



Merseyside & Cheshire Bridge Association

County Newsletter

Issue 2

OCTOBER 2010

A Message from the Editor

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Thank you to everyone who contacted me about the revival of this publication. It was very heartening to receive so much positive feedback. Of course, for the resurrection to be successful I need information, articles, amusing stories and lots of local results from all of you out there. Please help by making a contribution; I need more of your news and views.

I am grateful to Bill Niccol who upon receipt of issue 1, immediately put fingers to keyboard and sent in an article about this year's Scarborough Congress. Also, David Stevenson has offered to answer any queries on the laws that you might have, so don't be shy and email me with any problems that don't need an immediate ruling and you will get a definitive answer from our own European Bridge League director.

On page 4 you will find conventions corner, a regular feature that I hope you will help with by sending me requests for conventions you want explaining and letting me have details of agreements that you have found a great asset to your partnership.

County Voucher

Each year the EBU issues one free voucher to the County to be awarded at their discretion to a member who in their opinion has in some way contributed significantly to furthering bridge within the County.

It entitles the holder to one free entry to an EBU tournament up to the value of the Autumn Congress entry for the current season.

If you have anyone who you feel is deserving of this award, please contact County Secretary Angus Clark with your nomination (aandsclark@aol.com)

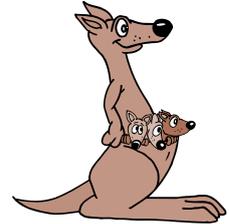
Northern Counties League

Each of the 3 divisions have now completed their 4 rounds of matches. The C team have been unable to find the division winning form of last year and ended up a disappointing last place out of the 8 teams in their section over the whole season. The B team have also struggled this season and sadly they were also finished at the foot of the table. The main focus of attention was on the A team, who after an excellent 3rd round, lay in second place in their division 6 vp ahead of Yorkshire. Having not finished higher than third in previous years, they were keen to cement that spot, with an outside hope of the title in the unlikely event of leaders Manchester having a very bad day. In fact it was Merseyside & Cheshire who had the bad day, but Yorkshire were also off form and we managed to narrowly cling on the second spot.

The selectors are keen to get more players involved in these matches. As can be seen from the above report, some new blood would certainly not go amiss. If you have any desire to represent your County, even if only once or twice a season, do get in touch with the Chief Selector and also try to attend the trials in February. If you think that your game is not up to representative standard, you might be pleasantly surprised!

A HAND FROM DOWN UNDER

By Tim Bourke



Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1 ♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	4 ♠
All Pass			

Making a contract by forcing the defenders to choose ‘their poison’ is always very satisfying. To do this to your opponents you need to put one of them on play at a point where they can only make a lead that is to your advantage; this is called an endplay. On this deal, the bidding was brief. North’s two no trump was a Jacoby game-forcing raise in spades. South’s leap to game promised a minimum hand without a shortage, typically some 5-3-3-2, or perhaps 5-4-2-2, shape. West led the jack of clubs, taken in dummy with the ace. Declarer drew the trumps in two rounds and then finessed the queen of diamonds. West took this with the king and exited with a second club. Eventually declarer had to play the heart suit himself and lost three tricks in the process. “It was on either the diamond finesse or the same defender holding both heart honours. Unlucky,” offered declarer. North was not impressed. “All you had to do was draw trumps and play off your club winners. Then you should play the ace of diamonds followed by the queen. This gives up the chance of a successful finesse in diamonds, but it guarantees the contract! It will not matter whether it is East or West who holds the king of diamonds, the defender who wins with the diamond king will have two unpalatable choices. He can open the heart suit, ensuring that you only lose two tricks in the suit. Otherwise, he leads a minor suit allowing you to ruff in one hand and discard a heart from the other; in either case you would lose only two hearts and a diamond.”

SCARBOROUGH 2010 by Bill Niccol

The Scarborough Congress in late July is one of my favourites. I would heartily recommend it to every M&CBA member. The standard varies from the club player to the near world - class, but everyone feels at home and the atmosphere is genuinely non-threatening! Give me a call if you would like a lift. I will be there for sure next year.

In terms of being a "bridge professional", Jason Hackett meets the criteria perfectly. Accurate, quiet, polite and a great dummy player (please read on!) I had the pleasure of playing against him in the pairs. It is always some consolation to lose to the eventual winners and he and Mike Bell duly took the plaudits. Our match was a close affair. We had a good early board when their transfer responses to an opening 1club bid backfired. After a start of 1♣ - Pass - 1♥ (showing spades) I was able to double showing hearts. We then competed to 3♥, which caused Jason to eventually finish in 3♠ one down (I had KJ109 of trumps!) John Armstrong always used to say that the key to success was to have agreements. Even if not the best agreement, it is important to have them about different situations. I would recommend that your partnership has the agreement that if you double a transfer bid you are showing the suit – as in the example above.

Jason did not take long to exact his revenge – with interest.

