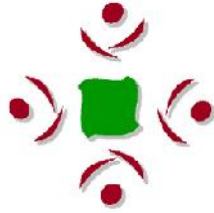


*London
Metropolitan
Bridge
Association*



MetroNews

*The newsletter of the
London Metropolitan Bridge Association*

Autumn 2015

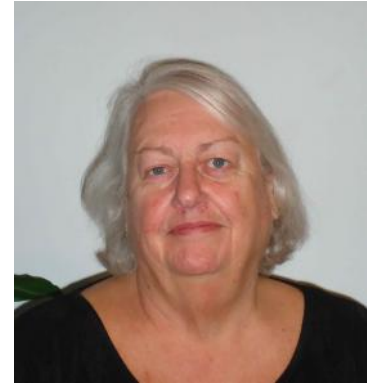


*London
Metropolitan
Bridge
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Words from the Editor

You are probably aware that, in addition to the HQ staff at Aylesbury, the EBU is run by a number of volunteers. There is a Board of Directors and three Standing Committees – the Tournament Committee, the Laws & Ethics Committee and the Selection Committee – almost all of whom are currently elected by the shareholders, who in turn represent each of the counties that form the union. The Board does also have some appointees filling specific roles.



This arrangement is long-established but somewhat unwieldy and the Board has recently come up with proposals to reform the Standing Committees, changing them all to sub-committees of the board (there are other existing sub-committees such as the Editorial Board for *English Bridge*) and reducing the number of people on each. The Board would then make appointments to the various committees, encouraging suitable people to put themselves forward for this.

These proposals were aired at the Shareholders' Meeting in May. The general feeling was that the Tournament Committee, was more or less redundant, as the Aylesbury staff do all the day-to-day running of tournaments very efficiently. There is an ongoing need to review the overall strategy for tournaments, but this could readily be done by a small sub-committee or working group.

With regard to the Laws and Ethics Committee, there was a further proposal to split it into two. The new L&E sub-committee would be a regulatory body only, dealing with licensed systems, alerting rules etc, and there would be a separate Disciplinary Panel to act as the judiciary, dealing with matters of discipline. Again, the shareholders were largely in favour of this.

The proposal to turn the Selection Committee into a sub-committee was the most contentious and provoked much discussion. One point of view that was expressed was that it was essential that the selection process be as fair and democratic as possible and thus should remain in the hands of an elected Standing Committee. On the other hand, some thought that the Board members were generally better-placed than the shareholders to know who would be suitable as members of a selection committee.

All the counties were invited to discuss these ideas further before the Board brings firm proposals to the November AGM. If you have any views you would like the London shareholders to consider prior to then, please get in touch with one of us – the LMBA shareholders are myself, Roger Morton (rhl.morton@blueyonder.co.uk) and James Smith (jamesrobertsmith@talktalk.net).



Another bumper issue of MetroNews! There is lots of news about recent events in London, but I should like to draw two things in particular to your attention:

- This is the time of year when I exhort you to put together your teams of four to enter the annual knock-out competitions – the London Trophy and the London League. Teams of four matches are a most enjoyable form of bridge – must be tried if you haven't as yet! And this is a very special year for the London League, as it is now celebrating the 80th anniversary of its inception – making it a more venerable institution than the LMBA or the EBU! There's a Newcomers League as well as the three main Divisions, so something for everyone. Why not enter a team and join in the celebrations – see page 12 for more details of how to enter.

- Bridge in London has suffered badly in the last couple of years for the lack of a good central London venue for matches, events and play. This situation is rectified with the move of the Young Chelsea BC into its new home at 54 Goldhawk Road, W12 8HA. The new premises are quite magnificent, with plenty of space for regular duplicates, teaching, matches as well as ancillary activities like board games. With a bar and a kitchen as added attractions, it is to be hoped that the facilities here will provide a new focus for the London bridge-playing community. I hope to see you there!

Chris Duckworth
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chris.duckworth@lineone.net



Annual General Meeting

The 2015 AGM of the LMBA will be held on Thursday 10th September, at the Young Chelsea Bridge Club, 54 Goldhawk Road, London W12 8HA, starting at 7.00pm.

Agenda

- 1 Registration of proxies & apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes of the AGM of 11th September 2014
(**Note.** *These can be found at www.metrobridge.co.uk*)
- 3 Matters arising from these minutes.
- 4 Chairman's Report
- 5 Treasurer's Report
- 6 Adoption of accounts for 2014
- 7 Subscriptions (direct and Pay-to-Play) for 2016-2017
- 8 Elections to the Executive Committee
- 9 Appointment of honorary auditor
- 10 EBU shareholders' Report
- 11 Any other business

LMBA results this season

Ian Gardiner Trophy

The Ian Gardiner Trophy is the London County's major Teams-of-Four competition which serves as a qualifier for the Pachabo Cup – the national inter-County Teams-of-Four championship.

In the qualifying event, the scoring method was changed to match the change in this year's Pachabo scoring. Instead of the previous obscure method of calculating the score based on "swing" – something almost no-one understood and for which it was well-nigh impossible to determine the appropriate tactics – the scoring this time was based on a straightforward combination of Victory Points and Point-a-Board. The tactics for this are still tricky, but it makes for an interesting event to have something different.

The leaders were last year's winning team, Chris Duckworth, Brian Callaghan, Franklin To and Rob Cliffe who finished with 134 points, well clear of runners up Tim Gauld, Simon Cochemé, Stephen Popham and John Pemberton on 118.5, with Michael Hill, David Ould, Roger Morton, and Andrew Kisiel a close third with 113.5. Two teams qualified for a play-off to determine the title, but the Gauld team included a player whose County of allegiance was not London, so the Hill team challenged the Duckworth team.

The final was a close-fought affair, but in the end the holders won through to retain the trophy for another year. This team represented London in the Pachabo, where they finished in a respectable but unexciting eighth place.

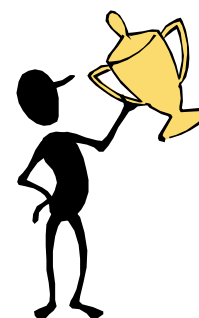
London Championship Pairs

This year 22 pairs competed for the London Pairs title. The format of the event was changed so that all the pairs played through in a two-session event, which was preferable to having a qualifying and final session with a few teams only competing in a consolation event.

The result was a very narrow win for the title-holders, Victor Silverstone and Brigid Battscombe who scored 61.69%, just a whisper ahead of runners-up Debbie Sandford and Gad Chadha on 61.59%. In third place, some way below, were David Williams and Paul Russell with 57.34% and fourth were Susanna Gross and Tom Paske on 56.8%

Four pairs represented London in the Reg Corwen Trophy, As several of the leading pairs did not have London allegiance, these were: Debbie Sandford & Gad Chadha, David Schiff & Anne Catchpole, Franklin To & Ian Payn and Chris Duckworth & Brian Callaghan.

All four pairs did well, finishing in the top half of the field of over 100 pairs. Three pairs were in the top 20, the best London pair being Ian Payn & Franklin To who finished tenth.



Lederer Memorial Trophy 2015



The date of the Lederer was recently changed from Autumn to Spring, and the most recent event was held over the weekend of 28th February-1st March this year. The event was won by the favourites, the England Open team of Andrew Robson, Tony Forrester, David Bakhshi and David Gold.

The de Botton team comprising Janet de Botton, Artur Malinowski, Nick Sandqvist, Tom Townsend, Thor Erik Hoftaniska and Dror Padon led for much of the event, but the two faced each other in the final match and the England team emerged victorious.

The final results table:

1	England Open	292
	Andrew Robson, David Bakhshi, David Gold, Tony Forrester	
2	De Botton	249
	Janet De Botton, Artur Malinowski, Nick Sandqvist, Tom Townsend, Thor Erik Hoftaniska, Dror Padon	
3	Gold Cup	234
	Stefan Skorchev, Borislav Popov, Cameron Small, Jonathan Cooke	
4	Ireland	234
	Mark Moran, Tom Hanlon, Tommy Garvey, John Carroll, Rory Boland	
5	Gillis	224
	Simon Gills, Boye Brogeland, Espen Erichsen, Espen Lindqvist	
6=	Zia and Friends	218
	Zia Mahmoud, Roy Welland, Sabine Auken, Denis Bilde	
	London	218
	Gary Jones, Ed Scerri, Ray Robinson, Jerry Harouni, Richard Bowdery	
8	England Seniors	210
	Paul Hackett, David Mossop, Gunnar Hallberg, John Holland, Colin Simpson, David Price	
9	England Women	169
	Sally Brock, Nicola Smith, Heather Dhondy, Catherine Draper, Liz McGowan, Sam Punch	
10	 HOLDERS	112
	Bernard Teltscher, Victor Silverstone, Phil King, Stelio Di Bello, Willie Coyle, John Matheson	

This year's win brings Andrew Robson and Tony Forrester jointly into the lead in the league table of Lederer winners. Tony's wins have come at intervals over the last 24 years, his first win being in 1981. Andrew started rather later, his first win being in 1998. They now have 8 wins apiece, taking them ahead of Zia Mahmoud and Victor Silverstone, each with 7 wins to their names. Behind them, on 6 wins, are four players – Colin Simpson, Claude Rodrigue, Louis Tarlo and Albert Rose – three of whom are no longer with us and so of course have no opportunity to improve their totals!



Forrester and Robson in play against Gold Cup team players Cooke & Small

See the article on pages 20 - 22 to read more about this year's event, including details of the prize-winning hands.

Green Pointed Swiss Weekend

This year's green-pointed weekend was again held in the Central Hall Westminster, this time in the newly re-furbished Aldersgate Room on the lower ground floor. This room was adjacent to the café and was spacious and well-lit, providing a great venue.

There was an increased entry of 78 pairs competing on Saturday in the **Swiss Pairs** which was won by Glyn Liggins and Allison Green who scored 101 VPs, just one ahead of runners-up Barry Stoker and Gordon O-Hair on 100 VPs. There was a tie for third place between Brian Callaghan & Heather Dhondy and Ed Scerri & Malcolm Pryor, both of whom finished on 98 VPs.



