

GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2018-19

September 2018

PROGRAMME

For this first month of the new programme year, we have -

- Mon 3rd : Swiss Teams 1
- Mon 10th : Winter Pairs 1
- Mon 17th : League 1
- Mon 27th : Ladies' Pairs and Men's Pairs

For any of these Mondays apart from the League, you need only turn up as a pair if it is a pairs event, and as a foursome if a teams event.

COMING LATER

The first weekend event of the season run by the GCBA will be the Everett Cup, on Saturday 20th October. The event starts at 1100 hrs and will include lunch and a short tea break in the afternoon. The event is a teams event, but you enter as a pair and we will have a draw for team-mates (after the pairs have been allocated to one of two buckets). Everyone is welcome, so do come along to try something new.

CLUB QUALIFYING ROUNDS

Every club in the county is asked to consider running heats of two county competitions – the County Pairs and the Ace of Clubs. In each case the top half of the field will qualify for a final to be held at Cheltenham Bridge Club in March (CP) and April (AofC). See the website for more details.

BRIDGE AROUND GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Coming up in September ...

- On the 28th-30th is the West of England Congress at Weston Super Mare. See [the Somerset SCBA website](#) for details.

Cheltenham BC Expansion

During the past few years much work has gone into the access to Cheltenham Bridge Club and the new back entrance and the lift are fully operational now. And so it is time for the next stage, wherein the CBC is embarking on a redevelopment of its refreshment facilities. To get ready for that CBC is running a special weekend event on 12th-14th October. It will be a drop-in Swiss Pairs event where a pair can come along any time; the game starts at 1400 Friday, resumes at 0900 Saturday, and starts again at 0900 on Sunday. You can play just one 5-board match or a set of matches. The charge is £1 per match but proportionally less if you play more (and you could play up to 200 boards over the weekend). The timing coincides with the last two days of the Cheltenham Literature Festival, so you can create your own mix of bridge and culture.

Cleverly Teams League

This is just starting up again and this year will have Division One county wide (with 7 teams), and then a North Division and a South Division (each with 5 teams). Last year's division winners Nympsfield and EDF-Energy have been promoted to the top division.

Avoiding Half Tables

An experiment is proposed at Cheltenham Bridge Club to try using robots and BBO to save pairs from missing boards when there is a half table. The "sit out" pair will play the relevant hands using tablets, and with two robots as opponents. Guidance will be available. Watch this space!

GCBA RESULTS

The final two sessions of the Summer Teams took place in August, and across the six sessions, Allan Sanis (despite scoring nil on the last session) retained his first place with 28 points, followed by Joe & Wendy Angseesing on 26 and Mike Wignall on 24 points.

The final sessions also took place of the Summer Pairs and here Joe Angseesing retained his winning position despite missing the last session. His 61.7% average was well ahead of Mike Wignall in second place and Roger Schofield in third. Eleven people played enough sessions to challenge for the series title.

Victor Ludorum

The Geoffrey Paterson trophy is awarded to whoever earns the greatest number of Master Points in Monday night games. All who have played in the top county team in the past three years are excluded. This year's winner was Roger Schofield, followed by Tony Letts and then Mike Wignall.

EBU Competitions

In the EBU Online Knockout the county team of Chamberlain & Shields, Denning & Plackett lost in the semi-final to a team of Scottish Ladies.

In the Gold Cup, the same four, with John Atthey & Garry Watson, have reached the last 16 and play their quarter-final match at the start of October.

John Atthey & Claire Robinson won the Swiss Pairs at the Scarborough Congress, first of 140 pairs.

GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2018-19

September 2018

THE AVON FRIENDLY

This match took place on the 12th August and was a first for both counties – trying to give players who have never before tried it, a taste of playing bridge against people from another county. Each side provided a group of regular tournament players, a group of regular club players, and a group of relative newcomers. This turned up ...

♠ T62		
♥ 86532		
♦ 96		
♣ 965		
♠ AK		♠ J743
♥ AJT74	B 21	♥ KQ9
♦ QJ854	DLR n	♦ AKT7
♣ 8	VUL: NS	♣ A3
♠ Q985		
♥ --		
♦ 32		
♣ KQJT742		

As you can see there are 13 top tricks and the majority of tables played in a slam. There were two stand-out results on the hand but neither matched expectations.

The first disaster was that a pair found themselves in 6♠ rather than in a making denomination, and went three down. This – you might have guessed – could only happen in the top section, and came about when West bid 4♣ after P-1N-3♣ and this was read as promising both majors.

The other stand out result was the one table which bid the cold grand slam. This was also a table in the top section, but it came about when East-West had a mix-up over the responses to 4N, found an impossible number of aces, and frustration at this led to a lucky guess to bid 7♥.

This all goes to show how the variety of results we see keeps us all so interested in the game.

The Under-Appreciated Tournament Director

The game of Duplicate Bridge which we play today relies very much on the Tournament Director. The TD at any event has three priorities, and these are (in order of importance)

- to ensure that the game is played in a way that people enjoy, and that they will return for more,
- to arrange the movement and scoring in a way to generate a fair result,
- to resolve any accidents which happen in accordance with Laws of Bridge and any regulations which are in force.

As players we need to be aware that the TD has all three of these in mind. There are times these conflict, and we must trust the TD to resolve any such conflict.

As players, we also regularly fail to appreciate the fact that our TDs are (nearly) all volunteers, giving up their time, or at least disrupting their own bridge game, in order to give us a well organised competition. We should always be supportive of the decisions the TD makes, and we ought to say THANK YOU to the TD a lot more often.

TD Training Courses

The EBU runs these on a regular basis, the nearest instances in the near future being at Aylesbury on 31st October, and at Solihull on 19th February 2019. See the EBU web site for details.

Best Conventions (12)

The final item, number twelve, on my list of “must have” conventions is the agreement to use a cue bid of the opponents’ suit to show a good raise of partner’s suit.

The big advantage obtained from using this cue bid for support is that it gives you the ability to distinguish different strengths of raises. The cue bid is generally used for the stronger raise, and suggests a hand with useful defensive as well as attacking values.

The concept comes into play when partner opens the bidding and the next hand overcalls, and when they open the bidding and partner overcalls.

The cue bid is sometimes needed to provide a general force when the hand in front passes, but if that hand bids then double is available for all the problem hands and the cue bid is free. When the cue bid is a general force, it also incorporates strong raises of partner’s suit – and that has to get clarified in the later bidding,

The cue bid makes no promises about the suit of the cue bid; for example after 3♣-3♥-P-4♣, the cue bid might be made on a hand with three small clubs. Using this to distinguish a good raise to game from a minimal raise to game is important guidance for partner here, about the possibility of a slam being appropriate.

[In the past this cue bid has often been referred to as the “unassuming cue bid (UCB)” but today its meaning is much better defined than it was then and the label “unassuming” is no longer appropriate].

Don't forget Hand-of-the-Day on the website changes every day!