

GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2022-23

Oct 2022

GCBA RESULTS

Series 17 of the place 9-High Swiss Pairs is nearing a conclusion. The current leaders are Jim Berry and Cyril Green (recent winners of the EBU's Handicap Pairs) with Derek Boreham and Moya Jackson in second place.

Autumn Teams 2 (F2F event) Division 1 : 1st place Jack Armorgie, Tom Jarman, Paul Denning and Diana Nettleton; and 2nd place Lesley Harrison, Martin McWilliam, Paul Lilley and Peter Swales.

Division 2 : 1st place Peter Waggett, Ben Ritacca, Tony Hill and Ashok Kwatra; 2nd place Patrick Phair, Patrick Shields, Jim Simons and Val Constable.

The county leagues have just started. In the first round, wins were recorded by the following teams: Lawy, Butland, Sanis, Sasanow and Lewis.

MIDLAND COUNTIES LEAGUE

Gloucestershire played Nottinghamshire in the second match of the 22/23 season. Our Dawes team won 17-3, the Porter team won 20-0 and the Markham team also won 20-0. Well played Gloucestershire.

NATIONAL TEAMS LEAGUE

Gloucestershire has members playing in all three divisions of the new weekly National Teams League. Our teams are currently lying second in both Division 1 and Division 2, and somewhat lower in Division 3.

CLUB TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS

Following a recent training course, we have five newly qualified Tournament Directors (club level) in the county. We wish congratulations to Helen Nightingale, Alan Stanfield, Caroline Bourke, Louise Keeling and Annemarie Tierney. Helen and Alan both achieved a 'distinction'.

HOW'S YOUR TECHNIQUE?

This hand occurred in the recent County Match against Notts. It was the first board of the match so perhaps some players had not yet settled. Only one pair reached the following slam.

- ♠ AJ72
- ♥ AK96
- ♦ K98
- ♣ Q8
- ♠ KT986
- ♥
- ♦ AQ74
- ♣ AK54
- 6♣ X by East
- ♠ Q4
- ♥ JT4
- ♦ JT
- ♣
- JT9732
- ♠ 53
- ♥ Q87532
- ♦ 6532
- ♣ 6

West	North	East	South
	1♥	Pass	4♥
X	Pass	5♣	Pass
Pass	5♥	Pass	Pass
6♣	X	Pass	Pass
Pass			

South starts with a low heart lead which you ruff. You play off a top trump to which both follow. Now what? The bidding probably places the Ace of Spades and King of diamonds with North, so you need to set up the spade suit, but you need to be careful with your entries.

The correct line is to play a spade towards your Queen at trick three. It cannot help North to rise with the Ace, so your Queen wins the trick. Now a second club to dummy completes the extraction of the trumps and allows you to make the key play of leading the spade ten.

North wins with the knave but you have 2 entries to dummy (a heart ruff and a diamond) which allows you to take the marked ruffing finesse against North's Ace of spades and get back to cash the winning spades, disposing of your losing red cards.

Note that if you play a second spade to the ten at trick three, without drawing the trumps, you risk losing a trick to the Queen of clubs ruffing the third round of spades. Also, if you play the King of spades before the ten, then North will cover and you will be left guessing later whether to play him for the Knave, or hoping that the spades are divided 3-3.

MASTER POINT PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to Lesley Harrison on becoming Gloucestershire's 17th Grand Master. Also, to Ashok Kwatra on achieving the rank of Life Master.

EVERETT CUP

This event is run in aid of the Sue Ryder Charity and will take place at Cheltenham Bridge Club on Sunday 6th November at 2:00 p.m. This is a teams event but entry is by pairs who will be drawn into teams on the day. The entry fee is £10 per person and will include refreshments. There will also be a raffle and spot prizes. You can enter via the GCBA website.

GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2022-23

Oct 2022

IMPROVER'S CORNER

Many players find it difficult to know when it is correct to hold up in a suit and when it is right to use your stopper(s). A simple rule can help in this respect: if two enemy high cards need to be knocked out before success is attainable, then employ a hold up, even if you hold two stoppers.

Whilst there will be some exceptions to this rule, forget them for the moment, for soon you will have the technique to recognise those rare occasions when you may abandon the rule. Try this example:

♠ AK3
 ♥ AJ2
 ♦ T52
 ♣ QJ92
 ♠ T8642
 ♥ 9753
 ♦ 83
 ♣ K7
 3NT by South
 ♠ J5
 ♥ QT8
 ♦ KQ976
 ♣ A64
 ♠ Q97
 ♥ K64
 ♦ AJ4
 ♣ T853

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♦	1NT
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West led the ♦8 in response to his partner's overcall and East inserted the Queen. Declarer could guarantee two diamond tricks by taking this trick, so that seven tricks were assured. Two additional tricks could come from clubs, but that would require two cards to be knocked out, the top two clubs, and therein lies danger.

If East held both top clubs, little could be done, but if the honours were split, then surely West would take the first club lead and fire back a diamond and then East could win three more diamond tricks when he came in with his club winner.

The counter was simple. Declarer simply employs the rule above and ducks the first diamond trick, winning the second lead of the suit. When West won his club, he had no more diamonds to play and South had plenty of time to go about developing his 9 tricks.

Good play by South, but poor defence by East, for by playing properly he can defeat the hand. Strangely enough the way to do this is the same as that employed by declarer – a Hold-Up play. At trick one, East should not play a diamond honour, but instead insert the nine.

The point of this move is to prevent South from ducking the trick. The play forces South to win his Knave at once and this ensures that West will have a diamond left when he wins his club trick. Now whatever he does, South is defeated. So, we learn that the Hold-Up play is a weapon just as available to the defence as it is to declarer. Now try this deal:

♠ KT3
 ♥ A52
 ♦ QT2
 ♣ KQT6
 ♠ J742
 ♥ 74
 ♦ K743
 ♣ 985
 3NT by South
 ♠ Q85
 ♥ KT983
 ♦ A6
 ♣ J42
 ♠ A96
 ♥ QJ6
 ♦ J985
 ♣ A73

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

You are East and partner leads the ♥7, declarer playing low from North. It looks tempting to win the King and return a heart, hoping to get in later with a diamond and perhaps the ♠Q, but that is taking on all the work yourself.

Partner is on your side and maybe he can help. Play the ♥8 of hearts on the first trick, forcing out one of South's stoppers. When declarer plays on diamonds, as ultimately he must in order to come to 9 tricks, partner can win and push through another heart, thus setting up your heart suit whilst you still have a sure diamond entry.

SEPTEMBER PROBLEM SOLUTION

This was last month's puzzle. Play this slam on a trump lead:

♠ 6432
 ♥ AKJ8
 ♦ AQ
 ♣ AKJ
 6♠ by West
 ♠ AKQJT7
 ♥ 53
 ♦ 94
 ♣ 954

There appear to be lots of finesse opportunities on this deal. However, if you take a losing finesse in one suit, you may have to guess what to do next. The solution is to enlist the help of the defenders. Simply draw trumps and then lead a heart from East, covering whatever South plays. When North wins this trick, he must then concede an additional trick in whatever suit he returns.

OCTOBER PROBLEM

♠ Q95432
 ♥ 653
 ♦ 3
 ♣ 543
 4♠ by West
 ♠ T876
 ♥ AKT
 ♦ AQJ
 ♣ KQJ

South	West	North	East
1NT	Pass	Pass	X
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

North leads ♠J. South cashes two top spades and switches to the Queen of hearts. Play from here.