

GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2020-21

October 2020

CONGRATULATIONS..

To Andrew Kambites who has been granted the Silver Award by the EBU in recognition of his many contributions to the game over the years. In addition to our website's list of Andrew's achievements, he also edited this newsletter for many years.

GCBA RESULTS

Series 4 of the weekly Swiss Teams was won by Patrick Shields, Daniel McIntosh, Diane and Filip Kurbalija. The runners-up spot was claimed by Ashok Kwatra, Jack Armorgie, Toby Roberts and Arun Nanda.

Series 3 of the 9-high Weekly Swiss Pairs was won by Richard Williams and Janet Miles, with Ralph Brooks and Diana Davies half a match behind in second place.

Monday Night GCBA Swiss teams results for September:

1. Roger Williams, Mike Wignall, Mike Lewis, Malcolm Green.
2. Mark Rogers, Peter Waggett, Alan Wearmouth, Tony Hill

and October:

1. BBO Robots – not sure they deserve a mention!
2. John Cuncer, Angelos Agathangelou, Stuart King, Steve Turner.

FACEBOOK

A reminder that GCBA has a 'Facebook' presence, created in order to share news of bridge players in the county and their activities, and to remind those who might be interested of forthcoming events. In Facebook search on "GCBA bridge" or

[click here to find it.](#)

If you have a Facebook account, you can "like" and "comment" on posts, and even "follow" the page and get all the news delivered to you as it happens. We currently have 83 people who "follow" the page. Current editors are Roger Williams, Judy Sanis & Patrick Shields. Contact them if you have new material to be posted.

ONLINE UNDO

When playing on-line on BBO, players have the facility to ask for a retraction of their last bid or play – commonly known as an 'UNDO' and this can be accepted or rejected by opponents. The facility was designed to allow players to correct a mechanical error - a mis-click akin to pulling the wrong card from the bidding box and an UNDO of this type should certainly be accepted. An UNDO during the play is akin to wanting to replace a played card in the face-to-face game and should generally be avoided (the EBU don't allow them in games they organise). Genuine mis-clicks do occur – particularly from people fairly new to online play or those playing on small screens such as a phone, but mis-clicks can be minimised in a number of ways. Better concentration helps and BBO (under account settings) allows you to require a confirmation of each bid and/or play that you make. Be aware that BBO will rearrange your hand to put trumps on your left once the auction is over. If you are too hasty with your opening lead, you may find you have led a card that you did not intend! You can avoid this error by delaying your lead for a couple of seconds or by changing your display to show a hand diagram rather than card pictures as there is no re-arrangement of cards in a hand diagram.

A TEXTBOOK HAND

This hand cropped up the other day in an on-line teams game. It features routine early play and an interesting end position. Against 4♠, West started with the ♣A on which East dropped the Queen (indicating that he held the ♣J or a singleton). West continued with a small club to East's Knave, who now switched to the ♥J.

♠ 4	♠ T76	♠ J52
♥ T765	♥ Q842	♥ J3
♦ AT52	♦ Q964	♦ KJT873
♣ AK975	♣ 63	♣ QJ
	♠ AKQ983	
	♥ AK9	
	♦	
	♣ T842	

If trumps break, or the Knave falls on the first round, you can ruff a club in dummy for your tenth trick. If these chances fail, you can hope for a favourable heart position. Hence you win the heart switch in hand and play off two top trumps. Unfortunately East was dealt ♠Jxx so you can't successfully ruff a club. The obvious thing to do now is to cash your ♥K in case the ten falls and then run your trumps and hope for the best.

When you lead your last trump, West is in trouble. He has already had to abandon diamonds and is reduced to ♥T7 ♣K9 with a discard still to make. A heart is fatal so he lets go a small club. Now declarer succeeds either by exiting with a club and forcing a heart lead for a finesse, or by running the ♥9 and then playing a club, using the West hand as a stepping stone to dummy's heart winner.

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The Ace of Trumps (1)

Perhaps the most important card that you can hold as a defender is the Ace of Trumps. It frequently gives you many options in your defensive strategy.

Getting a ruff

♠ JT92
♥ 7
♦ 95
♣ AKQ653

♠ A4
♥ KJT983
♦ AQ98
♣ 4

4♠ by South

West	North	East	South
1♥	2♣	2♥	2♠
4♥	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Holding the ace of trumps, a short suit, and a bidding partner, the short suit lead should be automatic. Dummy plays low, partner the deuce, and declarer the jack. At trick two a low trump is led towards dummy – you rise with the Ace and play...??? Obviously you want to get partner in for a club ruff, but does East hold the ♥A or the ♦K?

You should play partner for the ♦K. His ♣2 was a clear suit preference play. Even if your normal signalling method is to give count, bridge logic should always take precedence. Here partner has led an obvious singleton so you should play a low club with a diamond entry, and a high club with a heart entry. On this hand you could argue that West could cash the ♦A to see if East gives an encouraging signal, but that might not be good enough if declarer has a singleton diamond. A diamond to partner's King sees you get your club ruff and the defeat of the contract whenever declarer has more than one diamond.

Tip

When you hold worthless cards and you recognise partner's lead as a singleton, give suit preference at trick 1.

Giving a ruff

Suppose you hold as West:

♠A ♥xxxx ♦xxxx ♣Axxx

South	West	North	East
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	?

What do you do? – Well, you might consider doubling! Partner is marked with at most one diamond, so you should be able to lead that suit and give him 2 ruffs using your aces as entries. Furthermore, partner may have a trick of his own to inflict a two trick defeat.

Tip

When you hold a sure trump entry and length in a suit bid and supported by opponents, consider leading their suit.

Forcing declarer to ruff

♠ JT4
♥ J52
♦ J97
♣ KJT7

♠ A752
♥ 76
♦ KT643
♣ 92

4♠ by South

♠ 6
♥ 984
♦ AQ8
♣ Q86543

♠ KQ983
♥ AKQT3
♦ 52
♣ A

South	West	North	East
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
3♥	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♥	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West's opening lead? There is a choice between leading from the doubleton club or the diamond length. With length and control of the trump suit, it is usually better to lead from your long suit, hoping to force

declarer to ruff. If the defence starts with three rounds of diamonds, South ruffs the third and plays trumps. Now you hold up the ace until the third round of the suit (which exhausts dummy's trumps) and play another diamond. South can ruff but you have a trump plus a diamond winner for a two trick defeat. South can get out for one down by abandoning trumps after the bad split shows up and playing hearts instead, but you still beat the contract with two trump tricks. Note that an initial club lead allows South to throw a diamond on a club and make an overtrick!

Tip

When holding 4 trumps to the Ace or King, it is usually right to lead from a long suit rather than a short one.

Of course, half the time you hold the Ace of Trumps, partner will have the opening lead, but there are still many things you can do in defence.

♠ QT85
♥ 643
♦ AKQJ4
♣ 7

♠ 76
♥ 2
♦ T8765
♣ T9632

4♠ by South

♠ A2
♥ AJT987
♦ 3
♣ QJ84

♠ KJ943
♥ KQ5
♦ 92
♣ AK5

South	West	North	East
1♠	Pass	2♦	2♥
2NT	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Partner leads the an obviously singleton ♥2 to your Ace and declarer's ♥5. Don't give him a ruff just yet. Partner must have two trumps on the bidding so return a diamond at trick two, then win the first spade and you each get a red suit ruff.

(to be continued...)