

**Notes of the Meeting of Members of the Yorkshire Contract Bridge Association
held by Zoom video conference
on Saturday 25th November 2023 at 11.00 am**

Present: GrahamJepson (President), David Guild (Joint Chair - DG), Nick Woolven (JOint Chair - NW), Lesley Millet (Treasurer - LM) and 18 other members.

NW welcomed members and presented a half-yearly review of national (EBU) and county news. There is to be a contested election for the positions of EBU Chair and Vice-Chair. YCBA has four votes as shareholders, and they have agreed to support the current interim Chair and Vice Chair, Adrian Darnell and Tony Russ, in the election.

NW congratulated Lesley Millet on the receipt of a Dimmie Fleming Award for outstanding service in bridge administration for a county - this will be presented at the EBU AGM.

County news - following the AGM, the Management Board appointed David Guild and Nick Woolven as Joint Chairs, with Nick primarily responsible for tournaments and David dealing with bridge development and other county issues. There has been an increased entry for the face-to-face Yorkshire League with 56 teams taking part in 2023-24. Since the AGM, teams representing Yorkshire have won the President's Cup inter-county competition, and the A and B divisions of the Northern Bridge League, while the C team placed second in its NBL division on a split tie. However Yorkshire was less successful in the inter-county Tollemache Cup, failing to qualify from its group for the final. NW thanked the panel of selectors for their work.

DG described the ongoing initiative for members of the Management Board to visit affiliated clubs, to receive feedback and offer support in enhancing membership and participation in club events. He also described the Piggyback Teaching scheme to be launched early in 2024. Under this, clubs may participate in a county-wide programme of short lessons delivered online to be followed by practice sessions in clubs supervised by teaching assistants recruited locally by the clubs themselves.

Grants are available from the YCBA, not just for technology as in the past but also towards additional running costs relating to expansion for programmes. Nine grants totalling £7,000 have been made in the present year. The window for applications in this present year has been extended to 31st March 2024.

Mark Dunkley announced the launch of the YCBA Facebook page, which is intended for news about the YCBA, promotion of its competitions and also for good news stories from clubs and individual members, all to be supported by photos for greater visual effect. Mark will welcome contributions. Mark also described plans for the EBU's Festival of Bridge in September 2024. YCBA is planning a combined Golf and Bridge competition with Yorkshire golf clubs. Other local initiatives will be welcomed.

NW outlined the EBU's plans to run local events for players ranked 10 or below - 75% of the EBU membership - that allow competition with players from other clubs but do not involve long journeys to venues.

LM gave an update on a question raised at the AGM in June. At the meeting It was agreed that the Management Board would investigate online banking and dual signatures for payments at or above an agreed ceiling (presently £2,500) and would update members at the next Members' Meeting in November 2023. At a subsequent meeting the Board considered this question and the minutes state:

'Online banking is already used. The widespread adoption of dual signatures was felt to be unworkable for Tournament administration. The current ceiling for double signatures was agreed to be kept at £2,500. Additionally, all substantial payments outside budgeted Tournament expenditure to be notified via Officer email. Where discretionary payments are made, such as Club Grants, a documented payment approval audit trail is required. The Board noted that the YCBA has a full audit annually of our YCBA Accounts'.

LM commented on tournament director training - the YCBA had recently run a course for club level directors with 24 attending and intends to run a course for directing online events including set-up on BBO.

Questions and comments from members. Tony Watson (Ilkley) suggested the EBU ought to be more transparent with its financial affairs by publishing draft accounts on the website for comment before they are submitted to the EBU Board for approval. Also, if there are contested elections, the names of the candidates and their credentials should be published on the website. Ian Newsham (Wetherby) suggested that TD training should include practical advice about movements as well as more technical issues on rulings. Robin Jepson replied to a question from a member about permitted systems and conventions in the Yorkshire League, which is Level 4 as defined in the EBU Blue Book.

It was agreed that the Members Meeting in 2024 will be on **Saturday 23rd November** starting at 11.00 am using zoom video conferencing.