

*London
Metropolitan
Bridge
Association*



MetroNews

*The newsletter of the
London Metropolitan Bridge Association*

Spring 2008

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Index



Pages

- 3 Editorial – P2P and London
- 4 LMBA AGM 2008 – notice and Agenda for the forthcoming AGM
- 4-6 Coming Soon – LMBA events in the near future that you really mustn't miss
- 7-8 London News
- 8-9 Newcomers Day by Chris Duckworth
- 10-12 LMBA Results this year
- 12-13 Bridge in the Fortieth Dimension by Michael Hill
- 14 Ian Gardiner Trophy by Roger Morton
- 15-17 Meet David Gold by Chris Duckworth
- 18 Letters Page
- 18 Puzzle Corner
- 19-21 Diamonds Forever by Paul Lamford
- 21-22 Duck or Grouse by Ned Paul
- 22-25 Queen for a day by Broadway
- 26-27 Know the Laws
- 27-30 Congratulations to London players
- 29 Puzzle solution
- 30-32 Veronica Thicke explains it all for you



Words from the Editor

The whole issue of P2P is still the biggest thing facing the county and the EBU right now. There is an EBU EGM on 4th June, which will have happened by the time you read this, but which at the time of writing is still in the future, at which a vote will be taken on whether to proceed with the new strategy for universal membership or not. I don't know how the vote will go, and I don't even yet know how London will decide to vote on your behalf.



We held a meeting in mid-May of representatives from LMBA-affiliated clubs to get their feedback on what the proposals mean to them and how the county should vote. Only a few club representatives attended, including one whose views were firmly anti-P2P and some who were unsure or rather suspicious about the new strategy. If we took their views solely into account, we would probably vote against, but it is not as simple as that. Most of our clubs had earlier replied to a survey suggesting they would probably continue to affiliate if P2P went ahead. Many expressed concerns about, but not necessarily antipathy to, the proposals. And it is easy to see that many clubs and individuals simply either metaphorically shrug their shoulders and think it doesn't matter much which way things go, or else are happy to "go with the flow".

The biggest club in the county is the Andrew Robson Bridge Club, but they do not issue master points. There would therefore be a big financial penalty on the club to affiliate to the EBU under P2P, and little or no direct benefits. What would you do if you were Andrew Robson? The next biggest club is the Young Chelsea, which would no doubt continue to affiliate and would have to charge its members an additional sum to cover the additional cost of P2P. Individual club members themselves would probably pay no more overall, since most pay an EBU subscription which they would no longer have to pay, and would instead pay a little more table money. But individuals have a habit of overlooking the good things and only noticing the bad. So they might choose to play elsewhere, and the Young Chelsea, already struggling to make ends meet in its very expensive location in central London, could suffer badly.

The LMBA Committee has a meeting just before the EBU EGM when we will make our final decision on how to vote. It is very hard to determine what, in the long run, really is the best thing for the County and the EBU. But I do know that, whichever way we decide and whichever way the overall vote eventually goes, there will be some tough times ahead making things work.

Chris Duckworth

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A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Annual General Meeting

The 2008 Annual General Meeting will be held at the **Young Chelsea Bridge Club**, 32 Barkston Gardens, SW5 (nearest tube station: Earls Court) on **Thursday 3rd July**, starting at **7.00 pm**. The Agenda for the meeting is shown below.

Do come along in July and help to shape the future of bridge in London - there is also a free glass of wine and nibbles on offer for all attendees!

Agenda

- 1 Registration of proxies
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Minutes of the AGM of 5th July 2007
(Note. These can be found at www.metrobridge.co.uk – the LMBA website – follow the link at the bottom of the home page)
- 4 Matters arising from these minutes.
- 5 Chairman's Report
- 6 Treasurer's Report
- 7 Adoption of accounts for 2007
- 8 Subscriptions for 2009-2010
- 9 Elections to the Executive Committee
*Standing down from the Committee this time will be:
Chris Gidden, Cecil Leighton, David Martin and David Muller.
David Martin is not standing for re-election, but the other three will be re-standing. Nominations for further candidates may be made beforehand or will be taken from the floor at the meeting.*
- 10 Appointment of honorary auditor
- 11 EBU delegates' Report
- 12 Any other business



Coming Soon!

Mixed Pairs



The 2008/9 season opener will be the **Mixed Pairs Championship**, always a sociable and enjoyable event. It will be held on **Sunday 14th September** at the Young Chelsea Bridge Club. You don't need to pre-enter, but it is helpful if you do – just call the Young Chelsea on 020 7373 1665 to say you will be coming along, or contact the event organiser, Nigel Freake, at gelohnake@waitrose.com.

London Trophy

Summer time is also when you should be thinking about getting together a team for the **London Trophy**. This knock-out teams of four competition provides inter-club bridge for non-bridge clubs, so if you can gather together a foursome from your golf club, tennis club, place of work or any other formal or ad-hoc “club” this is the perfect way to introduce them to some not-too-serious organised bridge. The entry fee is only £16 per team, which guarantees you at least two matches, as all first-round losers in the main Trophy event get to play in the Della-Porta Plate, the consolation knock-out competition.



This year, in fact, it is even better value, as your entry will more than likely also give you free entry to an additional Pairs competition. This will be open to pairs from all teams that win at least one match in either the London Trophy or the Della-Porta Plate and will be held in June 2009 at the prestigious RAC Club in Pall Mall. This picture was taken during the break at last year’s finals at the club, and gives you a flavour of what the venue is like.

Teams should enter by **1st September**, though if you are a little later than that, don’t worry – you can probably still be fitted in. All enquiries and entries should be made to Cecil Leighton on 020 8500 0700.

Lederer Memorial Trophy

It’s not too soon, either, to get the date of this year’s **Lederer Memorial Trophy** in your diaries. It will be held at the Young Chelsea Bridge Club on **Saturday and Sunday 1st - 2nd November 2008**.

Note that this is **not** the date shown in your EBU diary, which is incorrect!

The usual array of bridge stars will be present at this event. To give you a taste of the event, here are a couple of pictures from last year. The first shows London’s David Bakhshi being an honorary Irishman for the weekend, playing in partnership with European silver



medallist Tommy Garvey, against Tony Friday and LMBA President Bernard Teltscher. In the background is the EBU's Michael Clark operating the laptop, providing input to both the Vugraph presentation at the venue and the live BBO coverage.



The second picture features Heather & Jeremy Dhondy, playing as European Mixed Team Champions against Gunnar Hallberg and Andrew McIntosh, members of the winning Schapiro Spring Foursomes Winners team.

This year, tireless event organiser Simon Cochemé is standing down from the role, which is being taken on by Stefanie Rohan. The final picture from last year shows Simon being presented with a well-earned bottle of champagne in thanks for all his efforts.



Teltscher Cups

In addition, on the Saturday afternoon of the Lederer, clubs in and around London will be able to play with the stars, playing the same hands as in the main event and scoring up with two of the top pairs. The winning pairs from these heats will be awarded the **Teltscher Cups** and be invited along to the competition to receive them on the Sunday.

Clubs interested in participating in this should contact organiser Chris Gidden at Imba@chg.me.uk or on 020 7609 1093.

London News

David Martin

David Martin is standing down from the LMBA Committee this year. Although he has been less involved in the last couple of years due to pressure of work, David has been a tireless worker on behalf of the Association in the past.

He joined the committee in 1996 and has contributed to all aspects of the County's work, including serving as an EBU delegate and working on publicity, tournament organisation and competition rules, and a review of our activities as a whole. He joined the Board of Directors of the EBU in 1998 and became Chairman of LMBA in 2001. In 2004 he stood down from both offices but continued to provide input to the County for a further few years. We are grateful for all his work and wish him well in the future.



