' views.

The idea of having breaks built into sessions was also discussed. Norman was particularly concerned about the problem of long uninterrupted screen time not being advisable, and difficult to cope with for some people. There was a difference of views: some felt that building in breaks was a good idea; others felt that the pace of play was often quite slow, and there was already adequate time between table movements, and when people were dummy. It was agreed we would try out introducing breaks until the end of January, to see how it went down with members. For BBO, the mechanism is slightly awkward, but could be achieved by adding say 5 or 10 minutes to a board half-way through the session.

Canvassing opinion: at the end of January, we will have 9 months' experience of running BWS on-line bridge. It was agreed we would carry out a survey of members' views on their preferences, on a range of topics, including:

- RealBridge v BBO.
- Session start times.
- Numbers of boards in sessions.
- Built-in breaks or not.
- What other options people would like to see provided.

A questionnaire will be drafted for comment.

**Action: DT/JSS/LB**

**Posting results** (action from last time): in order to make the process easier for uploading of results, David said he would set up a Dropbox folder to hold the results and hands files, and make access available to JSS, JJ, and LB, so that we could access them and upload directly, without DT having to send them by email each time.

**Action DT**

## **7 RealBridge**

We cannot issue links for RealBridge sessions for more than a week, because of the regular weekly RealBridge updates. Dave Tilley will send the instructions for setting up RealBridge sessions to Jim, in case it needs to be done when David isn't available for any reason.

**Action DT**

The latest RealBridge update email from Shireen Mohandes (Release Notes – Version 0.9.8, dated 19<sup>th</sup> January) will be circulated.

**Action JSS**

“PLAY” option on the website: as discussed last time, Jim had received some complaints from a few members that on certain, but not all, RealBridge sessions, the results on the website do not include the “PLAY” option. This option is useful as it allows a person to see again what the bidding was on their table, and how the hand was played, and even play it again using Bridge Solver Online, so they can learn and improve.

This issue was related to the editing of the .xml results file to correct errors in player names. The method of doing this has now been resolved, so all our results on the website should now include the PLAY option.

## **8 Possible New Events**

Two are proposed:

- replacing the existing Friday evening session once per month with a Swiss Pairs, the first being 29<sup>th</sup> January
- A new monthly event on a Tuesday evening, a Teams night, the first being 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

The format of the latter was discussed, eg random draw of pairs, with seeding based on NGS grades to avoid either very strong or very weak teams.

A notice about these will be drafted, for posting on the respective websites. **Action DT**

The longer term future of our on-line bridge was discussed; it was generally agreed that there will be a place for some on-line activities once live bridge is resumed. There will need to be some coordination of which live sessions the Clubs have, in order to find suitable slots.

Pre-lockdown, Warrington met on Monday and Thursday evenings; Stretford had only afternoon sessions – Sundays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, with Improvers on Fridays; Brierfield had evening sessions on Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs, plus Mon/Wed/Fri afternoons.

The three Club Committees will be reviewing their arrangements anyway, as we approach the end of Covid restrictions. As BWS, we will discuss in coming months when the timing is clearer.

## **9 Education**

After discussion, Mike Hickling has decided against running an on-line course for beginners. Warrington has therefore decided to promote Jack Stocken’s (Yorkshire Bridge) new on-line beginners course, which starts today. Both Warrington and Stretford have advertised it in their websites, and it has been drawn to the attention of the Warrington U3A group of learners, via Andrew Young.

The Thursday morning Zoom lessons for Improvers continue to be popular, with upwards of 40 attendees. We will therefore continue with these in the meantime, and review once we have a better idea when live bridge/ live classes will be possible again.

## **10 Festival of Bridge Week**

This has been a successful annual event at Brierfield, with free bridge and a variety of sessions.

We proposed that we hold a BWS Festival of Bridge over Easter, to include a variety of formats, such as a Trophy competition, a random pairs, a pro-am, etc. The Clubs will discuss in their respective committees if they want to support this, and offer free bridge for the week. **Action B/W/S**

## **11 Psych Book**

There was a brief discussion on psyches and our policy. We are bound by the EBU Laws of Bridge, and psychs are legal. We can, and do, however, record them, with a view to discussing with any player who “offends” 3 times, and reporting the player to the EBU. There were no new entries in our psych book since last time.

## **12 AOB**

12.1 The BWS Teams of Four Lockdown league is underway. We have 7 teams taking part in a round robin, to be completed by mid-April. All teams have now played at least one match. A table of current league positions is published on the Warrington website.

12.2 Deputising for David Tilley: there were concerns about how we would proceed if DT was unavailable for any reason. We need cover in place. **Actions (all by DT):**

- Provide Jim with contact details for setting up RealBridge sessions.
- Provide contact details for stand-in TDs (eg Josh Clarke) to other members of this BWS committee
- Ensure that any Stretford work for invoicing (eg a spreadsheet) is shared with at least one other Stretford Committee member.

## **13 Date of next BWS Organisers’ meeting**

The date agreed is Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> February, at 10am.