

GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2018-19

May-June-July 2019

PROGRAMME

There are two months remaining in the summer season, where we have roughly alternate sessions of Summer Pairs and Summer Teams, dates being-

- **Pairs** : 8th, 22nd and 29th July, 12th and 26th August
- **Teams** : 1st and 15th July, 5th and 19th August.

The game on 22nd July is special – it is part of the EBU Simultaneous Pairs (the table money is therefore £7pp but you gain hand commentaries, scoring across the country and bundles of Master Points).

COMING COUNTY EVENTS

There is just time to get yourself organised for the joint GCBA-HCBA Green Point events at Ross on Wye, 21-22nd July. The Swiss Pairs takes place on the Saturday, and the Swiss Teams on the Sunday.

On Sunday 18th (not 11th as once stated) August we have a repeat of last year's inaugural friendly match against Avon CBA, and we have been invited to Bristol for this. Again we have three teams of different experience levels, so if you have any interest in playing do contact ctd@gcba.org.uk.

The County maintains a list of known bridge clubs in the county on its website (under "Local Clubs"), to make it easy for locals and visitors to find these clubs. We have recently discovered a number we didn't know of before – if you know of any we don't have listed please tell us by sending an email to

publicity@gcba.org.uk.

NATIONAL CLUB COMPETITIONS

The EBU runs two national competitions which affiliated clubs can enter – the NICKO (any number of teams-of-4) and the Garden Cities (one team-of-8 per club). As the name implies the first runs as a Knock-out event (with 24-board matches), and a draw which starts locally but inevitably has to spread. The Garden Cities by contrast is managed through a county heat from which the top team goes on to a regional and then national final.

Cheltenham BC lost in the final of the NICKO in 1995, 2007, 2012 and 2017, but has won the Garden Cities in 1998, 1999 and 2019. Entries for the NICKO need to be in by the end of September, but the Garden Cities does not come until well into 2020.

Do consider putting in a team to represent your club in both of these competitions.

BRIDGE AROUND GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Don't forget

- In Newport, the East Wales GP Congress on 3-4th August – see EWBA website for details.
- West of England Congress at Weston, 4-6th October.

GCBA RESULTS

The Spring Teams was comprehensively won by Tony Hill & Alan Wearmouth, Mark Rogers & Peter Waggett – who came first in all four sessions.

The Spring Swiss Pairs was won by Ashok Kwatra & Mike Wignall ahead of Roy Collard & Val Constable.

The County Individual was won by Paul Denning, a mile clear of the rest who were led by Anne Swannell.

The Cotswold Cup raised over £800 for the Sue Ryder Hospice and the winners of the event were Kate & Philip Morgan ahead of Betty & Richard Harris.

The Rank Xerox Teams was won by the team-of-8 from THRIBB.

The winners of the County Knock-Out (whose reward is to represent the County at the Pachabo) is Keith Stanley's team (Paul Denning, Richard Plackett, Garry Watson, Alan Wearmouth). The team came 3rd in the Pachabo.

The winning pair in the County Pairs was Tony Hill & Alan Wearmouth, a fraction of a match-point ahead of Patrick Shields & Mike Wignall.

The AGM Pairs (Steve Darke Salver) was won by Kate & Philip Morgan..

Cam & Dursley U3A Bridge Group is the first U3A group in this county to affiliate to the EBU/GCBA. We welcome them and hope to see players from there engage in the Cleverly Teams League and other county competitions.

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A GOLD CUP MATCH AGAINST ZIA !

In the round-of-16, six of our County team were drawn against last year's Gold Cup winners, including the famous Zia Mahmood. The match took place at TGR's club in London, and our team won by 17imps. Here's a bad result for both teams ...

♠ AKJ32		
♥ T7		
♦ 864		
♣ A64		
♠ QT985		♠ 76
♥ Q98	B 18	♥ AKJ3
♦ Q9	DLR E	♦ AKJ5
♣ K92	VUL: ns	♣ 853
♠ 4		
♥ 6542		
♦ T732		
♣ QJT7		

In each room East opened 1N, and opposite 15-17, West transferred to spades and then bid 3N, while opposite 14-16, the other West showed four spades and invited game (after which East bid 3N). At both tables, North thought he could see advantage in getting a spade lead and doubled; this indicated an unusual lead was needed and this could only be because North held spades behind dummy's suit.

The Souths were all set to lead the ♠Q, but now switched to lead a spade. After that lead it was impossible to beat 3N and the swing on the board came down to who cashed out to save the overtrick! Would you have led a club or a spade?

Our team now go on to play a team from the North of England (Yorkshire & Manchester) in the quarter-final.

THE CLEVERLY TEAMS LEAGUE

This is one of two Leagues run by the GCBA each year, complementing the County League which runs on the third and fifth Mondays at Cheltenham Bridge Club.

This league is organised quite differently – matches are of 24 boards and are played at the convenience of the players between September and April, often at a player's home, but sometimes at a bridge club.

There have been 3-4 divisions in recent years, organised as one (top) County-wide division, plus regional divisions so that the amount of necessary travel is minimised. Matches are sometimes played in the evening, and sometimes during the afternoon – whatever suits the players best.

Any foursome can enter – they could come representing a club or they could come from different clubs, they can be EBU members but do not have to be. You can have as many as you like in a team (although only 4 play in any match). You can find more details on the GCBA website (under Events) or by contacting the organiser, Ian, by email to

ctl@gcba.org.uk

The CTL gives you a different sort of bridge game from your "normal" club duplicate – using IMP scoring the way most top end and international matches go. Do think about entering a team.

THE GARDEN CITIES FINAL

The Cheltenham Team won 5 of the 7 matches in the final, losing to Bristol BC who also beat them in the Regional Final, and to Tunbridge Wells BC who were last year's winner. This hand was the team's largest single gain, in the first match against Leeds BC.

♠ 8543		
♥ Q765		
♦ T3		
♣ QJ4		
♠ AKJ72		♠ Q
♥ J2	B 2	♥ AK9
♦ KQ754	DLR E	♦ AJ862
♣ 8	VUL: ns	♣ K752
♠ T96		
♥ T843		
♦ 9		
♣ AT963		

East opened 1♦ at all but one table (the exception was 1N), and it was up to West, now or after East had shown some strength perhaps by a NT rebid, to show very positive diamond support. After an old-fashioned 1♦-2♠-2N-4♦ start it is very easy for East to check on aces and stop in the small slam.

And indeed 13 of the 16 pairs with these hands did succeed in getting there, but three didn't. What this illustrates is that it you don't need clever plays to win points - but consistency and being in the 81% when 19% of the players go wrong is just as good (and comes with more opportunities). It was this strength-in-depth that took the Cheltenham team through the Regional and National finals successfully.

Can you solve these crossword clues

- What Mary had, briefly, put about singular bridge building feat (6,4)
- Play here to avoid bottoms (2-6)