27 teams competed in the **Swiss Teams** on Sunday. The winners were the strong squad of Graham Osborne, Frances Hinden, Philip Wood and Jeffrey Allerton who finished with 106 VPs. Runners-up were the regularly successful team of Paul Hackett, Roger O'Shea, Justin Hackett, Jason Hackett on 93 VPs with Dinah Caplan, Dessy Malakova, Marion Robertson and Mike Bell third on 89.

Garden Cities

This year's Garden Cities heat was fought out between 3 teams from the Young Chelsea BC and one from the West London Gay BC. The runaway winners were the YC team captained by Paula Leslie, the only team to end up with positive IMPs at the end of the session! They comprised Paula Leslie, Roger Gibbons, Peter Taylor, Ingar Hansen, Richard Hillman, Richard Bowdery, Andy Bowles, Shireen Mohandes.

This team represented London in the Regional Finals with a few changes of personnel - Chris Duckworth, Brian Callaghan, and Solvi Remen played in place of Roger and the two Richards. They finished third behind Kent and Surrey, just failing to qualify for the finals.

Palmer Bayer Trophy

A small but cheerful entry of 14 pairs competed for the Palmer Bayer Trophy in February this year. The winners were Jason Crampton & Sam Oestreicher who scored a massive 74.40%. This was the third success in the Palmer Bayer for this pair, who previously won the trophy in 2003 and 2004.



You might think that over 10 year's experience might render them unsuited to be competing in a "No Fear" event, but this is far from the truth, as Jason and Sam don't play club bridge or enter tournaments – they just play "office bridge" and enjoy supporting this competition!

In second place were the father and young son combination of John & Alex Pemberton with 8.93% and a close third were Adam Sutcliffe & Peter Cox on 58.63%.

Café Bridge Drive - Tonsleys

Café Bridge events are immensely popular and attract the biggest entry of all our competitions. This time there were 70 pairs playing in the cafés and restaurants of the Tonsleys area of Wandsworth on a sunny April day.

The winners are pictured with their prize, a voucher for a meal and drinks very kindly donated, along with another prize for second place, by The East Hill, a really excellent gastropub which is one of the venues for the competition.



The leading pairs were:

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-------|
| 1 | Dominic Flint & Pamela Reiss | 67.53 |
| 2 | Susi Behrmann & Malcolm Morris | 64.66 |
| 3 | Jacqui & David Bowers | 62.19 |
| 4 | Kay Colton & Margaret Hamilton | 62.11 |

The event was once again held in aid of Age Concern Wandsworth, and the greatly increased entry meant we achieved a magnificent £2000 for the charity.

London Trophy

The final stages of the London Trophy and Della-Porta Plate were held at the Royal Automobile Club in Pall Mall in June. In the main final, the winners were CMC Cameron McKenna who beat HM Treasury. RAC Woodcote Park won the playoff for third place in the main draw beating Verve.

The Della Porta Plate was won by Concentric who beat Putney Pirates.



The winning London Trophy team: Arthur Dyson, Belinda Bridgen, David Reuben, Roy Griggs (l to r) with Pat Brotherston who presented the prizes.

See Mike Hill's article on pages 28 - 35 for some of the more interesting hands that arose, and more pictures.

London Trophy Pairs



26 pairs competed in this event, held in April this year. The winners were a scratch pair, put together on the day who finished nearly 7% clear of second place (isn't it strange how often first-time partnerships do really well together?).

The victorious pair, Bill Linton and Carrie Eden are pictured here with Dominic Flint who presented the trophy.

The leading scores were:

1	Bill Linton & Carrie Eden	66.67
2	Charles Moore & Kate Woodruff	60.04
3	Philip Watson & Rita Desmarais	58.33
4	Ravinder Wallia & Tony Rawsthorne	57.01

Fox Shammon Trophy

The entry for the Seniors Pairs more than doubled this year, thanks to the efforts of new organiser Dave Muller. The President's room at the Queen's Club, overlooking the main tennis court, was almost full with 14 tables in play.

The winners were John Stimson and Benjamin Hackenbroch who scored 64.42%, pushing last year's winners Bernard Teltscher & Victor Silverstone, with 63.03%, into second place. Third was international star Robert Sheehan playing with Angela Sillence on 55.56%.

Leagues

At the time of going to press, the outcome of London League Division 1 is not yet decided. The winners will be either Punters, led by Brian Kelly, or YC1, led by Fiona Hutchison. YC1 need to have a convincing win against YC2 (Simon Cearns) to overhaul Punters - their match average suggests they could do it but YC2 is a team always capable of creating swings!

Division 2 has been decided. The winners are Tartan under Uday Hegde, comfortably ahead of second-placed Café Bridge captained by Brian Wallace.

Division 3 has been won by the Improbables led by Richard Wharton who will be well pleased after being denied promotion last year. Barrels led by John Clarke finished in second place, just one point ahead of the third-placed Hurlingham team under the captaincy of Gitte Hecht-Johansen.

The winners of the Newcomers League is undecided and depends on the result of the match between Camden Ladies v Concentric. The winners of this match will be the overall winners.

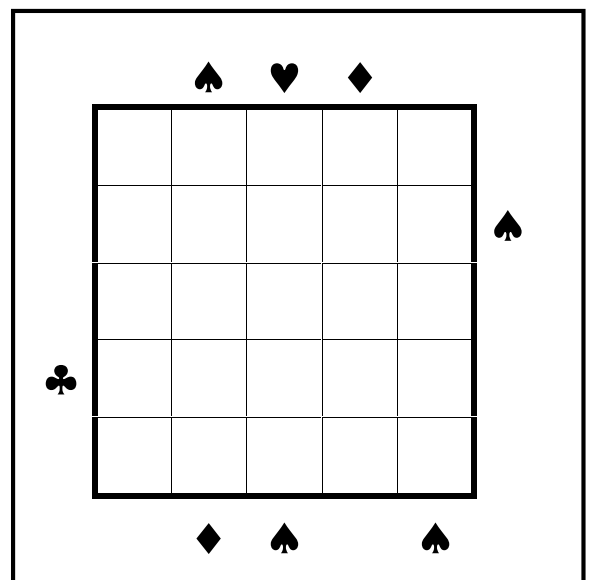
The Home Counties League winners are London Red led by Dominic Flint.

Puzzle Corner

Place one of each suit symbol and one blank space in each row and column of the grid.

The symbols outside the grid indicate which symbol is nearest to that border.

The solution is on page 38.



London News

The London League

I am indebted to Richard Fleet, a LMBA life member who has now retired to the depths of Devon, but who retains an interest in the bridge archives, for the information that the London League is this year celebrating its 80th birthday.

He uncovered a 1935 edition of British Bridge World in which it was stated that the London League was scheduled to start in November of that year. This means that the League predates the LMBA which didn't come into being (as the London & Home Counties Contract Bridge Association) until 7 April 1936.

The early winners of the League include some very famous names. In 1936 the champions were Leslie Dodds' team, including Richard Lederer who is of course commemorated in the Lederer Memorial Trophy. In 1938 and 1939 the winners were Maurice Harrison Gray and team, including such luminaries as Jack Marx, Terence Reese, and S J (Skid) Simon.

The youngest of all these was Terence Reese (*right*), who would have been only 26 in 1939 but was widely regarded as one of the very best bridge players and writers for most of his life. He died in 1996 at the age of 82 but I was privileged to know him a little in his latter years – he would drop me little notes in my capacity as London Secretary and would sometimes offer caustic comments about the play of others when he was kibitzing at the Lederer or similar events!



Club news - all change!

The **Monday Club**, which is a Surrey club with dual membership of London, has moved to new playing premises. The club continues to meet on Tuesday evenings, now at The Northcote at 2 Northcote Road, Battersea, SW11 1NT. The pub is on the junction of Northcote Road and Battersea Rise and is just three minutes from Clapham Junction Station. More details from their website at: www.bridgewebs.com/monday2.

TGRs is another non-London club, being affiliated to Middlesex, but its central location makes it of interest to London members. It is now based in new premises at 19C Craven Rd, Paddington, W2 3BP. The club is close to Paddington Station – see their website for more details: www.tgrsbridge.com.

But the big news is the long-awaited move of the **Young Chelsea Bridge Club** into new permanent premises at 54 Goldhawk Road, W12 9HA. The new site is directly opposite Goldhawk Road (Hammersmith & City Line) tube station and about 10 minutes' walk from Shepherds Bush station (Central Line and overground). It is also on many bus routes that go to Shepherds Bush, with two

that stop directly outside the club – numbers 94 and 237. More details on their website at www.ycbc.co.uk.

The opening night of the new club premises was a huge success, with a total of 66 pairs playing and several more who had to be turned away – not because there wasn't space for a few more tables, but there just weren't enough spare tables, chairs and bidding boxes etc!



This picture will give you an idea of the space in the main playing area, known as the Warwick Room in honour of the club's founder. But there are two more good-sized rooms for teaching and matches, plus of course a bar.

Read more about the opening night in Paul Lamford's article on pages 23 - 25.

London Gay Bridge Tournament 2015

The West London Gay Bridge Club is again organising its annual tournament, which this year will be held on Saturday 3rd October at St. Gabriel's Church Hall, Glasgow Terrace, Churchill Gardens, Pimlico, SW1V 3AA. There will be a Pairs competition starting at 11.00am and a Teams competition at 3.00pm. Do note that entry is not restricted to gay players – all are welcome. This is an EBU-licensed event and the Tournament Director will be Anne Catchpole.

The entry fee is £12 for one event, or £16 for both, inclusive of a light lunch. All enquiries and entries should be made to David King at davidking1712@gmail.com or on 07967 655515.

Committee Vacancies

There are currently vacancies on the LMBA Executive Committee. You don't need to be an expert player to serve and the committee would particularly like to find people from amongst the core membership who would be willing to represent the large number of those who play regularly at club level but rarely join in with tournaments at County and national level.

Anyone interested should contact the Secretary, Chris Duckworth, who can explain what is involved in joining the committee and helping to run bridge in London. New candidates will stand for election at the AGM on Thursday 10th September (see Agenda on page 3).

