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A Letter from the County Chair

This is the first of what I hope will be reasonably regular emails from the County Chair to the members of Manchester County Bridge.

I hope your bridge playing exploits, whether face-to-face or online, are going well and giving you lots of enjoyment.

Perhaps now that it’s getting a bit warmer and a bit lighter in the evenings you may feel able to go to your local club and renew those friendships that we lost during COVID.

**Manchester County Bridge** **Association** (MCBA) covers 12 EBU affiliated clubs from Besses O’ th’ Barn in North Manchester to Prestbury in Cheshire. Our job is to promote bridge across the county and organise County competitions for all players, whether experts or beginners.

So, if there is anything we can do to help your club please contact me at [irenedavies14@gmail.com](mailto:irenedavies14@gmail.com)

**Events**

Could I draw your attention to some of the events that are coming up in Manchester? Our knockout teams finals for the **Higson Cup and Plate** take place on Sunday 23rd April at Bramhall Bridge Club. The early rounds of this have been played since October. Teams from all the divisions are involved in the finals as this event is handicapped throughout. Our league and cup cater for all levels of players. If you don’t have a team in the league yet perhaps now is the time to start getting your friends together to form a team for the Autumn.

**The Manchester League** is for teams of four to eight players with at present five divisions with eight or nine teams in each. The season runs from September each year till the following May, with four players from each team playing one match of twenty-four boards against all other teams in their division. Scheduling of matches is completely flexible and can take place at any time to suit both sides. Since the pandemic most have opted to play online (either on BBO or RealBridge) but hopefully more matches will return to F2F by agreement of both team captains.

As well as the Higson Cup and Plate there is the **Goldstone cup,** another knockout event which is not handicapped. Both of these follow roughly the same timescales as the League.

If you would like more information about the League or Cup events please contact Barbara Eastabrook at [eastabrook1@btopenworld.com](mailto:eastabrook1@btopenworld.com) who will be happy to have a chat.

Larkhill Bridge Club and the County have organised a **Charity Pairs** event on Sunday 11th June at the Larkhill Centre in Sale. Proceeds will go to the Trussell Trust, which is the largest UK foodbank provider. You can enter via the Manchester Events website. (See below)

or by email to Susan Triggs at [grasan30@gmail.com](mailto:grasan30@gmail.com)

For more experienced players on Sunday 30th July there is a **Swiss Teams** event for teams of four held at St Peter’s in Hale. We are hoping to run a F2F two day **Congress** with events for all levels of players in early January 2024, details to be finalised in the coming months. It will be great to resurrect this flagship event post pandemic with bridge players joining us from far and wide!

We have two websites which may be of interest -

The MCBA website which provides news of past events and a calendar of future events, as well as a Deal of the Week feature and archives of information going back many years.

<http://www.manchesterbridge.org.uk/>

The Manchester County Events website is used for online entry to all the County events referred to, and for posting results. It also has links to local clubs and other useful information.

<https://www.bridgewebs.com/manchesterevents/>

**Listening to the grassroots players**

The County is in the process of setting up better lines of communication with the clubs. We would like 1 or 2 players from each club to volunteer to be part of the liaison between club and county. Also, we have set up a membership subcommittee and we are organising exec members to come and play at smaller clubs and have a chat with members.

Above all enjoy your bridge.

Irene Davies (Manchester County Chair)