

GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2015-16

April 2016

Programme

And this month we have -

- Mon 4th : Open Teams 4
and Hosted Pairs
- Mon 11th : Winter Pairs 4
- Mon 18th : League 9
- Mon 25th Spring Pairs 4

WINTER & SPRING PAIRS

any pair can turn up (as can any four for the Open Teams) but if you lack a partner and are willing to be a standby, please tell Patrick and we will advertise accordingly.

Other dates for your diary

- Sunday 3rd April : the final of the Ace of Clubs – qualifiers are coming from four clubs.
- Sunday 17th April : the final of the County Pairs, from the four qualifying heats.
- Friday 29th April to Sunday 1st May : Cheltenham Congress at Brockworth. Choose to play any combination of one or two sessions on Friday, all day Saturday or all day Sunday. Entry forms on the web.
- Sunday 5th June : County AGM and the Champions Cup, with a 1330 hrs start.
- Sunday 3rd July – CBC is one venues of three for the new Midlands Improvers Pairs. It is limited to NGS rank of 8, aiming at players of under 5 years experience – and includes hand commentary and discussion. More details to come later.

SUMMER SWISS PAIRS

starting 9th May and running for four months. Get partnerships organised!

Hesitations

One of the constraints within the game of bridge is the limited vocabulary we have for bidding, which comes with the warning that there must be no other means by which partners communicate during the bidding. Illegal communications are all tagged as “unauthorised information” and this is usually abbreviated to UI.

There is clearly potential for intentionally communicating via illegal channels but this is rare and the common problem we face is **unintentional UI**, and by far the most common cause is the tempo of the auction.

In an ideal world every bid would take the same amount of thought and the tempo would be totally uniform, but it is inevitable that some situations require more thought than others, so the tempo will always vary. Where we all know that the situation needs thought (an unusual sequence or perhaps after a jump in the auction) then the quantity of UI is very low and not an issue.

However, even in a mundane sequence, an even slightly offbeat hand can cause serious pause for thought and this creates UI. We need to understand and accept that UI is just a fact of life and indeed the rules are written on the basis that it can't be helped – just as sometimes at golf your ball rolls into Ground Under Repair.

As in golf, there are rules about how to handle this accident – but the first point to make it that when UI happens, it is nobody's fault and there should be no blame attached. The rules are what comes next, and you should call the Director to apply them.

<TO BE CONTINUED>

GCBA Results

The third round of the Open Teams was won by the team of Tony Letts & Peter Shelley with David Jones & Patrick Shields, who collect 8 points for that but the Angseesing team collected 4 points which leaves them in the lead with 20, ahead of two teams (Letts and Councer on 12 points). One sessions to come.

The third session of the Winter Pairs saw a clear win by Joe Angseesing & Keith Stanley who – on dropping their lowest score – are now dead level in the series with Chamberlain & Shields going into the last round. Denning & Hill are in third place.

In League Division One, with 2 matches to go, the Shields team is now 22 VPs clear in Division One. In Division Two, the Harrison team is 14 VPs ahead of Swannell and has guaranteed themselves a promotion place.

The third session of the Spring Pairs on Easter Monday saw a win for David Hauser & Alison Pritchard first of the 15 pairs, but overall leaders in the Spring Pairs now are the Constables.

External Results

EBU Interclub Knock Out : of the original six Cheltenham teams, two are left. In round 4 Cheltenham D (led by Paul Denning) has to play West of England, Cheltenham E (Peter Waggett) has to play Trowbridge.

Crockfords : the only Cheltenham interest is Peter Shelley's team (with Brian Goalby & Tony Letts) in Round 2 of the Plate.

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Winter Open Teams

The winning team collected 94imps in session three and the biggest contribution was from this hand. The other tables all played in 4♠ or 5♠ making 11 or twelve tricks for a total of 2imps changing hands, but our heroes never played the hand in spades ...

