

Welsh dragon passes on

By Tom Townsend

Dealer East
Vulnerability North-South

♠ 6 4										
♥ A 9 8 2										
♦ 8 4 3										
♣ K 10 4 3										
<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center; width: 40px; height: 40px;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ A J 10 9 8 5 3
	N									
W		E								
	S									
	♥ J 6 5									
	♦ A J 2									
	♣ none									

West	North	East	South
pass	2♣(1)	1♠	1NT
pass	double(2)	3♠	pass
pass	pass	pass	3NT
	pass	pass	pass

- (1) Stayman, looking for 4-4 hearts
(2) For take-out

Contract 3NT
Declarer South
Opening Lead ♠7

THE Camrose starts tonight on RealBridge, free to watch with a half hour delay. With Covid issues far and wide, the move to online was inevitable. Details on the BGB and home nation websites.

One regular combatant we'll miss is Filip Kurbalija, who died last week. Capped 55 times for Wales in the Camrose series, he was 67. Here Filip was South, playing in the Spring Fours. This was one of his favourite events. He won it in 1990, with Peter Goodman, Patrick Jourdain and Adrian Thomas, and again in 2008, a much tougher proposition, seeded 28 with Tim Rees, Ian Pagan and Chris Jagger.

Can you beat his 3NT as East, sitting over the dummy? West leads the ♠7 to your ♠A. Kurbalija drops the ♠Q. Your lead to trick two.

Kurbalija worked as Financial Analyst for the Welsh Assembly, played in the Welsh Rugby Sevens in his youth, and was a dedicated fan of Nottingham Forest. He said his wedding day to Diane, with whom he played for the Welsh Seniors, was "the happiest of his life"; he even received a congratulatory telegram from Brian Clough.

Filip adopted a rigorous, objective approach to bridge, which put many of his professional opponents to shame. His bidding systems were modern and comprehensive, fully documented to avoid misunderstanding. He was a tough bridge competitor and true sportsman.

Did you play back a spade, to clear your long suit? So did East. This was the layout:

♠ 6 4										
♥ A 9 8 2										
♦ 8 4 3										
♣ K 10 4 3										
♠ 7										
♥ 10 4 3										
♦ K 10 9 6 5										
♣ J 8 7 2										
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	N									
W		E								
	S									
	♥ J 6 5									
	♦ A J 2									
	♣ none									
♠ K Q 2										
♥ K Q 7										
♦ Q 7										
♣ A Q 9 6 5										

The Cardiff man won, laid down ♣A, and took a marked finesse of the ♣10. Three more clubs and four hearts made 10 tricks.

In the replay, South routinely dropped the ♠2 at trick one, betraying his double stop. East promptly switched to the ace and Jack of diamonds; West cashed his suit for down two. Great deceptive play by Filip. RIP.

Table One 3NT plus one, N/S +630
Table Two 3NT off two, N/S -200