

Beckenham Bridge Club

Newsletter

August 2007

Message from the Chairman

by Bob Manser

I welcome this opportunity once again to serve our club and thank you all for your support at the annual general meeting. Nine years have passed since I last occupied this chair and I am sorry to have to remind you as I did then of the need to support our club in order that it may continue to thrive. Whilst we have welcomed a number of new players in the interim period, for a number of reasons our membership has continued to diminish. At the AGM I asked those present to make every effort to play at least six times over each month – that is the minimum required to pay our way. Regretfully, we have yet to reach that degree of support and I urge all members through this newsletter to try to meet that target during the new season.

At the AGM I also introduced the concept of 'Best Behaviour at Bridge' (BB@B) that has now been adopted by the English Bridge Union for all their competitions. Elsewhere in this newsletter is a copy of the code, which I distributed at that time. I was heartened on that evening that those present had taken the code to heart and I do no more now than to remind you all of just one point that I feel encapsulates the whole concept: '*Make bridge enjoyable for yourself, partner and opponents*'. Given that, then all the other points fall into place. In the June issue of *English Bridge* Sally Bugden describes the penalties available to tournament directors for breach of the code but I am not inclined to reproduce these since I have yet to witness at Beckenham any occasion when this would be justified – but please take heed.

The introduction of BB@B at Beckenham was to counter the quite unjustified reputation of the club as 'unfriendly' in some quarters. Too frequently when I have asked members of other clubs in Kent why they don't come to Beckenham I have been told of this even although, when challenged, the only 'evidence' has been hearsay. The only way we can combat this is by ensuring we all adopt the above concept as diligently as possible.

During the summer we have been pleased to welcome an 'Improvers' section on Monday evenings and I wish to thank all those members who have given their time to ensure the success of this venture. I have been delighted with the feedback from those visiting Beckenham for the first time and I am sure when members come in contact with these new players they will make them welcome and take an interest in their progress. Should you be involved in a movement that requires 'sit out' on one of these dates, why not wander over to the other section and give some words of encouragement. Whilst not yet ready to fully participate at club level these players will be the future of bridge – please do all you can to ensure that their future will be with us at Beckenham.

And finally, with this newsletter comes the programme for the new season. I recommend all members highlight dates of club competitions in their diaries and start arranging to participate in as many as possible. When I first joined the Beckenham club it was not unusual to have twenty-four tables at major club competitions. It would require major effort on behalf of all members to return to that situation but it is possible. [Incidentally, I am told that the hall now has only twenty tables. How I should enjoy demanding they purchased more in order to accommodate our competitions!]

Good luck for the coming season. Enjoy your bridge!

Club programme 2007-2008

A pocket-sized card with the club programme for the next twelve months is enclosed with this newsletter. A large-print version is included on the centre pages of the newsletter.

Members' responsibilities

Tournament Controller and Referee	David Blacknell
Directors Controller	Gretta Blacknell
Club Captain & Inter Club Competitions	Allan Foster
Website	Dorothy Holland
Club Trophies	Roy Creamer
Stationery / Playing Cards	Jenny Kirkby
Duty Roster	Tony Smith
Ladder Co-ordinators	David Blacknell and Dorothy Holland
Master Points	Alan Gearing
Membership Roll	Lindsey Lamb
Newsletter	Chris Lamb
Publicity	David Hudson and Terry Crispin
Refreshments supplies	Claudine Kanaar
Membership Applications	Lindsey Lamb in liaison with the Committee
Banking and Recording Table Money	Paul Fishleigh (David Lightfoot, David Blacknell and Nick Kanaar in Paul's absence)
Ingram Bowl	Dorothy Holland

The Haycocks Trophy

The Haycocks Trophy was presented in 1974 to be played for in an annual teams-of-eight match between Beckenham and Farnborough. This year's event was staged at Beckenham on Monday 2nd July. Full details of the match result are not available as we go to press, but suffice it to say that Farnborough won a resounding victory on this occasion. Beckenham will be looking for revenge next year.

