

GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2015-16

February 2016

Programme

Unusually we have five Mondays this month -

- Mon 1st : Open Teams 2 *and Hosted Pairs*
- Mon 8th : Winter Pairs 2
- Mon 15th : League 7
- Mon 22nd : Spring Pairs 2
- Mon 29th : County Pairs QF

WINTER PAIRS & SPRING PAIRS : any pair can turn up (as can any four for the Open Teams) but if you lack a partner and are willing to be a standby, please tell Patrick and we will advertise accordingly.

COUNTY PAIRS QUALIFIER: clubs also hold heats and you can play in as many as you like, and with different partners. The final is on Sunday 17th April at CBC.

Other dates for your diary

- Saturday 20th February – a Director's refresher course is being run at Cheltenham Bridge Club – free – email malcolm.green@gcba.org.uk if interested. **4 PLACES LEFT.**
- Sunday 21st February – Newent Bowl. See Newent club's web site for entries.
- **Sunday 19th March sees the next running of the Everett Cup. A special event this year to support the MINDSONG charity, with a hot meal at half time. A teams event but enter as a pair and draw for team-mates. Entry £10 per person.**
- Sunday 19th June – CBC is one of the three venues for the Midlands Improvers Pairs (simultaneous pairs plus a hand discussion). Limited to NGS rank of 8, aiming at players of under 5 years experience. More details to come later.

Alerting Rules

As was said last month, the reason we have alerts and announcements is to make sure that the opponents have as much information as exists about our bidding – and that must cover agreements and style. Lack of an alert says to the opponents "you already know it all".

One wrinkle in our procedures is that we (generally) do not alert above 3N. This is because of the extent of Unauthorised Information that alerts and non-alerts can generate at high levels. So if the opponents have bid above 3N, you do need to ask at the end of an auction "what should I know about these bids?"

In fact, asking at the end of the auction should happen a lot more than it does to ensure that alerts are properly understood. An Alert might be simply a well known convention, but it might be different – you need to check, it can make a significant difference to you.

<TO BE CONTINUED>

Your GCBA **Committee reports**

(27 Jan meeting)

- After many years of loss-making, table money for weekend events will have to increase, but we intend to step our catering up a notch at the same time.
- We need some new faces in GCBA organising roles – anybody interested at all please talk to Jim Simons.
- The GCBA is able to help clubs with capital costs – a first example being a contribution to the CBC lift fund. David Simons, our Treasurer, will be issuing guideline to clubs shortly.

GCBA Results

The first round of the Open Teams was won by the team of Joe Angseesing & Roger Jackson, Wendy Angseesing & Christian Fleming. They pick up 8 points for that, and the teams led by Richard Butland, Val Constable and Malcolm Green will pick up 6,4,2 points respectively. Three sessions to come.

The first session of the Winter Pairs went to Richard Chamberlain & Patrick Shields with a massive 9% lead over Lesley Harrison & Pam Pearce, followed closely by Paul Denning & Tony Hill.

In League Division One, the Shields team remain unbeaten and are 14 VPs ahead of second. In Division Two, the top two teams – led by Harrison and Swannell – are well clear and play each other in the next round.

The first session of the Spring Pairs saw Tony Hill & Alan Wearmouth, and John Councer & Kanwar Rahim collecting big scores, leaving them over 7% clear of third.

Externally

Richard Chamberlain & Patrick Shields won the Swiss Teams at the Midlands Congress and came home with a trophy won 35 years ago by Paul Denning & Patrick Shields.

Paul Denning played in the Welsh team in the Camrose, which ended below average alongside every other team except England, who took a massive lead.

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Winter Open Teams

In the first session (Jan 4th) this hand proved too difficult for all pairs but one (well done Ian & Steve) ...

♠ 4		
♥ T532		
♦ KT9654		
♣ 85		
♠ AJ762	BOARD 6	♠ Q93
♥ A98	DEALER: E	♥ KJ4
♦ J	VUL: E/W	♦ A72
♣ AQT2		♣ KJ63
	♠ KT85	
	♥ Q76	
	♦ Q83	
	♣ 974	

East opened 1N, for some 12-14 and others 14-16. The normal sequence was for West to transfer to spades and then bid 3♣. This left East in a dilemma – to support clubs or support spades?

The single player known to have raised clubs was rewarded when his partner now bid 6♣. With two diamond ruffs there are six trump tricks in that contract, to go with three in the red suits and now 3 spades will suffice – so losing one spade and ruffing one to set up the fifth will deliver the slam.

Those who committed to spades too early split between those who stopped in game making, and those who bid the spade slam (4 cases). They mostly made only 10 tricks, because few played the spade suit to best advantage.

With that combination the optimum play, for either 4 or 5 tricks, is to lead the queen on the first round. When covered, back toward the nine for 4 tricks, but cash the jack trying to drop the ten for 5 tricks.



Midlands Counties Leagues

Our teams are doing better this year, with the Dawes team (in the top division) just a few VPs behind the leaders before this Worcestershire match. Our three teams produced a 10-10 draw, a 16-4 win and a 13-7 win. This hand produced gallons of swings ...

♠ 97		
♥ Q63		
♦ AJ2		
♣ KT985		
♠ KQJ86543	B19	♠ T2
♥ AT975	DEALER: S	♥ 84
♦ --		♦ T965
♣ --		♣ AJ762
	♠ A	
	♥ KJ2	
	♦ KQ8743	
	♣ Q43	

After dealing South opened 1♦, and none of us have much practice with the 8500 shape of the next hand. The hand has enormous potential (just ♥KQx with partner makes a slam) but how can we tell if partner has the right cards?

The most practical bid is 4♠ which gives North a problem, and some stars sitting North trusted the vulnerable West enough to bid either 5♦, or more imaginatively, 4N to show two places to play.

If allowed to play in 4♠ or in 5♦ you were making game, but more often, over 5♦, West bid on to 5♠ and now the spotlight was on North. Two of our finest – Roy Collard and Peter Waggett – found the necessary trump lead, and later jumped up with the ♥Q to play a second trump. They had bid over 4♠ and then held declarer to 10 tricks for the par result – excellent work. Four pairs across the 12 tables were allowed to play gently in the comfortable 4♠.

What chance has this?

Analysis which shows that the contract depends on just the placement of one card is quite common, two cards too, and we sometimes see three – but look at this hand from Southam ...

♠ KJ6		
♥ A52		
♦ Q6		
♣ AQ943		
	DEALER: S	
	♠ A4	
	♥ KJ9	
	♦ A2	
	♣ KJT872	

Jim & Jo Simons bid this up to 6♣ which is a respectable contract, with at worst two potential losers. The opening lead was a spade and if the ♠J had held the first trick, then the ♦2 can be discarded on the third spade and you are home.

But at trick one, when the spade jack is covered, you win the ace and draw trumps. You should now eliminate the spades by cashing the king and ruffing the third. Can you see you still have three chances to make this contract? Firstly if West has the ♦K, then playing ace and another diamond leaves West to lead into the ♥KJ9 and you are home.

So you try that, but East wins the second diamond, and you get a ruff & discard (home now) or a heart. On the heart you try the ♥9 and if the ♥T is on your right the nine wins or forces the queen, and if it goes ♥T-♥A, you still can play up to the ♥KJ and find the queen onside.

Any one of four cards (♠Q, ♦K, ♥T, ♥Q) lying in the right hand is enough for you to make this contract. Neat? An 93.7% slam. Did you find all your chances?