



Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Sunday 30 June 2013 @ West Midlands Bridge Club

Present: Darren Evetts (Chairman), Mike Thorley (Vice Chairman), Sandra Squires (Secretary & Membership Secretary), Elayne Meakin (Competition Secretary), Ron Birch (League Secretary), Leslie Reece (Treasurer), Adrian Knight (Match Secretary), Jan Eden (Publicity Officer), Myra Scott (Player Development Officer), Colin Lang, Jon Downing, Carolyn Fisher, John Pyner, Stephanie Galvin, Peter Nicholds and 30 Members.

1. **Apologies** were received from Hylda Townsend, Ken Crane, Nick Woosnam, Anne Woosnam, Chris Harris, Roger Twyman, Myra Twyman, Jane Hall and Cyril Hall.
2. **The minutes of the AGM held 24 June 2012** were agreed and signed as correct by the Chairman.
3. **Matters Arising**

It was confirmed that the King team had won the Knockout Cup after last year's AGM.

4. **Treasurer's Report (Leslie Reece)**

The results for the year were again very satisfactory with a net surplus of £3340 which was similar to the previous year. Again half the surplus came from external sources with the continued sponsorship of £750 from Nicklins and a windfall of £800 from the sale proceeds of redundant trophies.

Income

Income from P2P was up by about 4% helped by the reaffiliation of Rugby Bridge Club.

The first year of the MiniBridge initiative produced an unexpected surplus of £453.

The WPL result was lower and the effect on other county events was negative, mainly due to making the Cock of the County a free competition apart from the cost of the teas.

Expenditure

The net cost of external competitions was up due to fewer entries to the Garden Cities event and an extra pair taking up their place in the Corwen. The county also paid £123 to the EBU in P2P costs. This will be an ongoing expense.

There were some extra admin costs: extra publicity material, £50 for website software replacement and £45 for a movement manual. The website costs include the cost of an update; however, the basic fee was unchanged.

Delegate expenses reflect the number of meetings and number of delegates attending.

Forecast

A surplus is expected for 2013/14, but is likely to be quite a bit lower.

P2P income is likely to remain the same and Nicklins have agreed to extend their sponsorship for a third year.

However, a few negatives are already known – the Green Point profit is down by £130, due to lower entries; WPL is likely to break-even and the Garden Cities heat was again disappointing. The cycle of county matches, with more home matches this year, will mean greater costs.

To finish on a high note the recent charity simultaneous pairs raised a record figure of £1250 for the Warwickshire Air Ambulance.

Jon Downing asked if the county P2P costs are likely to rise. Leslie confirmed that they were unlikely to be significantly higher.

Jon Downing pointed out that without the one-off items the county surplus would only be £500-£600 and this may affect the county's ability to pay the rebate. It was noted that the rebate would have already been deducted from these figures. Also as the rebate is fixed in retrospect once the results are known it could be adjusted as necessary.

The Executive Committee recommended a rebate to Clubs of 2p per player session. It also recommended that the County P2P fee remain at 7p. These recommendations were proposed by Leslie Reece, seconded by Ron Birch, and agreed

5. Chairman's Report (Darren Evetts)

Darren distributed the following report:

It is difficult to believe that it has been three years since I was elected Chairman. So much has happened over that period that I cannot imagine where the time has gone.

There have been two landmark events this year. Hylda Townsend, one of our Life Members, celebrated her 100th Birthday in March. Susan Stockdale, having won a Gold Medal at the 51st European Championships in Dublin this time last year, just two months later won a second Gold Medal, with teammates, at the 2nd World Mind Games in Lille. Our congratulations go to both Hylda and Susan.

Congratulations also to the Coventry & North Warwickshire Bridge Club team of Roger Bryant, Steve Green, Ian Handley, Martin Jones, David Kenward, Gareth Roberts, Nick Stevens & Garry Watson, on winning the 2013 Garden Cities Trophy. Although Coventry Bridge Club had won this trophy many times, this year is the first time that Coventry and North Warwickshire Bridge Club has won the event. Our congratulations to Ian Handley, David Jones, David Kenward, Mike Leese and Steve Wood for finishing third in the Pachabo Cup.

The Markham (3rd) team won the Inter-County League for the third successive year. Well done to all the players who contributed to this success. They will represent Warwickshire in the Inter-County Leagues Final next month. The Dawes (1st) Team finished second and the Porter (2nd) team finished fifth in their respective divisions. My thanks to all those members who commit to representing Warwickshire in these matches. Any pair wishing to qualify for County selection should aim to play in the Warwickshire Pairs League, Coventry Pairs League, or Birmingham Pairs League.

