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September 2025

CBAI News

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NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

REPORTS FROM REGIONAL
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MESSAGE FROM INCOMING PRESIDENT

JOHN PHELAN

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CBAI National President's Welcome



I am very honoured to have been invited to represent the South Eastern Region as the National President of the CBAI for the coming year, and thank all the members of the region for their confidence in me. I am looking forward very much to my year in office.

I will reiterate my motto for the year, which I outlined at the recent AGM. "Be nice to your partner, be nice to the opponents, and be especially nice to the TDs!"

One of the roles of the President is to act as the eyes and ears of the Association at grassroots level as they travel the country. I hope to meet as many of our members as I can in my travels to congresses and national competitions, and I will welcome any feedback you have for us, and promise you that I will pass it on as appropriate. We need to take every opportunity we can to promote this great game of ours, and no committee, no matter how well staffed it is, has a monopoly on good ideas!

I look forward to a wonderful bridge season, and to meeting as many of you as I can at the bridge table in 2025/2026.

John Phelan
National President, CBAI

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Chief Executive's Welcome



Welcome back to all our members for the 93rd season of the Contract Bridge Association of Ireland.

In early July, we had our Annual General Meeting, which our Honorary Secretary Linda O'Riordan has written about in more detail elsewhere in this issue. At the AGM, we drew members attention to a couple of significant projects currently being undertaken that are occupying an increasing amount of my time, and that of our committees and volunteers.

The first is the potential amalgamation with the Northern Ireland Bridge Union, to form a 32-county national body for bridge in Ireland. Discussions are progressing on the key issues that need to be resolved, and we have reached the point where we feel it is worthwhile to seek external professional advice on some of these issues. There is still a good deal of work to be done, of course, but we now have broad agreement on what a potential new organisation will look like, and assuming everything continues to go smoothly, the intention is to circulate a full plan to the membership (probably via the regions in the case of the CBAI) in the new year, with both bodies presenting a formal amalgamation resolution at their respective AGMs in the summer. So watch this space.

The second is the upgrade of the CBAI's member database. I'm pleased to inform you that we are making good progress on this and hope to unveil at least some elements of it shortly. The plan is to bring our processes firmly into the 21st century, and, in particular, to allow members, clubs, and regions to access the relevant data directly and to make appropriate changes themselves without having to go through Head Office as is currently the case. So members will be able to check their grade or masterpoints, for example, or change their email address; clubs likewise will be able to amend their own data, and will also be able to register their members, or upload masterpoint returns, via the database rather than using the current paper methods.

We are confident that this will represent a major improvement for the users of the system and the for CBAI as the administrators of it. It will of course require some training, and that is part of the rollout plan. As with all such systems, a valid email address will be required for a member to access the database. If you have not previously given us your email address, or you have changed it and haven't told us of the change, I'd encourage you to correct that as soon as possible.

I also want to draw members' attention to two very notable achievements in recent months. The first is that the Regent Bridge Club has been celebrating its centenary, which makes it seven years older than the CBAI itself. At first glance, that seems odd, but I suppose on reflection that without bridge clubs there would have been no need for a national bridge body. Anyway, the Regent has pulled out all the stops to make the year a memorable one, including publishing a wonderful book of reflections on the hundred years, which is available from the club, and holding a great congress in UCD in July. Congratulations to Centenary President Paul Porteous and his committee on a job very well done. If your club is planning to celebrate any notable milestones of this kind, please keep us informed; we'll be delighted to give you any publicity we can.

The second noteworthy achievement was that of our juniors Matthew O'Farrell and Luca Crone in winning a silver medal in the President's Cup at European Youth Pairs Championships in Salsomaggiore, Italy in July. This represents Ireland's first podium finish at any level in more than ten years, and our first junior podium in considerably longer than that. Both Matthew and Luca are making quite the impact on the Irish bridge scene, and Luca has recently extended his range to the US, as he has gone to Chicago to pursue his studies there. Some of our other juniors are also making good progress, thanks to the tuition and support of volunteers like Karel De Raeymaeker (winner of the President's Merit Award last season for his contribution to junior bridge), Margaret Murphy, Martin Brady, John Phelan, and Paul Delaney. The big challenge is to get more juniors playing bridge to increase the pool of talent available; if you know of any likely candidates – either playing a bit of bridge already, or with the potential to learn – please give us their details and we'll line them up with the Junior Committee.



And finally, the housekeeping. All the CBAI and IBU competitions and congresses for the season are listed on our website, and the “majors” up to Christmas are now open for online entry. A full calendar is included elsewhere in this publication. Please support these competitions whenever you can.

We will have three sets of Simultaneous Pairs again this season – the IBU’s in the first week of November as usual, the CBAI’s in the first week of March, as last year, and the Celtic Nations Sims in early May, with the funds going entirely to junior bridge, as has been the case since it was introduced a few years ago. Please encourage your club to support these three Sims weeks if you can; aside from raising much needed funds for good causes, they are also great fun. We’re currently in the process of preparing the commentaries for the IBU week in November, and our expert analysts report that some very exciting deals await.

This traditional start-of-season “Newsletter” has been incorporated again this year into the Autumn edition of the Irish Bridge Journal, and is being sent by email to all members. I’d like to thank our editor, Enda Murphy, and designer, Sue Power, for all the work they put into the Journal; I’m sure you’ll agree that it is a most professional publication. Thanks also to all our advertisers – please support them with your custom whenever you can.

With best wishes for an enjoyable, competitive, and sociable, bridge season in 2025/26, and I hope to see you at the table very soon.

Sincerely,

Dermot O'Brien



The heart of the Kingdom

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2 Dinner, B&B (Single Room) <i>from</i>	€265	€250	€237.50
3 Dinner, B&B (Double/Twin) <i>from</i>	€560	€520	€510
3 Dinner, B&B (Single Room) <i>from</i>	€370	€350	€345

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AGM Report

Linda O'Riordan, Honorary Secretary, CBAI

The CBAI's Annual General Meeting was held in the Greenway Manor Hotel, Waterford, on Saturday 5 July. In spite of the gorgeous day, well over a hundred people attended, some of them official delegates representing our thirteen regions, others ordinary members – all members of the Association are entitled to attend this annual meeting.

In particular, there was a great turnout from the local area to support the incoming CBAI National President, John Phelan of Waterford, with quite a few extra chairs called into service.

The AGM is always a most enjoyable day, a gathering of the bridge community to meet old friends, hear what is going on within the Association, and have a say in how bridge is run in Ireland. Sometimes, resolutions are submitted in advance proposing a change in operations; these will be put to the floor for a vote. This year, as is often the case, there were no such resolutions – hopefully, a sign that the membership is generally happy with the way things are being run. Aside from the obligatory change of President (the Presidency of the CBAI is rotated through our thirteen regions every year), all the other officers were reappointed – Martin Brady as

Vice President, Brendan Martin as Honorary Treasurer, and Linda O'Riordan as Honorary Secretary.

There were five main speakers on the day. Chief Executive Dermot O'Brien gave his report on the 2025/26 season, and outlined some plans for 2025/26, noting the continuing progress in rebuilding post-pandemic. Attendance at national competitions exceeded the previous year's already good numbers, and congresses were also generally growing strongly. Three congresses returned live for the first time since the pandemic, and a fourth was due back next season. He also outlined the investments in bridge being made by the CBAI, which are possible because of the Association's solid financial position – accrediting new bridge teachers, and a major development workshop for existing teachers, training new

Tournament Directors, which are badly needed at club level in many areas, and a significant overhaul of the member database, which will modernise it and allow members, clubs, and regions to interact directly with it in ways not currently possible, which should make life simpler and more efficient for all. Dermot's presentation concluded with an "In Memoriam" remembering some of the notable bridge players and administrators who passed away during the season, and a series of thank-yous to the CBAI's officers, committee members, volunteers, and staff.

Treasurer Brendan Martin presented the signed accounts for the year to 30 April 2025, and took some questions from the floor. The Association made another surplus for the year (in spite of some agreed additional spending commitments) which has added to the reserves available for investment in suitable projects for the Irish bridge infrastructure such as those Dermot had discussed. Brendan outlined briefly a few expenditures which are anticipated but have not fallen due for payment yet – notably a refurbishment of the CBAI office and the database revamp. He concluded by showing an analysis of the financial position versus 2019 (the last full pre-pandemic year) and 2022 (the first year of re-opening post-pandemic), which demonstrated



Bridge game after the AGM in the Greenway Manor Hotel



John Phelan with Catherine Byrne

that the Association has recovered very well from the impact of the pandemic.

Outgoing President Catherine Byrne, who put her heart and soul into her year as President as representative of the Dublin North region, reflected on her year in office. She thanked all the congress organisers and members who had welcomed her so warmly throughout the season, and the TDs who had treated her so graciously in all the events she had played in. She was very grateful to her region and her club (Malahide Regional BC) for nominating her for the role, which she had enjoyed enormously. She also thanked Dermot and the CBAI staff, and her good friend Mary Breen, for the benefit of their guidance and support during the year.

Catherine then presented the ceremonial chain of office to the incoming President, John Phelan, who addressed the meeting. John said what an honour it was to have been nominated as President, and assured members that he will take the role very seriously and will work tirelessly to continue the good work of his predecessors, noting that Catherine would be a hard act to follow. He promised to keep the speeches short, and exhorted everyone to be “nice to their partner, nice to the opponents, and especially nice to the TDs!” He was very grateful to the South Eastern region for nominating him, and would do his very best to justify the region’s confidence in him. The meeting then paused briefly for some photographs of John, first with Catherine and then with his family, and for the presentation of a celebratory cake by the region.

