

# GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2022-23

August 2023

## GCBA RESULTS

Series 22 of the 9-High Swiss Pairs is now well under way and the current leaders are Tony and Rosalind Reeves, just ahead of Angela Gatliff and Debra Barrett.

### Summer Open Teams 5.

1<sup>st</sup> Tom Jarman, Jack Armorgie, Paul Denning and Roy Collard.

2<sup>nd</sup> Peter Waggett, Ben Ritacca, Tony Hill and Alan Wearmouth.

### Summer Open Teams 6.

1<sup>st</sup> Val Constable, Mike Wignall, Patrick Phair and Patrick Shields.

2<sup>nd</sup> Peter Waggett, Joe Angseesing, Tony Hill and Alan Wearmouth.

### Summer Open Teams 7.

=1<sup>st</sup> Roger Eaton, Ted Phillips, Chris Healy & Mike Robinson.

=1<sup>st</sup> John Councer, Angelos Agathangelou, David Atthey and Alison Pritchard.

After the sixth and final session, the leading scores in the Summer Pairs League are

- Alastair Catchpole & Ashok Kwatra, joint with Arun Nanda & Toby Roberts on 30 points.
- Ben Ritacca & Peter Waggett on 29 points.

## ROSS-ON-WYE GREEN POINT CONGRESS

Many Gloucestershire players took part in this well supported weekend congress. Paul Denning and Kanwar Rahim finished joint second out of 58 pairs in the Swiss Pairs. In the Swiss teams Ben Ritacca and Peter Waggett were in the third placed team (from 28 teams) and Tony Hill and Alan Wearmouth were in the fourth. Congratulations to all those who took part.

## CHELTENHAM CONGRESS

A reminder that this year's Cheltenham Congress takes place on August 26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> at Dean Close School. The event features a Green Point Swiss Pairs on Saturday and a Green Point Swiss Teams on Sunday. There will also be a '9 High' Pairs event on the Sunday. [There is still time to enter.](#)

## YOUTH BRIDGE

After several years away, Youth Bridge, with the support of GCBA, has returned to Cheltenham Bridge Club this summer with five Saturday afternoons leading up to the end of term, and four Wednesdays during the school holidays.

A total of 28 children took part across the weeks, ranging from complete beginners to some with more experience. With support from a group of fantastic volunteers, they were taught in small groups, allowing for their different levels. Each Wednesday morning finished with a quiz, and a Minibrige duplicate competition was held in the afternoon, with prizes supplied by GCBA.

As a follow-up, seven of the children will be attending the national Youth Bridge Camp, being held in Northampton at the beginning of September.

If you have a child or grandchild who would like to join us, we will be back at Cheltenham Bridge Club on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September. For more information, please contact Jan Bailey, via [jan.bailey@gcba.org.uk](mailto:jan.bailey@gcba.org.uk) or tel: 07988 810990.

## CLUBS FORM NEW COOPERATIVE CLUSTER

Earlier this month GCBA met with representatives from four clubs: Tewksbury and Twyning and also from just across the border in Worcestershire, Bredon and Eckington.

The idea was to get to know each other better, review the current bridge situation in that neck of the woods and try to identify ways of working together to give the game a bit of a boost, as in these clubs overall table numbers have declined a bit and there is little or no teaching going on.

Tewkesbury provided the tea and GCBA a homemade cake.

An excellent and very friendly discussion was had that resulted in five action points for the clubs and GCBA, the first of which was carried out the same day and the others were underway just a couple of days later. This gives us all optimism for the future and demonstrates what can be achieved when ideas, experience and enthusiasm are shared. Areas addressed included Teaching, Advertising and Technology.

The point was made that although they are four small clubs, collectively they are a large one, with associated resources and multiple sessions.

GCBA will provide ongoing support where appropriate, but this new cluster of bridge clubs is now up and running.

