

*London
Metropolitan
Bridge
Association*



MetroNews

*The newsletter of the
London Metropolitan Bridge Association*

Autumn 2021



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Words from the editor

Well here we are at last, more or less all set to recommence playing face-to-face bridge! How do you feel about it now?

Speaking personally I am absolutely delighted to be able to do so. I shall be going down to Eastbourne for the Pairs at the EBU Summer Meeting next weekend and I hope to see a lot of friends and acquaintances there. And I am very much looking forward to the resumption of club duplicates – my club plans to re-open at the end of August and I sincerely hope it will now be able to stay open without any more lockdowns.



Still speaking personally, I am not afraid of meeting people in a bridge club environment and playing pretty much as normal. I have been double-jabbed, as will have been most of the people there and we will follow sensible hygiene precautions like hand-washing and sanitising. I believe one can't hide away – life is for living.

I understand that some people may feel more cautious than me – everyone must make the best decision for him- or herself. But I do hope we do get back before long to enjoying our game much as it was pre-Covid. I know many people will say that online bridge is here to stay, and I am sure it is, but I would like it to sit alongside face-to-face play as an extra bonus, an additional way to enjoy bridge, not as the only alternative.

Online has many advantages – it saves time and travel, you can play with people in any geographical location and the cost is low. But for me it has one fundamental flaw – you don't get to meet real people, to chat, to socialise and to form friendships and relationships. And for me, that is what bridge is all about. I have been lucky enough to meet so many great people through bridge, to find new friends in countries all over the world – even to find two husbands (one at a time)!

Meeting people through bridge is especially important for those who come into the game. Established players have a network of people they can play with online, but that is not the case with beginners. Many people who decide to learn bridge do so not simply because of the game itself - they are seeking an activity where they can meet new people in a non-pressurised environment. It has been proved to be especially helpful to those in older age who, for example, lose their life partners and need somewhere to turn. Bridge can provide vital support and a community spirit, but it isn't the same without the real physical contact.



I attended several sessions of the BAMSA conference last month, at which there was much talk about the future of bridge. BAMSA, in case you haven't heard about it, stands for Bridge: A Mind Sport for All – an academic research-led project that explores the social world of bridge and the benefits of mind sport. It is spearheaded by Samantha Punch, a Scottish international player and Professor of Sociology at the University of Sterling. She organised the conference which brought together academics and practitioners from all over the world and all aspects of bridge –

organisers, bridge professionals, teachers, players and policy-makers – to discuss a wide range of topics. These included:

- bridge and well-being;
- the collapse of face-to-face bridge in 2020 and the knock-on effects on bridge clubs and bridge play;
- opportunities and challenges of online bridge, including the cheating scandal;
- gender and sexism in bridge;
- age and inter-generationality in the bridge community;
- learning, education and development in bridge.

There were some fascinating presentations and discussions and there was a lot to think about arising from the sessions. Everyone attending saw benefits coming from online bridge, but of course everyone attending was relatively computer-literate – inevitably since the event was held online.

One important statistic that was put forward, however, was that an estimated 50% of bridge players have not switched to playing online bridge. The views of that half of the bridge-playing community were scarcely represented at the conference, since they were the ones who, for a variety of reasons, couldn't or haven't wanted to switch to online activities.



It surely would be the most terrible shame to lose half our number by not providing an environment where the less-technologically minded can participate fully in bridge. It would be even worse if new players no longer came into the game because it no longer offered the social benefits that are so important to so many.

We must get back to face-to-face play to support these people – and I really hope we do.

MetroNews Editor

Chris Duckworth

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Annual General Meeting

The 2021 AGM will be held via Zoom on Thursday 2nd September starting at 7.00pm. The agenda for the meeting is below:

The details of how to join the meeting and attend to have your say on the organisation of bridge in London are below the agenda. Everyone is very welcome.

Agenda

- 1 Registration of proxies & apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes of the AGM of 3rd September 2020
***Note.** These can be found on the LMBA website at bridgewebs.com/lmba*
- 3 Matters arising from these minutes.
- 4 Chairman's Report
- 5 Treasurer's Report
- 6 Adoption of accounts for 2020
- 7 Subscriptions (direct and UM) for 2022-2023
- 8 Elections to the Executive Committee
- 9 Appointment of honorary auditor
- 10 EBU shareholders' Report
- 11 Any other business



This is the link for the meeting. For most people, all you need to do is copy and paste the line below immediately beneath "Join Zoom Meeting" into the address line of your browser and press "enter" - this will take you to the meeting. If you have not used Zoom before you will need to download the app on the device you plan to use.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89085717689?pwd=T1ZOTGJWU0tHNDhJY2NUYnpUZi9jZz09>

Meeting ID: 890 8571 7689

Passcode: 719440

Lederer Memorial Trophy 2022

It was not possible to stage the Lederer in 2021, but it is planned to hold this prestigious invitational teams event once again next year. The date and venue have yet to be confirmed, but it is most likely that the event will be hosted once again by the Royal Automobile Club in Pall Mall. The intended dates are **Saturday 26th** and **Sunday 27th February 2022**.

The Lederer provide as opportunity for spectators to watch the bridge greats in play and to enjoy the atmosphere of a high-level bridge competition in elegant surroundings. Make a note of the date now, and watch out for full details on the LMBA website (www.bridgewebs.com/lmba) as soon as they are available.

In the meantime enquiries may be directed to **LMBAentries@gmail.com**.

Forthcoming competitions

*We are very pleased to be able to announce an almost full programme of county events for the 2021-2022. Unless otherwise indicated, all events will be held at the new premises of the Young Chelsea Bridge Club in Hammersmith – see the **London News** section for more information about this location.*

Please see the information at the end of this section regarding payment of entry fees.

London League

Holders: Division 1 *Dhondy*
Division 3 *Aces Hi*

Division 2 *Bury the Hatchet*

Following a survey of the players, it has been decided that for the 2021/22 season, the **London League** will be run as a hybrid event, with both on-line and face-to-face matches possible. The rules for determining which is adopted for each specific match have not yet been formulated at the time of writing, but is expected that they will be finalised at the AGM in September, and the regulations will be communicated to captains thereafter.

