

## 2016 Chairman's Report

The biggest nice surprise that happened this year is our Youth Team, captained by Charlie Lee and comprising of Alfred Lam, Chris Chan, Jackson Tsang, Michael Wu, Niko Man and Sam Tseng, did HKCBA honour as they came second runner-up in youngsters section of the 16th World Youth Teams Championships which took place in Italy in August 2016! This is the first time that Hong Kong has put our name on world championship record. Well done all!

Our senior team, comprising of Aaron Cheng, Derek Zen, Edmund Tse, Roger Ling, Samuel Wan and Vincent Li, also broke a minor record, they participated in the 2016 World Bridge Games and just managed to qualify into the knock out stage for the first time for Hong Kong. Understandably they were heavily beaten by USA, the ultimate senior world champion. Nothing to be too proud of but at least there is some improvement.

This year is APBF Congress, which took place in Beijing in April 2016. Hong Kong sent four teams in the open (ended 17<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>), two ladies teams(ended 7<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>), one senior team(ended 3<sup>rd</sup>), one junior team(ended 3<sup>rd</sup>) and two youngster teams(ended 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>). This clearly shows that we are no longer a significant player amongst APBF, certainly a long term worry for our Association.

Again, we participated in Hong Kong – Guangzhou – Macau interport which was held in Hong Kong on 23 – 24 July, and as usual we ended 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. Let's hope there will be a breakthrough in 2017.

Our Intercity took place at Hong Kong Regal Hotel from 27 to 31 July. One of Hong Kong team managed to get into semi-final but there their journey ended.

Our 2/3 Hong Kong ladies team(as there is a pair of Chinese ladies) did managed to get into the final, I suppose the lack of experience as well as nervousness took over, despite an initially healthy lead, eventual they lost the match and became the 1<sup>st</sup> runner up. This said, still it was a boost of morale for our ladies.

As I mentioned last year, we initiated a 2½ years' programme of training for our ladies team, aiming at raising the standard of our ladies with target to end up(hopefully) in the top three position in Asian Games that will take place in Jakarta next year. In particular we now were officially confirmed by Olympic Council of Asia

of the event. We do hope our effort can help our ladies.

As any representative to Asian Game is subjected to the approval of Hong Kong SFOC, we are trying to get a real understanding between us and SFOC as they no doubt would like to see the past achievement of our proposed players, not just winning the trial. HKCBA is contemplating a more complicated trial but first of all we have to know from SFOC who in their opinion 'would NOT' be accepted. We set up a special committee just to ensure all the procedures are properly achieved.

Coming back to our local, our membership decreased slightly from 273 to 269, and the average attendance of our regular tournament is 8.5 tables.

Our financial position is still healthy, recently we were told that for APBF event or WBF event, any team ended up in 8<sup>th</sup> or above will get some subsidy from Government sports programme (with a ceiling of HK\$100,000 per year), the amount may not sound too attractive, but at least this compensates to a certain extend the good performers. We just hope if Hong Kong is participating in the official Asian Games, this will raise the awareness and status of Bridge amongst the public as well as the Government. We were also told that the next Asian Games would be in Hang Zhou, China, should Bridge again be an official sport, then surely this would caught the eyes of SFOC, in particular if we perform well next year in Jakarta. Let's hope for the best for our Hong Kong teams.

Although by the time you receive this report, the Chinese New Year is well behind us, still I wish you a very happy year of the Rooster.

Derek Zen