

President's Cup

by Paul Lamford



The prestigious Lederer Invitational Tournament had to find a new location this year, as the Young Chelsea Bridge Club could no longer accommodate the event. The RAC came to the rescue by providing a splendid venue in their club in the heart of London's Pall Mall. It was 1997 when the President's Team had the second of their two successes in this invitation team event, and a few of that team are now octogenarians. Tony Priday and John Matheson, recent regulars for the President's side, did not play this year. Younger blood was brought in and some very good players answered the rallying cry at short notice. It certainly worked and the team of Teltscher and Silverstone, Coyle and King, Townsend and di Bello, led throughout and were almost certain to win with a match to go. This was Silverstone's seventh win of the Lederer, and he joins Zia and Robson on that magic number, at least for those years where there are records. Who will be the first to get to eight?

Near Miss

Love all. Dealer North.

	♠ AQ82		
	♥ J7		
	♦ 832		
	♣ T854		
♠ 63		♠ KJ4	
♥ T963		♥ A84	
♦ QJ75		♦ AK6	
♣ 962		♣ AK73	
	♠ T975		
	♥ KQ52		
	♦ T94		
	♣ QJ		

West	North	East	South
<i>Holland</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Hallberg</i>	<i>Stockdale</i>
	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♥	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♦	Pass
3NT	All Pass		



Brian Callaghan, who presented the best-played hand award to Gunnar Hallberg

Slight difference in range led to different contracts on the above deal. Hallberg opened 2C and over Holland's 2H – showing 0-3, traditionally with 0 controls – his 2NT rebid showed 22-24. Holland had enough to bid Stayman and raise to 3NT. A major suit lead would have made life easy for him, but South did well to lead the ten of diamonds and East won with the king and ducked a club. Another diamond came back and Gunnar won in East, cashed the top clubs and the remaining diamonds pitching the club from East. He was pretty sure that South was 4-4-3-2 now, so played a heart to the eight. South exited with a heart, and Gunnar won and threw South in with another heart. However, North had the ace of spades, so she could win a spade and cash the winning club for one off. Had South had the ace of spades instead of North, Gunnar would have been home. Good play and great defence from the two rising women stars.

Tribal Calls

Game all. Dealer South.

♠ AT
♥ AKQ7
♦ JT
♣ Q9852

♠ K87543
♥ 632
♦ K64
♣ 3

♠ QJ92
♥ 985
♦ 952
♣ AK6

♠ 6
♥ JT4
♦ AQ873
♣ JT74

West North East South

<i>Hackett, Ju Bell</i>		<i>Pszczola Byrne</i>	
Pass	1♣*	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦*
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♥*	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

The above auction, from the match between the Holders and the European Aces, won the best bid hand award, even though the contract failed. Byrne and Bell was the only pair to explore the hand fully. 1C was clubs or 17-19 balanced (their system TRI-BAL is so called as it focuses on three balanced hand ranges). With his good intermediates Mike Bell was going to treat it as the latter. 1S showed diamonds, 1NT was 17-19 and 2D an artificial game force. 2H and 3D were natural and the key bid was 3H which showed 4 good hearts, as North was known not to have five. It was now easy to choose the Moysian fit by bidding 4H, but with clubs 3-1 and the diamond finesse wrong there was no play for the contract.



Michael Byrne and Mike Bell collect their best-bid hand award from Callaghan

Game is around 65%, so a very good contract at the combined teams and point-a-board scoring system in operation in the Lederer. Zia-Bakshi, and Hoftaniska-Charlsen, bid 1NT (15-17)-2C-2H-3H-4H and that could have been a poor contract opposite spade wastage and much weaker hearts. The one brave player to open the West hand was Erichsen, who ventured a multl. The operation was a success but the patient died. North overcalled 2NT and was raised to 3NT by South, but East chose a heart lead and declarer wrapped up nine tricks. The analysts thought a spade was right, as this should beat the contract when partner has a weak two there, and if partner has KQJxxx in hearts, declarer may get home anyway by ducking two rounds.



