

Chairman's Report by Derek Zen

The biggest event for HKCBA and our members is no doubt towards the end of last year, we can finally have our own Club House. For those members who have visited the Club House, I am sure you are all impressed by the set up and the convenience provides to all our members. We can now house almost all events at our Club House, except maybe due to capacity reason, our Open League / Invitational Team have to be splitted into different sessions to be held on separate dates. Hope this will not cause too much inconvenience to our members. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed to the successful launching of the Club House, your efforts are truly appreciated and will be long remembered.

One thing worth bringing up to the attention of all members who play at our Club House: Please be kind to all the furniture and other facilities. This Club House belongs to all of us, and I do hope everyone will treasure our Club House as you treasure your own home – handle things with care, keep the area tidy and clean, flush the toilets etc., surely all of us wish to see we can maintain our Club House as good as possible, as this will be our venue at least for the coming 10 years, if not 20 years!

Another major event is no doubt in the coming Asian Games which is going to take place from 18 August – 2 September 2018 in Jakarta and Palembang, Indonesia. This is the first time that Bridge is an official game in Asian Games, and we hope this good tradition will go on to become a regular event in Asian Games, in particular the next Asian Games (in 2022) is going to be held in Hangzhou (杭州), China! Another good news for all our Bridge players is because Bridge now becomes a formal event, support and subsidy from Government has substantially increased, not only for full subsidy in the actual competition, also Government is willing to help in granting a meaningful sum for the pre-tournament purpose, this is why for the first time in history, HKCBA can afford to ask Patrick Huang to be the coach for our men's team, and also funding for us to join a lot of other competitions. The obvious example is the "Test Event Road to Asian Games" which took place in November 2017 in Jakarta. The best news is our KF Mak and WK Lai came first in the men's pair, so for the first time in HKCBA history, our players can stand to receive the honour when the national anthem is playing!

One problem that is troubling the Council is that although we expressed to the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China (SF&OC) that our intention to participate in all Asian Games Bridge events, namely Men's Team; Men's Pair; Ladies Team; Mixed Team; Mixed Pair as well as Super Mixed Team (where two males play as a pair, and two ladies as another pair), the dilemma we are facing is:

- 1) As the final approval from SF&OC would be based on the proposed players/team's external competition results, so even though players may win the trial, there is no guarantee that they can ultimately go.
- 2) Conflicts between different events – as for trial, there are cases when a player may wish to participate either in Ladies Team or Mixed Team, she has to make a choice a lot earlier which might not be optimum for her.
- 3) As the detail rule for Asian Games organizer is not yet clarified, we sort of acting without the full picture, very much like making leads again a slam with bidding 1S pass 6S ALL pass, so mistake bound to occur, so I would like to apologize on behalf of the Council if our solution comes out is sub-optimum. This is an impossible task for the Council.

Having our own Club House has another advantage is we can now proceed to become an official National Sports Association under the SF&OC and if accepted, we can have subsidies from Hong Kong Government for most of the international competitions in future. We now have fulfilled most of the requirements, the only aspect that is lacking is HKCBA appears not giving sufficient effort in providing training to the public.

To cater for this need, we had formed a training committee headed by KF Mak, with the intention to train up sufficient qualified trainers, both in advance course as well as elementary course. In particular now we have our Club House, so venue is no longer a problem.

Also, in order to raise the standard of our Tournament Directors (TDs) and train up young Directors, in July 2017, we invited Maurizio di Sacco (Honorary Chief Tournament Director of WBF) to come and gave us courses on Directorship, in particular for updating of new laws which took effect starting from 20 September 2017. Two levels of courses were conducted on general tournament operation at Basic level and National level. We received overwhelming responses and some TDs from Singapore also came to attend. Hence, in November 2017, WBF TD Committee sent a team to Hong Kong to conduct a separate TD examination at WBF level for our Hong Kong TDs. The official results will be released later in 2018, but we were told all the examinees in Hong Kong came out well ahead of those taking the same examination in Jakarta.

One thing I forgot to mention, HKCBA's overriding objective is to promote Bridge in Hong Kong, so our Club House is open to all Bridge Players, as long as they are willing to abide by our Club House rules, those who are interested may approach Leo Cheung for details.

Last year we participated in quite a number of external events for APBF, our open team ended in 9th and our ladies did quite well by ending in 5th. Our senior team ended in 3rd and won the berth to represent APBF to participate in d'Orsi Trophy (World Senior Teams) in Leon, France in August 2017, and they ended in 9th position, just missed out the knockout phase.

Our youth teams also played well in the APBF, our Youngster Team ended in 2nd, Girl Team ended at 3rd and Junior Team ended in 4th. In addition, the winners of Edmund Tse Cup (Inter-College Bridge Championship) and the Rose Bowl (Inter-school Bridge Competition) are The University of Hong Kong and Baptist Lui Ming Choi Secondary School respectively.

We organized the Intercity Championships from 26 July to 30 July 2017 and a total of 56 teams participated. Hong Kong players Abby Chiu and Alan Sze (Team Ambassador) ended 1st runner up in Open Team and our Derek Zen and Maurizio Di Sacco won the Open Pairs as a first time partnership.

The triangular interport took place in Macau and as usual, the crown position was taken up by Guangzhou, Hong Kong team really needs to wake up!

Our total number of member is 255, a slight decrease over that of 2016. Hope now we have the Club House, we will be able to attract more members.

Last but certainly not the least, the Council noticed that there is a general disrespect for Tournament Directors by some of our seasoned members, please do remember they are all volunteers and the amount we pay for Tournament Director is not the reason why they come, it is their interest in Bridge and wish to contribute and serve HKCBA. Please, do respect all Directors in your act as well as in your language, if any member does have complaint, you can surely write in and tell the tournament operation committee. Please do not forget, it is our aim to promote Bridge as a sport, I have never seen a football player can disrespect the referee!

The road in front of us is bright. Let's all work together in achieving a better and strong HKCBA in all aspects.

When you receive this report, the Chinese New Year is near, so I wish you all a very happy New Year. 'Kung Hei Fat Choy!'

Derek Zen