

GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2022-23

Jan 2023

GCBA RESULTS

Series 18 of the 9-High Swiss Pairs was won by Ralph Brooks and Diana Davies, well ahead of David Knott and David Bruce – congratulations!

Autumn Teams 4 (F2F event)

Division 1

1st Ben Ritacca, Tony Hill, Alan Wearmouth, Peter Waggett.

2nd Colin Lennox, Pat Emery, John Jenkins, Ian Plewis.

Division 2

1st Garry Watson, Joe Angseesing, Mark Rogers and John Councer.

2nd Patrick Shields, Val Constable, Patrick Phair and Jim Simons.

Spring Teams 1 (F2F event)

Division 1

1st Garry Watson, Richard Butland, John Councer and Angelos Agathangelou.

2nd Patrick Shields, Val Constable, Patrick Phair and Jim Simons.

Division 2

1st Mike Robinson, Chris Healy, Ted Phillips and Roger Eaton.

=2nd Paul Lilley, Peter Swales, Lesley Harrison and Martin McWilliam [getting promotion on a split tie]

=2nd Ashok Kwatra, Roy Collard, Jack Armorgie and Tom Jarman.

Autumn County Leagues:

Div 1: Lawy then Butland.

Div 2: Sasanow then Roberts

Cleverly Div 1: Stroud Badgers then EDF/Glevum

Cleverly Div 2 : Thrubb then Lakesiders

The County Knock-Out is now underway and features the opportunity for teams beaten in round one to gain re-entry to the main event through a repechage arrangement.

MIDLAND COUNTIES LEAGUE

Gloucestershire teams played Warwickshire in the December round of the Midland Counties League. Our teams produced a mixed performance; the Dawes team won 14-6, the Porter team lost 8-12 and the Markham team lost 9-11. Current league standings show our teams lying first, fourth and second in their respective divisions.

NATIONAL TEAMS LEAGUE

The first season of this event has now concluded and teams featuring our Gloucestershire players finished second in both Division One and Division Two. Congratulations to all those who took part.

JUNIOR FUND-RAISING EVENT

This event was due to be held on January 7th but had to be postponed due to the planned rail strike which would have prevented the Juniors from attending. This event will now take place on Saturday 4th of March. An entry form will be available on the GCBA website.

SCHOOLS BRIDGE

Minibridge has been introduced at Denmark Road High School in Gloucester. The Year 9 group have had a set of lessons and a start has been made this month with the Year 11 group.

TEACHING SURGES IN WOTTON UNDER EDGE

Ian Cooke has been running a teaching program for twenty years. In 2019/20 he had a class of eight, and the most attendees he had ever had was twelve but this has now soared to twenty-four. Ian is an EBED qualified teacher and uses their 'Bridge For All' materials Y1 - 30 weeks.

Nationally the conversion rate from teaching to club player is woefully low. One of the keys to success is if a gentle more relaxed session is available to "bridge" between classroom and club room. Ian provides this, getting typically five or six tables and includes a couple of more experienced players that were former pupils to help out, as well as to demonstrate the progression possible. He also facilitates games for a four on RealBridge. It is impressive what enthusiasm can achieve.

INTER-COUNTIES 9-HIGH SWISS EVENTS

The Midland Counties Working Group are organising a series of 9-High Swiss Pairs events for participating counties. In the November No-Fear Swiss Pairs, Gloucestershire finished third overall. The next event is scheduled for Saturday Jan 28th at 2:00 p.m. on RealBridge. There will be expert commentary on some of the hands from Ben Norton, one of our best young internationals, and also an opportunity to join a Zoom question and answer session with Ben after the event. Great value at £6 per pair. See the website for more details.

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OVERTRICKS ARE KEY AT PAIRS

Thanks to Jack Armorgie for sending me this hand, which occurred in a recent pairs event.

♠ K9865		♠ AT742
♥ Q63	4♠ by	♥ AJ9
♦ Q6	East	♦ A853
♣ J52		♣ 3

South	West	North	East
			1♠
2♣	4♠	Pass	Pass

South starts with two top clubs. You ruff the second club and, draw trumps in two rounds finishing in dummy and ruff another club with the ♠T. Now a diamond to dummy's Queen loses to the King and the diamond Knave is returned. You win and ruff a diamond on the table with South showing out. Now you play a heart to your Knave which holds. Ten tricks were always there even if the heart finesse had lost, but now you know that North has sole control of the diamond suit as well as the heart King.

All that remains is to play the remaining trumps and North will be squeezed in the red suits to give you a vital eleventh trick. The key to the hand was unblocking the spade ten so that you could access dummy at the critical time.

IMPROVER'S CORNER

When defending, beginners are taught how to signal to their partner fairly early on in their bridge journey. A common signalling method is to show length, traditionally to play high-low with an even number of cards in the suit. So for

example when partner starts with the King in this layout,

	♠ J4	
♠ KQT2		♠ 7632
	♠ A98	

you would start an echo with the 7 to show an even number. So far, so good, but suppose the layout is like this:

	♠ T72	
♠ K954		♠ Q863
	♠ AJ	

When partner leads the 4, you have to put in the Queen at trick one and you have not had the chance to show partner how many cards you hold in the suit. Suppose that partner gets in with some side entry and lays down the King of this suit. Now it may be vital for partner to know how many cards you hold. For example, if declarer has the doubleton AJ and lacks an entry to dummy, he may not be able to enjoy a second trick in the suit.

The way to do this is to signal count in your usual fashion but to show the count of how many cards you have left in the suit at this point. This is often termed 'present count'. In the example above, when partner cashes the King you should play the ♠3 (bottom of your odd number remaining). If your original holding had been ♠Q86 then you would play the ♠8 as at that point you have just two cards remaining in the suit.

There are other situations in which this concept applies. Suppose you hold ♣A8542 in a suit and have to make some discards. Playing traditional methods, you might discard the ♣8 as a high card to show encouragement in the suit. Later, with a free choice as to a second play in the suit, you should discard ♣5 (high from an even number remaining).

With a holding such as AK8432, you would play firstly the 8 and then later the 2 as at that point you have an odd number of cards remaining in the suit

NOVEMBER PROBLEM SOLUTION

♠ AKT97	4♠ by	♠ QJ2
♥ 954	East,	♥ 63
♦ A3	trump	♦ K742
♣ K52	lead	♣ A973

Assuming that the defence will play trumps whenever they can, then you will not be able to ruff a heart in the East hand for your tenth trick. However, you have 4 tricks in the minors so 6 trump tricks will see you home. Win the trump lead with the Ace and play 3 rounds of diamonds ruffing the third with the King. Now take the 2 top clubs and ruff another diamond high before exiting with a club. The defence can win and play another trump but you can win in the East hand and ruff the last club with your ten of spades. At this point you have made 5 tricks with trumps and East still has the master trump to give you 6 trump tricks in total – a dummy reversal.

PLAY PROBLEM

♠ A		♠ 6542
♥ AK9754	4♥ by	♥ 82
♦ 864	West	♦ AT52
♣ T72		♣ AKQ

You play in 4♥ by West on the lead of the ♦K. You can count 10 tricks if the hearts break 3-2 so you win the diamond and follow up with the ♥A and ♥K. Unfortunately, on the second heart North shows out, discarding a spade. So how do you play from here?