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EVENTS & NEWS

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Hand 1

IMPs		Dealer W		Love All	
♠ AJ1052		<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>
♥ 4			3♥	Pass	4♥
♦ K853		?			
♣ AJ3					

Hand 2

Pairs		Dealer W		Love All	
♠ 43		<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>
♥ AKQ1082		-	Pass	1♠	Pass
♦ Q7		2♥	Pass	2♠	Pass
♣ O42		?			

Hand 3

IMPs		Dealer W		Vul All	
♠ AJ63		<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>
♥ 543		-	2♠*	Dbl	Pass
♦ Q42		?			
♣ J96					

* weak

Hand 4

IMPs	Dealer W		N/S Vul	
♠ AQJ109	S	W	N	E
♥ 8	-	2♥*	Pass	Pass
♦ Q43	?			
♣ AQJ8				

* weak

Hand 5

IMPs		Dealer N		Love All	
♠ K10983		<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>
♥ AJ		-	-	1♥	Pass
♦ KQ7		1♠	Pass	2NT	Pass
♣ J105		3♦	Pass	3NT	Pass
		?			

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The Inter-Club Teams is a new event that has proved extremely popular. It was run over three evenings with ten teams playing three matches each evening. We are reviewing the format this year so if anyone who is considering competing would like to put forward their views, please contact one of the Committee Members or mail Eddy Blackburn at Blackedd@hotmail.co.uk.

The Irene Allen and Healey Cup were held in October and November last year and continued to be popular and so will be run again this year – both on Sundays.



Forthcoming Events

The format of some of the County events was changed last year to make them more accessible to our members who were keen to play in them but found the qualifying round on a Monday evening inconvenient. We're pleased to be able to say that it worked and we were able to welcome a number of new faces at the County Championship Pairs last year. So nobody will be surprised that we are following the same successful formula this year with a number of other events.

The first of these will be the Championship Pairs to be held on Sunday 8th March at Bradley Green Village Hall. This competition is open to all members of the WCBA whose county of primary allegiance is Worcestershire. A good quality meal is provided and many of the members who played last year said how much they enjoyed the event. So,

You might also want to start to form teams for the County Closed Teams Championship that starts in October. Again, we are doing away with the Monday evening qualifying round and going straight into the knockout stages. A new feature that we are introducing is a “Plate” event which will be open to all teams knocked out in the first round. In theory, therefore, the seeded teams should not be qualifying for this part of the competition, so the less-fancied teams should have a chance of winning. In practice, however, as in all knockout competitions, anything could happen!



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www.bridgewebs.com/malvern hills/

Further details from Michael Lane – 01684 564334



www.pershorebridge.co.uk

Championship Pairs: -

1. Alan Boyes & Peter Kershaw
2. Martin Rees and Louie Kennedy

Most Improved Pair: Bryan Stock & Peter Abbott

Most Improved Player: Ruth Simpson



Championship Pairs Winners: Peter Kerslake and Alan Boyes



Most Improved Player: Ruth Simpson



Pershore Bridge Club also won the Healey Cup – see article later



I'm grateful to Alan Boyes for inviting me to play at Pershore earlier in the year. It was a very enjoyable experience despite my finding that the warm welcome did not extend to giving a visitor an easy ride. While we finished above average, we did not manage to finish amongst the leaders. Next time.....!!! - Ed



LESSONS TO LEARN!

Bidding Panel

Moderated by Nick Forward

Once again we have six panellists who have had a stab at this set of hands – Mike Willoughby, Stewart Fishburne, Brian Stanley, Sue Evans, John Sansom and Jimmy Ledger.

Hand 1

Hand 1					
IMPs		Dealer W		Love All	
♠ AJ1052		<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>
♥ 4			3♥	Pass	4♥
♦ K853		?			
♣ AJ3					

Votes: 3 for 4♠; 2 for Dble; 1for Pass

Marks: $4\spadesuit = 5$; Dble = 4; Pass = 3.

A not uncommon problem which is exacerbated by the uncertainty of East's raise to 4♥. This can be either a continuation of the pre-empt, or a good hand where East thinks that game is on. There is inevitably some guess work here which is shown in the panel's responses.

Brian: 4♠; anything could be right here but surely 4♠ will be right more often than it is wrong. There are 8 spades missing and LHO appears to have 6 or 7 hearts, making it more likely Partner has 3 or more spades. I know if he only has 3 they will probably break badly but if Partner has one high honour we should be able to finesse the other. It may be right to defend but if there are two 9 card fits here then the only time 4♠ is wrong is if both sides can only make 9 tricks.

