

# Lederer Trophy 2005

By TOMMY GARVEY

On the 15 October, the Irish quartet of Tom Hanlon, Hugh McGann, John Carroll and Tommy Garvey made their way to the Young Chelsea Bridge Club in London to defend the Lederer trophy title that they had won in 2004. Once again, the invited field of eight teams was extremely strong (the calibre of this event is reflected in the fact that the only previous time that Ireland managed to win was in 1991), and each team would play a twelve-board match against every other team. The 1991 team was Mesbur, Fitzgibbon, Walshe, Boland.

There were 60 Victory Points (VPS) available in every match, with 36 VPS at stake depending on the imp score and 24 VPS allocated on "point-a-board" basis (2VPS if you win a board or 1 VP for a drawn board) – leading to an interesting mixture of a teams and pairs approach.

Our first match was against the Australian Bermuda Bowl team, who were practising on their way to the world championships in Estoril. On Board 12, an aggressive Australian bidding toy gave us a chance to win someimps:

*Match 1, Board 12. N/S Vulnerable and Dealer West*

	♠ KJT4		
	♥ KQT		
	♦ A62		
	♣ A65		
♠ A987		♠ Q	
♥ A986		♥ 653	
♦ Q75		♦ JT9843	
♣ T8		♣ QJ3	
	♠ 6532		
	♥ J84		
	♦ K		
	♣ K9742		

W	N	E	S
	Tommy		John
2♣	2NT	P	3NT

2C showed 0-12 with at least 4/4 in the majors and this kept us out of the doomed 4 spades that was played around the room. The diamond jack was led and you win perforce in dummy. Although it looks like you may have 3 spades (if you are lucky and both honours are on-side), 2 hearts and 2 AKs, you haven't got enough entries to lead up to spades three times - so you need a new plan.

You are clearly going to have to do something with clubs and, although you expect a 4-1 break it is not as bad as it seems.... If west has a singleton Q, J or T then East will have an unhappy choice on the second round - he can split (and you duck and have an entry to your four club tricks via a next round finesse of the nine) or he can stay at home, giving you only three club tricks but no loser, and a tempo, allowing you to switch your attention to spades.

So you play A of clubs and a second club ducking and the defense persist with diamonds (dummy throwing spades) - playing one to the Q (ducked) and another (although a spade switch would have forced me to guess the spade position or go off.)

Now just three major suit tricks are needed for game, so you lead the heart Q but this is ducked. You can't afford to play a second heart at this stage as the defense can just set up the long heart before you have a spade trick, so it is time to switch back to clubs. West is hopelessly squeezed in the majors - if he pitches a heart you can simply set up another heart trick (remembering to drop the K under the A to leave an entry in dummy for a spade to the K, or to play the K and then one back to the jack if he ducks so he is endplayed to play spades for you). If he keeps all of his hearts, then he will be down to a singleton A and you can play a spade from dummy up - and score

2 spade tricks without even having to guess where the queen was as each defender will now be down to a singleton spade.

With the help of this board (4 spades went one down in the other room so we gained 12 imps) we managed a 35VP to 25VP win to start our campaign.

Next on the agenda was the Winner of the 2005 Spring Foursomes (one of England's premier competitions), which consisted of a pair of Bulgarian internationals and a pair of English internationals (Brian Senior and Geoff Wolfhart). It was a reasonably quiet set of boards, but they got the best of the part score battles and we suffered a 22VPS to 38VPS reverse.

On paper, the third match looked like one of our easier ones (though with four ex British internationals, maybe "slightly less difficult" would be more appropriate!) as we faced the President's team.

**Match 3, Board 12. N/S Vulnerable and Dealer West**

♠ AKQ4	♠ T73
♥ J76	♥ KQ942
♦ KQ6	♦ 2
♣ 865	♣ QT74
♠ J	♠ 98652
♥ AT85	♥ 3
♦ J975	♦ AT843
♣ K932	♣ AJ

W	N	E	S
P	Tommy	2H	John
3♥	1NT	P	2NT
P	P	P	3♠

John bid 2NT lebensohl and then showed a forcing to game hand with 5 spades. West led the five of hearts (the underlead of the ace wouldn't be everyone's choice) and East won the Queen to switch to the two of diamonds to the eight, nine and queen.