Committee Match v Surrey

This year's annual match of the London Committee against the Surrey committee was held in April and hosted by Richmond Bridge Club. Having lost in the last two



years, London managed to redeem itself by winning by a convincing margin, though we did have to bring in one ringer when we seemed to have only 11 of the 12-man team present at the start of the match. Very fortunately, Membership Secretary Roger Morton's regular partner lived nearby and scooted round to make up the numbers.

The picture shows a beaming Bernard Teltscher, LMBA President, receiving the trophy

from Surrey President Graham Wells.

Andrew Robson

Although his club has always been affiliated to the EBU through London, Andrew Robson himself was until recently a member of Middlesex. We are delighted to announce that he has now changed allegiance and has joined London. We are pleased and proud to welcome him as a member.



Young Chelsea's 40th anniversary

The YCBC is celebrating its 40th year of existence over a number of months, but the exact anniversary of its inception was 8th May 2008. On that date the club held a special anniversary Swiss Pairs preceded by a draw for its "Play with an International" event the following week. To mark the date, club member Simon Cochemé donated a magnificent cake baked and decorated by his daughter. The picture shows club Chairman Ian Payn and Secretary Chris Duckworth cutting the cake.



In memoriam

We are sad to report the deaths of two well well-known and popular London tournament players.

Peter Hecht-Hohansen died suddenly in February and Moza Panahpour died at the beginning of May after a long illness. Both left bridge-playing wives and many bridge-playing friends, to whom we extend our sympathy.

Newcomers Day

by Chris Duckworth

On a very sunny Sunday in May, it was good to see five tables-worth of newcomers turn up to play a gentle and sociable duplicate session. Ned Paul came along to help out and make up the numbers, for which I was very grateful. We played a three-board-round Mitchell which led to separate North-South and East-West winners. Tea, coffee and biscuits after three rounds kept everyone going and added to the sociability – though it was quite difficult to drag everyone away from the chatting and back to the tables again after the break!

Love All. Dealer West

♠ J 10 9 2	
♥ 10 7 5	
♦ 8 5	
♣ Q J 6 5	
♠ 7 5	♠ A 8 4 3
♠ Q 8 4	♥ 3 2
♦ A K Q 10 3 2	♦ J 9 7 6 4
♣ 9 8	♣ 7 4
♠ K Q 6	
♥ A K J 9 6	
♦ –	
♣ A K 10 3 2	

This was one of the more interesting hands that was tackled.

I actually sat in as South on this hand, before one of the participants had arrived, and at my table East West were playing weak twos (quite a lot of newcomers learn weak twos right away these days). West bid 2♦, North passed and East raised to 5♦. What would you do now as South?

Although I think Double is the best call, I was pretty sure that my partner would not think of removing this with a

suitable hand, so I took a shot at 5♥. This was passed out and North tabled a very useful hand after the ♦A lead.

I ruffed the diamond, cashed ♥A in case there was a singleton queen, then crossed to the ♣Q to play a second round of hearts. Expecting the ♥Q to be with East because of the weak two opening, I ran the ♥10 and was not pleased to see the queen win.

Now a second round of diamonds would have embarrassed me, as if I ruffed again I would need to use my last trump to draw West's last trump. Now, when I knocked out the ace of spades I would lose lots more diamond tricks as well. Fortunately for me, West exited with her last trump, so I heaved a sigh of relief and made my contract!

This hand is easy to make playing safely for the contract, as most new players are taught to do. You simply cash two top trumps and, as long as they break 3-2, you carry on by

ignoring the outstanding trump queen and just knock out the ♠A. Whoever has the queen can win it when they like, but you do not lose control of trumps. But Pairs play is different, as you are trying to make as many tricks as possible, so as to get the best score possible.

As we discussed after the play, West is really too strong for an opening weak two and could open 1♦. This would have been raised by East, probably to 2♦, which South should double for takeout. This is no doubt what happened at most of the other tables, where 5♥ was reached twice more, though once it was doubled and made, giving North-South a nice top.

At one other table South doubled 5♦ and this went three off for a better score than making 5♥. At the final table the contract was a quiet 1♥+4 – East West obviously kept quiet, which worked out very well for them!



The final results were:

NS:

- 1 Shelley Evans & Leszek Lubaszewski
(pictured leftt)
- 2 Yoshimi Furukawa & Ikugo Sasaki

EW:

- 1= Jan Holman & Ian Stewart
Mala Lever (& Ned Paul)

The picture right shows the event in play, with joint EW winners Jan and Ian in the foreground (Ian in the striped shirt and Jan in turquoise).



LMBA results this year

Ian Gardiner Trophy

The London Championship Teams of Four qualifying event for the newly-named Ian Gardiner Trophy was played in early January. Fourteen teams competed and the eventual winners were the team of Nick Boss, Richard Johnson, Greg Sokoloski and Jacek Sikora.

This team included a player without London allegiance, however, so was not eligible to go forward to the play-off to determine the final winner who would represent London in the Pachabo. The play-off match was thus between the teams coming in second and third in the qualifier, respectively Nick Irens, David Bakhshi, Espen Erichsen and Andrew Robson and Michael Hill, Mike Clack, David Ould and Roger Morton.



The final was played on 16th May and was won by the Irens team – seen in the picture celebrating their victory. A short report from the final is on page 14.

London Championship Pairs

The entry for this year's Pairs Championship was exactly the same as last year, with 30 pairs competing for the title. At the end of the qualifying session, David Gold and Susanna Gross were in the lead, giving them a healthy carry-over score to take forward into the final. But competition was tough in the final stage and they were overtaken by the eventual winners Ned Paul and Brian McGuire, who had a stunning second session.

The final leading positions were as follows:

- 1 Ned Paul & Brian McGuire
- 2 David Gold & Susanna Gross
- 3 Doug Dunn & Anne Catchpole
- 4 Nigel Freake & Paul Lamford

Last year's winners, Carl Nelson and Abigail Nichols, came over from the States to play in the event again. They made it through the first stage to qualify for the final, but sadly finished mid-field in the second stage.

A consolation event was held alongside the final, in which the leading pairs were:

- 1 Rob Cliffe & Gitte Hecht-Johansen
- 2= Liz Wright & Nick Wilson
- Peggy Moss & Gordon Clarke

Palmer Bayer Trophy

This event was held in February, when a small but select group sat down to enjoy an friendly afternoon's bridge. The results were:

- 1 Jane Coupe & Peter Blumer
- 2 Nigel Freake & John Drummond
- 3 Chris Elliott & Lorna Vestey

Green Pointed Swiss Weekend

There were 36 tables in play in the **Swiss Pairs** in March, spread between the Young Chelsea BC and the neighbouring Barkston Gardens Hotel. Seven hard-fought rounds of the Pairs led to the following final positions:

- 1 Janet de Botton & Nick Sandqvist
- 2 Sarah Dunn & David Gold
- 3 June Booty & Richard Irwin
- 4 Mathew Hoskins & Liz Hoskins

In the **Swiss Teams** the following day there were 34 teams competing. Again seven matches were played, leading to these positions:

- 1 Espen Erichsen, Nick Irens, Tom Townsend, David Gold
- 2 Brian McGuire, Nick Boss, Sebastien Kristensen, Mark Lehto
- 3 Jeffrey Alper, Peter Hasenson, David Sellman, Victor Silverstone
- 4 Karen Pryor, Norman Inniss, Malcolm Pryor, Bill Hodgkiss

Garden Cities

There was a good turn out of six teams from four clubs in this year's Garden Cities heat, held to determine which club would represent London in the Regional Finals of the national Inter-Club Teams-of-Eight Championship.

