

London
Metropolitan
Bridge
Association



MetroNews

*The newsletter of the
London Metropolitan Bridge Association*

Spring 2014

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Words from the Editor

No room for much of an editorial this time in a packed issue!

I just want to draw everyone's attention to the fact that this is the last issue we will be putting into the post for you unless you do not have an email address, or you have specifically asked for the magazine to be posted to you. Postage and printing costs have escalated of late, so our default method of disseminating the newsletter in future will be electronically.



We don't want anyone to miss out though, so if for any reason you would like a printed copy, that's fine – we will send you one. But if we have an email address for you, we will assume you are happy to be circulated via email unless you tell us otherwise. Many of you have already opted for this, so it is only a few for whom things will change.

It is important, of course, that we have your up-to-date email address, so if you have changed yours recently, please send a message to our membership secretary, Roger Morton, at rhl.morton@blueyonder.co.uk and he will update our database. Or if you prefer, send me an email and I will make sure the update is done.

A rather belated Happy New Year to all, and I hope your bridge in 2014 is both enjoyable and successful.

Chris Duckworth
MetroNews Editor
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A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris".

chris.duckworth@lineone.net

LMBA results this season

Café Bridge Drive - Clapham

Last September saw the second of our popular Café Bridge events held in the Abbeville Road in Clapham, SW4. One or two of the restaurants in the area had closed down during the year, so we were only able to accommodate 32 pairs, and the event sold out well before the actual day.

Newtons Restaurant and Bar were our home-base for the event, where players could get an excellent cup of tea or coffee before play and a glass of wine afterwards as well as playing some of their bridge there – the picture opposite shows tables in play in Newtons. They also allowed us to display the raffle items throughout the day and, despite the lower entry, the raffle was very well supported.



In total we were able to raise a very healthy £750 for our chosen local charity, Trinity Hospice. The cheque was handed over to their grateful fundraiser,

Catherine Sykes at the hospice shortly after the event.

Last year's winner Robert Sheehan played this year with his wife Penny, but was only able to manage fifth place this time, but Margaret Hamilton improved on her third place of last year to take the winners prize in partnership with Kay Colton.

The leading places were as follows:

1 Margaret Hamilton & Kay Colton	65.96 %
2 Jacky Morton & Norrie Buxton	65.02
3 Merrita Dickinson & Chris Bonser	64.26

Mixed Pairs Championship

The Mixed Pairs Championship this year was held at the Wimbledon Bridge Cub in mid-September and attracted a good entry of 30 pairs, thanks to the hard work of organiser Susi Berhmann. The winners were the young couple of Millie Jones and Rob Myers, whose 60.24% narrowly beat Alan Webster and Sue Shaw on 60.12%. Andrew and Anne Stimson were third with 59.05%.

The picture below shows the leading three pairs:



Left to right: Anne & Andrew, Millie & Rob, Sue & Alan, with TD Jonathan Lillycrop



The Mixed Pairs in play

Lederer Memorial Trophy

This prestigious event was boosted this year by being held in the elegant surroundings of the Royal Automobile Club in Pall Mall. The larger rooms allowed the entry to be increased from eight to ten invited teams, but the quality of the field was as high as ever.

See pages 5-11 for Paul Lamford's article on the event and all the results.

Teltscher Cups

As usual, alongside the main event there was a "Play with the Stars" event in which the players in a number of clubs scored up with their 'teammates' from the Lederer.



This year, the EW pairs were teamed up with Zia Mahmood and David Bakhshi, pictured left with the EW winners, Naomi Cohen and Tim Pelling who played at Wimbledon Bridge Club. Their winning score was +32 IMPs.

The NS pairs teamed up with David Gold and Tony Forrester, and the victorious NS pair with +69 IMPs was Madhusinh and Manjari Rawji, who played at the Friends Bridge Club in Harrow (*pictured right*).



Champions Cup & Junior Teams of Four

For different reasons, these two scheduled events were not held during the autumn as advertised.

The Junior Teams of Four, will, it is hoped, be re-scheduled during the spring, but the date has yet to be confirmed. Potentially interested parties will be notified, or may make enquiries from Chris Duckworth at chris.duckworth@lineone.net or on 020 7385 3534.

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.

Near Miss

Love all. Dealer North.

♠ AQ82	
♥ J7	
♦ 832	
♣ 10854	
♠ 63	♠ KJ4
♥ 10963	♥ A84
♦ QJ75	♦ AK6
♣ 962	♣ AK73
♠ 10975	
♥ KQ52	
♦ 1094	
♣ QJ	

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

Slight difference in range led to different contracts on the above deal. Hallberg opened 2C and over Holland's 2H – showing 0-3, with no 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.



Brian Callaghan presenting the best-played hand award to Gunnar Hallberg

Tribal Calls

Game all. Dealer South.

♠ A10 ♥ AKQ7 ♦ J10 ♣ Q9852 ♠ K87543 ♥ 632 ♦ K64 ♣ 3 ♠ 6 ♥ J104 ♦ AQ873 ♣ J1074	♠ QJ92 ♥ 985 ♦ 952 ♣ AK6
---	-----------------------------------

West	North	East	South
<i>Justin</i>	<i>Bell</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Byrne</i>
			Pass
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. 1♣ 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. 1♠ showed diamonds, 1NT was 17-19 and 2♦ an artificial game force. 2♥ and 3♦ were natural and the key bid was 3♥ which showed 4 good hearts, as North was known not to have five. It was now easy to choose the Moysian fit by bidding 4♥, but with clubs 3-1 and the diamond finesse wrong there was no play for the contract.

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)-2♣-2♥-3♥-4♥ 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



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

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.

Ruff Justice

EW Vul. Dealer North.

<p>♠ Q74 ♥ 103 ♦ KJ10764 ♣ A9</p> <p>♠ K105 ♥ AQ92 ♦ AQ5 ♣ J103</p> <p>♠ A92 ♥ KJ64 ♦ 2 ♣ KQ542</p>	<p>♠ J863 ♥ 875 ♦ 983 ♣ 876</p>
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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.

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.



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

Slam Swings

I am indebted to Frances Hinden, Mike Bell, Phil King, Andy Bowles and others for contributing analysis of this hand.

Game All. Dealer North.

♠ 642 ♥ KQ82 ♦ K863 ♣ 53 ♠ AKJ76 ♥ 10 ♦ Q754 ♣ K82 ♠ 108 ♥ 6543 ♦ J92 ♣ J976	♠ Q93 ♥ AJ97 ♦ A10 ♣ AQ104
---	-------------------------------------

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

South led a heart in response to his partner's lead-directing double of the response to RKCB. 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

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 the following hand.

NS vul. Dealer North.

