

GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2017-18

Jan 2018

PROGRAMME

For this month we have -

- Jan 1st : County Individual
- Jan 8th : Winter Pairs
- Jan 15th : League 6
- Jan 22nd : County Prs QF
- Jan 29th : League 7

From the 22nd Jan qualifying heat of the County Pairs, the top 50% of the field will progress to the final on Saturday 17th March. Anyone can play in any number of heats, and if they qualify with more than one partner can choose with whom they play in the final. Top places in the final will earn Green Points.

GCBA WINTER PROGRAMME

Our next weekend event is the Cotswold Cup on Sunday 4th February at CBC. [Details are on the website](#). The profits from the event and any extra collected will go to the Sue Ryder Foundation. Please try to come along; sign up at Cheltenham Bridge Club, or by email to allansanis@aol.com.

After that the next county-wide weekend event is the Newent Bowl which takes place on Sunday 4th March at Newent. Details are on the [Newent BC website](#).

BRIDGE OUTSIDE GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Forthcoming events in neighbouring counties include these that are worth considering -

- East Wales hosts a 2-day Swiss Teams in Newport on the weekend of 10-11 February.

DIRECTORS' THOUGHTS

Following the lead of the EBU, 2018 is the right time to remind ourselves of the concept of Best Behaviour at Bridge, and for this year we are proposing four New Year Resolutions –

1. To never say an unkind word at the table, no matter what partner does!
2. To pay proper attention to the STOP card, putting it out and pausing at the right times.

Even if partner can take it, this is not nice for the other pair.

The rules for the STOP card are not perfect, but they do help at times, so please follow the 10-second rule.

3. To own up at the time when I pause (or rush) and create a break in tempo.

We need to be more accepting that breaks in tempo happen, and that we need the TD to apply the rules because it is too difficult for any of us at the table. Acknowledging the break early take a lot of the heat out of these situations.

4. To remember that the TD is my friend, and the friend of everyone at the table.

But you always knew this didn't you?

A course for new Directors took place in Cheltenham during the last quarter of 2017. We can report that there were nine from Gloucestershire who achieved their Club Tournament Director certification, and four of these passed with Distinction – so well done to all and extra congratulations to Andrew Bull, Stewart Harrison, James Hastie and Mike Lewis.

GCBA RESULTS

The Winter Swiss Teams (now 12 teams) has had four rounds and yet another team has reached the front – this time the leading team is Wendy Angseesing & Mike Wignall, Joe Angseesing and Roger Jackson. There are two teams 5 VPs behind, and two more just 1 VP behind that.

The Winter Pairs had its fourth session, the winners of which were Peter Swales & Anne Swannell ahead of Patrick Phair & Jim Simons. Leading the series now are Aleksandar Lishkov & Diana Nettleton, with Pam Pearce & Roy Collard scoring best of those who have played all four sessions.

The County League has had five matches now and in Division One the Denning team remains the leader with an average score of over 17 VPs per match. In Division Two the team led by Mike Lewis is first ahead of the team led by Mary Jones.

The Hand-of-the-Day column on the GCBA website provided a set of ten puzzles over the holiday period (vmt to Garry Watson). Answers were requested and the best performer amongst those who submitted answers was Patrick Phair who got 9 out of 10 answers right. Very well done!

If you haven't done the problems, they will be there throughout January, so go and have a try.

The fourth County match of the season against Oxfordshire was cancelled due to snow.

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NICKO

The Cheltenham team who reached the final of last year's Inter Club Knock Out had a scare in their first match of the current run, and were losing when this hand came along.

♠ 6		
♥ AKQJ5		
♦ JT		
♣ AKQ72		
♠ A8		♠ KQ952
♥ 982	B 14	♥ T74
♦ AKQ965	DLR E	♦ 842
♣ 53	VUL: none	♣ J4
	♠ JT743	
	♥ 63	
	♦ 73	
	♣ T986	

Neither East nor South decided to show their spade suit, so West got to open 1♦ and North decided to show a two suiter with a bid of 2N. Over this it went P-3♣-3♦ and at this point North looked no further than game in the suit his partner chose, and bid 5♣.

The defence to this was easy, as West cashed three winners. There was a big opportunity missed here, from the failure to recognise the power of the 5-card heart suit. If the club suit is running then it looks like only a defender with five hearts can beat the heart game. Bidding 4♥ would have won the match for the Worcestershire team.

Bridge Magazine

The publication with the above name has been running since the 1930s and claims to be the longest running bridge magazine in the world. It ceased paper publication a few years ago and in recent months has declared that it is no longer viable as a subscription magazine.

The Good News which comes from that is that they have decided that it is viable to run a free on-line magazine funded by sponsorship and advertising. The first issue has just appeared at

<http://www.newbridgemag.com/>

It contains many of the things we have long liked in Bridge Magazine, and now also has a Kit Woolsey column which is much recommended. The magazine has more than enough to read; the most informative part might be Alan Mould's Bidding Competition.

You can register for free at the above link, and start reading now!

Last month we mentioned dealing machines; we are told that a new device will be announced shortly by the PlayBridgeDealer4 people, so if you are buying you might want to wait until you see what that is.

Best Conventions (5)

Number five on my list of "must have" conventions is the ability to make a 2-suited overcall. The two great benefits of using such a bid, rather than bidding one suit and then the other, are that

(a) partner can evaluate their hand much better. For example

♠Q32♥T74♦A42♣A54

is just a simple raise after 1♥-1♠-2♥ but is clearly worth game after 1♥-2♥-4♥, where partner has shown at least 5-5 in spades and a minor.

(b) you might never get the chance to bid the second suit.

The times to avoid bidding a two suiter are when you are sure which suit you want to play in, which covers most 7-5 hands and many 6-5 hands.

The common style for showing two suiters, attributed to Michael Michaels and named after him, can be applied whatever level of opening has been made, but the strength required clearly goes up for higher bids. So after they preempt with 3♥, you still want to play that a 4♥ cue bid promises at least 5-5 spades and a minor.

The one difference with higher level openings is that 2N is needed as natural (and the same is true for 3N) so that 4N is often the only bid which shows a minor two suiter.

[The hand on the left might be seen as a counter-example to showing a two suiter when you have one, but, even if you intend to play in hearts, telling partner of your shape will help partner judge what to do should the opposition bid on]

Would you believe this hand?

♠ AKQJ942
 ♥ ---
 ♦ AKQJT
 ♣ A

In the first match of the current Camrose season, this turned up, after RHO opened 4♥. Everyone bid to 7♠, got doubled by the opener, and the club ruffed at trick one put the contract one down! The winning choice was to cue bid hearts and persuade partner to bid spades, before bidding the grand slam, as now the other hand was on lead.