Martin Brady, Vice-President of the CBAI, concluded the formal part of the meeting with a presentation to members on the progress of the potential amalgamation with the Northern Ireland Bridge Union (NIBU). Work is continuing, no insurmountable obstacles have been identified, and the expectation is that a formal plan will be shared with the CBAI’s Governing Council and regional committees during the next

number of months, and, assuming the response is favourable, that a formal amalgamation proposal will be tabled at next year’s AGM; ultimately the members will have the final say on the proposal. The NIBU is following a similar process with their membership. Martin and Dermot took a number of questions from the floor following this presentation. The main issues raised were around the costs of amalgamation, the likely legal structure, name, and domicile of a new body, the relative sizes of the two bodies currently, the plans for an office for the new body, and what might happen to the various competitions. There were some strong endorsements from the floor of the plan to amalgamate, and Damien Nee suggested that Co-Operation Ireland, which has funds available to support suitable cross-border initiatives, should be approached.

There was also some “other business” raised by the attendees, including advice for clubs going cashless, some questions on the criteria used for qualification for some of the national finals, and updated materials for bridge teachers.

The meeting concluded with finger food, and then a game of cards, with a whopping 27 tables participating and Diarmuid Reddan as TD, which raised almost €1,400 for the President’s nominated charity, Autism Friendly Waterford. The President, and the charity, have expressed their gratitude for such generous and helpful support.

Next year’s AGM will be in the South Midland region, the home of our President-Elect, George Ryan, at a venue and date to be decided, but which will be publicised closer to the event. All members are welcome to attend. If you haven’t been to an AGM before, why not come along and enjoy the annual gathering of the Irish bridge community.



John and Lucy Phelan and family



Junior Bridge Report

Martin Connell, Junior Committee

The Irish Youth Bridge Committee comprises the following people:

Secretary and Convenor:
Luca Crone

Treasurer: Paul Porteous

Member: John Phelan

Member: Karel De Raeymaeker

Member: Margaret Murphy

Parent's Representative:
Martin Connell

Parent's Representative:
Paula Flanagan

NIBU Representative:
Sandie Millership

NIBU Representative:
Wayne Somerville

The committee generally meets online about once a month usually just after the Junior Bridge Club meetings (see below) or in the run up to events where our juniors are involved. Meetings are well attended and last about an hour.

This year, the committee was very grateful to Martin Brady (U-26) and Paul Delany (U-21) who offered their coaching and mentoring services to our junior players; both have contributed substantially to the juniors' continued development. In addition, Peter Pigot has very kindly provided some online training sessions to our juniors and these have proven to be very popular, informative and helpful.

Kilkenny Congress 2024

The Kilkenny Bridge Congress took place in the Kilkenny Bridge Centre from 22-24 November 2024. There is a strong link between Kilkenny and junior bridge in Ireland because of the

tireless work of Kilkenny-based committee member Margaret Murphy on behalf of our juniors. Some of our juniors took part in the various sessions over the weekend and attended the presentation by Karel De Raeymaeker on declarer play in the bridge centre on the Saturday morning. It was a very enjoyable congress and the bridge centre in Kilkenny is an excellent venue with plenty of parking and facilities.

Junior Home Internationals 2024

The Peggy Bayer and Junior Camrose competitions were hosted by the Welsh Bridge Union from 14-16 February. Amanda Knox (WBU President) and Ceri Pierce (WBU CEO) did a fantastic job of making all the Irish contingent feel really welcome. It was a great weekend of bridge in Newport and it was so good to see all of the young bridge players mixing together and making new friends.

Of course, any friendships formed between bridge sessions were soon forgotten when they met each other at the bridge table! England, once again, dominated both competitions. In the Junior Camrose, the CBAI team (Luca Crone, Matthew O'Farrell, Isabel Burke, Denise Walsh and Leah Finnegan with NPC Martin Brady) finished second overall behind England. The CBAI's Peggy Bayer team was weakened this year because two of our more experienced players had important exams taking place. Fortunately, the NIBU was able to come to the rescue and Marc Campbell was drafted in to fill the fourth spot on our team. And he did really

well! There was some mention over the weekend of the CBAI trying to keep him and he was being compared to the soccer player Jack Grealish who was encouraged to switch from playing for the Republic of Ireland to playing for England! Could the same precedent apply to junior bridge internationals? Despite only having limited opportunity to practice together before the weekend the CBAI team (David Hoyne, Bence Orosz, Eve Connell and Marc Campbell with NPC Margaret Murphy) finished third behind the English and EBU teams (the WBU was unable to provide two teams for the Peggy Bayer competition this year so the EBU sent a second team to complete the line up).

It would be so great to win one or both of these competitions in the not too distant future! Ireland has one previous Peggy Bayer win, but has never won the Junior Camrose. Is it crazy to dream of successful junior bridge teams being driven on open-top buses through the streets of Dublin as jubilant fans hug each other and cheer? Or are we getting carried away again?

Malahide Congress 2025

The Malahide Congress took place in the Grand Hotel Malahide from 28 February-2 March of this year. Karel De Raeymaeker held a masterclass seminar on the Saturday morning which was well attended by some of our junior players from Kilkenny, Dundalk and Navan as well as some of the less junior congress attendees! Some of our junior players also featured in the prizes over the weekend.

CBAI President's Merit Award

The CBAI President's Merit Award is given each year to one of the unsung heroes or heroines of Irish bridge. The nominees for this award are usually the people who you might not hear about. They work behind the scenes, not looking for personal recognition but all the while making sure that things are managed efficiently and to maximum advantage. This year, Catherine Byrne's President's Merit Award went to Karel De Raeymaeker for his efforts with Irish junior bridge players for so many years. He gives so much of his spare time

voluntarily to coaching and mentoring young people at all levels to play bridge. Karel was nominated by several people, including some current junior players, a former Convenor of the CBAI Junior Committee, and several other well-known players with knowledge of his work. Karel himself played as a junior in 1985, and that experience led him to understand how much of an impact the guidance of more experienced players could have on young bridge minds, so in 2007, he volunteered his services to the Junior Committee. Since then, he has worked without a break as coach, organiser, non-playing captain, and committee member. Other coaches, and other members of the Junior Committee, have come and gone, but Karel has been a constant presence. His style is helpful, challenging, and inspiring, and he is incredibly generous with his time and his expertise.

Three of the top "graduates" from the junior programme in that time, Conor Boland (now on the IBU Open Team), Wayne Somerville (on the NIBU Open Team), and Kelan O'Connor (international triallist), have

benefitted enormously from Karel's coaching, as have the current crop of talented junior players, including Luca Crone, Matthew O'Farrell, and Isabel Burke; in his nomination, Luca commented on Karel's "unwavering commitment to teaching the future of the game". Karel has also very selflessly played in big national events with junior players on many occasions, voluntarily forfeiting his opportunity to add to his already impressive tally of national titles in the interests of developing junior players. And as BJ O'Brien and Paul Porteous noted in their nomination, "Karel is also a tireless advocate for junior bridge, never missing the chance to engage with the general bridge-playing population to seek their support for our junior players. Irish junior bridge is very lucky to have him".

Scottish Training Camp July 2025

A group of our young CBAI players attended a Junior Training Camp organised by the Scottish Bridge Union. It took place on the campus of Stirling University from 11-13th July. The SBU had very kindly



CBAI President, Catherine Byrne with junior players at the Malahide Congress



Karel De Raeymaeker receiving the President's Merit Award from CBAI President, Catherine Byrne

opened up this training camp to all other Bridge Unions from the home nations. The CBAI sent 19 young players, accompanied by some of their parents and by Margaret Murphy, the NPC of the CBAI U-21 teams. The upper age limit to take part in the camp was 18 years old so it was great for our newest recruits to bridge to see that there are other young people playing the game. They learned a lot over the weekend and left it wanting more which hopefully means that they will stick with it into the future.

European Youth Pairs Championship July 2025

Several of our juniors have just finished competed in the 16th European Youth Pairs Championship in Salsomaggiore Terme, Italy, from 18-23 July. In the mixed pairs, we had Luca Crone playing with Isabel Burke and Matthew O'Farrell playing with Sheila Walsh. This was followed later in the week by the U-26 and U-21 pairs. In the U-26 pairs we had Luca Crone and Matthew O'Farrell, Denise Walsh and Leah Finnegan, and Isabel Burke and Tom Gorey. The U-21 pairs were Eve Connell and Klara Flanagan and David Hoyne and Bence Orosz. They were accompanied by Martin Brady as Coach. There were some great performances by the young

players during the week with the highlight being the performance of Luca and Matthew in the President's Cup where they finished second overall. This was a fantastic achievement by the young Irish pair, and represents Ireland's first junior medal in many years.

The Year Ahead

As a committee we look forward to next year's junior bridge programme. Hopefully, the enthusiasm for the monthly Junior Bridge Club 'meet-ups' in Templeogue will continue and those young novice players will catch the bridge bug that will lead them on to being involved in more advanced training at U-21 and U-26 level. We can always do with some new players, so if you know anyone under the age of 25 who plays a bit of bridge or would be interested in taking it up with people of their own age, please put them in touch with any of the Junior Committee members.

The proposed amalgamation of the CBAI and the NIBU is a very positive development from a junior bridge point of view. This amalgamation would provide us with synergies for promotion of

junior bridge, and ultimately a larger pool of players to choose from to represent us internationally which will lead to more competition for limited places and hopefully a return to annual junior trials.