John pulled trumps in three rounds (West discarding 2 hearts) and then ruffed a heart back to hand. He played the three of diamonds and West (rather carelessly) followed with the five and, after a bit of thought (or maybe just a pause for dramatic effect for the kibitzers), John put the six of diamonds on it.

Making twelve tricks rather than the normal eleven tricks in the other room only gained 1 imp, but much more importantly it meant that we won this particular point a board by 2VPS to 0. We scored a healthy 49 VPS in this match to put us comfortably back over average on 106 VPS.

Our next match was against the All Stars- Zia Mahmood & John Mohan (his partner from the USA seniors team) and Sabine Auken & Daniella Von Arnim (the best ladies pair in the world) - and even though it was less than half way through the competition, they had built up a formidable lead having scored 124 VPS. If we did

not win this match it would be a real uphill struggle to retain the cup.

Both of the Irish Pairs played very well in this match but pride of place goes to this defensive effort from Hugh McGann - which won him the "best defended hand" award.

**Match 4, Board 20 (Board 8 of the match). Both Vulnerable and Dealer West**

♠ 8	♠ T75
♥ AJ872	♥ 964
♦ 8763	♦ QT52
♣ T97	♣ 632
♠ AK932	♠ QJ64
♥ KQT5	♥ 3
♦ 9	♦ AKJ4
♣ 854	♣ AKQJ

W	N	E	S
Hugh	Mohan	Tom	Zia
1♠	P	P	X
P	2♥	P	3NT

John had made 3NT on a spade lead, but Hugh got the defence off to a much better start when he led the Queen of hearts. Zia won the Ace of hearts and played a diamond to the Ace, and then cashed his winners before exiting with the queen of spades to Hugh's king to leave (with 7 tricks won by declarer):

♠ -  
♥ J87  
♦ 87  
♣ -

♠ A9                    ♠ 7  
♥ KT5                ♥ 96  
♦ -                      ♦ QT  
♣ -                      ♣ -

♠ J64  
♥ -  
♦ J4  
♣ -

Hugh now found the only card to prevent declarer from getting two more tricks – the Ten of hearts!! If Zia wins the jack, Hugh had an entry to partners hand to avoid any subsequent endplay. (If you play it out on any other lead, declarer should find a way to his ninth trick.) This board put a gloss on a fine performance and when the smoke cleared we had beaten the All Stars by 50 VPS to 10 VPS... we were going to enjoy our dinner more than they were...

With play finished on Saturday night, we were in the joint lead with England on 156 VPS (with the Spring Foursomes third on 139 VPS and the All Stars fourth on 134 VPS) – still very much all to play for, with the winner likely to come from these four teams.

Coincidentally, we were playing England in the first match on Sunday, and a big win for either team could be decisive. The English team consisted of four members of their World Championship team and this was

going to be a tough match. The big board of the match was:

**Match 5, Board 4. Nil all and Dealer West**

♠ T8753                    ♠ 9  
♥ A84                    ♥ QJT9  
♦ K4                      ♦ Q86532  
♣ QJ8                    ♣ 65

♠ K62                    ♠ AQJ4  
♥ K763                ♥ 52  
♦ AT97                ♦ J  
♣ 94                    ♣ AKT732

As North/South, John and I bid to six spades. This is a fine proposition as it is pretty much a straight forward 50% shot on the finesse of the spade king – but today the finesse was losing and we lost the match 28VPs to 32 VPS (Ireland had by far the better of the rest of the match). If the finesse had worked, we would have won the match heavily 39VPS to 21 VPS.

The All Stars had bounced back from their set back against us with a crushing 52 VPS to 8 VPS against the English ladies, and the Spring Foursomes had only managed 25 VPS against Australia - so with two rounds to go it had become a three horse race (England 188 VPS, All Stars 186 VPs and Ireland 184 VPS).