♠ QJ ♥ AQ6532 ♦ J4 ♣ 863 ♠ A104 ♥ K98 ♦ AK103 ♣ 1072 ♠ 765 ♥ J104 ♦ Q82 ♣ KQJ9	♠ K9832 ♥ 7 ♦ 9765 ♣ A54
---	-----------------------------------

West	North	East	South
<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. Against 4♠ by East, Zia led a top club and continued with another, 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	
♥ KQJ1062	
♦ A3	
♣ A8	
♠ 9	♠ QJ1083
♥ 953	♥ 4
♦ QJ542	♦ 10986
♣ Q732	♣ 1094
♠ AK74	
♥ A87	
♦ K7	
♣ KJ65	

With 45 matches to be recorded this year, the resources of the LMBA were stretched so we do not have full details of this hand. Suffice to say that Willie Coyle, North, reached 7♥ having found that North had three key cards, and six hearts including the queen.

If North had been 2-6-3-2, the grand would have been almost on ice, As it was, it was quite a bit above 50%. It would be unreasonable to expect a first-time partnership to find out the exact North shape, even using a relay system!.

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. Though a little over 60%, one can see, that this line fails.

Instead Coyle ran six rounds of hearts pitching a club and two spades from South. If the queen of clubs were with East there would be a black-suit squeeze in due course, and he would also succeed when West started with an unlikely Qx in clubs. His line gained unexpectedly when he crossed to a spade and West pitched a club, thinking that North might have A10x 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 A10x of diamonds and Ax of clubs. A bad slip by West and a killing blow for the Presidents' Team.

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, coming second. 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?



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

Line-ups and scores

1. **President's Team** **284**
Bernard Teltscher, Victor Silverstone, Willie Coyle, Phil King, Tom Townsend, Stelio Di Bello
2. **England Women** **245**
Heather Dhondy, Nevena Senior, Sally Brock, Nicola Smith, Fiona Brown, Susan Stockdale + Barry Myers as stand-in on Saturday
3. **HOLDERS** **242**
Neil Rosen, Martin Jones, Michael Byrne, Michael Bell, Peter Crouch, Simon Cope
4. **European Aces** **241**
Gunnar Hallberg, Paul Hackett, Justin Hackett, John Holland, Jacek Pszczola, David Mossop
5. **Premier League** **227**
Frances Hinden, Jeffrey Allerton, Grahame Osborne, Chris Jagger
6. **Zia & Friends** **225**
Zia Mamood, David Bakhshi, Espen Erichsen, Nick Irens, Erlend Skjetne

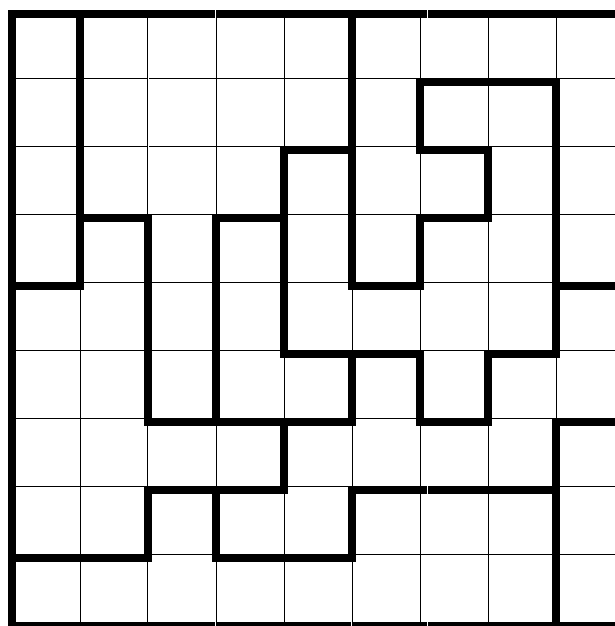
7. England Open	220
David Gold, Tony Forrester, Andrew Robson, Alexander Allfrey	
8. Spring Fours	219
Janet de Botton, Nick Sandqvist, David Burn, Thomas Charlsen, Thor-Erik Hoftaniska, Artur Malinowski	
9. Norway	170
Boye Brogeland, Simon Gillis, Erik Saelensminde, Geir Brekka	
10. Young Chelsea	170
Paul Martin, Paula Leslie, Dom Goodwin, Gordon Rainsford	

Negotiations are already underway to stage the event at the RAC again 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.

Puzzle Corner



Can you place a heart symbol into selected squares in the grid so that every row, column and outlined area contains exactly two hearts? Squares containing hearts mustn't touch, not even diagonally.



If you get stuck, the solution can be found on page 23

Entries

by Mike Graham

This time Mike discusses the importance of entries and how to make sure you are in the right hand to cash your winners.

One important aspect of declarer play is the maintenance of entries between declarer and dummy. If we have this suit to play:

<i>Dummy</i>	KQ7
<i>Declarer</i>	AJ63

The correct order is to take the king and queen first; this clears the way for the ace and jack. If we cash the ace first, we can follow with the king and the queen in dummy, but then need to use an entry to our hand in order to be able to cash the jack.

Dummy **K85**
Declarer **AQJ6**

This is similar, although here we can afford to cash the ace first. We can then lead the 6 to the king and come back to hand to make the queen and jack.

Amusingly, when this combination arose at the table (bar bridge on a skiing trip) declarer cashed the ace and queen in hand, and then led to the king. She now needed an entry to hand to make the jack – and she didn't have one. Nothing daunted, she tried leading the jack anyway, but the defenders had not yet had enough beer to not know that this was a lead from the wrong hand, and that meant the difference between a successful contract and an unsuccessful one.

Dummy **K8**
Declarer **AQJ6**

With one fewer small card in dummy, the play is to lead the six to the king, and then the eight to hand for the other three honours.

As a general principle, it is right to take the high cards in the short holding first, as this then allows an entry to the hand with the longer suit holding.

Sometimes, the suit is not solid:

Dummy **K8**
Declarer **QJ1065**

To keep entries fluid we start with a low card to the king; if the defenders take their ace immediately we can now run the suit (if West plays the ace, we have to decide whether to unblock the king or not – if the ace is singleton, that could be bad idea). If they duck, we lead the eight towards our hand and can continue the suit until the ace

appears. Obviously, to cash the long cards we would need an entry to our hand. If we start with the queen, the defenders can take their ace; we can cash the king, but will then need an entry back to hand to run the rest of the suit. If they duck the queen, we can continue the suit; if the king is taken by the ace we only need one entry to our hand, but if the defence ducks the king as well we will need two entries – one to force out the ace, and another to be able to cash the long cards.