John: 4♣; a decision between pass and 4♠ – the 4♥ bid by East could either be a reasonable hand expecting to make or a bid that adds to the pressure of the preempt. On balance I cannot see 4♠ being expensive and North's values (if any!) are not likely to be in hearts. The shortage in hearts is good and 4♠ could be making or be a better score than 4♥ making.

...and more succinctly:-

Jimmy: 4♠; seen too many auctions like this bid on peanuts. Could easily be wrong!

Two members of the panel went for a more flexible – if nebulous – approach:-

Mike: Dble; Could be expensive, but our high cards are sitting in the right places. The five card spade holding is also significant as it firstly gives some security and secondly makes it a bit less likely that partner had long enough spades to overcall 3♥. I'd like to bid 4♠ but would need better spades for that since I don't fancy playing a 5-3 spade fit and getting forced at every possible opportunity. In the worst case that we find ourselves playing in 5♣, at least we're taking the force in the short hand.

Stewart: Dble; Yuck! Everything is a gamble. RHO could be a strong hand, or just maintaining the pre-empt. Pass seems just too lily-livered (but could well be right). Action options are double and 4♠. The latter strikes me as 'all eggs in one basket', when 5♣, 5♦ or defending 4♥x might be the best spot. I'll double and hope it doesn't then go Pass Pass redouble, when we could lose rather a lot.

I can appreciate the advantage of keeping game in one of the minors as an option, but if partner has 3 good spades, he/she is unlikely to bid them and you could end up in a grotesque 4/3 club fit at the 5 level. Mike comments that you may be forced in the long suit, but it should be borne in mind that partner probably doesn't have many hearts either on this auction. Sue took a more pessimistic approach:-

Sue: Pass; I cannot visualise a hand where we could make game when partner has passed. Sacrificing at teams means that we will need to find new team mates for next time. Even doubling (for penalties) at teams is too risky.

Pass could well be right – but the majority favour action; largely because of an innate desire not to be talked out of a contract. On the hand itself both 4♥ & 4♠ made, with 5 of a minor unsuccessful...and yes, spades were 5/3.

Hand 2

Pairs	Dealer W		Love All	
♠ 43	<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>
♥ AKQ1082	-	Pass	1♠	Pass
♦ Q7	2♥	Pass	2♠	Pass
♣ Q42	?			

Votes: 3 for 3♣; 1 for 3♥; 1 for 4♥; 1 for 4♠

Marks: 3♣ = 5; 4♠ = 4; 3♥/4♥ = 3. 3NT/3♠ = 2.

You want to be in game.....but which one?

Stewart: 4♥; We seem to have enough for game, but probably not more given partner's simple rebid. Which

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game will play best? It could be 4♥, or 4♠, or even 3NT. I quite like the idea of keeping my minor suit holdings undescribed and have the lead coming up to, rather than through the Queen. I'm going to bid 4♥. Even if partner is void this could well be the best game, given the lack of communications playing in anything else.

Sue: 4♠; Partner now has 6 spades for his rebid. Hopefully one of the minor Queens will be an entry to the hearts if partner has none at all.

Mike: 3♥; obviously forward going and a slight underbid (13 points opposite an opening bid may not be enough for game these days) but it keeps all options open. If Partner shows some extra values by bidding 3♠ I'll go to 4♠. If he passes or bids 3NT or 4♥, I'm happy enough at Pairs since I feel sure there will be a lot of different scores on the hand (hopefully not all making games!). 3♣ and 3NT are decent second choices but saints preserve me from anyone who thinks 3♥ is a sign-off!

I agree that 3♥ should not be treated as a sign-off (although some would play it as such) but it is also not forcing; and with opening values seems to me an underbid. The other panelists aim for a more consultative approach.

Jimmy: 3♣; must force partner to game - if he bids diamonds I will bid 3NT otherwise 4 of the major he bids.

John: 3♣; and see what partner does. You want to be in game and either 3NT, 4♥, 4♠ are the likely contracts. If partner bids 4♣, bid 4♥.

Brian: 3♣; we have 13HCP with a good suit. Partner has opened the bidding so we should be in game; but which one? Bidding 3♣ gives partner a chance to show delayed heart support, bid 3♦ asking, or bid 3NT.

Partner held ♠ KQ10962, ♥ void, ♦ K42, ♣ K963, and 4♠ was the only making game, so consulting with partner was the best way to find the right spot.

Hand 3

IMPs	Dealer W		Vul All	
♠ AJ63	<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>
♥ 543	-	2♠*	Dbl	Pass
♦ Q42	?			
♣ J96				

* weak

Votes: 3 for 3NT; 2 for 2NT; 1 for 3♣.

