

Avon Contract Bridge Association

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 17th May 2015 at Bristol Bridge Club

- 1. Present:** Andrew Urbanski, Robert Glass, Mike Short, Larry Bennett plus those players attending the Handicapped Pairs.
- 2. Apologies:** Suzy Lawson, Sue O'Hara, Stuart King, Steve Tomlinson.
- 3. Minutes of previous AGM and matters arising.**

Unfortunately these were not distributed to those attending due to a faux pas and Suzy not being present. Larry Bennett printed off a copy from the website and Andrew Urbanski briefly went through the important points to members. There were no matters arising.

4. Chairman's Report (Andrew Urbanski)

- Event numbers are stable.
- It is nice to see members attending from Bridge and Games Bath and Tudor BC in addition to Bristol BC and West of England BC.
- There have been a number of notable competition successes:
 - Avon qualified for the final of the EBU Tollemache Cup, although did not do so well in the final.
 - Bristol BC qualified for the final of the EBU Garden Cities, to be held in June.
 - Avon won the Western League 'A' Division and are currently joint first in the 'B' Division, although there is one outstanding match result between Dorset & East Wales which could affect the outcome. Thanks to those players who represented Avon this year in all divisions and anyone wishing to play in this event in future are strongly encouraged to put their names forward.
- Sadly I have decided to step down as Chairman after 3 years to help look after my wife.
- I would like to thank the Committee members for what they have done over the past year, to Annie at the bar for preparing the lovely tea and to Ian Mundy for arranging the catering (applause received from members).

Mike Short thanked Andrew for all of his hard work while on the Committee.

5. Treasurer's Report (Mike Short)

Accounts were distributed to those present.

- The accounts are healthy, with around £6000 in the current account and £9000 in the deposit account. We cannot get a good rate of interest on our money while maintaining it in a risk-free environment.
- Turnover and costs slightly down on previous year due to changes in some competition formats and the fact that we did not have to purchase a new honours board as we did the previous year.
- We made around £1700 profit, similar to last year.
- 2016-17 will be the final joint venture between Avon and Wiltshire for the green-point weekend, as Wiltshire want to go their own way. This is fair enough as they do much of the work. Avon have traditionally provided the labour but equipment is now outsourced and there is less work involved. Avon will need to organise and run their own one after that if they want the revenue, something that the new Committee will need to look at. (Christine MacFarlane pointed out that the person providing the equipment will stop next year).

Mike Short proposed a vote of thanks for Andrew Urbanski's hard work on the Committee, which was duly performed by those present.

6. Tournament Secretary's Report (Robert Glass)

- It has been quite a successful year tournament-wise for the ACBA. Before I go into more detail on that, can I please thank the staff and Directors of Bristol BC for looking after us and hosting our events this season, and also to Larry Bennett for his help in Directing.
- Over the past couple of years we have tried to involve a larger proportion of our membership in our events and we have had a good turnout for most of our events. Indeed, moving a number of them to a Thursday evening has been a great success, averaging 19 tables per event, so dwindling numbers for events such as the Championship Teams and Championship Pairs in years gone by has now been arrested.
- In fact, with 19 tables for the Championship Teams this year we became a victim of our own success, as not all teams were able to play each other due to lack of time. To address this issue and make it fairer next year we will look at having a qualifier, followed by a 7 table all-play-all final, as we did with the Championship Pairs this year.
- In addition, with the Non-Expert Pairs, Handicapped Teams and Handicapped Pairs now a regular part of our Calendar, we hope that more players feel that they have a better chance of doing well in this type of competition.
- In the League we had three divisions of 6 teams, about the same as last year. Unfortunately there was not enough interest to justify a Newcomers League and

our attempts to introduce new players to team bridge on a Wednesday evening with the kind help of David Jones was also poorly attended. It seems that there is a reluctance for new or inexperienced players to participate, something that we have not yet found a solution to.

- Entries in the K/O were slightly down on last year but traditionally this has always varied between 12 and 16 teams and 13 teams this year was fine. It allowed us to give some of the stronger teams a BYE in round one and therefore the rest of the field a better chance of getting past the first round. However, 16 teams is obviously the perfect number if we can get that.
- A number of our members have done well in external and/or national competitions this season. Those that we are aware of are posted on our website and reported in the County section of the bi-monthly EBU magazine. Andrew Urbanski has already talked about our success in the Western League but I would just like to highlight some of the other more prominent successes (those finishing in the top three places or who have qualified for a final):
 - Avon qualified for the prestigious EBU Tollemache Cup, the inter-county teams-of-eight Championship, for the first time in a number of years. The top 2 teams in each Group of 9 or 10 teams qualify for the final and Avon won their Group, beating some strong contenders. The team was Tim Brierley & Mike Elliott, David Jones & Trevor Ward, Graham Hartley & Rob Lawy, Robert Glass & Jeremy Rickard and Mike Letts & Andrew Urbanski, with NPC Stuart King. Unfortunately the team did not do so well in the final in what was a very strong field.
 - In the EBU Garden Cities, Bristol BC beat the West of England BC in the ACBA qualifier and subsequently won the South-West Regional Final to qualify for the National Final in June. The players were Aidan Schofield & Mike Huggins, Steve Tomlinson & Robert Covill, Tim Brierley & Mike Elliott and Trevor Ward & Rob Lawy.
 - David Jones (and Miles Cowling) and Tim Brierley & Mike Elliott reached the final of the EBU National Pairs (after getting through two previous qualifying rounds), where they came 4th and 6th respectively.
 - Andy & Cathy Smith won the Bristol BC heat of the EBU Portland Pairs and came 30th nationally out of 397 pairs.
 - Graham Hartley, Rob Lawy and Trevor Ward (with Paul Denning) came 2nd in the Devon Congress Swiss Teams.
 - At the Northern Easter Festival, Suzy Lawson (with Alan Jarvis) came 2nd in the Swiss Pairs and 3rd in the Mixed Pairs.
 - At the joint Avon/Wiltshire/EBU Green-point weekend, the Swiss Pairs was won outside of the County by Pat Davies & Katharine Hodgson with Duncan Cairns and Rob Lawy in 2nd place. The Swiss Teams was won outside of the