Finally, it was great to see our very own committee member, John Phelan, being appointed as President of the CBAI for the year ahead. John has been a great advocate for junior bridge in this country and a very popular NPC for the junior teams on a number of occasions. Not only is he a fantastic bridge player, he is hugely popular with the young players, he offers great coaching advice and is very generous with his time. On behalf of the Junior Bridge Committee, I would like to wish John the very best for the year ahead as President.



Luca and Matthew - runners-up in the President's Cup at the European Youth Bridge Championships in Salsomaggiore, Italy

CBAI & IBU Calendar 2025-2026



SEPTEMBER 2025

13-14 Sept	Duais an Uachtarain <i>Tower Hotel, Waterford</i>
20 Sept	Fermoy Gala Day <i>(Incorporating Munster Pairs)</i> <i>Fermoy Mart</i>

OCTOBER 2025

2-5 Oct	Drogheda Congress <i>ABCD Bridge Centre</i>
10-12 Oct	Limerick Congress <i>Kilmurry Lodge Hotel</i>
18 Oct	Spiro Mixed Pairs <i>Templeogue Bridge Centre</i>
19 Oct	Coen Mixed Teams <i>Templeogue Bridge Centre</i>
31 Oct-02 Nov	Carlow Congress <i>Seven Oaks Hotel</i>

NOVEMBER 2025

3-7 Nov	IBU Sims Week
7-9 Nov	Donegal Congress <i>Abbey & Central Hotels</i>
14-16 Nov	Kenmare Congress <i>Kenmare Bay Hotel</i>
21-23 Nov	Kilkenny Congress <i>Kilkenny Bridge Centre</i>
29-30 Nov	IBU Interprovincials <i>Knightsbrook Hotel, Trim</i>

DECEMBER 2025

6 Dec	Regional Pairs <i>Various Days/Times/Locations</i>
13-14 Dec	Master Pairs <i>Templeogue Bridge Centre</i>

JANUARY 2026

9-11 Jan	Waterford Congress <i>Tower Hotel, Waterford</i>
17 Jan	Jackson Cup Women's Pairs Revington Cup Men's Pairs <i>Westgrove Hotel, Clane</i>
18 Jan	McMenamin Bowl Women's Teams Geraldine Trophy Men's Teams <i>Westgrove Hotel, Clane</i>
23-25 Jan	Cork Congress <i>Maryborough Hotel</i>
24 Jan	Regional Teams <i>Various Days/Times/Locations</i>
31 Jan	Confined Regional Master Pairs Championship <i>Templeogue Bridge Centre</i>

FEBRUARY 2026

1 Feb	Confined Regional Master Teams Championship <i>Templeogue Bridge Centre</i>
6-8 Feb	Ennis Congress <i>The Inn at Dromoland</i>
14-15 Feb	Holmes Wilson Cup <i>Mount Wolseley Hotel</i>
20-22 Feb	Galway Congress <i>The Ardilaun Hotel</i>
27 Feb-1 Mar	Malahide Congress <i>Grand Hotel Malahide</i>

MARCH 2026

2-6 Mar	CBAI Sims Week
7-8 Mar	National Pairs Finals <i>Falls Hotel, Ennistymon</i>
21-22 Mar	IBU Burke & O'Connor Trophies <i>Knightsbrook Hotel, Trim</i>
27-29 Mar	Clonmel Congress <i>The Talbot Hotel</i>

APRIL 2026

10-12 April	CBAI Novice & Intermediate Congress <i>Tower Hotel, Waterford</i>
11-12 April	IBU Moylan Cup <i>Malahide Bridge Centre</i>
18-19 April	National Teams Finals <i>Midlands Park Hotel, Portlaoise</i>
21-23 April	IBU Seniors Congress <i>Cavan Crystal</i>
23-26 April	Greystones Open Week <i>Greystones Bridge Centre</i>
24-26 April	Tralee International Congress <i>The Rose Hotel, Tralee</i>

MAY 2026

9 May	IBU Pairs Championship - All grades <i>Templeogue Bridge Centre - 12 noon</i>
11-15 May	Celtic Nations Sims Week
16 May	JJ Murphy Trophy <i>Loughrea Hotel & Spa</i>
16-17 May	Lambert & Cooper Cups <i>Loughrea Hotel & Spa</i>
23 May	4Fun Teams Final <i>Westmanstown - 12 noon</i>
23-24 May	IBU Egan Trophy <i>La Mon Hotel, Belfast</i>

JUNE 2026

5-7 June	Yeats (Sligo) Congress <i>Clayton Hotel</i>
12-14 June	Killarney Congress <i>Castlerosse Park Resort</i>



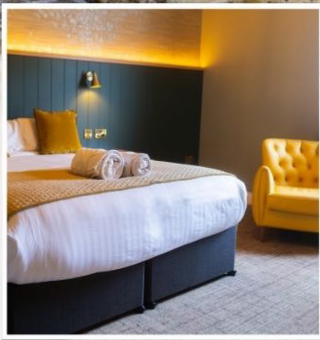
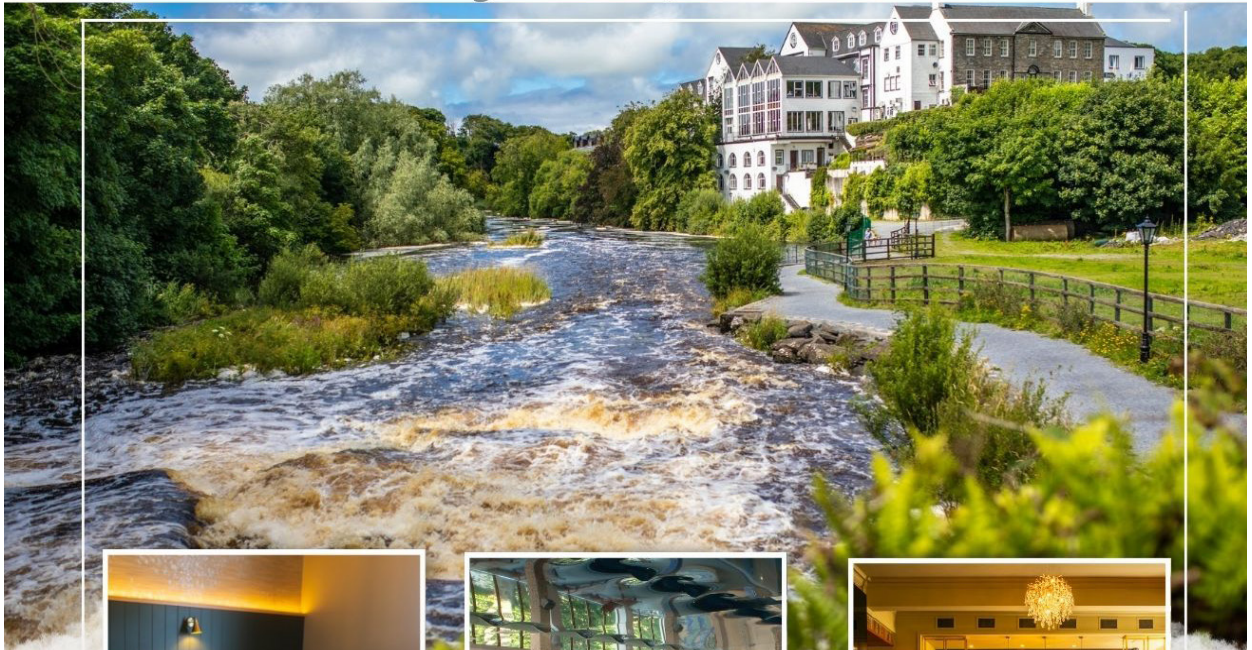
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DUBLIN NORTH REGION REPORT

Aidan Synnott, Regional Secretary

Dublin North Region had the honour of supplying the President of the CBAI for 2024/25.

The successful candidate for this prestigious post was Catherine Byrne of Malahide Regional Bridge Club. During the year, the region thus hosted both the Duais an Uachtarain in September 2024, in Portmarnock, and the Novice & Intermediate Congress in February 2025, in Roganstown. Both events were very successful. In addition, Catherine attended many other national events, congresses, and meetings in what is always a gruelling presidential schedule. She performed her duties admirably and her year as President was very successful. The DNR Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank her for representing us so well.

Returning to the more routine work of the DNR Committee, the bridge world in North Dublin appears to have settled further, and we now seem to be in an established "post-Covid" pattern of activity. There are good and bad aspects to this. The good news is that several clubs in the region are now running



Catherine Byrne receiving her chain of office from Gordon Lessells

Novice classes once more, and this is reflected in the increased number of Novices playing in various clubs and in the consolidation of entry numbers in our two regional Novice events (Novice Pairs and Novice Teams). The other tournament for which we had good entry numbers was the 4Fun Teams Qualifier, again fuelled by strong demand from Novice players.

The less good news is that membership levels at Master and Intermediate grades have stagnated a little, and this is reflected in poor entries for many of our regional tournaments aimed at those grades. Hopefully, as our new group of Novices rise through the ranks, this issue will resolve. The overall number of clubs in the region remains stable at 30 and all clubs who wished to return after Covid appear to have done so, albeit that several are in new venues. With the improved situation for live bridge within the clubs, activity in the two major virtual clubs (Clontarf Area & Glasnevin Regional) has ceased. However, we continue to support their infrastructure so that they could be revived quickly if there was a requirement to do so.

