

GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2017-18

Mar 2018

PROGRAMME

For this month we have -

- Mon 5th : Spring Teams 2
- Mon 12th : Spring Pairs 1
- Mon 19th : League 9
- Mon 26th : Spring Teams 3

The Spring Teams (which runs for five sessions) is a multiple teams event to which any foursome can turn up at any session. The Spring Pairs is a Swiss Pairs event, and for the first session anyone can just turn up without notice.

GCBA WEEKEND PROGRAMME

The next event is the final of the County Pairs on Saturday 17th March. Heats have already taken place at CBC and GCBA, and Stroud. Other clubs still have time to hold one. All players in the final will receive some Green Master Points.

The final of the Ace of Clubs (pairs, non-expert) has been moved to Sunday 15th April, and starts at 1330 at Cheltenham Bridge Club.

BRIDGE AROUND GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Forthcoming events in neighbouring counties include the Coventry Congress on 13-15th April, and then in May ...

- 4-6th : the Cheltenham Congress. Entry forms are on the GCBA and CBC websites.
- 12-13th : The EBU Swiss Teams Congress, Solihull.
- 19-20th : Avon Green Point weekend, at the University of Bath.
- 26-28th : The EBU Spring Congress, Stratford.

DIRECTORS' THOUGHTS

For the use and education of Tournament Directors, and others interested in such matters, the EBU runs a bulletin board for discussion of TD-related questions; you can read it on

www.ebu.co.uk/forum

One of the recent interesting discussions was about removal of boards because of slow play. There seems to be little backlash against the need to do this at times, particularly if – as we want to – mixing newcomers in with more experienced (and therefore usually faster) players.

The point of contention was whether or not to enter “Not Played” into the scoring system, and the point was correctly made that this is not what the option was designed for, as doing this distorts the scores. “Not played” should only be used when the intention from the outset was that the board would not be played.

When circumstances later emerge which stop a board being played, then the rules require some mix of AVE, AVE+ and AVE- scores need to be given. The reason for this is that were a pair to play just 18 boards in an evening rather than 27 boards, their chance of scoring a high percentage increases because the flattening effect of a larger number of boards has not been felt.

Go browse !

The February County match against Derbyshire generated a win for the Dawes team, a draw for the Porter team, and a loss for the Markham team.

GCBA RESULTS

February started with the Cotswold Cup where 28 pairs competed for a magnificent trophy and in the process raised £623 for the Sue Ryder Hospice. Many thanks to all who played and to the sponsors of the raffle prizes (Baker & Graze, Morans, The Ivy, The Tivoli, Waitrose and Laithwaites). The winners NS were Enid Castle & Sybil Davis, while EW was a draw between Paul Lilley & Peter Swales, Anne Swannell & Roger Williams.

The final session of the Winter Pairs was a win for Malcolm Green & Mike Lewis, but it was an absent pair – Roy Collard & Pam Pearce who moved into first place to win the series, with Ashok Kwatra & John Skjonnemand in second place.

The Winter Swiss Teams had its final session, from which the foursome of Tony Hill & Alan Wearmouth, Mark Rogers & Peter Waggett emerged as clear winners.

The County League round eight was the penultimate match for some. The team of Joe Angseesing, Richard Butland, Richard Chamberlain, Paul Denning & Garry Watson has won Division One with a match to spare; followed now by the Letts team. In Division Two it's neck-and-neck between the teams led by Mary Jones and by Mike Lewis.

The first session of the Spring Teams was won by the team of Brian Goalby & Keith Sharp, Tony Letts & Roger Schofield.

In the EBU Ranked Masters, John Atthey & partner won the Grand Masters section, while Claire Robinson & partner won the National Masters.

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COTSWOLD CUP

This event used hands from the Shanghai Bermuda Bowl of 2007 and players got to team up with Zia & Rosenberg or Levin & Weinstein. This was one hand where one of our pairs outbid both BB pairs...

♠	--	♠	J632
♥	76432	♥	AJ
♦	T95	♦	764
♣	K9872	♣	AQT4
♠	AKQT8	♠	B 21
♥	Q9	♥	DLR N
♦	AKQJ	♦	VUL: NS
♣	63	♣	9754
		♥	KT85
		♦	832
		♣	J5

In the big event, one pair bid quickly to 6♠, and the others were on their way there when Zia as South doubled a heart cue bid. Now, expecting a heart loser, the East-West pair decided to stop out of the slam.

In our replay, this hand turned up when Paul Lilley & Peter Swales played against the winners – Enid & Sybil. Sitting East-West, Paul & Peter overbid somewhat to reach 7N, while all but one of the other tables settled for the six level.

South had heard East and West bid spades and diamonds, and it was clearly too dangerous to lead from the ♥K, so out came a club – the jack. The jack ran to the queen, and now playing a club to the ten gave declarer 3 tricks in that suit to go with 10 tricks outside, and +1520.

Wessex Youth Bridge

The weekend of 8-9 April will see Cheltenham Bridge Club taken over by a cross-county venture in support of youth bridge. If you know anyone under 21 who might be interested, do point this out to them.

The website below has the details www.bridgewebs.com/gloucestershiroyouth

Running Bridge in the Gloucestershire County

The County Association has existed for over 75 years and throughout that time has organised a variety of bridge activities. As in many counties, the number of entries to these events has been declining over the years, and the committee has been pondering on this.

At the same time, we can see more bridge players, and more bridge being played, across the county. The current analysis suggests that what is happening is that the competitive streak is no longer as strong in the bridge playing population. Many now playing tend to focus more on the social aspects of the event and shy away from travelling in pursuit of the stronger opposition.

If this is true (please do offer any alternative thoughts), then what should the GCBA be doing? Those on today's committee don't know the answer – for they have all grown up in the more competitive world of the past.

In order to allow the county to adapt sensibly to the needs of the current bridge population, we need a committee with a much stronger representation from the 80% of the bridge players who are currently not involved. (The same issue arises for the EBU as the National Body – those most involved are not typical of today's bridge playing population.)

What can you do about this? The answer comes when the new county committee gets elected at the AGM on the 13th May. We need your inputs. Please consider standing or nominating someone you think will be able to help us move forward.

Best Conventions (7)

Number seven on my list of "must have" conventions is Roman Key Card Blackwood. This form of Blackwood asks also about the trump king, and allows for checking on the trump Q in most circumstances.

The basic responses (to 4N) in most common use are 5♣ to show 1 or 4 out of 5 key cards, 5♦ for 0 or 3, 5♥ for 2 (or 5) but no trump queen, and 5♠ for 2 with the trump queen.

The order might seem slightly odd, and 5♣ for 0/3 would be easier to remember, but there is a theoretical advantage in the scheme listed and most tournament players have accepted this pattern and have got it wrong often enough to now remember.

The correct and slightly purist view is that key card asks only occur as a final check to ensure you don't bid a slam missing two key cards. This is because it is extremely rare that a slam missing two key cards will be as good as 50%, so you are happy to stop out if two key cards are missing.

You need to be more careful here than with traditional Blackwood, that the response doesn't put you above the last safe contract.

After the 5♣/5♦ responses you might be missing one key card but be unsure about the trump queen. Missing that usually creates about 50% of a loser, so missing one key card and the trump queen points to avoiding the slam. With RKC, over a 5♣/5♦ response to 4N, the lowest non-trump bid is used to ask about the trump queen, with a sign off in the trump suit denying it. This mechanism allows you to avoid some bad slams and keeps you out of doubtful grand slams.