The fact that we would need entries to our hand, if the ace is not taken on the first (or second) round, is significant. One of the ploys available to the defence is to hold up in a suit so that declarer is forced to waste what might be a vital entry. This deal came up in a pairs event:

Game All. Dealer South

♠ QJ2	
♥ A103	
♦ A1075	
♣ J105	
♠ –	♠ A854
♥ KQJ9	♥ 8752
♦ KQJ62	♦ 93
♣ KQ93	♣ 842
	♠ K109763
	♥ 64
	♦ 84
	♣ A76

The bidding proceeded:

West	North	East	South
			2♠
DbI	3♠	Pass	Pass
DbI	All Pass		

South opened with a Weak Two in spades; not classical according to some, but when you can get in first it is

generally a good idea to do so. West doubled, North raised to Three Spades, and West doubled again. This gave East a difficult choice, and he decided to take his chances in defence, trying for a 200-point penalty; West had to have a good hand, and East was hoping his trumps would provide nuisance value. A good shot, as Four Hearts would have had little chance on repeated spade leads.

West led the king of hearts. South ducked, and West continued with the queen, taken by the ace in dummy. South now ruffed a heart in hand and played a trump; West discarded the two of diamonds. The queen was played from dummy, and East won the ace in order to switch to a club. South had to duck this; West won with the queen and shifted to diamonds.

Declarer played well; he won the ace of diamonds immediately and ran all his trumps. This was the position when the last trump was led:

♠ –		
♥ –		
♦ 107		
♣ J10		
♠ –		♠ –
♥ –		♥ 8
♦ QJ		♦ 9
♣ K9		♣ 84
	♠ 9	
	♥ –	
	♦ 8	
	♣ A7	

On the nine of spades West had to make an unpleasant discard; if he threw a club, declarer would play the ace and drop the king (it was virtually certain from the bidding and play that West held both club honours), and if he discarded the jack of diamonds (which

is what happened in practice) declarer would discard a diamond from dummy and exit with a diamond; West would be end-played to lead away from the king of clubs.

Well played in the endgame by South, certainly, but the defence could have done better. The squeeze/throw-in only worked because declarer was given the opportunity to run his trumps without interruption. If, however, East plays low on the queen of spades, and also on the jack that follows, and only takes the ace on the third round in order to switch to a club, West can win and start diamonds – but declarer has no entry to hand, apart from the ace of clubs, to draw and run the trumps. With the ace of clubs gone, there is no pressure on West at the end.

There was some discussion about the early heart plays. It looks as if the early ruff is not necessary, as a later heart ruff provides an entry to hand, but if the ruff is not taken the defence can follow the general line of taking the third trump, playing a club through, and then knocking out the ace of diamonds. If declarer takes the heart ruff now, he gets locked in hand at the finish, as the defence can exit safely in a red suit.

However, there is a winning defence. After the king of hearts is ducked at trick one, West switches to the king of diamonds. After two rounds of diamonds, South has none left, and can no longer exit in the suit.



Another way of preserving entries is to duck a round of a suit so that you can run it later. This is a typical position:

<i>Dummy</i>	AK8743
<i>Declarer</i>	65

Playing in notrumps, if there are no other entries to dummy, we will make only the ace and king if we cash them immediately. However, if we duck the first round, leading the five and playing a small card from dummy, we will later make five tricks if the suit breaks 3-2. This costs nothing, as if the suit is 4-1 there are only two tricks to be had anyway.

Dummy **AK87432**
Declarer **65**

Now we have a nine-card holding. Should we play for a 2-2 break, which means taking the ace and king immediately, or should we duck a round first, which wins against a 3-1 division?

The answer depends on the number of tricks you need. In the first example above, you can never make more than five tricks. In this example you are (virtually) sure of six tricks by ducking the first round, but have a chance of seven tricks. If you need seven tricks from the suit, then playing the ace and king, hoping for a 2-2 split, is logical. However, if you need only six, it is best to duck a round. The odds on a 2-2 split are 40.7%; a 3-1 split is 49.7%.

Percentages are funny things – look at this combined holding:

Dummy **AKJ8743**
Declarer **65**

Playing this suit for six tricks is reasonable, and if the suit is 3-1 finessing the jack on the first round is as good as anything. Slightly safer, though, is to lead the six and run it, which caters for Q1092 with West.

The deal which gave rise to this combination was as follows:

♠ 82
♥ 83
♦ 94
♣ AKJ8743
N
S
♠ AQ4
♥ AJ52
♦ QJ75
♣ 65

South opened 1NT (12-14) and was raised directly to 3NT. West led the jack of spades to South's queen.

With all suits safe from attack, South led a club, which brought a prompt queen from West. Declarer could see lots of tricks now. He won with the ace – and suddenly lots of tricks became remarkably few tricks, because East showed out. The full hand was:

NS Vul. Dealer South

♠ 82	
♥ 83	
♦ 94	
♣ AKJ8743	
♠ J106	♠ K9753
♥ K96	♥ Q1074
♦ A83	♦ K1062
♣ Q1092	♣ –
♠ AQ4	
♥ AJ52	
♦ QJ75	
♣ 65	

Declarer took his eye off the ball, but it was an understandable mistake. Ducking when the queen appeared was still correct, as it was a teams competition. At pairs, though, you might take the queen at face value – not every West will find the queen play at anything like a normal tempo. Well defended, Sheriff!

Forthcoming competitions

Entries may be paid by cash or by cheque made payable to LMBA, but the preferred method of payment is by electronic transfer of funds. Payments should be made to the LMBA account as follows, using your name as a reference:

Sort Code: 09-06-66

Account Number: 41838562

Full competition regulations may be found at the website www.metrobridge.co.uk.

Ian Gardiner Trophy

Sunday 15th February 2014 starting at **11.30am**

Venue: Young Chelsea Bridge Club @ Queen's Club

Holder: Anita Sinclair, Fredrik Bjornlund, Ben Green, David Bakhshi, Glyn Liggins



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 22nd – 23rd June 2012 in Daventry.

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. EBU level 4 systems permitted.

Entry Fee: £60.00 per team.

Entries should be sent to Imbaentries@gmail.com, quoting Ian Gardiner in the subject line, to arrive by 10th February 2013. Enquiries may be directed to the organiser, **Ian Payn**, on 07713 322420.

Green Pointed Swiss Weekend

Saturday – Sunday 8th-9th March 2014

Swiss Pairs - Saturday starting at **1.00pm**

Holder: *Andrew Stimson & Anne Stimson*

Swiss Teams - Sunday starting at **11.30am**

Holder: *Roger O'Shea, Paul Hackett, Jason Hackett, Justin Hackett*

Venue: Central Hall Westminster, Storey's Gate, Westminster, SW1H 9NH



We have a fabulous new venue for the Swiss events this year. The Central Hall Westminster is a beautiful building and really is very central – just opposite Westminster Abbey and equidistant from St James's Park and Westminster tube stations, with Victoria Station only a 15-minute walk or short bus ride away.

Parking is also available in this area, with on-street parking on single yellow lines and in paid-for bays free on Saturdays, and free parking also in residents' parking zones on Sundays. Available spaces are limited, however, and public transport is strongly recommended for such a central venue.

