

GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2018-19

August-September 2019

PROGRAMME

After alternate Teams and Pairs in August, the new season starts off with the same pattern as last year

- First Monday of the month is Swiss Teams.
- Second Monday is the Autumn Pairs
- Third Monday is the League
- Fourth Monday is special, and for September is the Ladies & Men's Pairs (October is County Knock Out, November is Mixed Pairs)

Apart from the League for which we need entries by two weeks ahead, you can just turn up for as many or as few sessions as you fancy – but do come as a pair on pairs evenings, and as a foursome on teams evenings.

COMING COUNTY EVENTS

Our first weekend event of the new season is the Everett Cup, on Saturday 19th October. This is a teams event which you enter as a pair; there will then be a draw for team-mates, giving everyone a chance at the trophy. The event starts at 1100 hrs and includes a lunch and a break for afternoon tea. The cost is £10 per head. Entries can be made on the notice board at CBC or by email to ctd@gcba.org.uk.

Finally we need to remember that Bridge is only a game : an important point was made by Einstein once : "I only know of two things which are infinite – the Universe and human stupidity – and I am not sure about the former."

NGS RANKINGS

The EBU introduced the national ranking scheme only a few years ago, and while some old hands dismiss it, the number of visits to the EBU web pages on NGS indicates that there is plenty of interest in the numbers. In this county the biggest grouping is in the NGS-7 category, and in the statistics for the past quarter we find that 62% of grades did not change, but that 13 people (11 from Cheltenham, 1 from Newent and 1 from Somerford Keynes) saw their grade go up two places.

In all categories there were movements up and down over the quarter, with more down movements from the higher grades and more up movements from the lower grades. If you log into the EBU website you can see how your own performances have rated against expectation.

BRIDGE AROUND GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Don't forget

- West of England Congress at Weston, 4-6th October.
- Worcester Congress on the 26th-27th October

Cleverly Teams

This year there are 18 teams playing in three divisions - one County-wide, one North and one South.

GCBA RESULTS

The Summer Pairs – in which you can only count one score with any one partner - has completed its final session and the winner of the series is Joe Angseesing, with Patrick Shields in second and Tony Letts in third.

The Summer Teams also has completed; leading from two sessions before the end and holding on were John Councer & Mark Rogers, who ended 8 points ahead of Peter Waggett & Garry Watson. The winners came in the top four on 5 out of the 7 sessions.

There have been three instances of Sims Pairs recently, and in the Bill Hughes Simultaneous Pairs in June, Martin & Nicola Renshaw came 15th out of 814 pairs with a 65% score.

The best local performance in the Green Point Swiss Pairs in Ross-on-Wye was the third place taken by Michael Cornelius & Lesley Mitchell.

AND FROM OUTSIDE

Six of the County Team put the holders - the Zia team - out of the Gold Cup but then lost by 26imps over 64 boards to Brian Senior's squad from Manchester & Nottingham.

Four of this team also came second in the Four Stars Teams at the Eastbourne Congress, coming second to a team three of whom are the current European Open Champions.

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EXIT FROM GOLD CUP!

Having beaten Zia in the round-of-16, six of our County team lost the next match to the top Northern team led by Brian Senior. It was by no means a walk-over and both teams had good luck at different points. How would you have handled this hand from the fifth stanza?

♠	AJ			
♥	AQ6			
♦	AKQ984			
♣	A6			
♠	K942	♠	73	
♥	872	B 12	♥	954
♦	T5	DLR W	♦	73
♣	T843	VUL: ns	♣	KQJ952
	♠	QT865		
	♥	KJT3		
	♦	J62		
	♣	7		

Our guys had a clear run and started 2♣-2♦-2♥-2♠-2N which was their conventional way of showing a game forcing balanced hand, while still allowing room to explore. It continued 3♣-3♦-3♥-3N by which time South had promised a 54xx shape and North had denied adequate support for either major. Opposite at least 25 hcp, South now bid 6N and North re-evaluated; the fact that partner had values and this long diamond suit was a lot of extra tricks and he had all the aces – this was enough to justify bidding a grand slam which he duly did. He chose 7N where 7♦ would have been a better choice, but the spade finesse worked and he was home.

In the other room over 2♣ East sensibly bid 3♣, taking away all the space which the opposition really wanted and after 3♣-X-4♣ there was just no way for the grand slam to be bid. The away team settled in 6♦ and lost 13 imps.

MONDAY MASTER POINTS

The County runs events at Cheltenham Bridge Club on Monday nights and one of the bonuses for a County-run event is an allocation of roughly double the usual Master Points. We have a trophy awarded each year for the player who, throughout the year, scores the most Master Points on Monday evenings. Members of the County top team usually score highest but these people are declared ineligible for the Geoffrey Paterson trophy which goes with this competition.

The winner of the trophy this year is Mike Wignall with 1395 local points, followed by Ashok Kwatra on 953 and Steve Sasanow on 849. The highest (but ineligible) collection of Master Points was by Peter Waggett (1494) followed by Mark Rogers (1430). The most consistent collection of Master Points was by Richard Butland & Garry Watson (an average of 50 per outing), which might be linked to the type of games (mostly teams) in which they play. The greatest number of Monday outings was by Patrick Shields (49) and next was Steve Sasanow (40).

A total of about 120 different people played on Monday nights during the last year, and of those all but 14 collected some Master Points.

The greatest aggregation of Master Points comes on Swiss Teams nights, followed by County League nights and then the Swiss Pairs nights. If you want more Master Points, do come along!

SUIT COMBINATIONS

One of the key building blocks to playing a hand well as declarer is knowing how to play the individual suits within the hand. Often the play is constrained by other factors, including entries but, when not so distorted, it is worth learning the “right” (default) way to play a suit to best advantage.

There is software available on the Internet (called SUITPLAY) which is the most trusted fount of knowledge on this, and has in recent years led to corrections in the tables of “best play” which were incorporated in earlier issues of “The Official Encyclopaedia of Bridge”.

There is also a facility at <http://www.automaton.gr/tt/en/OddsTbl.htm>

which you can use online to obtain the odds on different splits but then you have to work out the best line for yourself.

One position which comes up on a regular basis is when we are missing the KJ of a suit and a few small cards. Here are some of the “correct” answers which might be worth knowing (all are showing the best line for maximum expected tricks)

QT98 -- A432 : lead either Q or smaller towards the ace and take a double finesse.

QT32 -- A954 : cash the ace first and then lead towards the QT.

QT987 -- A32: lead low towards the A and take a double finesse.

QT987 -- A2 : lead the Q and run it if not covered.

And of course we must remember that the layout of the cards might not support this line; but knowing you have played the best line does give you a defence when partner asks why you went wrong!