Forthcoming competitions

Unless otherwise indicated, all competitions are played with permitted conventions at EBU Level 4. Membership requirements for each competition are specified in the competition description. See page 19 for details of how to make entry payments.

London League & Newcomers League

Entries close **1st October 2015**

Holders:	Division 1	<i>To be determined</i>	
	Division 2	<i>Tartan</i>	Capt: <i>Uday Hegde</i>
	Division 3	<i>The Improbables</i>	Capt: <i>Richard Wharton</i>
	Newcomers	<i>To be determined</i>	

The 2015/2016 season will mark the 80th anniversary of the London League's commencement!

These league competitions are for teams-of-four, although up to 8 people may play for any one team during the season. Matches are played in home or away venues, which may be homes, clubs or other suitable premises. There are currently three all-play-all divisions with end of season promotion and relegation plus the Newcomers League. The latter is designed particularly for those with little experience of competitive bridge. The winners of the Newcomers are eligible for promotion to the London League, but may choose to continue at the lower level.

In Division 1 only, any systems are permitted, provided reasonable notice is given. The lower divisions of the London League are played at Level 4, whilst in the Newcomers League EBU Level 3 systems and conventions only are permitted.

New teams are always welcome and will be considered for entry at any level, although it would be exceptional for a new team to enter Division 1 directly. All players in the London League must be EBU and LMBA members, but non-members are allowed in the Newcomers League. Teams in this league are restricted to only one player of National Master rank or above, however.

Entry fee: £20.00 per team in the London League, £16 per team in the Newcomers League.

Entries should be made to **Imbaentries@gmail.com**, quoting **London League** in the subject line, or may be sent by post to **Dominic Flint** at Flat 3, 3 Marylebone High Street, W1U 4NG.

Enquiries may also be made to Dominic on 07763 845457. Every effort will be made to accept late entries if necessary.

London Trophy & Della-Porta Plate

Entries close **30th September 2015**

Holders: London Trophy: *CMC Cameron McKenna – Arthur Dyson, Belinda Bridgen, David Reuben, Roy Griggs*

Della-Porta Plate: *Concentric – David Picken, Mark Rogers, Mike Taylor, John Bryant*

The London Trophy is a knock-out teams of four competition for club teams, which is open to teams from all types of clubs, including both bridge and non-bridge clubs. Teams eliminated in the first match enter the secondary Della-Porta Plate competition, also run on a knock-out basis.



Holders - CMC Cameron McKenna

Matches are played in home or away venues, which may be homes, clubs or other suitable premises. Early rounds are regionalised as far as possible to minimise travel. The final stages of both competitions will be held at the Royal Automobile Club in Pall Mall in June 2016. All participants are also eligible to play in the London Trophy Pairs, held in Spring 2016.

Simple systems only are allowed in this event – full details of what is permitted will be sent to all participating teams and may be found on the LMBA website at www.metrobridge.co.uk. No team may have more than one player of National Master or above and no pairs of regular high-level tournament players are allowed. Players need not be members of the EBU or LMBA.

Entry fee: £20 per team.

Entries should be made to **Imbaentries@gmail.com**, quoting **London Trophy** in the subject line. Enquiries may also be made to Kath on 07747 197940.

Every effort will be made to accept late entries if necessary.

Home Counties League

Entries close **1st October 2014**

Holders: *London Red – Capt: Dominic Flint*

This is an inter-county teams-of-eight competition for London and the Home Counties. It is aimed at county second team players who would not normally be expected to represent their counties in



events such as the Tollemache Cup. Teams are allowed to field at most two Grand Masters in any one match.

Matches are of 24 boards and are normally played at the YCBC on weekday evenings starting at 7.00 pm. Players must be members of the county that they represent but allegiance is not required. Green points are awarded.

Current participants are Middlesex, Surrey and London (each with two teams), so there is room for additional counties to join in – anyone interested should contact **Dominic Flint** at Dominic.Flint@clara.co.uk or on 07763 845457 for more details.

Entry fee: £16 per team.

Café Bridge Drive - Clapham

Tuesday 15th September 2015 starting at **10.30** for **11.00** am

Holders: *Robert Sheehan & Susie Lewis*



This year will be the fourth Café Bridge event in the popular cafés in the Abbeville Road area of South Clapham. Once again we are supporting the local charity Trinity Hospice.

The duplicate bridge tournament will be played in a number of different cafés/bars/restaurants in the area, each round of the tournament being played in a different venue. Note that this year we have a new venue on Clapham Common, so the playing area will extend beyond the Abbeville Road itself.



Players should report to The Craft Kitchen, 33-35 Abbeville Road, SW4 9LA to register on the morning of play. Note that this is the same venue as previously used, but Newtons, our former HQ, has been taken over by The Craft Kitchen.

All are welcome – EBU membership is not necessary.

Entry Fee: £22.50 per player, which includes lunch at whichever venue you find yourself in at lunchtime!

Advance entry is **essential**. Entries and enquiries should be sent, to arrive no later than 8th September 2015, to Imbaentries@gmail.com, quoting **Café Bridge Clapham** in the subject line Please note that Café Bridge events are very popular and numbers are restricted, so entries should be submitted as soon as possible, and will be accepted on a first-come first-served basis.

Enquiries may be directed to **Chris Duckworth** on 020 7385 3534 or at chris.duckworth@lineone.net.

Mixed Pairs Championship

Sunday 20th September 2015 starting at **1.00pm**

Venue: Young Chelsea BC, 54 Goldhawk Road, W12 8HA

Holders: *Ian Payn & Chris Duckworth*



Please note that this year this single extended session, match-pointed, mixed pairs event will be held at the Young Chelsea Bridge Club at its new premises in Goldhawk Road, just off Shepherds Bush. Full details of how to find the venue may be found on the YC website: www.ycbc.co.uk.

All players must be EBU members, but LMBA membership is not necessary.

Entry fee: £22.00 per pair.

Advance entry is not absolutely necessary but would be helpful, and should be made to Imbaentries@gmail.com, quoting **Mixed Pairs** in the subject line.

Queries may be directed to the organiser, **Susi Behrmann** on 020 7585 1911.

Men's & Women's IMP Pairs

Sunday 25th October 2015 starting at **1.00pm**

Venue: Young Chelsea BC
54 Goldhawk Road W12 8HA

Holders: **Men:** *Nick Sandqvist & Tim West-Meads*
Women: *Brigid Battiscombe & Linda Pethick*



As introduced last year, this will be the second run of the Men's and Women's IMP Pairs. Each event will comprise a single extended session, played at the same time in the same venue as each other, using the same hands.

Scoring will be by cross-IMPs, a form of scoring that is similar to teams-type scoring. That means the emphasis is on bidding and making your games, not on worrying about the extra few points from playing in no-trumps or from overtricks. In other words, a more relaxing form of the game than ordinary pairs, so something that we hope will appeal to many of our regular club and social players.

Find a partner of the same sex and come along for a fun afternoon of bridge! All players must be EBU members, but LMBA membership is not necessary.

Entry fee: £22.00 per pair.

Advance entry is not absolutely necessary but would be helpful, and should be made to Imbaentries@gmail.com, quoting **Men's Pairs** or **Women's Pairs** in the subject line. Queries may be directed to the organiser, **Michael Hill** on 01732 863283 or at michaelrd.hill@btinternet.com

Palmer Bayer Trophy

Sunday 31st January 2016 starting at **1.00pm**

Venue: Young Chelsea BC

Holders: *Jason Crampton & Sam Oestreicher*

This single extended session, match-pointed, 'No Fear' pairs competition is for those who like to play tournament bridge under more relaxed conditions than often apply, and for those who particularly want to enjoy a social atmosphere when playing.

Improvers and tournament novices are most welcome and more experienced players may find this an ideal way to introduce family, friends and colleagues to organised bridge. Players need not be members of the EBU or LMBA.

The principal aim of this event is enjoyment, so the pace of play is a little more leisurely than usual. Simple systems only are allowed, but including weak two opening bids and transfers in response to 1NT openings. (A full description of allowed systems and conventions can be found at www.metrobridge.co.uk and will be made available at the event.) A complimentary glass of wine awaits you at the end of the session to be enjoyed whilst discussing the hands that you have just played with an expert, who will be happy to answer any questions.

Entry fee: £16.00 per pair.

Advance entry is not absolutely necessary but would be helpful, and should be made to **Imbaentries@gmail.com**, quoting **Palmer Bayer** in the subject line.

Queries may be directed to the organiser **Chris Duckworth** on 020 7385 3534 or at chris.duckworth@lineone.net.



Ian Gardiner Trophy

Sunday 7th February 2016 starting at **11.30am**

Venue: Young Chelsea BC

Holders: *Brian Callaghan, Chris Duckworth, Rob Cliffe, Frank To*

This is the major London Teams of Four Championship, which is played as a one-day two-session multiple teams event from which the leading two eligible teams qualify for a head-to-head 48-board match to determine the winner of the Ian Gardiner Trophy. Green-points will be awarded for both stages of the event, and the winners will be eligible to represent London in the Pachabo Cup, the national



inter-county teams championship, on 11th-12th June 2016 at the Holiday Inn, Birmingham Airport. The qualifier is scored using the same method as the Pachabo – a combination of IMPs and point-a-board.

Note the early start on the day is combined with only a short break between sessions, allowing an early finish on Sunday evening.

Note also that all players must be LMBA members and, in order to be eligible to go through to the final, all players in a team must have London as their primary County of allegiance before playing in the event.

Entry Fee: £60.00 per team.

Entries should be sent to **Imbaentries@gmail.com**, quoting **Ian Gardiner** in the subject line, to arrive by 31st January 2016.

Enquiries may be directed to the organiser, **Ian Payn**, on 07713 322420.

Lederer Memorial Trophy

Saturday-Sunday 27th - 28th February 2016

Holder: *England – Andrew Robson, Tony Forrester, David Gold, David Bakhshi*

This prestigious invitational teams event will again be held at the Royal Automobile Club in Pall Mall. Although still several months away, a number of excellent teams have already confirmed their participation and the competition will provide a real treat for those who would like to watch all the excitement of live play at the very top level.