We welcome back Rugby Bridge Club to the County this year, and say goodbye to Rugby Village Bridge Club. We are pleased that Rugby Bridge Club decided to re-affiliate, and look forward to seeing many of their members at County events. We wish Rugby Village Bridge Club well, and hope they will be happy in their new County, Northamptonshire.

Ron Birch joined the Executive Committee this year and took over Management of the League. Ron, with the help of his wife, Lin, soon began moving the League onto the new EBU League Management System. I am happy to say that this has been successful and would like to thank all the League teams for making the transition so easy and painless. I am sure members would want me to thank Ron (and Lin) for all the work they have done this year. Any teams wishing to join the league please contact Ron.

Warwickshire played host to the National Women's Teams in September, and I am pleased to report that one of the teams reaching the final had two Warwickshire members in the team. We also played host once again to the Inter-University Bridge Festival, held at Warwick University, in February. Coventry and West Midlands Bridge Clubs provided support to the event.

The County works in association with two of its Clubs in running two special events. Coventry & North Warwickshire Bridge Club - International Replay - an invitation event, runs for nine sessions a year on the second Thursday of each month from October to June. Stratford upon Avon Bridge Club - The Shakespeare Swiss Teams – takes place annually, and is open to Bridge Clubs from the surrounding area. We are pleased to be able to work with Clubs offering these types of events, so if your Club has anything in mind, please speak to us.

The Warwickshire Bridge Focus, launched in July 2012, has, I feel sure, provided members with an interesting and informative publication. Bridge Focus provides information not only from the County, but also from the Clubs and individual members. It includes interesting hands, informative play and bidding problems; questions and answers about the laws, and other bridge related topics. I would like to thank Jan Eden, the editor of Bridge Focus, for his time and effort in producing this publication. My thanks, also, to those Clubs and individuals who provide the content material.

West Midlands Bridge Club will once again be hosting the Premier League in November, the European Seniors Trials and the finals of the Gold Cup, in December, and are looking for volunteers to help with the VuGraph! For those members who are not familiar with the term 'VuGraph' it is where the matches are broadcast around the World using the online bridge site, Bridgebase Online (BBO). It is very simple to use, and training will be given, so if you think you might be able to assist please contact me.

The EBU Bridge Shop is a service provided by the EBU for all of its members. Members can enjoy a discount, so please consider using the shop for your bridge supplies.

The data provided through Pay-2-Play has given us some particularly interesting information. In 2011 four Warwickshire Clubs featured in the top twenty most attended affiliated Clubs in England, and this year three Clubs featured in the top twenty, those being West Midlands 3rd (5th in 2011), Kenilworth 4th (4th in 2011), Stratford 17th (17th in 2011).

Nicklins LLP, accountants and business advisers, of Birmingham, have generously agreed to sponsor us for a further year. I would like to thank them for their continued support, and ask members to consider Nicklins for any of their accounting or business needs.

The MiniBridge scheme continues to develop. Coventry is now running a Junior MiniBridge session on Saturday afternoons. Anyone interested in taking their child, or grandchild, or if you are prepared to offer help with running these sessions, please contact Frank Deakin, 02476 338668. West Midlands Bridge Club continues to offer MiniBridge sessions at Dorridge Junior School and Wheelers Lane Primary School, and will also be starting a Junior MiniBridge session on Saturday afternoons from September. Anyone interested in taking their child, or grandchild, or if you are prepared to offer help with running these sessions, please contact Chris Killeen, 0121 704 9633.

The Player Development Group has now existed in its present form for three years. The group is working very hard to provide events for up and coming players. They have developed from one annual event to now seven competitions running during the year, many of these being suitable for players with little more than one year's learning. Their current focus is looking at ways to narrow the gap between events for less experienced players and events for more experienced players at County level. As a first step the Player Development Group are looking to offer more teams events, in the hope that every two-three years a new league division can be introduced. Another focus will be looking towards sharing and developing teaching materials currently in use for club players at a number of Clubs within the County. Please talk to Myra Scott if you have any ideas, or would like to be involved in any of these initiatives.

I would like to say a special thank you to all the people within the County who contribute to the teaching of bridge. They contribute so much to the enjoyment of the game for new players, and each one of them is making a very positive contribution to the future of the game.

Our Charity Simultaneous Pairs raised an outstanding £1250 in support of Warwickshire Air Ambulance, which is £500 more than last year. Thanks go to David and Martin Jones and George Cuthbertson for providing the commentary; to the EBU for administering the scoring and to Sandra Squires for managing the event. The format of the event was changed this year to run on two separate evenings, with each evening playing different boards. We hope members found the new format an improvement, and that some of you were able to play twice, which was something not previously permitted! Clearly the extra money raised for the charity suggests it was a success!