There is a café within the building serving very reasonably priced refreshments with everything from teas, coffees and snacks to sandwiches and full meals. Please note, though, that as this is a Methodist Church property, no alcohol is permitted on the premises. There are plenty of alternatives within a short distance, however, for those in need of a drink or different food option during the breaks.

Both the Swiss Pairs and the Swiss Teams will comprise 7 seven-board matches. They will be single-flighted with prizes and green points awarded in accordance with EBU regulations. All players must be EBU members, but LMBA membership is not required. EBU Level 4 conventions permitted.

Entry fee: £25 per person per event. A reduced fee of £48 per person is available to anyone playing in both events over the weekend.

Advance entry is strongly recommended and should be made to **Mike Hill** at michaelrd.hill@btinternet.com or on 01732 863283 or in writing to Winterbourne, Swan Lane, Edenbridge, Kent, TN8 6AL.

London Championship Pairs

Sunday 30th March 2014 starting at 1.00pm

Holder: *John Pemberton & Stephen Popham*

Venue: Young Chelsea Bridge Club @ Queen's Club

This competition is a one-day, two session, match-pointed pairs. The top fourteen pairs from the first session will compete in an all-play-all final with carry-forward scores whilst the remainder of the field competes in a consolation final. This major County Pairs Championship is green-pointed and is the qualifying event for the Corwen Trophy, the national inter-county pairs championship.

EBU Level-4 conventions permitted. All players must be LMBA members, but only the leading four pairs with London as their county of allegiance (before playing in the event) will be eligible to play in the Corwen Trophy on 31st May – 1st June 2014 in Northampton.

Entry fee: £30.00 per pair.

Advance entry is not essential but can be made to **Imbaentries@gmail.com**, putting "Championship Pairs" in the subject line. Enquiries may also be sent to this address or be made to **Guy Hart** on 07775 922605.



Garden Cities Heat

Thursday 10th April 2014 starting at **7.00pm**

Holder: *Young Chelsea BC*

Venue: Young Chelsea Bridge Club @ Queen's Club

The Garden Cities is the national teams-of-eight championship for EBU affiliated clubs. The winner of London's single-session qualifying heat will be eligible to play in the South-East Regional Final that takes place in Richmond on Saturday 17th May 2014 and, if successful there, in the National Final that takes place on Saturday 14th June 2014 in Solihull. Clubs may enter as many teams as they wish, subject to space restrictions at the venue. (The LMBA reserves the right, if necessary, to restrict the number of teams per club).

Clubs must be members of the LMBA. Players must be members of the EBU and of the club they represent but do not have to be LMBA members. It is not necessary for the same eight players to represent a team at each stage of the competition but no player may play for more than one club.

Entry fee: £56 per team

Advance entry is required and should be made by 3rd April 2014 to **Chris Duckworth** at chris.duckworth@lineone.net or on 020 7385 3534.



London Trophy Pairs

Sunday 27th April 2014 starting at **2.00pm.**

Holder: *Clive Levy & Sarah Mclachlan*

Venue: Royal Automobile Club, 89 Pall Mall, SW1Y 5HS
(Tel: 020 7747 3296).



This is a single-session pairs competition open to players who have participated in the London Trophy in the current season. The rules regarding permitted systems and conventions in this event are the same as for the London Trophy.

This event provides an opportunity for pairs to practice and improve, so progress further in the Trophy itself. Or, if you have been unfortunate enough to have already lost in the main event, then simply another opportunity to meet and play against like-minded opponents in the very pleasant surroundings of the RAC.

Entry fee: Free!

Advance entry is required for this event. Entries should be sent to Imbaentries@gmail.com, quoting LT Pairs in the subject line, to arrive no later than 20th April 2014. They may alternatively be sent by post to **Kath Stynes** at 22 Streatham Court, Streatham High Road, SW16 1DL. Enquiries may also be made to Kath on 07747 197940.

Café Bridge - Tonsleys

Tuesday 29th April 2014 starting at **10.30 for 11.00 am**



Holder: *Pandora Anand & Melinda Scott-Manderson*

Venue: The Alma Tavern, 499 Old York Road, SW18 1TF (for registration)

Our Spring Café Bridge Drive will once again be held in the Tonsleys in Wandsworth, and will again be held in aid of the local charity, Age UK.

For those not familiar with the idea of café bridge, the duplicate bridge tournament will be played during the day in a number of different cafés/bars/restaurants in the area, each round of the tournament being played in a different venue.

All are welcome – EBU membership is not necessary.

Entry Fee: £20.00 per player, which includes lunch at whichever venue you find yourself in at lunchtime. Advance entry is essential and entries should be sent to Imbaentries@gmail.com to arrive no later than 22nd April 2014, putting “Café Bridge” in the subject line.

Any enquiries may be directed to **Chris Duckworth** on 020 7385 3534 or **Kath Stynes** on 07747 197940. Please note that Café Bridge events are very popular and numbers are restricted. Entries will be accepted on a first-come first-served basis.

Fox Shammon Trophy

Sunday 11th May 2014 starting at **2.00pm**

Holder: *Simon Cochemé & Gilly Cardiff*

Venue: The Queen’s Club, Palliser Road, W14 9EQ (Tel: 020 7385 3421)

This single extended session match-pointed pairs event for senior players will be held in the President’s Room overlooking the main court at the prestigious Queen’s Tennis Club in Barons Court, London, W14. The event is expected to finish at 6.30-7.00pm.



All players must be EBU members and must have been born in or before 1954.

Entry fee: £24.00 per pair

Advance entry is strongly advised and should be sent to arrive no later than 4th May 2014 to **Steve Eginton** at steve@eginton.co.uk or on 01628 780862 or 07989 557779.or in writing to The Kukris, High Street, Bray, Berks, SL6 2AH.

London News

Annual General Meeting

The 2013 AGM of the LMBA was held on Thursday 12th September at the Young Chelsea Bridge Club and minutes of the meeting can be found on the LMBA website www.metrobridge.co.uk. The business of the meeting was mainly routine, but three new committee members were formally voted in. They are Dominic Flint, who has taken on the Treasurer's role for the association and is also organising the London and Home Counties Leagues; Kath Stynes, who has taken on the lead role of organisation of the London Trophy and associated London Trophy Pairs, along with administrative support for the Lederer and other competitions; and Guy Hart, whose primary role is organising the London Championship Pairs.

There are still vacancies on the committee, so if anyone is interested in contributing to the work of the association, please get in touch with the Secretary at chris.duckworth@lineone.net or on 020 7385 3534.

The 2014 AGM will be held on Thursday 4th September, at a venue to be announced. Further details and an agenda will be published in the next issue of MetroNews.

Awards

Two London members received accolades of different kinds during the last few months.

Andrew Robson was awarded the 2013 **International Bridge Press Association Personality of the Year** jointly with Bauke Muller of the Netherlands, both of whom having been decorated by their country in recognition of their achievements in bridge. Andrew was of course awarded the OBE at the beginning of the year, and Muller was made a Knight in the Order of Orange-Nassau as the most successful bridge



player of his country.

