

# GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2019-20

February-March 2020

## EDITORIAL CHANGE

First let me offer a huge vote of thanks to Patrick Shields who has compiled this Newsletter in recent years. In an attempt to relieve some of the workload on Patrick, who does so much to organise and support GCBA activities, this and immediately forthcoming issues of this newsletter are being compiled by Garry Watson. Garry would welcome your views and ideas on future content and accounts of your successes. Contact - [editor@gcba.org.uk](mailto:editor@gcba.org.uk)

## PROGRAMME

The coming weeks see the following events -

- First Monday of the month is (Spring) Teams.
- Second Monday is Spring Swiss Pairs
- Third Monday is the County League
- Feb 24<sup>th</sup> is the concluding session of the Winter Swiss Pairs

## BRIDGE AROUND GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Don't forget

- The Newent Bowl takes place this year on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February and is a Swiss Pairs event.
- The National Ranked Masters pairs is on 29<sup>th</sup> Feb and 1<sup>st</sup> March.
- The Wiltshire Green Point weekend in Bath comes with Swiss Pairs on Sat 7<sup>th</sup> March and Swiss Teams on the 8<sup>th</sup>.

## TOURNAMENT DIRECTING

GCBA recently provided a (free of charge) introduction to being a Tournament Director to a group of twelve from Painswick and Roehampton BCs. If your club needs to have more people understand the job of being a Tournament Director, then contact [ctd@gcba.org.uk](mailto:ctd@gcba.org.uk) and we will arrange something.

Also, the County is organising a TD seminar for active TDs in the county, on the morning of Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May. Watch the county website for details closer to the time.

## COUNTY TRAINING

Early January saw another training session expertly run by Patrick, with amongst other things a very useful analysis of how to handle everyday suit combinations from the viewpoint of both declarer and defenders. The next session of Saturday training is March 14<sup>th</sup> and will be led by a guest speaker – David Burn. David is an International player and coach, a multiple winner of most of the major British Championships, a Bridge journalist and a very entertaining speaker. Do make an effort to attend what I am sure will be a great day.

## TOLLEMACHE CUP

Feb 15/16<sup>th</sup> sees the first Tollemache Final (inter counties teams of eight) for the county since 2014. Gloucestershire is represented by Paul Denning, Richard Plackett, Patrick Shields, Richard Chamberlain, John Atthey, Claire Robinson, Richard Butland, Garry Watson and we wish them the best of luck in a strong field.

## GCBA RESULTS

*The Cotswold Cup in support of the Sue Ryder Hospice was well attended with 16 tables taking part. N/S winners were Enid Castle and Sybil Davies, whilst Doug Quine and Patrick Shields claimed the top spot E/W. The event and raffle raised over £800 for the charity and our thanks go to all who supported the event so generously. A special vote of thanks must go to Allan and Judy Sanis, who worked so hard to organise the raffle and prizes.*

*At the half-way point in the Spring Teams, SIMONS (Jim Simons, Patrick Phair, Val Constable and Roy Collard) are currently leading the way with one win and one third place finish.*

*In the Winter Swiss Pairs, Joe Angseesing and Ben Ritacca lead with Roger Schofield and Tony Letts a close second. The rest of the field are half a match adrift but this could all change in the final stanza being played on Feb 24<sup>th</sup>.*

## NATIONALLY

*In the National Inter Club KO (NICKO) Cheltenham has 4 teams through to round 3.*

*The Seniors KO sees one Gloucestershire team through to the fourth round.*

*In Crockfords Cup, GCBA is guaranteed one representative in Round 3 as the 2 Cheltenham sides are set to play each other.*

*Gloucestershire also has one team through to the third round of the Gold Cup*

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## AN ODDITY

When was the last time you made zero tricks playing in a doubled contract? Hopefully never! Well it didn't happen on this hand either but it might well have done. In a recent national knock-out match the following hand occurred.

♠ AKQ		
♥ AKQJ		
♦ 9		
♣ AKT65		
♠ J63		♠ 974
♥ 763	2♥x by	♥ T984
♦ A53	East	♦ KQJ7
♣ 9742		♣ J3
	♠ T852	
	♥ 763	
	♦ T8642	
	♣ Q8	

The bidding started 2♣ from North and East, keen to disrupt proceedings, overcalled 2♦. This was doubled when it came round to North and a subsequent redouble by West (who could not remember if 2♦ was natural or artificial) led to an inelegant contract of 2♥X. South led the ♣Q and continued the suit. North drew trumps. He then cashed all his black suit tricks but had to concede a diamond at the end. 7 down doubled cost 1700 non-vul. It might have been 2000 had South not killed his entry at trick 1 to his ultimately winning ten of spades. This failing still resulted in 15 IMPs to the NS pair. The offending pair will remain anonymous unless someone makes a better offer than they did!

## UNDERDOG TEAM TACTICS

Let's say you draw a seeded team in the Gold Cup. Realistically, you don't rate your chances of winning over 48 boards, so how should you approach the match? Larry Cohen – a top US player and

writer has the following tips in his most recent book. Firstly you must appreciate that:-

- The experience of playing against top class opposition is invaluable - something to learn from.
- The pressure is all on them. You are not expected to win and can therefore play in a more relaxed way. You are in a no-lose situation.

What about strategy?

Top teams pulp weaker players on part-score deals. Don't let this happen. Compete actively for partials. Don't sell out when opponents have stopped in a low-level fit as this risks losing 5-6 IMPs a time. It is fairly safe to get involved – they won't be keen to double you into game and you may push them around a bit. You can be slightly overactive in this area as your opponents probably won't expect it. I will cover more on this aspect of the game in a future article. If you can keep in contention in the match on the small deals, you are in with a chance if you get a bit lucky on a couple of big-swing deals.

At IMPs, you need to bid close games, and to stand a chance you must certainly do this, but an inferior team is very unlikely to win a long match with ordinary behaviour and luck, so how should you deviate your game to give you a fighting chance?

Don't go mad! That will most likely just end the match prematurely and you will learn nothing from the experience opportunity.

You need to look to make MINOR but REASONABLE deviations from the norm. Some examples:-

- With a high combined point count, perhaps look to play in 3NT rather than a known 4-4 major suit fit.
- Do something different to the other table – so against 1NT-3NT you might lead a heart from QJ9x rather than a spade from QJTxx.
- Maybe pass a 12 count in first position which is sure to be opened at the other table.

Such actions stir things up a little and give you a chance to gain on pure luck, but clearly these actions slightly reduce your average outcome.

Take mildly against the odds actions. For example, bid a 50% grand slam. This would not normally be a good idea as opponents may stop in game but assuming that first class opponents will bid to slam, it is a chance to generate the sort of swing you need to win the match. Say you hold

♠K98532 ♥5 ♦AQJ54 ♣A

You might bid

1♠ - 2N (Jacoby) - 4N - 5♠ and then 7♠ is a reasonable shot as it is at worst on the diamond finesse.

Another thing that you may be able to organise via your seating arrangements is to play a different strength 1NT opener to the other pair sitting your way. This creates different auctions, perhaps gets hands played from the other side and attracts different leads. Get lucky and you may pull off the upset of the year.