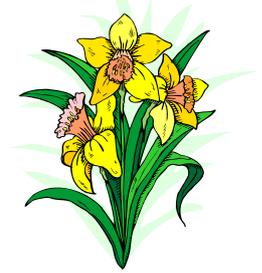




County Newsletter



Editorial

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Whilst there are events going on throughout the calendar year, the Bridge 'season' tends to start around September in clubs and local leagues. That means that now Spring is here, clubs will have competitions coming to their conclusion. So please LET ME KNOW THE RESULTS. I would like to include them in the next issue or two as I am sure your members would appreciate a wider audience hearing about their successes and it might even boost entries for next time. *P.S Anyone can let me know - it does not have to be the club organisers.*

The Eric Howarth Cup - One Day Swiss Teams

This event was held in mid-March at the Deva BC and was excellently organised by Phil Nuttall with TD Sarah Amos running it in her usual efficient and friendly style. Well done also to the club members who arranged the refreshments. It would have been good to see a few more Deva players taking part though, especially with green points on offer and the venue being their home club.

As declarer you can sometimes obtain a hint about the defender's distribution from the opening lead and use this advantageously, as demonstrated by Ted Reveley on this deal from match 3.

Dealer South. EW vul.

	♠ K Q 6 5 2	♠ A 7
North	♥	♥ Q 8 5 2 South
	♦ 7 4 2	♦ A K J 3
	♣ Q J 8 7 5	♣ A K 10

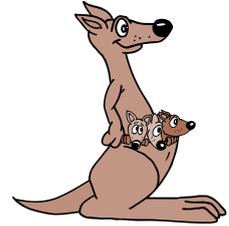
South opened 2NT and Ted as North showed both of his suits before the partnership settled in 6♠. The opening lead was the spade 4 and he decided that the most likely reason for leading one of his known suits was because the suit was breaking 5-1. This possibility was reinforced when West played the 3 of spades under dummy's ace. Thus Ted decided his best chance was to play for a dummy reversal. At trick 2 he ruffed a heart in hand, crossed to dummy with a trump and ruffed a further heart. Back to dummy with another trump, a 3rd heart ruff and then a diamond to the ace to draw the last trump. He could now play the seven of spades to cash his king and queen, before taking the diamond finesse for his contract. In fact, West had jumped in with the ace of hearts on the first round of the suit and as East held the heart king and Q x x x in diamonds, the 3rd round of spades squeezed him. So Ted actually emerged with an overtrick in a contract that many around the room had failed to make. (Stuart Matthews pointed out that you can also make by playing another spade at trick 2, ducking it and later ruffing the other spade loser in dummy before drawing trumps. This needs the diamond finesse as does Ted's line)

WALES WIN CAMROSE

You may recall that in the February issue we reported that local player Alan Stephenson was the non-playing captain of the Welsh team in this year's home international series for the Camrose trophy. After a tremendously exciting second weekend of play, Wales held off challenges from both England and Ireland (who finish 2nd and 3rd respectively) and came through to win. This is the first time Wales has won the trophy since the event was started in 1936. Well done to them and especially to Alan – he might find himself with the job on a permanent basis now.

A HAND FROM DOWN UNDER

By Tim Bourke



Dealer West. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
1♥	Double	3♥	3♠
4♥	4♠	All Pass	

This deal occurred in a teams match and the auction was the same at both tables, as was the heart king lead. Upon winning the ace, both declarers drew trumps with the ace and queen but then their paths diverged.

The first declarer led a diamond to the queen and was disappointed when East took this with the king. The club exit was covered by the ten and taken by West with the king, who then shifted back to diamonds. Declarer rose with the ace of diamonds and, hoping for a 3-3 break or for East to hold the club queen, played a third round of diamonds to East's ten. When East placed a club on the table, declarer played the jack and West's queen of clubs proved to be the setting trick.

The declarer at the other table showed how to make the contract against any distribution of the outstanding cards. After ruffing the six of hearts in dummy at trick four, he played the ace of diamonds followed by the four of diamonds. East took this with the diamond ten and shifted to a club. South inserted the ten of clubs and West won with the queen, only to find himself end-played. West saw that the only chance for the defence was that East held the jack of clubs and so he exited with the club king. This gave declarer two club tricks to go with his five trumps, a heart ruff and the two red aces. Notice that had West been able to exit with a low diamond, declarer would have played dummy's queen of diamonds and it would either hold the trick or, if East produced the diamond king, the suit would be 3-3 and there would be a discard for the club jack. So, whatever West tried, declarer would have 10 tricks

Conventions Corner by the Editor

Fit bids - part 1

In addition to having a good fit in any potential trump suit, it can be very useful if you and partner hold length and strength in a side suit. This asset can vastly increase the trick taking potential in your chosen contract. Just imagine if you hold ♠ A Q J 3 2 ♥ 6 ♦ 6 3 2 ♣ K J 9 2. You open 1S and partner raises to 3S. Do you bid game? Well you can judge the correct answer better if you know the location of partner's side strength.

If partner holds ♠ K 10 7 4 ♥ 9 8 ♦ A Q 10 4 ♣ 7 4 then you have a certain heart loser and a lot of guesses to make in the minors if game is to succeed. However switch the minor suit holdings and the hand opposite is ♠ K 10 7 4 ♥ 9 8 ♦ 7 4 ♣ A Q 10 4 and barring a very evil distribution of the cards, game is a certainty.

