

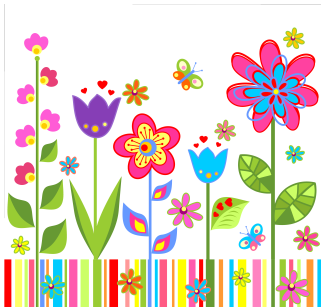
*London
Metropolitan
Bridge
Association*



MetroNews

*The newsletter of the
London Metropolitan Bridge Association*

Spring 2018



*London
Metropolitan
Bridge
Association*



Words from the Chairman

You will forgive me, I hope, for temporarily ousting the Editor from her usual space. It won't happen again (although I have to admit that the chair is quite comfortable, and one could get used to the view from here), I'm only here for valedictory purposes – waving on the way out, as it were.

As some of you know, before being Chairman of London, I was Chairman of the Young Chelsea. In the latter role I did a few things for good, probably did a few things that were a bit naff (we're none of us perfect). My tenure as Chairman of London could probably be summed up the same way. Now it's over.



Immediately after the London Championship Pairs I will be stepping down. The LMBA's current Treasurer, Dominic Flint, will take over the reins until the AGM (my exact words were, I seem to recall, "you're not leaving this pub until you've agreed". Happily, Dominic had somewhere he needed to be, so allowed himself to be stitched up). I won't immediately step down from the LMBA Committee, but have no intention of becoming a spectre at the feast, reminding everyone else at every opportunity how things had been done "in my day". I'll do what I'm told.

The reason I thought I'd hi-jack this page was to do two things: to remind you what your county committee does for you, and name a few names whose contributions over the years have done a lot of good for the county – for clubs, for you – which may not be readily appreciated.

Those who have doggedly followed my articles in this journal for the last several years will know that I am no stranger to nicking gags, or making up feeble ones of my own. The temptation to lead off this article with something like "What has the LMBA ever done for us?" and then rattling off a list was there, but resisted. Perhaps I've matured (I wouldn't bet on it), but I think perhaps just a bald assertion of the facts, why you have a "county" at all, might be more in order, without the slightly leaden facetiousness.

The EBU is sub-divided into counties – it just is. In that county there are clubs, and in those clubs are you, the members. The LMBA is a bit off because it's a diaspora of clubs – there is no reason why some clubs in London are affiliated to Middlesex, say, or Surrey, they just are. The closest club to where I live, Lavender, run by my friends the Stimsons, is merely a hop over the river from my house. But is it a London club? No. They're affiliated to Surrey. Why? Lord knows. I suppose one of the things that I've done that was a bit naff was never asking, but too late to worry about that now (all yours, Dominic).

We are not a county that has much by way of county spirit. We are who we are, but although that might ostensibly seem a bit sad, it has some upsides. Nothing divides other counties like selection (go to some county web sites and check out

the minutes). Who gets in to the Tollemache team, or the Metropolitan Cup team – in other counties these are matters of pride, jealousy, bitterness and rancour. You, London members, are realistic. The Tollemache team (let's swiftly move on from this year's qualifier) is made up of the best. No-one in London bitches about the line-up chosen by Selector Tom Townsend. The Metropolitan Cup teams are always made up first and foremost out of people I trust to play well and not let us down. But if anyone was interested I'd always listen and find them a berth.

That's one thing the county does. Another, obvious, thing, is organising events. Seniors, Simple Systems, Mixed, Men's and Women's, what have you, and the Championship Pairs and Teams, from which you can go forward to the national pairs and teams competitions, the Corwen and the Pachabo, with the LMBA paying your entry fee. We have regular easy duplicates, a halfway house for developing players. We have a youth officer, we have an ongoing obligation to stage the Channel Trophy on behalf of the EBU. We stage two Café Bridge events each year, and give the proceeds to charity (we're not a rich county but nor are we a poor one).

Every year we host the Lederer Memorial Trophy, now at the RAC, which just seems to get better each year. If I'm taking any personal credit it would be for building that up (see last issue) but it would be nothing without Simon Gillis (sponsor), Colin Freeman (RAC), Kath Stynes (person who does the real work) and a band of indefatigable helpers, who turn out come rain or shine to keep things rolling while I swan around chumming up to Zia.

Before I get on to my tear-jerking personal tributes, it's time for an appeal. None of the above comes from nowhere. If there's anything you like about county things, then you're entitled to join in with the running of it. You're more than welcome. Neither sitting on a committee nor taking responsibility for running an event are frightening, not that arduous. Write an article for this newsletter! The editor is always desperate. How do you think I ended up scribbling half the bloody thing? Mike Graham is stretched to bursting point.

But, now I'm afraid it's Oscar speech time.

I'd like to thank the current committee for their work and support. Kath Stynes (now secretary), Dominic Flint (gotcha!), Mike Hill (whose task has been to keep me honest, curse him), David Muller (quiet and conscientious – he wasn't recently given a Dimmie Fleming award for nothing), James "from the diaphragm" Smith, Binkie and Steve Eginton (to the untrained eye it might have looked as though Steve only turns up to meetings so that we can shout at each other, but...er...well, moving along...). I thank you one and all.

Of recent departures from the fray, Roger Morton was webmaster and membership secretary for many years, and was always trenchant in his views at meetings, but never offensively, and rarely, if ever, wrong.

But last, but certainly not least, is your editor, Chris Duckworth was secretary of the LMBA and the Young Chelsea for decades, and her contribution is incalculable. She remains as newsletter editor and youth officer but has handed

over the role of secretary to Kath. The support she has rendered me over the last however many years both at the YC and London (occasionally spiced with contempt, but that's life) has been unwavering. She may or may not have thought I was a good thing, but that didn't matter – she was always there, because the important thing to her has been, and always will be, working for the members.

That's it, I'm out of here. I have been Vice-Chairman of the EBU for four years and will continue to be so. My links with Bridge administration are not over, but I have to reduce my commitments. It's time for a change in London, and I'm happy to step aside to help facilitate that. You are all capable of moving forward, you are good people. Support your friends on the committee, and get involved if you can. The game needs volunteers, and if the rewards come in Heaven, well, that's the way of things. If you have any suggestions or comments about the LMBA, then Dominic Flint's e-mail address is available on request.

Yep, having painted him into a corner, I can't let it go...

It's been an honour.

Onwards!

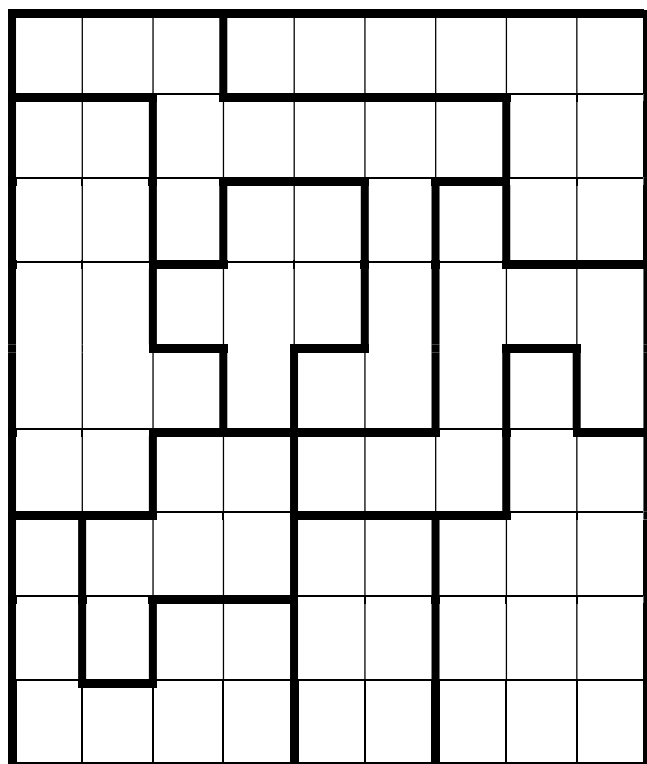
Ian

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Puzzle Corner



This time it's another "Place the Ace" puzzle.

