

Western League

'In the latest County matches against Avon, the A and B Teams had keenly contested close matches throughout, which ended 11-9 to Hereford in the A team and 11-9 to Avon in the B team. The C team suffered early losses and never recovered to lose 17-3. Overall, the A team have now won 1 and drawn 3 and currently lie 2nd in the league, the B team have won 2 and lost 2 currently lying 1st, and the C team have won 1, drawn 1 and lost 2 and are currently lying 3rd. Unfortunately some teams are a match behind and these positions will certainly change.

Peter Watts

County Training continues on the last Wednesday of the month.

Congratulations.

Hereford's only previous English International was Phyllis Williams (RIP), but all that has changed - Ben and Tom Paske played in the England team at the week-end that won the Peggy Bayer in Limerick. This is the U-20 equivalent of the Camrose for the home nations + Republic of Ireland. I had a note from Richard Croot to say that the Ben/Tom appeared on Vugraph (Bridge Base Online) and performed very well. Hopefully they will appear many more times on that medium.

County Calendar 2007

FRI	16 th MAR – CLUB TMS OF 4	@ 7 pm	@ Ledbury
SAT	24 th MAR – CLUB TMS OF 8	@ 2 pm	@ Tarrington
SAT	31 st MAR – Multiple Teams of 4	@ 10.30 am	@ Tarrington
MON	16 th APR – Ace of Spades	@ 7 pm	@ Larrupéz
SAT	21 st APR – Champ & Mixed Pairs	@ 10.30 am	@ Tarrington
FRI	11 th MAY – CLUB TMS OF 4	@ 7 pm	@ Ledbury
SAT	12 th MAY – Barbara Forryan Mem Prs	@ 10.15 am	@ Much Birch
SUN	20 th MAY – Open Teams	@ 2 pm	@ Tarrington
	16 th / 17 th JUNE Swiss Pairs / Swiss Teams		@ Larrupéz



*News by e mail / letters to the editor, 62 Huntsmans Drive, Kings Acre,
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Next issue deadline: 28/04/07

email: stephen_booth@hotmail.com

Please make use of the County Website and make constructive criticisms.

[County website: www.herefordshirebridge.co.uk]

HEREFORDSHIRE BRIDGE

Newsletter no. 81 Herefordshire Bridge Association Editor: Stephen Booth (01432 354012)

MARCH 2007

Editor

In the absence of a County Chairperson (Nominations?) it's me again! It was great to see John Cattnach from Worcester on the front page of January's ENGLISH BRIDGE. I met John about 15 years ago when we were trying to introduce Bridge into schools. John became the Schools Area Organiser and his enthusiasm has lasted these many years, in areas of training, promotions and competition. He has used JF Kennedy's call to service - 'Think not what the EBU can do for you, but what you can do for the EBU'.

On that note we have **Membership News** from Pat Jenkins

You will all have received a renewal notice with your February edition of English Bridge advising that EBU and HBA subscriptions are due on 1st April. The EBU full member rate has been increased by 50p this year to £16.50 and the HBA rate remains unchanged at £3.50.

For just 38p per week (less than a Mars bar!) you will receive six editions of English Bridge and a free EBU Diary, will be eligible to enter all local and wider run EBU registered events and collect Master Points and, at the same time, will be supporting the National organisation that constantly promotes and serves our great game and endeavours to secure its long term future.

Total subscription for 2007/2008

Full members	20.00
Junior members (under 25 years on 01/01/07)	5.00
Junior members (under 17 years on 01/01/07)	2.00

Dual HBA members, full members of another county 4.00

There has been a change at the EBU over the last twelve months in the administration of membership data and subscription collection which should hopefully provide a much more efficient service to the members.

The membership department is currently working on a cross-matching exercise with each of the 39 County membership secretaries to ensure that the records they hold are correct and agree with ours. Once complete, there will be just one membership database, which will be held by the EBU. Each County membership secretary will have direct, password protected access to their section of the data thus giving them instant up to date information on payments, new members, address changes etc and any errors should be picked up and corrected quickly. The new regime will take effect from 1st April 2008.

The EBU is also keen to see as many members as possible pay their subscriptions by direct debit as it is a much more cost and time effective means of collection. Anyone wishing to convert to this method can get a direct debit form from their Club representative. *This is not mandatory however*, those members wishing to pay by cheque, EBU vouchers or cash may still do so via any Club representative, to me or direct to Aylesbury but it would be helpful if cheques could be made payable to EBU from now on please (and avoid posting cash)

If you have any questions at all, do ask your Club representative or contact me on 01432 890294, email: jenkinsbarrsct@btinternet.com – we are here to help in any way we can.