This event is usually a close battle between the Young Chelsea and the Woodberry and this year it was the YC's turn to come out on top by quite a convincing margin. The surprise of the event was perhaps the Woodberry B team, which on the evening outperformed the club's A team and another strong YC squad to finish in second place.

- 1 **Young Chelsea Red** Fiona Hutchison, Mark Lehto, Brian McGuire, Dom Goodwin, John Pemberton, Paul Martin, Tim Gauld, Dimitre Stoev
- 2 **Woodberry B** Toby Musk, Fedor Goumans, Andy Conway, Chris Watkinson, Mandie Campbell, Antony Nash, David Schiff, Benji Hackenbroch

Newcomers' Day

A report of this event, with full results, is on pages 8-9.

Fox Shammon Seniors Pairs

Once again, the record for the entry to this event was broken this year, as it continues to grow in popularity.

The event was won by LMBA President Bernard Teltscher, playing with Victor Silverstone – they are seen here with the Fox-Shammon Trophy.



Final results:

- 1 Bernard Teltscher & Victor Silverstone
- 2 Kitty Teltscher & Steve Eginton
- 3 Maria Budd & Malcolm Harris

Home Counties League

Although not all the matches are yet completed, the leading two positions in the League this year have already been determined. Well done to Surrey, captained by Barry Stoker, who have finally won the League, beating London Red into second place. They have won all their matches in this League for the last five years but this is the first time they have done so with big enough margins to win the League – so a well-deserved first place.

Bridge In The Fortieth Dimension *by Michael Hill*

The Young Chelsea Bridge Club was formed in 1968 and the club has been holding a number of special events this year to celebrate its fortieth anniversary. One such event, in January, was an inter-university teams. Members (and guests) were invited to form teams from their former (or current) university or college (although a little cross-fertilisation was allowed where a college couldn't field a complete team). The good news was that there were teams of current students as well as alumni. In total, there were fifteen teams, all-play-all in two-board matches.



Amazingly, there were three of us (two who were current YC members and a third not far away) who started in the same year (1964 – ouch!) on the same course at Imperial College and we were lucky enough to be able to find a fourth in the form of a very recent graduate from IC (albeit from a different course). So not only was this forty years of the YC but forty years (more or less) gap between the three grumpy old men and the lovely young lady who completed the team! I played with Harvey Thomas, my old university partner but with whom I had not played since as our paths diverged when we graduated, while Gary Jones played with Tessa Greenslade.

University bridge always had exciting elements to it – the impetuosity of youth being a factor, of course. But, in the hand which follows, we had almost the reverse of that when our (student) opponents were very restrained in their bidding whilst, aided by some system uncertainty, it was our team-mates who might have appeared impetuous.

EW Game. Dealer North

<p>♠ J107 ♥ 983 ♦ QJ7 ♣ Q962</p> <p>♠ AKQ3 ♥ K ♦ A109853 ♣ K5</p> <p>♠ 94 ♥ QJ74 ♦ K62 ♣ AJ87</p>	<p>♠ 8652 ♥ A10652 ♦ 4 ♣ 1043</p>
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When Harvey and I held the North-South cards, the bidding was brief:-

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	All Pass		

Having dredged up a response of 1♥, East was so relieved to have found a fit after her partner's 1♠ rebid that she did not revalue her hand. At the other table, Gary and Tessa were made of stronger (or was it more impetuous) stuff. They bid:-

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♥	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♣	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

With limited system discussion, Gary wasn't entirely sure whether Tessa's 2♠ rebid was natural or a splinter agreeing hearts, so the next three bids were in the nature of steps in the dark. But Tessa's 4NT was clearly RKCB and they had agreed which way they were playing 5♣ (1 or 4) and 5♦ (0 or 3) responses so, knowing of one ace opposite, she was able to bid the slam.

There was no way the defence could create more than one trick and little real scope for declarer to find an unsuccessful line, so twelve tricks were duly made in both rooms. A slam swing against a game making overtricks is common enough but a slam swing against a part score – that really is the stuff of which university bridge is made!

Alas, this was not enough to win us the event. We finished a fairly distant third with a score of +76 imps. Winners, with +101 IMPs were one of the cross-fertilised teams consisting of Dafydd Jones, Alex Hydes, Paul Shannon and Henryk Klocek. All credit to them for consistency – they won twelve of their fourteen two-board matches (and lost the other two very narrowly).

Overheard at the bridge table

- ♣ Your play was much better tonight, and so were your excuses.
- ♦ Q Do you ever do anything right?
- A If I did everything right, I wouldn't be playing with you.

Ian Gardiner Trophy

by Roger Morton

The play-off final of the London Championship Teams of Four for the Ian Gardiner Trophy was played on 18th May at the Young Chelsea BC. Nick Irens' team (Andrew Robson, Espen Erichsen, David Bakhshi) faced Mike Hill's team (Mike Clack, Roger Morton & David Ould) over 48 boards.

Irens won by 65 IMP's. Hill had gained IMP's on three of the six stanzas but we had lost the second stanza by 52IMP's, and that was a mountain too high to climb.

Here is an interesting hand, where we had an opportunity to reduce the deficit.

Love All, Dealer South

♠ A 10	
♥ 9 6 2	
♦ 8 5 2	
♣ AK 5 3 2	
♠ 5 2	♠ 9 7 6
♥ K 10 8	♥ J 5 4 3
♦ AK 10 7 6 3	♦ Q J 9 4
♣ 9 4	♣ J 6
♠ K Q J 8 4 3	
♥ A Q 7	
♦ –	
♣ Q 10 8 7	

South Opens 1♠ (4 card major style) and West chips in with 2♦.

a) First problem. With your favourite partner, is 3♣ by North a game force on your methods? If not, the bid certainly makes it easy now for South to bid 4♦ splinter. Then, after a 4♠ cue from North, the grand will surely be bid with confidence after a GSF enquiry for top trump honours. Bridge is an easy game!

b) When North made a negative double (East redoubled at the table), it

gets much more complicated. What does South do, to show the powerful spades, club suit and diamond void? I made a tired and lazy bid of 4♠ and that concluded the auction. Maybe I should have bid 3♦, North bids 4♣ and we might then at least have got to 6♣ or 6♠.

Should you end up in six spades, the play seems quite trivial with 11 tricks in the blacks, the heart ace and a heart finesse for the overtrick. But in bridge, we have to stay awake, especially on board 47 at the end of a long match. The clubs suit will be blocked when they divide 3-1. Andrew Robson politely suggested in the bar afterwards that declarer should make the spectacular unblocking play of discarding a winning club on the opening diamond lead! The position usually occurs only in puzzles.

This is a good teacher's hand. Hasty play to trick one and failure to plan are pitfalls for all of us. *(Actually, on reflection, it's better to ruff the diamond lead, draw trumps, play a club to the King and then discard a blocking club on a losing diamond. You can now pick up ♣Jxxx with East as well.)*

It was a very enjoyable match, played in good spirit and at a sensible speed. We wish the Irens team every success when they represent us on June 14th/15th at the Pachabo County Teams Champions Tournament in Hinkley.

Meet David Gold

by Chris Duckworth

One of the very brightest stars on the London scene is David Gold. He has been at the top of the bridge ladder for so long it is hard to appreciate that he is only 28 years old and has been playing seriously for less than 10 years!

Although his father is a dedicated bridge player and there were always bridge books in the house, David did not take an interest in the game until he was 16. He saw a group of other sixth formers playing lunchtime bridge at school, got them to briefly explain the game, and sat down to play with them. He formed a partnership with another Reading School pupil, Ben Cowling, and they soon became the school's best pair. They played a weird system called Midmac, the details of which David can no longer remember! At that time there was no organised bridge at the school, although now, thanks in part to the trend he started, plus the later dedicated efforts of teacher Judy Honickberg, Reading has become the hotbed for much junior bridge talent.



