

SUFFOLK CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

CONSTITUTION

1. TITLE AND CONSTITUENT MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1 The Suffolk Contract Bridge Association ("SCBA") is an Association as defined in the Bye Laws of the English Bridge Union Ltd ("EBU").
- 1.2 The SCBA is a Constituent Member of the EBU. It shall abide with the Bye Laws, Rules and Policies of the EBU.

2. OBJECTS OF THE SCBA

- 2.1 To promote Duplicate Contract Bridge in the County of Suffolk and amongst the SCBA's affiliated clubs, and encourage inter-club, inter-county and national competitions.
- 2.2 To employ the funds of the SCBA in the best interests of the game of Duplicate Contract Bridge, having regard to the fact that the SCBA is a non-profit making body.

3. MANAGEMENT OF THE SCBA

- 3.1 The management of the affairs of the SCBA shall be vested in the following Officers:-

Chairman
Vice Chairman
General Secretary
Treasurer
Competitions Secretary
Membership Secretary

and at least four but not more than six other members of the SCBA, who together will form the Executive Committee. All Officers and other Executive Committee members must be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting by a simple majority of the Full Members of the SCBA attending.

- 3.2 The Executive Committee shall meet from time to time as it deems fit, but not fewer than four times within a Membership Year. A quorum shall consist of six members and, in the event of a tie on votes cast, the chairman of the meeting shall have the deciding vote.
- 3.3 The Executive Committee shall have the power to co-opt and to fill any casual vacancies.
- 3.4 The Executive Committee may from time to time appoint and disband sub-committees as may be deemed necessary, and may delegate to them such powers or duties as may be deemed to be expedient. Such sub-committees shall conduct their business as directed by the Executive Committee.
- 3.5 The Executive Committee may from time to time co-opt members to carry out defined duties as may be deemed necessary and as directed by the Executive Committee, and may delegate to them such powers or duties as may be deemed to be expedient. Such co-opted members may be appointed either from elected members of the Executive Committee or from the general SCBA membership. Such co-opted members appointed from the general SCBA membership may attend and, with the permission of the Chairman, speak but not vote at meetings of the Executive Committee.

- 3.6 The Executive Committee is responsible for the control of all monies and assets of the SCBA. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the collection of all monies due to the SCBA, payment of all accounts and for keeping the books of account. The Treasurer shall account to the Executive Committee for all financial transactions as and when required, and prepare a report and statement of accounts duly examined, for each Annual General Meeting. The signatures of the Treasurer and one other authorised member of the Executive Committee shall be required on the paperwork for the payment of monies out of the SCBA.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 All members of the SCBA must be Player Members of the EBU and be fully paid up in respect of subscriptions and all or any other monies due to the SCBA or EBU.
- 4.2 A Player Member of the EBU automatically becomes a Full Member of the SCBA when their primary allegiance to the SCBA is recorded with the EBU, and they are a member of one or more clubs affiliated to the SCBA.
- 4.3 A Player Member of the EBU may become a Full Member of the SCBA when their primary allegiance to the SCBA is recorded with the EBU, even though they are not a member of any clubs affiliated to the SCBA, unless in their discretion the Executive Committee decides otherwise.
- 4.4 A Player Member of the EBU whose primary allegiance is to another Association or does not have primary allegiance to any Association may become an Adopted Member of the SCBA, on request and at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
- 4.5 Full Members of the SCBA shall have the rights indicated below. They:
- are eligible to play in all SCBA competitions;
 - are eligible to represent the SCBA in national or regional competitions by qualification or selection;
 - may vote on, propose or second motions at general meetings;
 - are eligible to serve as officers or Executive Committee members of the SCBA;
 - will receive the SCBA's publications and communications.
- 4.6 Adopted Members of the SCBA shall have the rights indicated below. They:
- are eligible to play in all SCBA competitions except those designated by the SCBA as qualification for representation of the SCBA in national or regional events;
 - may receive the SCBA's publications and communications.
- 4.7 The Membership Year shall run for the twelve month period from 1st April to 31st March.
- 4.8 The SCBA Pay to Play county component and each of the SCBA member category's annual subscriptions (if any), for the Membership Year starting 1 April, shall be determined by the Executive Committee and ratified by a simple majority of the Full Members at the succeeding Annual General Meeting. If at the AGM the decisions of the Executive Committee are varied by the membership then those variations shall take effect from 1 April next following the AGM.
- 4.9 The Executive Committee of the SCBA may honour long-standing members for their service to the SCBA by electing them to Life Membership of the SCBA. A Life Member of the SCBA shall automatically become a Full Member of the SCBA for each Membership