The League currently has three Divisions. In Division 1 only, any systems are permitted, provided reasonable notice is given. The lower divisions of the London League are played at Level 4. Matches are for teams-of-four but teams may consist of up to 8 people. All players in Divisions 1 and 2 of the League must be EBU and LMBA members.

New teams are always welcome and will be considered for entry at any level, although it would be exceptional for a new team to enter Division 1 directly.

Entries for 2020/21 will close on 1st November 2020

Entry fee: £20 per team

Entries and enquiries should be made to **LMBAentries@gmail.com** quoting London League in the subject line. They may also be sent by post to the organiser, Dominic Flint at Flat 3, 3 Marylebone High Street, W1U 4NG. Enquiries may also be made to Dominic on 07763 845457. Every effort will be made to accept late entries if necessary

Home Counties League

The 2021/22 season will be held as an online competition.

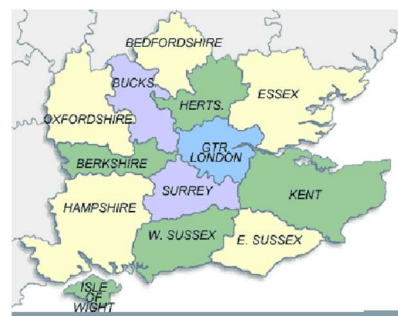
Entries will close 1st October 2021

Holders: Division A – *Sussex* Division B – *Surrey Purple*
(*Play-off to determine overall winner outstanding*)

The Home Counties League is an inter-county teams-of eight competition for London and the Home Counties. It is aimed at county second team players who

would not normally be expected to represent their counties in events such as the Tollemache Cup. Teams are allowed to field at most two Grand Masters in any one match. Players must be members of the county that they represent but allegiance is not required. **Green points are awarded.**

Current participants are London, Middlesex, Surrey, Sussex, Essex and Berks & Bucks - but there is room for additional counties. With online matches the need for travel into central London is eliminated, so players will save both travel time and costs. This provides **a great opportunity for new teams to join in.** Are you in one of the counties shown here and interested in playing county-level bridge?



Anyone interested should contact **Dominic Flint** at Dominic.Flint@clara.co.uk or on 07763 845457 for more details.

Entry fee: £20 per team.

Mixed Pairs

Sunday 19th September 2021 starting at **2.00 pm**

Venue: Young Chelsea BC, 21-23 Dalling Road, W6 0JD

Holders: *Jules Davidoff & Carla Sidney-Woollett*

The Mixed Pairs will be the first LMBA event to be held in the new premises of the Young Chelsea Bridge Club on **Sunday 19th September**. This will be played as a single extended session – about 30 boards, depending on the number of entries.



The event is expected to finish at around 6.00pm, when there will be a complimentary cheese buffet and an opportunity to discuss the hands with an expert.

The event is open to all EBU members



Entry fee: £14 per player, £28 per pair. Half price for juniors

Entries should preferably be made by using the online form on the LMBA website (www.bridgewebs.com/lmba). Alternatively, the same information can be sent by email to **LMBAentries@gmail.com**, quoting Mixed Pairs in the subject line.

Entry fees should preferably be paid in advance, but entries and payment will usually be accepted on the day, at the discretion of the Tournament Director/Event Organiser.

Enquiries may also be directed to the organiser, David Muller at d1muller@yahoo.co.uk

Palmer Bayer Trophy

Sunday 5th December 2021 starting at **2.00pm**

Venue: Young Chelsea BC, 21-23 Dalling Road, W6 0JD

Holders (2019): *Claire Smith & Mary Anne St Clair-Ford*

We are very happy to be able once again to present this 'No Fear' pairs competition for those who like to play tournament bridge under more relaxed conditions than often apply, which we were unable to hold in 2020. This single extended session, match-pointed pairs event is especially for those like to enjoy a social atmosphere when playing.

Improvers and tournament novices are most welcome and more experienced players may find this an ideal way to introduce family, friends and colleagues to organised bridge. Players need not be members of the EBU or LMBA.

The principal aim of this event is enjoyment, so the pace of play is a little more leisurely than usual. Some system restrictions apply to ensure the less-experienced are not confounded by excessive complexity, but allowed systems include most of the commonly used conventions. (A full description of allowed systems and conventions can be found at www.bridgewebs.com/lmba and will be made available at the event.)

A complimentary glass of wine (or a soft drink) awaits you at the end of the session to be enjoyed whilst discussing the hands that you have just played with an expert, who will be happy to answer any questions.



Entry fee: £12 per player, £24.00 per pair. Half price for juniors.

Entries should preferably be made by using the online form on the LMBA website (www.bridgewebs.com/lmba). Alternatively, the same information can be sent by email to **LMBAentries@gmail.com**, quoting Palmer Bayer in the subject line.

Entry fees should preferably be paid in advance, but entries and payment will usually be accepted on the day at the discretion of the Tournament Director/Event Organiser.

Enquiries may be directed to the organiser **Chris Duckworth** on 020 7385 3534 or at christinejduckworth@gmail.com.

Ian Gardiner Trophy

Sunday 30th January 2022 starting at **11.30am**

Venue: Young Chelsea BC, 21-23 Dalling Road, W6 0JD

Holders: *Nick Sandqvist, Nathalie Shashou, Gyn Liggins, Andrew Dyson*

This is the major London Teams of Four Championship, which is played as a one-day two-session multiple teams event from which the leading two eligible teams qualify for a head-to-head 48-board match to determine the winner of the Ian Gardiner Trophy.

Green-points will be awarded for both stages of the event, and the winners will be eligible to represent London in the Pachabo Cup, the national inter-county teams championship, which is scheduled for the weekend of 11th – 12th June 2022. The qualifier is scored using the same method as the Pachabo – a combination of IMPs and point-a-board.

Note also that all players must be LMBA members and, in order to be eligible to go through to the final, all players in a team must have London as their primary County of allegiance before playing in the event.

Entry Fee: £72.00 per team.

Entries should be sent to **LMBAentries@gmail.com**, quoting Ian Gardiner in the subject line, to arrive no later than 23rd January 2022.

Entry fees should be paid in advance, but entries and payment may be accepted on the day at the discretion of the Tournament Director/Event Organiser.

