

BRIGHOUSE C v SHEFFIELD H - WON 13 – 7

5th March 2017

In this last match of the season, the top four teams were pitted against each other. Brighouse C Team were handily placed in second position and our opponents, Sheffield H, in fourth. The leaders, Wakefield D, were playing away at Barnsley B who were sitting in third place. A prior examination of all the possible combinations of results showed that if Brighouse C Team managed to win by at least 14 – 6, then promotion to Division 9 would be guaranteed.

Round 1 gave us a promising start with two significant boards. Les & Christine were the only ones to bid 4 Spades on board 4, got doubled and promptly made 10 tricks (790 pts), and 12 IMPs. On board 5, Keith & Edwina were the only pair to bid and make 4 Spades, for another 11 IMPs. Offset against one or two losses on that round, we finished with +13 IMPs in credit.

The second round was remarkable for two reasons. Firstly, there were no swings of more than 5 IMPs either way as each hand was fiercely contested. More importantly, Neil & George played seven of the eight hands (Keith & Edwina, playing the same hands, played only three!), and managed a positive score on all eight hands. On board 16, Neil & George were doubled in 5 Clubs but made the contract, 750 pts. We were greatly indebted to Neil & George as the round only yielded +2 IMPs.

Board 19 proved to be crucial in the third quarter as Les & Christine were doubled in 5 Diamonds and again made the contract (750 pts) giving us a gain of 15 IMPs on that board alone. The round finished with the C Team another 9 IMPs to the good, 24 IMPs overall in the match.

The close contest continued into the final quarter. Board 31 proved to be most important as all four north-south pairs bid to 2NT, the Brighouse pairs making nine and eleven tricks whereas the Sheffield pairs only managed six and seven tricks, giving a 12 IMP return on that board. Despite two boards going down significantly, the C Team gained another 2 IMPs giving an overall total of +26 IMPs. This translated into a VP match score of 13-7, just one agonising point short for guaranteed promotion. We had to wait for the result of the Barnsley – Wakefield match.

Pair	Boards 1-8	Boards 9-16	Boards 17-24	Boards 25-32	Totals
1. Les & Christine	630	-1300	540	130	0
2. Neil & George	410	2230	0	220	2860
3. Mike & Kate	-500	-220	450	-240	-510
4. Keith & Edwina	170	-730	-150	-20	-730
Totals	710	-20	840	90	1620

Soon after 10 pm, the YCBA website revealed that Wakefield D had beaten Barnsley B by 14-6, confirming the C Team's promotion to Division 9. Well played to everyone who has represented the C Team throughout the season. You are all invited to the Civic Reception and open-topped bus tour around the sights of Brighouse which I am sure Barry is already in the process of organising!

Going up, going up, going up!

Keith Stones.