David and Ben played a little inter-school bridge and had the occasional outing to the local club or tournament, but there was no more than that whilst David was at school, and he didn't play at all during his subsequent year at University. After a year at Goldsmith's College, David felt his course of Maths and Computing was not for him and he dropped out, with little idea of what he would do next. To keep him busy, his father took him along to St John's Wood Bridge Club to play a little rubber bridge, and suddenly, David was hooked. He became totally addicted to the game and played as much and as often as he could. He also became very good at it, very quickly. He remembers a breakthrough occasion, when he had played through the night with his father, Honor Flint and David Higginson, another regular rubber bridge player, after which Higginson remarked to David "I don't remember you making a single mistake all night. I think you will be a world champion one day".

Soon after this David's father asked Tom Townsend to watch David, to try to assess just how much talent he had, and Tom was impressed. About the same time David met Richard Probst, then a star of the England junior team. Richard was equally impressed and asked David to partner him in junior trials. They won these in 1999 and quickly David was in demand for many junior international events. David partnered Richard in his first ever national tournament – the Spring Foursomes in 1999 – in which they won the Punchbowl in a team with Michael and Margaret Courtney. He played with both Richard and Alex Hydes in a number of junior events, but David always had his sights set on the open game.

His chance came when Tom Townsend, after captaining him in the English Under-25 team in the Dutch Den Bosch tournament, asked him to form a partnership. Their first event was the Brighton Teams in 2000, which they won teamed up with

Rob Cliffe and Nick Sandqvist, after which the partnership went from strength to strength. David describes Tom as a perfectionist both in bidding and in play. Whilst he was not always an easy person to partner, since shortcomings were never overlooked, David credits Tom for teaching him an enormous amount about the game, in particular judgement, not an easy thing to learn.

They played in English trials in 2001 and came third playing with Tony Priday and Nick Sandqvist. This result was enough to earn David his first Camrose match for England. Then in 2003 they won the trials for the Europeans, so represented England in Malmo the following year – when David was still only aged 24!



Tom, looking critical!

Since his England debut in 2001, David has played in the Camrose every year. He has also played in two European Championships, one Bermuda Bowl, one World team Olympiad, two European Pairs Championships (gaining a bronze medal in Tenerife in 2005) and one World Pairs, plus the Bonn Nations Cup six times. Quite a record.

David earns his living as a bridge professional and says he can't now imagine doing any other kind of work. He manages the St John's Wood Bridge Club and plays with clients as a professional partner. He is also the driving force behind a new company bridge4money.com, which provides an on-line money bridge game. The company was launched a year ago and is growing slowly, but he has plans for increasing the marketing within the next year or so and taking a bigger slice of the on-line gaming market.

David believes that, to be the best as a bridge professional, it is not enough to get results – you should make the whole experience worth while and enjoyable for your clients. That is what he aims to do – and I am sure he succeeds. It would be hard to meet a more charming, direct and likeable character on the bridge scene. He is kept grounded by Rowena, his partner of some 4½ years, with whom he lives in West London - they hope to marry and have a family in due course, once she has finished her accountancy exams.

One of his other hopes for the future is, at some time, to get his own bridge column in one of the national newspapers. He writes regularly now for Bridge Plus magazine and is developing his journalistic skills. But his real main ambition is to win a world championship (or even several!). It seems to me there is every likelihood of his achieving this – time is certainly on his side. And although he works as a bridge professional, he is happy to earn his money elsewhere and to try to play on the best possible England team.

When asked how he would go about selecting such a team, David said he would like to see England adopt a model similar to that used in the Netherlands or Ireland. He believes the country's best players should be identified, formed into a team or small squad and be given concentrated coaching and development. There should be more continuity from year to year and more focus on developing

younger players. For the future of the game, he would love to see something like an Academy of Bridge akin to a football academy, not for beginners but for those with promise who could be helped to play even better.

Finally, I asked David for a hand and he recalled this one from the Spring Foursomes in 2005, playing against Brian Callaghan and David Burn.

Love All. Dealer East

♠ J 10 6	
♥ 8 7 5 2	
♦ 3	
♣ A K 10 7 6	
♠ A 7 4	♠ 9
♥ K 10 3	♥ A Q J 9 6 4
♦ A 9 6 2	♦ J 10 8 7 4
♣ Q J 5	♣ 8
♠ K Q 8 5 3 2	
♥ -	
♦ K Q 5	
♣ 9 4 3 2	

South	West	North	East
<i>David</i>	<i>Brian</i>	<i>Tom</i>	<i>David B</i>
4♠	5♥	5♠	4♥
Pass	Double	All Pass	Pass

The auction went as shown and Brian led a small trump, taken by the Jack in dummy. David played the ♦3 to the

king and ace, and West continued with the ace of trumps and a third round of trumps. The contract now depended on how clubs were played. David reasoned that Brian, seeing the possible threat from the clubs in dummy, would have tried to cash a heart trick if he thought one was standing up. Since he hadn't done so, he must have three hearts, meaning that David Burn had opened 4♥ with only a six-card suit. In that case he must be very distributional and so probably had a 1-6-5-1 shape.

David played ♣9 and Brian produced the five of clubs. David reckoned that with Q85 or J85, Brian might equally well have played the eight – a sort of restricted choice position – so he placed West with QJ5 and ran the nine. When this held, he was home.

5♠ doubled and making went very well with 5♥ doubled and making in the other room – but they still lost the match!

More Kaplan Kwotes

"He's preserving his options to misguess the diamonds."

"In order to let the contract make, the defenders must lead a spade. No other line of play succeeds."

"The first duty of a contract is to make. If it doesn't make, that's a major flaw."

"South's bid implied: I have four spades, four hearts, six clubs and the rest are diamonds."

"His lead was the middle from the top of nothing."

"Bad enough when the trumps are 4-1, but when the singleton gets a ruff, that's an affront."

Letters Page

Dear Madame Editor

Thank you for your kind words about me in the recent issue of MetroNews. There has, alas, been a slightly disconcerting consequence. Reference was made to a modest wager between myself and Joe Fawcett, and the fact that he hadn't, upon losing, coughed up. Upon reading the article, he expressed surprise at the existence of the wager, and immediately paid the sum in question, five pounds.

Subsequently, I gave the matter some thought, and it seemed to me that if he'd forgotten the matter altogether, then it was equally possible that I had forgotten that he had indeed forked out the relevant sum at the time. Both of us are, I know, prone to occasional bouts of amnesia, for medical reasons too complex to explain here. Restless in bed, I turned this way and that (and when I got bored I turned that way and this) achieving sleep only when I resolved to put the matter right. I shall stop at nothing to restore Fawcett's good name, and remove any stigma inadvertently attached to it by my casual suggestion that he knocked me for a fiver many years ago, when it looks unlikely that he did any such thing. To clear his reputation, I am prepared to climb every mountain, ford every stream, go to the ends of the earth. Do anything, in fact.

Short of giving the money back, of course.

Yrs. Respectfully,

Ian Payn

Puzzle Corner

		6				4		
			1			3		8
					2			5
2				5			1	
		1						
			9	1				
3			8					9
						7		2

Another Sudoku, but this time the shaded squares must all contain either odd or even numbers. You have to work out which.

I hope you enjoy the puzzle – if you get stuck the answer is on page xx.



