

# GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2018-19

March-April 2019

## PROGRAMME

After the Bank Holidays for Easter and May Day, the county programme settles down to alternate sessions of Summer Pairs and Summer Teams, the first few dates being-

- Pairs : 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> May and 10<sup>th</sup> June,
- Teams : 20<sup>th</sup> May, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> June

## COMING COUNTY EVENTS

On Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May we have the AGM and then bridge. We can only offer the traditional levels of excitement at the AGM but the Pairs which follows is surely worth coming for – entry (including refreshments) is free and there will be prizes in multiple categories. If you can let us know of attendance ([ctd@gcba.org.uk](mailto:ctd@gcba.org.uk)) then it is easier for us to organise the catering.

On Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> August we have a repeat of last year's inaugural friendly match against Avon CBA, and we have been invited to Bristol for this. Again we have three teams of different experience levels, so if you have any interest in playing do contact [ctd@gcba.org.uk](mailto:ctd@gcba.org.uk).

## BRIDGE AROUND GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Coming up in the near future (full details via the web site) ...

- On the 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> May, the Cheltenham Congress.
- On 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> May, the Avon GP event at Thornbury.
- On 25-27<sup>th</sup> May, the EBU Spring Congress at Stratford-upon-Avon.

## VOLUNTEERS

Much – in fact almost all - of what happens in the County bridge-wise is done by volunteers, and to all those volunteers we should (regularly) express our gratitude. BUT WE NEED MORE VOLUNTEERS.

Two particular tasks come to mind; the first is serving on management committees, and for the County Association there is an chance at the AGM on 12<sup>th</sup> May for you to put forward (with their consent) anybody you think might help improve the quality, quantity or variety of bridge which your County Bridge Association supplies.

The second task is much more visible as we see it every time we play duplicate – and that is the Tournament Director. The role encompasses more tasks now that ever before, but clubs are looking at splitting the list of tasks across multiple people and that helps. But it means we need more volunteers to help with collecting table money, running the scoring software, putting out and collecting Bridgemates and boards – on top of deciding and directing the movement and handling any calls on the Law Book. The County and the EBU both support (financially) the provision of training for the TD role. If anyone is interested in learning more – contact [ctd@gcba.org.uk](mailto:ctd@gcba.org.uk).

## GCBA RESULTS

*The Spring Teams was comprehensively won by Tony Hill & Alan Wearmouth, Mark Rogers & Peter Waggett – who came first in all four sessions.*

*The Spring Swiss Pairs was won by Ashok Kwatra & Mike Wignall ahead of Roy Collard & Val Constable.*

*The County Individual was won by Paul Denning, a mile clear of the rest who were led by Anne Swannell.*

*The Cotswold Cup raised over £800 for the Sue Ryder Hospice and the winners of the event were Kate & Philip Morgan ahead of Betty & Richard Harris.*

*The Rank Xerox Teams was won by the team-of-8 from THRIBB.*

*The winners of the County Knock-Out (whose reward is to represent the County at the Pachabo) is Keith Stanley's team (Paul Denning, Richard Plackett, Garry Watson, Alan Wearmouth).*

*The winning pair in the County Pairs was Tony Hill & Alan Wearmouth, a fraction of a match-point ahead of Patrick Shields & Mike Wignall.*

TUDOR BRIDGE CLUB in Chipping Sodbury is realigning itself to be a Gloucestershire club rather than an Avon-affiliated club. We welcome them and hope to see players from there engage in the Clubs League and other county competitions.

**TD Roundtables** continue, on occasional Fridays at Cheltenham BC. Anyone is welcome. Next session : 1800 on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May.

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## Midlands Counties League

As we went into the last match of the season against Warwickshire, all our teams had a chance of winning their divisions. Sadly we ended up second in each Division, which is our best overall result this century (although the DAWES team has won twice, ten and eleven years ago, and the MARKHAM team once, two years ago).

This hand – played in 4♥ at all tables – was one of our successes. The six Souths who declared all got the ♠J lead, while the six Norths mostly got the ♦J. How do you proceed?

♠	AQ3				
♥	QJT8542				
♦	4				
♣	65				
♠	JT87			♠	K65
♥	K6	B 27		♥	3
♦	K863	DLR S		♦	JT9
♣	QT9	VUL: none		♣	KJ8432
	♠	942			
	♥	A97			
	♦	AQ752			
	♣	A7			

In both cases your first step is to count your certain nine tricks (six trumps and three aces) and think where the tenth will come from. A key point in both scenarios is to recognise that the king of the suit led is almost certainly wrong for you, and your best choice is to rise with the ace. With the trump finesse in reserve, you then need to focus on setting up a long diamond for your tenth trick.

Only after taking one ruff is it right to play a heart to the nine. After it loses you still have two heart entries and a club entry to the South hand and that is enough to ruff out the diamonds and cross over to cash the last.

This highlights a lead which makes life difficult, and that is a club – which removes an entry from dummy prematurely. This was found at one table (when clubs were bid and supported). Can you still cope?

The answer is that you can, but in practice you won't. You need to win the club ace, ruff one diamond and then play the ♥A. This allows you to lead a third diamond on which you must discard the ♠3 to endplay East.

What this does highlight is that even when easily outbid, your bidding can be ever so helpful to the defence.

## Defender's Advantage?

One useful feature in the reporting of hands today is that you get information – the Double Dummy (Deep Finesse) analysis – about how many tricks could be made. If you look at the example below (which goes with the hand on the left) you might notice that the number of tricks which can be made by North/South and by East/West doesn't always add up to 13.

	♠	♥	♦	♣	N
N	5	6	10	6	7
S	5	6	10	6	7
E	7	6	3	7	4
W	7	6	3	7	4

Why is that? It is because the side of the person who makes the opening lead is at an advantage – striking the first blow. Would that encourage you to prefer to be a defender? The answer is not so clear, for if we look at statistics on contracts chosen and results (<http://www.rpbridge.net/9y37.htm>) we find that about 64% of contracts make.

## Declarer's Advantage?

Another interesting comparison is who comes out best – human declarers against human defenders, or double dummy declarers against double dummy defenders. Statistics have been gathered (see <http://www.bridgecaptain.com/DA.jpg> and there are others) and what they show is ....

1. The level of the contract changes the answer, and at lower level contracts the human declarer did better than the double dummy declarer.
2. Playing in a slam the advantage went the other way, although in high level contracts the margin between the human and the double dummy was much much smaller.

They also analysed the effect of the opening lead and discovered that most of the difference was down to the opening lead. When the human defender chooses an optimal opening lead (a "double dummy lead") then the human declarer does a little worse than the double dummy, even in low level contracts. The advantage which human defender's less than optimal lead gives is about 0.8 of a trick – which is quite significant.

It does mean that we need to pay a lot of attention to the choice of opening lead, but we shouldn't give up hope as the humans found a double dummy lead over 80% of the time!