Pat Jenkins
Membership secretary

The English Bridge Union Teachers Association (EBUTA) has introduced a Partner Teacher Scheme, for current EBUTA members, in which you ‘can receive an unprecedented level of support from the EBU’. These include the use of their website, complimentary equipment and other discounted items to enable new players to progress from Learners to Club players. There is a course in March & an alternative in April, for which I have details. John Payne, the Education Manager, has all the details through Lisa Miller 01296 317217 & lisa@ebu.co.uk.

If you would like to Teach, the EBUTA is for you – same contact.

Editor

IN-HOUSE LEAGUE BRIDGE FOR ALL SECTION DIV. ONE

Caine (Caine Rossi Rowberry)
Dowdle (Wilson Kingston Kingston)
Grubb (Western Webber Wilkins)
Slater (Richards Walters Pickering)
Griffiths (Cottam, Cottam, Watts)

06:10:06	Caine beat Dowdle 17 - 3
01:11:06	Grubb beat Slater 12 - 8
25:11:06	Griffiths beat Grubb 19 - 1
14:01:07	Caine beat Slater 8 - 2
18:01:07	Slater beat Dowdle 11 - 9
16:02:07	Grubb beat Dowdle 14 - 6

IN-HOUSE LEAGUE BRIDGE FOR ALL SECTION DIV. TWO

Mabe (Gunn, Smith, Waterton)
Robbins (Watson, Lloyd-Nash, Keeling, Athay, Johnson)
Pascoe (Pascoe, Williams, Russell, Mullen)
Smith (Smith, Dixon, Walker, MacDougall)

11:10:06	Pascoe beat Smith 16 - 4
01:11:06	Smith beat Mabe 18 - 2
26:10:06	Mabe beat Robbins 13 - 7
21:11:06	Pascoe beat Robbins (npc) 19 - 1
06:12:06	Pascoe beat Mabe 13 - 7
16:01:07	Robbins beat Smith 14 - 6
24:01:07	Smith beat Mabe 13 - 7
31:01:07	Pascoe beat Robbins 14 - 6
07:02:07	Pascoe beat Smith 19 - 1

Why not get your Team organized for next years’ competition – the more the merrier.

The In- House leagues are well over halfway to completion and are a great way to spend an evening, if you have two rooms for play. Tea & biscuits / cake are all that is required to be provided by the host team and **TEAM PLAY is the best learning environment**. Usually you play two halves of 12 boards each and the match lasts up to 3 hours –with time to think & plan. There is little pressure on overtricks and you can practice your ‘safety plays’ at little cost. Being in this relaxed environment, against appreciative opponents, is what the game was invented for.

IN-HOUSE LEAGUE OPEN SECTION DIVISION ONE

Griffiths (Mathews, Weller, Watts)
 Thomas (England, Ralph, Thacker)
 Booth (Richardson, Brown, Brown)
 Munday (Munday, Baldwin, Baldwin)

24:10:06	Griffiths	beat	Thomas	19 - 1
24:10:06	Booth	beat	Munday	20 - 0
09:11:06	Griffiths	beat	Munday	14 - 6
15:12:06	Griffiths	beat	Booth	17 - 3

These pages are for a match report and there's room for any hands, which you thought were of interest or would like comments.

IN-HOUSE LEAGUE OPEN SECTION DIVISION TWO

Harrington (Harrington, Goddard, Goddard)
 Robertson (Ray, Baker, Bennett)
 Weller (Dowle, Porter, Prout)

09:11:06	Harrington	beat	Robertson	18 - 2
06:12:06	Harrington	beat	Weller	16 - 4
09:01:07	Robertson	beat	Weller	18 - 2

At COUNTY PRACTICE on 28/02, **Tony Truluck** made some useful comments and sent out this e mail. Dealer picked up this hand -

♠ X ♥ Q 10 X X X ♦ X X ♣ A K Q X X

Every north player opened 1♥ and, with south holding a balanced 14 count there was no game. During the discussion I mentioned my aversion to opening under strength hands especially where the weaker suit is the one I have to bid. So much can go wrong. How often do opponents bid game and, whether we had a chance to bid clubs or not, P will lead a heart? This hand is especially relevant as we have two decent five card suits and we are highly likely to have an opportunity to enter the auction later once we have more information, and if opponents bid on we have a much better chance that partner will lead a club.

