

COMPETITION SECRETARY'S REPORT

My thanks are due to the Tournament Committee, comprising Anne Hassan, Ian Hamilton, David Leeman, B McDowell, M McFaul, S Millership and B Ewart for all their hard work. Special thanks to B Ewart who emailed everyone each month informing them of what competitions were on and when and for distributing flyers. David Leeman who kept an inventory of all our equipment and checked bidding box contents regularly and set up the tables for the Camrose match and Ian Hamilton for all his work as League Organiser and also for the work he puts in to organising the Interclub and Celtic Sims Competitions, never mind the other things he does for the Union. The TC met 3 times throughout the year.

To say that entries to the various competitions during 2017/18 is disappointing is an understatement, although numbers were slightly up in a few competitions. The Robb Cup (an Inter B competition) was organised by P Johnston & A Hassan and it was great that this competition was resurrected after a number of years. I extend my thanks and congratulations to all competition winners.

The Kelvin Cup and the Mackinnon Cup were both organised by Brian McDowell and I thank him for doing a grand job.

The Millership Cup was organised by Jeff Millership and again a grand job.

The Premier 1 League was organised by Ian Hamilton and TD'd by Sandie Millership, thank you Sandie.

The Premier 2 League, Inter A and Inter B Leagues were organised by Ian Hamilton and TD'd by Ian Lindsay, thank you Ian.

The Novice League was organised and TD'd by Pat Johnston, thank you Pat.

As usual all our Interclub and Celtic Sims competitions were organised by Ian Hamilton and the amount of work Ian puts into this is phenomenal. Ian produces all the booklets, having analysed all the hands and this prevents him participating which is unfortunate. Thank you Ian.

We hosted the First Camrose match this year, organised by Brian McDowell and Pat Johnston in the absence of Anne Hassan, another successful event TD'd by Fearghal O'Boyle and Mairead Basquille. Unfortunately, this was the last International competition too to be managed by Brian as he has now retired, however Helen Hall has taken over the position and I am sure she will do an equally good job. Thank you Brian, on behalf of the NIBU.

Brian also organised the NI Teams event in Portstewart and entries were disappointing – 7 teams, down 4 on last year, however the event was a great success, again my thanks Brian.

Sandie Millership is our Congress Organiser and has worked tirelessly for the NIBU for many many years. Sandie also TDs an enormous amount of the competitions.

It has been suggested that perhaps there are too many competitions and that we should archive some of them, in particular the HELM cup which has had to be cancelled for the past 3 years as not enough teams entered. The TC has now finalised the diary, and we sincerely hope it is correct this year! Please let us know what your thoughts are. You can email me at lizscott@nibu.co.uk.

There were a few complaints about the lack of heat in the Boat Club. This we have addressed with the help of H Curran and the Boat Club have agreed to make sure that there is heat in playing rooms in future.

Sandie Millership TD'd the Provincial Mixed Pairs for me in Enniskillen, and numerous other events. For some events she stood in at the last minute. Eric McNicholl TD'd the Novice section of the Gala Pairs and also the Northern Pairs in Londonderry/Derry. Alan Hill TD'd the Gala Pairs and numerous others competitions and I thank all of them for their time and commitment. Thank you does not seem enough for all the work they do. Please if you are a TD at your club think about assisting us with our competitions, We do not have enough TDs.

The NIBU need some more TDs to come forward. Alan Hill has run many classes on the rules etc and I hope some of those who attended his classes will volunteer to TD some of our competitions.

On a personal note, I have been very disappointed by the lack of interest in our competitions. Is this because we have lost our competitiveness or is it just a case of no new blood playing bridge? I do know that a few of our Grammar Schools hold classes so perhaps there is a future in bridge! having said that, once our senior pupils move on to University alas bridge seems to be lost forever to them within our Province.

I would also like to welcome to the NIBU two new clubs, Quoile and Carrickfergus. Unfortunately Downpatrick club has had to close, this will be a big loss to the Union.

Throughout the season 2017/2018 I have been able to visit some clubs in the Province with the help of our Chair with the hope of encouraging many more people to enjoy our competitions and also to let us know what they want the NIBU to do for them.

Let me express my thanks to the clubs visited for their warm welcome and the friendliness that was expressed. It was a delight to visit you and perhaps I will get the opportunity to do so again during the incoming bridge year. To the clubs we didn't get around to, sorry, we did try very hard to get round all.

Liz Scott
Hon Competitions Secretary

June 2018

