

GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2016-17

December 2016

Programme

This month we have -

- Mon 5th : Winter Teams 4
- Mon 12th : Winter Pairs 4
- Mon 19th : League 5
- Mon 26th : CLUB CLOSED
- Jan 2nd : GCBA Individual

The teams are allocated for the League, but for other teams events you just turn up as a foursome, although warning to the CTD (ctd@gcba.org.uk) for any Swiss event is very helpful. For the pairs events, just turn up as a pair.

GCBA WEEKENDS

The next event is a teams event, the Cotswold Cup, on Sunday 5th February 2017. It's never too early to go hunting for the best team-mates!

EBU COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP

As always the first round of this - the Tollemache qualifying - took place in November. The County has played in this event since time immemorial; a record suggests we reached the final in 1956 (does anyone know more?) but since the 1960s it wasn't until 1990 that the team qualified for the final stage of this competition.

Until 1989 the heats were regionalised and GCBA played in the Bristol heat but it never managed to come first and only the first ever qualified for the final.

That changed in 1990 with a centralised qualifying round and two team from each group progressing to the final; that year the county came second in its group with a team of

Joe Angseesing & Graham Cornell
Richard Butland & Keith Stanley
Bob Cassey & Terry Fix
Patrick Phair & Jim Simons
John Rookwood & Derek Rue

The team followed that with qualifying for the final stages on four more occasions in that decade. After the millennium, the team stumbled occasionally but from 2005-2010 they qualified on six consecutive occasions, and in the February 2007 final the Gloucestershire team won the trophy by a margin of almost two matches.

The winning team that year was captained by Judy Sanis and comprised

Joe Angseesing & Graham Sadie
John Atthey & Richard Butland
Richard Chamberlain & Andrew Kambites
Paul Denning & Patrick Shields
John Rookwood & Derek Rue

After that the team qualified for the final for the next four years but in November 2011 failed to qualify by just 1 VP. Since then we have only qualified once - in November 2013 - and then we came last in the final.

Across the 14 outings in the past ten years, Paul Denning has been present at all, while Richard Chamberlain & Patrick Shields have each missed one, and Richard Butland has missed two. Richard C has maximised his diversity playing with six different partners, ahead of Richard B, Dan McIntosh and Keith Stanley each of whom have had five partners. The most used partnerships have been Denning & Shields, Hill & Wearmouth - each with eight outings.

The County team has as its captain this year for the first time ROY COLLARD. The team lost a planned pair just ahead of the event, but Richard Harris & Peter Waggett came on board and performed well, the team ended 4th in their group - same score and same position as the previous year.

GCBA Results

On the third round of the Swiss Teams, again we had 13 teams and after six matches the team of Joe Angseesing & Roger Jackson, Christian Fleming & Mike Wignall has retained its lead (which dropped from 13 VPs to 11 VPs); the teams led by Paul Denning and by Garry Watson are chasing. After the next session the top four teams will split off for a two session final.

The third session of the Winter Pairs was a repeat win by Norah Allen & Suzanne Griffiths ahead of Joe Angseesing & Keith Stanley. Across the series, the leader board is still Norah & Suzanne, followed by Tony Hill & Alan Wearmouth, but with Joe & Keith very close behind.

After four matches in the County League Alan Wearmouth's team remains 13 VPs clear in Division One, while Wendy Angseesing's team is 19 VPs clear in Division Two.

The Everett Cup had 6 teams this year, and first place went to Chris & Penelope Healy with Peter Swales & Anne Swannell, ahead of Betty & Richard Harris with Patrick Phair & Jim Simons.

The County Mixed Pairs had 17 pairs compete and the winners were Ben Britton with Maggie Eaton (a welcome visitor from Hereford) followed by Cynthia Moore & John Stirrup. In third place were Allan & Judy Sanis who win the Flitch prize for that performance.

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League 4

Lots of interesting hands came up in this session. On this first hand too many players slipped up in their play of the diamond suit.

