



Merseyside & Cheshire Bridge Association

County Bulletin

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Editor's News

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One way of judging the success of a County is by looking at the results of their teams in matches against other counties. Our clubs primarily offer a diet of pairs events as that is what the majority of members prefer, but playing teams is essential to our chances of being successful in the Northern League and the Tollemache Cup and the only regular county wide competition is the Merseyside League. The League has been in existence for 68 years but is gradually losing teams and may have to re-think it's format. One way in which you can support the County is to play in the League, so if you are considering taking part do not hesitate or if your team has folded in the last couple of years get in touch as there are others who are in the same position.

Contact Earl O'Keeffe as soon as possible - earlokeeffe@yahoo.co.uk

Garden Cities Regional Qualifier

by Bob Pitts

Once again, the Deva club were our County representatives in this EBU inter-club teams of eight competition. We travelled to Bradford hopefully, having been one of the two qualifiers to the national final from last year's Northern heat with three-quarters of our team remaining the same.

On the very first board of the day against Sheffield I held ♠ 10 4 2 ♥ Q 10 9 8 4 3 ♦ K 7 4 ♣ 9 and opened with a weak two hearts. There was a double on my left and a positive three clubs on my right. LHO now tried three hearts over which my partner Barry Jones passed (I alerted this as we play Rosencranz doubles in this situation - a pass denies a heart honour). Three no trumps on my right was followed by three passes. As I had more help for partner's defensive prospects in diamonds than in spades, I began with the diamond four. This turned out rather well when Barry turned up with **seven** diamonds to the Q 10 plus the ace and queen of clubs sat over dummy's king. My diamond king was unblocked under dummy's ace on the second round of the suit so Barry had the pleasure of taking all eight of our defensive tricks! In fact the opposition were lucky; firstly they were not vulnerable so were only -200 rather than -400 and also had the queen of clubs been in my hand the good five club contract reached by Julian Merrill and Paul Roberts, who were the East-West pair in our section, would have brought in a bundle of imps. As it was we had to settle for just +4 imps (the results were flat when played by our other four-some)

Soon after partner passes and the opposition bid 1♣ - 1♦ - 1♠ -1NT - 3♣ - 4♣ and you have to lead from this collection ♠ Q 9 8 5 ♥ 7 5 3 ♦ A 10 9 ♣ K 6 3. Now it sounds like a trump lead might be best in case dummy has club shortage, but it is not routine. After all, partner may have a heart trick and you might get 2 trumps to go with your diamond ace. Thus a heart was selected. Sadly for my LHO this allowed me to get home as I held ♠ A K J 4 3 ♥ K 9 2 ♦ void ♣ A J 10 9 8 and dummy was ♠ 10 2 ♥ A 10 6 4 ♦ Q J 7 6 3 2 ♣ 7. I got two top hearts, the club ace and two club ruffs in dummy plus all five spades in hand as I could ruff three diamonds.

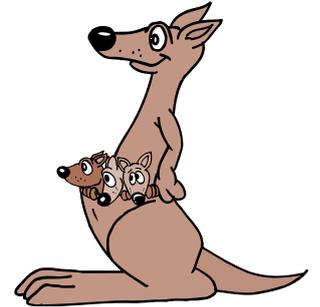
These two boards helped us to beat Yorkshire's representatives, but a loss to Nottinghamshire, then wins v Cumbria and Lancashire left us needing a good win in the final round against Manchester (who usually win the Northern heat). However it was not to be and we merely finished fourth out of the six teams - roll on next year.

HAND FROM DOWN UNDER

by Tim Bourke

Dealer North. Both vul.

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



West	North	East	South
	1NT	3♥	3♠
Pass	4♦	Pass	4NT ¹
Pass	5♣ ²	Pass	6♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Roman Key Card Blackwood

2. 0 or 3 key cards

West led the four of hearts. Declarer was delighted to see the dummy as twelve tricks would always be there if the diamonds could be played for three tricks. After taking the opening lead with dummy's ace of hearts, declarer cashed the king, queen and jack of trumps. After the three top trumps in hand, declarer cashed the three top clubs throwing a diamond from dummy. East's heart discards on the back winners was a small problem, suggesting that the diamonds might not break 3-2.

A diamond was led towards the dummy in case West was void in the suit. After both defenders followed with low cards to this trick, declarer could count East as having started with either 0=7=4=2 or 0=8=3=2. The ace of trumps reduced everyone to four cards. On the basis of the four of hearts being either a singleton or from four-two doubleton, the only unknown was the location of the two: if East had kept two hearts higher than the heart deuce, he could have at most two diamonds remaining: if that were the case, declarer planned to continue with the ace and another diamond, establishing the ten of diamonds as the twelfth trick with the four of trumps as the entry to cash it.

If East had kept the equivalent of either a singleton king of hearts or the King-two, declarer had a strategy in mind to cope: he would lead the three of heart from dummy and discard a diamond from hand. As a result, either the three of heart would win or the five of hearts would be established as a winner for a second diamond discard. So, no matter what East chose to do in such an ending, declarer would have made five trumps, two heart, two diamonds and three clubs for a total of 12 tricks.