Chris Duckworth (*yes me, your editor, I am very proud to say*) was awarded a **Silver Medal** by the EBU for "outstanding contribution, and recognition of long service as a volunteer at national and/or County level."

Only one other person has been given the Silver Medal, and that was also a London member, Cecil Leighton, so I feel very privileged to join him in this exclusive little club!



Affiliated Clubs

We are very pleased to welcome the **West London Gay Bridge Club**, who affiliated to the EBU and LMBA last summer. The news of this came through just too late to be included in the last issue of MetroNews. The club meets on Mondays at The Victoria in Strathearn Place, W2. More details are available from their website at www.wlgbc.co.uk

The **Livesey Bridge Club** moved premises in September last year. They now play at the Sydenham Community Library, Sydenham Road (next to the Catholic Church), London, SE26 5SE. More details from their website at www.bridgewebs.com/livesey.

The **Young Chelsea Bridge Club** is still temporarily located within The Queen's Club in Baron's Court. W14 9EQ. The club is hoping to move to new premises in the Goldhawk Road which will provide them with a new permanent home. All depends on the relevant planning permissions being obtained, but the planning process is in train at the time of writing.

In Memoriam

Warwick Pitch

On 30th August 2013, we lost the person who probably did more than anyone else to promote bridge in London, and who helped to develop numerous young bridge players who have become the stars of English bridge. This isn't a full obituary, as much has been written elsewhere about Warwick's life and the story of how he came to set up and run the Young Chelsea Bridge Club, turning it into one of the most well-known and successful bridge clubs in the world. Indeed, there was an excellent three-column obituary in The Times – apt recognition of the impact he had during his lifetime.



But this issue could not go by without marking his passing, and especially his contribution to the County. He served on the London Committee for most of the 1970s and was Secretary for six years from 1974 to 1980. He sponsored the Lederer Memorial Trophy for many years and he sponsored junior bridge in every way possible, providing enjoyable and affordable bridge for all.

He is very much missed by all bridge players, in London and throughout the bridge world.

Andrew Abelson

Andrew Abelson died suddenly just before Christmas. He was a skilled bridge player who played regularly at the St John's Wood BC, then for many years was a stalwart of the Young Chelsea BC. Most recently, he often played at the Putney BC. His most recent success on the tournament scene was as a member of the winning team in the London One-Day Swiss Teams in 2012.

Our sincere sympathy goes to his friends and family.

They're all barmy!

by Richard Fleet

To put it another way, I'm the only one in step and the rest are out of line. This was the situation discussed by the *Bridge Magazine* expert panel in the December 2012 issue.

In a pairs event, West held:

♠	A K Q 6 4 2
♥	K 10 8
♦	K 10 7 3
♣	—

At unfavourable vulnerability, East dealt and opened 1♥. After South overcalled 2♣, West bid 2♠. In my old-fashioned way, I would prefer to force with 3♠ but that is a) unfashionable and b) defined as a fit jump (West is a heart short for this action).

North now bid 4♣ (hardly a surprise) and East doubled, showing extra values. There was no further opposition bidding and West bid 5♣, not an action at which one could reasonably take offence. In response, East bid 5♦ and West had a problem.

Taking the bidding at face value, East-West certainly have at least an eight-card diamond fit, probably have at least an eight-card heart fit (it's not certain; East could be 2-4-4-3) whilst West is looking at a magnificent spade suit.

Playing pairs, it looks clear to me to bid 6♠. This is the bid that's under your nose. Yes, one of the other denominations might be better, but you'll never find out what partner's majors are: to say the least, it won't be obvious to him that you should play in spades, not hearts, when he has the Jack of spades and the Ace-Queen of hearts. Furthermore, 6♠ making 12 tricks outscores 6♦ making 13.

I agree, you might miss a grand. But first you've got to find the right grand, then you've got to make it. Given that partner has extra values, say a decent 14 points as an absolute minimum, the opponents have bid to the four level with very little between them, so it will hardly be a shock to find the suits splitting badly and experience suggests that going down in a grand slam is liable to score a tad below average in a match-pointed event.

To be fair, Eric Kokish suggested that the fact that the opponents haven't bid 5♣ might be an indication that the splits won't be too bad. But does this really stand up? North, who rates to have zero high cards, bid 4♣: from his perspective, bidding 5♣, even if he is distributional, might be offering an 800 point penalty when the opponents could only make (or only bid, which amounts to the same thing) game. In a teams event, 800 versus a vulnerable game might be 4 IMP away, no tragedy. In a pairs event, it is likely to be quite disastrous.

Alternatively, you might put your faith in one of the red suits, though they are both gappy and picking the wrong one won't do much for your match point score.

So what did the expert panel do? 23 renowned experts gave their views: exactly

one of them made a bid in diamonds, hearts or spades and this - a 7♥ shot by Nick Sandqvist - was decidedly West of Dagenham (Barking, to the uninitiated).

In descending order of popularity, 13 bid 6♣, 7 bid 5NT and a magnificent duo tried 7♣ (why East's bidding should show both red aces is beyond me; and, even if he has them, it is far from clear that there is a satisfactory denomination available at the seven level).

May one suggest that 7♣ might be appropriate, though still not risk-free, were West to hold the same hand with both red queens: it would be satisfying to force East to choose the denomination by reference to his jacks (i.e. if you are playing a grand, you want to choose the more solid suit, the one in which you partner has the jack).

Leaving aside the lunatic fringe who force to a grand slam, I would have some sympathy with the 5NT and 6♣ bidders if there was some degree of unanimity as to what these bids meant. But who in their right mind is going to experiment with this sort of action if there is the slightest likelihood of a misunderstanding?

At least the 5NT bidders were all on the same wave length – their bid meant “pick a slam”. Interestingly, two of the 6♣ bidders (Drew Cannell and Eric Kokish), suggested that 5NT might be construed as a Grand Slam Force. And one of the 5NT bidders (Liz McGowan) was prepared for the possibility that partner might interpret it as the GSF. So maybe it's not as clear as all that.

The 6♣ bidders were not of the same mind. Marc Smith, who intended to pass 6♦ (can this really be right at pairs?), clearly thought that he was agreeing diamonds. Several others suggested that they were probing for the best strain whilst guaranteeing first round club control: if this is a valid argument, 5NT doesn't seem to have a lot going for it.

At least John Holland and Mike Lawrence were realistic about the degree of ambiguity inherent in the situation:

“ Not clear if Five Diamonds was natural or just a cue so will raise partner's suit response to seven” (Holland).

Might as well toss a coin as do that: you don't know what his bid over 5♣ meant so why should his bid over 6♣ help? He's probably in the same situation as you – no idea which suit is agreed!

“ Partner won't know for sure which suit is trumps but he will appreciate that I am looking for seven” (Lawrence).

