

Beckenham Bridge Club

Newsletter

February 2007

Message from the Chairman

by David Lightfoot

In this, my last message as your Chairman (my word, how quickly the past three years have gone!), there are two recent matters on which I must comment.

First, I anticipated in the July 2006 Newsletter that your Committee might need to take action to safeguard the Club's financial position if the level of attendance at our meetings did not improve sufficiently to cover our unavoidable day to day running costs. So it has proved. As the Treasurer will report at the Annual General Meeting on 12 March, we have had to rely on Club reserves to fund a significant operating loss in the last calendar year. This is why we had to increase table money from £2 to £3. At the same time I met Bromley Mytime, our landlords, among other things to make it clear that yet another increase in rent for the Public Halls would be - to put it mildly - most unwelcome (the rent they presently charge us is 50% higher than it was three years ago). Happily, these two measures seem to have done the trick. We are now at least breaking even on a daily basis and we might, I hope, begin in the longer term to rebuild our financial reserves. How far we succeed in that is very much in your hands as it depends on increased attendances on Club nights.

Second, on a much more upbeat note, our trial of Bridgemate last August was a success and - due to a most generous donation from Mrs Valerie Gunn in memory of her late husband, Peter - we have been able to buy enough of this equipment to serve 14 tables (with the possibility of adding to that number later). Bridgemate is now regularly used for the first division of the ladder competition and we are planning to use it more regularly on other Club nights as directors become more familiar with setting it up and running it. Incidentally, one of the main tasks of a director is the initial setting up, which in turn depends on settling the table movement for the evening as quickly as possible. As a rather nervous fledgling director, I know how helpful it is to directors if you arrive to play in good time and settle at the tables early, so it would be of great assistance to them (generally, not just when we are using Bridgemate) if you would bear that in mind.

Finally, this Newsletter accompanies the formal notice of our Annual General Meeting to be held on Monday, 12 March. Please note the 7pm start. I look forward to seeing you then. In advance of that, may I remind you that annual subscriptions (held at the bargain rate of £12) were due on 1 January and should in any case be paid no later than the date of the Annual General Meeting. If any of you have not yet had the opportunity to pay, the Treasurer, Paul Fishleigh, or I would be happy to accept to accept your subscription.

Beckenham teams

by Allan Foster

The Club has entered a team in the Kent Teams of 8 Competition (Corbett Cup). In the first round our team of David Brown, Iris Willis, Dorothy Holland, Roger Pechey, Bob Manser, David Hudson, David and Gretta Blacknell beat a strong Farnborough team who conceded after 24 of the 32 scheduled boards, when Beckenham were 87 IMPs up. Our Corbett Plate team have not yet played a match.

In the National Inter-Club Knockout (NICKO), the 'A' team (David Hudson, Bob Manser, Paul & Jean Fishleigh) have progressed to the third round. The 'B' team (Allan & Gillian Foster, Jennifer Viles, John Hemington) lost in the first round, but have progressed to the second round of the Plate competition.

In addition to the above teams, we will also need a team of eight to play in our annual friendly match against Farnborough B.C. for the Haycocks Trophy in June. Could any club members who wish to play please contact Allan Foster.

Ladder Competition

The ladder competition is shaping up to be a tightly fought affair this year, with several pairs in close contention for the top spot, including the winners from last year and the year before. The leader board after the January round, with four rounds still to go, looks like this:

1=	Neil Benn and Peter Crofts	114 points (40)
1=	Catherine Draper & Michael Prior	114 points
3	Ian Draper and Gerald Tredinnick	113 points
4	Steve Burton and Phil Jones	110 points
5	Tony Barker and Bob Bruty	92 points (12)
6=	Tim Lloyd-Williams and Anne Jasper	84 points
6=	Terry Crispin and Patrick Orpen	84 points

Figures in brackets show points awarded temporarily to an absent pair. Points for absence are used solely to determine qualification for the Divisions and are excluded when calculating the final rankings.

Club members' achievements

Congratulations to club members who have achieved fine results in various external competitions during recent months. If you do well in a competition away from Beckenham, please tell Marie Horlock or the newsletter editor, so that we can record your achievement in the next newsletter. Bracketed names are of non-Beckenham players who were part of the successful teams.

