

Beckenham Bridge Club

Newsletter

August 2008

Message from the Chairman

by Nick Kanaar

When I first tried this absorbing game (seems only yesterday but was in fact quite a few years ago) Claudine and I were advised by Pat Hepburn that we should take lessons before attending Spring Park Bridge Club. After doing so we were allowed, initially, to play at Bromley and on our very first night were placed on a table with words from Jim "please look after them as they are new". Quite delightfully, David Brown welcomed us in his lovely manner and explained a few facts of life at a bridge club. The initiative of Bob Manser with the Improvers section is reminiscent of the encouragement that we were given. We had a similar act of kindness from the bridge playing world on arriving (flustered, nervous and late) for our first E.B.U. summer congress at Brighton when we were put at ease at the first table by a man we had not met before, who went by the name of John Durden.

Emboldened, we played a few times and you may imagine the euphoria when Jim Mulcahy woke me up a few weeks later to congratulate us on coming "top" the night before - a "purple patch" night obviously. That led us in the heady enthusiastic days to want to play seven days a week and twice on Sunday. Other new members were a couple of teenagers bearing the name Draper who, then did not know the word "pass" but, arguably, went onto better things (but neither has had the good fortune to achieve chairmanship of the club which we all then held in awe). Notwithstanding our awe we were introduced to Beckenham and sponsored by a couple of friends called Molly and Ted. I could write a tome of the lovely people that we have met and still know through Beckenham Bridge Club but there is another message that I wish to convey.

I am pleased and delighted to be Chairman and happy to do as much work as is necessary and called for. What I want to add is a greater sense of pride in representing Beckenham B.C. Reviving the basis of that pride is something that can only be achieved by the members themselves. This means YOU. The first building block is that of attendance. The second is making sure that each evening is pleasant and enjoyable. The third is to create an efficient operation. The fourth is to build external respect by having an enjoyable efficient club that interacts with other clubs in the area as well pulling its weight in Kent.

I and your committee can pull all those strings together and I will do my best to ensure that. But the underlying reality is that it is up to the members, individually and collectively. Please attend and encourage others to do so and please hide the frustrations and offer "best behaviour at bridge" decorum at all times. You have a good committee and many people who work rather hard to do their best to make things run smoothly and efficiently. I did not fully appreciate what all that meant and implied and my first few weeks have been something of a baptism of fire. I have learnt that hard work in itself is not quite enough and all the strands need pulling together. There have been a number of points of detail that I have thought that I would quietly sort out and have, quite delightfully, found them already done and unsung. Those quietly contributing in all sorts of ways are too many to name.

Even those who brought criticisms to my attention have done so in a constructive manner. I want to hear all criticisms voiced, or written, clearly and fully (with or without proposed solutions). I promise an open mind, to listen and to take on board all problems because I have a real and genuine intent to react constructively and purposively. There is a "Suggestions Box" out for those who might wish to be anonymous. Please tell me how you think this club might improve in each and every aspect. Please assume that (even though I am a sensitive and delicate rose) I am as thick skinned as I appear. Please let us all move forward because I really, really want a strong sense of pride in being Chairman of this wonderful club.

NEW EBU LAWS FROM 1st AUGUST 2008

The EBU website has further information on the new laws, showing changes affecting players, and changes affecting directors, at: <http://www.ebu.co.uk/lawsandethics/misc/2007laws/default.htm>

Shuffle: You should **shuffle your cards** after the hand has been played before returning them to the board.

Hesitation: You are still required to **agree a hesitation**, for example when it happens and the TD should be summoned if there is any disagreement. The new laws state that the best time to claim actual damage is at the end of the hand (rather than on sight of dummy).

Explanations: You are now **allowed to ask about the meaning of an individual call** in the opponents' auction, but it should not be done in such a way as to suggest a call or play to partner such as "does that 2H bid show hearts?" – perhaps indicating that the questioner holds hearts.

Questions: Sometimes players ask questions because they do not think their partner has understood. It is illegal to do so.

Clarification Period: There is a short period between the final pass and the first card being faced when questions are asked. This is now called the Clarification Period. Members of the declaring side may consult their own system cards during this time, for example to make sure nothing has been mis-explained.

Dummy: When you put the dummy down you must display it with the **lowest ranking cards nearer declarer**.

Revokes: Dummy cannot ask a defender whether he has revoked. However, he can still ask declarer.

