



# County Bulletin

Issue 31

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## Editorial News

Sadly, the County has recently lost three of its nicest players. George Eakin was a regular participant in club and County events as well as the Merseyside League and we are sad to lose a player who was always so charming and easy-going. Ralph Churney was one of our leading and most successful players. There is an article devoted in this issue to his memory. We also lost Ric Dearing a couple of weeks ago and like Ralph he had been a participant in all aspects of Merseyside bridge for longer than most of us can recall. Ric had continued to play despite some recent poor health and will also be very much missed.

### Were you sneaky?

by Bob Pitts

You will recall that in the previous issue I gave you a question about how to handle this.:

Starting with the hand on your left, the opponents bid uncontested to four hearts, via 1♥ - 2♦ - 2♥ - 4♥. Your partner leads the club ten and dummy comes down with: ♠ J 10 5 ♥ A K 5 4 ♦ J 9 8 2 ♣ A Q and your hand is ♠ Q 8 4 2 ♥ 2 ♦ A 10 ♣ K 7 6 5 4 2. Declarer goes into a very long trance, checking your lead methods before winning with the ace, he follows with the eight, draws two rounds of trumps, and exits with the club queen under which he plays the jack and partner follows with the three. So, having won with the king of clubs, what do you do and why?

Your partner's lead of the club ten did not deny the king, so declarer clearly does not mind if your partner wins the second round of clubs. He obviously has a problem in the pointed suits and has a choice between the spade finesse or a correct guess in diamonds and having your partner open one of these suits is what declarer would prefer. Thus you should try to dissuade him from a successful finesse in spades and play back the spade eight. Declarer might now place the spade queen offside and win, planning to endplay your partner.

Here is the full deal:

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

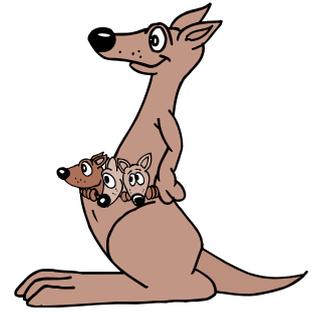
If declarer wins the spade eight and plays the other top honour and tries to throw your partner on lead with the third round of the suit, he will get a nasty shock when you win, and now your switch to the ten of diamonds will give him a nasty guess. He might get it right, but it is always a good idea to put your opponents to as many of these awkward decisions as you can. Even if they get this one correct, your future defensive plays will be treated with suitable respect.

# HAND FROM DOWN UNDER

by Tim Bourke

Dealer South. E/W vul.

Imp scoring



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

| West   | North            | East | South |
|--------|------------------|------|-------|
|        |                  |      | 1♠    |
| Double | 2NT <sup>1</sup> | Pass | 4♠    |
| Pass   | Pass             | Pass |       |

1. Limit raise or better in spades

After a brief but revealing auction, South declared four spades. Because he was worried that leading a plain suit would cost a trick, West started with a trump. This choice and the bidding allowed declarer to place most of the missing high cards on his left. Consequently, there was a danger of losing one heart, one diamond and two clubs.

Declarer won the trump lead in hand and then drew the remaining trumps with dummy's ace. Next he ran the queen of diamonds to West's king. West got off play with a diamond to the jack in dummy. Declarer crossed to his ace of diamonds and continued with the four of hearts from hand. West could not afford to rise with the ace as that would have given declarer two heart tricks and the contract. So, West played the heart jack and the trick was won in dummy with the king.

Declarer returned to hand with a trump to cash the ten of diamonds, throwing a small heart from dummy. West had to win the continuation of the queen of hearts with his ace and found himself in the unenviable position of having to give declarer a ruff-and-discard or lead up to the king of clubs. So the contract rolled home.

## The Chester Bowl

Entries are now being accepted for this popular event. Only 36 pairs can be accommodated so book early, especially if you also want the two course meal (there are some players who enter just for the food).

The event is being held to support the Chester & District Federation of the Blind

Entry is £30.00 a pair for the bridge. Entry forms and details about the food and it's cost are available on the club website or contact

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# Remembering Ralph

by Bob Pitts

We have recently lost one of our very best players. Ralph Churney, who died last month, has been a leading figure within the County for as long as most of us can remember and whilst he had been playing less often recently, but when he did play, his usual charm and sense of humour was, as always, apparent.

He rarely told stories about his successes preferring modestly to mention the good play of others or of his own perceived errors. It was thus not easy to find too many deals to use, but I have a couple for you.

In 1987, Ralph along with Ted Reveley, Roy Dempster, Steve Whittleton, John Hasset and Jeff Morris won the Gold Cup, the major KO teams event in Britain. This qualified them to play in the 1988 Europa Cup, an international event for the winners of similar events in other major bridge-playing European countries.

