

GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2016-17

July 2017

PROGRAMME

This month we have -

- Jul 3rd : Summer Teams
- Jul 10th : Summer Pairs
- Jul 17th : Summer Teams
- Jul 24th : Summer Pairs
- Jul 31st : Summer Pairs

BRIDGE IN JUNE

In Italy (Montecatini) for two weeks in June there was the European Open (teams and pairs). Richard Chamberlain & Patrick Shields played the Seniors Teams (and won the two day qualifying round but then got knocked out) and the Seniors Pairs (average minus), while Paul Denning (with three from Wales) played in the Open Teams (average minus).

On the final day of this event, Cheltenham Bridge Club opened its doors for the viewing of that day's play via BBO. Some dozens of people attended throughout the day and it was much enjoyed. As well as the official BBO commentary we had local wisdom from county trainers. A great idea!

BRIDGE OUTSIDE GLOUCESTERSHIRE

You can also obtain a good game of bridge in various neighbouring counties in coming months; in planning ahead you might look at

- 22-23 July is the Green Point Swiss weekend at Ross-on-Wye, run jointly by GCBA and HCBA.
- 5-6 August is the Green Point Swiss weekend in Newport, run by East Wales BA.
- 4th August is the start of the EBU Summer Congress in Eastbourne.

The new Laws

The new Laws of Bridge for 2017 will come into force in England from 1st August 2017. The changes are not radical, and there are briefings being organised for TDs across the county to ensure they have caught up.

The TD will always be the definitive source when the need arises, and will pull out the new book and the revised words when needed. Many of the changes are clarifications of current practice. The general thrusts of the Laws remain

- (a) to reach a meaningful bridge result as often as possible, and
- (b) to restore equity, rather than to punish.

For players the key changes are

- If you think you earlier mis-explained partner's bid, you are not required to call the TD immediately but can wait, but only until just before the opening lead is faced.
- if a claim is contested, play can continue without calling the TD, provided the non-claiming side proposes that, and the four players accept it. If this happens, you cannot later revert to consideration of the claim that was made.
- Insufficient bids, calls out of turn, and withdrawn calls can more often be replaced (when the means of doing that does not help the offending side). When lead penalties do apply (now less often) they are more severe than previously.

As always, WHEN AN INFRACTION OCCURS, CALL THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR.

GCBA Results

In the first and second sessions of the Summer Pairs we had Ian & Val Constable winning ahead of Tony Letts & Garry Watson, and then Norah Allen & Roy Collard winning ahead of Alison Pritchard & Patrick Shields.

In the first and second sessions of the Summer Teams we had a win for Richard Butland & Garry Watson, Diana Nettleton & Keith Stanley, followed by a win for Joe & Wendy Angseesing with Tony Hill & Jim Simons.

In the Corwen our only representatives (Roy Collard & Pam Pearce) came in the middle, and in the Pachabo, our team was just the same – in the middle of the field.

In the Seniors KO the Cheltenham squad of Patrick Shields & Alan Wearmouth, and Garry Watson with David Jones of Coventry were knocked out by 1 imp. Local interest is now confined to one team involving Richard Butland and one involving Peter Shelley.

In the Nicko we have one Cheltenham team now in the last eight. In the Gold Cup we have Richard Butland's team in the last eight, and Paul Denning's team due to play on 9th July. In Crockfords our remaining Welsh-Glos interest has to play a Cambridge team on 28th July.

No congress wins to report.

One searching for gems, we hear,
requiring case for diamonds
perhaps (5,4)

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Summer Teams 1

There were only two pairs in sensible contracts on this hand

♠ 954	♠ QT86	♠ AJ7
♥ Q	♥ 73	♥ AT954
♦ Q976	♦ KT32	♦ AJ54
♣ QT932	♣ J64	♣ A
	B 8	
	DLR W	
	VUL:none	
	♠ K32	
	♥ KJ862	
	♦ 8	
	♣ K875	

North-South were silent and it started from West with P-P-1♥-P, at which point West is not strong enough for anything except 1N. It all now comes down to East's rebid. The dilemma is that you have 18 hcp which is a lot, but prospect of 4 tricks which isn't a lot. You can choose between different number of diamonds and different numbers of no-trumps. Your poison?

Of course, nothing is perfect here. From East's perspective it could be right to play in a red suit or in no-trumps, which lets us rule out 3N as an option as it kills any choice.

Similarly it might be right to play this hand in a part-score or it might be right in game; bidding 3♦ over 1N forces to game, again killing options. So that doesn't seem right.

We are left with two options – either 2♦ or 2N and it is difficult to criticise either. The former is a better contract but the latter is likely to make as North's lead in either four card suit gives away a trick.

The two players who opted for the 2-levels bids both made their contracts for scores of +90 and +120, for gains of 7 imps and 5 imps respectively. In a team game, these little hands all add up – it pays take care of them!

Bridge In Italy

Richard Chamberlain got to play this hand against Zia & Meckstroth in Montecatini last month, to gain 12 imps as we beat their team 14-6.

♠ K6	♠ A9732	♠ QT54
♥ KT6542	♥ J73	♥ 98
♦ T3	♦ AK84	♦ 95
♣ 632	♣ 9	♣ JT854
	B 23	
	DLR : S	
	VUL: all	
	♠ J8	
	♥ AQ	
	♦ QJ762	
	♣ AKQ7	

The bidding at both tables started 1♦-1♥ but for us, 1♦ was known to be unbalanced and was therefore a good trump fit, so Patrick leapt to 4♣ showing diamond support and shortage there, after which a 4♥ and 4♠ cue got us to the slam.

In the other room, after 1♥, North showed spades and the later diamond support was much less clear and the pair ended in 3N by South.

Against 6♦, Zia led a small trump, after which Richard could count on six trumps, three clubs and three tricks in the majors.

The more testing lead is a spade, but with a spade loser, Richard can throw dummy's hearts away on the clubs and ruff a heart and a club in dummy.

Both our team and Zia's progressed to the knock-out rounds of this Seniors Teams, but got defeated there. Zia & Meckstroth went on to play in the Open Pairs and after six sessions of that they ended up in second place.

GCBA Squad

Garry Watson conjured up a trick from nowhere on this hand in the last squad practice ...

♠ A96	♠ JT3	♠ 754
♥ A83	♥ 94	♥ T765
♦ Q8	♦ J97654	♦ A32
♣ J6542	♣ 97	♣ T83
	B 212	
	DLR :W	
	VUL: NS	
	♠ KQ82	
	♥ KQJ3	
	♦ KT	
	♣ AKQ	

The bidding started with 1♣-P-1♦ (transfer showing hearts) before the 23-count got a chance. What can such a hand do? Garry tried double to start with and heard 1♥ (three card support)-2♦-2♥. With some spark of life from partner it is impossible to stop out of game, so Garry bid what he thought he could make – 3N.

The opening lead was a club which he won and he could see prospects of three tricks in each black suit and needed three more to make his game. He pushed out the ♦K at trick two and it went ♦8-♦4 to East. The prospect of declarer holding KQT of diamonds now came into East's imagination, and if that was the case then winning the ♦A would release all of dummy's diamond winners.

Clearly the answer was to duck two rounds of diamonds, so the ♦K duly won trick two. At this point Garry switched to spades and then to hearts when the spade ace was knocked out. Suddenly there were nine tricks. Should we blame East for not taking the ♦A and beating this game? In fact 3N can always be made, but only by playing the majors and guessing the diamonds right later (as one should since ♦A with West would be an entry to the long clubs).