Diamonds Forever

by Paul Lamford

One Friday after the Butler Pairs at the bar at the Young Chelsea, I bumped into Dipak Finesson, the strong Indian player, born in Iceland. He seemed to have done better than me on every hand we compared:

Love All. Dealer South

♠ A 7 2 ♥ 9 8 3 ♦ A 7 4 ♣ A K 8 6 ♠ Q 10 4 ♥ K 7 ♦ K 10 8 3 2 ♣ 10 7 2 ♠ K 6 ♥ A Q 6 4 ♦ J 6 5 ♣ Q J 5 4	♠ J 9 8 5 3 ♥ J 10 5 2 ♦ Q 9 ♣ 9 3
---	---

West	North	East	South
Pass	3NT	All Pass	1NT

“This was an unlucky board”, I remarked to Dipak. “28 points and game goes off on normal play.”

“You made two errors in one sentence,” he replied. “What you meant to say, surely, was ‘This was a lucky board, as game makes surprisingly with normal play’.”

“Well, I was not up to it, then”, I replied. “I ducked the diamond lead to East’s queen and ducked the nine of diamonds continuation but West overtook and cleared the suit. When I took the heart finesse, West won and cashed the setting tricks in diamonds. I suppose you made it?”

“Without doing anything clever, even”, Dipak replied. “I reasoned that, as West has led the three of diamonds, he

did not have both the queen and king, nor both the nine and ten – with KQ10, KQ9, K109 or Q109 he would have led a different card.



Therefore, the only time playing low is right would be when East had ♦109 doubleton and then a lot of Wests would lead the king from KQ8. I therefore rose with the ace of diamonds on the first round, and ran the nine of hearts, covered by the ten and queen. That lost to the king, but the diamonds were blocked, and I later ran the eight of hearts and West sheepishly produced the seven. I even made an overtrick by finessing the four of hearts on the third round, and was pleased to see that I had gained 10 IMPs.”

I quickly moved on to another board:

NS Game. Dealer East

♠ Q 10 2 ♥ K 3 2 ♦ Q 10 3 ♣ Q J 9 4 ♠ J 9 4 3 ♥ Q J 5 4 ♦ 9 6 ♣ 10 8 7	♠ 8 7 6 ♥ 10 9 8 ♦ A J 8 4 2 ♣ A 5 ♠ A K 5 ♥ A 7 6 ♦ K 7 5 ♣ K 6 3 2
---	---

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

West	North	East	South
All Pass	1NT	Pass	2♠

“We wrong-sided this one,” I commented as we moved on to the next hand. “But East’s eccentric weak Two Diamond bid fixed us a bit. “I over-called 2NT and North raised to 3NT. West led the nine of diamonds and I ducked the first round in both hands. West continued with a second diamond and East cleared the diamonds. Sadly he had the ace of clubs and I duly went off. I could have won the first diamond with the king as it happens, but who would have known it?”

“Hmm,” replied Dipak, “I also had a diamond lead, in 3NT as South, after an auction which began (Pass) – 1♣ (Polish style) – (Pass) – 1♦ (Relay) – (Double). However, I rose with the queen of diamonds and now could not be beaten, wherever the ♣A was. Only worth 3 IMPs, however, as there were clearly few declarers of your calibre.”

“How could I miss that?” I thought to myself, and decided to move to another board.

NS Game. Dealer West

♠ K J	
♥ A 6 5 3	
♦ A K 7	
♣ 10 6 5 4	
♠ A Q 7	♠ 10 4 2
♥ K Q 10	♥ 9 8 4 2
♦ Q 8 6 3 2	♦ 9 4
♣ K Q	♣ J 9 8 7
♠ 9 8 6 5 3	
♥ J 7	
♦ J 10 5	
♣ A 3 2	

“Again, we were unlucky”, I moaned, “to meet the only pair in the room not to be playing transfers after a 1NT overcall. If North had been playing the contract, a diamond lead would have eventually produced a diamond ruff for the defence. I led the king of hearts, but declarer ducked. I switched to a club but South won and led a spade up. I won, cashed the club and continued with a top heart but declarer won in dummy and cashed the king of spades. He reached his hand with a third-round heart ruff, played another trump, and came to three spades, three diamonds, a club and a heart.”

“I think you should address your own deficiencies before criticising others,” Dipak retorted. “Playing natural responses to a 1NT overcall is probably best, as you can use a cue-bid as Stayman. And, oddly, I faced the same auction but chose the queen of diamonds as my opening salvo. Declarer won, crossed to the ace of clubs and played a spade but I rose with the ace and played another diamond. Declarer won in hand and crossed to the king of spades but now he could not get off dummy without sustaining a diamond ruff, and we gained 5 IMPs. Surely the ♦Q is a no-cost lead, as dummy is marked with diamond strength and partner obviously has a blizzard?”

“I clearly lack your imagination,” I responded, “but would you like a game sometime?”

“I am sorry, I won’t be able to play for a while”, Dipak responded, “as I am

currently suspended from the EBU pending an L&E hearing, chaired by Mr Burn, which alleges that my declarer play and defence ‘raises suspicions of unauthorised advance knowledge of the exact layout’.”

“Oh,” I replied. “I wish you luck in your defence to this unfounded allegation.”

(Just in case you hadn't guessed, Dipak is not unrelated to a certain piece of software – Ed)

Duck or Grouse!

by Ned Paul

Everyone knows about ducking in NT contracts when you hold Axx opposite xx. However, the waters run a bit deeper than that as these two deals will show. Both are from recent novice duplicates, yet feature plays that would be far from novice if you found them.

Here is a set hand from “1st year Students Play Session – Week 24” from a club outside London.

Love All. Dealer East

♠ A 7 4 2	♠ 9 3
♥ A 7 3	♥ Q 10 9 4 2
♦ 10 6 2	♦ Q 8 4
♣ 10 9 6	♣ Q 7 4
♠ K J 10 5	
♥ K 8 6	
♦ K 9 5	
♣ A J 2	

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

A basic point count auction sees South end in 3NT. The point of the hand is that West will be put off leading spades by South’s bid and will instead seek to find partner’s suit. The three of hearts is chosen, dummy plays small and West puts in the nine. South wins, clubs and diamonds do not produce enough tricks and when spades are

broached the defenders cash their remaining hearts to defeat the contract.

That’s what supposed to happen but try the effect of South ducking the first heart trick and ducking again when East continues with the queen of hearts. Now when a third heart is played West wins but cannot continue hearts. South knocks out the ace of spades and makes the contract.

Is this play findable at the table? Well, the three of hearts indicates that West has an honour and if this was the queen and East had the ace, East would surely have played the ace at trick one. If West has five hearts it makes no difference what you do, so you may as well play for the cards as they are. If the four of hearts is returned instead of the queen, the three having been led, declarer should be wondering about the two, and again a 5-3 heart division is indicated. The principle hope is again a blockage, with the ace of spades in the hand with the short hearts.

Two days later at the LMBA Newcomers novice duplicate at Young Chelsea BC this next deal occurred. At least it was computer generated and thus untouched by human hand.

Game All. Dealer South

	♠ 9 8 5 4		
	♥ J 7		
	♦ 6 2		
	♣ A 10 9 8 7		
♠ 10 6 3		♠ K 7 2	
♥ A 10 9 8 6 3		♥ K 5	
♦ 9 8 4		♦ 10 7 5 3	
♣ 3		♣ K Q 6 5	
	♠ A Q J		
	♥ Q 4 2		
	♦ A K Q J		
	♣ J 4 2		

South	West	North	East
2NT	pass	3♣	pass
3♦	pass	3NT	end

A Stayman auction puts South into 3NT and West leads the ten of hearts. East wins with the king, returns the five and West plays no further part in the play. Although both club honours are

offside, nine tricks are made in some comfort.