In the match against Denmark, vulnerable against not, Ralph held ♠ Q 10 9 2 ♥ 9 6 2 ♦ J 6 4 ♣ A K 9. His left-hand opponent opened one heart and Ted overcalled two no-trumps showing the minors. The next hand jumped to four hearts and feeling confident that his partner would have plenty of shape for the call at this vulnerability, Ralph bid five clubs. This proved to be spot on as Ted held ♠ J ♥ void ♦ K 10 9 7 3 2 ♣ Q J 8 7 6 3 and the ace, queen of diamonds were onside doubleton. 8 imps in when the other table result was five hearts doubled two off.

Several of the teams were playing unusual systems, but Ralph and Ted proved that they had done their defensive homework when this arose deal against Sweden:

Dealer West E/W vul.

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

| West                | North           | East                | South           |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Pass                | 1♣ <sup>1</sup> | Pass                | 1♦ <sup>2</sup> |
| Pass                | 1♥ <sup>3</sup> | Double <sup>3</sup> | 1♠              |
| Double <sup>4</sup> | Pass            | Pass                | Pass            |

1. either 9-11 or 17+ hcp
2. 0-7 hcp or strong without a major
3. 'I could have opened 1♥'
4. 'I could have responded 1♠'

Ralph led the heart two. Ted won the trick with the jack and returned a trump to Ralph's queen. Hearts were continued, declarer ruffing the third round to take the losing club finesse. Ted played a club back to dummy and declarer ran the spade jack. Ralph won and now gave Ted a club ruff. The master heart followed with South and West both discarding diamonds. A diamond to the king came next, then another to the ace and a further diamond promoted the spade eight for +800. In the other room N/S had merely conceded -100 in a contract of one no-trump.

**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.

August

29th Northern Bridge League round 2 various

September

9th Ebed simultaneous pairs BBC

12th Northern Bridge League round 3 various

October

3/4th Great Northern Swiss Pairs Leeds

5th-8th BGB simultaneous pairs Clubs

10th Northern Bridge League round 4

11th WBU green-pointed Swiss pairs Northop

18th Chester Bowl (charity pairs) Deva

November

1st Merseyside Cup

## Try to stay awake

*by Paddy Murphy*

This was the final board of the Corwen trophy.....need to focus!

*Dealer West. N/S vul.*

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

| West         | North    | East         | South |
|--------------|----------|--------------|-------|
| <i>Tracy</i> |          | <i>Paddy</i> |       |
| 1♦           | Pass     | 1♥           | 2♠    |
| Pass         | Pass     | Double       | Pass  |
| 3♥           | All Pass |              |       |

Quite a lot of the field were in three diamonds, two or three no-trumps or four hearts, so bringing home the contract would be a good result. The lead was the king of spades to the ace and a club was returned, which I won in hand with the ace. I decided that I should play for hearts to break 4-2 or a stiff honour with South (5-1) so I tried the ace then another heart, which South won. He cashed the queen of spades and continued with the ten. I ruffed this in dummy with the heart queen, North ditching a club. I continued with the king, ace then queen of diamonds pitching my last spade, then the king of clubs before a further diamond which I could ruff with the heart nine. The jack of trumps brought my total to nine tricks and 90% of the matchpoints.

*[The Corwen trophy is the National inter-County pairs event so all of the 103 pairs had already fought their way through their county qualifiers to be there. Paddy and Tracy finished in an excellent 6th place].*

## Events Updates by David Stevenson

### Bill Hughes Simultaneous Pairs

The Bill Hughes Simultaneous Pairs, organised by David Stevenson, was held at the end of June. Having grown over many years from a small Simultaneous Pairs, solely in Merseyside, to now being played in 13 countries, with two heats in Merseyside/Cheshire at Deva BC and Hartford BC. Unlike other Simultaneous Pairs, which are either in favour of a Charity, or more commonly are fundraisers for a bridge organisation, this Simultaneous Pairs is for the players, giving at least 50% of the money collected back in prizes, unlike the 10% to 20% of other Simultaneous Pairs.

Members of this County, Liz Commins and Paddy Murphy, came second overall playing at Colwyn Bay CC with 72.45%, a mere 0.04% behind the winners, Helen Cantwell & Jeanne Anderson from Sale BC in Australia with 72.49%. Full results can be seen at :

<http://www.simpairs.com/default.asp?session=005892>

### President's Cup

Many members of the County probably do not realise that this inter-County event has been run by our County ever since the break-up of the old North-West CBA, many years ago. It started as an Inter-Area event for the NWCBA and developed into an inter-County event after the break-up. It has also developed from being an event for the North West to cover a rather wider area, usually getting between six and nine teams, and is held at various venues around the whole area.

This year it was at Derby, and got an amazing thirteen teams, including three teams that had not played before. This might cause a rethink over venues since some of the venues we use cannot hold the 26 tables this requires. However, we should be very pleased that a Green point event run by our County is so successful.

Our County came fourth. If you want to see full results, including the details of how our own team did, please go to

<http://blakjak.org/president.htm>