**East of Scotland Schools Minibridge Tournament**

This event was held at Dundee Bridge Club on Tuesday 15 March. 42 children from schools in Aberdeen (Robert Gordon’s Primary and St Joseph’s RC Primary), Dollar (Strathdevon Primary) and Dundee (Claypotts Castle Primary) took part.

It was the first time that such an event had been held in Dundee, and this year it was one of three such competitions organised by the Scottish Bridge Union for primary school children. The other two events were in Glasgow and Elgin, and scores from the three competitions will be merged to produce an overall winning team.

The competition was a Swiss Teams event, and two adults (one from each of Aberdeen and Dollar) brought the 42 children up to 11 teams of four. Teams including an adult were not eligible to win the trophy. We played four rounds of three boards each, with a break in the middle for lunch, and were able to finish shortly after 2pm, having started to play around 10.30am. This was quite a lot of boards for the children in a relatively short period of time, and there were some rather tired youngsters by the end, but everyone seemed to enjoy themselves and the whole event went rather more smoothly than some of the nervous adult helpers had anticipated. Thanks are due to everyone who helped on the day, and particularly to Margaret Pemble (Tournament Director), Richard Jarvis (Scorer), Loraine Findlay (Aberdeen) and Anne Ritchie (Dollar).

The event was won by the splendidly named Marshmallow Champions from Aberdeen whose team members were Yersin, Elizabeth, Ethan and Nathan, with the Strathdevon Greens (Matthew, Aidan, Rebekah and Rupert) a close second.

The highest scoring team, but ineligible for the trophy, were the Bridge Spartans, whose three junior members were Jakub (Aberdeen) playing with an adult, and Alfie and Lewis from Claypotts Castle Primary.

Around a dozen DBC members have been involved in a teaching programme at Claypotts Castle Primary since last September. We began with 17 children, and another eight joined us after Christmas, and we still had all 25 of them attending at the end of this term, which the schoolteachers tell us is something quite unusual for a lunchtime club, and perhaps reflects the enjoyment and enthusiasm the children seemed to have.

I believe that this is the first time that DBC or the Central District has attempted to teach Minibridge in primary schools, though there have been several previous bridge classes in secondary schools, notably the very successful programmes in Montrose led by John and Sarah Williams.

We were very much feeling our way, encouraged by Ann Wickens from the SBU, and whilst I am not sure we were entirely successful in our efforts, it was clear that the children were for the most part enjoying themselves and having fun, and I think that this was also true of most of our teaching team.

We shall be meeting during the Easter break to review the programme, and to make plans for the next academic year, and would welcome interest from any DBC members wishing to join us in the future. It should not take too much of your time, is both enjoyable and rewarding, and may just be helping to create future bridge players and members of the club.

Graham Bullock