



County Bulletin

Issue 29

APRIL 2015

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Editorial News

The Merseyside League is just coming to the end of its 66th season. Whilst there are not as many players taking part as in the past, it is still the best teams game in the County. Their end-of-season pairs event takes place on May 7th and I hope you will all try to support it. If you need a partner then contact me or Earl O'Keeffe and we will do our best to help fix you up.

There is also a veritable Summer Festival of bridge locally. Firstly, there are the Preece Rosebowl (Ladies pairs) and the Andrew Rosebowl (mixed pairs) which are County events. Liverpool Bridge club are running their annual Open pairs and Teams competitions soon and the ever popular the Jim Davies Swiss teams takes place in mid-June at Heswall Hall (book early). Bridge4Fun is taking place again in late June and after last year's success it will be a good idea to register early for this as well.

Double more often (at pairs)

by Bob Pitts

Most players (me included) don't double their opponents often enough when playing pairs. Of course you will get a very bad score if the contract succeeds but against that you need to protect yourself from dropping below par when you have the balance of power. This deal from the recent North Wales Spring Congress is a perfect example. I was sitting West and the opponents were Mike Tedd and John Salisbury, the eventual winners of the pairs event. After a competitive auction where we had found our heart fit, John declared three clubs from the South seat. However, I had failed to double, an action which should be automatic (there is no truth in the rumour that I did not want to be seen as a bad host by doubling my weekend house-guests).

Board 38 Dealer East E/W vul.

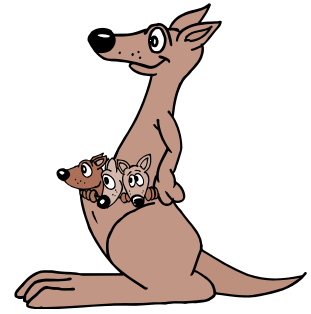
	♠ 4 3 2	
	♥ 10 9 6 5	
	♦ 10 7	
	♣ K 9 8 6	
♠ 10 7		♠ K J 8 6
♥ A K J 7		♥ 8 4 3 2
♦ A K 8 3		♦ J 9 6
♣ Q 10 5		♣ 4 3
	♠ A Q 9 5	
	♥ Q	
	♦ Q 5 4 2	
	♣ A J 7 2	

Declarer lost two diamonds and a trick in each of the other suits for -50 and only 4.6 for my side out of a top of 38. With many East/West's making one no-trump exactly, doubling was essential and +100 to us would have scored 24.6. Had we mis-defended and let the contract home our score would have not been that much worse than the result that we did get.

HAND FROM DOWN UNDER

by Tim Bourke

Dealer South. EW vul.



<p>♠ 4</p> <p>♥ 7 3 2</p> <p>♦ Q J 9 7 5 3</p> <p>♣ Q 8 7</p>	<p>♠ A 5</p> <p>♥ K J 9 4</p> <p>♦ 6</p> <p>♣ A 10 9 6 5 2</p>	<p>♠ J 10 9 2</p> <p>♥ 6</p> <p>♦ A K 10 8</p> <p>♣ K J 4 3</p>	<p>♠ K Q 8 7 6 3</p> <p>♥ A Q 10 8 5</p> <p>♦ 4 2</p> <p>♣</p>
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West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♣	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West led the queen of diamonds and continued with a second diamond, very much against declarer's preference for a switch. Declarer saw that there would be no problem if both majors divided favourably. If trumps were 4-0, he saw that he would need some luck in spades: either spades 3-2 or the hand with four trumps holding four spades as well.

What, he thought, could be done in the more likely scenario where the spades were 4-1 and the hand with the singleton had three trumps? The only possible rescue plan was to try and set up dummy's clubs. So, after ruffing the diamond continuation, declarer cashed the ace of clubs, throwing a spade, then ruffed a club high in hand. After crossing to dummy via the nine of trumps, declarer ruffed another club high. As by now the clubs had proved to be 4-3 and trumps no worse than 3-1, he returned to dummy with the ace of spades and ruffed a third club, thereby establishing two winners in the suit. Next a trump was led to the jack in dummy and then removed West's remaining trump with the king whilst throwing a spade from hand. The ten and nine of clubs provided parking places for his remaining low spades and he had made his contract.

