

# More Jeddah News



by  
Steve Ryalls  
BBG Jeddah  
Sports Coordinator

Established as an annual event, the Sports Challenge was set up to allow both British and American expatriates to meet each other in friendly rivalry that was away from the daily rigours of business life.

The actualities of the Challenge are that a few dedicated team captains work exceedingly hard to get together players, establish venues and dates for events, ably supported by their group of amateur sportspeople.

Over the years the Challenge has incorporated such sports as swimming, sailing, golf, tennis, darts, horseshoes, 10 pin bowling and the like. With all events being open to BBG members and their spouses (without whom, most of the events would never have enough players), it further ensures that there is as big a social interchange as possible.

Over the last 6 years the results have been very good for the BBG insofar that we have lost one Challenge, won three Challenges and drawn the last two with the ABJ (due to there being an even number of sports activities). Our American counterparts are now suggesting that we either reduce the number of sports to five events or increase it to seven, thus ensuring that there is a clear winner each year.

It would be unfair to drop any of the current sports, as the time, dedication and commitment from the participants in all these events, must be recognised. Logically it would be better to increase the number to seven events and with golf, swimming, tennis, darts, horseshoes and 10 pin bowling being the well established sports, we would welcome any thoughts from our members for a seventh event - be sensible, after all you may end up being the captain and organiser.

The Sports Challenge culminates in the Survivors Ball, hosted alternately at the British and American Consulates in Jeddah, where the shield is handed to the winning country and the wooden spoon (now substituted with a chamber pot, due to the mysterious disappearance of the spoon!!) is awarded to the losers. This is normally accompanied by a few rounds of good hearted banter and sarcasm at the opponent's expense.

Due to the current political climate, this years Survivors Ball has been delayed to September/October and as we will be in the cooler part of the year, it is intended that it will be a black tie event, with our ladies being dressed up in all their finery and jewellery. This is yet another positive aspect of the expatriate life in Jeddah, where we can stage a wonderful display of the latest in designer wear that can challenge any fashion show in London, Paris, New York or Milan.

Whilst the intent of the Sports Challenge is to have events that are not business development orientated, it is an excellent venue at which to meet new people, make new friends, renew old acquaintances and mix with potential business contacts.

With a diminishing number of British and American expatriates here in the Kingdom, it has become more difficult in recent years to find a full compliment of players but it is a worthwhile tradition that should be maintained and developed as it helps to form a stronger bond between the two nations, both socially and from a business point of view.

The BBG Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Brits who have participated and supported this event over the years. We look forward to more Sports Challenges in the future and would urge our members and their spouses to get involved and enjoy the event.

## Reinstatement of the Special Interest Groups (SIG's) update July 2002.

by  
Pat Folliard  
BBG Jeddah

In recent times, the BBG Committee has become aware that as well as providing a focus for some social activities members have been looking for a forum to discuss and, if possible, promote their own business activity. Consular staff also felt that this emphasis should be developed. The SIG's were disbanded a couple of years ago for various reasons but taking everything into account, the time seems right to reactivate them.

By combining what we hope will be complementary industries, certain SIG's are potentially quite strong, e.g.:

- Finance / Banking / Insurance / Economy – 22 potential SIG members.
- General Trading / Food / Textiles / Manufacturing - 26potential SIG members.
- Shipping / Aviation / Transport - 28potential SIG members.
- Construction / Engineering / Property - 25 potential SIG members.

Certain other potential SIG's are small and may need to be combined with others to produce a viable group. Each SIG will have a Chairman and all the Chairmen will meet as the Business Development Committee (BDC) with the object of:

- Establishing and maintaining the SIG's.
- Working with the Consular staff to advise and, where necessary, assist with projects. Above all, to promote UK plc.

Since for many this is a new initiative, it is felt that a degree of flexibility will be needed to maintain this activity and there well may need to be some running changes as the groups form and establish themselves. There may need, e.g., for groups to combine if there is insufficient interest at the initial level.

Initial contact has been made with certain members of the BBG who, it was felt, could possibly serve as SIG Chairmen and it seems likely that an inaugural meeting of the potential Chairmen with Consular staff and the BBG Committee will take place in September.