Revokes: Defenders are allowed to ask one another whether they have revoked. This returns to a situation outlawed in 1987.

Quitted Tricks: Players are now allowed to point out that a quitted trick card is pointing the wrong way. Declarer can do it at any time; dummy or defenders can do it only until the lead is made to the following trick.

Members' responsibilities

Tournament Controller and Referee	David Blacknell
Directors Controller	Gretta Blacknell
Club Captain & Inter Club Competitions	David Hudson
Website	Dorothy Holland/Neil Wotherspoon
Club Trophies	Chris Lamb
Stationery / Playing Cards	Jenny Kirkby
Duty Roster	Tony Smith
Ladder Co-ordinators	David Blacknell and Dorothy Holland
Master Points	Alan Gearing
Membership Roll	Gwyneth Davies
Newsletter	Chris Lamb
Publicity	David Hudson and Terry Crispin
Refreshments supplies	Claudine Kanaar
Membership Applications	Gwyneth Davies 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
Improvers Section	Bob Manser

Finding a partner

It is club policy not to publish or make available the telephone numbers or addresses (postal or e-mail) of members. Sometimes this creates difficulty in arranging games. If you are content for your details to be available to other members please either let the Secretary know or put them on the club notice board where a list is available. The Chairman is anxious to play with as many members as possible and will welcome arranging games.

The committee is also keen to have as many email addresses available as possible since this helps in giving notices and information and in distributing the newsletter. Please give the Secretary your e-mail address if you have one.

Would you like to represent Beckenham Bridge Club? *by David Hudson*

Our club fields teams annually in a number of competitions such as the Corbett Cup, the Corbett Plate, the Mitchell Salver, the Haycocks Trophy, and the NICKO (National Inter Club Knock Out). If you are interested in representing the club in any of these competitions please let me know by e-mail on dtchudson@hotmail.com or by mobile on 07855 915756 or by speaking to me at the club.

Beckenham narrowly lost the 2008 **Haycocks Trophy** match against Farnborough Bridge Club. We were always slightly behind but it was only decided in the final quarter when we eventually lost by 29 IMPs. The match was played in a good spirit throughout and we were made very welcome by our hosts. The chocolate fudge cake during the break was memorable. Beckenham were represented by David Hudson and Gwyneth Davies, Tim Lloyd-Williams and Farah Diggins, Bob Manser and Anne Jasper, and Paul and Jean Fishleigh.

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:

Gillian Foster: 4 star Premier Regional Master
Allan Foster: 3 star Premier Regional Master
David Hudson: 8 star Premier Master
Bryan Pinto: Premier Master

Lawrence White: Advanced Master
Erica Engel: Master
Thomas Brettle: Area Master
David Fletcher-Smith: Area 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.

Club members' achievements

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). 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.

KENT EVENTS

Larsky Cup (Kent championship pairs)	1st: Ian Draper & (Jeremy Willans) 4th: Tony Smith & Chris Lamb
Phillimore Cup (Swiss Pairs):	1st: Ian Draper & (Jeremy Willans)
Green Point Butler Swiss Pairs:	1st: Ian Draper & (Jeremy Willans)
Green Point Bracketed Teams (A):	1st: John Griffiths, Keith Ashcroft (+ teammates)
Gill Cup and Brook Shield (Leagues)	Winners: Gillian & Allan Foster (+ Jennifer Viles, John Hemington)

Ladder Competition

The new champions, Keith Ashcroft and Michael Prior, won at a canter this year. With four first places and two second places, they finished with a record score of 164 points (out of a possible maximum of 168). Congratulations to them and to those contesting the other top places, where Dorothy Holland and Roger Pechey pipped their rivals for the runners-up spot by the narrowest possible margin.