Place aces in the grid so that every row, column and outlined shape contains exactly two aces. Cells containing aces may not touch, not even diagonally

The solution can be found on page 18 if you get stuck.



LMBA results this season

Café Bridge Brook Green

This year our September Café Bridge drive was again held in Brook Green, but this time in aid of a different charity - Mind, the mental health charity, was chosen as our beneficiary. September is a time when many of the Café Bridge regulars like to go away on holiday, so this event is relatively small. Forty pairs took part this time but we still raised a very respectable £800.00 for Mind.

This was the second year in which Brook Green was the chosen area for the event, but this time we had three new venues taking part. So there was a great variety of pubs and restaurants taking part. Pictures of a few of these are shown below - you can see that we were once again lucky with the weather!



The event was won by Gilly Arber and Elinor Malcolm – seen here with their champagne prizes - who scored an impressive 64.86%. The runners up were Lorna Heaton and Jane Bryden-Brown with 62.46% and in third place were Janet Lassler and Soheila Monro on 60.93%.

We were very grateful to the Lavender Bridge Club who once again loaned us the use of their bidding boxes, and to Victor Lesk whose marvellous BriAn scoring system again allowed us to run the event smoothly and get the results out promptly.



Men's & Women's IMP Pairs

The entry to this event was a little disappointing this time and as a result the two fields of men and women were merged to provide more meaningful results. Prizes were still awarded to the leading two men's pairs and women's pairs, however.

The leading positions and scores were:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 David Muller & Trevor Mathews | +87.62 IMPs |
| 2 Simon Gass & Alan Scott | +61.09 |
| 3 Anne Rosen & Catherine Seale | + 56.08 (Women's winners) |
| 6 Chris Duckworth & Kath Stynes | + 30.08 (Women's runner-up) |



*David & Trevor
(pictured left)*

*Catherine & Anne
(pictured right)*



Mixed Pairs Championship



This year's Mixed Pairs Championship attracted an increased entry of 26 pairs and was played in good spirits at the YCBC at the beginning of October.

It was very refreshing to see a young pair as the eventual winners – Qian is still a junior in bridge terms. She and her partner Tony are pictured left.

The leading three pairs were:

1 Qian Le & Tony Ye	60.77%
2 Victor Silverstone & Brigid Battiscombe	59.68
3 Chris Duckworth & Brian Callaghan	58.77

Palmer Bayer Trophy

This year the “No Fear” Pairs for the Palmer Bayer Trophy was held earlier in the season, at the beginning of December. The event was well attended, with 21 pairs taking part.

The leading players were:

1 Claire Smith & Mary Anne St Clair-Ford	60.95%
2 Gill Leese & Anne East	58.36
3 Frank Taylor & Gerrard Raven	56.86



London News

Annual General Meeting

The 2017 AGM of the LMBA was held on Thursday 14th September at the Young Chelsea Bridge Club. The draft minutes of the meeting can be found on the LMBA website at www.metronews.co.uk.

The 2018 AGM will be held on Thursday 6th September 2018 at the Young Chelsea Bridge Club. Further details and an agenda will be published in the next issue of MetroNews.

Awards for London members

Several London members have recently been recognised by the EBU for their contributions to bridge in various ways.

Silver Award for Richard Fleet

This award is given for outstanding contribution and recognition of long service as a volunteer at national and/or County level. Richard was on the LMBA committee for 20 years, with ten of those as Chairman. Beyond that, he has contributed widely at national level, serving on numerous committees throughout his bridge administration 'career'.



He served on the EBU Selection Committee from 1982 to 2006 (with only one year off in the mid-1990s), five of those years as Chairman. He was also on the Laws & Ethics Committee for a total of 14 years from 1981 up to and including the current committee. He has also served on the EBU Constitutional Commission and was a member of the Conventions Working Party. A keen bridge historian, in 2016 Richard wrote a comprehensive book, 'Tournament Bridge in England: 1925-1945', which he donated to the EBU.

Richard retired and moved to Devon with his wife Debbie a few years ago, but he has retained his loyalty to London and is an honorary member of the County.

Tony Priday Award for David Ewart

The Tony Priday Award was first introduced in 2015 and is awarded for an outstanding contribution to bridge and enhancing the game in all its aspects. The award was made to David in recognition of his work for the Union in pursuing its VAT claim against HMRC. David is a Queen's Counsel specialising in tax matters and he researched, co-ordinated and pursued the case at every level, culminating in an appearance before the European Court in Luxembourg early in 2017. The amount of work and dedication David put into this work over a period of several years was exceptional, and he levied no charge at all for his services, thus saving the members untold thousands of pounds.



As well as his work as a barrister, David somehow finds time to play bridge for London in the Tollemache team, to act as Chairman of the Young Chelsea BC and to help look after his five children with his wife Sarah, also a London bridge player.

Alec Salisbury Award for Sarah Bell

The Alec Salisbury Award is presented in memory of Alec who was a teacher who gave much of his time to promoting junior bridge. It is given to a serving school teacher who has made a significant contribution to schools' bridge.

Sarah is a chemistry teacher who has been a positive influence on junior bridge since she was a member of the U26 squad. After the announcement of the new U16 category, Sarah was the person who took up the challenge to organise young players from all across the country to form the first England squad in this age group. Despite its hasty beginnings, this group performed brilliantly and managed 4th in their first ever Junior European championships, qualifying them for the World Championships the following year in Italy. They then managed a creditable 8th place finish despite having lost several members of their team from the previous year and having to field a more inexperienced side.

Since its tentative beginnings, the U16 squad has now gone from strength to strength and become a beacon for young players everywhere in the country and that stands as a testament to Sarah's efforts.

Sarah also has been active within her school, starting up a bridge club which has proved very popular with the pupils and has been a big supporter of the development of the Junior Award scheme being one of the key sources of feedback and critique during its inception. She is married to Mike Bell, a current member of the England Camrose team.



Dimmie Fleming Award for David Muller



The intent of the Dimmie Fleming award is to publicly recognise those people who do not hold an official (i.e. EBU) office, but have, for a long time - usually over 15 years – worked hard for bridge in administration at County level.

David Muller is one of the “quiet men” of English bridge. An accomplished player who, after early retirement has run his own bridge club for some years, he has steadfastly supported his county for approximately three decades, serving on the committee since 1994, with only one or two short breaks, and

before then as the County Youth Officer. He has also served on the EBU Selection Committee.

His current portfolio includes not only taking and keeping committee meeting minutes, but also running the LMBA web site, including a recent overhaul. Furthermore, he is organiser for several events (and has been in the past) and directs and scores without fee at London's massively popular (but difficult to administer) Café Bridge events run in aid of charity.

He retains his interest as a tournament player, both in county and national events, and despite making his living from bridge, takes on the tuition of younger players without charge. He also helps to organise events at the Young Chelsea BC, of which he is a long-term member. David recently married and lives in North London with his wife, Lorinda.

Tollemache Cup

The London team in the Tollemache qualifier this year comprised Tom Townsend, Alex Hydes, Brian Callaghan, Heather Dhondy, David Burn, Keiran Dyke, David Ewart, Phil King, Mike Bell, Sarah Bell and NPC Ian Payn. An excellent team, but fortune did not go their way this time and they failed to qualify for the final, finishing fourth in a strong section of the field.