I'm sure that this will help him a great deal.

The issue that none of the answers addressed is that, as well as needing to ascertain the best strain, it is hardly guaranteed that partner holds both red aces. Why cannot he hold something like ♠J8 ♥QJ975 ♦AQJ8 ♣AJ, or a similar hand with the ace of hearts rather than diamonds? Or is he supposed to be clairvoyant and realise that you have first round control in neither red suit?

At the risk of being accused of repeatedly banging the same drum, a minus score

will be a disaster. Conversely, if you bid and make a slam, particularly in a major, you will score well. Particularly given what other maniacs are likely to do with this hand, I estimate that you will score at least 75% for + 1430. I think that I could live with that.

So what did partner have? Very unfairly, he had ♠108 ♥A9752 ♦AQ86 ♣AJ - Nick Sandqvist is a very fine card player but even he won't fancy his chances in 7♥. Rather oddly, Alan Mould (the conductor) said that "all three grand slams are more or less on the trumps 3-2", which seems to imply that East holds the queen of hearts, so maybe there is a misprint.

Funnily enough, the majors both split 4-1 (you could make 7♦ but no other grand slam). I'm still happy to take my matchpoints in 6♠: where do you think the expert panelists will end up?

Puzzle Solution (see page 11)

♥						♥		
		♥		♥				
♥							♥	
			♥		♥			
	♥						♥	
			♥		♥			
	♥							♥
				♥		♥		
		♥						♥

The Riddle of Nirvana

by Brian Callaghan

The following story is best described as a fact-based fantasy, set around 1990. If having read it you would like to know more about the riddle of Nirvana (unlikely but just possible), the author will be happy to enlighten you – email him at brian_callaghan@lineone.net.

Bother with Boxes

"Name's Jack." said Chris' partner-to-be as they shook hands before the evening's duplicate. Chris was on duty to play with those who, like Jack, turned up at the club in need of a partner. Jack was well-spoken and looked to be in his seventies, fit for his age, white-haired and smartly dressed in jacket and tie. Chris was a complete contrast in his usual rumpled attire. With plenty of practice in assessing partners, Chris expected nothing good. He quickly pigeonholed Jack as one of those whose early bridge had been informed by the likes of Buller and Beasley. Jack's next remark came as a surprise.

"I particularly came here to try out bidding boxes for the first time."

A few of England's bridge clubs had recently replaced spoken bids with the use of boxes. The Young Chelsea, where they were about to start play, was in the vanguard. Chris fetched a box, welcoming the chance to demonstrate his skill. In one fluid motion he grasped a bidding card from the box and laid it on the table

between them facing Jack. He showed Jack how to place successive bids from left to right and how to simply restack them in the box after the auction. Jack murmured in appreciation throughout this display. They had scant time left for system discussion. Chris coaxed Jack down by a point from a 16-18 1NT opening. Then, just before play was upon them, Jack sprang another surprise by proposing transfers, to which Chris agreed. Jack was more in touch with the modern game than Chris had thought.

Their session went well apart from some embarrassing lapses by Chris. Jack proved to be a workmanlike player and an intelligent bidder, belying Chris' first impression. Jack strangely had no problem whatsoever with bidding boxes. Not so Chris, who kept pulling out the wrong bid without noticing until it was too late to correct.

On the first occasion Chris opened 1NT holding both majors. To Jack's 2♣ he thought he had bid 2♥, so over 3NT he concluded the auction with 4♠. The opponents gave him an odd look and he saw that he had bid 2♦ instead of 2♥. Fortunately dummy produced both majors too, so no harm was done.

The next time he must have dozed off. Jack opened 1NT and Chris had five spades and game values. With a start he woke to see that everyone was waiting for him. He hastily slapped a 2♥ transfer on the table and followed Jack's 2♠ with a 3NT rebid. That became the final contract and the opening leader asked what 2♣ meant. Chris then noticed there was an extra round of bids on the table. He had always boasted of being able to bid in his sleep, and now it appeared to be true. The actual auction did not make a lot of sense, but Jack gravely replied that 2♣ asked for 2♦. Chris thought they were playing Stayman because everybody did. In any event Jack had only two spades and they had dodged another bullet.

On their last deal of the evening Jack opened 1NT again. This time Chris had five hearts and invitational values. He thought he had transferred with 2♦ and was disconcerted when everyone passed. His mistake had been to bid 2NT, which Jack had somehow managed to pass. It could have been a lot worse.

"Sorry, partner. I don't know what came over me. You'd think I was the one who'd never seen a bidding box. We were lucky my clumsiness didn't cost us." said Chris. Jack seemed not at all interested in whether they had won. "How much do you remember about those deals?" he asked. "Almost everything." said Chris. "When my partners have to speak their bids they don't recall anything about 1NT auctions. Let me buy you a drink. I owe you an explanation. I hope you don't mind listening to a plain tale from the Raj? I promise to keep it brief." Jack continued. Chris thought that this was either some sort of wind-up or that Jack was delusional, but Chris was supposed to be pleasant to customers even if they were completely crazy. Besides, how could he refuse a drink?

Secret History

"Have you heard of Nirvana, other than in relation to Buddhism that is?" Jack asked. They were seated in the club bar, drinks before them. "The band, you

mean? Their album came out last year.” said Chris, who could think of nothing else. Jack was evidently not a follower of the music scene. “No, I mean the bridge convention of course. It’s a method of responding to 1NT. I used a bit of subterfuge to get you to play it.” said Jack. Chris fancied he knew a lot about bridge, but this was a new one on him. He did not think it was part of the Beasley system and he did not see how he could be playing something without knowing what it was. Jack scribbled on the back of his scorecard and handed it to Chris, saying “This will make things clearer.” Chris expected to see a bridge hand or auction, but instead there were a few lines of doggerel.

*Eight paths follow!
Four are short,
Three are long, and
One is naught.*

“As clear as mud.” replied Chris, heroically refraining from profanity.

“It’s a bit of a rough translation. The original is in Sanskrit. I have it on my study wall.” Jack pressed on unperturbedly, and then launched into his tale.

“As a young man, I did a tour of duty in India just before the war. I moved about a bit, but wherever I went the officers would entertain themselves at bridge. It was a rough and ready game of natural bidding, except for Mr Blackwood’s 4NT convention. The fellows were all mad keen on that. I thought little about further possibilities of conventional bidding until my path crossed with that of a truly gifted individual, not an officer, but a savant of the auction.”

“A bidding guru?” asked Chris.

“That is an appropriate term. He created the method of responding to a 1NT opening called Nirvana. His original riddle is an aid to pedagogy. He must have seen some glimmer of bridge ability kindling within me because the riddle was his parting gift to me, along with two pieces of advice. One was always to show respect for Nirvana, and the other was to use my power wisely. I didn’t discover what he meant by the last one until I began playing tournament bridge much later in life.”

