



Merseyside & Cheshire Bridge Association County Bulletin

Issue 28

FEBRUARY 2015

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Editorial

As the New Year gets going, the selectors will be looking for pairs to put themselves forward to represent the County in various matches, especially in the Northern Bridge League competition. We need players at all levels.

Please have a look at the article on page 4 from the Chairman of selectors and if you can offer to join in, even if for only one event, it would be greatly appreciated.



Tollemache hand

by Dave Keen

Whilst our County team did not qualify for the Tollemache (National teams-of eight) final this season, it has to be said that it is a very tough event, with all of the best players in the country taking part and only two from each 8/9 team section getting through to the final. The editor twisted my arm for an interesting bidding hand' so here is one where Jean and I managed to reach the correct contract when only a quarter of the field were getting there.

♠ A K Q 6 2

♥ 3

♦ K Q 5 3

♣ J 7 6

♠ J 8 7

♥ A K 6 5

♦ J 8

♣ A K 5 2

1♠ (five card suit 10-15 hcp)

2♦ (natural)

3♥ (singleton heart and 5-1-4-3)

4NT (maximum hand with working cards)

6♠

2♣ (random game force)

2♠ (natural and forcing of course)

3NT (a slam try)

5♥ (two key cards)

Natural methods should get there via 1♠ - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♥ (fourth suit forcing) - 3♣ (showing the shape) - 3♠ (agrees suit and is forcing - you do play this as forcing after a fourth suit bid don't you?) - 4♦ (cue bid) and now responder should be taking control and checking on key cards. (*This helped us to gain 50 imps on the board The event is scored by cross-imping all 4 tables in the match*).

On January 24th, the Deva BC held the first of it's four TD training sessions. The day, run by Mike and Sarah Amos, was a great success. There were players there from Deva, Wirral, Alsager, Brighthouse, Oswestry and The Walls bridge clubs. There is still space on the remaining courses - the next one is soon, February 7th.

Waterworth Cup

by Alan Stephenson

The Waterworth Cup is the major pairs event of the County and was won in 2014 by Mike Amos and Pete Foster. Stuart Mathews and I played the following hand towards the end of the first session against the eventual winners and it nicely shows that at pairs you can get a good score even if you miss the optimum contract. Pete was sitting West, Mike East, Stu South and myself North.

	♠ 10 8 6 5 3		
	♥ Q 9 7 3		
	♦ 8 4		
	♣ 9 2		
♠ A 2		♠ K Q J 9 4	
♥ A 8 5		♥ K 10	
♦ A K Q J 7 3		♦ 6 2	
♣ 10 7		♣ K 8 6 4	
	♠ 7		
	♥ J 6 4 2		
	♦ 10 9 5		
	♣ A Q J 5 3		
West	North	East	South
1♦	Pass	1♠	2♣
3♣	Pass	3NT	All Pass

The two club call was a typical matchpoint bid to ensure what was likely to be the best lead for the defence if EW bought the contract, as seemed probable, and partner ended up on lead. Mike and Pete never quite got to grips with the hand with twelve tricks in no-trumps (and spades despite the bad break) guaranteed as long as East got to declare. Perhaps Pete could have tried a raise to 4NT which would have seen Mike happy to co-operate, with his undisclosed extra values and strong spades. Still it's hard to be too critical especially at pairs and in view of the fact Mike and Pete won. The play was interesting and I heard a number of people discussing the hand after the competition and commenting that the three pairs in 3NT must have been lucky to make thirteen tricks and that North must have fallen from grace and pitched a spade. At our table Mike showed good technique and made thirteen tricks with no mis-defence unless you call not cashing the club ace at trick one a mis-defence. After a heart lead from Stu to the five, queen and king, Mike ran all of the diamonds and with one still to cash this was the position :

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

As the last diamond was cashed North was forced to discard a heart to keep the spade guard, Mike now discarded the spade four and now the run of four rounds of spades saw South succumb, not being able to hold on to the club ace and his heart stop, so the eight of hearts was the thirteenth trick and a 57% board for East-West. I felt particularly sorry for Rekha Gatfield and Ian Stanley who had found the ace of clubs lead at trick one which avoided conceding the overtrick against 6NT and suffered an outright bottom anyway. I suppose that's pairs!