Club members' achievements

Since the last newsletter, very few reports have reached us of club members' successes in external events. If you do well in a competition away from Beckenham, please tell the newsletter editor so that we can record your achievement in the next newsletter.

Congratulations to the club members who have achieved the following fine results recently (names in parentheses are of non-Beckenham players who were part of the successful pairs or teams).

KENT EVENTS

Larsky Cup (Kent championship pairs) 3rd: Dorothy Holland and Pat McBain

Phillimore Cup (Swiss Pairs): 1st: Ian Draper & (Jeremy Willans)
3rd=: Gillian & Allan Foster

Ladder Competition

The defending champions, Ian Draper & Gerald Tredinnick, ran out clear winners after finishing strongly in the last few rounds. They thus retain the Rose Bowl for a second year. Bob Manser and David Hudson squeezed into second place by the narrowest of margins, after putting in a final spurt.

1	Ian Draper & Gerald Tredinnick	163 points
2	Bob Manser & David Hudson	135 points
3=	Catherine Draper & Michael Prior	134 points
3=	Steve Burton & Phil Jones	134 points

Club competitions

Congratulations to those members who have achieved success in club competitions in recent months. Here are the top three placings in the main competitions played since the last edition of the newsletter.

Owen Cup (March/April 2007)

	VPs
1 Paul & Jean Fishleigh, Bob Manser, David Hudson	104
2 Marie Horlock, John Amor, Keith Ashcroft, John Griffiths	97
3 David Brown, Iris Willis, Neville Grant, Farah Diggins	81

Marie Horlock's Team won the Sealed Handicap

Larsky Heat (February 2007)

2 pairs qualified for the Kent Pairs Championship:

Keith Ashcroft & Michael Prior	61.81%
Dorothy Holland & Pat McBain	54.17%

Kirsch Bowl - Ladies Pairs (May 2007)

1. Pat McBain & Dorothy Holland	55.11%
2. Julia Price & Norma Cruikshank	53.79%
3. Jo Lightfoot & Jan Johnson	52.84%

Sam Russell Club Championship Pairs (May/June 2007)

1. Keith Ashcroft & John Hemington	63.62%
2. David Hudson & Bob Manser	63.45%
3. Neil & Jackie Wotherspoon	58.48%

Mixed Pivot Teams - Bentley Trophy (July 2007)

	VPs
1 Keith Ashcroft, Phil Jones, John Griffiths, Marie Horlock	95
2 Malcolm & Pat McBain, Tim Lloyd Williams, Anne Jasper	83
3 Slavek Michalek, Jenny Kirkby, Tony Smith, Jon Harrison	76

Knock Out Teams – Final (March 2007)

Dorothy Holland, Pat McBain, Peter & Detta Bentley beat

Michael Prior, Tony Price, Tim Lloyd-Williams, Steve Burton

Johnson Cup - Mens Pairs (May 2007)

1. David Hudson & Bob Manser	65.91%
2. Roger Pechey & Tim Lloyd-Williams	63.64%
3. Keith Ashcroft & Ian Draper	61.17%

Oilly Biro Pairs – cut for partner (June 2007)

1. Peter Crofts & Anita Freeman	61.50%
2. Angus Bain & Slavek Michalek	56.00%
3. Ian De'Ath & David Pallister	54.50%

Masterpoint Promotions

Congratulations to the following club members, who have attained Ranking Promotions since the last Newsletter, or whose earlier promotions have not previously been noted here:

Brian Grimwood: 9 star Premier Master
 Julia Price: 1 star Tournament Master
 Ritti Crown: 5 star Master
 Roy Cornelius: 4 star Master

Sue Starkey: 3 star Master
 Lawrence White: Master
 Lesley Pechey: District Master

If your name has been omitted, please inform the editor, and it will be included in the next newsletter. Special apologies to anyone who has been misidentified with a namesake, and is credited above with a ranking that is too high or too low; if this has happened, a correction will be made next time.