Full details of the teams, and of how to obtain your spectator tickets, will be published in the next issue of MetroNews. In the meantime enquiries may be directed to the organiser, Ian Payn, on 07713 322420.

Teltscher Cups – Play with the Stars Pairs

Saturday 27th February 2016

Holder: *Not held in 2015*

This is a parallel satellite event to the Lederer. Players at participating clubs play the same hands as are played in the Lederer itself on the Saturday afternoon, scoring up as team mates with the results achieved by two of the star pairs in the main event – one NS and one EW. The winners are invited to attend the Lederer on the Sunday to meet their team-mates and be presented with the cups.

Any club interested in holding a heat of the Teltscher Cups in February should contact organiser Elaine Kay at elainefkay@icloud.com or on 07940 081406.

Advance notice

Garden Cities Heat

Thursday 7th April 2016 at 7.00 pm.

Inter-club teams of eight at the Young Chelsea BC

London Championship Pairs

Sunday 10th April 2016 at 11.30 am.

Two session pairs at the Young Chelsea BC. Note the earlier start time. This event is the qualifier for the national Reg Corwen Trophy and the leading 4 pairs with London allegiance will qualify to play. The Corwen will be held on 3rd – 4th June at the Holiday Inn, Birmingham Airport.

London Trophy Pairs

Sunday 17th April at 2.00pm

Pairs event at RAC Pall Mall especially for participants in the London Trophy and Della Porta Plate.

Café Bridge Wandsworth

Tuesday 19th April at 10.30 for 11.00 am

Café bridge in the Tonsleys area of Wandsworth

Fox Shammon Trophy

Sunday 24th April at 2.00pm

Seniors Pairs at the prestigious Queen's Club

London Trophy final

Sunday 12th June at 2.00 pm

Finals at RAC Pall Mall, open to spectators

London Congress

Saturday-Sunday 16th-17th July 2016

Central Hall Westminster

Replacing the London Green-pointed Swiss Weekend, traditionally held in March, the congress will comprise Swiss Pairs on Saturday at 1.00pm and Swiss Teams on Sunday starting at 11.30am, plus parallel events for less-experienced players.



More details of all these events will be in the Spring issue of MetroNews.

General Competition Information & Regulations

Entries. The preferred method of payment of entry fees for competitions is by electronic transfer of funds. Payments should be made to the LMBA account as follows:

Sort Code: 09-06-66

Account Number: 41838562

Please include your surname and the competition name as part of the reference, so that your payment is readily identifiable.

Payments may otherwise be by cash, by EBU voucher, or by cheque made payable to LMBA. Payments on the day are generally acceptable except for certain events for which this is not practicable. These currently include:

- Leagues
- London Trophy
- Café Bridge events
- Lederer spectator tickets

Membership requirements for each competition are specified in the competition description. If players are members of counties other than London, they can become LMBA dual members in order to comply with a requirement for LMBA membership by the payment of our dual membership subscription, which is £5 per annum. Subscriptions may be paid along with competition entry fees, making sure that full contact details for the individual are provided, including email address and existing EBU membership number if appropriate.

Alternatively, they may be sent directly to the LMBA Membership Secretary, Roger Morton, at 43, Banstead Road South, Sutton, Surrey, SM2 5LG. He may also be contacted at rhl.morton@blueyonder.co.uk or 020 8643 4930.

Seating policy. Players may be allocated a starting position by the TD on arrival at a venue, or may be required to draw a starting position or cut for North-South. Players who require a stationary position for medical or mobility reasons should if possible notify the organiser or venue in advance.

Competition regulations. The Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge (2007) apply to all competitions. Where appropriate, the regulations and directives of the EBU Laws & Ethics Committee also apply, as contained in the current Orange Book and other published documents.

Regulations for matches played privately can be found on our website www.metrobridge.co.uk. In such matches, reference may be made if necessary to an external referee. It is recommended that the Young Chelsea Bridge Club is contacted on 020 7373 1665, where access is usually possible to a suitable person.

The decision of the LMBA Executive Committee in any dispute is binding and final.

2015 Lederer Memorial Trophy

The 2015 Lederer Memorial Trophy took place over the weekend of Feb 28th/March 1st, at the RAC in Pall Mall. Ten teams descended on the club to play each other over the course of two days, using a scoring method based on a combination ofimps converted to victory points and point-a-board. For the first time at this competition, 10 points counted as a win (or a loss, depending on which side of it you were) on the point-a-board.

The ten teams invited were:

England Open (Tony Forrester; Andrew Robson; David Gold; David Bakhshi)

England Women (Nicola Smith; Sally Brock; Heather Dhondy; Catherine Draper; Liz McGowan; Samantha Punch)

England Seniors (John Holland; David Price; Colin Simpson; Paul Hackett; David Mossop; Gunnar Halberg)

The **HOLDERS** (Bernard Teltscher; Victor Silverstone; John Matheson; Willie Coyle; Phil King; Stelio di Bello)

Zia Mahmoud's team (Zia; Denis Bilde; Sabine Auken; Roy Welland)

Simon **Gillis'** team (Simon Gillis; Espen Erichsen; Boye Brogeland; Espen Lindqvist)

Janet **de Botton's** team (Janet de Botton; Artur Malinowski; Nick Sandqvist; Tom Townsend; Thor-Erik Hoftaniska; Dror Padon)

Ireland (Tommy Garvey; John Carroll; Tom Hanlon; Mark Moran; Rory Boland)

Gold Cup (Cameron Small; Jon Cooke; Stefan Skorchev; Borislav Popov)

London (Ray Robinson; Gary Jones; Ed Scerri; Jerry Harouni; Richard Bowdery)

The event was doubly-blessed in terms of Tournament Directors. Martin Nygren and Vigfús Pálsson, both top European Directors, kept things running smoothly and are already hard at work on modifications for 2016 which will make results more accessible. As usual, there were myriad helpers and BBO operators, all acting under the aegis of Event Organiser Kath Stynes. The VuGraph room was, as always, a lively source of comment, with pearls of wisdom dispensed by Joe Fawcett, Ian Payn and Jeremy Dhondy.

Jeremy Dhondy took more part in the weekend when, on the Sunday afternoon, wearing his EBU Chairman's cap he presented two of the EBU's Diamond Awards – the first to be awarded – to Nicola Smith and Tony Forrester, neither of whom was aware that they would be taking home these prestigious trophies for consistent excellence at international level.

As to the bridge, the England Open team seemed unstoppable, but several teams were battling for second place. The only team that actually managed to beat England Open was Gillis (a team also containing for this event a record number of

people called Espen in it), although the Irish team, making a welcome return, managed to hold England Open to an honourable draw.

As always, there were awards for the best bid hand, the best played hand and the best defended hand.

Best Bid Hand

♠ 52	♠ A93
♥ K	♥ AQJ10952
♦ AKQJ7	♦ 96
♣ A10982	♣ 5

<i>Tommy Garvey</i>	<i>John Carroll</i>
1♣	1♥
2♦	3♥
4♣	4♠
4NT	5♠
7NT	



Best bid hand winners, Carroll & Garvey

Tommy Garvey opened 1♣, which was either 11-13 balanced or (as here) 17+. If you cavil at giving full weight to the singleton K♥, well, the beefiness of the Diamond suit makes up for it. John

Carroll responded 1♥, as well he might, and Garvey rebid 2♦. This confirmed that he had 17+, and a five card Diamond suit.

Carroll now bid 3♥ which must show a suit of this quality based on what happened later in the auction. 4♣ and 4♠ were cue bids, 4NT RKCB, with 5♠ showing two key cards and the Queen of Hearts. It was at this point that Garvey did the important thing. He trusted his partner to have the suit he'd shown, good enough to allow the K♥ to be overtaken if a Spade was lead, knocking out the entry to the Hearts. He was right.

Would Carroll have bid this way without the all-important 9♥? Of course not!

Best Played Hand

Game All. Dealer South.

♠ A9		♠ J7654
♥ Q8532		♥ K97
♦ AK		♦ 43
♣ AQ103		♣ J85
♠ 103		♠ KQ82
♥ 1064		♥ AJ
♦ J9765		♦ Q1082
♣ 962		♣ K74

West	North	East	South
			<i>Malinowski</i>
			1NT
Pass	2♦	Pass	2
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
Pass	6NT	All Pass	

Artur Malinowski played in 6NT after North had bid what he thought he (Malinowski) could make. A Diamond lead did nobody any good or any harm and the first thing Artur did was play a Heart to the Jack. In a way, you wouldn't mind if this lost because you no longer have to worry about what to do, but the Jack held. Artur cashed the Ace but couldn't afford to blithely play a third round of the suit, because if it didn't break, he'd be going off. So, he



Artur Malinowski

crossed back to his other top Diamond, played the ♣A then a Club to the King, and cashed ♦Q to see if the J dropped. It didn't, but a third club back to the Queen made East look decidedly

green around the gills. He could keep the Spades stopped, or he could keep the King of Hearts, but he couldn't do both. Thirteen tricks in the high-scoring contract, a well-deserved good score for Malinowski.

Simon Gillis, the event sponsor, made a speech at the end thanking all those who had come, played and helped out. Thanks to his continuing generosity there will henceforth be no charge for spectators. He presented the awards above, and the runners-up prize to the de Botton team, who scored 249 VPs, and to the winners, the England Open Team, who performed outstandingly throughout, and finished on 292 VPs.

Next year's Lederer will take place on 27th/28th February, at the RAC in Pall Mall. Spectators welcome, BBO coverage as usual.

Best Defended Hand

Game All. Dealer South.

♠ KQ987

♥ K8654

♦ 10

♣ J4

♠ J632

♥ J103

♦ J432

♣ 103

♠ A105

♥ Q97

♦ 95

♣ AK862

♠ 4

♥ A2

♦ AKQ876

♣ Q975

Tom Townsend, West, led 10♣ against Three No Trumps by South (who had advertised long Diamonds). Nick Sandqvist (East) looked at dummy and realised that the only hope was if a) Townsend could get on lead with a diamond and b) could help set up a second Spade trick. So, he switched to a small Spade which went to the Jack and Queen. Declarer played the ♦10 off dummy, and cashed the A and K. Noting Sandqvist's 9 on the second round he accurately divined the Diamond position and tried to sneak the 6 passed Townsend.