Our regional league (Kirwans League) was held as a series of face-to-face events in 2024-25, having been held online or as hybrid events for the preceding few years. All sections were well supported, and the players seemed pleased to be back live; we would like to thank our league co-ordinations Mary Deane and Dan O'Mahony for their hard work and, of course, Kirwans for their continued generous sponsorship.

The winners in each category were:

Novice: Glasnevin

Intermediate B: Vernon

Intermediate A: Vernon

Area Master: Malahide

Open Master: Malahide

The Region continued to run its highly successful Improvers' classes, delivered by Seamus Costello. These were oversubscribed, further evidence of the healthy situation at Novice & Intermediate B levels. We did not run a Tournament Director Course in 2024/25 but plan to do so in 2025/26.

We held our AGM in June 2025. Mary Breen's term as President has expired, but she will continue to provide the committee with the benefit of her experience, taking on the position of CDO alongside Dan O'Mahony. Our new President for 2025/26 is Patricia Quigley, nominated by St. Gabriel's Bridge Club. We wish Patricia the best of luck in her new role. John Kehoe will continue as Honorary Treasurer and Aidan Synnott has agreed to continue as Regional Secretary and Webmaster. The committee welcomed a new member; Deirdre McGann of Iona Bridge Club



Patricia Quigley DNR President for 2025/2026



WESTERN REGION REPORT

Fiona Place, Regional Secretary

The past year has seen some success within the Western region and our Congress was back in the Ardilaun Hotel over Valentine's weekend and was well attended. A big thank you to David Walsh and Louise Mitchell for their trojan work in ensuring a successful congress.

Women's Internationals

Galway Bridge Centre had the honour of hosting the prestigious Lady Milne trials at the weekend run over three days 26-28 September.

We had three members from the Western Region competing in the event, Joan Kenny, Louise Mitchell, and Deirdre O'Halloran and big congratulations to Joan, who along with Jeannie Fitzgerald, Teresa Rigney, and Siobhan Part, won the event and represented Ireland in the Lady Milne Trophy in England in April 2025.

It is with much sadness that we learnt of the passing of Una Walsh. Una was a secretary of the Western Region for a number of years and also a past president of both the CBAI and the IBU. She was a founder of the Galway

Bridge Centre and for many years she single-handedly produced the Irish Bridge Journal.

The picture below was taken when Una received a presentation from the then-President of the CBAI (Peter O'Meara) for all the work she contributed to bridge throughout her lifetime, at Galway Bridge Congress in April 2019.

It was an honour to have Joan Kenny represent Ireland in both the European Championships in Herning in June and the World Bridge Games held in Argentina in October. Louise Mitchell was also part of the team for the latter event.

Coen Trophy

Hearty congratulations to two of our Western Region players, Joan Kenny and Enda Glynn, who along with their team mates Teresa Rigney and Conor Boland took the number one spot and won the prestigious National Mixed Teams Championship, for the Coen Trophy.

The event took place in the CBAI headquarters in Templeogue with 58 teams competing. Also

well done to Deirdre O'Halloran and her partner David O'Brien who finished in 4th place (of 97 pairs) in the National Mixed Pairs event (Spiro Cup) held the previous day.

New Grand Master



David Walsh with CBAI president Catherine Byrne and Tom Quinlan from AL Homecare

We were very honoured to have one of our own reach Grand Master status. Huge congratulations to David Walsh, who continued a proud family legacy, following in the footsteps of his late father Paddy Walsh, who was celebrated as one of Ireland's top bridge players. David becomes only the fifth person in the Western Region



Peter O'Meara and Una Walsh



Coen Trophy winners Enda Glynn and Joan Kenny with team mates Teresa Rigney and Conor Boland

to reach this esteemed status, joining Gay Keavney, Enda Glynn, Rory Timlin, and Joan Kenny at the highest level within Irish bridge.

Well done David on this outstanding achievement.

Regional President's Prize

A big congratulations to Don Coen, President of the Western Region, for hosting a super event with 25 tables in the Lady Gregory Hotel, Gort. The event raised much-needed funds for the chosen charity, Gort Cancer Care West. Congratulations to Margaret Forde and Rhona Bolger who won the event, followed closely by Billy Cuniffe and Michael Waldron in second place.

National Teams Finals

The CBAI National Teams finals were held in March in Portlaoise. Very well done to Joan Kenny, Paul Scannell, Gay Keaveney, Enda Glynn, and David Walsh who put up a terrific performance finishing second in the Kelburne Cup, narrowly failing to add to the substantial track record of Gay, Paul, and Enda in particular in that competition.

Our Inter B team also performed very well, finishing in 5th place in the Tierney Trophy. Well done to Carmel Walsh, Tony Faherty, Trina Byrne, and Frannie Byrne.



Winners of President's Prize = Margaret Forde and Rhona Bolger

Senior Camrose

Congratulations to our Western Region players, Gay Keaveney and Enda Glynn, who represented the CBAI team in the Senior Camrose (Teltscher Trophy), in Gormanstown in May, alongside teammates Donal Garvey, Pat Quinn, Fred Barry, and Paul Porteous, with Joan Kenny as non-playing Captain. The team was leading with only a few boards to go, but a great finish by the Welsh team meant that had to settle for second spot ... but ahead of the Ireland team in the bragging rights!

Regent Centenary Congress

The Regent Bridge Club celebrated its centenary with a congress in UCD from in July. Congratulations to our players from the Western Region, Patsy O'Donohue and James Ward, along with their teammates Margaret Holmes and Eugene Gath on winning the Regional Masters Teams competition.

Regional Officers for 2025-2026 are as follows:

President: TBC

Secretary: Fiona Place

Treasurer: Michael O'Connor

CDO: Michael Waldron

Patsy O'Donohue and James Ward, along with their teammates Margaret Holmes and Eugene Gath on winning the Regional Masters Teams competition.





SOUTH MUNSTER REGION REPORT

Linda O'Riordan, Regional Secretary

South Munster held its Annual General Meeting on June 10th, 2025, with Jean Kelly presiding. During the meeting, Jean presented awards to the players with the highest masterpoints in each grade at the regional competitions during the season.

The recipients were Cian Holland & Derek O'Gorman for Masters, Geraldine Browne & Mary Beausang for Intermediate As, and Karen & Liam Magnier for Intermediate Bs.

The South Munster region showed good growth in membership during the season has grown, as the hard work of our teachers is reaping rewards in terms of new Novices; many clubs are offering Improver classes as well. A new club has opened in UCC for staff, and a former club has rejoined for the first time post-COVID, confirming the positive outlook for bridge in the region.

Regional qualifying events this year saw an increase in participation. The Intermediate A & B pairs event comprised

26 pairs, with Caroline McGeer & Nick Addy winning the Intermediate A category, and Karen & Liam Magnier winning the Intermediate B category. The Intermediate A & B teams event took place on 7 February, 2025, marking the first time since Covid that enough entries were received to run this competition. Ten teams entered; the Intermediate A team winners were John O'Donovan, Dermot Houston, Sean Houston, and Kryle Allen, while the Intermediate B team winners were Liam and Karen Magnier, along with Des and Marie O'Sullivan. There were 23 entries for the Regional Pair qualifiers, with Liam Hyde & John Whelehan taking first place. Eleven teams competed in the Kelburne Cup qualifier (Barry O'Connell Trophy), which was won by Derek O'Gorman, Cian Holland, Tom McCarthy, and John Russell. Many congratulations to Cian Holland, who has achieved the title of Grand Master, although the presentation of his silver salver is proving elusive. The Novice competition had 30 pairs; winners were Denis Callanan & Tricia Dorgan.

The South Munster region organised bridge games for Novice and Intermediate B players at four venues in November, addressing members' reluctance to travel. These events were positively received and will continue to help players gain confidence for wider competitions.

Munster took first place in Regional/Master category at the Inter-Regionals, second in the Open, and third in Intermediate teams. Ronnie O'Shaughnessy, Brian Madden, Verna Roberts, and Geoff Roberts from South Munster were on the winning Master team event. Alan Auchincloss, Kyrle Allen, Hugh Twomey, and Declan O'Brien claimed the Cooper Trophy, with Twomey and O'Brien also securing second in the Lambert Cup.

Killarney Congress resumed after more than five years. The event received strong support, with Ciaran Broadbery and the committee organising a most successful return. Kenmare and Cork Congresses also saw increased participation. In the past, congresses served as an introduction for players to compete outside their clubs and connect with other bridge enthusiasts, and hopefully bridge players will continue to support these very social occasions.



Fermoy Committee, Fermoy 90th Celebration

Fermoy Bridge Club commemorated its 90th anniversary last September. A special commemorative event was led by President Nora O'Driscoll and included both past and present members. Attendees enjoyed light refreshments followed by an evening game of bridge as part of the celebration. On 20 September 2025, Fermoy Bridge Club will hold their Gala Day event.

We extend our condolences to the families and clubs who lost members this year. In particular, we remember Anne Dillon, an important figure in South Munster bridge and a European Mixed bronze medallist for Ireland, who passed away in March.

Ciaran Broadbery has been appointed as the new Regional President for the upcoming season, and we wish him well for his presidential year.



