



**INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE PRESS ASSOCIATION
DEALS OUT
THREE AWARDS TO SCOTTISH BRIDGE PLAYERS**

22 December 2021: Team Scotland has been awarded the **Alan Truscott Memorial Award** by the International Bridge Press Association (IBPA). This prestigious award is presented periodically to an individual or organisation that, in the opinion of the IBPA Executive, has done something in the world of bridge that Alan would have approved of and appreciated.

[Note 1]

Team Scotland won the award for the stance it took in this year's EBL Qualification for the World Championships. In this event each of the 30 participating European nations is drawn



to play each other. Scotland was first to face the Italian team, whose selection had been controversial, but Scotland chose not to take its virtual seats at the bridge table. It accepted a zero for the forfeit rather than dignify the opposition by playing the match. Every country taking part subsequently followed suit. [Note 2 caption]

The IBPA **Award for Personality of the Year** was conferred on Samantha Punch, professor of sociology at the University of Stirling, and the driving force behind BAMSA (Bridge: A MindSport for All), previously known as the 'Keep Bridge Alive' campaign. BAMSA was launched in 2019 in order to use academic research in collaboration with bridge organisations to transform the image of bridge, increase participation and enhance sustainability of the mindsport. [Note 3]



And Sam's book *Bridge at the Top: Behind the Screens* was the recipient of a third IBPA award, being conferred **Master Point Press Book of the Year**, jointly with Simon Cocheme for *Bridge with a Twist*. [Note 4]

"I am delighted, particularly regarding the book which I'm very proud of, because it is where the whole BAMSA journey started. BAMSA wouldn't exist if I hadn't done those interviews so it's also a big thank you to the players who gave up their time for all my questions and to the team of editors, including BAMSA volunteers, for helping to cut down 30-40 pages of interview to a chapter length version. I'm doubly proud to have written a bridge book with no bridge hands!

"It's also great for BAMSA and Team Scotland, and to reassure people that the crowdfunding that has gone to BAMSA is being put to good use", said Sam Punch.

“The really important thing is the gravitas of the recipients of previous awards in all three categories,” said Joan Forsyth, President of the Scottish Bridge Union. “It is an outstanding achievement for Sam, her BAMSA team, and the Scottish Open Team, to be granted these awards”.

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- ENDS -

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Notes to Editors:

1. Alan Truscott Memorial Award

The Alan Truscott Award is presented periodically to an individual or organisation that, in the opinion of the IBPA [Independent Bridge Press] Executive, has done something in the world of bridge that Alan would have approved of and appreciated. Alan was an IBPA Executive member, serving as its president from 1981 to 1985 and was the long-time bridge editor of the New York Times. Alan was also a fine player: before leaving Great Britain for the United States, Alan represented GB internationally, earning a first and second in the European Team Championships and a third in the Bermuda Bowl. Before such things were forbidden, he served as the non-playing captain for both Bermuda and Brazil in world championships.

2. Team Scotland (L-R): Anne Perkins (non-playing captain). Derrick Peden, Stephen Peterkin, Jim Hay, Alex Adamson, Samantha Punch and Derek Sanders.

3. BAMSA hosted an online international conference in June 2021 which brought together academics, practitioners and policy makers in the bridge world to discuss a range of topics including the opportunities and challenges of digital bridge, marketing bridge, healthy ageing, well-being and youth bridge.

BAMSA has recently published seven academic papers on partnership dynamics, identities, emotions, motivations, professional bridge and gender. The aim of such research is to seek wider recognition of bridge as a mindsport, and how mindsports can offer a range of social and health benefits. BAMSA's goal is to generate sociological research evidence which can be used to convince local governments to invest in bridge in schools and community projects. Resources can also be developed to encourage employers and universities that setting up opportunities to learn bridge is beneficial to improving well-being and mental health of employees and students. New intergenerational and family approaches to playing bridge could also help to 'bridge the gap' between the generations. A longer-term goal is to use bridge research to design practical projects to encourage more people of all ages to play in different contexts and to contribute to the building of intergenerational communities.

4. In the course of her research project, *Bridge: A MindSport for All*, sociologist Sam Punch has been able to interview many of the world's top bridge personalities. The topics of these conversations were wide-ranging, and included the dynamics at the table, challenges, motivations, emotions, partnerships, teammates, skill development and gender issues. As a bonus, each subject offers their favourite bridge tip. Top players, coaches and even sponsors talk frankly about what life in the top echelons of bridge is all about - and give the reader a revealing glimpse of what it is really like 'behind the screens'.

<https://blackwells.co.uk/bookshop/product/Bridge-at-the-Top-by-Samantha-Punch/9781771400640>