Townsend wasn't having any of that, and leapt in with his Jack to pump a Spade through, giving the defence a Diamond and two tricks in each black suit to beat the contract.

Racing Deluges Cubbyhole

by Paul Lamford

The opening night of the re-formed Young Chelsea Bridge Club was packed, with everyone wanting to play and two or three pairs being turned away. This was caused by a shortage of tables - I think that they could have squeezed in a few more. There was plenty of space for the bridge, run excellently by Martin Lee and Nick Sandqvist, and such a big turnout could not have been anticipated. The new premises are splendid and the buffet was excellent, as is the bar. And it could not be nearer to the tube. It was also good to see so many old faces there, including people that I had not seen for years like Peter Donovan, the Daily Mail bridge correspondent, who is going strong at 82.

Mike Scoltock and Nick Wilkinson won with a fine score of +66 IMPs in a strong field with an NGS average over 57%. The play's the thing, and Deep Finesse would have made all of the following game contracts which were often beaten. The first:



Paul Lamford in play on the opening night, in partnership with Anne Catchpole.

Morton's Fork

EW Vul. Dealer North.

♠ 10873	
♥ 84	
♦ AQJ8	
♣ AQ5	
♠ Q65	♠ KJ942
♥ K10763	♥ 2
♦ 92	♦ 1053
♣ K102	♣ 9643
♠ A	
♥ AQJ95	
♦ K764	
♣ J87	

West	North	East	South
	1NT	Pass	2♦*
Pass	2	Pass	3♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

The above was the auction at our table, and I presume at quite a few tables. North sensibly thought that 9 tricks in no-trumps might be easier than 11 in diamonds. I note that Thor Erik made 3NT by North, but he had a mis-defence. South might well make if

West does not lead a spade, but at our table, North was declarer. East led the four of spades, and my partner won, crossed to a diamond, and took a heart finesse. The opponents cashed out for one off. The winning line is not obvious. Declarer crosses to a diamond at trick two and leads a spade. If East wins with the nine and plays a heart, declarer rises with the ace, crosses to North again and plays a third spade. If East rises, then when he cashes the spades, his partner gets squeezed. If he ducks, then he has no entry to the long spades. The play in 5♦ is not without interest, especially on a trump lead. Normal play is to win in dummy and take a heart finesse. This loses, and West does best to play a

second trump. Again dummy wins and plays a heart. East cannot gain by ruffing, so discards a spade. South wins, ruffs a heart with the ace of diamonds, draws trumps and cashes his winners. West is squeezed without the count. Unlike the play in 3NT, this can be found, but nobody made 5♦.

Diamond Pin

EW Vul. Dealer South.

	♠ Q1095		
	♥ KJ2		
	♦ Q642		
	♣ K7		
♠ A82		♠ J43	
♥ 64		♥ 9	
♦ AJ87		♦ K5	
♣ Q1032		♣ AJ98654	
	♠ K76		
	♥ AQ108753		
	♦ 1093		
	♣ –		

West	North	East	South
			3
Pass	5	5♣	All Pass

Most gave in to Four Hearts here, but the intrepid souls who bid 5C, at adverse, were rewarded, whether or not they made the contract. Four Hearts is tough to beat, requiring East-West to find their diamond ruff (or a misguess in spades). South might open 4H or even 1H at these colours, or even an intermediate 2H. In Five Clubs, the defence do best to cash the ace of hearts and switch to a small spade won in dummy. Now, assuming the hearts are 7-3, the club finesse looks clear, as it is around 9-6 on when North follows to the first round of clubs. Now the diamond finesse is around 8-6 against so that does not appeal. The alternative line is to play the ace and

king of diamonds, and ruff a diamond, which works when either opponent has Qxx in diamonds. On the second diamond, South has to play the nine or ten, and now declarer has the choice between running the jack, pinning the nine or ten, or ruffing the third round. It looks like South has the king of spades and probably the king or queen of hearts. Restricted choice tells us to play him for ♦Q9x but with ♦Qxx in diamonds and the same majors, he would be too good for 3H, and the declarer has a chance to get this right.

Continuing with terms that are common to bridge and chess, which was my first game before I switched to bridge, was the following hand where West needed to change his line of attack:

Switch in Time

EW Vul. Dealer South.

		♠ KJ92	
		♥ K654	
		♦ 107	
		♣ KQ6	
♠ 76			♠ 10853
♥ AQJ10			♥ 83
♦ 9852			♦ QJ3
♣ J82			♣ A543
		♠ AQ4	
		♥ 972	
		♦ AK64	
		♣ 1097	

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

This was a common auction from the weak no-trumpers, with everyone in game. At my table West led the queen of hearts, East following with the three. West did well to continue with the jack of hearts and I ducked again, fearing

East might have ♥Ax. Now West could have beaten the contract by force by switching to a diamond, but chose to exit with a club. I played high in dummy, and East might still have given me a guess by ducking smoothly. Instead he won, and declarer was

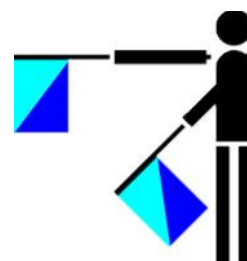
home with the favourable position of the jack of clubs and ace of hearts. 3NT failed 11 times of the 25 occasions it was reached and I wonder whether that was good defence in every case.

The credit for the new premises goes to Nick Sandqvist and the rest of the committee, and it is hoped that the turnout will remain high. I certainly intend to go there more often, and the regular events the YC used to organise will be augmented by a monthly backgammon tournament with low entry fees. Those who prefer Scrabble can find the anagram of the heading to this article instead.

Signalling II

by Mike Graham

Mike continues the theme of signalling, introduced last time. In this article he talks about suit preference signals and false cards.



In the last issue we looked at two types of signal; the “count” signal, attempting to indicate to partner how many cards we had in a suit, and a “suit-preference” signal, attempting to direct partner’s attention to a particular suit.

We also saw how the card played to trick one can vary in intent according to partnership design. It can be straightforward count, or incorporate a like-dislike element. Later in the play, however, most signals will tend to be suit-preference.

This hand came up on the internet site Bridge Base Online:

Game All. Dealer North.

♠ 543	♠ J106
♥ 975	♥ KQ106
♦ 10763	♦ KQ98
♣ AJ5	♣ Q7
♠ K987	♠ AQ2
♥ AJ3	♥ 842
♦ AJ5	♦ 42
♣ 1094	♣ K8632

South had no particular reason not to lead his long suit, and started with the three of clubs. North took this with the ace, and, seeing no club two at the first trick, and mindful of the ten-nine combination in dummy, led back the five. South won with the king and led back the eight of clubs – a high card to indicate a preference for a high suit return. North, who knew the exact layout of the club suit when East showed out on the third round, won with the jack and had no trouble in returning a spade.

As it happened, after the initial club lead there was no real play for the contract, but it was competently defended nevertheless.

East-West reached 3NT by East after a weak notrump and Stayman sequence.

Sometimes, however, things may not be so clear. One problem can be that things that are clear to one defender may not be so clear to the other. It is very easy to fall into the trap of thinking that partner can see the same things that you can, as happened to North-South here:

South held KQ962 J7 52 J742. Virtuously resisting the temptation to open a weak 2 , he passed and heard the opposition bid as follows:

1 -2 -2 -3 -3 -4 -pass.

#Partner led the ace of spades, and dummy (East) came down with:

1053
65
10974
AK106

South played the two of spades, encouraging on the North-South methods, and the defence took the first three spade tricks. South had two options; to hope partner had a natural heart trick, or to try for a trump promotion with a fourth round of spades, which would work if partner had started with Qx in diamonds (it looked like declarer had a 3451 shape). Which to go for?

On the third spade trick North discarded the eight of hearts, and South now had to decide what North wanted. One thing was clear; the eight could not be North's highest heart. Therefore, North had a higher heart than the eight, and, if he wanted the trump promotion, he could have played a higher heart to show it.

So South concluded that North did not want the trump promotion, and switched to a heart. This was not a success, as the full deal was:

♠ A4	
♥ 109843	
♦ Q6	
♣ Q853	
♠ J87	♠ 1053
♥ AKQ2	♥ 65
♦ AKJ83	♦ 10974
♣ 9	♣ AK106
	♠ KQ962
	♥ J7
	♦ 52
	♣ J742

South was aware that if West had solid diamonds then a fourth round of spades (giving a ruff-and-discard) would allow declarer to ruff high and discard a heart from dummy; give West AQJx of hearts and North the king. So South thought that the eight of hearts denied the request for a trump promotion and asked for a heart switch.

North stated that if he did indeed have the king of hearts, then it would always make a trick, and that if that was the case it would be his clear duty to take the pressure off South by ruffing the queen of spades and exiting passively with a trump; therefore, as he had not done so, he wanted the trump promotion after all. South agreed, in the interests of partnership harmony, but wondered (and, I can assure you, continues to wonder) why on earth North had not made things easier by discarding the heart ten. This was a small swing out, as a reasonable contract of 3NT by East at the other table went down on a small spade lead, the defenders taking the first five tricks.

Conclusion: one clear signal in bold colours is a lot better than a wishy-washy ambiguous pastel one.

Most of the time, suit length signals will be honest. Some stratagems, like leading fifth-highest instead of fourth-highest, are well known; in such cases the player knows that partner is unlikely to play much of a role in the defence, and that the chances of misleading declarer are worthwhile. East on the following hand produced a subtle false signal that paved the way for a game swing to her team:

Game All. Dealer West.

<p>♠ Q953 ♥ J3 ♦ J86 ♣ AQ76</p> <p>♠ J64 ♥ AQ1085 ♦ K73 ♣ 104</p> <p>♠ AK10872 ♥ K76 ♦ 5 ♣ KJ9</p>	<p>♠ – ♥ 942 ♦ AQ10942 ♣ 8532</p>
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West	North	East	South
2	Pass	4♥	4

All Pass

Fifteen imps down with eight boards to play, and with nothing much happening on the first three, West decided that the time was right for a five-card weak two. East raised to game, and South bid a nervous 4 .