Running a County like Warwickshire takes a lot of time, dedication and commitment from a substantial number of people. I would like to thank all of our Bridge Clubs, and their members, who have played host to the many events we have organised during the year, and for their support in ensuring that the affairs of the County are kept in good order. Some of our individual members deserve a special mention: Ken Crane, for his work on WPL MasterPoints, our County Player Database and other IT related matters; George Cuthbertson, for his work on the Competitions Committee, Commentaries, reminders and Website updates; Bob Galvin, for being our Independent Examiner; Adrian and Prue Knight, Martin Ayers, Sue and David Jones, Peter Oldbury, Malcolm Oliver, Steve Royston, Sid Sidney and Mary Taylor, for duplimating the boards; Mike and Elayne Meakin, for their support with the organisation and running of events, and the reminders Mike sends to us; Myra Twyman, for her support with publicity; Roger Twyman, for his work as our Webmaster; those members who contribute to the many commentaries produced throughout the season, and our Tournament Directors, some of whom also provide telephone rulings for matches played privately. I would particularly like to thank David, Marilyn and Martin Jones, Mike Meakin, Maggs and John Pyner, and Nick Woosnam for their directing expertise, and welcome Graham Lightfoot, who has recently joined the WPL Tournament Directing team.

Warwickshire is extremely fortunate to have such a dedicated group of people, who provide such diverse support to our County. Having said that, I am acutely aware that for this level of support to continue we need to encourage new people who are prepared to Tournament Direct and sit on our committees, particularly the Executive Committee. This year we welcomed one new person onto the Executive Committee but, if we are to maintain the success of our County, we must plan for the future and encourage more members to take part in the County's administration. We rely on our Clubs, as representatives of our members, to convey much of our news, and I would ask Clubs to please convey this message, as it is of vital importance, both to the County and to the Clubs, that we must welcome new ideas and new energies into our group. If there are any members prepared to give of their time and skills to help to maintain and develop the diverse programme of activities within the County please contact me.

I would like to say a special word of thanks to members of the Executive Committee - Mike Thorley, Sandra Squires, Leslie Reese, Ron Birch, Jan Eden, Stephanie Galvin, Adrian Knight, Elayne Meakin, Myra Scott, Jon Downing, Carolyn Fisher, Jane Hall, David Jones, Colin Lang, Peter Nicholds, John Pyner and Nick Woosnam - for their unfailing dedication and commitment. I must also include Chris Harris, our Regional Club Committee representative. Chris is not a member of the Executive Committee, but has an open invitation to attend the meetings and contribute to discussions. My thanks also to all of those people I have not mentioned by name but who contribute so much to the Bridge administration across the County.

Finally, and very importantly, I would like to thank all of our members. Your support of the many Clubs you are members of, your attendance at County Competitions, and your contributions to the administration of the County are all vital to our success - thank you.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the County's administration please do not hesitate to contact me (Chairman@WarwickshireBridge.co.uk).

I hope you all have an enjoyable summer.

Competitions Report: Elayne Meakin

Overall this has been a good year with numbers slightly up, so we must be getting some things right! However, a couple of events have not run as smoothly as we would have liked.

There have been two main issues:

Firstly, no shows: Is it really too much to ask players who have pre-qualified for events, or pre-entered events, to let us know if they are not coming? Indeed, does everyone know how to contact us? We cannot chase everyone, so this year we asked the Clubs to chase, but we unfortunately still had problems. If anyone has any ideas on how we can overcome this issue, please talk to me. I am sure you will all agree that it is just not fair to keep 99% of players waiting for one or two people to arrive. The problem is made more difficult because the use of Bridgemate's reduces the ability to slot in late-comers. In future events will start on-time. This means players should please arrive 10 minutes before the published start time. Notified late arrivals will be accommodated, but un-notified late arrivals may not be.

Secondly, resources: We run 37 events a year! Some may say this is too much, but the attendances say otherwise. These events are run by a small group of people and the job becomes more complex as we adopt more technology. Also, it is the same people who run the 20 sessions of BPL and CPL, making a grand total of 57 events. So, we need either more TDs with technological skills, or helpers to deal with the scoring, etc. Clearly the people we need are those doing the work already at their Clubs, but if anyone could help out for just one event a year it would make an enormous difference. The County will provide support and training for anyone who is able to help.

Moving on: Next Year's events will be almost the same; with just two changes:

Frank Handicap Cup/Goodman Cup

One event we are concerned about is the Frank Handicap Cup. A major contributory factor, we believe, is that it was being played very early in the season. A County like ours needs a two session Teams of four event, and I think it is right to handicap it, and to use it as the Goodman Cup Qualifier, as this should encourage teams of all levels to enter. To enable us to re-schedule this event we will run the Goodman Cup for 2013/14 as a knock-out, with matches to be organised by the Team Captains (entries by 30 September) and the Frank Handicap Cup will move to July next year, and include the Goodman Cup qualifier for 2014/15.