Club News

The **Young Chelsea Bridge Club** will be celebrating its 50th anniversary in May this year, and is planning a special event to be held on the anniversary of the club's first meeting. This will be on Tuesday 8th May and will take the form of a "retro" duplicate. At the time of writing details are still to be finalised, but the idea will be to run the game the way it was played 50 years ago – with travellers instead of Bridgemates, hand dealing and curtain cards, no bidding boxes! Those whose memories are sufficiently long will probably recall that in those days smoking at the table was almost mandatory, but that is one feature that won't be re-introduced. There will, however, be suitably retro refreshments – maybe a glass of sherry and a vol-au-vent!

It is hoped that many past members of the club will be able to join current members on the day. Please email Louisa at youngchelsea@btconnect.com to be kept in touch with details. The club also hopes to produce a scrap book of pictures, memories, documents and anecdotes relating to its 50 years. Anyone who has anything that might contribute to this should please also contact Louisa at the club. Anything, however apparently insignificant, could generate great memories, so do come forward with whatever you might have.

Other forthcoming events at the YC are a Swiss Teams on 4th March, Mixed Pairs on 7th April, an IMP-scored half-Marathon on 28th April and an Individual and Summer Party on 30th June. More details of all these from Louisa as above.

The **RAC bridge section** has a new contact. He is Michael Bailey who can be contacted at michaelbailey5@hotmail.com.

The **Monday Club** also has a new contact, Marcia Marriott. Her email address is marciam@talktalk.net

In Memoriam

Sadly **Elizabeth Lindsay**, who was a member of the Young Chelsea Bridge Club for many years, passed away in November last year at the age of 98. Elizabeth played regularly with David Bishop, her bridge partner for 20 years, at the club when it was in Barkston Gardens and will be remembered fondly by many YC members and all who were privileged to play against her.

New members

The LMBA is very pleased to welcome the following new members who have joined the EBU through the London County during the latter half of 2017:

Stuart Carroll	Clive Garston	David Reuben
Jill Carroll	Stephen Goodwin	Niall Sheridan
Jane Cartwright	Sandra Grant	Yukiko Sugimoto
Shewak Dansingani	David Green	Lucinda Taylor
Paul de Rooij	Sue Hastings	Charles Tyndale Biscoe
John De'Ath	Emerald Kendall	Maxine Wadsworth
Martyn Deakin	Tom Laing-Baker	Adelaide Wieland
Keith Dickson	Lee London	John Wieland
Lia Donath	Gerald Mathias	Lori Woodland
Magda Elsheikh	Tarek Nadim	John Yuill
Arnaud Flecchia	Kiran Patel	
	Pavel Pipek	

We also welcome the following existing EBU members who have transferred their allegiance to London, or past members who have rejoined, during the last 6 months:

David Burn	Elizabeth Griffith	Lori Robertson
Joshua Cavendish	Tanya Heasman	Reiko Sei
Alex Cristol	Otto Heese	Kikue Tambara
Vittoria Dessi	Rosa Kaban	Ian Tree
Max Fawcett	Sharad Korgaonkar	Thomas Wilkinson
Chiharu Gillies	Federico Lombardi	

Forthcoming competitions

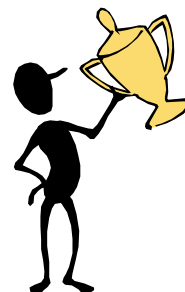
*Unless otherwise indicated, all competitions are played with permitted conventions at EBU Level 4. Membership requirements are specified in each competition description. **Details of how to enter events and make entry payments are at the end of this section.***

London Championship Pairs

Sunday 11th March 2018 starting at **11.30 am**

Holders: *Ludovico Mori & Marco Golla*

Venue: Young Chelsea Bridge Club. 54 Goldhawk Road, London W12 8HA



This competition is a one-day, two session, match-pointed pairs. Please note the early start time which will be combined with a short break between sessions to allow an early evening finish time.

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.

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 represent London playing in the Corwen Trophy on 2nd - 3rd June 2018 in Daventry

Entry fee: £36.00 per pair.

Advance entry is not essential but is strongly recommended. Entries should be made to Imbaentries@gmail.com, putting "Champ Pairs" in the subject line.

Garden Cities Heat

Thursday 22nd March 2018 starting at **7.00 pm**

Holders: *BTONS BC*

Venue: Young Chelsea Bridge Club. 54 Goldhawk Road, London W12 8HA



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 21st April 2018 and, if successful there, in the National Final that takes place on Saturday 23rd June 2018 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: £64 per team

Advance entry is required and should be made by 15th March 2018 to **Chris Duckworth** at christinejduckworth@gmail.com or on 020 7385 3534.

Café Bridge - Tonsleys

Tuesday 24th April 2018 starting at **10.30 for 11.00 am**

Holders: *Simon Prager & Dick Jordan*

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



**Save the
Children**

Our Spring Café Bridge Drive will once again be held in the Tonsleys, the area close to Wandsworth Town station, and will this time be held in aid of a new local charity. The Mary Portas Living and Giving shop in the Old York Road, where the Café Bridge is primarily played, raises funds for Save the Children and this will be our main charity this year, but we will also be giving some of the proceeds to the EBU fund for junior bridge. All four of the English junior teams – Under 26

open, Under 26 women, Under 21 and Under 16 – qualified to the World Youth Teams to be held in Beijing later this year and London is proud to have several players in the junior squads, so we are making a contribution to the cost of sending the payers to China.

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: £25.00 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 17th April 2018, putting “Café Bridge” in the subject line. Please note that Café Bridge events are very popular and numbers are restricted – entries will be accepted strictly on a first-come first-served basis.

Any queries may be directed to **Chris Duckworth** on 020 7385 3534.

Fox Shammon Trophy

Sunday 29th April 2018 starting at **2.00pm**

Holders: *Christine Tomkin & Peter Saies*

Venue: Young Chelsea Bridge Club. 54 Goldhawk Road, London W12 8HA

This is a single extended session match-pointed pairs event for senior players. All participants must have been born in or before 1957 and must be EBU members.

The event is expected to finish at 6.30-7.00pm.

Entry fee: £26.00 per pair

Advance entry is strongly advised and should be sent to arrive no later than 22nd April 2018 to imbaentries@gmail.com putting "Fox Shammon" in the subject line.

Enquiries may be made to **Dave Muller** on 07847 618105.

London Congress

incorporating

the twenty-fourth Green-Pointed One-Day Swiss Weekend

Saturday - Sunday 14th – 15th July 2018

Swiss Pairs Holders: *David Arundel & Andrew Bannock*

Swiss Teams Holders: *Claire Robinson, Martin W Jones, Kiril Delev, Nick Boss*

Venue: Young Chelsea Bridge Club. 54 Goldhawk Road, London W12 8HA

The London Congress continues the tradition of the LMBA Green-Pointed Swiss Weekends. The Swiss Pairs and the Swiss Teams will be single-flighted, with green points awarded in accordance with EBU regulations and prizes for the leading players in both events.

All players must be EBU members, but LMBA membership is not required.
Numbers are limited and pre-entry is essential.

Programme:

Saturday 14th July: Swiss Pairs starting at 1.00pm.

Two sessions with a one-hour interval, finishing at approx. 9.00pm

Sunday 15th July: Swiss Teams starting at 11.30 am

Two sessions with a short interval, finishing at approx. 7.15 pm

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.

Half price for Under-25s in all events.

Pairs wishing to play in the Swiss Teams are invited to request entry, giving their EBU master point rankings or NGS grades. Every effort will then be made to pair them up with suitable team-mates.