1	Keith Ashcroft & Michael Prior	164 points
2	Dorothy Holland and Roger Pechey	133 points
3	Steve Burton & Phil Jones	132.5 points
4	Bob Manser & David Hudson	130 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 2008)

	VPs
1 Nick & Claudine Kanaar, Ron Renton, Anne Jasper, Norma Cruickshank	102
2 Dorothy Holland, Tim Lloyd-Williams, Malcolm & Pat McBain	93
3 David & Gretta Blacknell, Neil & Jackie Wotherspoon	89

Anita Freeman, Joyce Levy, John Dennis, Alan Gearing & Terry Crispin won the Sealed Handicap

Larsky Heat (February 2008)

3 pairs qualified for the Kent Pairs Championship:	
Tony Barker & Bob Bruty	61.81%
Dorothy Holland & Pat McBain	57.29%
David Hudson & Gwyneth Davies	57.19%

2 further pairs qualified as reserves:
Tony Smith & Chris Lamb; Marie Horlock & John Amor

Kirsch Bowl - Ladies Pairs (May 2008)

1. Pat McBain & Dorothy Holland	68.91%
2. Gretta Blacknell & Jenny Kirkby	54.20%
3= Jan Johnson & Helen Gibbons	52.10%
3= Pat Hepburn & Mary Pearce	52.10%

Sam Russell Club Championship Pairs (May/June 2008)

1. Neil & Jackie Wotherspoon	59.36%
2. David & Gretta Blacknell	59.27%
3. Dorothy Holland & Pat McBain	55.40%

Mixed Pivot Teams - Bentley Trophy (July 2008)

	VPs
1 Nick Kanaar, Pat Hepburn, John Penwill, Ron Vogt	52
2 David & Jo Lightfoot, Neil & Jackie Wotherspoon	40
3 Tony Price, Tim Lloyd-Williams, Malcolm & Pat McBain	39

Johnson Cup - Mens Pairs (May 2008)

1. Chris Lamb & Tony Smith	67.08%
2. Colin Game & Ossie Saeed	58.75%
3. Roger Pechey & Tim Lloyd-Williams	57.08%

Knock Out Teams – Final (June 2008)

Steve Burton, Michael Prior, Tony Price & Tim Lloyd-Williams beat
Ian Draper, Phil Jones, Keith Ashcroft & John Griffiths by 14 IMPs.

Maud Kirk Plate (for KO Teams 1st round losers)

Winners: Jan Johnson, Jo Lightfoot, Jackie Wotherspoon, Julia Price & Helen Gibbons

Olly Biro Pairs – cut for partner (June 2008)

1. Gwyneth Davies & David Blacknell	65.00%
2. David Hudson & Morag Robertson	63.75%
3. Roy Creamer & John Penwill	59.38%

A cautionary tale

by Steve Burton

In the hand featured here, Michael Prior and I were playing N/S on Board 1 of a first round Hubert Phillips match against a West London team. Our team mates were Malcolm and Karen Pryor.

Board 1 Dealer North Love all

	<u>North</u> ♠ K Q x x x ♥ x x x ♦ 10 x x ♣ x x	
<u>West</u> ♠ x ♥ A Q 10 x x ♦ A Q 8 x x x ♣ x	<u>East</u> ♠ x x ♥ K J x x x ♦ K J ♣ x x x x	
	<u>South</u> ♠ A J 10 x x ♥ - ♦ 9 x ♣ A K Q J 10 x	

Auction – Room 1

N	E (MP)	S	W (KP)
-	-	1S	2H ¹
3S ²	4H	4S	5D ³
-	5H	5S	-
-	-	-	-

- Notes: 1 Karen & Malcolm play their Michael's Cue Bids either weak or strong
 2 Preemptive; would bid 3H with high card raise
 3 Telling partner what goes on so that if he is stronger he can act sensibly over 5S

Very reasonably, Karen led her singleton club and conceded the obvious 13 tricks for -510.

Auction – Room 2 (This was much more ambitious and contentious)

N (MP)	E	S (SB)	W
-	-	1C	1H ¹
1S ²	3H	4D ³	4H ⁴
-	-	6S	- ⁵

- Notes: 1 Shows a five-card suit; would double with four spades
 2 It was unclear whether West had an unusual 2NT available
 3 I occasionally try a psychic cue bid, so why not a psychic natural suit bid?
 4 West questioned North at length about the 4D bid and failed to make the obvious double
 5 Again West might have doubled but made the pass after some thought

East decided to lead the deceptive JD, and six spades was quickly one down. North questioned the validity of the diamond lead and the hand was phoned through to Heather Dhondy. She ruled that the lead was inadmissible, and adjusted the score to +1010 for N/S – a big turnaround from -50.

My plan as South was always to bid 6S if 4D was undoubled. As to East's lead options, if he is in possession of unauthorised information (as the director ruled), he is not permitted to lead a diamond if there is a logical alternative. Choosing to lead a diamond would need to be a "70%" action.