Thomas Charlsen and Tor-Erik Hoftaniska collect their award for the best defence

Ruff Justice

EW all. Dealer North.

♠ Q74
♥ T3
♦ KJT764
♣ A9

♠ KT5	♠ J863
♥ AQ92	♥ 875
♦ AQ5	♦ 983
♣ JT3	♣ 876

♠ A92
♥ KJ64
♦ 2
♣ KQ542

West	North	East	South
<i>Allerton</i>	<i>Hoftaniska</i>	<i>Jagger</i>	<i>Charlsen</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♣
Dble	Rdble	Pass	Pass
1♥	Pass	Pass	Dble
Pass	Pass	1♠	Dble
All Pass			

This was judged to be the best defended hand because the defenders cooperated well to get a big penalty. North did well to redouble rather than bid his six-card diamond suit, and the Premier League winners struggled into 1S, which was not a thing of beauty.

It got uglier when South led his diamond and declarer finessed – rising with the ace would have been -500.. Now North won and returned the four of diamonds, ruffed and South played a club to North who gave South a second diamond ruff. Now South cashed his clubs, Hoftaniska pitching a heart, and played a fourth round, conceding a ruff and discard. West pitched a heart, and North ruffed with the spade queen and now led a heart to dummy. South could win the next spade and give North a heart ruff for three down and +800 to NS. Tom Townsend subsequently pointed out that the defence could have done a trick better! If they take only one diamond ruff, and then North plays his second club. South cashes the clubs, North discarding a heart, and then plays a heart. Declarer finesses, and leads a spade to the jack, but South wins with the ace and plays the king of hearts covered and ruffed. Only now does North give South his second diamond ruff. South cashes the other high heart and then plays any card promoting the queen of spades for four off. Neither Brian Callaghan nor your author found this defence, and it was a few days later that it was discovered.

King's Speech

Game all. Dealer West.

♠ AQ62	
♥ T63	
♦ 852	
♣ K43	
♠ K987	♠ JT53
♥ AKQ	♥ J42
♦ JT64	♦ 3
♣ 98	♣ JT762
♠ 4	
♥ 9875	
♦ AKQ97	
♣ AQ5	

West	North	East	South
<i>Forrester</i>	<i>King</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Coyle</i>
1♣*	Pass	1♦	Dble
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

* clubs or balanced, forcing

Bernard Teltscher, who is also President of the LMBA, was delighted to give his closing speech this year, in which he paid tribute to the players he had brought in. He modestly claimed that he himself had made no contribution and singled out King and Coyle who had not played a board together before this event for special praise. He believed that top players can quickly play with each other without elaborate agreements.

They were the only pair to reach the cold vulnerable game on the above hand. West opened a nebulous but forcing club, often a weak NT, and East had to bid 1D. South doubled to show diamonds, and North bid 1S. South rebid a natural 1NT, showing a slightly better hand than he had, but the five-card diamond suit is very powerful. North had an easy raise to the cold game. West cashed three top hearts, giving declarer his ninth trick immediately, and the latter emerged with ten when the defence went astray. Game is solid if diamonds are 3-2, as West cannot have five hearts, and even if West had switched to a spade at some stage, Coyle would surely have finessed. West must be a solid 9 to 1 on to have the king of spades on this auction. In the other room Townsend was left to fester in 1♦ and he was pleased to find -300 to be worth 8 IMPs.

Slam Swings

Game All. Dealer North.

