County Allegiance

It may be useful for Clubs to understand the relationship between County Associations, the EBU and club members, as well as the principles governing county of allegiance.

County Associations are a very important constituent part of the EBU. They represent members' views at national level and provide a range of local services and competitions for members. The EBU and its County Associations organise and stage many tournaments annually, ranging from competitions that can be played at home, or at the club, through to prestigious national and international events.

When a club joins the EBU, it normally also affiliates to a County Association. This county of affiliation is usually the county in which the club plays its bridge, but for historical or logistical reasons may be a neighbouring county, e.g. county boundaries may have been redrawn or the club may have had to move its venue across a county line.

Universal Membership through Pay-to-Play (P2P) was introduced on 1st April 2010. At that point any member of an EBU-affiliated club automatically became a member of the EBU. Any existing or lapsed EBU members retained the Primary County of Allegiance to which they were already registered. For new EBU members their Primary County of Allegiance was set by default to the county of affiliation of the club which first registered the members' details to the EBU, and this is still the case with new members joining today via an affiliated club.

Which is my Primary County of Allegiance?

Many EBU members do not know which is their Primary County of Allegiance. In many instances it may not be important, but if one of your club members wants to represent the County or play in a County Championship, it may be necessary for them to have primary allegiance to the County. The member can most easily check their Primary County of Allegiance by logging into their member area on the EBU website using their EBU (User) number and the password provided when they first joined the EBU.

Their Primary County of Allegiance is listed there. If they have forgotten their password, they can input their EBU number and click the 'Forgot Password' button. If their email address has been registered with the EBU, the password will be sent to them in an email. If they do not have Internet access themselves, a friend or family member may be able to assist, or they can call the EBU on 01296-317200.

Changing Primary County of Allegiance

If a player needs to change their Primary County of allegiance, they should call the EBU membership helpline on 01296-317201.The EBU will amend the primary county to whatever a member wishes but only once during an EBU tournament year (1st September to 31st August). If there are particular individual circumstances that require a change more often than this, then the person should discuss this with the EBU. The facility to change one's Primary County through one's member area on the EBU website may be provided at a later date.

County P2P charge

Whenever a player takes part in a duplicate at an EBU-affiliated club, the club remits a small amount to the EBU as a membership subscription. This amount is known as the P2P charge and covers the cost of the services and benefits the EBU provides to clubs and individual members. An element of this charge goes to the County Association to which the club is affiliated, the exact amount varying from county to county. (In some cases the amount is zero, and the County Association raises its funds in other ways.)

The Primary County of Allegiance of the individual member has no bearing on which county the county element of the P2P fee goes to. For example, a member could live in Buckinghamshire and have Berks & Bucks as his primary county of allegiance, but play most of his bridge in clubs affiliated to Oxfordshire. Most of his county P2P fees would then go to Oxfordshire.

Playing in County events

The relationship between a County and its members is not something that the EBU gets involved in, but we can give out contact telephone numbers for county secretaries if required. Members are also encouraged to refer to their [County Association websites](#).

Any player who is not a member of a particular County and wants to play in one of the County's events will need to contact the County concerned and, if required, pay a County subscription fee. Most counties provide for dual membership and allow players with primary allegiance elsewhere to join as secondary (dual) members, generally on payment of a small annual subscription. The EBU is not involved in matters of secondary county affiliation.

County representation

In general, players may only represent their County of Primary Allegiance when playing in relevant EBU events such as the Tollemache. A player may change Primary County once in a competition year, provided he has not played in any of the Tollemache Cup, the Pachabo Cup or the Corwen Trophy (or relevant County qualifying event) for any other County. In these events no player may represent more than one County in the EBU competition year, which runs from 1st September of one year to 31st August of the next.

It is for County Associations to decide whether to accept entries for their qualifying events for the Pachabo or Corwen from players who have primary allegiance elsewhere. Note that if they do accept such entries, this does not imply the right to represent that County at national level.

Players representing their County in the Garden Cities Trophy are not necessarily required to owe primary allegiance to that County. They must however be bona fide members of the club they are representing. They may participate in qualifying rounds in more than one County, but only for one club within any particular County, and they may not subsequently change their allegiance to some other club within the same County. Likewise, players may play for only one club in the Regional and/or National Finals of this event.

Membership of a County in one financial year implies the right to represent that County in the balance of the playing season in the following financial year.