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Winter 2006

Premises Sub-Committee Report

The property sub-committee are still actively engaged in researching new premises. Recent properties they have viewed are:

Industrial Units at Hithercroft – car parking may be a problem.

Nuffield – journey similar to Roke.

Long Whittenham – Stables and 10 acres. Within the club's price range although they are not wide enough. They are also up a long track which would be a problem in Winter.

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell:

1) Home Farm. Originally the owners were reluctant to let barns to the club as they didn't want traffic going past the houses at night.

We are approaching the owners to ask if we could acquire a half acre of land before the houses.

2) Donkey Sanctuary. We are in discussions with the owners regarding a possible joint venture.

We are also contacting SODC to let them know that we would like to be considered in plans for the proposed new sports ground in Didcot.

If anyone knows or hears of any possible alternatives, please let us know.

Car parking

The overflow parking in the field has ceased until the spring. Thank you for continuing to park as considerately as you can.

Charity events

The club's annual charity night raised £350 for the McMillan Nurses.

The club also raised £250 for this year's Children in Need appeal. Thank you for supporting these worthy causes.

A New Handicap Competition

The club is creating a new competition explicitly aimed at all members of the Club. This will be a handicap pairs competition taking place on the four 5th Fridays of 2007 (March 30, June 29, August 31 and November 30). The intention is to encourage pairings of experienced and less experienced players.

Please watch the notice boards for more information.

Recent results

The Len Salmon Trophy by Jennie Griffiths.

For the benefit of those club members who do not know the origins of the Len Salmon Trophy, Len was a member of both Wallingford and Abingdon. Before he died he donated a trophy, for an annual challenge match between the two clubs. In the early days a challenge was issued by the holder of the cup.

Some of the more memorable occasions include when Clive Keep and Malcolm Simpson "broke in" to Wallingford brandishing weapons and dressed as gangsters to issue their challenge.

The following year Debbie Roberts and Peter Baxter issued their challenge as - I am not sure what – Peter was fully made up dressed in a wig, dress, lacy tights and was quite unrecognisable.

Since then we have degenerated to both club captains agreeing a date. To date the tally is Wallingford 7 Abingdon 4. This year saw the return of the cup to Wallingford. The A team finished + 61, the B team + 41 and the C team -12.

Pead Plate

The runaway winners of The Pead Plate teams event were Lamorna & Tony Burwood-Smith, Andrew Collins and Norman Nicolson who were first even before adjustment for their handicaps.

Our congratulations also go to:

Jean Squires & Isobel Townley-Freeman who came 7th in the EBU Autumn Congress Swiss Pairs.

Geoff Nicholas, Colin Jones Mike Brown, Clive Keep who took 11th place in the Seniors Congress Swiss Teams

Norman Gascoyne & Peter Finbow Isobel Townley-Freeman & Jean Squires who came 3rd in the Oxfordshire 1 day Swiss teams event.

Please accept our apologies if we missed your noteworthy results. Please help us by telling us about them.

Competitions update

Open Pairs

(Positions at the end of November.)

1 st Geoff Nicholas & Debbie Roberts	61.30%
2 nd Gillian Lonsdale & Clive Keep	60.42%
3 rd Peter Baxter & Peter Russell	60.39%

Handicap Pairs

(Positions at the end of November.)

1 st Andrew Speyer & Jayne Castle	49.42%
2 nd Clive Keep & Nigel Wilkes	48.62%
3 rd Kate Gould & Peter Finbow	47.13%

Open Individual

(Positions at the end of November.)

1 st Mike Brown	62.41%
2 nd Peter Russell	60.90%
3 rd Nigel Wilkes	59.42%

Handicap Individual

(Positions at the end of November.)

1 st Francis Glassborow	47.75%
2 nd Michael Lucas	46.78%
3 rd Joan Grandison	45.98%

Wessex League

B Team	Played 2	Won 1	Lost 1
A Team	Played 2	Won 2	
C Team	Played 2	Won 1	Lost 1
D Team	Played 4	Won 3	Lost 1

Chiltern League

Played 2 Won 2

Diary dates

Christmas Parties

Monday Players: Monday 18th December (7.00pm for a 7.30pm start). The party will feature military bridge. A food list will be placed on the notice board please indicate what you would like to bring.

Wednesday and Friday Players: Friday 15th December (7.00 pm start). The Bridge that evening will be a light-hearted pairs in 'Play with the Experts' format where your results will be scored with a virtual pair of expert team mates. Please bring a small plate of food and a raffle prize. A Food list will be put on the notice board. Please 'sign up' with what you would like to bring or you may give a small donation to Lamorna who will bring something for you.

Thursday Afternoon Players: (2.00pm start)
Thursday 14th December.

Classes

The Bridge For All courses will recommence on Tuesday 9th January 2007 and run for 12 weeks.