In this sort of situation, when a suit you hold strongly is bid on your right, you need to be cautious about asking too many questions. A quick pass or, if appropriate, a double, is much more sensible in view of the way the laws are currently framed.

Where Are They Now?

An occasional column, in which we ask former members of the club who have moved away from Beckenham to tell us how they're getting on in their new location. If you have contact details for any former members of the club, please tell the editor, so that he can ask them for their news for inclusion in future issues of the newsletter. First off is a former treasurer of the club

Pyers Pennant

After one year as treasurer at Beckenham, I moved south in 2002. Camilla and I now live near Eastbourne, with fine views across the Cuckmere valley. Between us we've lost various bits, breast, bladder, colon, two hips and a knee, but are still going strong and keeping a large garden under control. I sit on the magistrates' bench at Eastbourne, but will retire next year.

I now belong to Eastbourne Bridge Club, which has its own premises and offers bridge six days a week with monthly Swiss teams/pairs events. We use Bridgemates and will soon have a dealing machine. As a member of the committee, I have introduced two leagues, modelled on the Beckenham ladder, except that scoring is by cross-imps. When running the club's cup competitions I am often frustrated by members' reluctance to enter. I am also on the Sussex county committee, and organise two of their competitions. Now a Life Master, I feel that I'm still playing a superb game, but regret that (as at Beckenham) others so often seem to play just slightly better.

Here's an amusing hand from a Swiss Teams competition

3NT bid and made on 16 points

It is rare to bid three no trumps with less than twenty high-card points between the hands. It is rare to make nine tricks in no trumps with less than twenty high-card points. And when they do occur, these rare events are generally based on a long running suit.

In the hand below, both events occurred simultaneously; three no trumps was bid and made with only sixteen high-card points between the hands and no suit longer than five cards.

	<u>N</u>	Dealer East.	None vulnerable			
	♠ 5					
	♥ 10 7 4					
	♦ 10 9 8 6 3					
	♣ 10 9 8 4					
<u>W</u>		<u>E</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>S</u>
♠ K 7 6 2		♠ A Q 10			1D	2N
♥ 9 6 5 2		♥ K			No	3H
♦ -		♦ K J 7 5 4 2	No	3H	No	3N
♣ A 7 6 5 2		♣ K J 3	No	No	No	.
	<u>S</u>					
	♠ J 9 8 4 3					
	♥ A Q J 8 3					
	♦ A Q					
	♣ Q					

Lead - 2 of spades (fourth best)

South's 2 No Trumps was Wemble, showing the majors. 3 No Trumps showed a diamond stop and a strong hand, and was an invitation to North to pass or correct to 4 hearts; but North, with a near Yarborough, was too dazed to respond. However, this was a day when the gods were smiling on North-South...

West assumed, without asking, that South's 2 No Trumps was 'unusual', showing the two lowest unbid suits, namely hearts and clubs. So the defence started off with four rounds of spades. Declarer won the fourth round, and led the ace of hearts, felling East's king. After that, the hand was easy, the ten of hearts provided an entry to dummy for the diamond finesse, and nine tricks (two spades, five hearts and two diamonds) rolled in.

... and next, an e-mail received recently recalls an earlier period of the club's history ...

Ian Payn

I am a former member of Beckenham Bridge Club (I left the area some twenty years ago) and just dropped in on the club's web site more or less at whim. I read Bob Manser's article in the February newsletter, and was saddened to read of the death of Bob Oliver. I remember the two of them playing together well (by which I mean that I remember it well, not that they played well!) and to a young man and inexperienced player "The Two Bobs" were indeed the friendliest and most encouraging of opponents.

On the bright side, I was pleased to note that Maureen Hodgson and Pat Hepburn were still going strong. Pat probably doesn't remember me, but Maureen might, as we played together often. The results may not have been spectacular, but it was always a pleasant and amusing evening. Bob mentions several names, many of which are familiar to me, and they bring back happy memories. There was no better place to start off as a (relatively) young player in the eighties.

I am now chairman of the Young Chelsea club in London, and have been for some time. We too face declining attendances, and we too try various measures to rectify this. Some are successful, some less so, but the important thing is to keep trying. I was particularly interested in the "Integration Evenings" where, presumably, improvers play with more experienced players. We have novice duplicates, but I feel your idea is good for the next stage, so I'm going to nick it. Shamelessly. I will crack the whip to make sure that enough goodish players help out. After all, if people aren't coming into the game, there won't be a game.