NATIONAL EVENTS

National Inter Club Knockout (NICKO)

Ian & Catherine Draper (Anne & Neil Rosen), representing Farnborough, reached the 2006 final, where they lost by 15 IMPs.

KENT EVENTS

Kent Congress – October 2006

Swiss Teams	Steve Burton was a member of one of the joint winning teams. Ian Draper, Catherine Draper, Gerald Tredinnick & (Joe Sivayogan) were joint third.
Championship Pairs	Michael Prior and Keith Ashcroft were fourth, and were winners of the Ray White Cup.
Champagne Pairs	Michael Prior and Catherine Draper were second
Butler Pairs	Tony Price and (Mirna Goacher) were joint third
Golf Print Trophy	Yanne Green and Brian Grimwood , with two fellow members of Chislehurst Golf Club, won the Kent heat, so have qualified to play in the regional final

Masterpoint Promotions

Congratulations to all those club members who have attained Ranking Promotions since the last Newsletter, and especially to Catherine Draper for reaching the peak of the ranking system:

Catherine Draper - Premier Grand Master

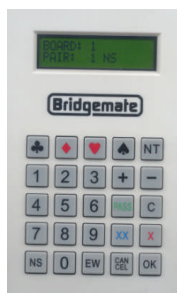
Keith Ashcroft – National Master
Jean Fishleigh - 1 Star Premier Regional Master
Paul Fishleigh - 1 Star Premier Regional Master
Anne Cartwright - 6 Star Premier Master
Roger Pechey - 6 Star Premier Master
Brian Richards - 6 Star Premier Master
Maureen Hodgson - 5 Star Premier Master

Richard Gibbons - 5 Star Premier Master
Helen Gibbons - 3 Star Premier Master
Neville Grant - 3 Star Premier Master
Anne Jasper - 3 Star Premier Master
Jan Johnson – 3 Star Premier Master
Nick Kanaar - 3 Star Premier Master
Angus Bain – District Master
Farah Diggins – District Master

For those who have had more than one promotion during this time, only the latest is listed here. 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.

Bridgemates

by Dorothy Holland



By now, you will probably have used the Bridgemate wireless scoring system which has been in use at Beckenham over the last two months. No more paper travellers with the inevitable scoring errors, instead a simple white box on each table, which communicates with the central scoring computer via a server - and the session's results are available within minutes of the last board having been played. In fact, it is even possible to have a continuous rolling updated score if your director deems it appropriate.

The Directors are to have a training session on the use of Bridgemates and the integrated scoring program, ScoreBridge, which will then be introduced on club nights on a regular basis.

Both players and directors will benefit from using the Bridgemate: players will find the Bridgemate an easy to use device and will enjoy the instant feedback on their results after entry of each result, and life will eventually be a lot easier for the Director as he or she no longer has to key in the results from travellers. Players enter their club membership numbers at the start of a session so there is no need for names to be written on the backs of travellers. Copies of membership numbers are available at the club; visitors are assigned a number to use. At the start of each round the Bridgemates display the pair numbers and board numbers for that round so everyone should be in the right place at the right time and with the correct boards! All that remains is for North or South to key in the contract and the result. Mistakes can be easily corrected by pressing the 'cancel' key. No need to calculate the result - the Bridgemate system does it all for you. The Director can make adjustments or award averages at the end of the session, using the ScoreBridge program.

It really is everything you ever hoped for, and then some. As one of the usual scorers, it's a boon for me. No more late nights trying to guess what North *really* meant when the score on the traveller is ambiguous or wrong pair numbers are recorded. No more having to guess the names of players not written on the backs of travellers! No more hours at the computer scoring. The results are available immediately after the last board has been played and I can upload them to the website within minutes of arriving home.

But how did Beckenham afford to buy these expensive gadgets? The answer is through the generosity of Valerie Gunn who donated £2500 to the club in memory of her late husband, Peter, who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to support the club. I wonder what he would think if he could see the Bridgemates in action!

Club competitions

Congratulations to those members who have achieved success in club competitions in recent months. It's especially nice to see such a strong entry for the Flitch. We surely prove that, contrary to popular belief, married couples can enjoy successful partnerships at the bridge table as well as away from it. Here are the top three placings in the main competitions played since the last issue of the newsletter.