West	North	East	South
1NT	2♦	Pass	2♠
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass

The auction needs some explaining. I opened a 12-14 no-trump and Mike Bell's 2♦ bid showed a long major. Jason's 2♠ bid announced some sort of heart fit if partner had hearts, otherwise 2♠ was high enough. My partner, John Gladders, of Whitley Bay, decided to pass then double. How would you interpret this? Following the principle of doubling transfer suits to show the suit called, I knew John didn't have diamonds. With hearts and clubs (5/4 or better) he could have bid 2NT showing 2 places to play. Therefore he has a balanced hand, happy to defend. Yes, but not with Jason at the helm!

North (Mike)

♠ K Q J 10 9 6
♥ K 9 4
♦ J 6
♣ J 5

West (Bill)

♠ A 3 2
♥ A 5 2
♦ Q 8 5 3
♣ K 10 9

East (John)

♠ 7 4
♥ J 7 6 3
♦ A 7 4
♣ A 8 7 6

♠ 8 5
♥ Q 10 8
♦ K 10 9 2
♣ Q 4 3 2

I led the Ace of trumps and another. Jason did not take long. He drew the outstanding trump then led the Jack of Diamonds. John played low in tempo, but Jason immediately then banged the King down! (This follows Zia's law that if they don't play it, they ain't got it!). We continued to give him nothing in the play and he was left to negotiate the heart suit. No problem! King from dummy ducked then a successful finesse of the Jack. Jason's double dummy line of play made a huge difference in the match. All he really knows is that I haven't got both top clubs – as presumably I would be likely to lead one. Also that John has about a 10 count. So how come he played double dummy? Don't ask me, but bring your buckets and spades next year!

Merseyside & Cheshire Bridge Association

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Latest Results

The Merseyside Bridge League season kicked off with a 2 session Swiss teams event. The runaway winners were Dusty Millers Blue who won all of their matches comfortably.

Congratulations to Bernard Kaye, who with partner David Tobias of Manchester, won the pairs event at the Bolton Congress in early September

The Merseyside BC Anniversary teams event was won by Joan King, Gill O'Neill, David Howe and Chris Whaley.

David Stevenson and Peter Kaufmann were winners of the teams event at the NI Spring Congress with teammates Robert Burns and Ian Lindsay.

David was back in Northern Ireland for the Autumn Congress, partnering Liz Commins, and finishing 2nd in the teams with Ciara Burns (NI) and Liz McGowan (Scotland)

David & Liz were also successful in the Isle of Man Congress, winning the pairs event.

The North Wales Autumn Swiss Pairs was dominated by players from the Deva BC. Paul Roberts and David Flacks won, closely followed by Bob Pitts and Simon Whitehouse 2vp behind with Arthur and Louise Orme a mere 1vp further back.

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.

October		
17 th	Chester Bowl – charity pairs	Deva BC
November		
14 th	Waterworth Cup (open pairs)	Merseyside BC
15 th	'Children in Need' sim. pairs	Merseyside BC
20 th /21 st	Tollemache Qualifier	Daventry
27 th /28 th	Llangollen Swiss Teams	Llangollen
December		
5 th	Merseyside Cup (swiss teams)	Merseyside BC
28 th -30 th	EBU Year End Congress	Blackpool/London
January 2011		
8 th /9 th	Manchester Congress	Renaissance Hotel
10 th /11 th /12 th	BGB simultaneous pairs	Clubs (MBC 10 th)
15 th /16 th	Chester Congress	Deva BC
28 th	M&CBA Executive meeting	Merseyside BC
February		
6 th	County Trials	Merseyside BC
13 th	Merseyside & Deeside Cup	Merseyside BC
20 th	Jean Keen Trophy	Merseyside BC
March		
10 th	Charity Challenge	Merseyside BC
13 th	Eric Howarth GP Teams	Deva BC
27 th	Portland Pairs	various venues
April		
17 th	Charity Teams	Merseyside BC

Contacts and information

MBC : www.merseybridge.org.uk

LBC : email jo-rogerarnold@talktalk.net

Deva BC : www.bridgewebs.com/deva

Angus Clark (county secretary) : aandsclark@aol.com

Dave Keen (chief selector) : email admin@mcba.org.uk

County website : www.mcba.org.uk

Conventions Corner

A regular feature to help explain popular agreements

PASS or CORRECT

Your partner opens 3NT showing a long solid minor and you hold ♠ 9 8 2 ♥ K Q J 2 ♦ 6 4 3 ♣ 5 3 2. Clearly you do not want to play in 3NT as the defence can cash a lot of tricks in spades and whichever minor partner does not have. The best bid is to respond 4C and partner will *pass* this if he holds a club suit or *correct* to 4D if that is his long suit. This is the way a 'pass or correct' bid works - it is used when partner has made a conventional bid where he holds a long suit (or suits) that is undefined.

This principle can also be useful in other bidding areas. Let us say you hold ♠ 6 5 ♥ K 10 9 2 ♦ Q 9 8 6 4 ♣ 4 3. The player on your left opens with a strong club and partner doubles to show either both majors, or both minors, and third hand passes. You should jump to 2H, as you are happy to play in that contract if partner has the majors (in which case he will *pass*) and you are prepared to commit your side to the 3 level if he has both minors (if he bids 3C you will of course *correct* to 3D). However, don't try this if partner is the sort to bid over strong club openings on rubbish (e.g. with 2 weak 4 card suits in a balanced hand).