Marks: 3NT = 5; 2NT = 4; 3♣ = 3; Pass = 2.

Nearly all bridge players play conventions to enable them to find the best contracts; however sometimes the convention can be a nuisance because it takes away a bid which you may wish to use naturally. This hand is one

such example. Many players use Lebensohl as a way of defining a response to a double of the opponent's weak two bid. The idea being that if you just make a bid at the three level over the double it is difficult for partner to know whether you are weak or intermediate in values. A bid of 2NT is used conventionally to ask partner to bid 3♣ which can be passed if your hand is weak with clubs or you can convert to your suit. This is non-forcing and used with a weak hand. Therefore a bid at the 3 level promises some values. Other bells and whistles can be added (for instance a bid of 3NT directly over the double can be distinguished from a bid of 3NT after 2NT-Dble -3♣. For my partner and me the first would promise a full stop in the opponent's suit and the second would promise a half-stop). I held this hand partnering one of the panel and found it very awkward. Most have decided to just bid game.

John: 3NT; seems to be quite reasonable here. You have the option of pass but this is not likely to bring in a big enough penalty score. 2NT is not available as an invite as most would play this as Lebensohl style and not natural.

Jimmy: 3NT; only other bid is to pass 2♠x which at teams is not advisable. I cannot bid 2NT as this is conventional and 3 level bids show length. We could easily be too high.

Sue: 3NT; Ugh! If partner has 16 points in the right places, then 3NT may make, so that is what I'll bid. I am unable to bid 2NT, because that would be Lebensohl, asking partner to bid 3♣, and I am a point or two too strong for that. Ugh! is just about right.

As Jimmy and Sue point out, opposite a standard double, you are almost certainly too high. Accepting this, others on the panel went for a more conservative approach.

Brian: 2NT; Lebensohl and then pass Partners 3♣. Most people play 2NT as Lebensohl in this sequence so that's what I'm bidding. There isn't enough defence to pass which could result in a really bad score at teams.

To be honest, I am not sure why 3♣ would necessarily be considered an improvement – you could easily be in a 3/3 fit.

Mike: 2NT; this is tough if you play Lebensohl here, which I do - if I could bid 2NT naturally, I would. Partnerships that play Lebensohl need to differentiate between an immediate 3NT and 3NT reached via 2NT – 3C – 3NT (which gives doubler the chance to show a strong hand with a good suit, by the way). Pass is a tempting alternative but dummy is likely to have at least one and probably two entries to enable my spades to be picked up – leading to -670 which is worse than -100 and a lot worse than +600! I must admit that there is an element of backing both horses here. 2NT natural is a fair

shot. I've chosen to interpret the convention in a way that allows me to 'go with the flow' and still bid 2NT albeit that it is conventional.

What Mike does not clarify is what he intends to do after partner's forced 3♣ bid

Stewart: 3♣; My spades are sitting under the weak 2 bidder, and it likely that RHO has values sitting over partner, so things don't sit too well for us. It's far too risky at teams to pass for what is likely to be a small extra gain and may well be -790. So I'll bid a quiet 3♣, natural and non-forcing. If partner bids a red-suit now he will have a strong hand and I can suggest 3NT. In this situation I don't have a natural 2NT option (played as Lebensohl), but even if available I think I'm a bit weak for that – I'd expect 10 or 11 points.

I can only determine from Stewart's comments that he plays bids over partner's double as non-forcing and 2NT followed by a suit as showing values. If that is correct it is not the common usage and he may need to check with his regular partners that they are on the same wavelength. In fact nothing works here; Partner held ♠ K7, ♥ KJ72, ♦ AKJ5, ♣ 752, and 3NT is down 2 tricks and 3♣ is a potential disaster. As I said – sometimes conventions can be a real nuisance!

Hand 4

IMPs	Dealer W		N/S Vul	
♠ AQJ109	<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>
♥ 8	-	2♥*	Pass	Pass
♦ Q43	?			
♣ AQJ8				

* weak

Votes: 3 for Dble; 2 for 2♠; 1 for 3♥.

Marks: Dble = 5; 2♠ = 4; 3♥ = 3.

Again the opponent's pesky weak two causes a problem. You have the values for double but you risk losing the spade suit which is why I prefer the minority bid of 2♠:-

Mike: 2♠; a slight underbid, I know, but I need partner to have quite a bit to make anything worthwhile and I'm not prepared to double and then bid 3♠.

Stewart: 2♠; natural and non-forcing. Yes, I've got a little bit in hand for this, but to double first and then bid 3♠ would show a stronger hand (and preferably more spades).

