

# GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2021-22

April 2022

## GCBA RESULTS

Series 14 of the 9-High Swiss Pairs has now completed. The winners are Pauline Mussi & Jonathan Bailey (the first pair to have a third win) , with Martyn Moxley & Neville Shorrick in second place.

Spring Swiss Teams - April 4<sup>th</sup>  
1<sup>st</sup> Jim Simons, Patrick Phair, Mel Barlow, John Arblaster.  
**WHO ARE ALSO OVERALL SERIES WINNERS.**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Graham Cornell, Joe Angseesing, Val Constable and Andrew Kambites  
3<sup>rd</sup> Mark and James Rogers, Alan Wearmouth, Peter Waggett

The Bi-weekly GCBA Swiss Teams has reached the final stages, with the teams being placed in groups according to their ranking after match five. The overall ranking will be determined by a series of round robin matches between the teams in each group.

In the County leagues, Patrick Shields' team leads Division One, with Rob Lawy running a close second. Allan Sanis' team and John Stirrup's team lead the other divisions.

## MIDLAND COUNTIES ON-LINE LEAGUES

The three leagues have now completed their matches. In the season's finale against Worcestershire, wins were recorded by all three Gloucestershire teams. Many congratulations to the Porter team, who won their league, and also to the Markham team for finishing runners-up in their league. The Dawes team came fourth.

## COUNTY PROGRAMME May-Aug 2022

The plan is to run games on all Mondays except for the two Bank Holidays, and the games will be Pairs League on the second and fourth Mondays, and all-play-all Multiple Teams on the other Mondays.

The collection of 16 Mondays all comes together as a single Summer Championship, with separate running scores for individuals, pairs and teams. You can participate in as many sessions as you like – the only constraint we need to impose is that [ctd@gcba.org.uk](mailto:ctd@gcba.org.uk) knows of any changes of plans for the Pairs League (new pairs, missed sessions) to enable the organisation of those games to proceed smoothly.

Three of the four Mondays each month will be online (BBO for Pairs, RealBridge for teams) but EVERY THIRD MONDAY the game will be live at Cheltenham Bridge Club (and that session starts at 1900 hrs, half an hour earlier than online). If you need help to find team-mates for any of the events, do ask.

You can score points towards the Summer Championship on any evening, with 4 points available for first place in any of the online games, and 8 points available for first place in any of the live events.

The AGM of the County Association (and an associated Pairs game) will be held on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June; the decision on live or online has yet to be made – please tell us what you think would be best.

## TREASURER VACANCY

Under the GCBA constitution, Officers may only serve for a period of 3 consecutive years and hence there will be a forthcoming vacancy for the position of Treasurer. Duties include the collection of monies due to the Association, the payment of accounts, and appropriate record keeping and reporting. Any interested party should contact the GCBA Secretary Patrick Shields for more information.

## LOOK AT THE SPOTS

Spot cards (those below a ten) often play a vital role in the game. See how you can put them to work in the following slam hand from a recent Crockfords match.

	♠ AK985	
	♥ AT	
	♦ AK8542	
	♣	
♠ 4		♠ QT732
♥ QJ7542	6♦ by	♥ K
♦ 63	South	♦ T
♣ K854		♣ AQJT72
	♠ J6	
	♥ 9863	
	♦ QJ97	
	♣ 963	

South	West	North	East
			1♣
Pass	2♦	X	2♥
Pass	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♦	Pass	6♦	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West's 2♦ showed a Weak Two in a major (hearts when he passed on the next round). How do you play on a spade lead? Bear in mind you can't see all four hands. It looks like ruffing two spades in hand will be enough, so you win the lead, draw two rounds of trumps and cash a second top spade. West discards.

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Once the spades are 5-1, setting up the fifth spade is no longer possible. But remember the bidding – you know the hearts are 6-1. Simply hope that West's singleton is one of the honours and play 2 rounds of hearts. You then have the 98 of hearts left in hand whilst West only has one heart of winning rank. A ruffing finesse in hearts now provides your twelfth trick using spade ruffs as entries. If you missed this line, you are in good company. The international player at the table suffered a similar blind spot.

## IMPROVER'S CORNER

Defence is undoubtedly the most difficult aspect of the game, but there are some basic steps you can take to improve your defensive success. Consider this hand.

♠ J7654  
♥ J3  
♦ AKJT  
♣ T7

♠ KQT932  
♥ AT           5♣ by  
♦ 95            South  
♣ K86

South	West	North	East
1♣	1♠	1NT	2♥
5♣	Pass	Pass	Pass

Firstly, what should you lead? I don't like leading unsupported Aces and on this hand, I am likely to be getting in again with the club King, so there is no need to cash quick heart tricks. The ♠K looks a natural and obvious lead, potentially setting up a spade trick to go with our other two top winners. Declarer ruffs the first trick in hand, crosses to a diamond in dummy, and runs the ten of clubs round to you. You might choose to duck this but it hardly matters because you will soon

be put in with the King of clubs and you have reached the critical point in defence. How do you continue?

Many players of all standards would hope that partner has the ♥K (after all he did bid the suit) and play Ace and another heart. Well you might get lucky but this would be poor defence. If you take the trouble to count declarer's tricks, you see that he has a maximum of 6 club tricks and 4 diamond tricks (if he has 5 diamonds you can never beat the contract) and hence 5♣ can not succeed unless declarer can win a heart trick. If you win the King of clubs and exit with anything other than the Q♠ or A♥ then the contract will be defeated.

The full hand:

♠ J7654  
♥ J3  
♦ AKJT  
♣ T7

♠ KQT932           5♣ by  
♥ AT                South  
♦ 95  
♣ K86

♠ A8  
♥ Q98765  
♦ 8762  
♣ 2

♠  
♥ K42  
♦ Q54  
♣ AQJ9543

The key tip is when defending is to COUNT DECLARER'S TRICKS.

## MARCH PUZZLE SOLUTION

♠ 653  
♥ 92  
♦ K94  
♣ AJ532

6♠ by  
South

♠ AKJT82  
♥ AQ  
♦ AQ3  
♣ K6

West leads the ♦J. You win the Ace and play off two top trumps, finding out that West started with Q94. You play clubs, ruffing the third round whilst West discards a heart.

You had hoped that the clubs were 3-3 so that you could discard your heart, but now that chance has disappeared, can you do better than the heart finesse? Well of course if you had 2 more entries to dummy you could still set up and enjoy the long club. Your first thought might be to lead a low diamond to dummy's 9, but an alert West will insert the ten and thwart that plan. The winning line is to just exit with a trump at this point. West has no more black cards so must either lead a heart to your tenace or a diamond, which gives you the extra dummy entry you need to get the clubs established for a heart discard.

## APRIL TEASER

♠ K9743  
♥ AJ  
♦ JT9  
♣ AT3

♠ 5  
♥ KQ752           6♠ by  
♦ Q653            South  
♣ Q92

You lead the ♥K against the slam. Declarer wins with the Ace, leads a trump to hand, cashes ♦AK, then crosses to dummy with a trump (partner discarding a heart) and ruffs a diamond before exiting with the heart ten. You win and play?

## CHELTENHAM CONGRESS

This year's event sees a Swiss Pairs on April 30<sup>th</sup> and a Swiss Teams on May 1<sup>st</sup> – both being played on RealBridge and both Green Pointed. In addition, Friday 29<sup>th</sup> April sees a Gentle Pairs session played on BBO. Full details can be found [here](#).