Championship Pairs/Mixed Pairs Qualifying

The criteria for qualification have been simplified:

Championship Pairs – Last year's top four pairs and all pairs playing in the top division of WPL, CPL and BPL will pre-qualify. In addition, all Clubs will be able to send four pairs from their heats (excluding pre-qualifiers).

Mixed Pairs – Clubs will be able to send six pairs from their heats.

Player Development Groups & Newcomers Events

Our programme for students and less-experienced players is now well established and spans the first two years, when learning the basics, along with another three years while becoming more regular and, hopefully, established club players. Many less experienced players are reluctant to move away from the comfort and security of their home Club. Our competitions, therefore, are hosted by different Clubs spread right across the County. This year Kenilworth and Silhill hosted events.

Our most successful event this year was the Mentored Novice Pivot teams hosted by West Midlands Bridge Club, with 24 teams taking part and, for the first time, all of our Clubs were represented. Next year West Midlands, Coventry & North Warwickshire, Heathercroft and Sutton Bridge Clubs will be hosting events.

Finally, thank you to you all for supporting our various events. Your views and feedback are always welcome.

Honours Board 2012 – 2013

Event	Winners
Championship Pairs	Susan Stockdale & Darren Evetts
Chick O' County	24 Jun: Julia Parsons & Roger Golsby 14 Oct: Jim Pedersen & Rod Jones
Cock O' County	Henry & Audrey McBride
Fledgling Pairs	Carrolleana Philp & John Baxter
Frank Cup	Geoff & Sue Morris, Peter Oldbury & Brent Wormald
Garden Cities National Final	Coventry & North Warwickshire B C
Goodman Cup	Mike Leese, Steve Wood, Roger Bryant & David Kenward
Green Point Swiss Pairs	Tim Durdin & Tony Hough
Handicap Teams	West Midlands A (Hackett)
International Replay	Steve Green, Martin Jones
Introductory Pairs	Marijke Rodrigo & Gerri Draysey
Ladies Pairs	Mary Shingler & Janice Fine
Men's Pairs	Gerald Nodding & Ken Crane
Mentored Novice Pivot Teams	Helen Thompson, Judith Currie, Freda Perks and Carolyn Fisher (Mentor)
Mixed Pairs	Nick & Anne Woosnam
Novice Swiss Pairs	Stephen & Sushi Abercrombie
Introducing Duplicate Pairs	Valerie & Martin Young jointly with Anne & Em Walton
Seniors' Pairs	Brent Wormald & Peter Oldbury
Shakespeare Club Swiss Teams	Andrew Clifford & Mike Thorley Peter Jupe & Paul Ison
Teams League	Moseley C (Woods)
Warwickshire Pairs League	George Cuthbertson & Ian Handley

Ruth Coubrough asked if the Warwickshire Championship Pairs event could be split into two days with the semi-finals and finals on separate days, as it had been done in the past. It was explained that staffing an extra competition might prove difficult and in the past splitting the event had produced fewer participants. A vote of the members present produced a majority for keeping it on one day (the status quo). However, Darren Evetts agreed to discuss the proposal at the next competitions committee meeting

6. Election of Officers and Executive Committee Members for 2013/14

Sandra Squires read out the nominations for County Officers and as there was only one nomination for each post the following were duly elected.

Chairman	Darren Evetts	Vice-Chairman	Mike Thorley
Secretary/Membership	Sandra Squires	Treasurer	Leslie Reece
Competitions Secretary	Elayne Meakin	League Secretary	Ron Birch
English Bridge Correspondent	Stephanie Galvin	Players Development & Youth Officer	Myra Scott
Publicity Officer	Jan Eden	Match Secretary	Adrian Knight

The following Committee members were also elected:

Jon Downing, Carolyn Fisher, Jane Hall, David Jones, Peter Nicholds, John Pyner, Nick Woosnam, Colin Lang

Leslie Reece, John Pyner and Colin Lang were elected as the County Shareholders.

Chris Harris was elected as the County's Regional Club Committee representative.

7. Election of Independent Examiner - Mr Bob Galvin was proposed by Leslie Reece, seconded by Beryl Latham, and agreed unanimously.

8. AOB

On behalf of all the members Cathy Everson congratulated Darren Evetts on his appointed to the Board of the English Bridge Union.

9. The next AGM will be held at Coventry and North Warwickshire Bridge Club on 29 June 2014 at approximately 5pm.

Sandra Squires
July 2013