Anyway, best of luck with your efforts, and long may the Beckenham Bridge Club prosper.

EBU Strategy Proposals approved

At an EGM of the English Bridge Union held in June, the strategy outlined in the last issue of the newsletter was approved. This means that if Beckenham Bridge Club remains affiliated to the EBU, all members of the club will become EBU members and will contribute financially to its work. The present annual subscription and Master Point charges will be replaced by a "Pay to Play" (P2P) fee, which all players will pay each time they play in a club session.

The changes will not happen immediately, but will be implemented in April 2010, after detailed arrangements have been worked out and approved.

Doing Your Duty

All members are asked to co-operate in acting as duty member when their turn comes round. At present this happens about once every 7 months. Failing to turn up for your duty can inconvenience other members, so please make sure you contact **Tony Smith** if you find that you are unable to do the duty that you have agreed to. Thanks are due to all those who reliably turn up as requested, and especially to Denis Protheroe, who has done several extra turns as duty member recently.

New Memberships

We welcome as new or returning members, Terry Atkinson, Thomas Brettle, David Fitcher-Smith, Valerie Gunson, Omer Jamall, Gordon McDermott, Joan Tinson and Jenny Watson, and wish them a long and enjoyable association with the club.

Editor's note

by Chris Lamb

Contributions for the newsletter are always welcome, and can be given to me at the club or e-mailed to me at chris7lamb@yahoo.com.

Welcome Back to All Improvers

by Bob Manser

Monday 14th July saw the resumption over the summer months of our 'Improvers Pairs' section. It was good to welcome some new players and also to see the return of many familiar faces. On the first week we had four full tables, on the following week we had five. Clearly we have room for more and would welcome any contacts from our new faces as well as from regular Beckenham members.

By request, this year we are offering some hints in the form of handouts on a number of conventions that have been specifically requested by these players.

Again this year, with the cooperation of our club members, it is hoped to arrange an 'integrated pairs' evening later in the season in order to give an opportunity for our improvers to meet the rest of the club members under playing conditions. I know that I can rely on you all to support this event. As previously, our 'Improvers' would sit E/W so that using Bridgemate they would be able to see their results instantly.

Peter Crofts

Peter Crofts died peacefully in his sleep on 19 July, four days after playing in a session at the Club.

Peter, a retired accountant and an RAF Sergeant Pilot during WW2, was an extremely loyal member of the Club who had suffered poor health in recent months. Until then he kept a very full diary and his rare absences tended to attract the comment "Peter's not here tonight". He had a very finely honed critical faculty, delivered in a dry but constructive manner, which not everyone appreciated but which he soon forgot!

Probably the only member who played in a suit and tie, he was a quiet but dangerous player. Any opponents who should have been playing at the two level and went to three were certain to be doubled and over the years Peter was very successful with a wide range of partners. He won a number of Club competitions, including the Individual three times in the last five years. In the days when the Club ran a sweepstake, Peter was a strong supporter of it, and his winnings were a testament to his consistent success in club sessions

A drawback of playing with Peter was that you had to play his system - not hugely complicated - but I dreaded the prospect of Modified Wemble arising. If it ever did, perhaps I didn't notice.

Peter will be sorely missed by many members.

David Blacknell

Valerie Moore

Until the sudden onset of her illness took her completely out of circulation over two years ago, Valerie was a regular attender at the Club. Indeed she had been for as long as I - and I suspect most of us - can remember, and certainly for at least 35 years. She was not only a most loyal Club member but also, throughout that time, played to a high standard with both regular and occasional partners. She had considerable bridge success on a wider stage too, particularly in teams competitions, about which she was characteristically modest. (It was only a week or so ago that I saw for the first time a photograph, which included no less a luminary than Terence Reese in the background, of a presentation to a team of which Valerie was a member along with Peter and Detta Bentley.)

Most of all, perhaps, Valerie will be remembered for a very happy marriage. She and her husband, Brian, were marvellously hospitable hosts. In bridge terms they made an ideal couple. Behind the committed duplicate player stood the relaxed, occasional social bridge player who was proud of his wife's achievements and was perfectly content to look after their (and sometimes others') children while she was engaged in serious competition.

David Lightfoot