



Merseyside & Cheshire Bridge Association



Issue 27

County Bulletin



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Special Bumper Christmas Issue

There is a six page issue for you this time so plenty to read during the holiday. I want to send my thanks to all the people who have contributed to make this the biggest newsletter/bulletin yet; it has been great to have so much material to work with.

Can I wish everyone all the best for the festive season and good luck in all the events you take part in during 2015.

The Deva BC are running a series of EBU Tournament Director courses, starting with Essentials on January 24th. Further sessions are Book Rulings on February 7th, Judgement Rulings on March 21st and finally Assessment on May 31st. There are full details on their website if you wish to sign up.

Routine false card?

by Simon Whitehouse

Occasionally a situation arises where you get a cost-nothing play that might gain you a vital trick, especially playing matchpointed pairs. In round 2 of the Great Northern Swiss pairs we were sat East/West against Richard Winter and Willie Crook, who ultimately finished runners-up in the event. North opened a 12-14 1NT and played in four spades after a routine stayman sequence. I led the heart queen and seeing dummy knew that partner is 'pointless' (as North had opened on only 11, this was not quite true). I therefore could tell that on any sensible line of play there were five club tricks, however there was a chance for some deception. Declarer (Winter) won the heart lead and spurning the diamond ruff just attacked trumps. I won the third round and continued with another heart. He won, drew the last trump with dummy's king and cashed the club ace. I dropped the queen on this and we were rewarded when his next play was to run the club nine to my ten for 83% of the matchpoints instead of 40%. We won the match 15-5.

Swiss Pairs N/S vulnerable Dealer West

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

NORTHERN BRIDGE LEAGUE

by Bob Pitts and Barry Jones

This NBL this season has produced mixed results for our three teams. The A team were second after round one and despite below-par performances in rounds 2 and 4, a good round 3 helped them to comfortably maintain that second place, though well behind winners Manchester 1. The B and C teams had poor starts but played much better as the season wore on. The B's won their round 3 and were second in the final session pulling them up to mid-table. The C team won their final round and that also propelled them up to the middle of their division. Everyone who took part is to be commended.

For the final weekend, I was due to play in the B team with Barry Jones, but a nasty 'bug' laid me out and Mark Weeks stepped in to replace me at only a couple of hours notice (thanks Mark). Mark and Barry played very well and were 3rd out of the 32 pairs in the Butler comparisons. Barry showed me this deal where a slightly thoughtless declarer brought about his own downfall. Over to Barry.

Dealer North. E/W Vul.

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

North opened with a Precision two club bid. After an enquiry from South they reached 3NT to be played by South, with North having shown a stopper in one of the major suits. I started with the heart seven, won in dummy. North played a club to the ace, and I dropped the ten, following with the five when he led back to dummy. He seemed to believe this, going up with the king, with Mark signalling for spades. Declarer continued with a club to my queen. I now played king and another spade and Mark cleared the suit. Declarer crossed to the top heart in dummy to run the clubs, but now ridden with worry that Mark had the diamond ace to go with his established spades, he came down to this ending with dummy on lead and he and I both still to discard on the final club. Look what has happened - he had squeezed himself!! Whatever he threw I could discard in the other suit and take the final two tricks for one off.

	♠ -	
	♥ -	
	♦ 9 7	
	♣ -	
♠ -		♠ 10
♥ J		♥ -
♦ A 10		♦ 8
♣ -		♣ -
	♠ -	
	♥ Q	
	♦ K Q	
	♣ -	

This is just a matter of taking care of entries. The first play in clubs should be to insert the six from the South hand unless Mark discards; only 5 club tricks are needed for the contract. This maintains communications and virtually assures the contract (if Mark has all 4 clubs things get awkward but declarer still has lots of chances and will make any other time).

It is not too early to start thinking about next season. The selectors need a good sized squad to choose from so please let them know if you are interested in playing, even if only for one match. The various divisions cover all standards of play so do not be afraid that you will be out of your depth - come on, YOUR COUNTY NEEDS YOU.