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



Competition Information & Regulations

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

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

Competition regulations. The Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge (2017) apply to all competitions as do, where appropriate, the regulations and directives of the EBU Laws & Ethics Committee. Full LMBA competition rules for individual events may be found on the LMBA website at www.metrobridge.co.uk.

Payment of entry fees

Payment on the day is generally acceptable for most competitions, but pre-payment is necessary for the Café Bridge and London Congress events, both to avoid excessive registration times and because numbers are limited.

Payments may be by cash, by cheque made payable to LMBA, or by bank transfer. Debit and credit card payments are not possible.

Electronic transfer of funds should be made to the following LMBA account:

Sort Code: 09-06-66 Account No: 41838562

Please use your surname as a reference.

The New Science

by David Burn

Your hand as North at love all is:

♠ AKQJ942 ♥ – ♦ AKQJ10 ♣ A

Sadly you are not playing for money; instead you are playing for England in the 2018 Camrose series against opponents from Northern Ireland. Your partner deals and passes, your right-hand opponent opens 4♥. What call do you make?

Let us suppose you choose a practical 7♠. This is followed by two passes and a double in your right. What call do you make now?

The double is, of course, a request for an unusual lead. You imagine that West is probably void in diamonds, but you also imagine that East's longer minor will be clubs. True, the spades may not be as solid as you hope, but there isn't a great deal you can do about that. You redouble. Everyone passes. Just as you hoped, East leads a club and...

♠ AKQJ942

♥ –

♦ AKQJ10

♣ A

♠ 10873 ♠ 65

♥ AQJ9875 ♥ 6

♦ 32 ♦ 987

♣ – ♣ J1087632

♠ –

♥ K10432

♦ 654

♣ KQ954

...West ruffs it, so you concede 200 for a loss of 3 IMPs when the contract is merely doubled at the other table. Do you have grounds for remorse?

Not really. If you were right about the whole business, then your redouble stood to gain 470 points compared to seven spades doubled. If you were wrong, the loss would be only 100 points. Those convert to swings of 10 IMPs and 3 IMPs respectively, so as long as you thought East would find the wrong lead as often as one time in three your redouble would be a long-term winner. Of course, you probably won't pick this hand up again for a while so the "long-term" effects of redoubling may prove difficult to measure, but at bridge the important thing is to be blameless rather than successful.

But it is possible that in positions such as this the best use of redouble is not primarily to improve your score. Imagine that South's king of hearts were interchanged with West's ace. Now you would like to be in 7NT, but South can't bid that because for all he knows you have (say) eight solid spades, five solid diamonds and two voids. Perhaps after all redouble should ask partner to convert to 7NT with the ace of the enemy suit. If he doesn't have it you lose an extra 3 IMPs, but if he does...

Naturally a New Scientist doesn't stop there. Henceforward the England team plays that over an opening 4♥ a bid of 7♥ is a transfer to 7♠. A Scottish player actually had the right idea – he bid 5♥ over 4♥, but when partner bid 6♣ he funkyed it and bid 7♠ in case anything else was misunderstood.

♣♦♥♠

Another problem:

♠ Q ♥ 742 ♦ QJ643 ♣ 10764

You are East, vulnerable against not, and this is the bidding

West	North	East	South
	1NT	Pass	2♥(1)
Pass	2♠	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) 5+ spades

What is your opening lead?

A recent publication, "Winning Notrump Leads", has encouraged players everywhere to start letting games through by leading something bonkers. Terrified of giving away a trick by leading from any suit with an honour in it, people now lead from two low in an unbid major at the slightest provocation. Here East didn't have two low in an unbid major, so he was

forced to fall back on three low (despite West's inaction over the transfer response).

A diamond lead would have found partner with ♦A108, and since dummy had ♦K5 the defence could take the first five tricks. A heart proved ineffective, leading to an adverse swing when the contract at the other table was also 3NT instead of the laydown 4♠ (North had 3=3=3=4 shape and the New Science requires not converting to the major despite the possession of three low in a side suit).

It struck us that if you must play "Winning Notrump Leads" you should incorporate a variation on a piece of old science: a double of 3NT asks partner to make the unusual lead of fourth highest from his longest and strongest suit.

How to lose 5 IMPs

by Chris Duckworth

You are playing in a Mixed Teams event when you pick up a balanced but chunky 19-count at love all. LHO passes and to your surprise partner opens 1♦. You bid a quiet 1♥ and partner surprises you further by bidding 2NT. Since this shows 18-19 points you have no difficulty in pulling the remaining cards out of the bidding box and saying 7NT. These are the two hands:

♠ AH3	♠ VB
♥ AHV7	♥ 53
♦ 109	♦ AHVB5
♣ H1073	♣ AB52

No, those aren't typos. I omitted to tell you that you are playing in the Netherlands. Hs are Heren or Kings, Vs are Vrouwen or Queens and Bs are

Boeren or Jacks. Here is the whole deal, translated into English

♠ AK3	
♥ AKQ7	
♦ 109	
♣ K1073	
♠ 9872	♠ 10654
♥ 862	♥ J1094
♦ 82	♦ 7643
♣ Q986	♣ 4
♠ QJ	
♥ 53	
♦ AKQJ5	
♣ AJ52	

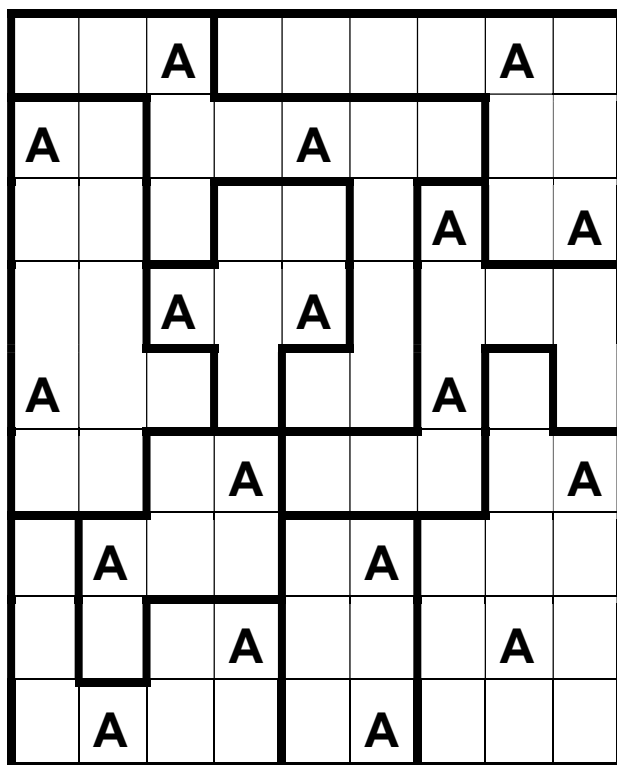
You claim your 13 tricks and move on to the next deal, assuming this is a flat board – after all it wasn't exactly difficult to bid to the grand.

But no. Team mates (who are Dutch) are playing this cute convention whereby 2♥ and 2♠ show 0-7 points and at least 4 of the bid major. Sometimes this leads to some great results, but it is definitely a two-edged weapon. As on this occasion, when East opened 2♥, South doubled and everyone passed.

That was -1700 and -5 IMPs as declarer managed to make just one trick. It was a shame, really, as she could equally well have chosen to open 2♠, and that would probably have been a trick cheaper and a small swing to us!

