

GCBA Newsletter

Season 2024-25

May 2025

RANK XEROX TROPHY

This inter-club team competition was won by Stroud, represented by John Councer, Angelos Agathangelou, Tom Jarman and Roger Miles. The Cheltenham team of Sophie Jacques, Sally Pendry, Ashok Kwatra and John Skjonnemand were runners-up.

COTSWOLD CUP

This, our Annual Charity team event was won by Gundi and Steve Bunker, Helen Nightingale and Tim Russell. Second place went to Maggie Conu, June Pearce, Val and Gordon Atkinson. The event raised over £400 for the Sue Ryder Foundation.

A GREAT DEAL FOR CHURCHDOWN BC

Alan Stanfield writes - 'Churchdown BC sought support to acquire a dealing machine as we had insufficient funds available. Why get a machine? - to get over the shuffle/deal of every board at each session and to be able to show the dealt hands on our website. We had been getting a dealing service from Gloucester BC but of course this meant regularly moving sets of boards between the two clubs (and paying a small charge for the service). GCBA gave us a grant and a loan, and the machine has been doing a great job for us. Dealing the boards is a quick and easy process. It has also let us easily play in the various national SIM events. Persuading some of the members that the weekly machine deals are genuinely random and not some fiendish plot to provide more challenging boards is a different story!'

GCBA RESULTS

County Leagues

Division 1

1st Patrick Shields, Garry Watson, Jack Armorgie, Alastair Catchpole.

2nd John Councer, Mark Rogers, Alison Pritchard, David Atthey, Angelos Agathangelou.

3rd Richard Butland, Paul Denning, Graham Cornell, Ben Ritacca, Mike Wignall, Joe Angseesing.

Cleverley Division 1

1st Stroud Badgers

2nd Stroud M

Cleverley Division 2

1st Wanderers

2nd Thribb B

Spring Teams

This competition split into 2 divisions. In Division One (four teams) the final positions were:

1st Kanwar Rahim, John Stirrup, Steven Sasanow and Nick Haynes.

2nd Jack Armorgie, Alastair Catchpole, Peter Waggett and Patrick Shields.

3rd Patrick Phair, Jim Simons, Val Constable and Mike Wignall.

4th Richard Butland, Paul Denning, Roy Collard and Ben Ritacca.

In Division Two (Swiss Teams) the final standings were:

1st John Councer, Mark Rogers, Alison Pritchard and Roger Miles.

2nd Roger Eaton, Ted Phillips, Chris Healy and Mike Robinson.

3rd Pat Emery, Ian Plewis, John Jenkins and Colin Lennox.

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IMPROVER'S CORNER

Last time we looked at the importance of counting the opponents' hands in order to determine your line of play when there are choices involved. Sometimes the count you can get is not absolutely certain, but you still get enough information to proceed in the best way.

♠ AQJ5		♠ K987	
♥ A75	6♠ by	♥ KQ93	
♦ AQ5	West	♦ 8643	
♣ K52		♣ A	
West	North	East	South
2NT	Pass	3♣	5♣
X	Pass	6♣	Pass
6♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Suppose you play this hand in a pairs contest and North leads the ♣Q. You start by winning and playing a trump to your Knave (both following) and ruff a low club in dummy, on which North discards a diamond. You draw trumps (North had four and South threw clubs). You cash the ♣K on which North discards a second diamond. You continue with the ♥A and ♥K and South plays the ten on the second round. Now what?

You know that South started with eight clubs, one spade and two hearts and two unknown red cards. You have 11 top tricks now but the contract is still safe. If you play the ♠ and South shows out, you throw North in with the last heart and force a lead into your diamond tenace.

If North shows out on the third round of hearts, then you know that South started with a void diamond so you simply duck a diamond to end-play North. If the hearts break 3-3 then you have 12 tricks and will make 13 if South's singleton diamond is the King.

This is a good line and guarantees the contract, but you can make an overtrick every time South holds the King of diamonds without in any way putting your 12 tricks at risk.

Instead of cashing the ♥Q at this point, just play a diamond from dummy. If South shows out then you duck and make 12 tricks as above. If South follows to the diamond lead then you finesse the Queen. If it holds then you take the Ace and finesse the heart knowing that it will win. If the finesse loses, then either the hearts are 3-3 or the diamonds are now breaking and your small diamond is now a winner.

The full layout was as follows:

		♠ T643	
		♥ J862	
		♦ JT97	
		♣ Q	
♠ AQJ5		♠ K987	
♥ A75	6♠ by	♥ KQ93	
♦ AQ5	West	♦ 8643	
♣ K52		♣ A	
		♠ 2	
		♥ T4	
		♦ K2	
		♣ JT987643	

SOLUTION TO MARCH'S PROBLEM

♠ A93		♠ 7
♥ K8	6♦ by	♥ 753
♦ KQ743	West	♦ AT85
♣ 942		♣ AKQJT

You arrive in 6♦ after North has shown at least 5-5 in the majors. North leads the ♠K. What is your plan to make the slam?

You expect to make five clubs, five trumps, the ♠A and a spade ruff. The only worry is a 4-0 trump break (North cannot have four diamonds). As you expect North to hold the ♥A and entries to your hand are few, a little care is needed if the trumps do break badly. Win the spade lead and ruff a spade with the ♦8. Now lay down the trump ace and continue with the ten. Let's assume that South covers this. You win and cross back to dummy with a club in order to finesse against South's diamond 9. In this way you easily pick up twelve tricks.

MAY'S PROBLEM

♠ AKT97		♠ QJ5
♥ 952	4♠ by	♥ 64
♦ A9	West	♦ K732
♣ K84		♣ A972

How do you the plan to make ten tricks after North leads a low trump? (Hint:- the opponents will lead trumps whenever they get in with hearts so ruffing a heart won't work).