New Membership

We welcome as a new member Richard Creamer (son of the club president), and wish him a long and enjoyable association with the club.

BECKENHAM BRIDGE CLUB - www.beckenhambc.co.uk

PROGRAMME 2007/2008

September

Thu 20♦* Ladder - Preliminary Round
 Thu 27* Teams of Four – Pairs Cut

October

Thu 4♦ Cicely Caro (Mixed Pairs)/Watson Fritch
 Thu 11♦* BGB Simultaneous Pairs
 Thu 25♦ Ladder

November

Thu 1♦* Vi Bulman Pairs
 Mon 5♦* Knock Out Teams – Qualifying Round
 Thu 22♦ Ladder
 Mon 26* Teams of Four – Pairs Cut

December

Mon 17* Wine & Mince Pies 7pm, Bridge 7.40pm
 Teams of Four Informal (Charity: Demelza House)
 Thu 20♦ Ladder
 Mon 24 **No Bridge**
 Wed 26 **No Bridge**
 Thu 27* Teams of Four – Pairs Cut
Mon 31 No Bridge

January

Mon 7♦ Knock Out Teams – Quarter Finals + Pairs
 Thu 17♦ Ladder
 Mon 21 Pairs including National Pairs Heat
 (Finals: Regional 16 March; National 19 and 20 April)

February

Mon 4 Knock Out Teams /Maud Kirk Plate + Pairs
 Mon 25 Pairs including Larsky Heat (Final: 13 April)
 Thu 28♦ Ladder

March

Mon 3 Knock Out Teams/Maud Kirk Plate + Pairs
 Mon 10 **AGM (7pm start)**
 Thu 13♦* ECATS Charity Challenge (Charity: Action Medical Research)
 Thu 20♦ Ladder
 Mon 24 **No Bridge**

April

Thu 3♦*# Owen Cup (inc Sealed Handicap) Session 1
 Thu 10♦*# Owen Cup (inc Sealed Handicap) Session 2
 Thu 17♦ Ladder

May

Thu 1♦* Johnson Cup /Kirsch Bowl (Men's/Ladies Pairs)
 Mon 5 **No Bridge**
 Thu 8♦ Ladder
 Mon 26 **No Bridge**
 Thu 29♦*# Sam Russell Club Championship Pairs Session 1

June

Thu 5♦*# Sam Russell Club Championship Pairs Session 2
 Mon 9* Olly Biro (seeded) - cut for partner
 Mon 23* Teams of Four informal (Charity: St Christopher's Hospice)

July

Thu 3♦*# Bentley Trophy (Mixed Pivot Teams)
 Thu 24* Teams of Four – Pairs Cut

August

Wed 20♦* Robertson Cup (Individual)
 Mon 25 **No Bridge**
 Wed 27 Teams of Four – Pairs Cut

Pre-entry required for these competitions

♦ There will be no duty member on these evenings

* There will be no other bridge on these evenings

VENUE: Public Halls, Bromley Road, Beckenham BR3 5JE

☎020 8650 3483/5698

The Club expects to meet in the **Small Hall** on Wednesdays apart from on Wednesday 31 October 2007 when we shall meet in the **Main Hall**.

We expect to meet in the **Main Hall** on Mondays and Thursdays apart from the following dates when we shall meet in the **Small Hall** on:

2007 - 12 November ; **2008** - 18 February and 12 May

and in the **Ground Floor Room** on:

2007 - 15 November; **2008** - 21 February

EBU Strategy Proposals

Even if you are not a member of the EBU and take no interest in EBU affairs, you ought to take a look at the new EBU strategy proposals, since they will affect all members of Beckenham and other EBU-affiliated bridge clubs. In effect, every member of the club would become a member of the EBU and would contribute financially to its work.