Year whilst they remain a Player Member of the EBU and shall not be required to pay any annual subscription for their the SCBA membership category. In addition a Life Member of the SCBA shall not be required to pay the entrance fee to any of its county competitions.

5. MEETING OF THE SCBA MEMBERS

- 5.1 An Annual General Meeting (“AGM”) of the SCBA shall be held as soon as is practicable following the end of each membership Year, and in any event before the end of June. The place, date and time of the Annual General Meeting shall be determined by the Executive Committee. The General Secretary shall send a notice convening the meeting in accordance with Clause 5.8 to each Full Member of the SCBA at least 28 days before the date of the meeting and a copy of an agenda listing the ordinary and special business to be transacted to each affiliated club at least 21 days before the date of the meeting. The ordinary business of the meeting shall comprise submission of the Reports of the Executive Committee, adoption of the Accounts, election of Officers and Executive Committee members, ratification of the membership subscriptions, appointment of an Examiner, election of EBU shareholders from amongst Executive Committee members and election of the County Representative.
- 5.2 A request for a Special Resolution from a Full Member of the SCBA, which shall require a vote of the Full Members at the AGM, must be received in writing by the General Secretary no later than 28 days before the date of the AGM. The request must be supported in writing by two other Full Members of the SCBA.
- 5.3 A nomination for a Full Member of the SCBA to serve on the Executive Committee must be received in writing by the General Secretary no later than 28 days before the date of the AGM. The request must be signed by the nominated Full Member, and proposed and separately seconded by other Full Members of the SCBA.
- 5.4 The General Secretary shall publish on the SCBA website all Special Resolutions and nominations to serve on the Executive Committee no later than 21 days before the AGM.
- 5.5 An Extraordinary General Meeting (“EGM”) shall be convened on the instructions of the Chairman or on receipt of a requisition signed by not less than 20 Full Members and stating the purpose of such a meeting. A notice convening the meeting together with either the motions or a statement of the matters to be discussed shall be sent to each affiliated club and directly to Full Members who do not belong to clubs of the SCBA at least 21 days before the date of the meeting. The meeting shall deal only with such matters.
- 5.6 The EGM shall be held no earlier than 28 days and no later than 42 days after the General Secretary has received the written request.
- 5.7 Any vote at an AGM or an EGM, which is tied, shall be split by the casting vote of the chairman of the AGM or EGM.
- 5.8 Notice of an AGM or an EGM shall be deemed to have been given 3 days after an email containing or attaching that Notice has been sent to the last notified email address of a Full Member held by the Membership Secretary. Any Full Member who would prefer to receive Notices of AGMs and EGMs by surface mail may notify the General Secretary in writing accordingly, and the General Secretary shall keep a register of such members and shall send Notice to such members by second class post which shall be deemed to have been received by the member 3 days after posting. In addition to email and surface mail Notices sent to Full Members, the General Secretary shall publish such notices on the SCBA website no later than 21 days before the AGM or EGM.
- 5.9 The quorum for an AGM and EGM shall be twenty Full Members.

5.10 The General Secretary shall be required to arrange a further EGM, if an AGM or EGM respectively fails to reach a quorum. In both circumstances the additional EGM shall be scheduled to occur within the period of 28 days to 42 days after the aborted AGM or EGM. The General Secretary shall publish the date, venue and time of the EGM at least 21 days before the date of the additional EGM.