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.com

John 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.

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
30th/31st	Match v Dublin	Deva BC

June

11th	Jim Davies Swiss teams	Heswall BC
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Report from the Chairman of Selectors

The County teams had a mixed year in 2014. The results for those that may have missed them from the County website are:-

The Presidents Cup, played in Carlisle on 28/06/14M & CBA were 4th

The match against Derby was lost

The Northern Bridge League final results were

A Division.....2nd to the winners Manchester

B Division.....4th to winners Lancashire

C Division....4th to winners Yorkshire SE

The Tollemache qualifier played on November 22nd.....M & CBA were 6th in their group.

My thanks to all the members who have represented us during the last twelve months and I hope whatever the results they have enjoyed the matches. A special thanks to Mark Weeks who stepped in at 9.30am on the match day to play in Yorkshire, when a team member had been taken ill. He played with Barry Jones, not a regular partner and they finished as our leading County pair on that session - many thanks Mark.

The selectors will be meeting in the next month or so to pick teams for the coming season. Before then I will be sending out emails to players asking for your interest and availability.

If you are missed out from my mail round or know of anybody who might be interested in playing for any of the various County teams please get in touch.

We really need 'new blood' at all levels and especially from the larger clubs like Deva and MBC. There is no commitment beyond the match for which you are selected and I'm sure you will enjoy a day out playing against opponents of your standard from other northern Counties. So please consider giving it a try.

The email I send will include all the relevant dates for this coming year.

John Hampson, Chairman of selectors

John73hampson@btinternet.com,

01270524525

Funny Hand

by Peter Hall

I played in the Northern End of Year Congress with Nigel Marlow, a good friend of mine from Berks & Bucks. We managed to be 3rd in the Open Pairs and 4th out of 62 pairs in the Swiss event and upon spotting this the editor pressed me for anything interesting.

There was one hand that I thought was particularly amusing when you look at the ups and downs of it - especially afterwards looking at it over a pint. On the first board of an 8 board Swiss match we double them in four hearts making, a clear bottom as there was no reason to do this. On the next board you hold as North :

♠ 10 6 4 2 ♥ K 9 8 4 ♦ K 9 ♣ 10 7 2 and the bidding goes

West	North	East	South
		1NT (15-17)	Pass
3♥ (slam try)	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♥	All Pass

Your lead.....well, it doesn't look like they have the diamond ace does it? So, you lead the diamond king and all looks good when dummy goes down with ♠ A K Q 8 ♥ 7 2 ♦ 8 7 2 ♣ A Q 9 3. Thanks for those nice cue bids opponents! Clearly when you put partner in with the diamond ace, you can ruff the third round and they are going to be one off - **feels like it should be a great score!**

But partners aren't there to do what you expect (this is bridge after all) so he overtakes your lead with the ace and returns another diamond, which declarer wins with the queen. Nobody else is going to make a trick with that card, now this feels like a bottom when declarer claims 11 tricks, just conceding the trump king and the match feels lost after just 2 boards. But you battle on and surprisingly win the match, despite this second successive bottom.....or was it? When you look at the scores in the bar you find you got 67% on this board. How can that be? When you see, you can't help laughing. Almost all declarers scored two overtricks because all the diamonds go away immediately on the spades, so your diamond lead could not be a failure whatever partner did to it. Well barring an immediate revoke, he deserves credit for avoiding that at least.

The full hand

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

NewinBridge.com has just launched a bidding app for smartphones and tablets. If you are interested contact Jan van Cleeff jvcleeff@xs4all.nl

Another bridge app is available from FunBridge which is run by Valentin Foncez. You can get more information from www.funbridge.com and blog.funbridge.com