Puzzle Solution

(See page 4)



Clash by Night

by Brian Callaghan

In teams competition it is normal that a team may contain more than four players, with just four at the tables in each stanza. The equivalent in pairs competition is unusual. (Maybe it is the language itself. To say that a pair may consist of either two or three players sounds contradictory.) The Young Chelsea marathon is one of the few events that permits three-player pairs. There is a good reason for this, which is that the marathon lasts a gruelling 24 hours, a duration for which not all two-player pairs have the stamina.



In recent years, only a diminished version of the event—a 12-hour half marathon—has taken place. But this year, the Young Chelsea's fiftieth, saw a return to the glory days of yore. Over the weekend of 28-29 October the club once again held a full 24-hour marathon. Twenty-seven pairs took part, just four of which had three players. (Two-player pairs are not entirely motivated by machismo. Any prize—first place attracted £1000—is larger per player when divided two ways instead of three. And having three players usually involves the extra effort of remembering more than one system.) There were six sessions of three-board rounds with short breaks between sessions. Pairs were organised into three lines, two lines in a Mitchell movement and the other line in a Howell.

What would you do with the North hand from deal 15 in the fourth session? Scoring is by matchpoints, you have been playing since noon, and it is now that rare hour between 1am and 1am (the clocks going back overnight). Dealer on your right opens 1♣, you overcall 1♥, on your left comes 1♠ showing five, partner passes, and dealer rebids 1NT (up to 14 HCP). You are vulnerable against not. Do you go once more to the well and repeat your hearts or do you pass?

North

♠ A732	W	N	E	S
♥ AJ9876	1♣	1♥	1♠	P
♦ 7	1NT	?		
♣ A7				

Say you pass. (The auction has not improved the value of your hand and the adverse vulnerability is a reason for pessimism.) A 3NT bid on your left becomes the contract. Your lead. Will it be a heart, and if so, which one? If not a heart, what is your alternative?

This was the full deal (see top of next column).

Your humble correspondent's contribution on the deal was to resignedly table the South hand as dummy in 2♥ doubled. North, England international (and not a pessimist) Heather Dhondy, took another bid which East doubled for takeout.

♠ A732	
♥ AJ9876	
♦ 7	
♣ A7	
♠ 8	♠ KQ1064
♥ KQ32	♥ 10
♦ A632	♦ KQ105
♣ QJ62	♣ K54
♠ J95	
♥ 54	
♦ J984	
♣ 10983	

As it happened, dummy's major suit holdings were robust enough to stave off a complete disaster. The trump four was so high that West could overruff a fourth round of spades with nothing less than the queen. Heather escaped for the one down to which she was entitled, and -200, often the kiss of death at pairs, scored a fortunate average.

How did 3NT by West fare? The two leading pairs at the halfway mark after three sessions were both involved in this contract. In second place on 1087.75 (from a maximum of 1872, so 58.11%), more than two tops clear of the field, were Simon Gillis, Alex Hydes, & Tom Paske. (The players were at the table for an egalitarian four sessions each. Simon was resting in sessions three and four. Alex was relatively fresh having come in to replace Simon.)

Alex, declaring 3NT as West, got the lead of a low heart. Deep Finesse says that 3NT by West can always be made, but Deep Finesse can see that North has doubleton ace of clubs and make three club tricks trivially. That is too deep a position for mere mortals, and Alex, after winning the heart lead with dummy's ten, played a club to the queen and ace. The low heart opening lead was either optimistic, looking for the queen or king with partner, or more likely made on autopilot. North's next effort of playing ace and another heart was an error, and Alex took full advantage. He pitched a spade and a club from dummy while South threw a spade. The next four tricks were a spade to the king, club king, diamond king, and diamond ace, getting the news about the diamond break.

This was the five-card ending with Alex, West, on lead at trick nine.

	♠ A7	
	♥ J97	
	♦ —	
	♣ —	
♠ —		♠ Q106
♥ K		♥ —
♦ 63		♦ Q10
♣ J6		♣ —
	♠ J	
	♥ —	
	♦ J9	
	♣ 109	

He cashed the top heart which squeezed South in three suits (winners in the minors and a communication card in spades). South threw a spade

The two pairs maintained their grip on the top two places for the rest of the event. They duelled it out into the light of the new day, when right at the end of the sixth session Simon Gillis, Alex Hydes, & Tom Paske edged past the long-time leaders to snatch victory by a margin of just six matchpoints—one-quarter of a top—over 156 boards.

and Alex executed a club endplay to get the last two tricks in diamonds. Making ten tricks was worth three-quarters of the matchpoints, 18, on the board.

It looks like it might be better to lead the heart ace, which would pin any singleton honour in dummy, or doubleton ten. But declarer can start with a spade to the queen (North has to duck) before tackling clubs. Declarer can then duck one heart to come down to the same position as Alex did, albeit with one fewer trick.

On the deal, the heart lead that does not concede the contract (unless declarer divines the club position) is the jack. That is not a likely lead, and neither is the singleton diamond, which luckily does not pick up partner's holding in the suit.

In first place at the halfway mark on 1121.17 (59.89%) were John Atthey & Mike Pownall (a two-player pair). They were defending against 3NT John, on lead, did not put his faith in any heart, but instead tried what he hoped would be a neutral low spade. So it proved to be, for declarer could now only make the contract by getting three club tricks. Declarer actually put on the overly-committal spade ten from dummy and lost to the jack. A prompt heart switch let the defenders make two hearts, two spades, and one club to defeat the contract by a trick. The result was worth 19 matchpoints to John & Mike, slightly extending their lead over second place.

Not as we know it

by Mike Graham

In this entertaining article Mike shows us that anyone can make mistakes at the bridge table, even at the very top level.

*(*If the title means nothing to you, you are probably too young to remember the original Star Trek – but see note below.)*

Let us start with a hand. You hold as East:

♠ A7
♥ J1086
♦ A
♣ AKQ1092

The event is a seven-table all-play-all pairs event, scored by cross-imps with the two most extreme results thrown out. Discarding two scores is an attempt to reduce any randomisation produced by a freak result; not a bad idea, as we shall see. After a pass from South, partner opens One Heart. We are playing five-card majors, so we know we have at least a nine-card heart fit.

Against my partner and me they had no problem – East jumped to 4NT and bid 7♥ over the 5♠ reply. I wasn't sure if it was their systemic agreement that this jump was RKCB, as West took an awfully long time to bid 5♠ - certainly longer than it takes to count to two and notice the presence of the queen of trumps. Still, handsome is as handsome does, and they duly wrapped up 2210. Partner's hand:

♠ Q83
♥ AKQ73
♦ K7
♣ 864

Obviously, there are other ways of proceeding with the East hand. Here are a few:

(1) Bid a natural and forcing 3♣. This sets up a game-force and enables the auction to segue into cue-bid mode fairly easily; if partner rebids 3♦, we can bid 3♥, showing that our force was based on a good club suit and heart support. If partner rebids 3♥, we could either cue-bid (possibly so that we can enjoy looking at this seriously good hand for a while longer), or simply ask for key cards in whatever way we have chosen to do.

(2) Bid an artificial 2NT, showing at least a game raise with heart support, if that is in our methods. This has the merit of concealing our hand from the defenders (not that that is likely to matter here). Also, a later key-card ask will focus on hearts. Some pairs have the agreement that a 2NT raise is an essential requirement for a hand that intends to use key-card later in the auction. This frees up the immediate 4NT response as an old-fashioned "how many aces have you got?".

(3) Start with 2♣. It seems to me that this is the worst way to start, as if partner rebids (say) 2♦, we now have to go through all sorts of fourth-suit shenanigans to set up a game force – why bother when we can let partner know immediately that we have a good hand with heart support? Still, if 2♣ is game-forcing, there may be some merit in it.