When they have a good trump support, a lot of partnerships use fit bids to show where their outside strength is located in order to help partner judge the correct level. It is a bit like using a trial bid. Fit bids can be particularly useful in competitive auctions. Say that you hold ♠ 6 4 ♥ A J 9 8 ♦ K Q 9 7 2 ♣ 4 3. Partner opens 1♥ and the next hand overcalls 1♠. Normally you would bid 3♥, but how much better to be able to show where your outside strength is by jumping to 3♦. This bid shows good heart support and a decent side suit in diamonds. Traditionally jump bids in a new suit are strong, but in this situation a bid of 2♦ after the overcall would be forcing, so little is lost by using a jump as a fit showing bid. If partner likes your side suit he can go on to game (or higher) otherwise he can sign off in 3♥, which of course does not preclude you pushing on with a more suitable hand.

There will be more about these type of bids in future issues, but for now just look at this fine example from a recent teams event at the Deva club

Dealer North. All vulnerable

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

After a pass by North, East opened 1♥ South overcalled 1♠ and West had a perfect hand for a fit jump of 3♣. When North now called 4♣ it was easy for East to go on to the five level as a two-way shot. 5♥ might make, otherwise it was likely to be a good sacrifice against the N/S game. As you can see, there was no winning option for N/S and they correctly settled for taking 5♥ one off. Sadly their team-mates were not playing fit bids and so did not push on over 4♣ and duly lost 11 imps on the board

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Latest Results

The Merseyside & Deeside Cup, which is the County Pivot teams event, was won by A & S Clark, M. Jubb, & D Hislop, with 2nd place going to R. Arnold, A. Hurst, B. Griffiths. & F Sawko

The County Women's team event for the Jean Keen trophy took place in February with the leading places being 1st Gill O'Neill, Margaret Barnes, Mandy Johnson, Avril Thompson 2nd Frances Davies, Jean Keen, Rekha Gatfield, Sally Clark.

The winners of the Eric Howarth Cup were Tracy Capal of Manchester and Liz Muir from the North-East, with local pair Alan Stephenson and Stuart Matthews (who seem to be winning most things this season). The Manchester foursome of Bernard & Rhona Goldenfield with Alan & Kath Nelson were second.

David Stevenson and Liz Commins were 2nd in the Pairs event at the Cumbria Congress in March.

Well done to Joan Marray and Julian Merrill who won the Colwyn Bay heat of the Portland Pairs. They finished 4th nationally out of 366 entrants.

The North Wales Swiss teams Congress took place last weekend. The winners were Mike Tedd, John Salisbury, Bob Pitts and Barry Jones, just 1vp ahead of Dave & Jean Keen and Kath & Alan Nelson of Manchester.

Club Champions

As part of the new P2P system, at the end of each year, the EBU are to calculate which player at each affiliated club in the country has earned the most masterpoints in that club's events during the year. The winners have now been announced, though as the new scheme only got underway in April, it only covers 9 months this time. So congratulations to the successful players in the Merseyside & Cheshire clubs who (in club alphabetical order) are Robbie Roberts at Blundellsands BC, Paul Holt at the Deva BC, Keith Perry at Frodsham BC, Paul Mathews at Hartford BC, Roger Arnold at Liverpool BC, Lollo Murthwaite at Merseyside BC, Richard Gooch at Warrington BC, and Angus Clark at Wirral BC.

It is worth noting that the EBU entered every club into a prize draw and the Club Champions at the first 3 clubs drawn won respectively £400, £200 and £100. Sadly none of the winners were in our County but how about that for a great incentive to play more often at your club?

Calendar

All events here are correct at time of publishing but you are advised to take the precaution of checking with the organisers in all cases.

April		
17th	Charity Teams	Merseyside BC
May		
2nd	May Day Pairs	Merseyside BC
11th	Simultaneous pairs	Merseyside BC
19th	Andrew Rosebowl	Liverpool BC
22nd	Green Point Pairs	Merseyside BC
28th/29th	Annual match v Dublin	
June		
2nd	Liverpool Open Pairs	Liverpool BC
3rd	Worldwide Sim. Pairs	Merseyside BC
9th	Liverpool Open Teams	Liverpool BC
11th	Northern Counties League	Round 1
16th	Jim Davies Swiss Teams	Heswall BC
23rd	County AGM	Liverpool BC
28th	Bill Hughes Sim. Pairs	Deva BC
July		
2nd	Northern Counties League	Round 2
16th/17th	President's Cup	Sheffield
25th/26th	BGB simultaneous pairs	Clubs

Contacts and information

MBC : www.merseybridge.org.uk

LBC : email jo-rogerarnold@talktalk.net

Deva BC : www.bridgewebs.com/deva

Angus Clark (county secretary) : aandsclark@aol.com

Dave Keen (chief selector) : email admin@mcba.org.uk

County website : www.mcba.org.uk

If clubs would like a mention of their events on the calendar, then please let Bob Pitts know. Where possible they will be included

Please also note that if there is sufficient space, major club results will be included in the County News in English Bridge but only if you send them to Bob Pitts. English Bridge like news 6 weeks prior to publication.