Now I know that 90% of players would open this hand 1♥, but recently I have been experimenting with and studying the effect of passing borderline hands and it is amazing how results improve. Just yesterday I was dealt:

♠ A K 9 X X ♥ X X ♦ A ♣ J 9 X X X

I chose not to open in 1st seat and my pass was followed by two more. RHO opened 1♣, I passed again to hear 1♥ on my left, pass from P, 1♠ on my right. Opponents eventually reached 3NT and P led a diamond. Careful defence ensured a one trick defeat. At every other table my hand opened, mostly with 1♠, and was often doubled in 2♠/3♣ for –500 or they had the NT played by the other side. If you lead the diamond ace and switch to a heart you might beat 3NT! Otherwise ops played in hearts making various plus scores.

Even the mighty fall to this odd theory that we need to get busy as early as possible. Witness Bob Hamman demonstrating another pitfall of opening on rubbish.

♠ A Q X X ♥ A J X ♦ X ♣ 10 8 X X X

Hamman opened 1♠! He supported partner's 2♣ bid and subsequently refused to cue bid his heart ace so an easy grand slam was missed. How much easier is it when you pass first and partner opens 1♣? After this start you never have to back pedal!

A number of highly ranked players were dealt this hand during a major pairs event:

♠ K J X X ♥ A K X X ♦ 10 9 8 X ♣ X

For some reason they ALL opened 1♦! At some tables the bidding progressed 2♣ on the left followed by two passes! Oh dear! We have to back in with a double only for partner to pass and concede –380. There were various other routes to a minus score with some pairs getting lucky, but generally opening 1♦ was not a success. Now you CAN make 2NT but nobody managed to stop below 3NT. Contrast this with the one player who passed, heard 1♣ on his left followed by two passes. Double seemed obvious and he had no compulsion to bid again over his partner's 1NT. They chalked up a near top for +120.

Now I am not suggesting that I am always right, but I AM asking you to consider a different approach that tends to net a LOT of IMPs. It is of course not just a matter of passing; you need to work on competitive sequences, as you will need a variety of methods to get back into the auction. Before you can learn those, however, you will need to first accept that there may be some merit in this. (There will be more to follow Ed)

Can I improve my Bridge?

We play bridge for many different reasons, perhaps it's for the social side, the competitiveness but I hope primarily for the enjoyment it gives us, whether we are playing with friends, in our clubs or further afield. Wherever we play, we may wish to improve our play and these days there are many ways we can do this. Some may suit you. I offer some ideas that may help: -

PLAYING – most of our play is in our clubs where we meet players of differing standards, but we can and do get complacent in our own comfort zone. As with many games, stretching ourselves against stronger players in County Events and at the many available Congresses such as Herefordshire's Green Point to be held in Ross in June gives opportunity to improve. They are really enjoyable and it's very satisfying getting a good result against arguable better players.

ANALYSIS – Do you analyse your bridge further than just checking the results? It's surprising what it can show. Do we consistently overbid, underbid, miss slams, fail to compete, forget I have a partner, play poor percentages? At many events now, we have the advantage of print outs for the hands, they can be very useful for those 6 or so hands when you want to check why it went wrong or hopefully why it went right. Try monitoring your results regularly on how well you play contracts and how well you defend contracts, it can be quite revealing.

CONVENTION CARD/RULES - all conventions have their strengths and weaknesses, some very good players use relatively simple systems. So what convention do you use? do you fully understand it or even remember it all? how do you counter other systems? do you just accept what the opposition are doing? could you consider playing something more challenging to improve your game? There are people within the County who can help and also there are also many useful pages on the web with an increasing amount of information on bridge.

How well do you know the rules? Have you read the rulebook, it won't excite and it won't be a best seller but it's surprising what is in it and how it could improve your game?

TUTORIALS – Steve Booth has touched on this previously and it is very valid. There are Groups operating around the County to learn new systems, learn playing techniques and review problems that arise. Listening and learning from more experienced players is a great way to improve and discussions in Groups throws up many valuable and useful ideas. Sometimes there is opportunity to listen to one of the games gurus, such as Ron Klinger, who visits these shores from Aussie on occasions.

READING – There are numerous books available on many bridge topics as advertised in the EBU magazine. They can be pricey but try Hay-on-Wye, where there are many bridge books, some at bargain prices. Another good source is to try a search on the internet for a convention that interests you, many conventions are covered in good detail such as Lebonsohl, Roman Key Card, DON'T, etc, etc.

PLAYING ON-LINE – There are several sites in operation these days. I use one called BBO (Bridge Base On-Line). It offers the opportunity to play bridge with players of your own standard from around the world, it has tutorials and most week-ends has matches to view involving the world's best. Even better, it is FREE and easy to use.

Peter Watts (pkwts@tiscali.co.uk)