Novice Competition winners Tricia Dorgan and Denis Callanan



(Intermediate B winners Karen and Liam Magnier

Winners of Regional Competitions:

Intermediate A & B: Caroline McGeer & Nick Addy (Intermediate A), Karen & Liam Magnier (Intermediate B)

Olive Rose Memorial Plate: Hugh Twomey & Declan O'Brien

Regional Master Pairs: John Whelehan & Liam Hyde

Raymond O'Leary Trophy: Pat Twomey & David Sheehan


Intermediate A Teams: John O'Donovan, Sean Houston, Dermot Houston & Kyrl Allen

Intermediate B Teams: Liam & Karen Magnier, Des & Marie O'Sullivan

Barry O'Connell (Qualifier for Kelburne Cup): Derek O'Gorman, Cian Holland, Tom McCarthy & John Russell

Novice Competition: Denis Callanan & Tricia Dorgan


Specsavers Competition: Martin Delaney & Tony Fitzgerald



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NORTH MUNSTER REGION REPORT

Tom Hardiman, Outgoing Regional Secretary

Regional Overview

The North Munster Region is thriving as we continue to foster and expand our vibrant bridge community. Our dedicated efforts are bearing fruit, with an increase in enthusiastic new players joining our ranks. Many are now participating in lessons and novice events with good entry numbers.

It is vital that we welcome these new members into our clubs and provide them with ample opportunities to develop their skills and enjoy the game. Collaboration among bridge teachers in our region will be key to supporting this objective.

The region hosted numerous successful events throughout the year.

Regional President's Charity Event

Our Regional President, Maureen Pattinson, hosted a charity event at Clare Bridge Centre, raising over €3,000 in aid of Clare Youth Services. This was a remarkable achievement and a testament to the generosity of our community.

Regional Events

The Intermediate Pairs, which now rotate venues with the President each year, continues to be a success. This year's event saw 20 pairs participating, with a separate Novice Section that attracted new players.

Irish Teams for European Competitions

Women's Team:

Congratulations to Jeannie Fitzgerald, who was selected for the national team for both the European Championships and the Lady Milne Trophy.

Mixed Team: Captained by Diarmuid Reddan.

Teltscher Trophy (Senior Camrose): The CBAI Team containing two North Munster players, in Donal Garvey and Pat Quinn, finished a very narrow second.

Sonya Britton Trophy

Ireland won the Sonya Britton Trophy with Jeannie Fitzgerald on the team.

Moylan Cup

2nd Place: Pat Quinn; 7th Place: Jeannie Fitzgerald

Interprovincial Competition

In the Area Master Competition, Munster emerged victorious. North Munster players included Margaret Holmes, Eugene Gath, Joe Carroll, Gerry McCague

Regional Competition Winners

Regional Pairs:

Cathal Dillane & Bosco Clarke

Regional Intermediate Pairs (Jim Whymys Trophy):

Carmel Daly & Gerald Walshe

Regional Intermediate B Pairs:

Liz Collins & Donie O'Shea

Regional Novice Winners:

Ben Valley & John Clohessy

Thomond Cup Winners:

Kay Cussen, Denis Sheehan, John O'Connor, and Justin Spratt

National Events Participation

Regional players have performed admirably at national events:

Davidson Cup: 2nd – Maureen Pattinson & Bob Pattinson

Holmes Wilson: 3rd – Kelan O'Connor

Burke Trophy: 4th – Gordon Lessells, Paul Barrett, Kelan O'Connor, John O'Connor

Revington Cup: Joint 2nd – Kelan O'Connor & John O'Connor

Geraldine Trophy: 2nd – Gordon Lessells

Spiro Cup: 2nd – John O'Connor

Duais an Uachtaráin: 2nd – Diarmuid Reddan

IBU Senior Congress Pairs: 2nd – Paul Barrett; 4th – Gordon Lessells

IBU Gala Pairs: 2nd – Willie Corby, 4th – Gordon Lessells

CBAI Women's Pairs: 4th – Louise Mitchell

Acknowledgements

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all the volunteers, players, directors, and organisers who have contributed to the success of this past year. Special thanks go to our Regional President, Maureen Pattinson, for her unwavering support and dedication.

Let us continue working together to nurture and develop our novice players, while encouraging the growth of our Intermediate A and B players. We look forward to another very busy and successful year ahead, and I wish the incoming committee, particularly my successor as Secretary, Gordon Lessells, every success.



SOUTH EASTERN REGION REPORT

Melwyn Godinho, Regional Secretary

The South Eastern Region regional AGM took place in Waterford Bridge Centre on 30 May 2025.

Regional Officers elected for Year 2025/2026 are:

President: Johanne Powell

Chairperson: Larry Mordaunt

Treasurer: Jim Doyle

Secretary: Melwyn Godinho

CDOs: Jim Kennington, Jim Doyle and Johanne Powell

The Committee made a special presentation to Oona Dwyer, who stood down as Regional Secretary after many years of loyal and dedicated service.



Presentation to Oona Dwyer, who stood down as Regional Secretary after many years of loyal and dedicated service.



Celine Smyth and Anne Kearney (Wexford) winning the Laird Trophy (National Intermediate A Pairs Championship)

Congratulations to John Phelan, Waterford, who was inaugurated as President of the CBAI at the AGM in July 2025. The AGM went off very smoothly, with an excellent attendance; the traditional game of bridge after the meeting was also very well supported, and raised €1400 for Autism Friendly, Waterford. Our thanks to all who attended.



John Phelan

Affiliation numbers have increased and table numbers are up, but, unfortunately, we lost one club this year. Waterford held its 42nd Congress early January with a successful turnout. The 43rd Waterford Bridge Congress will be held in Tower Hotel from Friday 9 to Sunday 11 January 2026. Congress rates p.p. for 2 Nights B&B + 1 Dinner apply.

In the season just past, the region scored a couple of notable successes, with Celine Smyth and Anne Kearney (Wexford) winning the Laird Trophy (National Intermediate A Pairs Championship), and Maria Donegan & Sean Mulvaney (Waterford) the Pat McDevitt Trophy (IBU Senior Pairs Championship).

In Wexford, Beginners' classes start on Tuesday 16 September at 7:30pm, in The Ross Inn, Neville Street, New Ross run by Martin Burke (mburkenr@gmail.com, 086 2669836), in Poulpeasty Hall (Y21 NY80) on Thursday 25 September from 7:30-9:30pm run by Jim Doyle (jimdoylebree@gmail.com 086 3619911). Jim is also running classes in Wexford Community Bridge Centre starting on Monday 22 September from 10:30am-12:30pm, and on Tuesday 23 September from 7-9pm

In Kilmuckridge, starting in September, there will be classes run by Podge Ussher (podgeussher@yahoo.ie 087 2487540) in the Upton Court Hotel (Sean Og's, Kilmuckridge).

In Gorey, Kerry Anne O'Connor (kerryanneoconnor@gmail.com 087 9583168) is running classes starting on Wednesday 1 October, in the Adult Ed Gorey Community School.

In Waterford, Beginners' classes will take place in the Teachers Centre, Newtown Road, Waterford, starting on Tuesday 9 September, 2025 at 10.30 a.m., while Beginners' classes in the Waterford Bridge Centre, Thomas Street, Waterford, start on Wednesday 10 September 10, 2025 at 7:30pm. Contact: Lucy Phelan 086 8275192 in relation to both sets of classes.

Beginners' bridge classes in the Tramore Bridge Centre are fully subscribed for September 2025.

Improver classes in Waterford in Sts Joseph & Benildus, Waterford, are being run by Pascal Browne starting on Tuesdays at 6pm for six weeks from 16 September 2025.

As new Regional Secretary, I have created WhatsApp groups for Waterford and Wexford to encourage exchange of information between local clubs in each of the counties.



EASTERN REGION REPORT

Bernie Rountree, Regional Secretary

Bridge Promotion

The season kicked off on 31 August with Eastern Region hosting a bridge promotion event in Stillorgan Shopping centre. This was very well supported by committee and friends. Leaflets were distributed giving details of local clubs and lessons available. We set up two tables and gave demonstrations of MiniBridge to interested passers-by. There was also a game of bridge going on most of the day. Pens, packs of cards and sweets were distributed. There was particular interest in lessons. The event was very well attended by locals promoting their own clubs and seemed to be a worthwhile effort for the region.

Our Presidents' & Delegates' night was held in Dun Laoghaire Bridge Club on Friday 6 September and was well attended with the majority of packs collected. Refreshments were offered to delegates and we had an enjoyable game of bridge.

New Clubs

The region was delighted to welcome Rathdown Bridge Club, a new venture which has opened in Greystones Bridge Centre. The club runs on Tuesday mornings. It is primarily aimed at Novice and B grades but welcomes more advanced players also. Brendan Martin is TD and offers assistance with bidding and play when requested. Brendan also prepares commentary on some of the boards each week. We wish the new club every success. The region now has a total of 63 clubs with over 4,000 members.

TD and Bridgemate Courses

Four very successful TD training courses were organised for the end of last season and during the Autumn with a total of 45 attendees. One Bridgemate training course was held with 17 attendees. Joe Dempsey facilitated them and designed and presented excellent courses. They were all very interactive and sociable with light lunch/refreshments supplied when the attendees were able to chat and intermingle. The region subsidised the cost of the courses to facilitate member attendance.

Training Seminar

Following feedback from clubs visited by our President and our CDO, a training seminar was organised in February. Hilary McDonagh facilitated the event which was attended by 80 Eastern Region club members. A further 54 applicants for places were disappointed! It was extremely successful and enjoyable with a presentation and play followed by discussion of completed boards. Lunch was provided and responses to the survey circulated were excellent. Most participants asked for more of the same. Another seminar is planned for autumn.

