

To all bridge players in Norfolk, Suffolk, Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire

Most Bridge Clubs throughout England have now returned their contract forms for affiliation. Most have decided to affiliate.

Sally Bugden Chair of the EBU states that Pay to Play will be implemented.

Shareholders voted unanimously at the recent AGM for the changes to the Bye Laws to facilitate Pay to Play and also ratified the 29p pay to play amount.

The current position in Eastern England is that virtually all the larger clubs have decided to affiliate with only some of the smaller clubs deciding to go their own way.

County Association	No. of EBU clubs 2009	Positive response to Affiliation From 01/04/10	Negative response to Affiliation From 01/04/10	Not replied
Cambs & Hunts	11	12	3	2
Lincs	14	9	4	1
Norfolk	28	17	8	3
Suffolk	19	13	4	2
TOTAL	72	51	19	8

The door will be open to any club who change their mind (as the large Coventry Club has done in the West Midlands). There is no closing date for affiliation. There is also no problem if clubs change their minds from disaffiliating to affiliating

Sally Bugden stated that 'if as seems likely from the summary of club returns by county, the EBU achieves a sustained 1.9 million player sessions per year then the current 5 year plan is viable.'

This is very good news and I believe that the EBU is looking towards a modern, vibrant, club interactive future. Now there is the opportunity for the building up of clubs that actually want to thrive and develop, as well as encouraging the formation of new clubs.

At the October meeting of the National Clubs Committee some interesting points were raised.

- No heats of county competitions should be played in unaffiliated clubs.
- If a guest in an affiliated club who is not an EBU member plays in a county heat they cannot win any master points and cannot progress.
- The Master Point booklet is being updated to reflect the p2p changes.
- Partner teacher existing structures will continue: after 2 years the enterprise should become an affiliated club with attendant p2p contributions.
- Currently, for EBU affiliated clubs, the 'Orange Book' enshrines the rules i.e. provision in the 'Laws of Bridge' for locally acceptable practices.
A new form of the 'Orange Book' called the 'Tangerine Book' is in preparation, setting out the EBU's regulations for duplicate bridge in England put into a simple form.
- Online Forum. The EBU site will soon have member-only areas.

Michael Clark, the IT specialist at Aylesbury, will be setting up a Forum associated with the new IT structures, which will later be converted into a Club Managers' Forum. He will also develop a method of providing clubs with free online deals and hand records, to be available sometime after April 2010.

- Simultaneous Pairs Event Policy from April 1, 2010
EBU, WBF and EBL Simultaneous Pairs will only be open to affiliated clubs.
BGB Simultaneous Pairs events will attract a surcharge of £1 per player for ALL BGB sessions played in unaffiliated clubs. As for the Children In Need simultaneous, Overall Master Points will only be awarded by ECATS to EBU members in unaffiliated clubs if the results are uploaded electronically to ECatsBridge with the EBU number of such members included in the file in the correct format. These will subsequently be uploaded to the EBU by ECatsBridge once the overall results are known and the Master Points will be credited accordingly.
All other licensed simultaneous events are being reviewed and a policy will be announced in early 2010.

Finally I should be pleased to hear from any member or club with any comments or just needing more information.

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Please when replying at any time identify, [a] your club and [b] your county of affiliation