

## REFLECTIONS FROM THE SEA END – SEPTEMBER 2016

The all too short balmy days of summer have seemingly come and gone but at least our cricketing lads are enjoying their Empire of the Sun and winning many glorious victories. They too sustain some sad defeats, but like Napoleon at Marengo and Austerlitz, they seem often to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat

It must be always remembered that cricketers and generals and even us bridge-players are only human beings and are affected by the same foibles, quirks and twists of fate that happen to all of us at some point in our daily lives. The only remarkable thing seems to be that bridge players seem to suffer from such incidents much more than the general mass of the population. Such thoughts brought to mind a few incidents that illustrate the special talents of leading bridge players and I trust my readers will draw their own conclusions as to their true significance.

A couple of bridge professionals were travelling to a major championship being held in Verona and they had flights which necessitated a change at Frankfurt airport. Travelling on budget airline tickets the flights were late at night and there was a long wait to pick up their connection which was leaving from a different terminal. Now one of the pair, was on the ball and went to the other terminal and found the right gate and settled down to read a book to while away the time to the flight. The other half had other ideas and went shopping at the duty-free shops and purchased a few liquids of an alcoholic nature which were largely consumed during the time of the stop-over, This so dulled the players wits that the player slept and the flight connection was missed.

Now you might have thought that the first player, when their partner had not turned up, might have made an effort to find out what had happened, but no, for reasons only known to himself, the player took no action and caught the connecting flight, leaving his partner to fend for himself. This latter follower of Bacchus, when he had woken up and found out he had missed his connection, improvised by rushing to the international rail station and caught a series of trains which arrived in Verona some 10 minutes before the event started. The pair played the first session in frosty silence and at the first meal break, they related their travel experiences to the rest of their team and they sought their sympathy, which was not readily forthcoming.

Morale was not at its best for some time until a few days later the non-playing captain of the team found a novel way of soothing the ruffled feathers of the players concerned. On a rest day of the championships, there was a boat trip on one of the Italian lakes organised for all the players and once embarked the non-playing captain handed the protagonists a fully loaded water pistol each and on a portable cassette player played "*TRAINS AND BOATS AND PLANES*" by Dionne Warwick. A water fight ensued which was enjoyed by all and cordial relations were restored.

Whatever you dear readers think of the story my darling pussy-cats thought it was endearing and showed off bridge players peculiar sense of humour..

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