West led a diamond, and East won with the ace. She now had to decide whether to return a diamond, hoping the lead was a singleton, or whether to try something else. She decided that West might well have some nuisance holding in spades, and went for the smokescreen.

She returned the heart nine. West won with the queen, and cashed the ace,

on which East completed her “peter” with the two. West duly led a third heart, and declarer, placing West with six hearts and East with two, decided to rely on the spades breaking 2-1 (or 3-0 onside) and ruffed in dummy with the queen. When East followed to the third heart, and showed out when a trump was led from dummy, South’s face was a picture.

All pairs have their own preferences for honour-card leads. Many pairs, when leading from an ace-king combination, have agreements; popular is to play the ace to request an attitude signal and the king to request a count signal. There are many honour-lead systems; Journalist, Rusinow, Slawinski, to name but a few. All can be found on the internet.

These lead systems, in general, apply to trick one. During the play, there may be other considerations:

Love All. Dealer South.

<p>♠ J109 ♥ AQJ8 ♦ K52 ♣ KQ2</p> <p>♠ A64 ♥ 753 ♦ AQ73 ♣ 764</p> <p>♠ KQ83 ♥ K109 ♦ 1086 ♣ AJ8</p>	<p>♠ 752 ♥ 642 ♦ J94 ♣ 10953</p>
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North-South bid 1NT-3NT (with a minimum combined 28-count, North did not bother with Stayman) and West led the five of hearts. With four heart tricks and three club tricks, declarer needed some tricks from the spade

suit, so she won in hand and started spades.

From West's point of view, the situation looked hopeless, but he saw one small glimmer of hope. If East had the jack of diamonds and declarer the ten.....after winning with the ace of spades he switched to the queen of diamonds. South was very suspicious. She looked at the East-West convention card, then asked East what the queen-lead showed (just in case the answer was different to that on the CC, perhaps), but finally played low from dummy. West then led a low diamond, and declarer, expecting West to have QJ, played low again. East won with the jack and returned the suit, so the defence had five winners.

The outcome was interesting. South showed herself to be a graceless player by summoning the tournament director and complaining that West had led the queen "and he didn't have the jack, like East said he did". East pointed out that he hadn't been asked about that; the question related to what East-West led from QJ, and that it wasn't anything to do with him if West didn't have the jack. The tournament director gravely stated that the result stood as played.

That was well defended by West, but South might have considered the opening lead. With QJ9x of diamonds, West might well have led one initially..

London Trophy Finals - 2015

by Michael Hill

On 14th June, the finals of the 37th London Trophy were once again held in the elegant surroundings of the Royal Automobile Club in Pall Mall. This LMBA competition is essentially social, that concept being maintained by restricting the expertise of the players, limiting the use of conventions and by using aggregate scoring. The finals day has three head-to head matches - the final of the London Trophy itself, the play-off for third place between the losing semi-finalists, and the final of the Della-Porta Plate, the competition for first round losers in the London Trophy - played simultaneously using the same boards. And once again, Pat Brotherston, daughter of Freddie Della-Porta who created the event in 1978, was able to attend and present the prizes. The three matches were:

London Trophy final: CMS Cameron McKenna vs. HM Treasury

London Trophy third place play-off: RAC Woodcote Park vs. Verve

Della-Porta Plate final: Concentric vs. Putney Pirates

There were the usual eccentricities. On no fewer than three boards, there were different scores at every table and, indeed, on one of those three, there were four different denominations for the contract.

There was a curiosity on the first board. North-South had a double fit in the black suits and 4♠ could not be

beaten (although it could fail if declarer did not play for clubs to be 2-2). However, it was a thin game in terms of high-card points and two teams stopped in a part-score. The excitement came when East-West at one table had a misunderstanding about the meaning of a double, leaving North-South to play in 3♣

doubled. This made the routine ten tricks but the swing of 150 against 4♠ making at the other table was the smallest in any of the three matches!

Perhaps it was a day for the curious, as something odd happened on board 2 as well. 3NT was unbeatable on the lie of the cards, but also unbiddable given two flat hands totalling 23 high card points. Most East-West pairs played in 2NT, making an overtrick, although one sold out to 2♠ by North which went one-off, so only a 50 swing. The oddity was at the table where North, holding five spades to the jack and no other high-card points, elected not to remove his partner's double of 1NT. When the defence never led spades at any time, declarer had no trouble in coming to ten tricks for a swing of 380.

Board 3 provided more scope for everyone.

EW Vul. Dealer South.

♠ 1092	
♥ 9862	
♦ J764	
♣ Q9	
♠ QJ63	♠ A
♥ KQ43	♥ J1075
♦ AQ5	♦ 10932
♣ A6	♣ KJ74
♠ K8754	
♥ A	
♦ K8	
♣ 108532	

At three tables, East-West quickly settled in 4♥ but at one table West thought the hand worth a further try and they ended in 5♥. At the other two tables, spade interventions led to the alternative game contract of 3NT (which yielded a straightforward

eleven tricks when the defence played spades at every opportunity).

The heart contracts proved more challenging because of the 4-1 trump break. One declarer in 4♥ made an overtrick but one went one-off. The third one showed how it could be done. The defence led a trump and switched to the ♦K. Declarer won the ace, unblocked the ♠A and returned to the ♦Q, cashed the ♣A and led the ♠Q, ruffing when no king appeared. He then cashed the ♣K, and continued with the ♣J discarding his last diamond. North ruffed and returned a trump but declarer won in dummy, and cross-ruffed diamonds and spades, simply conceding a spade at the end.

Declarer in 5♥ faced the worst challenge. North led a small diamond to the king and ace and declarer led trumps. South won and returned a diamond to declarer's queen. Declarer cashed a top heart and got the bad news. He then played three rounds of clubs discarding his losing diamond as North ruffed. North returned his last trump and declarer won, unblocked the ♠A, ruffed a club (eliminating South's last one), conceded a trick to the ♠K and won the enforced spade return for one-off.

He could have made eleven tricks by playing a spade a trick 2 before touching trumps. Then, when he wins the ♦Q, he ruffs a spade, draws trumps and concedes a trick to the ♠K, claiming on the enforced black suit return. This line does require South to have no more than two diamonds but that is quite likely after North's small (probably 4th highest) diamond lead.

A club lead at trick 1 (and continuation at the first opportunity) would have made declarer's life more difficult as he cannot now enjoy both a spade ruff and the third club. However, he can still succeed double dummy. After conceding a trick to the ♥A (playing low from both hands!) he wins the club return, ruffs a club high and draws trumps (perforce ending in dummy). Now he finesses the ♦Q, cashes the ♦A and exits with his third diamond – at which point dummy is high, holding one top card in each side suit.

Board 5 was another that provided excitement in the first half.

NS Vul. Dealer North.

	♠ 8753	
	♥ AJ85	
	♦ KJ	
	♣ K86	
♠ K9		♠ AQJ642
♥ 94		♥ 10732
♦ Q863		♦ 1094
♣ QJ743		♣ –
	♠ 10	
	♥ KQ6	
	♦ A742	
	♣ A10952	

North-South have game values but, without the sight of all four hands, it is far from clear what the final contract should be. Indeed, there were serious swings in both the Trophy final and the Plate final. Only in the third place play-off was there no swing – and even that required some sound defence.

When Verve were North-South, they were playing a strong no trump so North opened 1♣ and they quickly found their way to 5♣. This was

always destined to go one-off on the bad break. At the other table, RAC Woodcote bid to 4♥ - which can be made with the aid of a spade ruff and the diamond finesse. However, the ♦10 was led, ducked to the ♦J and, at trick 2, an unsuspecting declarer led the ♣8. East did well not to ruff and, after winning the ♣A, declarer led the ♠10. West won and switched to a small trump, East playing the 7. Declarer won the ♥K, crossed to the ♦K and ruffed a spade.

However, he was now short of entries to both draw trumps and enjoy the ♦A. So, in the hope that East held four diamonds, he cashed the ♦A, discarding a spade, and led a fourth round. When West followed, he had no option but to ruff high and then ruffed his last spade with the ♥Q. The ♣10 was then covered by the J and K and ruffed by East who then led the ♠A, West ruffing with the ♥9. Whether or not declarer over-ruffed (he didn't) he was destined to lose two trump tricks and go one-off for a flat board. Note that West had to retain the ♥9 when she led trumps early on and then use it to ruff her partner's ♠A, or declarer would have made his small trump for his tenth trick.

In the Plate final, there was a swing of 720 to Concentric when they bid and made 4♥ whilst Putney Pirates went one-off in 5♣. But things were rather different in the Trophy final. North opened 1NT at both tables and East overcalled 2♠ but, when CMS Cameron McKenna were North-South, South doubled and that ended the auction. That contract went only one-off when the defence failed to

lead a trump or switch to one at trick 2. At the other table, South bid 3♣ instead and West's ensuing double ended that auction. South was not pressed to make nine tricks and that led to a swing of 770 to HM Treasury. After that hand, several players were left thinking about the use, interpretation and judgment of doubles!

Board 10 was a cold grand slam in no trumps or spades (or hearts if declarer correctly located the ♥Q). But it was only bid at one table in each match, the other table stopping in the small slam. So HM Treasury, Concentric and RAC Woodcote all gained a swing of just under 700.

Then came **Board 11**, which was one of the three with different scores at every table.

Love All. Dealer South.

♠ A1087542	♠ 6
♥ Q1064	♥ AKJ853
♦ 7	♦ K
♣ 7	♣ K9854
♠ J9	♠ KQ3
♥ 72	♥ 9
♦ AQJ9432	♦ 10865
♣ AJ	♣ Q10632

CMS Cameron McKenna and RAC Woodcote both bid and made 5♦ on the West cards. The former actually made an overtrick when, after cashing the ♠A, North switched to his singleton club. But, overall, they lost a swing of 30 as HM Treasury bid and made the equally unbeatable 5♥.

RAC actually gained a swing of 100 because their North-South pair bid to 4♠ (freely, not intended as a sacrifice), going two-off, doubled. This was perhaps slightly careless, as the defence did not lead trumps. The lead was the ♦K, which was overtaken to continue the suit. Declarer ruffed low and was over-ruffed with the ♠6!