Unit 2 Classes 7.30pm

Unit 4 Classes 10.00am 7.30pm.

For information please contact Peter Baxter (01491) 614705.

Hand Write-ups

We have been asked for more write-ups of interesting hands to feature on the website. Please give them to Francis Glassborow. See the website copy of Trumpit for an example.

Judging The Contract by Arthur Tulip

It is too easy at duplicate to be seduced by the lure of 3NT in a variety of hands when the 'correct' contract is in a suit. Of course it will depend on the tactics that you and your partner want to adopt but there are a number of misapprehensions that seem to exist at the table. For example it is better to play in 3NT than 5 of a minor. Granted that there are fewer tricks required to get that valuable game bonus but what is the risk. Similarly on a duplicate evening playing in 4 of a major requires 10 tricks but if you can make the 10 tricks in No trumps then there is an extra 10 points which could make the difference between a top and an average. Playing the room with this sort of bidding is a tactic which can easily come unstuck. Consider the following hands:

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

West's 1♣ opening bid is natural and to be expected if you play a weak No Trump and partner's response of 1♦ does not upset the plan so a 2NT rebid is made indicating 17-18 HCPs and a balanced hand. What does partner now bid? There is definitely enough for a game bid but in what? When these hands were played in an international championship many pairs opted for the No trump game and were duly slammed because of the lack of the Spade stop.

The second misconception is that once you have decided on a minor game you must bid a slam. So, instead of the No Trump raise to game East shows a preference for the club suit. This should indicate to the opener that the hand is unbalanced and does not have a lot of points. West can verify this by bidding 5♣ which East should pass. Even this is not an easy contract but it could actually be made.

If the slam is bid declarer must guess where the three losers are (an Ace and two Queens).

It is important to bid hands correctly. Being in the correct contract is normally more important than being in the wrong slam or game even if it gives a better score. Nine times out of ten you will come unstuck and have a bad result which is not worth the risk.

Calendar Errata

Apologies to Erica and Christopher Sheppard whose telephone number was incorrect in the calendar. Their number is: 01865 793336.

May we take this opportunity to wish everyone Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Two Monsters by Francis Glassborow

Freak hands test any partnership. Two extreme freak hands occurred in the same three board set during the July multiple-teams event.

My regular partner and I play Acol Strong Twos with responses that I learnt when I was playing Bridge in Leiden. The Dutch also play Acol, but their version is not quite the same (or at least it wasn't) as the English version.

Over a strong two the immediate responses show suits with quick tricks (specifically an A or a KQ). Without such a suit, the responder bids either 2N with a weak hand, 3N with 8+ but no support for partner's suit, or raises partner's suit with some support. The two hands I am about to describe come very close to the borderline of what the EBU regulations allow for a strong 2; so close that I think they challenge the absolute requirement that a strong hand contain at least 14 HCP as well as abiding by the rule of 25 (cards in the two longest suits + HCP is at least 25).

Here is what I picked up for the first board of a match

♠ KQ98xxx

♥ -

♦ -

♣ AKQJxx

I do not know of any conventional system that allows me to describe such a hand to my partner. Do you? Notice how little you need from partner for a slam in either clubs or spades. Also notice that partner's red suit holdings are irrelevant. How can I tell my partner that? Here is how the bidding went:

2S (strong) – 3D (have either the A or KQ or diamonds)

5C – 5S

6S

The intent of the 5C bid is to tell partner that I am profoundly uninterested in the red suits. Partner can pass 5C with a bust and more clubs than spades, bid a

red suit with a bust and a little support for spades (I then exit with 5S) or, as she did, bid 5S to show some support for spades. I hoped that the support was at least Jx or xxx. In the event partner had 3 spades to the ten as well as 4 clubs. There is nothing of interest in the play. The spades split 2-1 so the contract made.

Two boards latter I picked up:

♠ KQxxx

♥ AKQ xxxx

♦ -

♣ x

Another mammoth 15 count but a little more tractable to conventions this time. The bidding went:

2H – 2S (partner has the SA)

3H (temporizing) – 4C (partner has a quick trick in clubs).

Up until that point all was fine (though not perfect), I then took leave of my senses and bid 7H. That is a terrible bid because there is no reason to think that partner has the CA, nor any reason to suppose that partner has any hearts. In addition, I have not explored the possibility that partner holds 4 spades to the A. Worse, we were the only pair to even realise that a slam was odds on. 6H would have been an excellent result at both pairs and teams. Let me rewind the bidding a bit and see how I should have bid.

2H – 2S

3S (I have spades as a second suit) – 4C

4N (RKCB) – 5D (1 ace)

6H (choose between hearts and spades) pass.

These two boards test partnership understanding in quite different ways. In the first creative bidding and trust that partner will give a helpful response to 5C is the key. However, the second hand requires following the agreed system and tested the partnership in a quite different way.