Take Two! On the lead of the ten East can place South with either the ace and queen, the queen but not the ace, or the ace but not the queen. West of course has no further high cards for re-entry. East should retain the king of hearts to kill the jack. There is no cost in the other layouts but the benefit comes when the cards are distributed as above. South wins the queen and when East regains the lead, West overtakes East's king of hearts felling dummy's jack and cashes out the suit.

Take Three! Who said South had to win the queen? South ducks at trick one and now the heart suit is terminally blocked. South might speculate that the contract cannot be made without giving up the lead and so a blockage in hearts is the only hope.

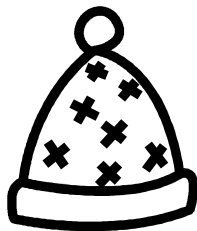
Plays like this seem commoner than one might think – they are just missed all the time, both by defender and declarer. Having become aware of them I shall now be good value in the bar for telling you what I might have done at the table.

Queen for a day

by Broadway

One evening I am passing Fulham and Munster and what do I see but The Chairman talking to an old doll by the name of Madame La Blimp. Or rather she is talking to him, and what is more he is listening to her, because I can hear him say yes, yes, as he does when he is really listening to anybody, which is very seldom.

Now this is a most surprising sight, because Madame La Blimp is not such an old doll as anybody will wish to listen to, being generally more than somewhat ginned up, and being Spanish looking and short and round with a small mouser, and wearing a pink tea cosy



and dragging an old plastic bag, and such.

Well, anyway, when The Chairman sees me as he is listening to Madame La Blimp he motions me to wait, so I wait until she finally gets through gabbing to him and goes rolling away.

"This is quite a situation" says The Chairman. "The old doll is in a tough

spot. It seems she has 2 sons, who ship off to live in Australia, and a sister in South Africa. Well, they are all on the way here on a world tour and in fact will land on Saturday, and it is Wednesday already. And it seems that they are all thinking Madame La Blimp is a high shot with many green points."

Now in all the years I am around this town I always try to keep in with the high shots, for I figure if I rub up against green points long enough some may rub off on me, and I stay away from small operators and chisellers and brokers. And Madame La Blimp is one of the worst brokers in town, having no green points whatsoever.

"How do they get such an idea as this?" I ask.

"I will tell you how" says The Chairman. "It seems she is telling them so in her letters to them."

"Why" I say, "Madame La Blimp is nothing but the old phonus bolonus to deceive people in this way."

"What I am getting at is this" says The Chairman, who is a kind hearted guy, "We must put on a high shot only game that she wins. Go and find me Judge George for an ever-loving partner, or at least for a partner."

So I going looking for Judge George, although I am not sure he will care to be Madame La Blimp's partner, especially after he gets a load of her. Of course he is not a judge, and never is a judge, but he is always serious, and uses long words very few people understand, and has too much Latin to be a miner.

It takes me several hours to locate Judge George, but finally I find him off Bayswater, and he is at a table with 3

guys from out of town, and he is playing for 5 a point, and is around 35 down when I step into the joint, because naturally at 5 a point he wishes them to win so that they will play for maybe 25 a point.

Well, when I give him the nod I wish to speak to him he finds a double of 4S from the West seat on the next hand, although I personally do not see a fourth defensive trick to this day:

♠ 8 7	
♥ J 7 2	
♦ K 9 5 4 3 2	
♣ A 8	
♠ A Q 6	♠ 10 2
♥ 10 6	♥ K 9 8 4 3
♦ A Q J	♦ 8 7 6
♣ Q J 10 7 4	♣ 9 6 3
	♠ K J 9 5 4 3
	♥ A Q 5
	♦ 10
	♣ K 5 2

Judge George starts with the Queen of clubs and declarer is quickly but wrongly taking three rounds of clubs, ruffing the third in order to take a winning heart finesse. Next is the singleton diamond and Judge George knows what time of day it is in situations such as this, so plays the Ace and follows with a fourth round of clubs.

Declarer throws the heart loser from dummy but East is trumping with the 10 anyway, which forces the Jack. Next declarer plays Ace and another heart, but naturally Judge George is discarding, so the 8 of trumps wins in dummy, and now the 6 of trumps is being promoted for the setting trick.

Afterwards, although he wins, Judge George is telling me he is very sorry I make him hurry up in this way, and he

is even sorer when I tell him what The Chairman wishes to see him about.

Well, when he starts out on a proposition The Chairman is a marvel for fast working, and the first thing he does is turn Madame La Blimp over to Bus Pass Betty and Miss Sophie Singleton.

Now this is water on Bus Pass Betty's wheel, because next to gloating if there is anything she loves it is sticking her snoot into other peoples business.

Anyway, it seems that between them Bus Pass Betty and Miss Sophie Singleton get Madame La Blimp all dolled up in new clothes, and run her through one of

those beauty joints, and she comes out looking very changed indeed, although even then if you put her in a



claiming race I do not think there is any danger of anyone claiming her. Afterwards I hear that Bus Pass Betty and Miss Sophie Singleton have quite a few words, as Bus Pass Betty wants to paint Madame La Blimp's hair the same colour as hers, which is like an England flag, but Miss Sophie Singleton says no, we want her to look like a lady.

Now it comes on the Saturday, and I get to the game around 7 and the first guy I see is The Talking Head, in evening clothes, and the minute he sees me he yells out "Mister Andrew McIntosh". Well of course I am not Mister Andrew McIntosh, and furthermore there is no resemblance whatsoever between Mister Andrew McIntosh and me, because I am a

fairly good looking guy, and I start to give an argument, when The Talking Head whispers to me like this:

"Listen," he whispers, "We must have big names at this affair, so as to impress these people. The chances are they read the newspapers and we must give them the chance to meet the folks they read about, so they will see Madame La Blimp is a real high shot to get such people."

Well, pretty soon I hear The Talking Head bawling "Mister Gabriel Chagas", and in comes nobody but False Card Frankie, and then I hear "Mister Zia Mahmood" and in pops Eight Ball. Next is "Mister Paul Chemla", who seems to be Viennese Harry to me, then "Mister Eric Rodwell" and who is it but Tall Paul.

Finally there is quite a commotion at the door and The Talking Head announces "Mister Benito Garozzo" in an extra loud voice, which makes everybody look round, but it is nobody but Stepping Stone Steve. He gets me to one side and wishes to know who Mister Benito Garozzo is, and when I tell him he gets so swelled up he will not speak to Benny The Bid, who is only "Mister Brian Callaghan".

I watch Madame La Blimp's sons and sister and I do not see that these names are making any impression on them. In fact they look somewhat bored, although the sons cheer up and take interest when "Miss Sabine Auken" and "Miss Nevena Senior" drift in.

Well, pretty soon the game gets under way and of course Judge George and Madame La Blimp are taking the lead and then improving their position, as nobody is doing anything right against

them. And in fact even this is not always enough:

♠ A 7 3	
♥ 10	
♦ Q 6 4 2	
♣ A 8 6 4 2	
♠ 9 6 5	♠ 8 4
♥ A K J 9 5 2	♥ Q 7 6 4 3
♦ J 9 8	♦ K 10 5
♣ 7	♣ J 5 3
♠ K Q J 10 2	
♥ 8	
♦ A 7 3	
♣ K Q 10 9	

Madame La Blimp overbids to six spades and of course the lead is the Ace of hearts. Now Wingnut, who is West, persists with a second top heart, as it seems a ruff and discard is his best chance to give the contract. But naturally Madame La Blimp politely gives the gift back and is throwing a diamond from hand while trumping in dummy, and it is not until she draws trumps and starts on the clubs that she finds out that they are blocked, and even then makes a last effort by playing from the wrong hand. Whether anyone is ever telling her she makes by throwing a club on the second heart I do not know.