WHY YOU SHOULD NEVER GIVE UP

by Dave Keen

This deal came up in the M&CBA versus Dublin match; Jean and I were sitting North/South

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

West	North	East	South
			1♠ (16+)
1♠	Pass	2♣	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥

East had presumably forgotten we were playing a strong club system & intended 2C as showing spade support and a good hand. This hand is made even more impossible by South thinking that East had clubs!

Lead : C8

Looking at all 4 hands you should lose 1 spade, 1 heart, 2 diamonds and 1 club for 2 down. Several points about playing hopeless contracts :

- your opponents are looking at different cards to you
- opponents can have an aberration
- there may be a distribution you have not thought of
- 'lock up your losers' to give yourself the best chance.
- try to be as misleading as possible

RHO has played in European and World Championships, but he still found a reason to be helpful.

First problem : trick 1, East's Club bid was taken by all as natural - I played small which went 5 Ace - trying to look like a man with AK stiff! The trump King was taken and a spade played back. I won, drew trumps and played another spade (remember I think that clubs are all with East). Next came the ten of diamonds, Q, K and I ducked. So the defence have taken 3 tricks.

Now East started to think, always a dangerous thing to do!

- West could have led the diamond 10 from 10 x, or even singleton, so a diamond looks dangerous
- a spade would be a ruff & discard, might be fatal
- declarer seems to have AK stiff of clubs

So a club hit the deck from East, running round to the J, a club to the K setting up dummy's last C and small heart to the 7 to play the winning club and discard my last diamond for 10 tricks!

Nothing brilliant about the declarer play - just keeping a lid on things until the last possible moment, trying to give the wrong impression about the club suit and hoping the defence now had a different picture to the real one! Sure, East could have done better but at least he was given the chance to slip up! The hand has ethical problems for East (a very ethical player) - he can't assume that "pard does not have 4 clubs because he didn't bid 3C" - his partner's non-alert of 2C must be ignored, he has not intended his 2C bid as natural and must bid and play on the assumption that his partner knows what he intended.

Merseyside & Cheshire Bridge Association*Contacts and information*

Newsletter editor : Bob Pitts

Phone : 01352 771304

E-mail: bob.pitts1@btinternet.com

Richard Alcock (county secretary) :
ralcock@altrad.comJohn Hampson (chairman of selectors) :
john73hampson@btinternet.com

County website : www.mcba.org.uk

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.

January

5th-9th	BGB simultaneous pairs	Clubs
17th/18th	Chester Congress	Deva BC

February

1st	County Trials	MBC
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March

1st	Jean Keen trophy (Ladies teams)	MBC
8th	Eric Howarth trophy (Open GP Teams)	MBC
22nd	Portland Pairs	

April

26th	Preece Rosebowl (Ladies pairs)	BBC
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May

17th	John Armstrong trophy (GP swiss pairs)	MBC
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The Chester Bowl*by Paul Roberts*

In the qualifying round of this year's Chester Bowl, Julian Merrill (sitting North) and I reached six clubs on the hand below. It is probably better not to disclose our auction in case any impressionable youngsters read this article.

♠ A K 8 7

♥ K Q 8 7 4

♦ Q

♣ 9 4 3

♠ Q 10 6 5 4 3

♥ 10 5 3 2

♦ J

♣ 6 2

♠ J 2

♥ J 9

♦ K 9 8 4 3

♣ K 10 8 5

♠ 9

♥ A 6

♦ A 10 7 6 5 2

♣ A Q J 7

The opening lead was the diamond jack, covered perforce in dummy. After some reflection East played the king and I won with the ace. I continued with a small diamond, ruffed by West with the club six and over-ruffed in the dummy. A small trump was played from the dummy and thankfully the jack from my hand held the trick. A spade to the ace permitted another club to the eight, queen and a discard of a small spade from West. So, what do I do now? With a certain trump loser I need an extra trick from the side suits. As my right-hand opponent has shown up with ten cards in the minors, plus at least one spade, the major suit length must be on my left and so the plan must be to pressurize him in the end-game. I cashed the club ace and exited with my last club. A spade came back which I won with the king. A small heart to the ace allowed me to cash the squeeze card, the diamond ten. In the four card ending, West could not keep three hearts plus the spade winner.

