

REPORT ON THE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM 2009

2009-07-12

We established a Committee of about 16 people this year with Carol Lee Bellam chairing the Committee. Included in the Committee were some of the bridge teachers as well as club Directors.

We established a Vision for the Mentoring Program as well as Guidelines for both Mentors and Mentees. Mentees were asked to fill out an application form giving us some background (past bridge teachers, where they play, number of mps, what they hope to get out of the program, past mentors etc) It was also important to know whether they wanted a SAYC or 2/1 player.

We decided it was too easy just to sign your name on a list with no information. However, mentors were simply asked to sign up. We opened the Applications in May advising that they would close on June 30. All of the above information was sent out to the district by Jim Berglund and every club was given a folder with all the information. This was then available at clubs for those who did not have their email addresses on Jim's list. The only club that did not take the folder was the Bow River Club. (It was, however, handed to the club manager). There were also self established Mentor/Mentee forms. However, we encouraged people to sign up and just let the Committee do the work. We wanted to protect our senior players from being asked to mentor and finding it difficult to say no.

During the two months of application, some of members of the Committee spoke to many people in the unit, asking if they would like a mentor and also asking if they would like a member. I can not begin to relate how many personal contacts were made during the months of May and June. In June, we reminded everyone that time was running out.

Diane Campbell established a Spreadsheet and we gradually filled in our recommendations. Diane should be recognized for the hours that she spent on this program and the significant contribution she has made to the bridge players in this unit. The Committee had their final meeting on the first Friday in July. We went through all of the matches and ratified or changed some of the matches.

In order to continue the personal contacts, the Committee split the list up (about 180 people involved in the Program) and phoned each person individually. We made up a page with recommendations of the information that we would provide in each phone call. Therefore, we were all on the same page and those people involved received the same information from each member of the Committee.

At this point, most all of those people on the list have been phoned and confirmed. To this date, we have received no complaints. We told all of the Mentors that we would be forwarding their names to the Volunteer Appreciation Committee and that they could expect an invitation to the Calgary BBQ. As Ken suggested, the members of the Committee should also be invited. I will forward you the names of the active participants.

At the end of this week, the final Spreadsheet will be sent to Jim Berglund to be sent out to the unit. In addition, a copy will be provided for each club. In addition, each club will also be given goal sheets so that a partnership may establish goals as they see fit.

Although the program officially runs from September to December, we are not concerned if some people begin during the summer. Nor are we concerned if they have to go into January to finish their games. We have requested that the partnership play at least 6 games (of course they can play more if they choose).

If we do have anyone who rejects their Mentor, their name will be put on a waiting list.

I would personally like to thank the entire Committee for their contribution to the bridge players in this Unit. Having a Committee who knew all of the people involved helped enormously in the matching of players. The personal contacts have also proven to be a very powerful tool. There is no one who asked for a mentor who did not receive one. There is also no one who has been asked to mentor more than two people.

Interesting aspect: A lot of our beginner plus and intermediate players want mentors who play 2/1 and some of our quite advanced people who volunteered played a very simple Standard American card. This did cause us some difficulties.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT YEAR:

1. That the present guidelines be followed and modified if the Committee sees fit.
2. That a Committee retains responsibility rather than an individual.
3. That the Program limits the people requesting mentors to those with 500 mps and less. We feel that players over 500 mps can approach some of the more senior people and ask them for a few games. Our emphasis should be on keeping and growing our Beginners and our Beginner Plus players. Teaching Programs and informal mentorships should be encouraged for our Intermediate players.

Diane Campbell and I are willing to Co Chair this Committee for the year 2010. If you would like us to do that, please let us know.

Committee Members

Ken Scott
Lorna Smith
Caroline Colliver
Janet Sharpe
Janet Gent
Brenda Bertrand
Dan Bertrand
Marilyn Haggins
Freda Nychkalo
Diane Campbell
Carol Lee Bellam (Chair, Mentorship Committee 2009)