Once it is all over, and Judge George and Madame La Blimp win handsomely I figure on taking the wind and I look for Madame La Blimp's sons and sister to bid them goodnight, but I find that Bus Pass Betty is pouring conversation into their ears by the bucketful, and while they say nothing this makes no difference at all to Bus Pass Betty, and in fact she prefers it this way.

So I hunt up Madame La Blimp and find her in a darkish corner and it is not until I am nearly on top of her that I see "Mister Benito Garozzo" is also there so I cannot help overhearing that she is telling him how to play a hand.

Well I can see there is no sense in me horning in now, so I just say goodbye to The Chairman and let it go at that.

Well of course by Monday the sons and sister take a train to continue going round the world, and there is nothing more to the story, except that Madame La Blimp lays off the gin for a while, and is now a regular partner of "Mister Benito Garozzo".

Although, at that, she is still having no green points whatsoever

More Kaplan Kwotes

"They avoided the trap of bidding a slam on the second hand to compensate for the one they missed on the first."

"South had five hearts and five clubs, but they were not playing five-card majors so he opened one club."

"To teach the opponents not to pre-empt against you, you must not only double them, you must also beat them."

"Twice doubled, twice made. The double seems to be the Good Housekeeping seal of approval in this match."

Know the Laws

You may be aware that the international Laws of Bridge have recently been revised and the new version will come into force later this summer. Before the old ones are replaced, you may like to be reminded of how they work by this piece, sent to me anonymously – Ed

While playing in a tournament recently, I couldn't help noticing the young and attractive female tournament director. After the event finished, I thought I would try my luck. The results of my clumsy attempt at seduction can best be described by reprinting the letter I received from her the following day.

Dear Sir

You telephoned me yesterday when my boy friend was on the other line (Law 33 - Simultaneous Calls), but did not tell me what you wanted (Law 46D - Incomplete or Erroneous Call). I said I would phone back, but before I could, you called me again (Section 4 - Call Out of Rotation), although I agree that it was probably more appropriate that you make the first move (Law 29C - Call out of rotation is Conventional). You told me that you would send your manservant around with a note.

Your man came round and showed me your card (Law 45F - Dummy indicates card) which I accepted (Law 52B 1 - Play of card accepted). The note included an invitation to go out for a Big Mac. This was insulting, and I could not accept (Law 27B - Insufficient Bid not accepted). Then, you attempted to correct this by offering me two Big Macs! (Law 27B 3 - Attempt to Correct by a Double), but your eventual offer of a romantic dinner for two was adequate (Law 27B 2 - Corrected by Sufficient Bid).



When we were dining, you pretended not to be married (Law 73E - Deception), but I had already discovered from your man that you were (Law 16 - Unauthorised Information). At first, I was happy with the nature of our conversation (Law 73A – Proper Communication between Partners), but was shocked when you invited me back to your room for a nightcap. This was entirely inappropriate (Law 73B - Inappropriate Communication between Partners), and I could only imagine that you were proposing something illegal (Law 60 - Illegal Play). This would obviously be contrary to your marriage vows (Law 75B - Violation of Partnership Agreement), and I asked for you to clarify what you meant (Law 70B 1 - Require to Repeat Statement). You hesitated unmistakably, which demonstrably suggested the logical alternative (Law 16A – Extraneous Information from Partner), that you were claiming my cooperation. I acquiesced (Law 69A - Acquiescence Occurs), and accepted your lead (Law 55A - Lead Accepted).

However, after considering my vulnerability (Law 77 - Scoring), I retracted my acquiescence (Law 69B - Acquiescence in Claim Withdrawn), and the whole matter ended (Law 68D - Play Ceases). You spread your hands in dismay (Law 54A - Declarer spreads his Hand) and asked me to return your card (Law 47 - Retraction of Card Played). That, fortunately, was the end of the session (Law 8C - End of Session).

I hope that you agree that these are the facts of the matter (Law 84 - Agreed Facts), and must end by saying that if you wish to make friends you must learn how to appeal (Law 92C - How to Appeal).

Congratulations ...

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



Tom Townsend, David Gold and Gunnar Hallberg were losing finalists in this year's England trials, along with team member Andrew McIntosh. This earned them selection to represent England in the Camrose Trophy and the Bonn Nations Cup.



LMBA Treasurer **Stefanie Rohan** (pictured) and her partner **Audrey Hartley** came a very close second in the English women's trials and played in the English Lady Milne team which won the trophy.

Peter Czerniewski, Gunnar Hallberg and Ross Harper won the Seniors Trials to earn themselves the right to represent England in the Seniors Camrose. **Ross Harper** and **Andrew Thompson** have been selected to represent England in the European Seniors

in Pau. Also at the Europeans are London members as coaches for all three teams – **David Burn** (Open), **Rob Cliffe** (Women) and **Peter Czerniewski** (Seniors).

Nick Sandqvist and **Artur Malinowski** were losing semi-finalists in the English open trials.

David Bakhshi and **Andrew Robson** have achieved a remarkable teams double, having won both the Gold Cup and Crockfords Cup, the two major teams events in this country, as members of the Allfrey team. They and the rest of the team were also runners-up at the Schapiro Spring Foursomes. **Phil King** also did well in the Gold Cup as a member of the semi-finalists team who lost to Allfrey in the last stages of the event.

John Matheson was 2nd in the Pairs at the SBU Gold Cup Congress in Peebles over the Gold Cup finals weekend. **Gunnar Hallberg** was a member of the second-placed team in Crockfords.

Janet de Botton's team has also achieved another set of great wins across Great Britain, having this year won the English National Swiss Teams, the Scottish Winter Fours and the North Wales Bridge Association Swiss Teams. Janet and **Nick Sandqvist** played on all three occasions, with **David Burn** and **Artur Malinowski** in the team in both the English and Scottish wins. The picture shows their most recent success, which was in Wales with the Hackett twins. Janet & Nick also won the LMBA One-Day Swiss Pairs in March.



At the Year End Congress, the Men's Pairs was won by **Andy Bowles**, with **David Ewart** and **Gunnar Hallberg** in second place and **Nigel Freake** and **Doug Dunn** in fourth. In the other events London had a string of second places - **Richard Hillman** in the Swiss Pairs, **Dave Strawbridge** and **Cara Howard** in the Mixed Pairs and **Simon Gillis** in the A flight Swiss Teams, while **Ursula Harper** was third in the Women's Pairs.

Sarah Dunn has been having a great season. She started by coming third in the Pre-Congress Pairs at the Year End Congress with **Tom Townsend**, and went on with Tom, **David Gold** and **Dom Goodwin** to come third at the National Swiss Teams. She and David were second in the LMBA One-Day Swiss Pairs, then she crowned things by winning the Easter Festival Swiss Teams, again with David Gold, but this time teamed up with **Ryan Stephenson** and **Liz Clery**. More recently she came second at the Bedfordshire One-Day Swiss Teams with David and Tom and **David Ewart**.



*Ryan Stephenson, David Gold, Sarah Dunn, Liz Clery
– winners of the Easter Festival Swiss Teams*

Also at the Easter Festival, **Pip Railing** was a member of the winning G W Arnott Davidson team, **Ian Abel** was third in the Under-25 Pairs, **Brian Callaghan** and **Michael Ranis** won the Swiss Pairs, and **Anne Catchpole, Paul Lamford** and **Stefanie Rohan** were second in the Swiss Teams.

Graham Orsmond and **Jackie Fairclough** won the Mixed Pairs at the Baker Tilley Lanzarote Congress.



Nick Boss and **Richard Johnson** won the National Men's Pairs, while **Helen Erichsen** as second in the National Women's Pairs.

Ned Paul and **Brian McGuire** won the National Pairs Regional Final.

