



SOMERSET CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION



SCBA Newsletter



Easter 2023

View from the Chair

I was delighted recently to receive the bridge session stats for February from the EBU and to read “Well done to Somerset which has more players now than in February 2020, I think the only region to have bucked the trend”.

Somerset was amongst the first counties to get organised for online bridge which helped many clubs to survive during the pandemic and now some clubs are organised to cater for both communities . Others have gone back to face to face only and are seeing encouraging growth in table numbers. County events at Woolavington have been less popular than before with only 4 clubs contesting the Teams of 8 and at the time of writing only 8 tables for our Championship Pairs.

Our Somerset Online 18 board games on BBO were a lifeline for many during the covid years and are unbelievably now in their third year. Naturally they have become less popular as ‘normal’ bridge has returned and we are now reduced from three games per week to two and maybe soon only one as Friday seems to be going the way of Wednesday.

However, my point is that there is lots of bridge being played one way or another in Somerset and that’s absolutely brilliant. There are club and

county games face to face and online, we have completed another very successful county league season, the pairs league was played for the first time in three years and our teams have continued to enjoy the Western League with our A team leading their division as I write. The knockout teams attracted an entry of 8 teams and the teams captained by Sheena Lanham and Frank Coltman have reached the final.

The Michael Coda Cup returned as a face to face event this year and raised £1750 for Sheila's charity. Thank you to all those who took part and contributed and congratulations to the winners Jane Hall and Peter Dawes.

It's really good to see that more clubs are taking up the challenge of teaching. I always pose the question to clubs "What is your response to someone who rings up the secretary to ask whether they can learn bridge at your club?" The answer could be anything from "We have a course starting next week" to "We don't teach but we have a relationship with this bridge teacher who will help you". I don't think that "Sorry I can't help you" is a satisfactory response and one that every club should take steps to avoid. For example, it would be simple for every club to include a link to a bridge teacher on their web site.

As we reach the end of another bridge season so our AGM on May 14th approaches and I invite you all to think and consider whether there is a role, large or tiny, that you could play to support the work of the SCBA in the next twelve months. In particular I am reaching the end of my time as your chairman and will be standing aside in May. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time in the chair which has sometimes been challenging, has always been busy and has usually been fun. Please get in touch if you have time and enthusiasm to offer to the SCBA. Have you ever thought "Why don't they do X?" or "Why the heck do they do that?" then here is your opportunity to do something about it!

Tony Russ 2023

“Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Somerset Contract Bridge Association (SCBA) will be held at Woolavington Village Hall on Sunday May 14th commencing at 1.00 pm.”

The provisional agenda is set out below.

It should be noted that the Secretary must receive any of the following in writing (preferably by email) by Sunday May 7th.

A Nominations for any of the Officer positions on the Executive Committee supported by a proposer and seconder, both of whom must be current members of the SCBA

B Nominations for the six non-Officer positions on the Executive Committee supported by a proposer and seconder, both of whom must be current members of the SCBA.

C Any special resolution that is to be discussed and voted on at the AGM under Item 11 duly proposed and seconded by two current members of the SCBA.

AGENDA

1. Introduction by the Chairman
2. Approval of the Minutes of AGM 2022 (copy can be found on the county website)
3. Matters arising from the 2022 Minutes
4. Chairman's Annual Report
5. Treasurer's Report (to be tabled) and adoption of Accounts
6. Tournament Secretary's Report (to be tabled)
7. Election of Officers and other Executive Committee members for 2023/24
8. Any Special Resolutions
9. Presentation of Trophies
10. Any Other Business

Keep an eye on the website for details of a bridge event to be held on the day.

Last Face to Face Competition before the AGM!

St George's Day Mixed Pairs

To be held at **Woolavington Village Hall** April 23rd 1pm

Played over 36 boards cost is £12 per pair plus £6 per person for a stupendous tea. This is always an enjoyable day played in the best possible spirit, rarely ending any marriages and always provoking entertaining conversations for the drive home.

Entries can be made [here](#)

Results:

The Michael Coda Cup

This raised £1750 for the High Sherriff of Somerset's Charitable Trust with the final being contested between 14 of the highest scoring pairs. **Jane Hall** and **Peter Dawes** won against a very competitive field with an excellent score of over 64%. **Gillian Toogood** and **Chris Bryant** also topped 60% in second place.

The results can be found [here](#)

Sheila Coda writes: It has been another successful year for the Michael Coda competition with a very generous amount of money raised. Once again, I am adding my grateful thanks to all those in the county who helped to organise and run the competition, to all the clubs who took part in the event or sent donations and, not least, to all of you who took part. Thank you.

The Teams of Eight

Four clubs fielded teams in this event – Langport, Cheddar & Wedmore, Nailsea and Chew Valley.

The leaderboard was a tie between Langport and Cheddar & Wedmore on 43 VPs with the former winning based on their result against the latter. Commiserations to the other two clubs and hopefully next year will see a few more entering.

