

Our penultimate match of the season saw the B-Team debut of Derek France playing with the vastly-experienced Shirley, one of his regular partners, following A-Team withdrawals.

We took an immediate giant lead of 44 imps in the first round, which included a massive 22-imp swing on Board 3 as both our E-W pairs made difficult vulnerable slams when both our N-S pairs defeated opposition slams. We gained a further 10 imps on both Boards 6 and 8 as, firstly, Chris & Pauline were the only pair to defeat 4H, then Kevin & Chris's opponents failed to bid 3NT. Another 7 imps were garnered by Shirley & Derek on Board 7 with the only game score, this hand being curiously passed out at Kevin & Chris's table after a bid out of turn, despite N holding 20 points! The only poor board was no. 4 with one opponent making 2H+2 when all other pairs had failed in 4H (-7 imps).

We continued to build our lead in the second round with another 28 imps to the good and a 72-imp half-time lead. Boards 12 and 15 were decisive, the former seeing both our N-S pairs making 3NT when opponents stopped short of game in Clubs, although making 11 tricks (+14 imps), the latter as both our N-S pairs made 4S when 4S and 3NT (also makeable) were defeated by our E-W pairs. Small deficits of 5 and 8 imps were recorded on Boards 10 (Chris & Pauline failing in 3NT, fortunately not bid by one opponent) and 13 (4 small scores including Kevin & Chris in 3NT-2 with 6-6-1-0 opposite 1-2-5-5 distributions and only 17 points between them).

After a delicious tea including hot quiches and several homemade cakes and meringues we put on another 28 imps for a neat 100-imp lead at the 3/4 mark. Val & Ann were the only pair to defeat 3NT on the first board (+10 imps) and a further 10 imps were gained on Board 22 with four plus scores. Only Val & Ann and one opponent bid the making 3NT on Board 18. Kevin & Chris were mainly responsible for our gaining 6 imps on both Boards 19 and 24, on 19 by doubling a kamikaze 4S-2 vulnerable with no game on their way (not vulnerable) and on 24 by being the only pair to bid 4H making on all tables.

Could we hold onto our potential 20-0 winning margin on the last round? Well, yes we could, adding another 14 imps for a comprehensive 114-imp victory and our second 20-0 win of the season. Most of the fireworks occurred on Boards 28 and 30, both being slam hands. On 28 three pairs went one off in 6NT when 6D was the only makeable slam, Kevin & Chris sensibly staying in 3NT (+13 imps), whereas on 30 only Shirley & Derek failed to bid 6S with 36 points (-11 imps). On two of the more mundane hands, Boards 25 and 26, we gained another 6 and 9 imps respectively just on better small scores.

Kevin & Chris and Val & Ann were our best pairs on a day when all four of our pairs outclassed the opposition by some way, having the advantage of being regular partnerships against opponents who in some cases were still sorting out their systems in the second half of the match. Well done all!

This victory takes us up to joint-top of the table with our final opponents Doncaster C, both 13 points clear of third place, so this final match looks like a title-decider with both teams favourites for promotion.

BRIGHOUSE B PAIRS	1st ROUND	2nd ROUND	3rd ROUND	4th ROUND	TOTAL
Chris & Pauline (E-W)	+2380	+820	-1540	-530	+1130
Kevin & Chris (N-S)	+80	+230	+1790	+980	+3080
Val & Ann (E-W)	+1810	+1430	-480	+50	+2810
Shirley & Derek (N-S)	-70	-270	+1420	+230	+1310
ILKLEY D PAIRS					
Mollie & Sylvia	-2380	-230	+480	-230	-2360
Tish & Geoff	-80	-1430	-1420	+530	-2400
Jacquie & Les	-1810	+270	+1540	-980	-980
Mike & Eric	+70	-820	-1790	-50	-2590