Competitions

Competitions were well attended with increased numbers at most events.

The winners were:

Novice Pairs: Mary Coyle & Denisa Newton

Inter B Pairs: Dorothy Collins & Niamh Hogan

Inter A Pairs: Robert Wolfe & John Corcoran

Master Pairs: Eoin MacNeill & David Scannell

Inter B Teams: Thomas Wade, Louise Webb, Deirdre Wall, Rachel Bell

Inter A Teams: Philip O'Dwyer, Ciaran O'Huiginn, Carol Vambeck, Michael Kenny

Master Teams: John Noonan, Eoin MacNeill, Alan O'Sullivan, Carol-Ann Cummins

4 Fun Teams: Paschal Doyle, Lucy Mulcahy, Ann Lynn, Margaret Hawes

E. O'Doherty: Gabriel McGovern & Eva Reynolds

ER Memorial: Fergal O'Farrell & Teresa Hynes

Britton Trophy: Alan O'Sullivan & John Noonan

It was great to see the Greystones Open returning to the calendar, with its early April slot. The two Dun Laoghaire events (O'Kennedy Teams & Muldoon Pairs) were also well supported.

We tried a new format for the Massey Bros League this year and had great success with 34 teams taking part. Congratulations to Fedelma Martin on all the work that she and her team put into this.

The winning teams this year were:

Seniors: Dun Laoghaire BC (MP)

Inter A Div 1: Dun Laoghaire Golf Club BC (VR);

Inter A Div 2: Elm Park BC (AMT)

Inter B Div 1: The Well BC (MS)

Inter B Div 2: The Well BC (ED)

On the national front, the Eastern Region had great success, with a number of winners in national competitions, at a range of levels:

Mairead Haugh & Roisin De Jong were half of the team to win the McMenamin trophy

Simon Burrell & Paul Twomey won the Gala Pair in the Intermediate Congress

Helen Locke & Robyn Conway were winners in the Novice Championship at the congress

John Biggar & Brenda Biggar won the Malahide Inter A pairs

Mary Devine & Ruth Keogh were winners of the JJ Murphy Trophy with Helen Locke & Robyn Conway a very close second

John Noonan & Carol-Ann Cummins won the IBU Master Pairs

Finally, the region also saw another member elevated to Grand Master status, with John Noonan following very closely on the heels of his partner, Carol-Ann Cummins, in achieving this rank. Many congratulations on a well-deserved achievement.



John Noonan being presented with Grand Master Salver by Catherine Byrne, President, CBAI



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DUBLIN SOUTH REGION REPORT

Teresa Gavin, Regional Secretary

John Coulter is the new President for Dublin South Region elected at the annual DSR AGM on 23 May. John plays in the Milltown Golf Bridge Club and is also a member of Regent and Bankers Bridge Clubs and has been an active member on the committee over the last few years.

The committee also welcomed three new members, Julie Anderson, Tom Flood and Brendan Ruddy, and we look forward to working together in the years ahead. We say goodbye to our departing committee member, Fiona O'Gorman, former President of Dublin South Region, who carried out huge work on the annual Fanagan League and who together with John Coulter got the league back up and running after the pandemic securing large entries and making it a very successful league within the region. We are grateful for all her help with Dublin South Bridge over the years.

Last season Dublin South members had great success, securing many titles.

National Competition Winners in 2024-2025

Coen Trophy: Joan Kenny & Partner, Conor Boland & Teresa Rigney

Spiro: Suzanne Hill & Hugh McDermott

Revington Cup: Conor Boland & Thomas Hanlon

Geraldine Cup: Peter Goodman, Dan McIntosh, Micheal O Briain & Pdraig O Briain

McMenamin Cup: Mairead Haugh, Roisin De Jong & teammates

Holmes Wilson: Matthew O'Farrell, Tommy Garvey, Peter Goodman & Dan McIntosh

Inter A Championship: Philomena Sweeney & Paul Twomey

Davidson Cup: Derek O'Gorman & Partner

Regional Master Teams: Pam Harrington, Eamon Martin (Jnr) & teammates

IBU O'Connor Trophy: Simon Burrell, Vicky Pigot, Sarann Doyle & Kay Falkner-Sheridan

Moylan Cup: Anna Onishuk & Karel De Raeymaeker

Egan Trophy: John Carroll, Conor Boland, Adam Mesbur & Nick FitzGibbon

Lambert Cup: Brendan Rushe & Partner

IBU Inter Pairs: Charles Alken & Anthony Alken

IBU Master Pairs: John Noonan & Carol Ann Cummins

IBU Senior Teams: Conor Moore, David Ryan, Jim McAndrew & Finian O'Donoghue

IBU Burke Intercounty Open Teams: Paul Delaney, Tomás Roche, David Dunne & Martin Brady

Kelburne Trophy: Paul Delaney, Tomás Roche, David Dunne & Martin Brady

Teltscher Trials: B.J. O'Brien, Randal Milne, Pdraig O Briain, Micheal O Briain, Peter Goodman & Terry Walsh

Lady Milne Trials: Joan Kenny, Teresa Rigney, Siobhan Part & Partners

Camrose Trials: Mark Moran, John Carroll, Tom Hanlon, Conor Boland, Adam Mesbur, Nick FitzGibbon & Gráinne Barton (NPC)

Dublin South Competition Winners in 2024-2025

Carroll Cup: Matthew O'Farrell, Peter Stewart, Siobhan Part & Ronan McMaugh

Paul O'Reilly Trophy: Simon Burrell, Su Li, Ian Kingston & Maura King

Quin Cup: BridKemple & Terry Walsh

Duffy Cup: Jane Harbourne & Joan Meade

Joe Moran Cup: Maura King & Ian Kingston

B.J. O'Brien Trophy: Simon Burrell, Vicky Pigot, Maura King & Ian Kingston

Pigot Cup: Paul Delaney, Tomás Roche, David Dunne & Martin Brady

Ruth Giddings Trophy: Tracey Pelosi, Meg Escott, Deirdre Doyle & Yvonne Keane

Kay Downes Trophy: Tara Crowley & Noelle Sweeney

Dublin South Members at World Bridge Championships:

Dublin South Region members were well represented at the World Championships held in Buenos Aries in Argentina

Open: Mark Moran, John Carroll, Tom Hanlon, Conor Boland, Adam Mesbur, Nick FitzGibbon, NPC Gráinne Barton

Women: Joan Kenny, Anne Fitzpatrick, Mary Kelly-Rogers, NPC Paul Porteous

Mixed: Marcin Rudzinski, Mairead Haugh

Youth Bridge

Congratulations to Luca Crone and Matthew O'Farrell who finished runners up at the President's Cup at the European Youth Bridge Championships in Salsomaggiore in Italy in July 2025.

CBAI President's Special Merit Award 2025

Congratulations to Dublin South Member, Karel De Raeymaeker who received this award from CBAI President, Catherine Byrne, for all his tireless work with junior bridge over the years. This award is given out to those who contribute so much to bridge without fuss or favour and is very well deserved.



Karel De Raeymaeker receiving the President's Merit Award from CBAI President, Catherine Byrne

Dublin South Region Clubs

Membership was up in Dublin South Region during the year and it was particularly pleasing that there was a substantial increase in numbers for our Novice and Intermediate competitions. Our Novice Pairs competition for the Kay Downes Trophy attracted huge numbers with 42 pairs taking part. Our Regional Teams and Pairs competitions also reported increased numbers competing. Our Inter Club League, the Fanagan League was extremely well supported with nine divisions across Confined Masters, Novices and Intermediate As & Bs. This is a very enjoyable and social league which sees club teams play home and away team matches throughout the year. Thank again to Fiona O'Gorman and John Coulter who organised and ran a superb league culminating in a Grand Finale on 11 May 2025 with refreshments and wine afterwards. A massive thank you to our sponsors, Fanagans, without whose sponsorship we would not be able to organise and run this league each year.

The Regent Bridge Club held a Congress in July to celebrate its 100th Anniversary and we enjoyed the presence of some world-famous bridge players such as Zia Mahmood who travelled to play in this tournament, which was held in the O'Reilly Hall in UCD in July 2025. Congratulations to Paul Porteous, President of the Regent Bridge Club, and his committee who made this special event happen. The club has also created a special 100th Anniversary Yearbook to mark this special occasion. The Regent also runs three open bridge leagues throughout the year starting in September called the Premier League organised by Sheila Kelly (text 087-2942332), an Area Master League organised by Fergus O'Rafferty (text 087-2786810) and an Intermediate League organised by Mairead Ni Oistin (087-6750393).

Dublin South Region has a busy calendar of events in the coming year as follows:

14/11/25: Carroll Cup hosted by Regent Bridge Club

14/11/25: Paul O'Reilly Trophy hosted by Regent Bridge Club

06/12/25: Regional Pairs (Quin/Joe Moran/Duffy Cups) at Templeogue Bridge Centre at 11.00am

06/12/25: Regional Teams (Pigot/O'Brien/Giddings Cups) at Templeogue Bridge Centre at 11.00am

26/01/26: 4Fun Teams Qualifier at Milltown Golf Club

20/04/26: Kay Downes Trophy Novice competition at Milltown Golf Club

10/05/26: Fanagan League Grand Final Night at Templeogue Bridge Centre

Fanagan League: Details of the 2025/2026 Fanagan league will be sent out to all clubs in or about September/October 2025 and details will be made available on DSR website.

Details of bridge Classes and bridge teachers are located on our website.