Enquiries may be directed to the organiser, **David Muller** at d1muller@yahoo.co.uk.

Autumn Café Bridge Drive – Tonsleys

Tuesday 14th September 2021 (*provisional*)
starting at **10.30 for 11.00 am**

Holders (2019): *Andrew & Anne Stimson*

The last Café Bridge to be held was in September 2019, as the planned event for the Tonsleys in April 2020 had to be cancelled.

It is hoped that it will be possible once again to hold a Café Bridge day in the Tonsleys at the end of this summer, but this has yet to be confirmed. It is however scheduled provisionally for Tuesday 14th September, and anyone interested should keep their diary free for that day!

If it goes ahead, the tournament will as usual be played in a number of different cafés/bars/restaurants in the area, each round of the competition being played in a different venue. The charity to be supported has also yet to be confirmed.

Once definite, all previous Café Bridge participants on our emailing list will be informed, and the LMBA website will be updated.

Meanwhile **enquiries** may be directed to **Chris Duckworth** at christinejduckworth@gmail.com or on 020 7385 3534.



Payment of Entry Fees

Payments should be made by bank transfer to the following LMBA account, using the name of the competition you are entering as a reference:

Sort Code: 09-06-66 Account No: 41838562

In some events, payment on the day is acceptable. Please see individual competitions for more details.



Advance notice

Dates for the following events in 2022 have been scheduled. Full details of the competitions will be published in the next issue of MetroNews in early 2022.

London Championship Pairs

Sunday 13th March 2022 at 11.30 am.

This is a two-session pairs to be held at the Young Chelsea BC. This event is the qualifier for the national Corwen Trophy and the leading 4 pairs with London allegiance will qualify to play. The Corwen is scheduled to be held on 28th – 29th May 2022.

Garden Cities Heat

Thursday 17th March 2022 at 7.00 pm.

The Garden Cities is the national Inter-County teams of eight competition for teams representing clubs in each County. This London heat is held to select the club to represent the LMBA.

The winning club team will go on to represent London at the Regional Finals, scheduled to take place on 8th May 2022.



Spring Café Bridge

Tuesday 19th April 2022 at 10.30 for 11.00 am

Café bridge – venue to be agreed



London Congress

Saturday-Sunday 16th-17th July 2022

The congress will comprise Swiss Pairs on Saturday and Swiss Teams on Sunday.

LMBA results this season

Championship Pairs

The 2021 Championship Pairs was held on RealBridge on 13th March. There was a good entry of 20 pairs, taken from a wider geographical range than usual, made possible by the event being online. Despite this, most players were London members, including one pair who actually live in the USA!

I am rather pleased to say that your editor and partner were victorious for the first time ever in this competition! The leading three pairs were:

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--------|
| 1 | Chris Duckworth & Brian Callaghan | 57.18% |
| 2 | David A Sherman & Peter Hasenson | 56.87 |
| 3 | Nick Sandqvist & Nathalie Shashoua | 54.93 |



Garden Cities

The London heat of this inter-club teams-of-eight competition was held online on RealBridge on 18th March. It attracted an excellent entry of 7 teams, though from only two clubs, the Young Chelsea and the Woodberry.

The top YC players were out in force that evening, and the YC teams all finished above the Woodberry ones. The leading two teams were:

- | | | |
|---|------------------|----------|
| 1 | YC Red | +72 IMPs |
| Sally Brock & Barry Myers, Susanna Gross & Claire Robinson,
Martin & Margaret Nygren, Ollie Burgess & Paula Leslie | | |
| 2 | YC Purple | +47 IMPs |
| Brian Callaghan & Chris Duckworth, David Burn & Mike Graham,
Nick Sandqvist & Nathalie Shashoua, Kath Stynes & Debbie Sandford | | |

The winning team went on to represent London in the southern regional semifinal, when Claire Robinson and Martin Nygren were unable to play so were replaced by Peter Taylor and Phil King respectively. They won this with a very comfortable lead over the second placed team, but were less successful in the final, where they came fourth out of eight teams.

London Congress

The London Congress was held this year on its regular July date, but was online on RealBridge. The Swiss Pairs on Saturday attracted players from all over the country and was competed by 60 pairs. There were several pairs in contention for the top place and it was very close as the event progressed. So close, in fact, that we ended up with joint winners – well done to them both.

Pictures of the winners and the leading scores are shown in the image below, taken from the RealBridge system.

London Metro Swiss Pairs

Pos	No	Pair	VP	MP	Bds
1=	33	James Thrower & Henry Rose	103	1670 / 2842	49
1=	59	Norman Selway & Kay Preddy	103	1631 / 2842	49
3	18	Andrew Bannock & John Dagnall	100	1651 / 2842	49
4	46	Stephen Fordham & Nevena Senior	97	1618 / 2842	49
5=	1	Angela Treen & Mark Mortimer	95	1597 / 2842	49
5=	51	Steve Eginton & Ian Reissmann	95	1614 / 2842	49
7	49	Chris Duckworth & Brian Callaghan	93	1596 / 2842	49
8	52	Naomi Gibbs & Mike Rawlins	89	1573 / 2842	49
9	10	Rob Lawy & Ian Walsh	88	1531 / 2842	49
10=	6	Robert Plumley & Kostadin Vasilev	86	1528 / 2842	49
10=	57	Steve Bourton & Julia Brough	86	1570 / 2842	49
12	43	Paul Hackett & Judi Lawson	84	1633 / 2842	49
13	32	Benjamin Gardner & Thomas Gardner	83	1499 / 2842	49
14	53	Robin Griffiths & Adrian Patrick	82	1503 / 2842	49
15	50	Claire Robinson & Sara Moran	81	1507 / 2842	49
16=	5	Norman Inniss & Stephen Brown	80	1505 / 2842	49
16=	11	Ron Birch & Lin Birch	80	1450 / 2842	49
16=	55	Celia Oram & Derek Oram	80	1511 / 2842	49
19	42	Jason Hackett & John Sansom	79	1526 / 2842	49
20	27	Nick Browne & Marie Thomson	78	1472 / 2842	49
21	35	Simon Gass & Alan Scott	77	1468 / 2842	49
22=	14	Miles Cowling & Ron Davis	76	1461 / 2842	49
22=	28	Kath Sturges & Nod Paul	76	1488 / 2842	49

The Swiss Teams on Sunday attracted a smaller entry of just 12 teams. The Owen team - Clive Owen, Nick Stevens, Trevor Ward and David Kendrick (*pictured below*) - won with over a match to spare over the Callaghan team – Brian Callaghan, Chris Duckworth, Ian Payn and Gillian Fawcett – in second place.