Interestingly, even on a trump lead they could have escaped for one-off, although it takes a rather counter-intuitive line to do so. After a trump lead, declarer must duck a club to West. West does best to lead a second trump but declarer wins in dummy, ruffs out West's ♣A and exits with a diamond. If East's ♦K is allowed to hold the trick he is immediately end-played (into setting up a trick for either the ♣Q or the ♥Q) and even if West overtakes the ♦K, this only delays the end-play.

The most unusual results were in the play-off match. Concentric subsided in 3♥ and, after making eleven tricks, must have expected a swing against them. However, the Putney Pirates East-West reached 5♥ after North-South bid to 4♠ and East showed his second suit and declarer had something of an aberration. The defence led spades and, after ruffing the second round, declarer cashed one top trump and the ♦K, then crossed to the ♣A to continue diamonds. North ruffed and declarer pitched a club! North then led the ♥10 and declarer spurned the finesse, winning with the ♥K. He now led the ♣K, which North ruffed and, after making his remaining trumps, declarer had to concede two club

tricks at the end for three-off and a swing of 350 to Concentric.

At half time, CMS Cameron McKenna led by 1060 in the Trophy final, Concentric by a whopping 2550 in the Plate final and RAC Woodcote by just 270 in the play-off

♠♥♦♣

The second half kicked off with more of a whimper than a bang. Board 13 was a solid game in no trumps or diamonds and was bid at every table except where Verve managed to stop in a diamond part-score

However, **Board 14** raised the excitement level.

Love All. Dealer East.

♠ A7543	
♥ –	
♦ AQJ92	
♣ A75	
♠ KJ	♠ 1092
♥ K9852	♥ AQJ76
♦ 10743	♦ 6
♣ J9	♣ K1062
♠ Q86	
♥ 1043	
♦ K85	
♣ Q843	

North-South have a cold game in spades whilst, with the aid of some good guessing in the black suits, East-West can make 4♥. The Cameron McKenna East elected to open 1♥ and this made it very difficult for their opponents. After 1♥ – P – 2♥, North doubled for take-out but East's bid of 3♥ then bought the contract. Alas he mis-guessed both black suits and ended one-off.

At the other table, the Cameron McKenna North was left to open 1♠

and, although East-West competed in hearts, Cameron McKenna had no trouble reaching 4♠. The ♥A was led and ruffed and a spade to the queen lost to the king. The defence continued hearts and declarer ruffed, cashed the ♠A and turned to diamonds, cashing five rounds as East declined to ruff. Declarer now played ace and another club and East won, drew the outstanding trumps and cashed a heart for one-off.

This was a good effort by the defence but declarer could have succeeded. When in dummy with the ♦K, he needed to ruff dummy's last heart with his last trump before running the rest of the diamonds. So, a potential swing of 370 to Cameron McKenna became a swing of 100 to HM Treasury.

In the Plate, Putney Pirates had no problem bidding 4♠ – and making it when East led his singleton diamond. However, at the other table, their East-West pair sacrificed in 5♥ – and nobody doubled. This was just as well for the Pirates as declarer lost her way in the play.



On the ♠6 lead, she played dummy's ♠K, losing to the ace. North cashed the minor suit aces and continued with a second diamond which declarer ruffed. She now drew trumps but, when they broke 3-0, she had only eight top tricks, so was forced to take the (losing) club finesse in the hope of a ninth trick. Had she refrained from drawing a second round of trumps when she learnt of the bad break, nine tricks would have

been possible on cross-ruff lines. So the end result was a swing of 270 to the Pirates when, if someone had found a “double” card and if the play had still gone the same way, it could have been a swing of 80 the other way!

The big swing came in the play-off. The Verve West found a weak 2♥ opening, third in hand and, over a 2♠ intervention from North, was raised to game. South didn't feel inclined to get involved, so 4♥ was the final contract. The ♦A was led, and declarer made no mistake. She played North for both black aces (after his overcall and the lack of support from South) and then cross-ruffed when the 3-0 trump break came to light. At the other table, the RAC West passed, so North was able to open 1♠ and, despite some competition in hearts, eventually bought the contract in 4♠.

The ♥A was led and ruffed and the initial play was the same as in the main final. However, in this match, declarer began the diamonds by leading to the king and East then ruffed the second round to play a third round of hearts. Declarer could ruff this, run the remaining diamonds and still had the ♣A and the 13th trump, losing just one more (club) trick, irrespective of where the ♣K was. So Verve gained a double game swing of 840.

Board 15 delivered the necessary relaxation after that. Indeed, it was so relaxing that it was passed out at four tables! Then came **Board 16**:

The Norths chose to open 1♦ (twice), 1♥ (three times) or 1♠ (once) according to style!

EW Vul. Dealer West.

♠ KJ52
♥ 10952
♦ AKJ7
♣ 6

♠ 1097	♠ A8643
♥ KJ864	♥ –
♦ 93	♦ 10862
♣ Q107	♣ K954

♠ Q
♥ AQ73
♦ Q54
♣ AJ832

The 1♦ openings led to 4♥ played by South while two of the 1♥ openings also led to 4♥, but played by North. The other 1♥ opening led to 3NT played by North, while the 1♠ opening led to 3NT played by South. Are you still with me?!

There was no more consistency in the play. Against 4♥ by North, one East led the ♦8, the other the ♠A. Against 4♥ played by South, one West led the ♠10 the other the ♠9. Against 3NT played by North, East led the ♠4 whilst, against 3NT played by South, West led the ♥6. Come on, catch up! Now double dummy, as you can see, 3NT is destined to fail and 4♥ is cold.

But this is the London Trophy. The ♥6 lead against 3NT gave the RAC declarer his ninth trick but, to be fair to the Verve West, I have to report that hearts were not bid in the auction at that table! When the Concentric North played 3NT on a spade lead, he won the ♠Q, crossed to a top diamond and ran the ♥10. West won and continued spades, and East won the ♠A to play a third round. For some reason, declarer ducked this,

leaving West on lead and West switched to a diamond. Declarer won, set up his second heart trick (West actually ducked) and cashed the rest of his nine winners.

Were you expecting two swings of 20 with their opponents in 4♥? The Putney Pirates declarer got a lead of the ♠A and switch to a small club. She won the ♣A, ruffed a club and ran the ♥9 to the ♥J. West switched to a diamond and declarer played a second round and then cashed the ♠KJ discarding clubs. The diamond ace was then ruffed by West who exited with a heart. Declarer now ruffed a club but she still had to concede a heart to the king, so was one-off for a swing of 450 to Concentric. Verve suffered a similar fate in the contract, so RAC also gained a swing of 450.

Would things be better in the main final? HM Treasury, playing 4♥ from the North hand followed the trend and went one-off but Cameron McKenna, playing it from the South hand, surpassed that. West led the ♠10 to East's ace and East returned a small spade, perhaps hoping West's 10 was a singleton. Declarer won the ♠K and led a small heart, rising with the ace when East showed out. He now played the ♣A, ruffed a club and played two top diamonds, ending in dummy. After cashing the ♠J, he tried to cash the ♦K but West ruffed and played KJ of hearts. South could win the ♥Q but had to concede the last two tricks for two-off and a swing of 50 to HM Treasury.

Had declarer played a club to the ace at trick 3 and ruffed a club before leading a trump, he might have

succeeded. After the ♥A and another club ruff, he cashes his spade winner (discarding a diamond) and two top diamonds ending in hand to lead a fourth club in this end-position:

	♠ 5	
	♥ 10	
	♦ KJ	
	♣ –	
♠ –		♠ 8
♥ KJ86		♥ –
♦ –		♦ 108
♣ –		♣ K
	♠ –	
	♥ Q73	
	♦ –	
	♣ J	

It now needs good defence to beat the contract; West needs to ruff with the ♥J and exit with a small trump to end-play declarer. Curiously enough, the only way that the contract can be made on best defence is for declarer not to play trumps at all. If you imagine the above lay-out with one more trump in each hand (except East's, of course), North having the ♥9 alongside the ♥10 and South still having the ♥A, there is now no defence for West when North, perforce on lead, plays a top diamond and South's remaining club is discarded.

The next few boards were fairly straightforward, although there were occasional swings either through brilliancy or carelessness. Then on board 23 there were three different contracts (1NT, 2♠ or 3NT), each bid twice and each making either eight or nine tricks, so six different scores. I was beginning to think we needed a larger computer to keep track of them

all. Would the final board be any simpler?

It was actually worse. This time there were five different contracts and five different scores!

Love All. Dealer West.

♠ K8764	
♥ 2	
♦ A6432	
♣ K2	
♠ A105	♠ J932
♥ A1094	♥ 83
♦ J5	♦ KQ107
♣ 9643	♣ QJ8
♠ Q	
♥ KQJ765	
♦ 98	
♣ A1075	

In the Trophy final, Cameron McKenna stopped in 2♥ and, after the ♦J lead and no trump switch by the defence when in with the ♠A, made an overtrick. At the other table, after North had opened 1♠, HM Treasury reached 3♥, also on the lead of the ♦J. This time, the defence did switch to trumps after cashing a diamond, so the contract ended one-off for a final swing of 190 to Cameron McKenna. In the play-off, RAC also reached 3♥ and, on the lead of a small heart, had a chance to make nine tricks. Alas, declarer played a second round of trumps without first playing a spade and the diamond switch limited him to eight tricks. But at the other table, there was a bidding misunderstanding. North opened 1♠ and

Results

London Trophy:	CMS Cameron McKenna beat HM Treasury by 640 points
Third place play-off:	RAC Woodcote beat Verve by 380 points
Della-Porta Plate:	Concentric beat Putney Pirates by 2750 points

rebid the suit over South's 2♥. South now bid 3♣ and this was passed out! South could amass only six tricks, so there was a swing of 100 to RAC.