This deal was the first hand of the evening, and my partner and I were

nervous – it is not being unreasonable to state that slam bidding in Essex – and, dare I say it, everywhere else – is not all that it might be. However, we were due for a pleasant surprise, for the grand slam was bid at six tables out of seven. The auction to miss it was:

1♥ (1)	1♠ (2)
1NT (3)	2♦ (4)
Pass (5)	

1. Five card major.
2. Relay.
3. Balanced hand 14-16 hcp.
4. Game-forcing relay.
5. Oops, forgot.

Two Diamonds went one down (2-1 fits can be quite awkward to handle) for -100 and, with everybody else scoring 2210, a loss of 20 imps. Note that if all seven results had been included, the datum score would drop from EW +2210 to EW +1880, so all the blameless pairs who had 7♥ bid against them would lose 8 imps.

The moral here, insofar as there is one, is that it is in general a bad idea to forget your system.

♣♦♥♠

Also bad is misusing your system. In the Venice Cup last year, in a round-robin match between Sweden and the eventual winners China, the Chinese East held:

♠ 7
♥ AQ732
♦ 3
♣ AK10932

Her partner, West, opened 2♦. This was a Multi-coloured Two Diamonds, showing either (a) a Weak Two bid in a major (b) a strong balanced hand (c) a Strong Two bid in a minor. North

passed, and this hand had to decide how to proceed.

Standard Operating Procedure for responding to a Multi 2♦ is to assume that partner has a weak two in a major and bid accordingly. Usually, this means:

- (1) 2♥ - please pass if you have a weak two in hearts, otherwise describe your hand.
- (2) 2♠ - please pass if you have a weak two in spades, otherwise describe your hand.
- (3) 2NT – what sort of hand do you have?
- (3) 3♥ - I am happy to play 3♥ opposite a weak two in hearts, but may wish to bid higher in spades if that is what you have.
- (5) 3♠ - I am happy to play in 3♠ if you have spades, or at least 4♥ if you have hearts.
- (6) Other – as per partnership agreement.

There are a couple of useful inferences here. A 2♥ response is usually neutral, but tends in practice to deny heart support, as otherwise you could bid 2♠. A 2♠ bid tends to deny spades, but will have hearts, because the partnership will reach 3♥ opposite a weak two in hearts. Also, it is not unknown for the strong-sounding 2NT asking bid to be not strong at all.

Playing these methods (and it may be that the Chinese EW pair weren't, in which case I am doing them an injustice) the normal response is 2♠, because you are happy (well, sort of) to play in 2♠ if partner has a weak two there, and to go higher in hearts if that is what partner has. Note that this is a bad hand to enquire with 2NT with, as you do not want to reach 3♠.

However, East seemed to have decided that her partner would have a weak two in spades, because she bid 2♥. Note that this asks partner to pass with a weak two in hearts. So it looked as if East expected a 2♠ response, over which....well, we will never know. Probably pass is best – partner has a few trumps, you have a couple of tricks, and it looks like the deal is a misfit, so stop bidding.

And then Something Happened. South bid 3♦ over 2♥. West, who did indeed hold a Weak Two, was pretty much constrained to pass, as partner was not guaranteeing any sort of fit, or indeed any sort of strength. North also passed, and now East had a problem. She stuck to her guns, and, presumably still assuming her partner had a weak two in spades, passed 3♦. This should have been defeated but was allowed to make for EW -110.

This was not a result to warm a captain's heart, as partner had ♠ A109 ♥ KJ10865 ♦ Q862 ♣ --, and 6♥ was not only cold but bid at the other table. If the hand had bid 2♠, then partner would be free to bid 3♥, as that is where responder has said she would be happy to play.

This is one of the weaknesses of the Multi 2♦ - if partner bids 2♥, you do not know what sort of hand partner has, so, holding a weak two, you are constrained to pass if there is enemy interference. And partner has the same problem – ok, partner has a weak two, but in which suit? All very messy.



Also in the Venice Cup, England faced Sweden on this deal:

♠ AQ87	♠ 43
♥ Q852	♥ A
♦ K	♦ AQJ1076
♣ KJ103	♣ Q754

For England, West opened 1♣ and slam was never really in the picture, the auction ending in 5♦. The Swedish West opened 1NT and the auction went:

1NT	3♣ (minors)
3♦	3♥
3♠	4♥
4NT	6♣
7♣	

Apart from 3♣, the meaning of the various bids was never explained. No-one doubled, but it was still 10 imps to England.



Reaching a grand slam missing the ace of trumps might seem a bit infra dig, but it pales into insignificance compared to this deal, which occurred in the 1971 Bermuda Bowl (Round robin round 15, board 14), France versus Brazil:

Love All. Dealer East

♠ KJ43	
♥ 10972	
♦ J9762	
♣ –	
♠ 862	♠ A10975
♥ A54	♥ 6
♦ A105	♦ K843
♣ A542	♣ 876
♠ Q	
♥ KQJ83	
♦ Q	
♣ KQJ1093	

The Brazilians played the North-South cards in Four Hearts for 420, but events at the other table were somewhat more optimistic:

West	North	East	South
Trezel	D'Ave	Stoppa	Chagas
		Pass	1♣
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♣	Pass	7♥
Dbl	All Pass		

You can imagine that West was reasonably sure that the contact would go down. And he would have been even surer if he knew that his partner held the other ace. It must be pointed out that the French, who were not in a qualifying position, were fielding an unfamiliar partnership.

♣♦♥♠

Another 2017 Venice Cup deal, this time from China versus the Netherlands:

♠ QJ108	♠ AK52
♥ K1086	♥ --
♦ AJ86	♦ Q6
♣ J	♣ AKQ9843

The Netherlands reached 6♣ easily enough, making thirteen tricks. As everything broke nicely and the king of diamonds was onside, they might have been slightly worried that an adverse swing was in the offing. They must have been pleasantly surprised to record 16 imps in the In column, as the auction at the other table was:

1♦ (1)	2♣
2♥ (2)	3♣
Pass (3)	

- (1) Strong club, five-card majors
- (2) Natural – not a reverse
- (3) Best consult the system file.....page 178.....

(* “Its life, Jim, but not as we know it” is a line said by Spock – actually from the 1987 song “Star Trekkin”, though it is often attributed to the TV series).

Meet Gordon Rainsford

by Chris Duckworth

Gordon is very well known to most London players, but he has never been profiled before in MetroNews, so this article is well overdue. Although I have claimed authorship, much of the content is taken from Gordon's self-penned profile on the EBU website.

Gordon Rainsford is one of London's most widely admired and respected bridge personalities, having done a lot of tournament directing before taking on the management of the Young Chelsea Bridge Club. After several successful years there, he left the club to join the EBU, initially as its Chief Tournament Director and tournament organiser. In mid-2017, he was promoted to EBU General Manager, a role which he is tackling with relish whilst continuing to wear his EBU Chief TD hat.



Gordon was born in Kenya in 1960, where until recently all his immediate family still lived. He first played rubber bridge as a teenager at home with his family – he remembers supplementing his pocket-money playing with his grand-mother against her friends. He also used to play at the Visa Oshwal community centre in Mombasa, where they played "Stern" - a variant of the Vienna system using the 7-5-3-1 point count! After coming to England he played at school for a few years, and competed in the Daily Mail Schools competition.

The first game of duplicate he played was at Stamford Bridge Club, where they made schoolboys very welcome and offered them a much-reduced table money. On leaving school he came to London with the intention of becoming an accountant, but he quickly changed his mind and took a degree in Sociology at the LSE instead. Later he worked in catering for a while before becoming a freelance photographer for twenty years. After school he didn't play bridge for fifteen years, knowing that when he started again it would be bound to take over his life - which indeed it did!