London Metro Swiss Teams

Overall scores

Pos	No	Team	Score
1	9	Clive Owen	107
2	3	Callaghan	82
3=	10	David Owen	81
3=	11	Rose	81
5	7	Illingworth	78
6	2	Birch	73
7	6	Green	66
8	4	Davies	62
9=	5	Flint	55
9=	12	Scotting	55
11	8	Hannon	51
12	1	Bennett	49

Boards

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18

London League

Division 1 of the London League was won by the Dhondy team, captained by Heather Dhondy. In the 9-team division, they finished on 111 VPs, comfortably ahead of David Muller's eponymous Muller team on 104 VPs, with YC1 captained by Fiona Hutchison in third place on 94.

In **Division 2**, the winners were Bury The Hatchet, captained by Dudley Leigh on 107 VPs. This was an impressive average of 15.29 VPs per match (out of 20) in the 8-team division. The runners-up were YC4, captained by Chris Goodchild, on 90 VPs, while Dominic Flint's Benedicts were third on 81.

This year **Division 3** was run as a single division rather than in sections. Overall, things were rather closer, but the clear winners were Aces Hi captained by Monica Davis on 102 VPs from 8 matches. Michael Bailey captained the RAC team who were runners-up with 96 VPs, just ahead of Coolhurst 2, captained by Vivienne McNaughton, who scored 94 VPs.

Home Counties League

The play of matches online rather than at a central venue gave a big boost to the Home Counties League this year, obviating the need for expensive and time-consuming travel. As a result, four new teams – one each from Sussex and Berks & Bucks, and two from Essex – joined in and the League was divided into two 5-team sections.

The winners of the A section were Sussex, who finished on 67 VPs well ahead of runners-up London Red on 46 VPs. In Division B Surrey Purple won with 61 VPs, with Berks & Bucks a close second on 58 VPs.

London News

A new centre for bridge in London

The Young Chelsea Bridge Club has moved to new premises in Hammersmith, which will be the venue for most of the London County events. The address is: The London MindSports Centre, 21-23 Dalling Road, W6 0JD. The location is 2 minutes' walk from Ravenscourt Park tube station on the District line, and is very easily reached by buses travelling down Dalling Road and along King Street, which is a busy road with many cafes and restaurants nearby. Full details of how to reach the club can be found on the Information page of the YCBC website at www.ycbc.co.uk.

The building is an old one, formerly a Salvation Army citadel, which has been comprehensively renovated, including the provision of a completely new heating and ventilation system. On the ground floor there is one main playing area in what was the Worship Hall, together with a large bar which will also serve as an overflow playing area. In addition there is an office, a well-equipped kitchen and toilet facilities, including for the disabled. On the first floor there are toilets and three more rooms – two decent-sized playing areas and one smaller room.

The title of the building – the London MindSports Centre – reflects that fact that the premises will be used to house other mindsports as well as bridge. The Hammersmith Chess Club and the London Go Centre are two organisations that have already decided to make the centre their home, and it is planned to expand the use of the building, both in the daytime and evenings, to other similar groups and for community use.

New Clubs

Two new clubs have affiliated to London during the last six months. The All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club now has a bridge club for its members, as do students at Imperial College. Both new clubs are small, but we hope they will flourish and grow!

In addition, Ned Paul has rationalised his various online playing sessions into a single club entitled the Ned Paul Bridge Club, also affiliated to London.

Tollemache final

London was represented in the final by the Young Chelsea BC team that comfortably won the southern regional final. The team comprised Kieran Dyke & Phil King, Ankush Khandelwal & Ben Green, Ingar Hansen & Peter Taylor, Brian Callaghan & Heather Dhondy, David Bakhshi & Stefano Tommasini, David Burn & Paul Lamford. Sadly, they did not do so well in the final and finished fifth out of eight teams.

In Memoriam

Long-standing London members will be saddened to learn of the death of Mike Durrant. Mike was a regular player in London clubs and events until he moved to Spain some years ago. He lived in Cordoba, where he continued to play bridge and support the local football team until his untimely and sudden death in March this year.

Helen Chambers, his long-term partner, described Mike as a bridge player:

“Mike was an underrated and unassuming player. He could have been one of the top players in the country if he'd had the inclination. He was always happy to play with partners at any level and took pleasure in getting good results playing with beginners or less experienced people. At his best, Mike was an intuitive player. In defence, he could somehow sense what cards his partners had to play and would make it easy for them to get it right – something many experienced players would lack patience with”

Mike was a clever, kind and gentle man, who is very much missed amongst his friends.



New LMBA members

The LMBA is very pleased to welcome the following new members who have joined the EBU through the London County during the first half of this year:

Paul Adleman
Alexandru Botgros
Graham Conn
Jacqui Conn
Clare Cooper
Alexander Duncan
Fabien Dunlop
Linda Eales
Webester Ewell
Allison Gaynor
Jarek Gornik
Moirra Gough
Dee Jones

Aysenur Kirris
Donald MacKillop
Susie Marshall
Jonathan Meek
David Millard
Kathy Murch
Ross Newby
Lucy O'Kane
Jonathan Potter
Vanessa Potter
Viviane Quelavoine
Julia Ryan
Dominique Ryder

Alua Serikbayeva
Antoni Sieminski
Jonathan Smith
Valerie Sydenham
Niall Tennant
Alexander Todd
Sarah Turner
Bernadette Twomey
Jet van Geuns
Anthony Whately-Smith
Amelia Whately-Smith
Suzanne Whitting

We also welcome the following existing EBU members who have transferred their allegiance to London, or past members who have rejoined, during the last 6 months:

Alexis Cochrane

Hugo Kirby

Jamie Herring

Let's cash winners *by Mike Graham*

Don't be fooled by the simple start to Mike's article on card play – it will soon have you thinking about different ways to handle various common suit combinations.