The real excitement was in the Plate final. Putney Pirates as NS bid:

P – 1♥ – 1♠ – 2♥ – 3♦ – 3NT

With both players stretching in the bidding, this contract was doomed – and, indeed, was lucky to escape for two-off. At the other table, Concentric bid: 1♠ – 2♥ – 2♠ – 4♥

Another doomed contract. Or was it? West led the ♣6 and declarer won with dummy's king to lead a spade. West won and switched to a (small) diamond. Declarer won this, discarded his losing diamond on the ♠K, played a club to the ace and ruffed a club. He now ruffed a diamond and played trumps from the top. West could make two trump tricks but, with declarer's ♣10 established, that was all. A final swing of 620 to Concentric.



Della Porta Plate Winners – left to right – David Picken, Mark Rogers, Mike Taylor, John Bryant

Congratulations ...

to the following LMBA members who have done well in national and international events over the last few months.



Mike Bell, right, and Michael Byrne, winners of the Yeh Bros Pairs

Mike Bell, in partnership with Michael Byrne, won the Pairs event at the prestigious Yeh Bros tournament in Shanghai in April.

Jasmine Bakhshi, daughter of international David, had her first (but undoubtedly not her last) success, winning the Under-19 Pairs at Easter in partnership with Isaac Channon.

There were several good results at the Easter Festival:

Anita Sinclair, David Gold, Andrew Robson and **Zia Mahmood** won the Swiss Teams, with **Heather & David Bakhshi** second and **Tom Townsend** third;

Matt Harman won the Really Easy Pairs.

Tom Townsend & Mark Teltscher were third in the Championship Pairs.

Mark Davies & Richard Creamer were third in the Swiss Pairs A flight and **John Hitchman** was second in the Swiss Pairs B flight.

Michael Alishaw & Toby Nonnenmacher (on right in picture) won the Portland Bowl as part of the Cambridge University B team who beat Manchester University A in the final.

Marion Robertson & Mike Bell came third in the Portland Pairs, the national Mixed Pairs championship.



David and Anita with the Swiss Teams Trophy



Tim Chanter & Helen Wildsmith were third in their heat of the National Pairs regional finals.

Alan Woo, Olivia Woo and Alex Hydes won the Swiss Teams at the Oxford Mid-week Congress. Olivia and Alex are pictured (*right*) with team mate Simon Cope.



Mike Fletcher was second in the Jersey Swiss Teams.

Angus Simpson & Claire Robinson came second in the Masters Pairs at the Ranked Masters weekend in March.



Claire Robinson, this time in partnership with **Nick Boss** (*left*), went on to win the Pairs A final at the Spring Bank Holiday Congress in May.

At the Schapiro Spring Foursomes over the May Bank Holiday weekend **David Gold, David Bakhshi, Andrew Robson** and **Alex Hydes** all reached the semi-finals in the main event. In the Punchbowl, **Gitte**

Hecht-Johansen, Szczepan Smoczynski and **Mary Gordon-Smith** reached the semi-finals.

Dessy Malakova and **Shahzaad Natt** were second in the Berks & Bucks One-day Swiss Teams.

Mike Bell won the Riviera Congress Swiss Teams in July.

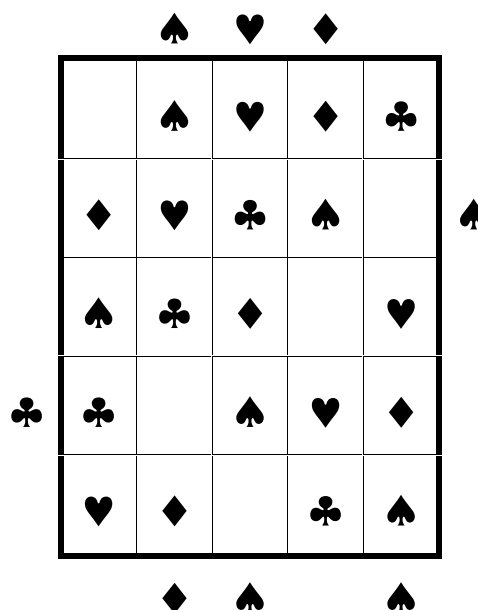
At the Summer Seniors Congress, **Bernard Teltscher, Kitty Teltscher** and **Willie Coyle** (*right*) won the Swiss Teams, whilst **David Ould** was in the running-up team.



Puzzle Solution

(See page 9)

Here is the puzzle solution.



Grimm's Tales

by Barry Grimm

Hello again!

You are aware, no doubt, of the expression “back by popular demand”. Well, demand doesn’t come much more popular than yours, dear reader. The editor of this august journal (what do they call it when it comes out in another month?) has been deluged, *deluged* with e-mails and phone calls after my last appearance in these pages. “Never” she said “have I seen such a reaction to a column in MetroNews.” I must admit, when she said that, I leant back in my Parker Knoll recliner (a birthday present to myself, I’ve never regretted it) and preened. Yes, preened. “You’ll be wanting me to continue then?” I said. “Of course,” came her reply. “I can never get anyone to write the back pages.” She does like her little joke.



Now, the secret to success as a bridge columnist (and I should know: both the Farmer’s Gazette and Dalton’s Weekly were kindness itself when they had to let me go. The word “unparalleled” was used) is not to boast, to brag about your successes and to gloat about your triumphs over those who aren’t as talented as you are. Those of us who count ourselves as being in the Pantheon of Bridge Immortals (sorry, came over all Victor Mollo there for a second) should nurture the neophyte, not berate him! We should tell him, and everybody, that bridge has a side that the world at large never sees, nor hears about.

Bridge is, I am convinced, a game about caring. Caring for those opposite us, caring for those we oppose, and caring for those who are weaker players (which, in my case, is just about everybody, of course). It’s in that spirit that the Grimmster is going to offer you, free, gratis and for nothing, his Top Ten Tips for Teams Play.

Not IMP tactics, any old fool could write an article about those, and several have: I'm going to tell you how to make sure your team comes out on top, whether playing at home or away. As always the lovely Shirley Harlow is taking down my every word with her trusty Ball Pentel (a birthday present from yours truly), taking a well-earned break from preparing the teas for the novice duplicate at my club, The Brentford Bridge Academy (Weds., 3 pm to 5.30, partners found £6). Let's crack on, because she's got to bottle up the bar for the evening session.

Home Matches

1 A lot depends on the time of year. In the winter, turn off the heating, in the summer turn it on full blast. Inform your team accordingly so that they can dress appropriately. Not too appropriately, obviously – on one occasion Phyllis-Doris Madoc turned up wearing a bikini top and a sarong. I didn't know where to look.

2 Parking. If parking at your house is easy, tell your opponents that it's impossible. And *vice-versa*, obviously: many's the time I've secured a late penalty because opponents have been driving around looking fruitlessly for a parking space. Sometimes they give up altogether and go home. By the same token, there's nothing as annoying as sweating your way somewhere on public transport, followed by a fifteen minute walk, to find acres of free parking space. Be ready with your alibi. In the former case "Oh, there must be a council meeting tonight". In the latter "Oh, there's usually a council meeting on Tuesdays".

3 Catering. As desultory as possible. If you have been notified of dietary requirements, ignore them (indeed, for a vegan make sure that there's meat in everything. Offer Beef Tea on arrival). Broken biscuits often go down badly. If you have a pet, make sure the visitors can see it in the kitchen. Move the cat dirt tray in there, as well.

4 Boards. Don't get a set of boards dealt at the club, with hand records, deal them yourself, waiting until the last member of the opposing team arrives before doing so. Explain this away by superstition. Use old, grubby cards. Charles and Diana Wedding decks always spark comment.

5 Bidding boxes. Make sure that one on each table is sabotaged and left in the middle of the table. When an opponent picks it up, the contents will go all over the place.

Away Matches

6 Even if you've come together in the car, arrive separately, individually if possible. That way the home captain has to get up to let people in four times.

7 Be late, but not late enough to forfeit i.m.p.s. or boards. Complain about the directions (politely, of course).

8 Catering: announce a dietary requirement in advance, as obscure as possible. Then when the food's produced say that it was for a team member not playing, and ask if there are any sausage rolls.

9 If the hosts have some nice antiques, refer to them during the break as “charming knick-knacks”

10 Ask to use the toilet (whether you need to or not) and come back looking traumatised.

I write, dear reader, in jest, of course. No-one is a greater avatar of good behaviour at or around the bridge table than Barry Grimm. But I can assure you, hand on heart, every single trick above has been perpetrated on me during my long and illustrious career. And what should you do if any of this is perpetrated on you? Nothing, absolutely nothing. Rise above it.

I’m not saying that it’s easy, mind. I remember one time a few years ago at the club there was what you might call an “incident”. Before the days of Best Behaviour at Bridge (of which I thoroughly approve, and I make sure that Shirley Harlow has posters supporting it pasted all over the club) there was an initiative called “Zero Tolerance”. This was an import from the United States, I believe, and like most things from over there – tobacco, hippies, David Hasselhoff – it was more trouble than it was worth. One of our more pompous members (and we have a few!) actually printed out a card which read “This is a Zero Tolerance Table” and placed it prominently on the table where he habitually sat North/South. Anyway, everybody more or less ignored the old fool, until another pompous prat arrived at the table and took umbrage. “How dare you?” he fumed. “By flaunting that sign you are making an assumption about your opponents that you are not entitled to make. It is sheer rudeness, and, under Zero Tolerance rules, I demand that you remove it at once!” I thought he had a point, as it happens, but wish he’d been less of a berk about it. Anyway, this put the cat amongst the pigeons and I was summoned to the table, each of them accusing the other of infringing the club’s Zero Tolerance policy. After a couple of minutes of finger wagging and jabbing I was starting to get a migraine, so I summoned Shirley Harlow in from the car park, where she was repainting the white lines, to sort it all out. How on earth I’m supposed to run a bridge club under these conditions I don’t know. Anyway, that was all about ten years ago, so those two idiots have calmed down a bit now. They still don’t speak to each other, but I suspect neither of them can remember why.

On that positive note, I’ll leave you to muse over the sense of what I’ve said. I think you’ll find that at the bridge table, as in life, you won’t go far wrong if you ask yourself before making a decision, “What would Barry Grimm do?”

Until the next time, here’s two thumbs up, from me, to you.

Published by the
London Metropolitan Bridge Association

www.metrobridge.co.uk