Please check out our website at www.bridgewebs/dublinouth for competition entries and competitions.



SOUTH MIDLAND REGION REPORT

George Ryan, Regional Secretary

It was another busy year within the South Midland Region, as the Committee continued the work of the previous year in getting out and meeting as many clubs as possible.

The region has 35 affiliated clubs, with more than 1,700 members. We ran four regional tournaments, all in the Bridge Centre in Kilkenny, and all very capably and professionally run by Brian Lawlor. These are now firm fixtures in our annual calendar, and we hope to see numbers increase as members become more familiar with them.

The Regional President's Prize was held in May in Kilkenny, with Melanie Hill and Pat Dempsey emerging victorious.



South Midland President's Prize winners Melanie Hill and Pat Dempsey

Another major event during the season was the special fund raising even held in July in Durrow, at which Daniel O'Donnell very kindly offered his services. Daniel was a wonderful guest, and nothing was too much trouble to him. He also finished the evening by singing a few songs. He has attended similar functions in the past, is a great ambassador for bridge. A wonderful evening saw more than €4,000 raised for the local St Vincent de Paul, and it is planned to repeat it next summer.



Daniel with Damien Nee, Paul Conroy, George Ryan and William Prior



Daniel with Jo Coffey

The South Midland team of Kathy Monks, Carmel Gleeson, Nora Kelly, and Kathleen Cassidy won the second session prize at the McMenamin Bowl (National Women's Teams Championship) and are pictured below with CBAI National President Catherine Byrne.

Thanks to all the Committee, especially President Phil O'Reilly, for all their hard work during the season, and best wishes to incoming President Anna Kavanagh for her year of office.



Kathy Monks, Carmel Gleeson, Nora Kelly and Kathleen Cassidy second session prize winners at the McMenamin Bowl (National Women's Teams Championship) pictured with CBAI President Catherine Byrne

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NORTH WESTERN REGION REPORT

Tom McNicholas, Regional Secretary



The season 2024/25 was unremarkable and unfortunately some of our clubs in the North West are still struggling with numbers. Some good work was started in teaching bridge and we can hope that this effort will result in some new faces joining our clubs in the new season.

The big news of 2024/25 was the return of the Sligo Congress to face-to-face play after a long absence. The numbers flowing in on the opening night were remarkable, and were a great tribute to the esteem in which the organisers, in particular Fearghal O'Boyle and Mairead Basquille, are held. Committee members were scrambling to set up more tables as the numbers were growing. Congratulations to all the Sligo team for making the event such a success.

Three charity events in Castlebar, Sligo, and Carrick-on-Shannon attracted great entries and we hope this trend continues.

In the Inter Provincials we joined with the Western region to compete in Cavan.

The Region, at its AGM in Carrick-on-Shannon, elected Ms Kathleen Walsh as President for 25/26 and Ann Lenehan as Vice-President. We thank the outgoing committee, under President Kathleen Carty, for their service, and wish this year's committee a very successful season.



Sligo Congress



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NORTHERN/DONEGAL REGION REPORT

Anne Murray, Regional Secretary

The dates for this year's Donegal International Bridge Congress 2025 are 7-9 November in the Abbey and Central Hotels on the Diamond in Donegal Town.

Our wonderful Congress secretary Jim O'Sullivan and his team are busy organising the Donegal Congress 2025 weekend. Jim's daughter Ita is the 2025 Congress President, and looks forward to welcoming all the visitors to Donegal for a great weekend of bridge and socialising. Now is the time to book your accommodation, as some players had to travel a long distance daily to play at last year's Congress.

The 2024 Donegal Congress was a great success, under the stewardship of President Margaret Doherty (Moville) who had previously been secretary of the Northern/Donegal Region for many years. Indeed, she graciously extended her term as secretary as we endeavoured to recover from the changes brought about by Covid. Margaret has also been working behind the scenes doing a lot of the secretarial work for our Donegal Congress over the last 20 years, we were all delighted to have her as our 2024 President.

It was a busy year as President for Margaret travelling to clubs around the county of Donegal. We had nine Open Cups and two Charity nights. Margaret finished her year and the season as President with a bridge/golf day with the golf in Ballybofey/Stranorlar Golf Club followed by a great night of bridge and a meal in the Finn Valley Centre. As a sign of the high esteem in

which Margaret is held, Dungloe Bridge Club closed for the night so their members could attend, along with bridge players from all over Donegal and Northern Ireland.

At national level our Donegal women had great success, with Anna Carr and Margaret Farren (Moville and Carndonagh) in particular continuing their fantastic form of the previous few years.

In Duais Na Uachtarain Competition Anna and Margaret, emerged victorious to win CBAI President 2024 Catherine Byrne's prize as the best of the 82 pairs that contested the first National Championship of the season.

In the CBAI Women's Pairs 2025 (Jackson Cup) Anna and Margaret placed 3rd of 76 pairs with less than 1% between 1st and 3rd place.

The following day, in the CBAI Women's Teams Margaret and Anna were outright winners with their teammates Mairead Haugh and Roisin de Jong. Close behind them in 4th place were Donegal's incoming president Ita O'Sullivan and Marion Gallagher with their teammates Sonya Hills and LizAnn Doyle

In the annual friendly Donegal v Derry teams competition, our Donegal women won bringing the cup back to Donegal. Congratulations to the team: Margaret Farren, Anna Carr, Marion Gallagher and Ita O'Sullivan. This competition was held in the Drummond Hotel, Ballykelly and was hosted by Limavady Bridge Club, winners of the competition in 2024.

In the CBAI 4Fun Teams, with 32 teams competing, the Donegal team of Una Carthy, Kathleen Kelly, Maryjo Hanlon and Geraldine Harkin came a very creditable 10th overall.

We have a new CDO in Pauric Burke who is full of enthusiasm and intends holding classes for new members. We wish him every success in his endeavours, and thank his predecessor Marion Gallagher for all her hard work over the past few years.



President Margaret Doherty at the Donegal Golf Day



MID LEINSTER REGION REPORT

Paul Dunne, Regional Secretary

Yvonne Dalton continues as President of the Mid Leinster Region for the second year of her term leading the committee of Neil Burke, Marian McKay, Blanaid Morris, Barbara Burke, Siobhan Canty, Tracey Macken, Marie O'Brien, Owen Cummins, Helena McIntyre, and Paul Dunne.

The committee looks forward to the new season of Cunningham League matches where we hope to build on last year's success.

We started our season with two training seminars. John Crimmins delivered a very popular and successful session for club Tournament Directors, while Yvonne and Neil facilitated a workshop focused on the use of Bridgemates.

Congratulations to the winners of our regional competitions, and to the MLR players who performed well in national competitions:

Cunningham League: Premier Master - Westmanstown (Tomás Roche); Area Master - Declan Byrne Bridge (Declan Byrne); Intermediate A1 - Cnucha (Kitty McCabe); Intermediate A2/B - Confey Castle (Martin Carley); Novice - Louisa Bridge (Noreen Naughton).

Regional Pairs: Master - Roisin & Willie O'Gorman; Intermediate A - Kathie McGrath & Anne Downey; Intermediate B/Novice - Mary Meaney & Shay Caffrey.

Regional Teams: Master - Liam Gaynor, David Redmond, Mary Timoney, Donek Szenejko; Intermediate A/B - Anne Downey, Kathie McGrath, Valerie Giles, Sheila Daly.

President's Cup: 1st Liam Gaynor & David Redmond; 2nd Roisin & Willie O'Gorman; 3rd Mags Kelly & Joseph Coyne; Best A Susan Conroy & Damien Griffin; Best B/N Ann Gilton & Walter Rockett.

IBU Pairs: 1st Inter B Brian Prendergast & Maurice Boland; 1st Novice Dermott Bradshaw & Patricia Kinch-Underwood.

Civil Service Cup (Inter B National Pairs): 3rd Dermott Bradshaw & Patricia Kinch-Underwood.

Davidson Cup: (National Open Pairs): 4th David Redmond & Liam Gaynor, 7th Donek Szenejko & Mary Timoney.

Kelburne Cup (National Open Teams): 4th Joe Coyne, Kevin O'Dea, Liam Maher, Brian Cleary; 6th David Redmond, Liam Gaynor, Donek Szenejko, Mary Timoney.

IBU Seniors' Congress Pairs: 3rd Donek Szenejko & Mary Timoney.

Cooper Cup (National Confined Teams): 4th Declan Byrne, Nicola O'Dowd, Breda Tuite, Blanaid Morris.

MLR committee is working with Peter Pigot to host two training seminars in September - one for Intermediate players and one for Advanced.



Presidents Cup winners - Liam Gaynor & David Redmond



NORTH MIDLAND REGION REPORT

Mary Macken, Regional Secretary

On the 13th June 2025, we held our AGM in Mullingar Bridge & Amenity Centre when our outgoing President Patricia Mahon handed over the seal of Office to George Farrell from the Ballymahon Bridge Club.

George on accepting the seal of office said "I wish to thank Ballymahon Bridge Club for nominating me as Regional President. I am delighted to accept this honour. I'd like to thank outgoing President Patricia for all her work over the past year. I look forward to working with the committee."

Outgoing Regional President Patricia Mahon and incoming Regional President George Farrell.



Outgoing Regional President Patricia Mahon and incoming Regional President George Farrell.

