

Ireland v Anglo-American Team

Exhibition Match at the Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin — 1957

Featuring Charles H. Goren, Helen Sobel, Ewart Kempson, Major Geoffrey Fell, and Ireland's leading internationals.

Compiled from original newspaper reports

Exhibition Match

Dr. F. McMENAMIN has shown much enterprise, and great credit is due to him for arranging a match to be played at the Shelbourne Hotel on next Wednesday and Thursday. A team of Irish international players will oppose a strong American-British combination, consisting of Mrs. H. Sobel and Charles Goren (America) with Capt. Ewart Kempson and Major G. Fell (Britain). Every bridge player in this country has heard or read about Goren, and his partner, Mrs. Sobel, is reckoned to be one of the best woman-players in the world. The Irish team is: T. D. Purcell, J. J. Bastow, J. A. Kelly, G. F. Read, Dr. R. Belton, Dr. M. Shrage, and Mrs. F. McMenamin. There will be two sessions of play on each day (3.30 p.m. and 8.30 p.m.), and the aim is to play a total of 100 boards.

Contract Bridge Exhibition

The home team got away to a flying start in the contract bridge exhibition-match between Captain Ewart Kempson's team (Capt. Kempson, Capt.), Major G. Fell (Britain) and C. H. Goren and Mrs. H. Sobel (U.S.A.) and Dr. F. McMenamin's team of Irish international players. At the end of the first session of 24 boards, the Irish team held a lead of 2,000 points. In the open room, Goren and Mrs. Sobel (N/S) opposed J. J. Bastow and T. D. Purcell while in the closed room J. A. Kelly and Dr. R. Belton were in the N/S seats against Kempson and Fell. The opening boards were evenly exchanged and nothing seriously happened until Kempson and Fell slammed a hand in spades that was not "on" and with Bastow and Purcell in a safe game, the Dublin team gained a swing of 750. At the end of twelve hands the visitors were 1,100 points in arrears. For the second set of twelve boards Goren and Mrs. Sobel switched to the closed room against Kelly and Belton. In the other room Kempson and Fell found new opposition in the personnel of G. F. Read and Dr. M. Shrage. Again slam hands proved the turning point, and Kelly did well to guess correctly in a six-club contract. Fell, in the other room, was reduced to a similar problem in the heart suit, but he was wrong in his guess and the home team swung a further 970 points. Fell was not at his best and besides guessing wrongly in the slam contract, he was at fault in other hands which gave swings to the Dublin team. The match is being played at the Shelbourne Hotel, and two further sessions (at 3.30 p.m. and 8.30 p.m.) will be played to-day. The result will be determined over a total of 84 boards. In the session after dinner Captain Kempson's team had matters much their own way at board No. 38, and the lead by the home team was reduced to a mere 60 points. The visiting team continued to have the upper hand for the remaining ten boards which concluded play for last evening, making a total of 48 boards. On the last two hands, board 47 and 48 contained a grand slam for N/S in one

case, and E/W in the other. Board 47 was shared because neither partnership went beyond five level. On board 48 the American combination, Charles Goren and Mrs. Sobel beat the par-contract of seven hearts, while Kelly and Belton stayed in six hearts to lose the swing of the board. The visiting team hold an overnight lead of 920 points.

