

GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2023-24

May 2024

GCBA RESULTS

County Pairs Final

1st Alastair Catchpole and Jack Armorgie.

2nd Paul Denning and Roy Collard

3rd Kanwar Rahim and Joe Angseesing.

The leading pairs from this event are eligible to play in the Corwen Trophy (national event restricted to the leading pairs in their respective county competitions)

County Leagues: Div One

The second half of the season (with regrouped teams) saw a win for Richard Butland's team. This team also won the overall league event, with Peter Waggett's team as runners up.

County Leagues: Div Two

The second half was won Jack Armorgie's team. The team led by Leslie Harrison was the best performer across the ten matches.

Cleverley League Div One

1st Stroud Badgers

2nd Stoud M

Cleverley League Div Two

1st Southam S

2nd Winchcombe

Garden Cities

The county qualifying event was won by Cheltenham A (Paul Denning, Roy Collard, Alastair Catchpole, Steve Evans, Tony Hill, Alan Wearmouth, Ben Ritacca, Peter Waggett). This team (with Patrick Shields and Garry Watson standing in for Alan and Steve), finished second in the Regional final, thus qualifying for the National final in June.

County Knock-out.

The final was won by Richard Buland, Paul Denning, Richard Chamberlain and Rob Stevens, by 26 Imps over the team of Allan and Judy Sanis, Keith Sharp and Steve Bunker.

The winning team will represent Gloucestershire in the Pachabo (a national event with entry restricted to county champions).

DEVON CONGRESS

Gloucestershire players made a successful foray to Torquay to play in the Devon Congress. Alan Wearmouth and Tony Hill won the Swiss Pairs event and Paul Denning was in the team that won the Swiss teams. Congratulations to all.

PORTLAND PAIRS

This is the National Mixed Pairs competition and Ro Kaye and Arun Nanda did well, finishing in 18th place in a field of over 100 pairs.

INTERNATIONAL SELECTION

Many congratulations to Patrick Shields and Richard Chamberlain upon being selected to represent England in this year's European Seniors Championship to be held in Herning, Denmark at the end of June. We wish them and the rest of the team every success in what I am sure will be a gruelling event.

Paul Denning is also playing in Denmark at the same time, representing Wales in the Mixed Teams Championship, playing with Diane Kurbalija.

COUNTY AGM

The GCBA AGM takes place on May 19th. The business part of the day starts at 1300 hrs. and will be followed by a free Bridge event for the Steve Darke Trophy. Please support this event if at all possible.

STROUD CAFÉ BRIDGE

The Stroud Café Bridge event was held in April, with 64 people taking part. The bridge was played over four cafes and raised £1000 for the Brimscombe-based Stroud Grace Network. Many thanks to the hard work put in by Alison, Francesca and Michele to make this such a successful event.

BRIDGE FESTIVAL 9th -15th SEPT (BRIDGE IT'S A BIG DEAL)

It's only four months now until the start of the EBU's first Bridge Festival. BIABD is a nationwide festival scheduled to take place from 9th-15th September with the objectives of raising the profile of the game among non-players, attracting new players to the game, raising money for a worthy cause (in this case Cancer UK) and having fun. The EBU is hoping that all clubs, whether affiliated or not, will take part and organise their own events to help support the festival's objectives.

Many clubs have already contacted the EBU, via their County Bridge Festival Managers, with details of their planned events such as a Charity Bridge Day being organised by Nettleham Bridge Club, and a Twin Town Tournament being hosted by Manchester. In addition, there will be national events including a Play Without The Experts session. Details of these events (including an Events Map), along with lots of ideas and resources, can be viewed on the [EBU website pages](#).

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To date, there has been some interest from a couple of clubs in Gloucestershire, but it would be great if all our clubs in the county took up this challenge and contributed to the festival by agreeing to hold an event(s). These events can be large or small, for example, dedicating one of your regular weekly sessions to the festival and making a contribution to Cancer UK, running an open day to attract new players, organising a full day competition with lunch provided and so on.

There are many ideas for events listed on the festival page of the EBU website. So please have a look at the various pages on the website, and discuss what your club can do to support the worthy objectives of the festival. Let's all do what we can to put Gloucestershire (literally) on the (Events) map. Please pass on details of your plans to our county Bridge Festival Manager,;

Richard Barlow
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IMPROVER'S CORNER

When you have played Bridge for a while, some aspects of the game seem to fall into the 'automatic' category. However, there are situations where these automatic plays cost rather than gain tricks. Consider this hand:

♠Q3 ♥T8632 ♦763 ♣984

You need to find a lead as West after the following auction;

North	East	South	West
		1NT	Pass
2♣	2♠	3♥	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Since partner has bid spades, you need to look no further than that suit and it seems automatic to lead the Queen. This is not a success when the full deal is like this.

♠ AKT
♥ 5
♦ QT42
♣ KJT73

♠ Q3
♥ T8632
♦ 763
♣ 984

3NT by South

♠ 82
♥ KQ74
♦ AKJ8
♣ 652

♠ J97654
♥ AJ9
♦ 95
♣ AQ

Declarer wins the lead and crosses to hand in diamonds to play a club to East's Queen. It is no good for East to continue with spades as declarer just knocks out the other top club and has ten tricks.

However, consider what happens on an initial low spade lead. If dummy ducks then a spade continuation sees East with three entries to establish the spades and then get in to cash them. If dummy wins the first trick, then East can safely continue spades when he wins the first club. Yes, declarer can duck in dummy but West switches to a heart and East wins to clear the spades whilst still holding the club Ace as a sure entry. In this way, the contract is defeated.

So, is there a lesson to be learned from this? In situations where you choose to open up a suit from honour doubleton and importantly when you also have no outside entry, then consider leading low from your doubleton. This is most likely to be effective when much of the strength in the suit is likely to be on your left.

The ploy of leading low from a doubleton honour also often works in the middle game when LHO has several cards smaller than your honour but of course you also need to be playing with a partner who knows you are capable of such plays.

SOLUTION TO MARCH PROBLEM

♠ KQ753
♥ J72
♦ A9
♣ K53

6♠ by West

♠ A92
♥ A
♦ JT52
♣ AQJT2

South	West	North	East
			1♣
1♥	1♠	3♥	4♥
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣
Pass	6♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Plan the play on a heart lead.

It looks like five spades, five clubs, two red Aces and a heart ruff gives thirteen tricks. As ever, when the contract looks easy, you need to consider what may go wrong. If the spades break 4-1 then you may have problems.

The simplest way to overcome any difficulties is to win the lead and duck a trump in both hands. Now you can win any return and manage to ruff a heart with the spade nine, before drawing the remaining trumps and running your clubs. This comes to twelve tricks.

MAY PROBLEM

♠ AQ9
♥ AJT952
♦ 3
♣ 652

6♥ by West

♠ 542
♥ KQ63
♦ AK
♣ AKJ3

You reach your slam unopposed. How do you play on ♦Q lead?