5.11 If the additional EGM once again fails to reach a quorum, the Executive Committee shall be able to take any decisions necessary so that it can continue to manage the affairs of the SCBA.

6. MEMBERS' BEHAVIOUR

6.1 Each member of the SCBA shall be required in connection with the game of Duplicate Contract Bridge, to conform to the standards of fair play, courtesy and personal deportment prescribed by the Bye Laws and regulations for the time being of the EBU.

6.2 The SCBA shall have the powers and the procedures for the enforcement of the requirement in clause 6.1. They are set out in the Schedule of the Constitution, and shall stand as part of the Constitution and be subject to the same provisions of the Constitution for its amendment.

7. AFFILIATED BRIDGE CLUB

Any Duplicate Bridge Club within the geographical boundaries of Suffolk may affiliate to the SCBA and all such Clubs shall be affiliated to the EBU. Any Duplicate Bridge Club in a county contiguous with Suffolk may affiliate to the SCBA with the agreement of the Executive Committee and the geographical County Association, and all such Clubs shall be affiliated to the EBU. The annual club affiliation fee to be charged for the twelve month period from the following 1 April will be determined in accordance with 4.8.

8. ELECTIONS FOR THE REGIONAL CLUB COMMITTEE

All affiliated Clubs are entitled to propose and vote for a County Representative to sit on the Regional Club Committee. All nominations for this must be submitted to the General Secretary in writing (or email) at least 28 days prior to the AGM. Nominees must be Full Members of the SCBA, be signed by the nominated Full Member, and proposed and separately seconded by other Full Members of the SCBA. In the event that there is more than one nomination for the post each affiliated club shall have one vote to be exercised (by the letter or email) to the General Secretary to arrive prior the commencement of the AGM. The representative for the Regional Club Committee shall be independent of the Executive Committee, but may attend and, with the permission of the Chairman, speak but not vote at meetings of the Executive Committee.

9. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Alterations to the Constitution shall be made only at an AGM or EGM through the positive votes of at least two thirds of the Full Members present.

10. DISSOLUTION OF THE SCBA

Dissolution of the SCBA shall be made only at an EGM through the positive votes of at least two thirds of the Full Members present. The assets of the SCBA on dissolution shall be donated to a charity or charities, or distributed amongst the affiliated clubs, as decided by the Full Members attending the dissolution meeting.

11. INTERPRETATION

On all questions of interpretation of the Constitution the decisions of the Executive Committee shall be binding until or unless upset at an AGM or EGM. The Executive Committee shall determine any point or matter that is not covered by the Constitution.

12. DEFINITIONS

The terms Association, Duplicate Contract Bridge and Player Member have the meanings set out in the Bye Laws of the EBU.

All terms that imply a specific gender (e.g. "Chairman") shall be interpreted to include both male and female equally.

Schedule of Disciplinary Procedures

1. Requirements of the Schedule

This Schedule is referred to under clause 6.2 of the Constitution and prescribes the powers and procedures for enforcement. It will comply with and follows the EBU disciplinary procedures and any variations thereof that are made from time to time. The SCBA shall act through its Conduct and Disciplinary Committees for the enforcement of standards prescribed in clause 6.1 of the Constitution. The SCBA shall have additional powers as set out in the clauses below.

2. Receipt of allegation

Any person making a complaint against one or more members of the SCBA, under the terms of clause 6.1 of the Constitution, must do so in writing to the General Secretary or the Chairman of the SCBA.

3. Conduct Committee

The Executive Committee of the SCBA shall appoint its Conduct Committee through its powers to appoint sub committees under clause 3.4 of the Constitution. The Conduct Committee shall be responsible for investigating complaints against the SCBA's members and to determine whether a Disciplinary Offence should be referred to the SCBA's Disciplinary Committee.

The Conduct Committee shall consist of no fewer than three members of the SCBA and no more than five. A quorum for any meeting shall be three of its members. It shall act by simple majority vote and its appointed chairman, or whomsoever in his absence the Conduct Committee shall select to chair a meeting, shall have a second, or casting vote in the event that there is parity of voting.