Key features of the proposal:

- ◆ The annual membership subscription and Master Point charges will be abolished.
- ◆ A Pay to Play (P2P) scheme will be introduced, in which a small table charge (probably about 30p) is levied for every player at every duplicate session in an affiliated club.
- ◆ A one-time only Registration Fee of £5 for new or lapsed EBU members.
- ◆ A big range of free services will be provided to affiliated Clubs, including a National Rating scheme.
- ◆ The annual Club Affiliation fee will be based on the number of duplicate sessions played per week.

A widespread consultation on the proposals is currently under way, so please give your views to any member of the committee, so that they can be taken into account when the club makes its response to the proposals. Of course, you can also make your views known directly to the EBU. A copy of the proposals can be found on the club noticeboard, or via links from the EBU home page: <http://www.ebu.co.uk/>

Improvers section

At the beginning of July the club initiated an Improvers section, which now has a regular five or six tables playing at one end of the main hall on Monday evenings. We are delighted to welcome the improvers to the club and we hope they enjoy their bridge here. Most of them have been learning bridge at Bromley evening classes or with private tutors, and in time some of them will want to graduate to the main club sessions. We hope that all members will be ready to offer them encouragement and advice whenever possible. Some ideas for helping the improvers to integrate into the club are being considered, and will be announced soon.

Margaret Vajda

Club members will be sorry to learn that Margaret passed away at the Mayday Hospital in Croydon on Tuesday 24th July.

When I first joined the Beckenham Bridge Club Margaret and her husband Paul were an established and formidable pair. Following the death of Paul, Margaret continued in her support of the club, attending whenever possible. Initially she would do the return journey from Norwood by public transport, accepting lifts from other club members when available. As her health deteriorated she would journey by taxi rather than miss her bridge.

But the courage and determination shown by her in attending this club was no more than a shadow of that demonstrated when she and Paul fled their mother country, Hungary, following the 1956 uprising.

Bridge was not her sole interest. Margaret had a passion for European history, attending discussion groups based in London. I count myself particularly fortunate in being able to tap into her knowledge of this subject on many occasions during my personal studies.

She also had a considerable interest in, and knowledge of, the fine arts and would frequently approach me for information regarding current exhibitions at the Royal Academy and the National Gallery. She would arrange visits there, again by taxi, whenever possible; where a helper would take her round in a wheelchair. On return she was always keen to discuss the finer points of the artist or group of artists. Her constant courage throughout her life, as well as her enthusiasm, is to be admired. She will be dearly missed.

Bob Manser (Chairman)

A slice of good fortune

by David Blacknell

How often do you find yourself in a seemingly unmakeable contract that needs a favourable distribution or a bit of extra help from your opponents? Both were required on the hand below, which demonstrates the difficulty of judging whether or not to lead an ace against a slam contract.

North

♠ K x
♥ K 10 x
♦ K Q x x
♣ K x x x

South

♠ -
♥ A Q J x x x
♦ J x x x
♣ A x x

The contract was a frisky six hearts and West made the only lead to concede the contract - the ace of spades. Trumps broke two-two and the king of spades gave a club discard. Clubs were cashed and ruffed on the third round (they broke three-three!). The thirteenth club was used to discard a low diamond from hand and the only trick for the defence was the ace of diamonds.

Any other lead and the contract fails by two tricks (West held A 10 x x of diamonds plus a club trick).

