



OXFORDSHIRE BRIDGE COMMUNITY NEWS DECEMBER 2025

INTRODUCTION TO OUR FIRST ISSUE

This news is produced by The Oxfordshire Bridge Association (OBA) for the benefit of all bridge players, whether or not members of OBA, and all bridge clubs, whether or not affiliated to the English Bridge Union (EBU). We recognise that people play the game for many reasons, maybe just competitive or just social or for a mixture of the two. But we all have a shared interest in preserving our wonderful game and enabling new players to take it up. It is in this spirit of mutual interest that we would like to take this forward and we invite your help to do this. **Please do write to the editor** at EditorOBANews@gmail.com with suggestions for future news sheets or submit your own bridge-related article for inclusion.

CIRCULATION

We are circulating this to all OBA members as well as to the contacts we have for clubs that are not affiliated to the EBU. Please would these clubs forward this to their members. **If individual members would like to be added to our mailing list for future issues** please could they register their interest with our editor EditorOBANews@gmail.com.

WHERE TO PLAY

We know of 43 distinct clubs playing in and around Oxfordshire, of which 20 are affiliated to the EBU. Details of where and when the latter 20 hold duplicates can be found on the OBA website, together with contact details for these clubs. For anyone seeking a game of bridge in the county we would very much like to include all the sessions and contact details of the other 23 clubs. Please send appropriate details to our website manager obacomp@gmail.com.

INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION

We congratulate Diana Nettleton and Abbey Smith on being included in England's two women's teams in the recent European Champions Cup.

Diana tells of the team spirit and fun they had and of their shared grief following the loss of Susanna Gross, originally due to play with Abbey but who sadly passed away after a long illness shortly before their departure.

Here is a hand which illustrates the fine margin between success and failure.

<p>Board 29. Dealer North. All Vulnerable.</p>

	♠ K T ♥ J 5 2 ♦ 5 2 ♣ Q J T 9 6 5	
♠ 8 ♥ K T ♦ A K J T 3 ♣ A 8 7 3 2		♠ A J 9 7 6 4 ♥ A Q 8 4 3 ♦ Q 8 ♣ -
	♠ Q 5 3 2 ♥ 9 7 6 ♦ 9 7 6 4 ♣ K 4	

Both 7D and 7H can be made, the former with one club ruff and the latter with one spade ruff. As both depend upon a 3-3 division in the defenders' hearts neither grand slam is the contract of choice. In practice out of 24 tables just five bid the small slam and one the grand, with the rest in game.

Diana's partner, Sally Brock, opened the East hand 1S, Diana bid 2D, Sally 2H, Diana 3C (fourth suit forcing), doubled by North, Sally 3H, Diana 4H, Sally 6H. This moved Diana's team up to a semi-final position from which they went on to take the silver medal. Well done Diana and her team.

Abbey and her new partner, Sally Anoyrkatis, could only watch as their opponents bid to 7H, reversing the course of this match and leaving their team fighting to just avoid the wooden spoon by winning their last match. Sometimes as a bridge player you just have to accept that it is not your day.

COMPETITIONS

The OBA runs a number of competitions scheduled in our calendar. For most but not all of these you will need to be or become a member of the English Bridge Union. Some are for OBA members only whereas others require you to be an Associate member of the OBA, this being free to members of the English Bridge Union.

We would particularly mention the inter-club leagues that we run each year, where clubs can agree to play online or face to face and which are open to all clubs to enter, whether or not affiliated. We also have a new event starting in early 2026, the face to face Mercian League, which can be entered by any group of four players, not necessarily from the same club.

RECENT COUNTY EVENTS

Congratulations to **Barbara Antrobus** and **Sue Waddington** who won the **OBA Handicap Pairs** event in early November. Also to **Mike Ribbins** and **Peter Hawkes** who crossed the border from Berks and Bucks to take the **OBA Swiss Pairs Championship** earlier this month. If you win an event please do write up the story of a hand that contributed to your victory and send it to EditorOBANews@gmail.com so that we can publish it here.

FUTURE CLUB EVENTS

If your club has an event open to non-members coming up that you would like publicised please advise the editor EditorOBANews@gmail.com. We are thinking of the type of

event Kings Sutton Bridge Club ran recently which featured 18 teams drawn from both affiliated and unaffiliated clubs.

COUNTY TEAM

Oxfordshire was represented in The Tollemache Qualifier (the national county championship) by Alan Wilson and Nick Smith, Ian Angus and Tom Rainforth, Matthew Covill and Chris Wilson, Priit Vohandu and Jaak Kand. The first 4 counties in each of two groups of 15 were to qualify for the final early next year. Oxfordshire was in a qualifying position right up until the last round. Three boards from the end these two hands appeared: xxx, KQT9x, x, J9xx opposite Axx, A, AKxx, AQxxx. Only 6 pairs out of 28 reached the excellent 6C slam, but when two of these were our opponents, the North East, and neither of our pairs got past 3NT we dropped from 4th to 8th position. How often do you want to be in a slam with only 26 points between the two hands? You might like to discuss how you and your partner would have bid these. One of the Oxfordshire sequences was 2NT (20-22) - 3D (transfer to hearts) - 3H - 3NT and it is hard to argue with any of those bids. Our other Oxfordshire pair also bid the hand without discovering the club fit but at this stage we needed to find 6C at both tables to qualify for the final.

We continue to put out monthly teams in the Midlands Inter-County leagues. This season is now three matches old and we have had varying degrees of success with the C Team leading the way - more details in future news sheets. There are opportunities for newer players to play in the inter-county matches in the NGS 9 or below team on the same dates.