



Scottish Bridge Union

President's Report - April 2016

President's Report - April 2016

Since the Council meeting in early February, I have played in the Hutcheson's Shield, the Mixed Swiss Pairs, the West District Pairs Semi-Final, the Men's Pairs Final, the Senior Trials, the National Pairs Semi-Final, the final of the West District Handicap Cup, the Benjamin Individual Trophy and the National Pairs Final. I have also directed at the Junior Camrose and Peggy Bayer and the West District Club Championship. In addition, I attended the Glasgow heat of the School's MiniBridge Championship and took part in the seminar for senior directors run by Fearghal O'Boyle from the Contract Bridge Association of Ireland - many thanks to him for presenting such a successful event.

Between now and our Annual General Meeting at the end of May, I plan to play in the National Swiss Pairs and the first round of the Scottish Cup as well as directing at our Overseas Congress in Mlini in Croatia.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the successful team who won the Lady Milne Trophy - Michele Gladstone, Paula Leslie, Helen Kane, Liz McGowan, Sam Punch, Anne Symons and their non-playing captain, Alan Goodman. The event was secured with a match to spare, averaging over 17VPs per match - a tremendous performance!

Unfortunately I was unable to attend this month's Council meeting as I was overseas but many thanks to Mike Ash, our Past President, for chairing the meeting in my absence, particularly as I can see from the minutes that there were a large number of agenda items to be covered:

- Agreement was reached on Council's recommendations to the AGM for a **slimmed-down Council structure** and revised voting procedures. Hopefully this will lead to shorter Council meetings with most decisions being delegated to the various sub-committees. I am also hoping for more effective communication between Council and Districts who should be, in turn, closer to the views of affiliated clubs. This will generate a number of changes to our **Constitution** which will be put forward at the AGM.
- Sign-off was agreed on our response to the lawyer's letter whose clients were questioning the appropriateness of our selection process for the **European Women's Team Championship** in Budapest in June. We believe that our selectors acted within their Terms of Reference and have the backing of Council.
- It was agreed that the Master Point Policy Committee should carry out a full review of **master point awards** and entry requirements with an emphasis on consistency and fairness.
- Due to competing personal priorities, Ann Wickens has tendered her resignation as Convener of the **Education sub-Committee**. She has recommended that the role be split into a number of individual responsibilities and Council would welcome approaches from any members who feel that they can help us to co-ordinate our efforts to continue and to expand the teaching of bridge to adults and secondary school pupils and MiniBridge to primary school pupils.
- It was agreed that Anne Symons and Jenny Cooper would take joint responsibility for the **Junior Co-ordinator** role.
- Following a report from our Treasurer, ongoing discussions took place on our **financial position** and future projections.
- Council confirmed that Scotland do wish to enter teams into the **World Bridge Games** in Poland in September but, given current financial constraints, cannot commit to provide funding support at this stage.
- The Tournament Committee reported on changes to the format of the qualifying stages of the **National Pairs** and the timing of the **Women's Pairs and Teams** - details will be published in the 2016/17 diary.
- A new suite of regional and national **Bronze tournaments** is being developed to encourage the large number of members in this category to participate in competitive events.
- **Disciplinary procedures** have been expanded in the light of guidelines from WBF on the increased frequency of cheating at international level.
- It was agreed that **psychic bids** would be recorded centrally and reviewed by Law & Ethics Committee for emerging trends - details (without names) will be published on the website.

As I will be stepping down as President at next month's AGM, this will be my last President's report. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Mike Ash, Past President and all other Council members for their support over the last two years.

I also extend my very best wishes to my successor - Ian Hunter was voted in as President Elect last year and his appointment as President will be formally proposed at this year's AGM.