

CHAIRMANS REPORT AGM 2021

Can I welcome everyone to my 6th AGM as chairman and my second virtual one and thank you all for attending. Two years ago, I could not have imagined having a virtual one but less so perhaps this year and next year, well who knows.

Before we get into the nitty gritty of the meeting it is entirely appropriate that we mention the passing of our previous, long standing chairman and President, Philip Mason. An obituary is on the website but before I ask for a minutes' silence I would just like to reflect on my memories of Philip. When I first stepped into this role, he was very helpful whenever I rang him, giving sound common sense advice and helping me negotiate my way around both local and national committees. He always ended though with the phrase, glad its your problem now! I even asked his advice once about wearing shorts to the Yorkshire congress. (Tailored he said)The work he did locally and nationally is summarised in his obituary but I would just like to send my condolences to his family and friends and remember him as a great stalwart and servant of bridge in Yorkshire.

(MINUTES SILENCE)

I would like to make an apology on behalf of the management board. As you may be aware we have to post the agenda and documents for the AGM 2 weeks prior to the meeting, unfortunately due to our treasurer being on holiday and a miscommunication with the webmaster, they did not go on until 3rd June with the accounts a bit later (constitutionally these do not have to be posted) when the treasurer returned. It will be fully understandable if you have questions later on.

National Update: Small surplus projected for 2020-21 but will need about £200000 for next year to cover all assistance given and aim is to break even in April 2022.

Committees have been formed for reopening and also regarding player development, recruitment and membership something our member Ron Millet has been banging the drum for, for a long time.

Last year I talked about getting players involved in playing on line and whilst I am encouraged by clubs and players who have taken the plunge to play either with their clubs or amalgamated clubs, the actual number of players is less than 50% of our membership. This is of course due to a variety of reasons and this is why the teaching initiative set up by board member David Guild, working with EBS/EBED has proved invaluable for a lot of clubs. Teaching of new students and hence new prospective members died down to practically zero at the start of the pandemic and the course set up with the help of Jim Edwards, teachers/tutors from the clubs and course lecturers meant that the 10 week course became a 20 week course coming to an end at the beginning of July. Altogether there about 220 students completing the course and hopefully these will go on to have further lessons and eventually start their bridge careers.

The face to face YL, which of course was Philip's great baby, did not go ahead this year but step up Mike Jackson/John Hayton and Robin Jepson, who worked amazingly hard to get an on-line league together in its place. This is of course now, in its third season and whilst it may never reach the numbers for face to face has been a great success meaning clubs can regularly play other clubs of a similar standard in a competitive but friendly environment. No one knows what the future holds at the moment for the 2021/22 season, so watch this space but the work done by these 3 in coordinating a great replacement means we are well placed whatever the future holds.

Whilst the Tollemache qualifier was again a disappointment, a better result was obtained in The Presidents cup with a well earned 2nd place with 12 teams competing. There was no NBL league for 2020.

Forgive me for not mentioning all the great results achieved by Yorkshire players but it is difficult to keep up with all the on line competitions that players can enter now. However there are a few I would like to mention. One is the achievement of Dave Robinson and Tony Sowter to be losing finalists with team mates in the Spring Foursomes. This is the toughest event in the EBU calendar, so well done to them. The second is the scratch partnership of Bob Brown and Alan Hayward in winning the EBU Bank holiday pairs and thirdly Paul Brereton and Frank Dixon on winning the virtual Great Northern Pairs. As I say, for those I have left out please accept my apologies.

The finances will be covered by our treasurer in her report, suffice to say that not running the EBU events face to face means income from those is down, but we are still in a healthy position. The teaching scheme mentioned earlier has been funded and as you will here funds available for restarting and technology will be announced. At present we have no crystal ball so cannot predict what is going to happen (even on June 21st) to bridge and bridge clubs in general but rest assured our commitment is still to the clubs and members of the county.

It only leaves me now to end with the thankyou's and this year it may take a little longer than usual. We have had teething problems with the new website which we plan to resolve but during this period our webmaster Andrew Pearson has ensured that whatever we have sent him has gone up quickly and hopefully this still remains the main source of information for the county. Remember you can contact us anytime through the website.

Secondly it is to all members of the board who have had to take on roles that they will have been unfamiliar with and who, behind the scenes, do a lot of work making sure competitions run smoothly and work tirelessly to provide the best support we can. On this note I would like to welcome (in anticipation of his election), Glyn Foley to the board.

For the first time in more years than I care to mention, Julia Staniforth has decided to step down from her role as secretary to the YCBA and Robin Jepson has taken on the role of acting secretary for this meeting and the following board meeting. Julia has been integral to the smooth running of the organisation and her knowledge of the YCBA is perhaps second only to Philip and Graham Jepson. She took on this role for the best part of 10 years or more and has worked tirelessly to ensure that everything was done correctly and has helped me

enormously over my time as chairman. I hope she somehow remains an integral part of the YCBA.

Lastly, I would like to propose to the members present that we now make Graham Jepson the President of the county (current vice president). If this is approved by you, we will ratify it at the next board meeting.

Proposer and seconder, vote (dissenters/abstainers).

End.