

GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2021-22

January 2022

GCBA RESULTS

Series 12 of the 9-High Swiss Pairs was comfortably won by Pauline Mussi and Jonathan Bailey, ahead of Diane Swift and Angela Hawley.

Spring Swiss Teams – Jan 3rd
1st Mark Rogers, James Rogers, Alan Wearmouth, Peter Waggett
2nd Paul denning, Joe Angseesing, Andrew Kambites and Val Constable.
3rd Jim Simons, Patrick Phair, Mel Barlow, John Arblaster

GCBA EVENTS

Entries are now sought for the County Knock Out. The winning team in this competition earns the right to represent Gloucestershire in the EBU's Pachabo Cup. The next series of the bi-weekly Swiss Teams competition will start shortly so be sure to let the chief tournament director know if you intend to play

WIDER RESULTS

The Scottish Cup (Scotland's major K.O. event) was won by Patrick Shields (playing with John Matheson) and Dan McIntosh (playing with Rob Myers).

Patrick Shields and Diana Nettleton finished second in the EBU Year End Congress Mixed Pairs.

BRIDGE CLUB WEBSITES



Many congratulations to Churchdown Bridge Club on implementing its BridgeWebs website towards the end of 2021. BridgeWebs is possibly the "de facto" standard for Bridge Club websites in the UK ([see here](#)). It provides an inexpensive and feature-rich platform ([details here](#)); however, this doesn't mean it is an easy job to implement and to maintain – far from it!

The vital role played by Bridge Club Websites and their importance is frequently overlooked, and so it was very useful that the topic was discussed by the GCBA Committee this week, from which emerged the suggestion that we could build up the County's capability to help Clubs to build and develop their websites, possibly with the help of neighbouring Counties and/or IT-students and seminars or similar.

Like the retailer's shop window, the Club website can be incredibly powerful in driving awareness and loyalty if, as well as results and details of future events, the website contains other items of interest.



As we see bridge activity continuing to be both online and face-to-face in the future, Bridge Clubs need to think about their physical and their online presence as one, rather than as two separate entities. If your Bridge Club might like assistance in developing its website please let the GCBA Committee know that you are interested.

IN MEMORIAM

We are sad to report the death of Filip Kurbalija, taken by cancer at the end of 2021. Filip played extensively in GCBA events in the last couple of years and will be well known to many of us. Filip had an impressive track record of success, principally in his native Wales, with 55 Camrose appearances with a variety of partners. Filip was also successful on the English tournament scene. In 2016 he won the Premier Grand Masters partnering Patrick Shields, and in 2008, he was part of the four-man team that won the prestigious Spring Foursomes. In the final, they beat the Number 1 seeded team of Forrester, Robson, Crouch, Liggins, Allfrey, Bakhshi with a storming final set.

Our condolences go to his wife Diane. Filip will be greatly missed.

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OPENING LEADS

I come across many players who frequently lead from a doubleton against a suit contract, and whilst it may occasionally strike gold, it is not a lead that I like very much. Of course, if partner has bid the suit, the lead is now extremely attractive, but let us look at situations where your doubleton is in a suit not bid by partner. Firstly, leading an honour from Kx, Qx or Jx is almost never a good idea. Partner will most likely be confused and think I have led from touching honours, which may well lead to a catastrophic subsequent defence. Also, unsupported honour cards are too valuable to be placed on the table at trick one, merely to be quickly gobbled up by declarer.

When partner has less than 5 cards in my doubleton suit (and with 5+ cards we might have heard an overcall from partner), then it follows that declarer or dummy must hold at least 4 cards in the suit, and therefore I am quite likely to be assisting declarer in setting up his suit, often picking off valuable cards in partners hand in the process. Consider this layout.

	♠ A72		
	♥ J843		
	♦ 76		
	♣ K532		
♠ Q96		♠ KT53	
♥ T2	4♥ by	♥ 96	
♦ AJ9532	South	♦ QT8	
♣ 76		♣ J984	
	♠ J84		
	♥ AKQ75		
	♦ K4		
	♣ AQT		
South	West	North	East
1♥	Pass	2♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

On a club lead from your doubleton, South has 10 top tricks and finishes up playing a diamond towards his King for an overtrick. If instead you avoid your doubleton and avoid a diamond lead from your Ace, then a trump lead (my choice) is likely to beat the contract as declarer will most likely draw trumps and attempt to drop the Jack of Clubs before playing a diamond to his King. A spade would be my second choice and this also beats the contract. My tip is to beware the doubleton lead as it generally helps declarer more often than it helps the defence.

IMPROVER'S CORNER

This month's tip is well known, but frequently not applied in practice. We are told not to bid poor suits on slam going hands, and certainly not to bid the slam in a poor trump suit.

	♠ J974		
	♥ 843		
	♦ A753		
	♣ 64		
♠ T		♠ AKQ	
♥ AK72		♥ J96	
♦ K4		♦ QJT82	
♣ T87532		♣ AK	
	♠ 86532		
	♥ QT5		
	♦ 96		
	♣ QJ9		

In the bidding, East opened 2NT (20-22) and then denied a major, so West jumped to 6♣. not to be recommended on such a poor suit. The slam had no chance when North led the Ace of diamonds. Despite the low point count 6♦ makes by ruffing the club suit good. The layout of the cards also allows 6NT to make. In the end-game South cannot keep his club winner and guard in hearts.

LAST MONTH'S PUZZLE

♠ AJT986		♠ KQ
♥ 6	6♠ by	♥ A843
♦ A	West	♦ J9853
♣ AKQ72		♣ 64

Playing this slam on a heart lead, it looks tempting to cash 2 top clubs and ruff a club high in dummy. Most of the time, this will result in 13 tricks, but you are not in the grand slam, so you need to play more safely for 12 tricks. Win the heart lead and play Ace and a low club. The defence can win this and play a trump, but now you can ruff your remaining small club high and claim 12 tricks. Playing clubs early means that when clubs break 5-1, your club King gets ruffed and a trump return leaves you with a club loser at the end.

AN OLD CHESTNUT

The following hand is presented as a double dummy problem. It was first posed in 1925 as a Whist problem. You play in 7♣ on a trump lead. Players found it difficult to solve almost 100 years ago but I expect the solution would be found more readily today.

	♠ JT3		
	♥ AKQJ4		
	♦ 76		
	♣ 532		
♠ K5		♠ 987642	
♥ T9872	7♣ by	♥ 65	
♦ JT9	South	♦ K3	
♣ 876		♣ JT9	
	♠ AQ		
	♥ 3		
	♦ AQ8542		
	♣ AKQ4		