Rather than plain, Chris thought the tale was tall. As advertised, it was also short. It was time to humour Jack, so he asked the question that was puzzling him.

“How did I agree to play Nirvana? I’ve never heard of it.”

“My question before the duplicate was ‘Shall we play eight-transfers?’ You agreed. Using the honorific always does the trick. Nirvana followers usually abbreviate it like this.” replied Jack, scribbling a bit more.

⁸transfer

“What honorific?” said Chris, reflecting that there had been something odd about Jack’s pronunciation of transfer. He had not found out at the time what sort of transfers Jack played, but he knew now.

“Why, the eight, the first word of the riddle. It’s the way we followers show respect for the method as my guru advised.” said Jack as if nothing could be more obvious.

“But the riddle doesn’t say anything about transfers.” objected Chris.

“It speaks of paths which are the essence of Nirvana. An ⁸transfer is a constituent of an ⁸path.” said Jack.

The situation was rapidly deteriorating from Chris’ point of view, but a flaw in Jack’s tale had occurred to him. He pounced.

“Transfers weren’t invented until the fifties. Your guru couldn’t have created a method based on them before the war.” he said.

Jack smiled indulgently. “The name did not exist then, but the idea did. You must know that many bidding notions existed in some form long before anyone managed to attach his own name or any other to a convention. My guru called them depression responses because the bid was depressed below the suit it showed. Do you see? That name never caught on, but when they came to be called transfers, I moved with the times.” Jack said.

Chris was regretting trying to argue with a madman. He decided to steer the conversation back to the safer ground of the deals they had played. He avoided looking Jack in the eye just in case that glimmer the guru had seen had grown into a searchlight glare.

“So what did our auctions mean?” he asked.

Auctions Revisited

Jack scribbled some more. This time it really was an auction, but with some decoration.

1NT [2♣ 2♦] 3NT 4♠

“I made the wrong response to Stayman, and there aren’t any brackets in the bidding box.” said Chris.

“Mr Stayman’s 2♣ convention and Nirvana are antithetical. 2♣ is an ⁸transfer showing diamonds or spades. Those bids between the brackets form the ⁸path, the pointed ⁸path on this occasion, which also shows diamonds or spades. Brackets make an ⁸path visible to novitiates. My 3NT ⁸continuation showed four hearts in addition to the four spades the ⁸path showed. There was no mistake in your bidding. You could have chosen 4♥ instead of 4♠ as the final contract.”

That was a more comprehensive answer than Chris had been expecting and it seemed to possess some internal consistency. He was trying to digest its meaning as Jack wrote down the next auction.

1NT [2♣ 2♦ 2♥ 2♠] 3NT

“You used the long spade ⁸path to show a five-card suit. It has two ⁸transfers.” said Jack.

“Why couldn’t I just have used a 2♥⁸transfer by itself?” said Chris, beginning to recover his wits, but surrendering to Jack’s terminology.

“The short spade⁸path would only show a four-card suit. You need a way to distinguish between four-card and five-card suits.” said Jack.

Of course you do, thought Chris.

“What about the last hand? How did you manage to pass that 2NT⁸transfer I made by mistake?” asked Chris.

“You are under a misapprehension. 2NT is not an⁸transfer in Nirvana. It is an⁸continuation.” said Jack.

“But there’s nothing to continue.” objected Chris.

Jack wrote down their last auction.

1NT [] 2NT

“You have not paid attention to the last line of the riddle. There is no⁸transfer, but there is an⁸path, the rounded⁸path which shows clubs or hearts. Your⁸path showed five hearts and your⁸continuation showed invitational values and nothing more to say. I expect you can see why.” said Jack.

Chris could not, but he was not about to tell Jack that. The whole idea of an absence of bids showing something seemed an absurdity. He was looking for the words to express this when Jack glanced at his watch and said “My magic carpet awaits me.” When Chris looked startled Jack added “Just a figure of speech. I must catch my train from Victoria. I’ve had an interesting evening and I hope you have too.” That sounded like an ancient Chinese curse to Chris. Jack drained the last of his gin and tonic, put on his coat, and left the bright lights of Earl’s Court for his lair in the south, never to re-appear at the club.

Left behind alone, Chris mused that he always ended up with nothing.

Epilogue

Chris had ended up with something. Over the years he obsessively used Jack’s clues to reconstruct the way Nirvana must work. When satisfied with his labours he took to asking his partners “Shall we play⁸transfers?” It never had any effect and he reasoned there must be some element missing. In an increasingly connected world, he kept searching the Internet for his holy grail, but he never found the original riddle of Nirvana.

Congratulations ...

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



Several London members played with distinction in the World Championships held in Bali last October.

David Bakhshi, David Gold, Andrew Robson and Tom Townsend were two thirds of the England team who did very well to reach the quarter finals of the Bermuda Bowl.

Heather Dhondy was a member of the England Women's team who narrowly lost in the final of the Venice Cup. The silver-medal winning team is pictured right.



Heather Dhondy added to her medal tally by winning two silvers in the Sport Accord Games in Beijing in December. The England women were second in the teams and she and Nevena Senior (*pictured left*) won silver in the Women's Pairs.



In the Seniors European Trials, **Gunnar Hallberg** was a member of the winning team (*pictured left*), which will represent England in Croatia later this year. **Brian Callaghan** was in the team of losing finalists,



Sally Brock presenting the Premier League trophy to three of the winning team.

Heather Dhondy and Brian Callaghan were members of the Premier League Division Two winning team (*pictured right*).



Toby Nonnenmacher and **Michael Alishaw** crowned a couple of very successful years by being awarded “Young Pair of the Year 2012” and then winning the Junior Channel Trophy in Ostend in December.

Their award recognises not only a series of great results, but also general demeanour at the table. Toby and Michael were commended for their patience and kindness towards less experienced squad members, matched only by their keenness to improve.



The winning Channel Trophy team

In other events abroad, **Phil King** won the Mersin Congress Pairs in Turkey (see left).



Tim Chanter and **Helen Wildsmith** were second in the Mixed Pairs in Lake Garda in October.

At the Guernsey Congress in September, **Alex Gauld** and **Arthur Wolstenholme** were second in the Mixed Pairs and third in the Pivot Teams.

Andrew Robson and **David Gold** have continued their run of great results by winning the Gold Cup for the second year running as members of the Allfrey team. **Glyn Liggins** was a member of the losing finalists' team.



There was lots of success at the Brighton Summer Congress.

The main Harold Poster Swiss Pairs was won by **John Reardon** (left) in his long-standing partnership with Richard Butland.

Andrew Robson came second in partnership with Alexander Allfrey.

The Teams A final was won by **David Bakhshi** as part of the Irens team (right).

Tom Townsend won the Tuesday Pairs with **Alex Hydes** second.

