

Review of the SBU Summer Congress held at Peebles Hydro 14-16th July 2017

This was our first congress as convenors and we really enjoyed it.

Congratulations to Jim Forsyth and Susan Aitchison winners of the Peter van Dijk trophy and to Sam Punch, Tim Rees, Stephen Peterkin and Les Steel who won the Edward Whittaker trophy.

There were more tables than last year, with most of the increase being in the Bronze section where there were 10 tables in play. The Bronze level players told us they enjoyed the friendly relaxed atmosphere of their own section but they were all bold enough to join in with the main tournament Swiss pairs on Sunday evening, where they played against a few grandmasters who hadn't had such a good weekend of bridge! Most of them also enjoyed attending the Gin tasting Masterclass; which will be available to all residents of the Hydro at the next Congress.

We were quite amazed to see the amount of preparation and work put into the event, particularly by the tournament directors Horst Kopleck and Christine Walker and by Andrew Barnes the scorer. We learned so much from them: Andrew said he is quite hopeful of getting Julie computer literate any time soon.

On Saturday Iain Sime treated us to a funny but very informative Masterclass entitled Double Trouble, which you can find available to download from the SBU website.

On Sunday morning the charity 2 board knockout raised £121 and at the same time the Bronze players had a Masterclass from Russell Frame who was assisted by his partner Joan Lees. As all players at the Congress had played the same hands he was able to show them how more experienced players had (or had not!) achieved the optimum results.

We were puzzled by one request we got from a player (who shall remain nameless!). He said his room was noisy and could we put him into the room above the bar next time. "Surely that's the noisiest room in the hotel?" but he assured us that it was in fact the quietest room in the hotel and that he was sure that it would always be quiet by the time he went to bed..... because he was always the last one in the bar!

Hasan and Julie Choudhury