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## WORLD YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS

Gloucestershire hosted a weekend practice game for the England Under-26 Women's squad back in March, and six of those players competed in the Netherlands in the 2023 World Championships. The team performed very well, reaching the quarter finals, before losing to Poland. The quarter final match started well for England but the tide turned when Poland bid a ridiculous Grand Slam which came home on a very fortunate lie of the cards while England stayed in the normal game contract. This board swung 25 IMPS (-14 not +11) and was a huge psychological blow in favour of the Poles. Congratulations to the girls on a fine performance overall.

## AUGUST PLAY PROBLEM

♠ A87542		♠ KQJ
♥ K3	7♠ by	♥ A9642
♦ KQ	West	♦ A87
♣ 764		♣ A9

North leads the ♣K against your slam. How do you plan the play?

## IMPROVER'S CORNER

Evaluating your hand by counting points is a good starting point for beginners but is not the full story. Consider this holding at favourable vulnerability.

♠7642 ♥QJ93 ♦Q8 ♣JT8

Partner opens 1♠ and the next player overcalls 2♥. You bid an obvious 2♠ and the bidding continues 4♥ - 4♠ - X. The defence accurately take their two diamond ruffs and you lose 500 when the full deal is as show in the next column.

♠ 7642		♠ 5
♥ QJ93		♥ T54
♦ Q8		♦ A9753
♣ JT8		♣ K743
♠ QT3	E/W	
♥ AK876	Vul	
♦ 6		
♣ A952		
♠ AKJ98		
♥ 2		
♦ KJT42		
♣ Q6		

You note that the 4♥ game had four inescapable losers, and whilst a more friendly break in the diamond suit would have limited the penalty in 4♠, 4♥ would then have been more down, so what went wrong?

South, with a weakish distributional hand, has a fairly clear-cut bid of 4♠, so the spotlight falls on North. You may think that bidding 2♠ on the first round was an automatic bid with 6 high card points and four card support but this is where judgement comes in. Your values are primarily defensive in nature, and it is obvious that you will do well defending a high level heart contract. If you pass the 2♥ overcall then future actions depend on what East does, but if he passes then the opener can always re-open with a double when short in hearts and now you can retreat to 2♠.

If opener does not reopen, then you are likely to do quite well out of defending a heart contract. Many players upgrade their point counts to make allowance for long suits or useful shortages, but you should be aware that you can deduct points for unsuitable holdings, and this is particularly true when holding spades at favourable vulnerability, as sacrificing may seem more logical in this position.

Minus points are honours in opponents suit and no honours in your own suit. Also, minor

honours (Queens and Jacks) are much more use in defence than attack and hence our given hand is worth nowhere near its 6 high card points. Contrast this with a holding such as:

♠QJ42 ♥932 ♦82 ♣T862

Now a raise to 2♠ is clear as you have no defence and would welcome a sacrifice from partner. To summarise, with clean values in support of partner, don't be afraid to bid up, but with minus points don't be too keen to get busy.

## SOLUTION TO JULY PROBLEM

♠ JT3		♠ AKQ
♥ AKJT842	4♥ by	♥ 7
♦ 62	West	♦ 53
♣ 4		♣ AQ76532

You get to game in hearts after North has opened the bidding with 1♦. North cashes two top diamonds and switches to a club. How do you play?

This looks like a trivial make so in those circumstances, you should always consider what could go wrong? You can afford to lose a trump trick so it looks normal to play trumps from the top, only losing 2 trump tricks if the suit breaks 5-0. But you need to be careful if North started with Q9xx of trumps and one club.

In that case when he wins the third trump, he will exit with a spade locking you on the table, with no way of getting to hand to draw the last trump (as a club will be over-ruffed).

The solution is not too difficult to find once you see the possible problem. You need to win the Ace of Clubs and cash a spade trick before playing the trumps. On the second and third round of trumps you discard two spades from dummy and North can no longer prevent you from getting to hand to draw the last trump.