♠ 97		
♥ J963		
♦ JT65		
♣ T54		
♠ A62		♠ KJ3
♥ A2	B 20	♥ 854
♦ A432	DLR : W	♦ KQ987
♣ A972	VUL : all	♣ J6
		♠ QT854
		♥ KQT7
		♦ --
		♣ KQ83

After 1♣-P-1♦ it is right for South to make a takeout double (an exception to the normal rule to bid your 5-card major) but this will not deter West from bidding 1N which will be raised to 3N. North leads a heart and declarer wins the ace.

The only concern is a 4-0 diamond break and if South (most unlikely anyway given the bidding) has four there is no way to avoid a loser. So the play must start with ♦A, and then a finesse (♦T-♦Q) followed by crossing to the ♠A to repeat this. This generates 9 top tricks.

If declarer gets the diamond wrong, it is necessary to give up a diamond to North, who will continue with hearts. South must not continue the suit or the run of the diamonds will lead to South being squeezed in the black suits. South must win the second heart and switch to the ♣K. Now the contract is off and declarer will be punished for not knowing their suit combinations.

On the internet there is a wealth of documentation to be found on suit combinations : look at the SUITPLAY software found at www.suitplay.com or Pavlicek's site at

<http://www.rpbridge.net/4a00.htm>.

This deal – and every session seems to have at least one as distributional as this – produced a lot of swings. Curiously the only match where it was a flat board was both tables in 6♦ making (Constable-Wearmouth well done to them)

♠ 7		
♥ KJT83		
♦ 975		
♣ J864		
♠ AK864		♠ T953
♥ 95	B 9	♥ AQ42
♦ KQ632	DLR : N	♦ AJT84
♣ Q	VUL : EW	♣ --
		♠ QJ2
		♥ 76
		♦ --
		♣ AKT97532

After a pass East opened 1♦, and South had to decide how high to pre-empt. With fewer cards in the majors, 5♣ would stand out but bidding that here might leave West with no choice but to double. You'd rather West had a chance to go wrong and 4♣, allowing West to bid 4M which you can double for an unusual lead, gives you a positive chance of a plus score (but don't double 4♠ today!).

Whichever is chosen, West has a seriously strong hand in support of diamonds. Over 4♣, the only ways for you to tell partner this are by bidding 5♣ or bidding 6♦. The latter is very tempting but you could be missing two tricks (even aces) and the jump to slam is risky.

Over 5♣ there is a chance partner will stop in 5♦ but it is very likely (as happened at the table) that North will come to the rescue by sacrificing in 6♣. This is great for East as pass now suggests control of clubs and an interest in continuing, so West can bid 6♦. This looks to be a success, but in fact a continued sacrifice with 7♣ beats that as this only loses -500 and that is actually cheaper than 5♦ making! [Grand slams can make but in practice won't]

Mixed Pairs

This hand fascinated; different auctions at three tables all ended in 5♦ by South.

♠ AJ972		
♥ --		
♦ 97		
♣ A98632		
♠ 865		♠ KQT3
♥ KJ732	B 25	♥ Q64
♦ A3	DLR : N	♦ T4
♣ JT4	VUL : EW	♣ KQ75
		♠ 4
		♥ AT985
		♦ KQJ8652
		♣ --

At table 1 : North started the auction by bidding his suits and after clubs, spades, spades it was clear that North had a 5.6 shape. On the way West make a values/defensive double of 3♠. South meanwhile bid diamonds and avoided hearts (would have been FSF); and then bid more diamonds. When eventually North supported diamonds, the spotlight fell on West for the opening lead.

At table 2 : North passed and East opened 1N over which South bid 3♦. North tried 3♠ next and then raised 4♦ to 5♦, which was passed out. Over to West to lead.

At table 3 : North passed and East opened a prepared 1♣ (could be two in a balanced hand) over which South bid 2N. North was unsure about the suits shown (does your partnership know?) and bid 3♣ over which South tried 4♦ and was raised to 5♦. Over to West to lead.

Common to all three auctions is the sense that EW have values but have been outbid. How NS are likely to make tricks in these circumstances is by ruffs. But only Judy Sanis at table 3 found the killing lead of ♦A, to collect +300; the others all saw game make. I hope you would be following Judy's example!