

HKCBA Chairman's Report for 2019

In view of the unstable political environment in Hong Kong in 2019 and the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic worldwide, we have no choice but to reschedule and cancel many events as we put safety of our members ahead of everything else. Please stay close to our website for any news and update in tournament schedules.

As I mentioned in my last report, Government is stepping up their support on our Association but unfortunately at current stage the support covers mainly on individual athletes who did well in the 2019 Asian Games. We have been attempting to apply for the Broad Grant but was turned down twice, no doubt we will keep working on the application for the future development of the club and benefits of our members.

As a result of Government support, we made a successful bid for the 2021 APBF to be held in Hong Kong, this will allow our members to watch top players in Zone 6 & Zone 7 performing at their best at close distance, and as it is a Bermuda year, of the thrill to watch with excitement on whether or how many HK teams can win a berth in Bermuda Bowl, Venice Cup, d'Orsi Trophy, as well as the newly added Wuhan Cup.

If APBF 2021 is held successfully and fruitfully, the Council is contemplating hosting the 2023 (or 2025) Bermuda Bowl in Hong Kong, we have just began our negotiation with the WBF and it is too early to draw any conclusion. We believe the final conclusion depends on whether WBF provides attractive terms and positions and the amount of subsidy we can obtain from the Government.

Last year we participated in numbers of international events and results are summarized as followed:

- 1) In April 2019, three teams were sent to 2019 APBF Youth Team Championships.
The Junior team finished at 4th out of 9 teams
The Youngster team finished at 5th out of 7 teams
The Kids team finished at 10th out of 21 teams
Only the Junior team obtained a ticket to participate in the World Youth Bridge Teams Championships, which was postponed to 2021 with the exact dates to be confirmed.
- 2) In June 2019, we participated in APBF in Singapore, the result is not impressive, our open team came 6th out of a total of 12 teams, ladies team came 4th out of total of 10 teams, 2 senior teams came 4th/14th out of total of 16 teams, and our mixed team came 9th out of a total of 11 teams.

However, our open team did manage to edge out Japan and won a berth for Bermuda Bowl, likewise our Ladies team won against Indonesia to secure a seat in Venice Cup; our Senior team was narrowly edged out by Japan, however, as the South American Team later withdrew from Senior Bowl, the senior team got the last ticket to the event. Hong Kong was able to send 3 teams to the World Bridge Team Championships.

3) The Bermuda Bowl, Venice Cup, d'Orsi Trophy and Mixed teams were held in Wuhan in 14 – 28 September.

Our Open team eventually came 11th out of a total of 24 teams.

The Ladies team finished 17th out of a total of 24 teams.

Our Senior team finished 20th out of a total of 24 teams.

We organized the annual Intercity championship from 17 to 21 of July again at Crowne Plaza in TKO, and the open team champion went to Team Geely Automobile, Open Pairs went to Kongo Kong - Terence Chan, Swiss Team goes to Team John Tsang whilst a substantial medals are won by the local players.

The triangular interport took place in 13 to 14 July in our clubhouse and Guangzhou team win this year, where this event might be replaced by big bay area events eventually.

Our total number of members is 352, a slight increase over that of 2018. We had an average of 9 tables in our regular tournament, this was somewhat affected by external situations in Hong Kong.

On the promotion of Bridge, we at present do give our consent to “Hong Kong Bridge Cultural Centre” to teach Bridge under HKCBA’s name, but this is just to ensure a proper standard and syllabus can be established, the Council do welcome all those who are interested to do whatever you can to promote Bridge in Hong Kong, in particular if we can arouse interactions amongst secondary schools as well as universities. The council will review this situation on an annual basis in order to enable that necessary changes and improvements can be made.

We do encounter a very unfortunate incident which should be reported to all member, the China Mind Sports Game will be held in China during November. We hosted a trial, but the winner of the trial only at a very late stage, informed the Council through an unofficial manner that they cannot go due to personal safety issues caused by and parents of two of their members (which are below 18) disagreed their participation.

We do consider this is a serious violation of conduct in view of:

- i) We do recognize there might be unforeseen events taking place, in such cases, we do expect those facing problem to inform the council as soon as they become aware of the possibility, so that possible solutions can be discussed and implemented.

None of the council members received any request or enquiries from their team members expressing their concerns of safety issue before their notification, which is only 1 month before the event (event participants, conditions of contest and event schedules had already been released by the organizer)

Due to the late notification, we were unable to negotiate with the organizing committee of the event to send another team. Other youth members’ opportunity was taken away.

- ii) Unless in very extreme scenarios, we do not accept personal reasons such as not being able to apply for leaves, disagreement by family members, etc. It is players' responsibility to obtain consent from their family members to participate in international competitions

- iii) After Council Member provided an preliminary warning to the team that penalties of prohibiting members from their team to participate in international events may be imposed, they counter offer immediately that the remaining members can indeed participate in the event, which we consider this as a bargain in the market

As a result, we imposed a penalty of prohibiting 4 of the members for one year ban in taking part in any event representing HKCBA, and if such thing happen again, the penalty will be much more severe.

We do hope this is the last time the Council has to deal with such unpleasant and difficult decision.

Derek ZEN