All our regional competitions were well attended, and the competition winners included:

Paddy O'Toole Memorial: Frank & Brenda Kelly

Regional Pairs:

Masters/Seniors: James Connolly & Sean Masterson

Intermediate A: Pdraig McKenna & JJ Donlon

Intermediate B: Tom Roche & Joan Peppard

Regional Gala Pairs: Sean & Bríd Galligan

Regional Teams:

Masters/Seniors: Sean Galligan, Bríd Galligan, Liz O'Reilly, Joe Brady

Intermediate A: Mary Dunne, Bridie Nugent, Geraldine Regan, Gerry Manning

Intermediate B: Joan Peppard, Tom Roche, John Higgins, Dillon Murtagh

John Cunningham Cup: Liz Taaffe & Michael MacDonagh

John Cunningham Intermediate B/Novice: John Fagan & Gerry Manning

We were delighted to have members of the Hanlon family in attendance for the cup presentation and also to have Tom and Carmel playing.

The regional President's Prize was held on Sunday 8 June 2025 in the Tullamore Bridge House Hotel, and attracted an attendance of 16 tables. The contestants enjoyed a good afternoon of bridge before Frances O'Toole and Marie Lynch were announced as the worthy winners.

On the National Front, our region was certainly to the fore in season 2024/25. Gerry and Monica O'Gorman were 2nd overall in the Simultaneous Pairs.

John Kiernan and Tony Ward were 3rd in the IBU Master Pairs. Margaret Martin, Lorraine Barry, Maura Conway and Kathleen Shaw placed 3rd in the Cooper Cup.

Frank Higgins, Mary Macken, Susan Tuite and Maura Hogan won Best Area Master in the IBU Senior Teams. The region did a first/second double in the

The winners of the Annie Hanlon Cup confined were Evelyn Corrigan and Mary McCormack.

L-R: John, Kay, Mary McCormack, Evelyn Corrigan, Tom Hanlon, Carmel Murnin (Hanlon)



4 Teams with Doreen McInerney, Patrick Martin, Pattie Ryan, and Patricia Mahon (Offaly) winning and Sean Galligan, Joan Peppard, Patricia McCormack, and Margaret Deegan (Westmeath) placing 2nd.

By far the region's greatest achievement was Tom Roche and Joan Peppard winning the Civil Service Cup (National Intermediate B Pairs Championship) and, along with John Higgins and Dillon Murtagh, retaining the Tierney Trophy (National Intermediate Teams Championship).

In addition, our Intermediate A Team of Kevin Woulfe, Mary Macken, Padraig McKenna and JJ Donlon also emerged victorious in the national finals, winning the Bankers Trophy.

These successes, and a solid performance from our Open team in the Kelburne Cup led to my personal highlight of the year as Regional Secretary, accepting the Marie Cummins Trophy in Portlaoise for the best performing region overall. It was the first time our region has won the trophy since its inception in 2007.

Finally I wish to express our sympathy to all who lost loved ones during the year.



L-R: Mary Macken, Padraig McKenna, Kevin Woulfe, Catherine Byrne, National President CBAI and JJ Donlon



Presentation of Marie Cummins Trophy Back Row L-R: Dillon Murtagh, Jo Brady, Liz O'Reilly, Sean Galligan, JJ Donlon, Brid Galligan, Padraig McKenna. Front Row L-R: John Higgins, Tom Roche, Kevin Woulfe, Mary Macken, Catherine Byrne, President CBAI and Joan Peppard



L-R: Frances O'Toole, Regional President Patricia Mahon, Marie Lynch



L-R Tom Roche, Joan Peppard, Catherine Byrne, National President CBAI, Dillon Murtagh, John Higgins with Tierney Trophy



NORTH EASTERN REGION REPORT

Seamus Costello, Regional Secretary

During June/July I arrange the fixture list for the coming year, in consultation with the club secretaries. Our 34 fixtures are 7 Regional events and 27 open events which include 4 new events, i.e. Hugh Owens Cup for Monaghan Club, Riona Carolan Team of 4 for Ardee Club, Joe Browne Memorial for Ashbourne Club and the Bridge Bash in Trim.

The last-named is an extension of the one-day event held for the first time last season, under the extremely effective organisation of Nicola O'Dowd, our new Regional President. Pictured below are just some of the North Eastern Region Winners at this year's Trim Bridge Bash, with Nicola.

A review of the role of the County Development Officer was carried out in July last year and the North Eastern Region County Development Officers were allocated a number of clubs from our total of 41 clubs, depending on their location;

Meath North: Mary Timoney 11,

Meath South: Nicola O'Dowd 9

Cavan: Melissa Brady 6

Louth: Eileen McEntegart 4

Monaghan: Con McCrossan 3

North Fingal and Louth South: Kay Goldsworthy 8

We will have two additional clubs next year as Laytown/Bettystown are reaffiliating and a new club Deerpark, Carolanstown is joining the CBAI.

A number of our clubs, Trim, Oldcastle, Virginia, Balbriggan, Skerries, Monaghan and Drogheda carried out bridge promotion events. The clubs reported that lots of people expressed an interest in learning bridge. A large number of our clubs held beginner's classes this year.

Numbers for our Regional events were again up this year and the winners were;

Pat Taaffe Trophy: Frank Davey & Paddy Bonner

Regional Mixed: Mary O'Gorman & Francis Bellew

Regional Pairs

Masters: Mary Timoney & Donek Szenejko

Inter A: Jacinta Kangley & Boris Dobroykov

Inter B: Madeline Heeney & Michael Spillane

Regional Teams

Masters: Margaret Winters, Maureen Walsh, Sean & Frances Newcomen

Inter A: Jacinta Kangley, Boris Dobroykov, Geraldine Healy, Pat O'Halloran

Inter B: Madeline Heeney, Michael Spillane, Jeff Young, Sylvia McCann

Reg Ladies Pairs: Mary Timoney & Mary Brady

Reg Men Pairs: Donek Szenejko & Joe Coyne



1st Inter B - Michael Spillane and Sylvia McCann



1st Area Master - Martin T. O'Brien and Dave Doherty



2nd Inter A - Sean Keane and Bridget Hession

National Competitions – notable performances

Inter Provincials: Ulster A Team Winners: Anna Shalvey, Melissa Brady, Mary Maguire, Kathleen McCabe

Master Pairs: 3rd Frank Davey & Tom Lawlor

Jackson Cup: 2nd Melissa Brady & Anna Shalvey

Cooper Cup (Teams): 2nd Debbie & Barry Leahy plus two

Seniors Congress Pairs: 3rd Mary Timoney & Donek Szenejko

Seniors Gala Pairs: 3rd Phil Geoghegan & James Newman

National B Teams: 3rd Madeline Heeney, Michael Spillane, Jeff Young, Angela Everitt

National A Teams: 2nd Jacinta Kangley, Boris Dobroykov, Geraldine Healy, Pat O'Halloran

Civil Service Cup Inter B: Madeline Heeney and Michael Spillane

County Championships

Burke Trophy Masters: 2nd Overall Deirdre Tuckey, Seamus Costello, Noreen Pender, Antoinette McGee

O'Connor Intermediate: 3rd Overall Simon Ridley, Mary Mulvey, Christine Griffin, Mary Elvers

Two members of the regional committee, Sheila Grimes and Kay Goldsworthy retired this year. I thank them both for their many years of service to bridge in our region. We welcome Fiona Murray, Trim who joins our committee.

This time of year, sees many changes in club secretaries and I take this opportunity to thank all our secretaries for the work they do in the smooth running of their clubs. To those retiring I wish you well for the future.

I thank our outgoing President Mary Timoney and the members of the executive committee for their commitment to bridge in our region. Finally, I wish our incoming Regional President, Nicola O'Dowd, a very successful year.



Presentation to Sheila and Kay by President Mary Timoney



Nicola O'Dowd making a presentation to outgoing President Mary Timoney

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21-23 April 2026



Tuesday 21 April

7:00pm:
Official Opening

7:30pm:
Gala Pairs*

Wednesday 22 April

1:00pm:
Senior Pairs Championship
(Pat McDevitt Trophy)

1:00pm & 6:00pm:
Open Pairs*

Thursday 23 April

11:00am:
IBU Senior Teams
Championship

11:00am & 3:00pm:
Open Pairs*



* No age/grade restrictions. To enter Seniors events, players must have been born in 1961 or earlier.
Pre-entry required for Seniors Pairs and Teams via www.cbai.ie

2026 Novice & Intermediate Congress

hosted by CBAI President John Phelan
Tower Hotel, Waterford

10-12 April 2026



Friday 10 April

7:15pm:
Official Opening

7:30pm:
Gala Pairs

7:30pm:
Mixed Pairs
- Jim Fitzgerald Trophy

Saturday 11 April

1:00pm:
Intermediate A Pairs - New Ireland Trophy (2 sessions)

1:00pm:
Intermediate B Pairs - Kervick Trophy (2 sessions)

1.00pm & 6:00pm:
Open Pairs

6:00pm:
Novice Pairs - Waterford Glass Trophy

Sunday 12 April

11:00am:
Team of Four - JJ Kiely Trophy
(extended session with short break)

11:00am:
Open Pairs



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Seamus Dowling, Irish Bridge Journal

'Máire O'Keeffe the exceptionally successful bridge teacher has published Bridge Made Simple. This well-written book is a must for all students taking up the game of Bridge.'

George Ryan, Irish Times

Bridge Made Simple 'is an absolute must for those starting this great game. I know there are so many people taking up the game these days that something of this nature is a great help to those taking Bridge Lessons.'

John Conyn, Sunday Independent