Visiting Team Win Exhibition

Having wiped out an arrear of 2,000 points at the end of the first session of 24 boards, Ewart Kempson's team were never in any further danger, and eventually scored a fully-deserved win over Dr. F. McMenamin's local team by a margin of 3,840 points, in the exhibition Contract Bridge match at the Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin, last night. The competing teams were: Capt. E. Kempson's — Ewart Kempson and Major G. Fell (Britain); C. H. Goren and Mrs. H. Sobel (U.S.A.) Dr. F. McMenamin's — T. D. Purcell, Mrs. F. McMenamin, J. J. Bastow, J. A. Kelly, Dr. R. Belton, Dr. M. Shrage and G. F. Read. With an overnight lead of 920 points at the end of 48 boards, Kempson's team put on the highest pressure, and mid-way through the first session yesterday afternoon the growing total had ascended to 3,390 points. The Irish team could be faulted for this increased score against them. On Board No. 52, Kelly and Belton were opposed to Goren and Mrs. Sobel, and the Irish pair played the hand in a bad contract of six hearts down, two tricks—200 points. Further Reverse The corresponding pair in the other room—Kempson and Fell—stayed in the par contracts of three no-trumps, and the total swing on the board was 860 points to the visitors. A further reverse to the Irish team came on Board No. 53. Again the opposition were in the par-game, but the home players got out of their depth in a five-heart contract that could not have been made. This board gave another big swing of 790 points to Kempson. A well bid slam in diamonds by Goren and Mrs. Sobel on Board No. 57 increased the deficit and the score in their favour at Board 60 was 3,390 points. There was a temporary revival by Dr. McMenamin's team on Boards 61–72. In Room 1, Bastow and Kelly opposed Kempson and Fell. Kempson got into serious trouble on a part-score hand which he played in two hearts (doubled) for a loss of 800 points. Small Slam A few boards later Bastow and Kelly bid and made a small slam which gave another substantial swing to the home team. At Board No. 72 the visitors' lead had been reduced to 2,200 points. In an effort to turn the tide on the last set of 16 hands, the Irish players were over-bidding their cards. It was reasonable tactics in the circumstances, but their aggression failed to find fruit and the winners' lead gradually ascended until it reached the final total of 3,840 points.

Many Points Hinged Upon a Guess

By Philip Quinn

The theory of probabilities is of the greatest help in the calculation of chances as to the division of outstanding honour-cards in the unseen hands. It is, of course, necessary to apply these mathematical chances as a general guide only and room should be made for their modification, if more precise information is available to the declarer. There is the further point that a gnawing hunch may prove superior to blind numbers. In situations where the declarer has to speculate upon the position of two outstanding honour-cards in a suit, the mathematical table tells us that they will be divided 52 times in 100 deals and that both missing honours can be expected to be in one hand on the other 48 occasions. The point is relevant to the deal set out below which arose in this week's exhibition match played between teams captained by Ewart Kempson and Dr. F. McMenamin. The latter's side gained a swing of 970 points on the board and the issue depended entirely on securing two tricks out of the heart suit.

North (Read / Sobel)

♠ 10 8 5 2
♥ K J 4 2
♦ 9 7 5
♣ 6 2

West (Kempson / Belton)

♠ 9 4
♥ Q 10 6
♦ A Q J 4
♣ K Q 9 5

East (Fell / Kelly)

♠ A
♥ A 8 7 5
♦ K 8 3
♣ A J 10 7 4

South (Shrage / Goren)

♠ K Q J 7 6 3
♥ 9 5
♦ 10 6 2
♣ 8 3

Plus reminder this record for the deal shown is Hand 17 as played in 1957. For 1925 they have been changed to adjust to present standard, i.e. North dealer on Board 1.

Bidding – Room 1 (Read & Shrage vs Kempson & Fell)

West	North	East	South
—	1♦	No	3♣
No	4♣	No	4♥
No	6♣	No	End

Bidding – Room 2 (Sobel & Goren vs Kelly & Belton)

West	North	East	South
—	1♦	No	2♣
No	3♣	No	3NT
No	4♣	No	6♣

In Room 1 (Read & Shrage vs Kempson & Fell), Fell led the ♥A early; the contract was defeated once East's ♥KJ sat over dummy's queen-ten. In Room 2 (Sobel & Goren vs Kelly & Belton), Goren guessed correctly — leading low to the ♥10 and later playing the ♥8 from hand — and brought home the contract. The result was a lucky one for the Dublin team, and a harsh result for the visitors to lose almost 1,000 points on a guess. Both East players discarded the ♥2 at the first opportunity. This was an effort by the defence to suggest that East had little or no interest in the outcome of the heart suit. Goren read the discard as a bluff, and found support for his view in the fact that West had, by his opening lead, shown some top-card strength in spades. The losing declarer's treatment of the situation had merit inasmuch as the play of the ♥A would have resolved his problem if West or East had had a singly-guarded honour in the suit.