

THE RICHARD LEDERER
MEMORIAL CUP

LMT-1947

The T.B.A. Inter-County Championship produced an epic struggle. Baron, nominated by the London Association in addition to Pearlstone (holders), made a disastrous start, and the end of the first session saw Yorkshire, playing with their usual fierce tenacity, in a clear lead with $23\frac{1}{2}$ points. Pearlstone was second with 18, Baron, Lancashire and Kent next best with $15\frac{1}{2}$ apiece.

Baron's players did really well in the second session, and the contest ended in sheer drama: when they came to play their last set of boards, Yorkshire were still $1\frac{1}{2}$ points ahead. When they came to the last board they were dead level; these were the East-West hands:

| WEST | EAST |
|-------------|------------|
| ♠ J 8 7 4 3 | ♠ A Q 6 2 |
| ♥ 5 4 | ♥ J 7 3 |
| ♦ K 6 | ♦ A 10 5 3 |
| ♣ A 7 4 3 | ♣ Q 6 |

Baron reached 3 ♠ at the first table, and found that 10 tricks could not be missed, as North held ♠ K 5. Their fate appeared sealed when their opponents at the other table bid to 4 ♠ in their stride.

Meredith, sitting South, had to lead from ♠ 10 9; ♥ Q 8 2; ♦ J 9 6 2; ♣ K 8 5 2. His partner had opened the bidding with 1 ♥, but the lead of that suit, bearing in mind the shaded bids prevalent in the Baron system, struck him as unattractive. His inspired selection was ♠ 9! Any declarer could be pardoned for placing North with ♠ K 10 5; ♠ 9 was covered by dummy's ♠ J and North's ♠ K, and a second finesse was taken against ♠ 10. Thus the Baron team scrambled home, by the margin of one point, with Yorkshire second and Pearlstone third.