♠ K4		
♥ Q76		
♦ AT95		
♣ K875		
♠ T6		♠ 7
♥ AJ9854	BOARD 5	♥ KT32
♦ J	DEALER: N	♦ Q632
♣ QJT2	VUL: NS	♣ A963
	♠ AQJ98532	
	♥ --	
	♦ K874	
	♣ 4	

North, playing a strong NT, started with 1♦ and South took the strange decision to show diamond support first with the intention of showing the spades later. The bidding however continued 2♥-P-4♥ and now the meaning of 4♠ was not clear, so he chose 6♦ which was doubled and that finished the auction. The ♣A lead gave the defence a chance but East switched to a spade and not a heart next, and that let 6♦ make for +1540.

The other table saw North pass as dealer (an acceptable action) and after P-P-4♠-P-P, the East hand came to life with a takeout double. As a passed hand partner should not expect a lot more; this hand was very shape suitable and catered for partner sitting there with good spades but unable to double. David Jones as West happily bid 5♥; he was doubled but found the ♥Q and ♣K where he wanted them, and scored +650. The tricky question is which of North or South should have bid on?

Just a 19imps gain, while every other match thought this was a "nothing" board! Such is bridge!

County Leagues, R8

Division Two has split into two parts – now tagged Division Two and Division Three. There were a massive 7/28 boards good slam hands and a tiny number of these were bid. Only on one occasion out of 98 (7 hands at 14 tables) did someone bid too high. This hand was the slam hand where the correct contract was reached most often, but that was only four times out of fourteen.

♠ AKJT652		♠ Q83
♥ K5	B26	♥ AQT93
♦ A86	DLR:E	♦ K2
♣ A		♣ 984

You might think the grand slam was inevitable if East opened, but one County Teams Dawes pair started with 1N and they got to slam but West gave up on the grand and settled for 6♠.

Another County Team Dawes pair got closer, after starting 1♥-2♠(strong)-4♠. This was quite informative (describing the minimum hand opening) and now ace asking showed the ♥A (with 5♣). West asked about the trump queen with 5♦ and the 6♦ response showed the ♠Q and ♦K but denied the ♣K. West lazily settled for 6S at this point but the hand has the space to try for the grand with 6♥ and that would let East upgrade the ♥Q and bid the grand.

Well done to the four pairs who bid the grand slam, but how did three teams manage to stop in 4♠? I can only imagine (would you dare to ask?) East passed and it went P-P-4♠-end, which should give us all a reminder about avoiding that bid on good hands – after all, 7♠ was an easy make even if we take away the ♥Q from the East hand.

County Squad Practices

One issue amongst the top county players is that they don't play as much bridge as they once did. So we have introduced a monthly practice game of just 4 tables playing 18 boards followed by a hand analysis. This hand from last practice session had a number of interesting points -

♠ KQT6		
♥ T3		
♦ QJ943		
♣ T8		
♠ 8743		♠ 9
♥ Q85	BOARD 6	♥ KJ742
♦ K62	DEALER: E	♦ T8
♣ KQ6	VUL: EW	♣ A7543
	♠ AJ52	
	♥ A96	
	♦ A75	
	♣ J92	

After an initial pass, every table saw 1N(weak) by South passed around to East who now had a second chance. Admittedly the vulnerability has its dangers, but even if you had not passed already, it pays to bid on 55 shapes with your points in the long suits - there are just too many good things which might happen.

The two Easts who passed 1N clocked up -150 (but might do better). When East bid 2♥ it was passed round to North on whom the spotlight shone. One North passed and with the right cards in dummy, East clocked up +170. The fourth North was a bit more enterprising and gambled with 3♦, making 9 tricks when she sensibly refused the diamond finesse, having diagnosed the ♠9 at trick 1 as shortage.

That was successful, but missed a chance. Have you thought about bidding 2♠ on the North hand after 2♥-P-P? This cannot show a 5-card suit for with that you would have transferred on the previous round, or a balanced hand for with that you would now double, so it must be a 4-card spade suit plus a 5-card minor. How beautifully descriptive – surely partner can place the contract now?