One panellist took a very rosy view of the hand and wanted to drive to game.



Finally.....

From Bernard Palmer

To All My Friends In Worcestershire

Time to say farewell

I'm sad that I was unable to see many of you to say goodbye before I left Worcester. I got an acceptable offer for my house towards the end of June but the legal process led to the completion of the sale to be delayed until early October. As some of you know I was selected to play for the Isle of Man in the Commonwealth Nations Bridge Championship which was held in Glasgow after the main commonwealth games. That led to a ten day commitment in early September and frequent and regular practice leading up to the event. With this and family commitments visits to Worcester became fewer and shorter.

However, I often think of my bridge friends from Worcestershire and the many happy times I had playing with them in clubs, in the county events and various locations in green point events. I would like to express my appreciation to all of my friends who helped to make my bridge in Worcestershire (over 14 years) such a pleasure and more particularly those who were my partners and teammates for all these events and for the pleasure of their company at many jovial meals on the way home after distant events.

A big thank you is also due to all of the officers of the county and everybody who contributed to the running of the county over the years.

A chance in a lifetime

My experience with the Isle of Man team at the Commonwealth Nations Bridge Championship was superb. There were twenty eight teams in all, split into two groups of fourteen, and teams played all the others in their group followed by a knock-out competition for the top four from each group.

On arrival at the venue on the first morning I was told by our captain that I was playing in the first match and that it was against Australia followed by the quip that if we managed to get a point out of the match it would be a bonus. The match seemed to go well, but I did feel nervous. However I managed to keep my composure. As we scored up at the end of the match we were accumulating a plus score. The excitement rose and with

three boards still to score we were ahead by 21 imps but that margin was reduced by 7 and then another 1 as the tension was rising and a final board loss of another 8 leaving the margin a rather slim 5 imps. That win converted to a victory points score of 11.58-8.42. Australia only lost one other match in the group stage and that was to Wales the eventual Gold medallists.

Out of our thirteen group games we went on to register:-

- six wins (Australia, England 2, Scottish Bridge Union, Guernsey, Black Swan and Kenya),
- one draw (Jersey), and,
- six losses (India, Wales, Scottish President's, Pakistan, Northern Ireland and South Africa 2)

Overall we felt it was quite a good performance for a team from the smallest country in the competition. Finally, would you believe I was asked for my autograph!!

I wish you all happiness for the future and I hope Worcestershire bridge goes from strength to strength.

Bernard Palmer

I'm sure we all wish Bernard well in his new home and hope that he will continue to play lots of Bridge and keep in touch with us - Ed



STOP PRESS!

Club Championship Pairs

The Club Championship Pairs took place yesterday at Cutnall Green Village Hall. Congratulations to the winners, Droitwich Bridge Club, represented by Suzanne Griffin and Rufus Ulyet, and also to the runners up, Worcester Bridge Club, represented by Joyce Skelton and David Thomas. Full results are on the County Website: <http://www.bridgewebs.com/worcestershire/>

For those who enjoyed the day, or wished they had been there to do so, the County Championship Pairs is on March 8th with a very similar format. Come along and enjoy!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: We are grateful to **Parkinson Wright, Solicitors**, of Droitwich, Evesham and Worcester ☎ 01905 726 789 for the production of this **Worcestershire Bridge News**



GREEN POINT EVENT

Come along and play in Worcestershire's Premier Pairs Event

Championship Pairs

Following the success of last year's event, this tournament is again open to all players with primary allegiance to the WCBA. There will be no qualifying tournament.

This is a two session event, with 42 to 50 boards played

Superb buffet lunch served in the 30 minute interval

Sunday 8th March, 2015

Bradley Green Village Hall (B96 6RW) – 11am start

Entry fee - £10 per player plus £6 for buffet lunch

The best placed pairs will be invited to play in:

- a) Corwen to be held on 30/31 May 2015 – top 3 pairs
- b) Edgar Foster Cup usually held in September 2015 – next 4 pairs

Ascender's wine prize.

ENTRY Form for the WCBA Championship Pairs 2015

Player 1: Name _____ EBU No. _____

'phone number _____

e-mail address: _____

Player 2: Name _____ EBU No. _____

Number of buffet lunches required: _____

Please enclose entry fee of £10 per person (£20 per pair) plus £6 for each lunch ordered, cheques payable to WCBA. Entries by 27th February please

Send to Eddy Blackburn,
114 Plymouth Close, Headless Cross, Redditch, B97 4NP

Enquiries 01527 402 665 or email blackedd@hotmail.co.uk
or see the details on our website www.bridgewebs.com/worcestershire/