Gordon and Arnaud in the Sahara at the end of 2017

During his time away from bridge Gordon met Arnaud, his non-bridge playing partner, and they live in West London just near to Portobello Road market. Arnaud is a video director and editor who has worked on several EBU training and promotional videos. They enjoy travel and have been all over the world on various holidays as well as frequent visits to the South of France where Arnaud is from.

Like most tournament directors, he started by accident out of necessity, because in small clubs someone needs to make sure

the games happen. Later he planned that being a TD would make a nice little retirement job for the future - but he soon discovered how much more hard work was involved than he had realised. He was advised to make a start on it sooner rather than waiting, so he quickly progressed through the ranks as an EBU panel director.

When Warwick Pitch retired from the Young Chelsea BC, the club looked around for a suitable person to take on the club management, and Gordon was the natural and popular choice. His directing expertise combined with a good business brain enabled him to help the club transfer smoothly from being a proprietor-owned club to one which was owned by the membership as a whole. He ran the club for six years before the opportunity came to move on.

Whilst managing the YCBC, most of his bridge was played filling in with irregular partners to make up the numbers in the duplicates. He did find time for some more serious bridge, however, and he had some successes at the table. Highlights were winning the Guardian Trophy with Paul Martin and winning the Premier Life Masters Pairs three times in a row with Dom Goodwin. He also

partnered Dom in a Young Chelsea team that won the Garden Cities trophy a few years ago.

When Gordon was offered the job at the EBU as Chief TD he had no hesitation in accepting. Somehow things had progressed faster and further than he had anticipated when he started along the path of directing! Soon he had extended this to directing for the EBL and WBF, which he has done fairly regularly over the last few years. He finds this particularly enjoyable as it is always useful to have one's preconceptions challenged and to see things from a different perspective.

When Barry Capal, the former General Manager of the EBU, decided to retire, Gordon was offered the job and he took it on in July last year. He is looking forward to this next stage of his work at the EBU, which he hopes will be as rewarding as his last five years. I asked Gordon what his aspirations were for the EBU, and he felt the main thing was to improve its perception among the membership. A lot of members see the EBU as something remote from them, not always aligned with their interests, whereas he would like them to come to see it as an organisation of which they are part and to which they can make a meaningful contribution. He pointed out that actually the staff at Aylesbury, as well as volunteers all over the country, for clubs, counties and committees, work extremely hard and this is not sufficiently recognised.

As for his aspirations as a player, Gordon hopes to find time to play a bit more now that he will be directing less. At the moment he is playing a lot of robot bridge, both because it works well on the train from work as it doesn't matter if he loses wi-fi signal, and because he has been involved with starting the Funbridge robot games that award EBU master points. At the current rate he reckons he may reach Grand Master in 2018! He would also like to play in some big events abroad, which he never has, as it would be interesting to see how others do things.

Finally, I usually ask the personality I am writing about for an interesting hand. Instead, Gordon offered me an amusing ruling from a Swiss Pairs at the YC in Barkston Gardens. He was called to the table because dummy's hand didn't match the description given during the auction and it transpired there had indeed been misinformation - a 2NT overcall had been explained with the wrong suits. He told dummy "It's a pity you didn't correct the explanation before the lead was made and then I could have re-opened the auction". At this point everyone looked uncomfortable and it transpired that dummy had put his hand down before the opening lead had been made! So he had exposed his whole hand during what is technically the auction period, which meant that when his RHO was given the option to bid again, suddenly he was no longer dummy (his partner was prohibited from bidding) but was instead a defender with 13 penalty cards! It's an interesting exercise for the new declarer to try to take the maximum advantage from the situation, but unfortunately he didn't really make the most of it. Of course at pairs he had a top anyway!

Tales of the Saucepan

by Kevin Castner

Kevin Castner is an American who nowadays spends much of his time in Europe. He is a fine player who often partners David Gold in events in London.

Victor Mollo's Griffins are sadly gone, and as time passes rubber bridge itself is fighting extinction. I hear you might, or might not, still be able to get a game in Paris. I used to play rubber twice a week in San Francisco, but that club passed into legend long ago. There was also an excitable game in Florence, Italy at the Circolo del Bridge where Piero Arganini presided and Grant Baze would hold court once a year or so, but rubber there died around the time they lost their lease in the Piazza Libertad. Of the few bastions holding out, one of the finest must be TGRs in London. Presided over by Artur Malinowski, one can find games of various stakes almost every day and evening (those by arrangement).

Rob Sheehan, formerly The London Times bridge columnist and still a regular stalwart of the so-called 'big game' (30 quid a hundred) at TGRs, brought many of the denizens and characters of that older game to life in a series of books he wrote in the 1990s. Some of those characters are still with us, but vanishing few.

Amongst the new blood, we occasionally have the company of Saucepan.

In person our young Pole is of medium height, mid-thirties (never asked), balding, and endlessly humorous. He is never seemingly unhappy; rather, an irresistible positive energy follows him around. Saucepan does everything fast, and when something goes awry is always ready with a broad smile and his usual idiosyncratic, 'What I'm supposed to do?' to which most of his current partners snarl, 'Not that'. His real name is the usual Eastern European jumble of an extraordinary number of consonants with a y or two tossed in for flavour.

With that as preamble, here is Saucepan at work.

1 The Saucepan giveth:

Last Saturday afternoon at TGRs I partnered The Great Malinowski. To my left one of the nicest individuals in bridge, Andrew Kay. To my right, Saucepan. I held:

♠Q ♥xxx ♦AKxx ♣Jxxxx.

We were at favourable vulnerability with a 60 partscore. TGM opened a 5 card major 1 heart, The Sauce passed and I bid 2 hearts. This was passed back to TGM whose hand moved to the back of the bidding box as his gaze fell to the scoresheet, and there was

just a fractional readjustment as it emerged with the pass card.

That last bit was lost on Saucepan, though it should not be for any rubber bridge player with a scintilla of a survival instinct, as he was multi-tasking at the time, taking in the Manchester United football game playing on the wall-mounted TV. He bid an immediate 2♠. This got back to TGM who now found a red card. Saucepan glanced once more at the telly, looking for succour perhaps, and tried 3♦. Thereupon my red card. Andrew retreated to 3♠, and a moment later Saucepan was declaring 3♠x. This was the entire deal:

Andrew (dummy)

♠ 109x
♥ Jxx
♦ 109x
♣ KQxx

Kevin

♠ Q
♥ xxx
♦ AKxx
♣ Jxxxx

TGM

♠ AKJ8
♥ AKQxx
♦ Q
♣ xxx

Saucepan

♠ 7xxxx
♥ xx
♦ Jxxxx
♣ A

We played three rounds of hearts. Saucepan ruffed and tried a trump. Armageddon. Artur overtook the spade queen, pulled trumps, cashed the rest of his hearts, then my diamonds for -1700. Saucepan threw his hands up in the air, smiled, 'What I'm supposed to do'. The almost always even-tempered Andrew suggested, 'Nothing, you %^*#'.
2 The Saucepan taketh away:

Two days later, I held:

♠A109xx ♥Qxx ♦— ♣AQJ109.

As dealer, all red, I opened 1 spade and heard 2♦ on my left, pass from partner, and a prompt, effortless 3NT from Saucepan. Knowing he is clinically insane, I doubled.

I reasoned (you may form your own idea of whether that word should be applied to my action) that diamonds weren't breaking and that if they didn't have 8 runners after the club king then we'd be in business. The red card got back to Saucepan and he took an eternity (for him) before passing.