The line ups were:

Langport: Alan Atkinson and Bridget Thorn, Stuart Pratt and Kate Pilkington, Lou and Robert Hobhouse, Nigel Hamlyn and Grant Weston.

Cheddar & Wedmore: Paul St Quintin and Geoff Davis, Barbara Biggin and Sue Gudgeon, Michael Smith and Chris Bryant, Peter Cresswell and John Down.



The winning team from Langport.

The Championship Pairs



Fifteen pairs competed in this event. A tight finish meant the honours went to Steve Tomlinson and Ralph Smith (pictured with Andy Ridgers presenting the trophy) on 59.4% with Grant Weston and Robert Judge just behind on 58.4%. Sheena Lanham and Andy Ridgers completed the podium on 57.8%.

Somerset National Pairs

Hosted on BBO 26th March:

Winners – Rob Lawy and Rob Stevens with almost 61%

The results can be found [here](#)

The Western League

In the latest round:

Somerset A team (Roger Sweet and Ian Morris with Allan & Jette Bailey) beat a strong Avon team 12 – 8. Somerset sit at the top of the league table with an average of 12 VPs per match with one game to play.

Somerset B team (Robert Judge and Grant Weston with Julian Brown and Kate Pilkington) lost to Avon B's by 8 – 12.

Somerset C team (Julia Hailes and Gay Lewis with Alan Atkinson and Mike Martin) beat Avon 12 – 8.

Results and links to the league tables can be found [here](#)

MASTER POINT PROMOTIONS

♥ Congratulations to the following Somerset players on their Master Point promotions!♥

9 Star Regional Master	Nora Mallett
4 Star Master	Marion Jehu
Advanced Master	Stephen Thomas
County Master	Mark Gostlin
District Master	Sarah Duncan, Marlise Kirkpatrick
Area Master	Bernard Harding Peter Hunter Lucy McMillan
Club Master	Sue Chapman Ian Dowler Paul Eburne Shirley Skeels-Piggins
Local Master	Helen Millar

2023-24 COUNTY LEAGUE

Of the 14 County League Captains of 2022-23 who responded to Bob Warrender's email of 13th February, seven stated that their teams would **only** enter the 2023-24 County League if on line and five stated a preference to play on line.

Teams may now consist of players from more than one club and will be identified by the Captain's surname, but when all team members belong to the same club the team will be identified by the club name and Captains initials e.g. TAUNTON(RS)

With matches being played on line it is not necessary to have a lot of nominated players for a team with some playing only one or two matches, so **teams with eight or more players should consider splitting into two teams.**

Individuals or pairs who are interested in playing in the league but who may not have a complete team should contact Bob Warrender (marianandbob86@gmail.com) who should be able to introduce them to others of similar standard to form a new team.

One from BBO

♠ Q J 10 8
♥ A K 6
♦ 5
♣ A 9 7 5 3

♠ 6 5 4 3 2
♥ 8 7 2
♦ 7 2
♣ 8 6 4

♠ A K
♥ 10 9
♦ K J 10 8 6 4
♣ Q J 2

♠ 9 7
♥ Q J 5 4 3
♦ A Q 9 3
♣ K 10

In the Polish Premier league the **2 club** opener by North at table one was in no way similar to that of an ACOLite's 2 clubs. West popped in a **2 diamond** overcall wondering what the harm could be. This was **doubled** and declarer must have been depressed to go two off vulnerable and lose 500 points. Grim.

At table 2 North started with **1 club** with West now overcalling **1nt** in a spirit of adventure, **doubled** by South with East trying **2 spades**, **doubled** by North and passed out. Drawing a veil over what happened next for the sake of any children reading declarer managed their three tricks for five off and 1400 away. Grimmer.

A last one from Vugraph:

♠ A 9 8 3
♥ J 10 3
♦ 10 9 5
♣ A K 5

♠ Q J 10 7 6
♥ 8 5
♦ A Q 3
♣ J 7 3

♠ K 5 4
♥ K 4 2
♦ K 7 2
♣ Q 10 8 2

♠ 2
♥ A Q 9 7 6
♦ J 8 6 4
♣ 9 6 4

Pretty much everyone plays weak twos these days although there is a tendency to simply treat them as a two level pre-empt. The question arises as to what actually constitutes an appropriate hand for using them. In this hand from the Vanderbilt, dealer South opted to open a weak 2 in hearts – 5+ of the major plus a four card minor is becoming popular for some reason. The bidding proceeded:

2H – **2S** – **2NT** (still an enquiry despite the overcall and the flat 12 points) – **3H** (good spade raise) **P** (probably a little late in the day) – **3S** – **4H** ppp

The Queen of spades was the lead and 2 off scored minus 100.

At the other table South stayed shtum North opened a **spade** and the **one NT** response was passed out. The 6 of spades lead did no harm with the hearts sat right and South chalked up eight tricks for + 120 and siximps.

The answer to the question to my mind is whether the weak two is going to make life harder for the opponents to find the right contract. If it makes life harder for your partner it is probably better to keep the bid in the box.....