County by Gillian Fawcett, Jane Moore, Warner Solomon and Ian Walsh & Brian Johnson, David Hale, Georgie Dalton & Sonia Blandy.

- Tim Brierley, David Jones & Jack Terry (with Alan Jones) won the Malvern Congress Swiss Teams.
- At the EBU Autumn Congress Swiss Pairs, Aidan Schofield (with Aleksandar Lishkov) came 2nd.
- Rob Lawy (with Andrew Thompson) were 3rd in the West of England Congress Swiss Pairs.
- At the Guernsey Congress, Rob Lawy (with Andrew Thompson) won the pre-congress Pairs and the Swiss Pairs.
- In the EBU National Inter-Club Knockout, the Bristol BC 'B' team (Tim Brierley, Robert Covill, David Jones & Steve Tomlinson) have so far made in through to Round 5 (last 32) and are still going.
- And finally, in the EBU National Inter-Club Knockout Plate, the West of England 'A' team (Mike Letts, Peter Shelley, Andrew Urbanski & Alan Williams) have made it to the quarter-finals and are still going.

I would just like to end my report by saying that Pianola are now doing websites for Counties and I am trialling a new website for Avon. Both Bristol BC and WOE BC use Pianola, and if the Committee agree to go ahead with it, we will be able to upload results just like any Club. It will also enable us to email our entire membership about upcoming events etc., which will be a great help. Watch this space.

7. Motions to be discussed

No motions were put forward for discussion.

8. Election of Officers and Committee

- Mike Short was re-elected as Treasurer (proposed by Gill Davies and seconded by Gerry Gowling).
- Suzy Lawson was re-elected as Secretary (proposed by Mike Huggins and seconded by Hilda Ball).
- David Jones was elected as Tournament Secretary (proposed by Robert Glass and seconded by Oli Espitalier-Noel).
- Sue O'Hara was elected as Publicity Officer (proposed by Jan Duncan and seconded by Hilda Ball).
- Larry remains appointed to the Committee as Chief Tournament Director and Robert Glass remains on the Committee to help look after the website.
- The posts of Chair, Vice-Chair and Youth Officer are now vacant positions.
- Andrew Urbanski may remain on the Committee to help with the Western League and report for the EBU magazine but will decide at a later date.

9. Any Other Business

- Mike Huggins suggested that we take, say £5000, and use it to invest in recruiting new members for the future. This was noted for the Committee to review at a future date.
- John Styles asked which Clubs are affiliated to the ACBA. Andrew Urbanski replied that it was Avonside, Bridge and Games Bath, Bristol BC, West of England BC and Tudor BC. Andrew Urbanski said that Avonside are always invited to our events but choose not to participate. Christine MacFarlane spoke briefly about Bridge and Games Bath, which mainly runs during the daytime and has proved popular.
- The draw for the £75 towards a meal for two at the winner's choice of venue was carried out and won by Jan Duncan.

10. Presentation of Trophies and Prizes

Trophies and prizes were awarded to those present. Winners were given the option of £10 cash or a personalised engraved wine glass. There are no personalized trophies or cash prizes for the winners of the Non-Expert Pairs (whose entry fee is free and who have already receives the Belmont Cup). In addition, the winners of the Handicapped Teams have already received a wine prize and cash prizes were awarded for the Handicapped Pairs.

- Non-Expert Pairs: Hilda Ball & David Beacham.
- Handicapped Teams: Mike Forrest, David Gregory, David J Griffiths & Brian Taylor.
- Handicapped Pairs (last AGM): Robert Glass & Damian Nicholls.
- Championship Teams: Andy Smith, Cathy Smith, Ralph Smith & Steve Tomlinson.
- Mens' Pairs: Mike Brady & Bob Curtis.
- Ladies' Pairs: Pat Chant & Cathy Davies.
- Championship Pairs: Mike Letts & Andrew Urbanski.
- Mixed Pairs: Mike Clew & Deb Ogilvie.
- Knock-out: Tim Brierley, Mike Elliott, Graham Hartley, Rob Lawy, David Jones & Trevor Ward.
- Knock-out Plate: Robert Covill, Robert Glass, Mike Letts, Jeremy Rickard, Andrew Urbanski & Alan Williams.
- League I: Andy Smith, Cathy Smith, Ralph Smith & Steve Tomlinson.
- League II: Colin Cheek (who sadly is no longer with us), Cathy Davies, Mike Davies, Colin Oakley & Eric Page.
- League III: Ray Mardon, Sheila Montgomery, Patrick Roe & Graham Rogers.