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THE ENGLISH BRIDGE UNION
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25th July 2008

Dear Mr. Bridge

Sandra Landy's article "It is not too late!" appears to fly in the face of a democratic process that has taken place over the last year.

The Board of the EBU has had meetings with representatives of each and every one of its 39 counties. It has done its best to contact every one of its affiliated clubs and its Membership Development Action Group has over 1000 emails that it has responded to. The Board has published its proposals in all their forms in English Bridge and has provided contact information for those who wished to make a contribution to the consultation process. It has chosen a route of being completely proactive in its consultation process by taking it to its affiliated clubs and their members. It is sad that anyone should suggest that we have not done otherwise.

The EBU has also held an EGM where every county was asked to consult with its clubs and deliver their verdict on 4 June 2008. The vote was carried by a nearly 2 to 1 majority for universal membership via the Pay to Play system.

The Board has approached the development of Bridge in England in a business-like manner, ensuring that its membership know that it has provision for any potential problems that may occur within the process of the change over to universal membership - the only way for our organisation to proceed. Master Point income and membership income are inextricably linked - hence our simplification of the process by making it one payment, which not only simplifies our own accounting process, which in turn modernises, streamlines and reduces costs, but also lessens the administrative burden on our affiliated clubs.

All possible alternatives have been published and discounted, for very good reasons. Nothing has been hidden, all these alternatives are there for all duplicate bridge players to read about.

The Board of the EBU has taken a route to develop the game and make it more accessible to more people by putting the organisation on a stable footing through universal membership. We continue the process of addressing our organisation and its operations - we readily admit the EBU of the past has not fully met the needs of its clubs and their players. Perhaps Mrs Landy wants to continue with the "old EBU" focusing on an elite group of players and neglecting the rest, resulting in a smaller and smaller group of members and a game that has no national representation or co-ordination - with all that that entails. She states that there are no services that clubs get from the EBU that they cannot get elsewhere and later on in her article states that she is still awarding Master Points at her club - we are not aware of any other organisation that awards these points, that trains tournament directors, bridge teachers and students or that regulates the game.

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What is truly astonishing is how Mrs Landy can suggest that a significant numbers of EBU members would defraud their fellow members. We have based our proposals on the belief that our members are honest and will not devise ways of getting round the new system. However, we will ensure that our members' interests are protected at all times- our volunteers on the new Club Committee and its representatives on the Universal Membership Project Committee will be addressing these potential scams to protect those interests.

A truly democratic process has taken place. The time has come to move forward together with a new style EBU, with its focus firmly on the clubs and the development of the game.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Stocken', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Peter Stocken
Chairman
EBU

cc EBU Affiliated Bridge Clubs
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