

Chairman Report for Year 2022

Unfortunately, we are in the third year of pandemic, although quite a number of NCBOs countries have relaxed their policy on pandemic quarantine, yet it is still extremely difficult (at least for Hong Kong and Mainland China as well as partial SE Asia) to arrange face to face competitions. Gladly, we do see a gradual move that such restriction is taken away (not without its problem though), and the face-to-face competitions becomes more regular as the year goes on. In particular with both the real relaxation of Hong Kong, and more importantly, China opening up the control on pandemic in the last few weeks, we have high hope that in 2023 The Bridge World will become a 'normal' one at last.

Despite the above, there are plenty of good news for our Association (albeit some bad news).

In late March we sent our open teams, comprising of Abby Chiu, Alan Sze, Jacky Ip, Jim Lee, Sunny Mo and Zia Wai to Italy to participate in the Bermuda Bowl, but that was not a smooth journey as Hong Kong team had to make several changes due to continuing COVID prohibit regular airline transport, and one member of the team actually was confirmed infected with COVID and has to come back much later, not expectedly, their performance were affected and end up 17th out of a total 24 teams.

In May, the online APBF Championship event was conducted, and Hong Kong was proud to make history in that both the open team comprising of Abby Chiu, Alan Sze, Bubble Ho, Dicky Lai, Gordon Ho and KF Mak and ladies team, members are Charmian Koo, Crystal Tang, Flora Wong, Helen Yeung, Joyce Tung and Pearlie Chan, both came first, a truly record break year for HKCBA, despite that China was also competing in this event. What's more, for our open team, they secured the title with two matches still yet to play! In my memory, this should be the first time that such lopsided victory had ever taken place. Let's congratulate both; our open team and ladies' team for achieving such a marvellous result.

Not to be outdone, Hong Kong participated in the Forth Asia Cup in Jakarta in 19-25 Oct 2022, our Ladies team comprising of Charmian Koo, Crystal Tang, Flora Wong, Helen Yeung, Joyce Tung and Pearlie Chan won the Bronze medal, and our Open Team, Baron Ng, Bubble Ho, Gordon Ho, KF Mak, Tony Lau and Zia Wai won the Gold medal! Hong Kong had won bronze in 2012, Silver Medal in 2018, and finally we won the Gold medal convincingly. This is an extremely good result for Hong Kong in the year 2022.

The Asia Game which was originally to be held this year in Hangzhou was finally postponed to September 2023 due to COVID, so in 2023, first we will have the PABF which will be held in Hong Kong (tentatively date June 9 to June 17), Asia Game in September, and the Bermuda Bowl in late August, certainly it will be a very busy year for our participating athletes and a feast for our Bridge lovers, with our current result in 2022, certainly we are expecting our representatives will have an excellent opportunity to stand on the stage both at APBF as well as Asia Game!

However, not everything is good news, this year our attendance is extremely poor although this is mainly due to COVID (compared with other clubs or similarly organization). As the HKCBA is meant to serve all the members and promote Bridge amongst the public, so the low turnout indicates in some way we are neglecting our mass volume members and focus too much on our elite athletes, which certainly is not our original intention. Therefore, a part of our 2023 target must be to attract more players to join our regular tournament, and assign our resources appropriately. The good result today is the result of HKCBA over 20 years of effort in promoting bridge amongst the youth, and we should never ignore that aspect, in particular most likely the control of pandemic will diminish after 2022 as even China is making a start to reduce the control.

Let's all hope for a better and brighter Bridge year in 2023.

Derek Zen