A Hand from the Higson Cup Finals

by Dave Keen

♠ A 10
♥ A Q 6 3
♦ A K Q 5
♣ A 7 4

♠ K Q 9 6 4 3
♥ J 9
♦ J 7 3
♣ 6 3

We reached the good six spade contract and West led the king of clubs. With a 3-2 trump break we have twelve tricks on top, draw trumps, cash four rounds of diamonds discarding a club and make all the tricks if the heart king is well-placed. So, we win the club ace, play the ace of spades and another to the king – West shows out! We have a club loser on the loose and a nasty trump situation! Your plan?

That club loser has to go and that means that East needs to have four diamonds. We cash four rounds of the suit discarding the club loser and East follows all the way (I always said that Justin Hackett is a nice guy :-)).

The situation is :

♠
♥ A Q 6 3
♦
♣ 7 4

♠ Q 9 6 4
♥ J 9
♦
♣

Now the contract is cold! Your plan? I hope you spotted it – the heart finesse is just an illusion! Ruff a club, play a heart to the Ace(!) and ruff a club. Your relevant cards are :

♠
♥ Q 6 3

♠ Q 9
♥ J

Now just exit with the jack of hearts and your spades must both win – known in the trade as a trump coup, but just common-sense card-play. Result, 1430 at both tables, played the same way – and, yes, the heart king was onside *****!

The Higson Cup is a playoff event in the Manchester League. Teams play through knockout rounds earlier in the season and the survivors qualify for the finals day in mid-April.

Don't forget that the Jim Davies Swiss teams takes place on June 8th at Heswall Hall. Best to book a place in advance for this popular event.

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.

June

7th	Liverpool Open Pairs	LBC
8th	Jim Davies Swiss teams	Wirral BC
25th	Preece Rosebowl (Ladies pairs)	Deva BC
27th	Bill Hughes simultaneous pairs	Deva BC

July

8th	Northern Bridge League round 1	
15th	President's Cup	Manchester BC
18th	Liverpool Open Teams	LBC

August

19th	Northern Bridge League round 2	
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September

9th	Northern Bridge League round 3	
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LADY MILNE 2017

by Barry Jones

The Lady Milne Trophy is the Bridge Home Internationals event for Ladies Teams. It takes place over one weekend with teams from England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland taking part. A sixth team, from the home federation, is also eligible to take part. This year Wales being the home nation they were able to field a WBU team as well.

The weekend of 21st to 23rd April saw the event being held at the Ramada Plaza Hotel in Wrexham. I had been asked to captain the Wales Ladies and an eventful weekend saw England victorious but only just. They lost their last match heavily to my team with Scotland defeating a good Northern Ireland team and closing in fast.

Taken from the final set against England where Wales were leading by 49-5 imps after the first sixteen boards the hand below shows the kind of thoughts that went through my mind while watching each hand over the weekend on BBO. This healthy 44 imp lead could easily disappear and nine of the final sixteen boards had been played with England, making a comeback (leading 27-21) in this set.

Dealer East Game All

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

On this hand Val Kennewell and Margaret Lane were North-South for Wales against Heather Bakhshi and Claire Robinson, East-West for England. As you can see, six clubs is a lovely, unbeatable contract but this board alone could result in a 16 imp swing out if all went wrong which could give England a lead of 43-21 with six boards to go. Watching on BBO these were my thoughts and emotions as the bidding progressed :

West	North	East	South
		2♥	Double ¹
Pass	3♥ ²	Pass	4♣ ³
Pass	4♠ ⁴	Pass	5♦ ⁵
Pass	6♣ ⁶	Pass	Pass ⁷
Pass			

1. "Oh no! Where are we going to end up?"
2. "Phew. At least that sets a game force."
3. "Yes! We may be on our way to the slam."
4. "Oh No!. This could be passed... We may miss the slam."
5. After about two or three minutes... "Yes! We are on our way again. But wait, what if Val thinks this agrees spades? What if she thinks Ace and King of hearts are good enough for six no-trumps with her good hand? Both of these contracts are one off! Argh!!! I need a drink!"
6. After another two minutes... "Yes!. We made it to the excellent slam. But wait... Why is Margaret thinking... Oh no, she going to convert to six spades? Don't do it! It's not pairs!!!"
7. "Phew! Thank goodness!"

During this one sequence I now knew how the saying "I was having kittens..." came about.

No effort in the play but what would happen in the other room?

West	North	East	South
<i>M Pierce</i>	<i>Draper</i>	<i>C Pierce</i>	<i>Smith</i>
		2♦	Pass
2♥	2♠	Pass	4♥
Pass	4♠	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♥	Pass	5♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

After a multi two diamond opening, two very experienced England internationals had FOUR calls EACH but both failed to bid their five card club suit and the excellent slam was missed. Anyone for a 'Leaping Michaels' 4♣ showing 5/5+ spades and clubs with the North hand? Yet another 12 imp gain for Wales.

The remaining six boards saw yet another 23 imps of swing with Wales just edging it. The final result was a convincing 97-45 imp win (17.69-2.31 VP) for Wales and 'Engerlund' had been defeated on St George's day.

I did not have to play a single hand but was exhausted after watching hands like this all weekend. Believe me, it is much easier to play than be a captain.

The County Ladies Pairs event for the Preece Rosebowl will take place on JUNE 25th.

It will be held at the Deva Bridge Club. Entry only £10.00 pp inc. a meal at halftime

Entries please to Liz Stevenson liz1@blakjak.org