How do you play the following suit?

AQJ7

K86

Now this:

Q2

AKJ5

Well, it looks easy enough. Cash the king and the suit is good. But at the table declarer played the ace, then the queen, and then the king. She made a good effort by trying to play the jack next, but the defenders weren't having any of that. Similarly:

QJ5

AK63

We cash the queen, and follow with the 2 to the AKJ. The basic principle is to cash the high honours in the short hand, before crossing to the long hand to cash the other winners.

Sometimes, the suit we want to set up tricks in is not solid:

AK854

963

We cash the QJ and follow with the AK.

If we cash the ace-king, we will need to lose the next round of the suit. In order to enjoy the length winners in dummy we will need an entry. Which would be embarrassing if we haven't got one.

We can maintain communications between our two hands by ducking an early round of the suit. We can take one high honour and then duck, or we can duck the first round. Either way, as long as the suit is 3-2 we can set up four tricks.

AQ854

963

Here, to make four tricks we will need a bit of luck. We will need to duck a round of the suit; probably the first round is best. Maybe our RHO has the singleton king. That would give us a double-finesse position against J1072 with LHO.

However, if nothing very interesting happens (RHO wins with the 10 or J), we have a choice on the next round. We can play RHO for K10 or KJ doubleton; this involves going up with the ace. Or we could play LHO for Kxx, which means finessing the queen. If RHO has KJx, there's nothing to be done. At least we make three tricks by finessing, as we retain the ace in dummy. But for four tricks, the finesse is the best percentage play.

AQ854

72

Same principle. But we are going to need more than just a bit of luck. Duck the first trick, then finesse the queen on the second. If we have led a virtuous life, we will find a 3-3 break with the king onside.

A8643

752

Here we can make three tricks (again, assuming a 3-2 break) by ducking twice. At the table, declarer led the two...and LHO played the king. Well, aces were made to take kings, so declarer rose with the ace, taking just one trick in the suit instead of three.

AJ754

862

Same principle. But if we lead the 2 and LHO plays a small card, we can always play the jack. LHO may have KQx. If the jack wins, we duck the next round of the suit.

What about if LHO plays the K (or Q) when we lead towards dummy? We need to hold on to the ace, so we duck. When we lead a second round we can finesse the jack, giving us four tricks if LHO started with KQx, or three when LHO had Kx and RHO Q10x (when we must lose two tricks in any event).

♣♦♥♠

At the table, however, there may be other considerations:

♠ J

♥ K64

♦ AK843

♣ 6532

♠ AK5

♥ A85

♦ 652

♣ KQ74

We have a simple auction: 1NT-3NT. Bucolic, perhaps, but practical. Slam in a minor is a long way off, and maybe the ♠J will help bolster the suit. Not so on this occasion, though; LHO leads the ♠10 and RHO plays the ♠Q over dummy's jack.

Time to count our tricks. Two spades, two hearts; we can establish four diamond tricks by ducking one round, and one club once the ace has gone. That's nine....or is it? When we duck a diamond, the defence will continue spades; our second stopper will be knocked out, and when we play clubs the defence will grab the ace and cash their spades. Which, alas, is what my partner did; she won the second spade, having ducked the first, and solemnly ducked a diamond. With the spades being 5-4 and no problems with communications that was one down. Not a zero percentage play, but pretty close.

Well, if diamonds are no good, where can we get our tricks? The only other suit is clubs. We will need RHO to hold the ace. So we play a diamond to the ace and lead a club towards our hand. If RHO plays the ace, we have nine tricks if the suit is 3-2 (two each from spades, hearts, and diamonds, and three clubs). If RHO ducks the club, so that our king wins, we have the option of reverting to diamonds. We can play to the king, and if the suit is 3-2 we can duck a round – the king of hearts is an entry. If diamonds prove to be 4-1, we play on clubs, hoping for a 3-2 break with the ace onside. The difference here is that we already have a club trick safely in the bag.

The really odd thing about this deal was that, in a six-table event, the contract was 3NT, down one, at all of them, for a flat board. All the declarers fell into the diamond trap, thinking to set up four tricks there, without considering the consequences of so doing.



Sometimes, things aren't so clear. It is teams at Love All. Partner opens 1♦ and RHO overcalls 1♥.

We hold:

♠ K1095

♥ A54

♦ J

♣ KQJ97

In the system we are playing, a 1♠ bid would show five. We can double to show four. Or we can bid 2♣. Bidding 2♣ would allow us to bid 2♠ if partner rebids 2♦ and we can see what partner does over that. However, we decide to double. Partner rebids 2♦ and now we have a problem. We have a pretty decent 14-count, so we are not going to stop short of game.

The problem with a direct 3NT (which was chosen at the table) is that the initial lead is going to be a heart. Our hearts are not super – sure, we have the ace, but any minor honour that partner may have in hearts is being led through at trick one. If our heart stopper is knocked out, we may have to run another eight tricks in a hurry.

If partner does have a minor holding in hearts (for example, Qx) it will be better if we can arrange to play in 3NT from partner's side. Bidding 2♥ is not a bad way of doing this. Bidding 3♥ here is a bit dangerous – partner may interpret it as a splinter bid agreeing diamonds. Whilst the jack may be a useful card, our general diamond length may be a bit of a disappointment.

If partner has a semi-stop in hearts she will (hopefully) bid 2NT, which we can raise happily to game.

Over our 3NT bid, all pass; the lead is the ♥10.

♠ AJ
 ♥ Q83
 ♦ K10982
 ♣ A62
 ♠ K1095
 ♥ A54
 ♦ J
 ♣ KQJ97

Yes, 3NT is a lot better from partner's side. Still, it's too late to worry about that now. Pity partner didn't rebid 1NT – oh well.

What's going on in the hearts? RHO may have made a Weak Jump Overcall with six, but that's a straw in the wind. LHO may have 109 doubleton, which would help to block the suit, but that's wishful thinking. More likely is that LHO has 10x and RHO KJ9xx. There's certainly no point in putting up the queen at trick one.

There are not all that many outstanding high cards. ♠Q, ♥KJ, ♦AQ. A lot will depend on our opinion as to who has the ace of diamonds.