♠	642
♥	KQ82
♦	K863
♣	53

♠	AKJ76	♠	Q93
♥	T	♥	AJ97
♦	Q754	♦	AT
♣	K82	♣	AQT4

♠	T8
♥	6543
♦	J92
♣	J976

West	North	East	South
<i>Brekka</i>	<i>Jagger</i>	<i>Saelensminde</i>	<i>Allerton</i>
	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♥*	Pass	1♠*	Pass
4♠	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♥	Dble	5NT	Pass
6♣	Pass	6♠	All Pass

I am indebted to Frances Hinden, Mike Bell, Phil King, Andy Bowles and others for contributing analysis of this hand. South led a heart in response to his partner's lead-directing double of the response to RKCB, and East won and after much thought played the ace of diamonds and the ten of diamonds, ducking when South covered. The ♠8 was returned, won with the nine and a club to the king was followed by a diamond ruffed low. Now declarer cashed the ace of clubs and after more thought, drew trumps. The red menaces were with North and the club guard with South and he had to go down. South had played 7, 9 in clubs, and North had followed upwards too, playing normal count, so maybe Saelensminde formed the opinion that clubs were 3-3. He therefore just drew trumps in case they were 4-1 and he would still make the hand if there was a squeeze. I agree with his line, although I would not have cashed a second round of clubs, risking failure when the clubs are 5-1. Also note the good play of ducking the jack of diamonds. If South had KJxx he would have done well to play the jack, and even if he had that holding, one might well squeeze him in the minors in any case. Two declarers returned the jack of hearts after drawing trumps, establishing their eleventh trick there, but when North returned a diamond, this broke up the red suit squeeze against himself. Running this round to the queen was the only winning line now, but a huge view.

Grosvenor Coup

NS vul. Dealer North.

♠	QJ
♥	AQ6532
♦	J4
♣	863

♠	AT4	♠	K9832
♥	K98	♥	7
♦	AKT3	♦	9765
♣	T72	♣	A54

♠	765
♥	JT4
♦	Q82
♣	KQJ9

West	North	East	South
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<i>Rainsford</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Goodwin</i>	<i>Zia</i>
	2♥	Pass	3♥
Pass	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Most pairs were in a spade partial for EW here, but against Zia the stakes were higher when East protected and West raised to game. The Grosvenor Casino Group are keen sponsors of poker and backgammon in the UK, and they have considered holding a bridge event, so it was appropriate that Zia should perpetrate a Grosvenor coup on this hand. Against 4S by East, Zia led a top club, and continued one, declarer taking the second. Two top spades revealed the fortunate lie of that suit, but declarer had carelessly neglected to unblock the ten, so won the third round in dummy. A club was won by Zia who switched to a heart, East ruffing the second round. Now declarer needed to find QJx of diamonds onside, and when he played a diamond Zia produced the queen. Declarer won, ruffed a heart, and finessed the ten of diamonds. North claimed for three off. Zia is a strong backgammon player who won a charity backgammon event at the same venue, the RAC, a few years ago. He was certainly prepared to gamble for the point-a-board, risking letting the contract through, even though a solid one off would have been safer. This is a bit like playing for the gammon when you should cash (with apologies to those of you who don't play backgammon).

Grand Larceny

NS vul. Dealer North.	♠ 652	
	♥ KQJT62	
	♦ A3	
	♣ A8	
♠ 9		♠ QJT83
♥ 953		♥ 4
♦ QJ542		♦ T986
♣ Q732		♣ T94
	♠ AK74	
	♥ A87	
	♦ K7	
	♣ KJ65	

There were ten teams in the Lederer, and a total of 45 matches, so the resources of the LMBA, who run the event, were stretched, and we do not have full details of the above hand. Suffice to say that Willie Coyle, North, reached the reasonable 7H. If North had been 2-6-3-2, the grand would have been almost on ice, and it was quite a bit above 50% as it was. It would be unreasonable to expect a first-time partnership to find out the exact North shape, even using a relay system!. When South found that North had three key cards, and six hearts including the queen, he bid 7H. East led the queen of spades, and declarer won and drew trumps, East parting with two small spades. It was clear that spades were 5-1, and Willie Coyle now rejected the correct technical line of playing three rounds of clubs, ruffing in North, and then, if the queen has not fallen, attempting to squeeze East in the black suits. This line is a little over 60%, but, as one can see, it fails. Instead Coyle ran six rounds of hearts pitching a club and two spades from South. He would still get home if the queen of clubs were with East, as there would be a black-suit squeeze in due course, and he would succeed when West started with an unlikely Qx in clubs. His line also gained unexpectedly when he crossed to a spade and West pitched a club, thinking that North might have ATx in diamonds. If that had been the layout, North would have ruffed a diamond in dummy, but one often does not think of the early play. Even against 6NT, West's defence would have been wrong, as declarer has a show-up squeeze so will never fail when North does have ATx of diamonds and Ax of clubs. A bad slip by West and a killing blow for the Presidents' Team.