Declarer was pleased to see that the actual layout would have seen six hearts fail if he had attempted to set up his own hand: after drawing two rounds of trumps and playing on spades, West would have ruffed in on the second round

Of course, if clubs had not broken 4-3 then declarer would have had to fall back on the spade suit behaving reasonably.

Do not miss the County Green-Pointed pairs event for the John Armstrong trophy on May 17th. The venue is Merseyside Bridge Centre and entries go to Bernard Kaye. This is one of our major events and it would be good to see as many of you there as possible.

In Hindsight

by Chris Raymond

Playing in the Swiss Pairs at Liverpool BC, this interesting hand came up.

♠ x
♥ 10 9 x x x
♦ Q 10
♣ 10 x x x x

♠ K Q x
♥ A K 8 x
♦ A K x x x
♣ x

West	North	East	South
			1♦
2♠	Pass	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

West's two spade bid is described as weak. Sitting South, three hearts seemed to be the least bad option to continue and my partner felt that his hand had improved enough to attempt game. West opened with the spade ace, then the ace and king of clubs. I ruffed the second club and then played the heart ace which revealed the bad news of all four outstanding trumps with East. So the problem - how to continue? The best option seemed to be to play East to hold three diamonds and three spades and cash the spade king, queen and all three top diamonds to discard the clubs from dummy and thus arrive at this ending:

♠	
♥ 10 9 x x	
♦	
♣	
	♠
	♥ Q J x
	♦
	♣ Q
♠	
♥ K 8	
♦ x x	
♣	

Now when I play a diamond and ruff high, whatever East does he can only score one more trick. Did I get this right? Sadly no as in the course of trying to allow for a 4-2 diamond break, I lost my way, but that is not unusual as my regular partners will testify! If instead West starts with the top clubs without cashing the spade ace, the contract can still be made by cashing the top diamonds to discard dummy's spade and then cross-ruffing for ten tricks.

I cannot see any way to make the contract if East has only two diamonds but if anyone can demonstrate a valid plan or a safer route to ten tricks with the existing layout then I would be happy to buy them a beer.

Merseyside & Cheshire Bridge Association

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All of the club contacts are available on the County website

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

26th Preece Rosebowl (Ladies pairs) BBC

May

7th MBL pairs event MBC

14th Andrew Rosebowl (County Mixed pairs) LBC

17th John Armstrong trophy (GP Swiss pairs) MBC

28th Liverpool Open pairs LBC

June

4th Liverpool Open Teams LBC

11th Jim Davies Swiss teams Heswall BC

25th Bridge4Fun MBC

July

27th-31st British Summer simultaneous pairs clubs

The Eric Howarth Trophy

by David Stevenson

The Eric Howarth teams took place on March 8th at Merseyside BC. The event was won by Babs Matthews, John Farmer, Bill and Joyce White. Daniel Miller, Peter Hall, John and Pauline Rudolf were leading with a match to go, but lost to Liz Commins, David Stevenson, Tracy Capal, Paddy Murphy, which dropped them down to second with Liz's team finishing third.

This hand comes from the match where Liz Commins/David Stevenson faced Julian Merrill/Paul Roberts. Having missed an excellent grand slam on the previous board, Paul found the superb bid of six clubs, which should have got his partnership to best spot. Six clubs cannot be misread, since with clubs he would have doubled four clubs.

Board 3 Dealer South. E/W vul.

♠ 8 7 3

♥ 10 7 6

♦ J 7 6

♣ 9 8 7 3

♠ K J 10 9

♥ Q J 9

♦

♣ A K J 10 5 4

♠ A Q 6 5 4

♥ A K 5 4 2

♦ 5 4 2

♣

♠ 2

♥ 8 3

♦ A K Q 10 9 8 3

♣ Q 6 2

West

North

East

South

3♠

Double

4♣

6♣

Pass

Pass

Pass

3♠ - showed a solid minor with nothing outside

Double - showed a good hand with reasonable spades

4♣ - was pass or correct

6♣ - is a master bid which should have got them to the making grand slam

We were all very impressed and told Paul so. Sadly for N/S 6♣ was cold.