Peter O'Sullivan and **Simon Prager** were fourth in the Corby Cup at the Online Players Congress.



Carmel Wood won the Devonshire Cup at the RAC Club.

Michael Hill and **Mike Clack** won the Surrey Golf Bridge Cup.

Espen Erichsen, Nick Irens, Tom Townsend and **David Gold** won the LMBA One-Day Swiss Teams, with **Brian McGuire, Nick Boss, Sebastien Kristensen** and **Mark Lehto** in second place.

Puzzle Solution

(see page 18)

9	3	6	5	7	8	4	2	1
5	2	4	1	9	6	3	7	8
7	1	8	3	4	2	9	6	5
4	8	5	7	6	1	2	9	3
2	7	3	4	5	9	8	1	6
6	9	1	2	8	3	5	4	7
8	5	2	9	1	7	6	3	4
3	6	7	8	2	4	1	5	9
1	4	9	6	3	5	7	8	2

At the Schapiro Spring Foursomes, in addition to David Bakhshi and Andrew Robson's second place, **Simon Gillis** was a losing semi-finalist in the main event and **Roger Mapp** and **Michael Ranis** won the Punchbowl.

Alan and **Olivia Woo** had a terrific time at the Jersey Lambourne Congress. After warming up by coming second in the Pre-Congress Pairs, they went on to win both the Swiss Pairs and the Swiss Teams. Also in the Swiss Teams in Jersey, **Mike Fletcher** was in the second-placed team and **Paul Martin** came third.



Tim Ryan won the Hants & IoW One-Day Swiss Teams in May.

London members did brilliantly at the Ranked Masters weekend. At the top of the tree, **Rob Cliffe** won the Premier Grand Masters – for the second year running! – with Heather Dhondy. **David Muller** and **Malcolm Pryor** were third in the same event.



Then **Gordon Rainsford** and **Dom Goodwin** won the Premier Life Masters – again for the second year running.

Comment:



And in the National Masters, **Nick Boss** and **Richard Johnson** won, closely followed by **Mark Gurney** in second place. The three sets of winners are pictured here being presented with their respective trophies.

Veronica Thicke explains it all for you

In which Veronica puts to death the feeble (but long-standing) running joke about not going to the Woodberry Bridge Club in Islington, and there are hints that change might be in the air.



Dusk fell, and I could see from my window that the car had arrived. I left the house, and joined my partner for the evening in the back of the limousine. The driver closed the door behind me, and returned to his own seat. Smoothly, he engaged gear and pulled away from the pavement, the engine noise a mere background purr. I had asked my old friend Rex Benison,

tall and fleet of foot, to escort me to Woodberry Bridge Club. Though perhaps not in the same class as my old friend Titus ap Llewelyn as a bridge player, he does enjoy two distinct advantages over Titus. Firstly, he has impeccable manners. Secondly, he isn't a feckless, unreliable lush. That he is wealthy beyond imagining is, of course, nothing but a side issue.

The lights on the Marylebone Road created a warm glow inside the car as Rex and I enjoyed a nostalgic laugh about our last outing together, in Juan-Les-Pins. Always a heady congress, the combination of bridge and glamorous nights can lead a girl to...well, that's a tale for another time. Soon, we climbed Pentonville Road, and as we neared the brow of the hill, the one way system diverted us and we were in White Lion Street. Exactly where we were headed. We got out. "Come back at about ten, Segal, and park up. We'll call when we're on the way out." The driver nodded, and we went into the Claremont Centre.

A glance at the notice-board left us no wiser as to what the Claremont Centre was, but at the end of a corridor we could see that there was a room set up for bridge. As we entered, a man took our table money and our names. When I gave mine, he stood up and bowed slightly, saying how honoured he was that I should be patronising his club. Wait until you read the article, I thought, then you'll find out what patronising is, but I did nothing except smile graciously, and ask him what it was he did. There followed a brief explanation, which I would pass on if I could remember it.

A nice lady came over and informed us that tea and coffee were included in the table money, and directed us to the kitchen where we could help ourselves. This kind offer was to be no help at all. Rex hasn't been near either of his kitchens in years. He doesn't know how to make himself tea or coffee. I, on the other hand, know how, but refuse to on principle. If I have to make my own I'd rather not have any at all. This was going to be no hardship. I

had left Mister Thicke instructions that he was to prepare us a light supper, get two bottles of the Dom on ice and skedaddle off to bed sharpish as soon as he heard my key in the latch. I'd also asked him to make sure there was a Perry Como CD loaded in the CD player, but I didn't imagine he'd remember that.

As usual the bridge itself was a bit of a rollercoaster, and our opponents were a mixture of the near-expert and the enthusiastic. One declarer pulled off an over-taking squeeze against us, which was impressive. At the next table, however, an elderly gent with 5-5-2-1 shape and a moderately good hand opened One Heart. His partner responded One Spade and opener rebid Four No Trumps. Upon hearing the response he bid Six Spades. When dummy came down both Rex and I looked at it with some astonishment, as it was rather on the pawky side. Declarer had loads of extras, so the slam rolled home. "Well bid." Said declarer to his partner. "Thank you", the other replied, preening. No matchpoints for us, so maybe it was. What do I know?



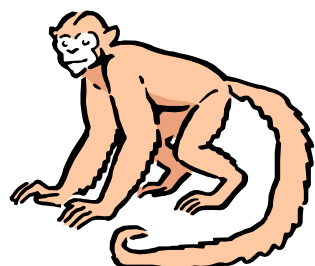
We weren't doing well, but we had a chance to redeem our dignity (if not our ranking) on the last board. Rex pulled something off which I hadn't seen him do before, and which you don't see very often at all playing in a reasonably relaxed atmosphere in a club.

At love all, Rex, fourth in hand, was dealt the following promising collection:

♠ 9 8 7 3 2
♥ 10
♦ J 6 3 2
♣ 10 9 8

... and heard his left hand opponent open One Heart. I bid Two Spades (weak) and the nattily turned out chap on Rex's right bid Four Hearts. Over to you... Well, as Rex told me afterwards, bidding Four Spades looked like a waste of time. Judging from my Weak Jump Overcall the opponents held enough for a small slam in Hearts at least, and bidding Four Spades wasn't going to stop them. So he doubled! LHO, not being sure whether his partner's Four Heart bid showed any particular strength, passed with his good hand. Likewise, RHO, not sure whether his partner's opening bid was any better than a minimum, passed as well, hoping for the best.

Four hearts doubled plus two didn't trouble the scorers, as all the other pairs were in Six Hearts, making comfortably. Rex's double was of course a striped-tailed ape. Had anyone



redoubled he'd have pulled to Four Spades and events may or may not have taken their natural course. As it

was, his nerve and imagination got us all the matchpoints. Shame about the other twenty-three boards.

Soon it was time to say our goodbyes to the good people of Woodberry. A group were off to a local pub, where the landlord was apparently welcome of their custom despite the late hour (how civilised!). Rex and I, however, had other plans.

The car pulled up, Segal got out to open the door for us, and we got in. Barry White's Greatest Hits Volume Two drifted through the in-car stereo. Following the one way system we returned to Pentonville Road, and as we descended the hill towards Kings Cross it looked as though all London lay before us, the lights twinkling a message of hope. I checked my Blackberry. There was a message from the editor of this very magazine. It consisted of just two words: Next, Putney.

My mission was clear. I turned to Rex. "Have you," I asked, "ever been south of the river?"

So, one running joke goes, another comes along five seconds later. Veronica seems rather keener to go to Putney than one might have imagined. I wonder why? Anyway, in case she doesn't make it, please keep those questions coming in case the regular mailbag is returned to in the next issue
– Ed.

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