Alongside the main event there was a Play with the Stars in which players scored up with their 'teammates' from the Lederer. The E/W winners were Naomi Cohen and Tim Pelling (Wimbledon) with +32 IMPs and N/S was won by Madhusinh and Manjari Rawji (Friends Bridge Group, Harrow) with +69 IMPs.



Teltscher Cup winners E/W: Naomi Cohen and Tim Pelling with 'teammates' Zia Mahmood (left) and David Bakhshi



Teltscher Cup winners N/S: Madhusinh and Manjari Rawji with 'teammates' David Gold (left) and Tony Forrester

Line-ups and scores

1. **President's Team** (Bernard Teltscher, Victor Silverstone, Willie Coyle, Phil King, Tom Townsend, Stelio Di Bello)
2. **England Women** (Heather Dhondy, Nevena Senior, Sally Brock, Nicola Smith, Fiona Brown, Susan Stockdale. Barry Myers stood in on Saturday)
3. **Holders** (Neil Rosen, Martin Jones, Michael Byrne, Michael Bell, Peter Crouch and Simon Cope)
4. **European Aces** (Gunnar Hallberg, Paul Hackett, Justin Hackett, John Holland, Jacek Pszczola, David Mossop)
5. **Premier League** (Frances Hinden, Jeffrey Allerton, Grahame Osborne, Chris Jagger)
6. **Zia & Friends** (Zia, David Bakhshi, Espen Erichsen, Nick Irens, Erlend Skjetne)
7. **England Open** (David Gold, Tony Forrester, Andrew Robson, Alexander Allfrey)
8. **Spring Fours** (Janet de Botton, Nick Sandqvist, David Burn, Thomas Charlsen, Thor-Erik Hoftaniska, Artur Malinowski)
9. **Norway** (Boye Brogeland, Simon Gillis, Erik Saelensminde, Geir Brekka)
10. **Young Chelsea** (Paul Martin, Paula Leslie, Dom Goodwin, Gordon Rainsford)

The final result was a convincing win for the Presidents' Team, and the England Women followed up their silver medal in Bali with another fine performance. Negotiations are already underway to stage the event at the RAC for next year. Thanks are due to the sponsors including Bernard Teltscher, Dave Mossop, Nick Irens and Simon Gillis, organisers Ian Payn, Kath Stynes and Dave Muller, the commentary team of Richard Fleet, Jeremy Dhondy and Joe Fawcett, the judge Brian Callaghan assisted by your author, Peter Hasenson and Roger Morton for photographs, directors Nicole Cook and Martin Nygren, scorer Nigel Freake, and all the staff and members at the RAC.



The winning team, L to R, Victor Silverstone, Willie Coyle, Tom Townsend, Phil King with Bernard Teltscher and Stelio di Bello in the front.

Final Scores:

	Pres	E W	Hol	E A	P L	Zia	E O	Sp4	Nor	Y C	TOT
President's Team	-	28	22	37	33	13	39	36	42	34	284
England Women	22	-	24	10	36	18	24	42	26	43	245
Holdes	22	26	-	25	26	38	22	38	35	10	242
European Aces	13	40	24	-	16	32	35	37	22	22	241
Premier League	17	14	24	34	-	29	26	21	45	17	227
Zia & Friends	37	32	12	18	21	-	27	21	19	38	225
England Open	11	26	28	15	24	23	-	16	38	39	220
Spring Fours	14	8	12	13	29	29	34	-	40	40	219
Norway	8	24	15	28	5	31	12	10	-	37	170
Young Chelsea	16	7	40	28	33	12	11	10	13	-	170