Our penultimate match was against the English Ladies team,

who were practising for the forthcoming ladies world championships – the Venice Cup. We were hoping for a big win and, just what we didn't want, John and I had a poor start to the match. On the first board we played in a slam going one down (to be fair it wasn't a great slam) and on the second board we played in the wrong game. The key in these situations is to try and work hard on the rest of the boards and not let the results distract or affect you – but as it happens we were right back in the match after the third board:

**Match 6, Board 15 (Board 3 of the match). N/S vulnerable and Dealer South**

♠ 72                      ♠ JT6  
♥ Q5                    ♥ AK97  
♦ 8542                ♦ J63  
♣ JT742                ♣ 863

♠ AK9843                ♠ Q5  
♥ 62                    ♥ JT843  
♦ -                      ♦ AKQT97  
♣ AKQ95                ♣ -

W	N	E	S
Tommy		John	
1♠	P	2♦	1♦
5♦	P	5♥	3♦
6♠	P	P	X

South opened one diamond, I recalled one spade (I thought at the risk of it being passed out

was negligible given my extreme distribution) and John bid two diamonds, which showed a constructive raise with exactly three card support. South's three diamond bid indicated that John was less likely to have any of his values in diamonds, so I bid five diamonds – exclusion key card blackwood. John's five hearts said that he had one key card outside diamonds so I bid the small slam (I thought that seven would have a lot of handling so didn't push towards it). South doubled telling partner she had a void, but after she took her club ruff at trick one I had the rest for a satisfying +1210 and 12 imps as they played in four spades at the other table.

Kinder and Hugh had a fine card to compare with and, despite the first two boards, we had chalked up a respectable 41VPS to 19VPS win. England had beaten the Spring Foursomes team 34 VPS to 26 VPs and the All Stars had lost narrowly in their match, scoring 27 VPS.

So, with one match to go, Ireland were first on 225 VPS with England right behind on 222 VPS and the All Stars a little further back on 213 VPS.

Our final match was against the Young Chelsea Club Champions. The quality of this team varies from year to year, but this time it was first rate with four current English internationals (the Hackett twins and Sanqvist & Mallinowski) along with Gunnar Halberg and Janet De Botton. The other good

news from our perspective was that England were playing the All Stars in the last match.

John and I had a pretty solid card including:

*Match 7, Board 27 (Board 3 of the match). Nil all and Dealer South*

♠ KJT4  
♥ QT75  
♦ J4  
♣ AK7

♠ 732  
♥ 3  
♦ QT8732  
♣ 962

♠ A9  
♥ 8642  
♦ 96  
♣ QJ843

♠ Q865  
♥ AKJ9  
♦ AK5  
♣ T5

W	N	E	S
			1♣
P	1♥	P	3♥
P	3NT	P	4♦
P	4NT	P	5♦
P	6♥		

John opened one club (10-13 balanced or 17+) and over the one heart response, three hearts

showed 17-19 points with 4 hearts and no shortage. Three no trump was a "serious slam try" and demanded a cue bid from John. Four no trump was for key cards and 5 diamonds showed three. I got the Ace of spades lead and it was easy to make 12 tricks from there. This looks to be a good position because slam might not be bid (as actually happened at the other table), six spades goes down on a heart ruff and 6 no trump (as tried by England) only has 11 tricks.

We were reasonably optimistic of our chances but, while we were waiting for Tom and Hugh to score up we heard that the All Stars had demolished England by 53 VPS to 7 VPS – so we actually needed a big win rather than just a small win if we were going to stay in front. Not to worry, Tom & Hugh had a solid card as well and we won comfortably 48 VPS to 12 VPs – to retain our Lederer trophy by 7 VPS ahead of the All Stars. Roll on next year....

## DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

**Galway Congress Easter 2006**

**14th to 17th April**

**Corrib Great Southern Hotel**

*Superb Value - 3B/B + 2D = E199 pps 2BB + 1D = E169 pps*

**NEW FEATURE: 3 session Congress Teams**

1 session Sunday Night and 2 sessions Monday (early start)

E1500 First Prize

*Further details later.*