I led the club ace and the following dummy presented itself:

♠Jx ♥A10x ♦A9xxxx ♣Kx !

I continued with the club Q, and was jolted when, on that black king Saucepan nonchalantly tossed the other one. That was followed rapidly by the diamond ace, on which partner played the 10. Good, I fleetingly thought....partner has diamonds and the lowest of them is the 10....that has to be positive. That hope was dashed immediately when partner began searching for a discard on the second diamond and the whole hand turned out to be this:

Dummy

♠ Jx
♥ A10x
♦ A9xxxx
♣ Kx

Kevin

♠ A109xx	♠ xxxx
♥ Qxx	♥ J9x
♦ —	♦ 10
♣ AQJ109	♣ 87654

Saucepan

♠ KQ
♥ Kxxx
♦ KQJxxx
♣ 2

Yes.....in real life, for money, with shape and a 12 card fit, Saucepan had eschewed any thoughts of suited games or slams to try 3NT, and then had stood his ground in 3NTx with a stiff club. How can you not love him?

On the run of the diamonds I was squeezed out of almost all my clubs so our fearless declarer eventually took 6 diamonds, 2 hearts and one each of the black suits. Saucepan scored up +1150, but he wasn't done with me.

I angrily asked him, 'Are you really that effing crazy?' and he just laughed and said, 'What I'm supposed to do? Partner had to have something'. And he followed up with the zinger: 'And 5♦ doesn't make'. And as ridiculous as that sounds, he is right. There's the 6-6 fit, but so mirrored that the one club

pitch doesn't solve the heart loser. Ah, Saucepan.

(Not, as a side note, that there wasn't more going on in this hand: partner had mis-sorted a spade into her clubs, or she would have bid 2♠...and then I'd have bid 4♠ (to make), and 5♦ would have gone down, and.....)

Anyway, if you're in London with a bit of time on your hands come look us up. Bring a thick skin, a sense of humour, and cash. Maybe you'll get to play against Saucepan.

Safety First?

by Roger Morton

Most of us at our clubs play the majority of sessions at Match Pointed Pairs. With this form of scoring, safety plays should not figure too prominently in our planning unless we have reached a very good game or slam contract unlikely to have been bid by the rest of the room. So, when we do play teams occasionally, there is a danger is that we play on 'autopilot' and don't change our strategy!

Here is a simple example that came up in the first round of the Gerald Faulkner Senior Teams National knockout competition in July 2017. I was South as dealer and Opened 2 No Trumps. Partner raised me straight to six (!) and opponents led a small diamond. Plan your play before reading on.

♠ QJ10
♥ KQJ
♦ Kx
♣ 10xxxx

♠ Ax
♥ Axx
♦ AQxx
♣ AQxx

This is a quite a good contract, about 60%. Instinctively, one would immediately go for a maximum score

by taking the Club finesse, hoping for Kx on your right, and that's exactly what I did at trick 2 for

WRONG! My line is 'pairs autopilot'. A careful count of tricks will tell you that you only need four Club tricks if the spade finesse is working. So you take the Spade finesse first; a) if it loses, you need all five Clubs and you take the Club finesse. b) If it wins, you can play safe on the Clubs by cashing the Ace first, later leading up to the Queen. This safety play catches singleton King on your left, a 6% chance.

Matches are often won and lost by such small chances! Who cares about missing a one IMP overtrick in a slam contract?

I was lucky, West held ♣Kx but East held ♠K!

Congratulations

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



Many congratulations to those London members who have represented England recently - **Toby Nonnenmacher** and **Shahzaad Natt**, part of the U26 team, and **Liam Sanderson** in the U21 team in the Junior Channel Trophy.

International honours also go to **Mike Bell** and **David Gold** who were part of the winning team in the Open BAM Teams at the North American Fall Nationals.

Andrew Black and his team, including **Phil King** and **Gunnar Hallberg** won the 2017 Gold Cup.

Anita Sinclair (*centre right*) was part of the winning Crcokfords team. **Ingar Hansen** was one of the runners-up.



The Premier League First Division was won this year by the Allfrey team (*left*), including **Andrew Robson** and **David Gold**. **Kieran Dyke** was a member of the second-placed team.

Division Two of the Premier League was won by **Heather Dhondy's** team including herself, **Brian Callaghan** and **Franklin To**.

Division Three was won by a team including **Sarah Bell**, while the runners-up included **Susanna Gross**, **Toby Nonnenmacher** and **Graham Orsmond**.



At the Eastbourne Summer Congress. the Harold Poster Pairs over the first weekend was won by **Andrew Robson** (*right*) playing with Alexander Allfrey.

Martin Baker won the Sunday Open Pairs with **Gordon Rainsford** second. **Martin** was also second In the Friday Open Pairs when **Chantal Girardin** was third. **Claire Robinson** and **Rowena Clow** were second in the Monday Open Pairs. **Gitte Hecht-Johansen** and **Terry Hewett** were second in the Friday speedball and also the Saturday teams speedball along with **Szczepan Smoczynski**.



In the major mid-week events, **Anne Catchpole** was third in the GCH Fox Pairs. **Lorne Anderson** won the Senior Pairs B final. The Friday PAB teams was won by **Mike** and **Sarah Bell** with **Andrew Black**, **Phil King** and **Gunnar Hallberg** second.



London dominated the Swiss Teams leaderboard in the second weekend. **Marion Robertson**, **Kieran Dyke**, **Mike** and **Sarah Bell** (left) won the Four Stars A final.

Andrew Black, **Phil King** and **Gunnar Hallberg** were second and **Shahzaad Natt**, **Stefano Tommasini** and **Kiril Delev** were third.

In the B final, **Peter Taylor** was second and **Toby Nonnenmacher** third. **Gad**

Chadha and **Debbie Sandford** were second in the Brighton Bowl Swiss Teams.



At the Autumn Congress the Eastbourne Bowl, the main A final of the teams, was won by **Andrew Black**, **Gunnar Hallberg**, and **Phil King** (left). Runners up were **Nathalie Shashou**, **Nick Sandqvist**, **Kiril Delev** and **Stefano Tommasini**, while in third place were **Roland Gronau** and **David Wing**.

In the consolation teams for the Sussex Cup, the team of **Mike Bell**, **Sarah Bell**, **Andy Bowles** and

Shireen Mohandes were first in the Blue Section but missed out on the trophy.

In the Swiss Pairs, **Nathalie Shashou** and **Nick Sandqvist** were second



In Guernsey the Pre-Congress Pairs was won by **Gordon Rainsford** and **Lorne Anderson**, who were also third in the Swiss Pairs. **Angus Simpson** was second in the Men's Pars and also second in the Multiple Teams along with **Tim Gauld**.

At the Overseas Congress in Halkidiki. **Gad Chadha** and **Debbie Sandford** (*right*) excelled. They won the Swiss Pairs together and came third in the Open Pairs. **Debbie** also came second in the Mixed Pairs and **Gad** was second on the Men's Pairs, with **David Wing** third.

♣♦♥♠

There were plenty of successes at the London Year End Congress to round off 2017.



The Swiss Pairs was won by **Keiran Dyke** and **Marion Robertson** (*left*) with **David Gold** and **Kevin Castner** in third place and **Alex Hydes** and **Sarah Bell** fourth.



The Open Pairs was won by **Phil King** and **Shahzaad Natt** (*right*) with **David Bakhshi** third.



In the Mixed Pairs **Chris Duckworth** and **Brian Callaghan** were second.

The Swiss Teams was a family affair, being won by **David** and **Heather Bakhshi** and **Liam Sanderson** (*left*).



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