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Latest Results

County trials

1. Ted Reveley and Bill Niccol 2. Julia and Ric Dearing 3. Alan Stephenson and Stuart Matthews

Chester Congress

Pairs final 1. Angus Clark and George Eakin 2. Julian Merrill and Paul Roberts 3. Gillian McMullan and John Fitzgerald
The consolation final was won by Roger Allison and Avril Lee.

Swiss teams 1. Irving & Joy Blakey, Rhona & Bernard Goldenfield 2. Catherine Draper, Andrew Woodcock, Dave Debbage, Andrew Petrie 3. Mike Tomlinson, Ewart Evans, Paul Evans, Alan Whittam

In the BGB simultaneous pairs heat on January 10th, the first time partnership of Paddy Murphy and Bob Pitts were the top partnership in the whole event with a score of 74.08%.

Editorial

How about a few New Year Resolutions?

(well New Year hints and suggestions actually)

1. Don't use Stayman on completely 'flat' hands - by that I mean ones with a 4 card major but 3 of each other suit.

For example

	♠ A Q 6 3		♠ 10 5 4 2
<i>West</i>	♥ K 9 5		♥ Q J 4 <i>East</i>
	♦ Q 9 4		♦ K 8 7
	♣ K 8 7		♣ A Q 3

When West opens 1NT, East should raise direct to 3NT, a contract that has lots of chances, unlike 4S. Playing in a 4-4 spade fit will only be right if West has a ruffing value and usually East will be unable to ascertain that. The great French teams of the past used to intentionally play many more game hands in 3NT than their opponents and they won several World titles (they were also quite good at tip #2).

2. Count - nothing will improve your game more than trying to count the distribution and points in the 'unseen' hands. Once you develop this skill you will find that you play and defend much, much better. Even on the occasions that it is not possible to get an exact count of everything you can get a good idea about how to proceed. There will be some articles on this in future newsletters which hopefully will help.

3. Try something new (I) - how about this year trying an event that you have not played in before. You might be pleasantly surprised how much fun it can be.

4. Try something new (II) - recently I have played a session at a couple of clubs that I have not previously been to. It was an interesting experience to meet some new people and find out about them and their club. Why not try it??

5. If you are entering the results into a Bridgmate at an event, do try not to let it slow down the pace of play. If you are the opening leader make your lead first, before filling in your scorecard or entering the contract into the Bridgmate. This will give everyone else at the table more time to see dummy and consider their play. This principle applies even more if you are going to be dummy - you will have lots of time to perform the administrative tasks whilst partner plays the hand.

6. Send something in to the Newsletter (especially relating to tip #2).

JUNIOR FLAIR

By Barry Rigal

When this deal came up in the qualifying rounds of the 1997 World Junior Championships in Bali it was a test not only of East's technique but also his temperament

Dealer North. E/W Vul.

	♠ 8 5		
	♥ K 10 9 3		
	♦ K 7 3		
	♣ A J 10 3		
♠ A J 10 3 2		♠ K Q	
♥		♥ J 8 7 2	
♦ J 10 5 2		♦ Q 9 6 4	
♣ K 9 8 7		♣ Q 4 2	
	♠ 9 7 6 4		
	♥ A Q 6 5 4		
	♦ A 8		
	♣ 6 5		
West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♥
1♠	2♠	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Playing 3rd and 5th leads, West led the club eight and East took dummy's ten with the queen. The question is what to do next; the trump intermediates are such that you can guarantee a trump trick for yourself if the defence can play three rounds of spades. Otherwise, West's overcall is likely to guide declarer towards picking up the trumps for no losers by starting with a heart to the king. So how do you persuade partner to find the correct defence?

East found the right answer when he switched to the queen of spades; when this held and he continued with the king, he had made it easy for his partner to work out that he needed to overtake this and play a third round of spades. So far so good and you may say that this is no more than routine expert technique. But if West thoughtlessly plays small on the second spade, what next?

As East you now know that declarer has all of the top cards in the red suits, and that he cannot ruff any spades in dummy. That means five trump tricks, two diamonds and at least two club tricks via a finesse. If you work out that declarer has to have a 4-5-2-2 shape, then you must switch to a club now in order to break up a squeeze on your partner in the black suits, as it destroys declarer's late dummy entry. If you play a diamond for example, declarer takes his seven red suit winners and the last trump forces your partner to give up a guard in spades or clubs. The great thing about playing a club back is that it should also make you feel good. To repay your partner's mistake by breaking up a squeeze on him should be worth something in the afterlife.

Conventions Corner by Bob Pitts

Fit Bids (part 2)

In a previous article we looked at fit jumps - situations where you make a jump bid to show a decent suit plus support for partner. There are also situations where a bid is clearly fit showing even if a jump bid has not been made (known as a fit non-jump). These most often occur when you are a passed hand or when partner has made a pre-emptive bid.

