



Scottish Bridge Union

President's Message

Dear Members,

I was so pleased to see so many of you in attendance via Zoom at the virtual 86th AGM of the SBU on Tuesday 30th June.

I hope that you all have been managing to play bridge in some way or other over the last few months?

As you know, the SBU have now entered into a contract with BBO to run "proper" tournaments on the site and are enabling many Clubs and Districts, in turn, to run their own.

Being a BBO TD Director requires special skills and many have been trained already to a National level and those trained, in turn, have been training others to run club and district tournaments in these virtual clubs.

Clubs and Districts should soon start to receive income from their own matches. Hopefully this will help them survive financially and help club members once again play routinely against "well kent" names, if not faces.

Long before the SBU entered into the fray as an on line games provider, Harry Smith backed by Paul Gipson started his very popular Lockdown events.

The amount of work involved and the dedication applied to best ensure each time that the numbers were optimal and that a good but informed time was had by all was, and continues to be, well beyond the call of duty. Well done Harry and team. Harry was the well-deserved recipient of the 2020 President's prize at the AGM.

Meanwhile Howard Greenwell agreed to run, on our behalf, Bronze teams, whilst the newly set up *On Line Committee* [an off shoot of the Tournament Committee of the SBU], set out their stall to Council for an on line presence. Howard's venture stems from another extraordinary amount of work with 8 leagues of 8 running. No one can remember any SBU bronze teams competition attracting so many.

Harry, Howard, and Paul Gipson have all been generous of their time and expertise in other ways. It is thanks to Paul's you tube demos that many entered into the world of on line bridge in the first place..

None of the development of the SBU on line presence would have been possible without Anne Brodie-Allan, a SBU member from the North, and the determination and hard work of Eddie McGeough and Anne Coles. ABA we quickly realised is indefatigable. She has been a BBO on line Director for some time and was greatly instrumental in guiding us through our application, in setting up the whole infrastructure, in training on line TDs, and in running tournaments, the last two still ongoing.

Such a steep learning curve for all of us and all of you. Considering new processes and procedures. Guidance documents on etiquette, setting up, downloading results into recognisable formats- not a straightforward process. Does our appeals process heard by the Law and Ethics Committee cover the new play platform? To undo or not to undo? We don't necessarily get it right each time, there is so much to consider, so many to consult. And of course there are so many opinions freely given from members.

Many of you had already been enjoying on line bridge thanks to your Local Heroes, in Dunbar, Berwick, Perth, St Andrews, Inverness, Aberdeen, Montrose, Arbroath, Hamilton, New Melville, the Carlton, and Colinton Castle in Edinburgh, Ayrshire, Dundee, and Kyle of Lochalsh, to name the ones I am aware of.

So many people helping keep their local bridge Communities together. So much good work and good will during these very difficult times.

Many teaching centres have continued to teach and run play sessions on line with pupils and are preparing to teach on line for the new session.

As you know both the SBU Overseas Congress in May and the July Congress have been cancelled.

At present the December Congress is "still on". A new booking process will be in place so that accommodation costs will not be paid until arrival at the hotel. The viability of the Congress is and will continue to be monitored closely.

There have been a number of approaches from members about the bridge calendar. Consideration of this is a work in progress. What could be run over the next few months for whom by whom?

What about advice from the SBU to all players including Clubs and Districts about safe returns to Face to Face bridge? - In the pipeline.

Many are hard at work preparing two new SBU endorsed teaching programmes for Adult bridge.

Special thanks to David Briggs and Nigel Booth at the New Melville who have generously agreed to adapt and SBU brand their system using our Working Groups' system File, and similarly Perth Bridge Club with Gill and George Roberts. Many many hours of blood sweat and tears spent. Thanks to Beryl Campbell and Susan Chapple for their patience and care scrutinising the drafts.

Meanwhile I am delighted that Sam Punch has agreed to be the new Education Convenor with named leads in Children and Young People, Tutor Support and Training, Marketing and Bridge Promotion, and Universities.

The SBU is an extended family of bridge players. There are so many family analogies but there are some differences. Every two years there is a new parent who is new to the family and usually new to the post. Family dynamics are often complicated and the SBU is no exception to this. Some family members are more conciliatory than others and some better communicators. Some are harder working, some are ever ready to help and some need encouragement. Some are ever ready to criticise. I would like to see everyone being involved and having their say- however

challenging- to help us grow and be the best we can be. I'd like it to be a bottom up and top down organisation. I'd like to see Districts ensuring they have the infrastructure to cascade all the information their chairs and secretaries receive down to all members, and be prepared, in turn to report members' ideas, thoughts, and fears up.

However, the SBU should not just involve itself with affiliated Clubs. It should be Scotland's bridge resource. The Web site should carry details of all known teaching centres, irrespective of the system taught. We all should do everything we can to foster a love of bridge and enable as many as we can to enjoy it.

When I was asked to write a piece for the SBU News "Player profile" I was newly on Council and there was no suggestion nor expectation that I might be invited to consider being the President Elect.

Easy then, to pontificate about what the SBU should do, after all, we are all good at that.

Here is what I said:-

Opinions on Bridge Administration

The SBU should

- *Ensure that all systems are in place to enable best, efficient, effective and correct practice in the game of Duplicate bridge*
- *Endeavour to promote the game of bridge to ensure its viability*
- *Help educate & sustain its bridge community*

Act with integrity, clarity and transparency

Let's see how I do.

Joan Forsyth 05.07.20