Psyched out

by Chris Lamb

♠ A K J 8 6 5 3
♥ A K J
♦ A
♣ K 3

You pick up this beautiful hand and are planning to open it with a game force bid (Acol 2 clubs or equivalent), when dealer on your right gets in first by opening 1 heart. Taken aback, you reassess the situation. Partner obviously has little or nothing, and may well have no entries, so you will be forced to play each suit from your own hand. Prospects of a slam now seem dim, so you settle for an overcall of 4 spades, which ends the auction. A heart is led and you are astounded to see that dummy contains:

♠ Q 10 7 2
♥ Q 7 4
♦ 10 4
♣ A Q 6 4

Seven no trumps is cold, and everyone else is in at least a small spade slam, though only one pair has bid the grand. It transpires that your opponent has opened on the following hand:

♠ 4
♥ 9 8 6 5 3
♦ Q 8 7 5 2
♣ 9 8

Of course, you should have started by doubling, followed by a jump bid in spades, but what will you do if partner responds to the double by bidding 2 spades, as he might do with his actual holding. Finding a convincing sequence to reach the grand slam may not be easy. As it is, all you can do is to congratulate the opponents on a successful psyche. It does seem that psychic bids are rarely encountered at Beckenham these days, and it is hardly necessary to report such bids, given their infrequent occurrence. When was the last time you felt the need to report a psyche, I wonder?

Best Behaviour at Bridge

Bridge is an extremely enjoyable game. Courteous behaviour is an exceptionally important part of that enjoyment.

This guide serves as a brief reminder of how to behave at the bridge table. We are sure that all players naturally follow this code of conduct but there are times when concentration and pressure can take their toll and it is for these situations that this reminder is issued.

- Greet others in a friendly manner prior to start of play on each round
- Be a good 'host' or 'guest' at the table
- Make your convention card available to you opponents and fill it out completely
- Make bridge enjoyable for yourself, partner and opponents
- Give credit when opponents make a good bid or play
- Enjoy the company as well as the game

Remember it is rude to criticize your partner or opponents in public, to be less than polite at the table, to gloat over good results or object to a call for the tournament director or to dispute or argue about a director's ruling.

Please call the director if you think you may have been affected by bad behaviour. You will be helping others as well as yourselves.

Any behaviour that is likely to put off a newcomer to the club is unacceptable.

The Bennett 'Murder'

John Bennett would have lived to an old age had these rules for 'Best Behavior' been observed by his wife in 1931. The hand that caused his premature death was as follows:

<p>♠ A 10 6 3 ♥ 10 8 5 ♦ 4 ♣ A 9 8 4 2</p> <p>♠ Q 7 2 ♥ A J 3 ♦ A Q 10 9 2 ♣ J 6</p>	<p>♠ 4 ♥ Q 9 4 ♦ K J 7 6 3 ♣ Q 7 5 3</p> <p>♠ K J 9 8 5 ♥ K 7 6 2 ♦ 8 5 ♣ K 10</p>
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Mr. Bennett, sitting South, opened 1♠ on what was then considered insufficient values. West overcalled 2♦ and North raised to 4♠. Mrs. Bennett, furious at what she saw as poor bidding followed by equally poor play promptly left the room and returned with a hand gun and shot her husband. She was tried for murder later that year but acquitted! Perhaps the judge was a bridge player?

Ely Culbertson confirmed that Mr. Bennett had overbid but suggested that had he played his cards better he could have saved his life. The defence opened with the diamond ace and on seeing the singleton in dummy switched to the club Jack. Mr. Bennett won this with the king and started to draw trumps. Here again he flirted with death as many often do when they fail to have a plan. He could have made his contract and saved his life. The proper play before drawing trumps was to establish the club suit. Mr. Bennett should have taken the club in hand and trumped the last diamond in dummy. A trump to the king and then the club 10 to the ace. Play the club 9 trumping if covered by the queen and allowing west to overtrump. If west now leads a heart or a diamond the contract is safe as is Mr. Bennett's life. If he exits with a spade at least Mr. Bennett would have had the satisfaction of knowing he had played the cards dealt him by fate to the very best of his ability.

Editor's note

by Chris Lamb

It would be good to have news of long-standing club members who have now moved away from Beckenham. So if you have contact details for any former members of the club, please tell me, so that I can ask them for their news for inclusion in future issues of the newsletter. Contributions for the newsletter are always welcome, and can be e-mailed to me at chris7lamb@yahoo.com.