Let's assign the ♦A to LHO. In that case RHO has overcalled 1♥ on:

♠ Qxx
 ♥ KJ9xx
 ♦ xxx
 ♣ xx

and may have the ♦Q as well. Is that a 1♥ overcall? Certainly, for aggressive players. Nearly a Weak Jump Overcall, for others. Is RHO of that persuasion? We don't know. Unfortunately, it's the first board of the set, and we don't know the opposition's habits.

If LHO has the ♦A, we need to duck a round of hearts. If the defence play a second round (which they will) we can win. We have a heart and five clubs

(assuming they are not 5-0); we will need three spade tricks, but without letting RHO in. So we play a spade to the ace and run the jack. If this loses to LHO, he will (as long as the 1♥ overcall is on five) not have a heart to return. He will probably play a low diamond, but we have based our play up to this point on the assumption that he has the ♦A, so we are not going to change our mind now. We put up the king – slightly anxiously, perhaps.

If RHO has the ♦A, however, a different line of play presents itself. We can win the ace immediately – this means that our ♥Q8 in dummy is a stopper, as long as LHO doesn't get in. As before, we need three spade tricks – but we don't want to lose the finesse to LHO. So we play an immediate spade to the jack. If this loses, RHO can do no damage.

Well, which to go for? If only we could know. This was the complete deal:

♠ AJ
 ♥ Q83
 ♦ K10982
 ♣ A62

♠ Q8642	♠ 73
♥ 106	♥ KJ972
♦ 754	♦ AQ63
♣ 1043	♣ 85

♠ K1095
 ♥ A54
 ♦ J
 ♣ KQJ97

At the table, declarer chose to duck the first two hearts, winning the ace on the third round. She now ran five club tricks, which looks tempting, but relies on the ♠Q dropping doubleton. After taking a spade finesse, declarer can't get back to hand – the entries are in clubs, and they

have gone. So declarer tried a diamond, but East had the setting trick.

The contract was also 3NT at the other table, but played by North; ten straightforward tricks on a heart lead.

♣♦♥♠

The auction was simple on this hand: 1NT-3NT. LHO led the jack of spades, RHO playing the king.

♠ 86
♥ J7
♦ Q4
♣ AKJ8643

♠ AQ5
♥ K843
♦ A985
♣ 52

Well, what lovely clubs. But there are four missing; we don't want to go for a 2-2 break, as dummy has no definite entries outside the club suit. At pairs, we

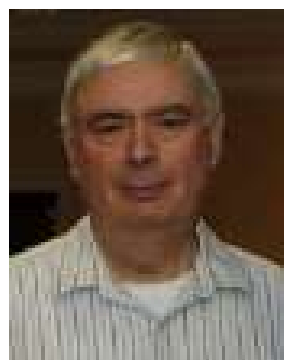
might try for the 2-2 break, as that will be an excellent score; a bit risky at teams, though.

If we duck a club we have six club tricks; together with the ♠AQ and the ♦A, that's nine. So we lead a club, with the intention of ducking. LHO plays the queen. Well, that's nice; we have seven club tricks, plus the other three; we might even make a heart trick for plus two. Declarer rose with the ace of clubs, and watched unbelievably as RHO showed out. LHO had played the queen of clubs from an original holding of Q1097. Correct is to duck the queen, of course; easier said than done. To cater for a possible 4-0 division, we don't even finesse the jack. We play a low club. If RHO shows out, we can finesse the jack next round. Well done to the defender who spotted the club position and gave declarer a losing option, all in perfect tempo. Not a bad player, my brother.

Indian Summer

by Paul Lamford

As the editor told me she was short of copy for the next issue, I was happy to step into the breach. I have enjoyed the various online games, particularly playing for London in the Tollemache, and so I thought it might be good to see if there were any interesting hands in recent months played by my partner in that event, David Burn. I had noticed that (as I write) his team, with Heather Dhondy, Sally Brock, Barry Myers, Fiona Brown, Richard Granville, Joe Fawcett and Frank To, was leading the latest Lockdown League Division 1 by a country mile.



I often wonder why it is a country mile. The concept is mentioned in Frederick de Kruger's poem *The Villager's Tale* in 1829:

*The travelling stage had set me down
Within a mile of you church-town
Wats long indeed, a country mile.*

I did notice that David was averaging over one imp a board in July and about half that in June. Soon Mr Hammond will be after him. The other thing I noticed was his grand adventures with several occurring in the two months – variously making, failing, unmakeable or missed grands. See if you can do better.

Firstly one possible grand against him:

E	anthonygol
♠	AKJ
♥	Q52
♦	AQ73
♣	AK8

It is game all and partner opens 1♦ which is balanced 11-13 or natural 10-16, precision style.

You bid 2NT which is 16+ balanced, Baron and partner bids 3♦ which is any minimum. What now? It is the first half of a 24-board London League match.

♣♦♥♠

The second decision is at game all, when you are partnering David Burn in one of the ALT events against two very strong Poles, Klukowski and Zatorski. You have not had a good set so far.

S	mdgraham
♠	AK
♥	A7543
♦	KQ102
♣	AJ

At game all you are third in hand. The auction, uncontested, goes:

P-1♥-2♣-3♦ (natural, but old fashioned)-4♦-4♠ (cue)-4NT (RKCB)-5♣ (4)-5NT (GS try). What do you bid now?

♣♦♥♠

N	dburn
♠	AKJ109765
♥	QJ87
♦	7
♣	
S	mdgraham
♠	2
♥	AK932
♦	A10
♣	KQJ62

On the next hand, the play is the point. The grand is excellent, but not cold:

Again the auction is uncontested. 1♥-2♠ (Nat, FG)-3♣-3♥-4♦ (cue)-4NT-5♦ (3)-7♥. West leads the ace of clubs which is surely good

news, but has it helped? Plan the play, as they say.

♣♦♥♠

Fed up with Mike Graham being declarer, you take over the mantle in yet another grand, playing this time with Richard Granville. He likes system much more than Mike Graham.

W	dburn	E	rgba3
♠	Q10	♠	AK93
♥	AQJ86	♥	
♦	A92	♦	KQJ106
♣	1063	♣	AKJ4

Against Nick Sandqvist and his delightful partner Nathalie Shashou, the auction is scientific and uncontested, with West again dealer.