For instance : partner opens 3♥ and the next hand doubles. You hold ♠ 5 ♥ J 9 7 ♦ 10 9 8 7 6 ♣ K Q J 8. You know that if you bid 4♥ one of the opponents will go 4♠. Better to make a fit bid of 4♣ showing partner where your values are. This may help him to judge whether to save and otherwise will suggest a good lead.

This example came up in one of the bidding competitions in a bridge magazine. Your hand is ♠ 3 ♥ J 6 4 ♦ K J 10 9 7 ♣ A 7 3 2 with only your side vulnerable and playingimps. RHO opens 1♥, you pass and LHO responds 1♠. Partner comes in with 2♣ and RHO calls 3♣. Whilst a case could be made for jumping to 5♣ or for a 4♦ fit bid (which effectively commits you to 5♣), the majority of the expert panel voted for 3♦. I think that this is the correct choice at this vulnerability, but if the vulnerability was reversed there is a stronger case for taking space away from the opposition.

Finally a hand from Unisys/Staten Bank Top Pairs event in 1989, where a fit non-jump bid brought in a bundle ofimps (it was a pairs event but scored by cross-imping).

Dealer South E/W vul.

	♠ Q J 5	
	♥ 9 7 6	
	♦ Q	
	♣ K Q 9 7 4 2	
♠ 9 3 2		♠ 10 7 4
♥ K J 5 3		♥ A
♦ A K J 10 8 2		♦ 9 7 6 4 3
♣		♣ A 10 6 3
	♠ A K 8 6	
	♥ Q 10 8 4 2	
	♦ 5	
	♣ J 8 6	

Where South opened 1♥, North usually led that suit against E/W's diamond game, which allowed it to make. However when the Brazilian champions Marcelo Branco and Gabriel Chagas sat N/S the auction was as below

West	North	East	South
<i>Kehela</i>	<i>Chagas</i>	<i>Murray</i>	<i>Branco</i>
			Pass
1♦	3♣	4♦	4♠
5♣	Pass	5♦	All Pass

Branco's pass followed by a lead directing fit bid in spades ensured that the contract went down and a win versus the Canadian masters on the way to an eventual second place in this prestigious international event.

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Llangollen Swiss teams 2012

Further to the comments in the previous edition, this event has been confirmed for 24th/25th November as the EBU Tollema-che qualifier has been moved to the weekend before.

Calendar

All events here are correct at time of publishing but you are advised to take the precaution of checking with the organisers in all cases.

February

12th	Merseyside & Deeside Cup	MBC
19th	Jean Keen trophy (women's teams)	MBC

March

8th	Charity Challenge sim. pairs	MBC
11th	Eric Howarth Cup (GP swiss teams)	Deva BC

April

10th/11th/12th	BGB simultaneous pairs	Clubs
15th	Charity teams	MBC
22nd	Preece Rosebowl	Bl. BC

May

7th	May Day swiss pairs	MBC
9th/10th	EBU simultaneous pairs	clubs
17th	Andrew Rosebowl	LBC
20th	Green pointed pairs	MBC
26th/27th	Annual match v Dublin	Dublin
31st	Liverpool Open pairs	LBC

Note—the Preece Rosebowl is the county ladies pairs event held at Blundell-sands BC and pre-entry is required as the entry fee includes the buffet tea. Contact Doris Coltman on 0151 924 1712

This is a true story (the names of the players have been withheld to spare their blushes)

Playing opening bids that have more than one meaning can be very useful but these usually require an enquiry bid to establish what hand type is held. If one of you forgets what is being shown disaster can ensue, as sadly happened to this partnership.

♠ Q	♠ K J 10 8 6 3
West ♥ Q 10 8 6 5 3	♥ A J 9 East
♦ A 10 7 4	♦ K Q 3
♣ Q 9	♣ J

West opened with a multi 2♦ showing either a weak two in a major, strong 2 in a minor or 23-24 balanced. East enquired with 2NT and from there on things went downhill; the auction continuing 3♣ - 3♠ - 4♥ - 6NT. Let's see what the players each thought that the bids from here on were showing.....

West	East
3♣ a good weak two in hearts	3♣ Strong two in clubs
3♠ a cue bid in support of hearts	3♠ Natural offering a choice of black suits
4♥ sign off	4♥ heart cue bid but no ace
6NT no idea!!!!	6NT I've heard enough - this should be solid

The unkind opponents led a club and cashed all the available tricks for 7 off! West later suggested that as it was pairs, East should bid 7NT so that if that is doubled he can redouble and record minus 7600, after all a bottom is still a bottom !

And finally.....don't forget the Eric Howarth Cup at the Deva BC on March 11th. A green pointed Swiss teams event which is always run in a smooth and friendly style. Book in soon to avoid disappointment.