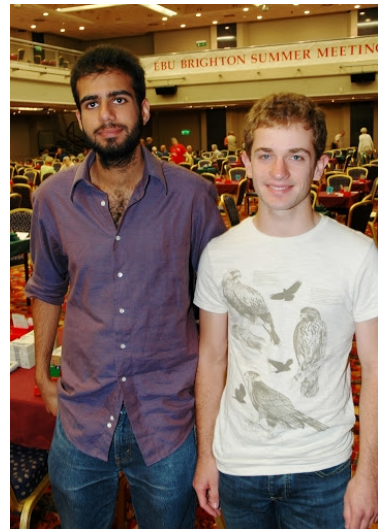
Stefanie Rohan won the Mixed Pivot Teams with **Millie Jones** third.



Anne Catchpole won the Seniors Swiss Teams *(left in the picture below)*.



Shahzaad Natt won the Thursday Open Pairs *(on left in picture right, with partner Tommy Brass)*.



David Gold was second in the Wednesday Open Pairs with **Andrew Shillam** third

Mike & Carrie Eden and **Millie Jones** were second equal in the PAB Teams.

Tom Townsend, **Gunnar Hallberg** and **Alex Hydes** were second in the Mid-week Knock-Out Teams.

David Wing and **Roland Gronau** were third in the Friday Open Pairs

More successes at the Autumn Congress:



Ben Green *(pictured holding the cup)* and team won the Eastbourne Bowl.

David Gold and **Susanna Gross** were second in the Two Stars Pairs.

Paul Lamford and **Stefanie Rohan** were third in the Swiss Pairs.

Paul and **Stefanie** along with **David Schiff** and **Anne Catchpole** were also third in the Sussex Cup.

Ingar Hansen won the Essex/Herts One-Day Swiss Pairs.

Mark Davies and **Richard Creamer** were third in the Surrey One-Day Swiss Pairs.

David Gold *(right)* won the TGRs Auction Pairs in partnership with Kevin Castner from the USA.



The Terminal Cafe

by Ian Payn



You will, I hope, have read elsewhere in this edition of MetroBridge that the 2013 Lederer Memorial Trophy was held for the first time at the RAC club in Pall Mall. Our President, Bernard Teltscher's team won, and will of course be invited back the next time the event is held as holders of the Trophy. Bernard has taken this opportunity to step down as sponsor for the event (not, I assure you, without going to some pains to ensure that a successor was in place). The debt London owes him for supporting the event is inestimable – he will be a hard act to follow. But I have shaken hands with Simon Gillis on an arrangement whereby he will support the event for the next three years. At the time of writing I'm negotiating as to whether we'll be moving the event from November 2014 to February 2015, and to hold it in February thereafter. I think we probably will, as this will suit the RAC, who were very generous with space this last time, and will be in a better position to guarantee this should we move to February. The subtext there, of course, is that the RAC thought it went rather well, too.

Speaking of the RAC, the Chairman of their Bridge Circle, Tony Scouller, asked me to partner him as his guest at their first duplicate of the New Year and I was delighted to do so. It was a very pleasant game, but I think that the sonic oscillator in our BridgeMate needed re-calibrating, because the negative input terminal was obviously sending encrypted data to the server, with the result that the published result didn't match our performance at the table. That's my story. Tony opined ruefully as we returned the cards to the boards for the last time, that had neither of us ever opened One No Trump our result might have been rather better than it was. I prefer my version.

In last spring's Metrobridge I announced three things: The Young Chelsea had lined up new premises; London were going to win the Tollemache and finally that the new venue for the London Green-Pointed event would be brilliant. I happen to think the same this year, but perhaps on the whole it would be better if I kept my opinions to myself... But the new Green-Pointed venue this year really *is* something else...

The Young Chelsea's temporary billet at Queen's Club is rather nice, but the agreement ends in April. I wish I had more concrete news, but the new premises being ready in time for this is still a real possibility. Fingers crossed.

Queen's Club was where we held our "wake" for Warwick Pitch, a man who had done so much for bridge both in London and England. I'm pleased to say that I think it went very well – it was certainly well attended with friends old and new, including Colin Freeman, who had been our Mister Fixit at the RAC (and I hope will continue to be so), and was a founding member of the YC. Obviously someone has to lead these things, and on this occasion the honour fell to me (largely because it's not a problem getting me to speak, the problem is getting me to shut up). Happily a few others stood up to say a few words (Jeremy Dhondy,

David Burn, Mike Clack and Sally Brock – please forgive me if I’ve left anyone out) and I think everyone left feeling as upbeat as they could under the circumstances. I’m putting together a small “Memories of Warwick” document which will be posted on the YC web site, so if you have anything to share please let me know.

Unfortunately December brought about the deaths of two other old friends, Mike Vail and Andrew Abelson. As one grows older you often find that you drift apart from people, and this was definitely the case with me and these two worthy gentlemen, but I hope we’ll all remember them. Andrew was a polyglot, Mike was not (sounds like the start of a Dorothy Parker poem), but Mike was very fond of France and the French language. So it’s surely appropriate that one mutters under one’s breath on occasion “rapelle”.

Another thing that has happened since last I wrote for you is that London Secretary and editor of this newsletter, Chris Duckworth has been awarded the EBU Silver Award. She is one of only two people ever to have this honour bestowed on them, and well she deserves it. The other, by the way, is Cecil Leighton, who served on the London Committee for (I think) fifty years. Anyway, well done Chris.

My own path to global domination continues: I’ve now been elected Vice-Chairman of the EBU, alongside Jeremy Dhondy as Chairman. I’ve been asked what this involves. My reply is usually “It’s like being Al Gore, only I don’t have to make a documentary about climate change”. I’m still Chairman of the Tournament Committee so am once again working closely with Gordon Rainsford, with whom I worked when I was Chairman of the YC and he was Manager. He must be wondering what he did in a previous existence to deserve all this.

Is it worth my mentioning the Metropolitan Cup again? Probably not, but you’d miss it if I didn’t. Lorna Vestey will be selecting the B team, I will select the A team (as last year, I will not be sending invitations: I’ll just pick a load of people, tell them they’re playing and that’ll be that). Date: TBA. Venue: TBA. County organising it: TBA, but it isn’t us. Sussex has decided to give up hosting it. I have a feeling Surrey have picked up the baton but wouldn’t put any money on it. I really should read my e-mails more carefully (or at least make some attempt to remember what they say). If you’re wondering why we haven’t taken on the arrangements I’m afraid it’s because there just isn’t any spare capacity on the LMBA Committee at the moment. The other reason, more practically, is that there’s no way that we could find an accessible venue that would be acceptable price-wise. So, we’d like to help, but we’re not going to.

On that positive note (irony) I’ll leave you for now. I’m sorry that for the second time in a row this has been more of a report than a column. Hopefully the next time you get to the back pages it will be a bit more coherent in tone. Which reminds me, I had a Christmas Card from Veronica Thicke. She sends her love...