1♣ (clubs, balanced or spades) -2♣ (FG with 5+ diamonds) -2♠ (balanced; 4-5 hearts not 4 spades) -3♣ (natural!) -3♥ (five hearts) -3♠ (undiscussed) -4♦ -7♦.

So how do you play it on the six of spades lead?

♣♦♥♠

And a final potential grand in which you are playing with your wife in the Woodberry weekly duplicate pairs, which is quite a good event. Again the auction is uncontested and this is your hand,

E	dburn
♠	AQ874
♥	A5
♦	QJ863
♣	A

No chance this time of the scientific auction to 7♦ you had with Richard Granville. At love all, partner deals and it begins 1♦-1♠-2♣. How would you plan the auction, without complicating matters unduly? If you bid 2♥ that will be game-forcing and partner will bid 3♣ over that.

♣♦♥♠

Grand Adventures

The first was a blow, but you survive it and recover to win the London League match by 24:

7		N dburn	W N E S
		♠ Q865	P P P P
		♥ 1074	1♦ P 2NT P
		♦ 42	3♦ P 7NT P
		♣ J752	P P P P
W Francis M		E anthonygol	
♠ 10942		♠ AKJ	
♥ AK8		♥ Q52	
♦ KJ95		♦ AQ73	
♣ Q10		♣ AK8	
	S heatherd		
	♠ 73		
	♥ J963		
	♦ 1086		
	♣ 9643		
		7NT E	NS: 0 EW: 0

As can be seen, grand is about 50%. Well 53% as a stiff queen of spades with South will do. Nothing ventured nothing gained, as they say. Given that you are playing a stronger team, this is a reasonable punt, although you could easily be off the ace of hearts.

♣♦♥♠

The next one was, strangely, flat in a no-play 7♦-1:

13		N dburn	W N E S
		♠ 65	P P P 1♥
		♥ Q8	P 2♠ P 3♦
		♦ A765	P 4♦ P 4♠
		♣ KQ974	P 4NT P 5♣
W Skrzat96		E dzeronimo	
♠ QJ8742		♠ 1093	
♥ J1096		♥ K2	
♦ 84		♦ J93	
♣ 10		♣ 86532	
	S mdgraham		
	♠ AK		
	♥ A7543		
	♦ KQ102		
	♣ AJ		
		7♦ S	NS: 0 EW: 0

I think that in accepting the grand slam try Mike was a bit optimistic here as partner is a passed hand. North opened in the other room, so reaching grand was more understandable.

Partner could just about have xx Kx AJxx Kxxxx I suppose, but as Bob Hamman says, "Don't play me for

perfect cards; I never have them!" Partner has a maximum and grand is still 0%. Well the 3% of a singleton K♥.

♣♦♥♠

6		N dburn	W N E S
		♠ AKJ109765	P P P 1♥
		♥ QJ87	P 2♠ P 3♣
		♦ 7	P 3♥ P 4♦
		♣	P 4NT P 5♠
W patr1cks		E DanMac	
♠ Q		♠ 843	
♥ 10654		♥	
♦ KQ986		♦ J5432	
♣ A54		♣ 109873	
	S mdgraham		
	♠ 2		
	♥ AK932		
	♦ A10		
	♣ KQJ62		
		7♥ S	NS: 0 EW: 0

West led the ace of clubs which seemed to give declarer an easy ride. Mrs Guggenheim would draw trumps and when the spades behave she would make lot of overtricks. Mike drew one round of trumps and ruffed a diamond in dummy and found that he could no longer make the contract! It seems that you just have to rely on the spades to come in, with or without the A♣ lead, so declarer was led up the garden path, but only a short one, and certainly not a country mile.

This phrase is more recent, from the early twentieth century: "On a pleasant walk, the less than honorable suitor leads the heiress or pretty young thing up a secluded garden path, where he whispers sweet, persuasive somethings in her ear."

Poor Mike got egg on his face when there was no longer a way home. And no, I am not researching that idiom, save to say that Lord Chalfont reflected in 'The Times' of London in 1972: 'There is something reassuringly changeless about the capacity of the highest military authorities for getting egg on their face.'

David made no mistake with this grand as declarer:

<div>7</div>		<div>N nicksan</div> <div>♠ 65</div> <div>♥ 109542</div> <div>♦ 87</div> <div>♣ Q972</div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div>1♠ P 2♠ P</div> <div>2♥ P 3♠ P</div> <div>3♥ P 3♠ P</div> <div>4♥ P 7♥ P</div>
<div>W dburn</div> <div>♠ Q10</div> <div>♥ AQJ86</div> <div>♦ A92</div> <div>♣ 1063</div>		<div>E rrgb3</div> <div>♠ AK93</div> <div>♥</div> <div>♦ KQJ106</div> <div>♣ AKJ4</div>	
	<div>S tigger5</div> <div>♠ J8742</div> <div>♥ K73</div> <div>♦ 543</div> <div>♣ 85</div>		<div>7♥ W NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

North led the six of spades and West won the jack with the queen, drew two rounds of trumps and cashed two more rounds of spades discarding a club from West. When North did not have the third trump he was home, but he would have also made it if spades had been 4-3 so I think this was the right (and winning) line.

♣♦♥♠

I think that one should expect 0.5 making grands in a set of 24 boards, so David certainly experienced his fair share in the summer. I hope he will continue to win one IMP per board when he next plays with me!

The last was taking simplicity too far:

<div>8</div>		<div>N mkek07</div> <div>♠ J632</div> <div>♥ K10764</div> <div>♦ 75</div> <div>♣ 94</div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div>1♦ P 1♠ P</div> <div>2♣ P 6♦ P</div> <div>P P</div>
<div>W Ashborn</div> <div>♠</div> <div>♥ QJ2</div> <div>♦ AK1094</div> <div>♣ KJ632</div>		<div>E dburn</div> <div>♠ AQ874</div> <div>♥ A5</div> <div>♦ QJ863</div> <div>♣ A</div>	
	<div>S fpldn</div> <div>♠ K1095</div> <div>♥ 983</div> <div>♦ 2</div> <div>♣ Q10875</div>		<div>6♦ W NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

I think I would just bid 2♥ on the second round on the East hand, and over 3♣ bid 3♦ setting the suit. Now I think 3NT-4NT should be RKCB in diamonds and when David finds 2 opposite then it must be right to bid grand. That makes easily enough without the heart finesse.