Main final : 1. Julian Merrill, Paul Roberts 2. Ken Hassell, Ian Kane 3. Jean Hand, Peter Swingler

Consolation event N/S Frank Salt, Jim Stambridge E/W Karen Jones, Barbara Eastabrook

Don't forget the Chester Congress on 17th/18th January

Defensive problem

by Dave Shaw

The opposition have the unopposed auction (starting with North) 1♦ - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♠ - 2NT - 3♠ - 5♣ - 6♣. Dummy goes down and as East you see partner has led the heart ace. You give correct count and he switches to a spade, won by the ace in dummy. Declarer now leads the king of diamonds from the dummy. Do you cover?

North

♠ A 6
♥ Q 10 6 4
♦ K Q J 10 7
♣ K 3

♠ K 5

♥ K 8 7 2

♦ A 6 5 4 2

♣ 9 7

East

Solution : the contract is going off regardless of how many diamonds declarer holds provided he has five spades as indicated by his bidding. Play low and keep playing low as long as declarer continues with the queen, jack and ten! Say declarer is 5-1-0-7 shape; in that case partner can ruff the fourth round and he also has to lose a spade. If he is 5-1-1-6 you can also take it two off by winning the ace and cashing the spade king, but if he is void in diamonds you have let the contract through. If you get this right, you and partner can congratulate each other on a fine defence (partner's spade switch is the only one to beat it).

I will own up. At the table, as West I led a trump and we wrote down minus 1370.

The South hand was ♠ J 10 8 7 3 ♥ 3 ♦ void ♣ A Q J 10 8 6 2

Mollo's Legacy

by the Editor

One of the late Victor Mollo's best characters was the Hideous Hog, who in the stories seemed to be able to conjure tricks out of thin air. In one episode he defended by trying to look like a man with a side suit singleton in order to get declarer to mis-play the trump suit. Well I can tell you that there are players out there who can be just as magical. Look at this deal from the final stages of the recent Italian Mixed teams championship.

♠ A Q J 7 6 4 2

♥

♦ 7 6 4

♣ 9 5 4

♠ 3

♥ A Q J 7 4 3 2

♦ 9 8 3

♣ Q 2

♠ K 9 8

♥ K 8

♦ A K Q 10 2

♣ J 10 6

♠ 10 5

♥ 10 9 6 5

♦ J 5

♣ A K 8 7 3

West opened three hearts, North overcalled three spades and East raised to the heart game. North began with the spade ace and having won the trick had to consider how to beat the contract. Perhaps South could now ruff a spade, but she would still need to hold the club ace and king to defeat four hearts. If South does hold the ace and king of clubs though, perhaps she had a four card heart holding that could be promoted? So, North (Niccolo Fossi) switched to the club five. South took the king and continued with the ace, North playing the four in order to look like a man with a doubleton. It is hardly surprising that declarer went astray. When South played a third round of clubs, West ruffed high and now found that a trump loser was inevitable (the entries are not quite there for a trump reduction). Quite a defence by North - not only pretending to have a potential ruffing value, but also imagining a trump when he did not hold one. I am pretty sure that Mollo's books must have been translated into Italian.

IT REPEATS

by David Stevenson

When I was young I read the wonderful book by Clyde E Love on squeezes, including learning about the wonderful triple repeating squeeze, where one player is squeezed in three suits, concedes a trick, and is then squeezed again for a two trick gain. Fifty years later I have never seen this at the table until the one day event at Northop Hall.

Dealer West E/W vul.

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

The auction was brief :

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♠	2♥
Pass	2NT	All Pass	

Playing with Liz Commins I led the three of diamonds. Declarer, Julian Merrill, won with the queen and played a heart to the king. He then ran the ten of hearts to Liz's jack. She returned a diamond and we cleared the suit.

In hand with the diamond king, Julian ran the spade queen and wondered what to do next. He eventually led the queen of clubs from the wrong hand but no-one worried. I won this trick and cashed a diamond to reach the following position, having won four tricks and Julian having won four:

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

Now the last diamond triple squeezes South. If he discards a heart Liz has two heart winners, if a club she has two club winners. Julian chose to discard the ace of spades, Liz discarding a heart, and now the spade king squeezed dummy again for four off! Dummy discarded a club, Liz a heart, and her hand was good!

So my first triple repeating squeeze after fifty years was in defence!