

Dear members

Since I've been back from my holidays, I've been to quite a few meetings where I keep getting reminded about the timeline of a bridge player. It usually goes, learn bridge, after 5 years or so feel pretty confident but look to get better through extra lessons or reading, after 10-15 years start to pass on the knowledge you have learnt or learn how to direct, perhaps do a directors course and try and get some experience at directing, maybe do some teaching if you feel confident enough; maybe if you get good enough you may try and mix it with the experts at a congress! However, if you only start to learn as you retire at 67 then it's quite unlikely many players will get to the latter stages of the above. I'm told that a club needs 8% of new members each year to thrive, this is a rough estimate because the number of actual members can be different from the active members and same goes for the number of new members. We are lucky to have many members at HBC who started way before retirement age but times have moved on and getting the younger generation to play bridge nowadays is very challenging, some universities have thriving bridge societies but rarely do they transfer to the bridge club. We are looking for more people to run sessions and help with directing, a rota will be produced so everybody who wants to help can have a chance, mainly for the afternoon sessions and the Wednesday evening. At this point I was supposed to be telling you about the FREE director course the YCBA are running at York but unfortunately, I have just found out that it is full!! Obviously a very popular course already. There is another one being run at Sheffield BC in October if you can't wait until the next one locally.

In other news:

A couple of the shutters have been damaged whilst opening the windows to allow ventilation. Please be careful when opening and closing the windows.

The Harrogate and district bridge League (HDBL) season starts soon. The Harrogate/Wetherby/ Ripon area plays considerably less teams bridge than the surrounding area of Ilkley, Leeds and York; with some players not playing any teams bridge at all! The HDBL AGM is at HBC on Wednesday the 6th August at 7pm if you are interested in putting in a team. It will include FREE cheese and biscuits and FREE bridge.

The northern midweek Congress takes place at the Cairn hotel from the 26th to the 28th of August including a jack high competition on the Tuesday afternoon.

Also, on Tuesday the 26th of August the YCBA is running a cafe bridge session around the cafes, hotels and restaurants of Wetherby, you play a round in a venue and then move onto another. The event starts at 11am and includes lunch! Details for entry are on the YCBA website.

HBC are running a heat of the national handicapped pairs (self-explanatory) on Sunday the 7th of September. This will be a social event and will include lunch. It starts at 11am so please sign up as places are limited, there will be a physical sign-up sheet in the club as well as an online version! This event is £15 each, please bring cash on the day.

A few of you have noticed that some of the bidding cards are in poor condition, having replaced the worst ones with SUPERDELUXE plastic cards (the ones that slide all over the place) some months ago we have now bought the "2nd best" ones which after this research I hope will give us the best of both worlds, good quality bidding cards that don't slide all over table. Well done to Dinah for bringing this to the committee's attention via the comments book, just goes to show that we do read the comments book and we do react to the things written in there.

Lastly, after a great deal of research (I did it all) I have found the general trend in quality of biscuits is on a downward spiral so we are committed to finding the best possible biscuits even if we have to up the budget a little. I'm sure this is the best news you have had for a long time.

I hope you all enjoy what is left of the summer.

Rob