But 6♦ making was a little over 50% so maybe one should never bid grands in duplicates.

Implausible Auctions

by Brian Callaghan

Sometimes you want to persuade your opponents not to sacrifice against your proposed contract. If you can conduct, either by luck or design, an auction that suggests that you don't know what you are doing, you are more likely to be left undisturbed. Our team benefited from this effect on a couple of slam deals in the recent online London Congress Swiss Teams.

On deal 18, the first exhibit, partner, in fourth seat at "red" (vulnerable versus not to those in my cohort), picked up

♠ K98
♥ A9
♦ 5
♣ AQJ9432

after the auction had started (1♥) double (2♥). Visions of a club slam beckoned and it would be nice if 3♣ were forcing, but it isn't. However, opener was an international with a reputation for creative bidding to uphold, so partner relied on him to keep



the auction alive and tried a heavy 3♣ anyway.

Sure enough, opener called 4NT, RKCB, with a surprise club void and heard a 5♦ response showing 0 or 3 key cards. With no room for investigation partner decided to bid 6♣ and, since the auction didn't add up, opener doubled and led a top diamond.

The full deal was

♠ K98	
♥ A9	
♦ 5	
♣ AQJ9432	
♠ J743	♠ 65
♥ 8762	♥ KJ10543
♦ 32	♦ AKQ86
♣ 1065	♣ –
♠ AQ102	
♥ Q	
♦ J10974	
♣ K87	

so we scored up 1540 when the opponents could have taken a sacrifice costing no more than 500. Meanwhile, at the other table teammates had saved over 5♣ but declined to do so again over 6♣. Still, that was 5 IMPs to us.

♣♦♥♠

In a reversal of roles later, on deal 28, I was the one in fourth seat again at “red” holding

♠ AKJ1072
♥ AJ876
♦ –
♣ 43

after the auction around the table had begun (1♦) 1♥ (double). I fancied our chances in a heart slam if we could

avoid a club lead. Maybe I should have called 6♥ immediately, but this kind of auction tells the opponents you are prepared for their suit. Maybe a psychic 4♣ cue bid was in order, but they might double.

Unable to decide, I passed awaiting developments and heard 3♦ on my left which came back round. Now a club call would be taken as natural so I bid the 6♥ I always had in mind. My left hand opponent then spoiled the plot by very decently offering to let me withdraw my obviously mistaken bid. I had to admit that my 6♥ was intentional, at which point the opponents might have smelt enough of a rat to press on with a cheap save. (7♣ to indicate a lead would avoid a grand slam accident.)

But they let us play, and with trumps divided 2–1 partner had no need to risk a spade finesse for the contract.

The full deal was:

♠ 93	
♥ KQ543	
♦ 987	
♣ KJ9	
♠ 5	♠ Q864
♥ 9	♥ 102
♦ AQJ6432	♦ K105
♣ A1076	♣ Q852
♠ KJ1072	
♥ AJ876	
♦ –	
♣ 43	

At the other table teammates picked a good moment to open 5♦. The player with my hand doubled then guessed reasonably to leave his partner's 5♥; we gained 13 IMPs on the deal.

Even with all this good fortune we were never in contention with the winners. Congratulations to Nick Stevens, Clive Owen, Trevor Ward and David Kendrick who finished over a match clear of the field.

Congratulations ...

to the following LMBA members who have done well in national and international events over the last few months.



In the trials in February, **Nathalie Shashoua** (*left*) came second (playing with Sally Brock), thus qualifying to play for England in the Lady Milne, which the England women went on to win.



In the Spring Foursomes, the main event was won by **Simon Gillis** (*right*), playing with a team of Norwegians.



The losing semi-finalists were two mainly London teams:

Mike Bell, Ollie Burgess, Kieran Dyke and Tim Leslie and

Janet de Botton, Artur Malinowski, Thor Erik Hoftaniska, Tom Townsend and David Bakhshi.

In the Hamilton Cup the same weekend, **Nick Sandqvist** and **Nathalie Shashoua** came second.



The final of the 2020 Hubert Phillips Bowl, the national Mixed Pivot teams KO, was played in February this year, in which the team of **Janet de Botton, Artur Malinowski, Thor Erik Hoftaniska, Tom Townsend and David Bakhshi** were runners-up.



In the Ranked Masters Pairs in February, **Sara Moran** (*left*) (playing with Claire Robinson) won the National Masters event and **Jonathan Lillycrop** and **Dan Cardnell** came second.

In the Masters Pairs, **Andrew** and **Thomas Bradkin** came second – a fine achievement for the brothers aged 12 and 14.



At the Easter Festival there were several successes for London players:

In the Championship Pairs, **Ollie Burgess** and **Susanna Gross** narrowly missed victory, finishing in second place by just 0.01%.

The Swiss Teams was won by **Simon Gillis** and team.

James Cater was second in the Junior Pairs.

Peter Taylor (playing with Richard Hillman) won the Swiss Pairs, while **Stefano Tommasini** (playing with Imogen la Chapelle) was equal third.



At the Lambourne Jersey Festival, **Gilly Cardiff** won the Mixed Pairs and **Nigel Bird** was third in the Swiss Pairs.

In the Portland Pairs, the national Mixed Pairs championship, **Nigel Bird** was second and **Sarah Bell** was third.

In the National Swiss Teams in May, **Nick Sandqvist** and **Nathalie Shashou** came third in the A final.

At the Spring Bank Holiday Congress, **Sara Moran** came second in the Championship Pairs and **Martin Baker** came second in the Swiss Pairs.

John Matheson came second in the Swiss Teams at the Summer Seniors Congress in July



In the Portland Bowl, the inter-University teams KO, Imperial College came third, with the team including **Li Yeoh** and **Ryan Tan**.

The Schools Cup played in March was won by Eton College for the first time since 1966, the inaugural year for the competition. The winning team included **Andrew Bradkin**, whilst **James Cater** was a member of the second-placed Haberdashers' Aske's team.

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