Individual Championship (August 2006)

IMPs

- 1 Gretta Blacknell 384
- 2 Moti Motahar 372
- 3 Lawrence White 364

Cicely Caro Mixed Pairs + Watson Flitch (October 2006)

1. Catherine Draper & Neil Benn 63.99%
2. Roger Pechey & Lesley Pechey * 57.44%
3. Paul Fishleigh & Jean Fishleigh 56.25%

* = winners of Watson Flitch

Vi Bulman Pairs (November 2006)

1. Tim Lloyd-Williams & Gerald Tredinnick 68.87%
2. Bob Bruty & Tony Barker 63.15%
3. Steve Burton & Tony Price 62.85%

National Pairs Heat (January 2007)

Qualifying Pairs

Ian Draper and Catherine Draper
Bob Manser and David Hudson
Allan Foster and Gillian Foster

Think it through

by Chris Lamb

In a recent newsletter, we were able to admire a brilliant play made by Ian Draper on the hand below. North led the spade king, covered by the ace, and trumped by South. Ian now underled those beautiful clubs to put partner in with the ten, so she could cash a spade and then give him a second spade ruff – the only way to beat the contract.

♠ J962 ♥ AKQ7432 ♦ T ♣ 2	♠ KQ8753 ♥ 9 ♦ KJ5 ♣ T74 N W E S	♠ AT4 ♥ J6 ♦ AQ8764 ♣ 83	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="4" style="text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">The Bidding</th> </tr> <tr> <th style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">N</th> <th style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">E</th> <th style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">S</th> <th style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">W</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">1S</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Dbl</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2C</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4H</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	The Bidding				N	E	S	W	1S	Dbl	2C	4H	P	P	P	
The Bidding																			
N	E	S	W																
1S	Dbl	2C	4H																
P	P	P																	
	♠ VOID ♥ T85 ♦ 932 ♣ AKQJ965																		

Most of us can only dream of coming up with such a spectacular idea, and even if we did have the imagination, and the bravery, to try it, we would probably just lead a little club and pray very hard that partner had the ten. The expert thinks things through more carefully, however, and Ian actually led the 9 of clubs, not a little one. What's the difference, you might think, and isn't there a danger that partner might actually let the 9 run? Ian's explanation of his analysis is very instructive.

First, you know that partner hasn't got a singleton club because they would certainly have led one at trick 1. So cashing a top club and then trying to give partner a ruff will not work. Next, it must be obvious to partner that you've underled a huge club holding in order to receive a second ruff, so overtaking the nine with the ten is clearly essential. Partner will not allow the 9 to run.

But what if declarer, not partner, has the 10? Expecting a club loser anyway, declarer might lazily follow low to your club lead. It is the 8 in dummy that means the 9 is the correct play because if you lead a low one and declarer fails to play his 10 it will run round to the 8 in dummy.

So let's suppose a sloppy declarer (holding 10x) fails to cover your 9, which holds the trick. The clubs are now very likely to be divided 7222, so you have a second club to cash, and have already ruffed a spade, and may conceivably find a trump trick in partner's hand. So if your 9 holds you would probably now play clubs from the top hoping for some sort of trump promotion when partner holds the singleton King of trumps or just possibly Qx (you know from the auction that declarer must have 6 or 7 hearts).

If your club holding was AKJ9xxx, it would also be right to lead the nine, since you are on a two way shot: a) when partner has the queen, and b) when partner has the ten and declarer has the queen but fails to play it.

Many thanks to Ian for providing this analysis, which, of course, he had to work out at the table.

New Memberships

We welcome the following new members who have joined the club since the last newsletter: Derek Churchman, Ritti Crown, Susan Tully.

We wish them a long and enjoyable association with the club.

Editor's note

by Chris Lamb

As always, but without much optimism, I'd like to appeal for articles or bridge hands for the next issue. If you don't want to boast of your brilliancies, then tell us about your disasters. What's that? You don't have disasters? Then we'd love to hear how you avoid them. You can find me at the club after Easter, or e-mail articles to me at chris7lamb@yahoo.com. Contributions should reach me by mid-June.