4. Disciplinary Committee

The Executive Committee of the SCBA shall appoint the Disciplinary Committee through its powers to appoint sub committees under clause 3.4 of the Constitution. The Disciplinary Committee shall, determine sanctions for offences admitted by the defendant, hear charges of offences and determine whether those charges are proved and if proved, to determine the sanction imposed.

The Disciplinary Committee shall consist of no fewer than three members of the SCBA and no more than five. At least three of its members must be present when it makes a decision to uphold a complaint and impose sanctions on the offending member. It shall act by simple majority vote and its appointed chairman, or whomsoever in his absence the Disciplinary Committee shall select to chair a meeting, shall have a second, or casting vote in the event that there is parity of voting.

5. Conflicts of Interest and Independence of the Conduct and Disciplinary Committees

Any member of either the Conduct or Disciplinary Committee who is in any way personally involved in the allegations within a complaint will be disqualified from participating in either Committee's handling of the complaint.

A member of the SCBA cannot be a member of both the Conduct and Disciplinary Committees.

6. The Complaints Process

6.1. Notice of Meetings

Where a written complaint is made, or a matter otherwise comes to the attention of the Conduct Committee, it shall first consider whether such complaint or matter falls within the scope of the Disciplinary Rules and whether further action is warranted. If it does the Conduct Committee secretary shall first write to the Defendant, seeking the Defendant's comments on the substance of the complaint or matter that has been raised. The Conduct Committee shall also be entitled to make such further investigations and enquiries as it in its absolute discretion considers appropriate. The Conduct Committee shall also be entitled to seek advice both from within the SCBA and from the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee, and to obtain external legal advice.

6.2. Complaint not justified

If the Conduct Committee decides that the complaint is not justified, all parties shall be notified and the matter ended.

6.3. Complaint justified

If the Conduct Committee decides that the complaint is justified, it may, in its absolute discretion, offer a verbal caution to the offending member, which if accepted, ends the matter.

If the Defendant does not accept the verbal caution, or the Conduct Committee decides a verbal caution is inappropriate, the Conduct Committee shall refer the case to a hearing by the Disciplinary Committee. The Defendant shall be notified, in writing, within two weeks of this decision and of his right to make a written submission to the Disciplinary Committee and to attend the hearing. The Defendant shall have the right to be represented by legal counsel of his choice or may be accompanied by a person to speak on his behalf. The Disciplinary Committee shall give at least two weeks notice of the hearing to the Defendant.

6.4. Disciplinary Committee's Sanctions

If after the hearing the complaint is upheld, the Disciplinary Committee may in its absolute discretion:

- (a) Give a written reprimand to the offending member(s), or
- (b) Suspend the offending member(s) from all or some of the competitions sponsored or licensed by the SCBA for such period as it shall determine.

If the complaint is against a member of the Executive Committee then in addition to any other sanctions applied, the Disciplinary Committee shall have the power to suspend such member from the SCBA's Executive Committee and any of its sub committees for such a period that it shall determine.

Any sanctions imposed by the Disciplinary Committee must be communicated to the offending member in writing within 21 days of the hearing.

No sanction shall come into effect until the time limit for an appeal has expired. If an appeal is made the sanction will not come into effect until the appeal has been determined, and will be modified or cancelled if that determination so requires.

6.5. Appeal

Each member found guilty of a Disciplinary Offence by the Disciplinary Committee has the right to appeal to the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee. Appeals must be in writing and lodged with the Secretary of the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee within twenty one days of the written communication of the Disciplinary Committee's decision to the offending member.

6.6. Referral to the EBU Laws & Ethics Committee

At any time the Disciplinary Committee may refer a complaint to the EBU Laws & Ethics Committee for its consideration. In doing so the Disciplinary Committee shall have fully discharged its responsibilities under this Schedule.

7. Definitions

The terms Disciplinary Rules and Disciplinary Offence have the meaning set out in the Bye Laws of the EBU.