

Beckenham Bridge Club

Newsletter

February 2008

Message from the Chairman

by Bob Manser

Towards the end of my year as Chairman at Beckenham it is, perhaps, the time to review those things that have been successful and those maybe not so successful.

First must be the success of our long-term venture to eventually add to club membership through welcoming the 'Improvers'. It has been my personal pleasure to be involved with this but in the organisation many others, who perhaps have not been so prominent, have supported me. And I should not forget to thank all those club members who have played in our two integrated evenings and especially to Steve Burton for his sympathetic directing on those occasions. Perhaps the greatest personal reward has been the number of these improvers who have commented on the friendly way in which they have been welcomed. We will continue with our separate sessions during the Easter holiday period and again over the summer months and I hope that we will again be able to hold a number of integrated events later in the year.

Combining the Christmas event with one of our charity evenings proved to be highly successful. Ten teams of our regular members competed together and a further five tables of 'Improvers' played in a pairs event. In total more than £300 was raised for the charity – the Demelza Trust. With sixty present, the opportunity was taken to announce the appointment of Pat Hepburn and Maureen Hodgson as Life Vice Presidents. These two ladies join the late Jack Caro in passing their ninetieth year whilst still supporting our club – Congratulations to both of you! We look forward to many more years of your company at the bridge table.

I welcome the many new members who have joined us during the year and helped to swell our numbers. However, I have to express my concern over attendance on some evenings when numbers have dropped - especially during the Christmas period.

Whilst writing Bob Oliver's obituary I started to wonder; what was different all those years ago when we had to restrict membership numbers? What made it necessary to play our pairs championship over three evenings – a preliminary, semi-final and final? One thing I do remember from that time was that many members, if not most, had regular playing arrangements. For example, they would play with one partner each third Monday, another on the first Wednesday and another on the fourth Monday and so on. Arrangements were so 'fixed' that when there was a fifth Monday, Wednesday or Thursday in the month many members were at a loss. It was then that a past president, Maureen Hodgson, suggested that we have 'cut in teams' on the fifth day – a brilliant idea that somehow has been subsumed. Whilst I am aware that similar fixed arrangements still exist, it is no longer the norm. Some members may like to consider reviving it. If you make a regular partnership arrangement there is less temptation to stay at home on a cold winter's evening asleep in front of the TV! Bob Oliver used to play with Gwen, Tony, Julia, Sheila, Valerie, Detta, Peter, Maureen, Sali, as well as many others and myself. My 'turn' was the first and third Monday every month – others had similar arrangements for other days. I urge members to resurrect a similar arrangement so that we may look forward to:

Bigger and Brighter Bridge at Beckenham

AGM – Monday 10 March 2008, 7.00pm

The agenda and other information on the Annual General Meeting are at the back of this newsletter. Please bring them with you to the meeting.

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.

NATIONAL EVENTS

Tollemache Cup **Ian Draper** and **Gerald Tredinnick** were members of the Kent team that won the inter-county teams of eight championship in February 2008.

KENT EVENTS

Fleming Femina (Ladies Pairs) 2nd: **Jackie Wotherspoon** & (Barbara Howarth)
3rd: **Liz Blande** & (Sue Jury)

Kent Congress – Swiss Teams 1st: **Michael Prior, Keith Ashcroft**, (Jill Skinner, Jeremy Willans)

Kent Congress – Swiss Pairs 2nd= **John Griffiths & Graham Pollack**
2nd= **John Amor** & (Neil Benn)

Dyer Smith/Hunter Cup (Mixed Pairs) 3rd: **Phil Jones** & (Christine Kempton)

George Griffiths Cup (Senior Pairs) 3rd: **Allan & Gillian Foster**

OTHER EVENTS

EBU Autumn Congress – Burlington Cup: 1st: **John Griffiths & Graham Pollack** + teammates

Tunbridge Wells Congress
Swiss Teams 3rd: **Marie Horlock, John Amor**, (Richard Currie, Doreen Charteris)
Swiss Pairs 1st: **John Amor** & (Richard Currie)
Friday evening Pairs 1st: **Michael Prior & Ian Draper**

Ladder Competition

Last year's champions, Ian Draper & Gerald Tredinnick, are not competing this year. At just past the halfway stage, Keith Ashcroft and Michael Prior, after some consistent performances, have opened up a commanding lead over their nearest challengers. The remaining four rounds will determine whether they can maintain that lead. The leading positions after the January round are:

1	Keith Ashcroft & Michael Prior	124 points
2	Steve Burton & Phil Jones	104.5 points
3	Bob Bruty & Don Gibb	97 points (16)
4	Dorothy Holland & Roger Pechey	86 points
5=	Pat Hepburn & Mary Pearce	84 points (16)
5=	Bob Manser & David Hudson	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.

Masterpoint Promotions

Congratulations to the following club members, who have attained Ranking Promotions since the last Newsletter:

Graham Pollack: Life Master	Allan Foster: 4 star Regional Master
Keith Ashcroft: Premier National Master	Derek Churchman: County Master
Helen Gibbons: 4 star Premier Master	Margaret Crawley: County Master
Bryan Pinto: Premier Master	

If your name has been omitted, please inform the editor, and it will be included in the next newsletter.

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 issue of the newsletter.

Individual Championship (August 2007)

	IMPs
1 Peter Crofts	157
2 Derek Churchman	155
3 David Hudson	147

Cicely Caro Mixed Pairs + Watson Fritch (October 2007)

1. Jackie & Neil Wotherspoon *	73.51%
2. Peter Crofts & Dorothy Holland #	61.72%
3. Rachel Bingham & Neville Grant	60.42%

* = winners of Watson Fritch
= winners of Cicely Caro Cup

Vi Bulman Pairs (November 2007)

1. Alan & Gillian Foster	63.19%
2. Chris & Lindsey Lamb	60.88%
3. Peter Crofts & Dorothy Holland	59.38%

National Pairs Heat (January 2008)

Qualifying Pairs

John Erdos & John Goodwill
Bob Manser and David Hudson
Lawrence White & Derek Churchman
Liz Blande & Mike Rafferty

Jack Hibbert Trophy

for highest percentage score during calendar year 2007

Bob Bruty & Tony Barker 76.19%

Bob Oliver

When I joined our club the very first person that offered a bridge date was Bob Oliver. This was the beginning of a friendship that continued for over thirty years. Bob would not have claimed to be one of the best players but he was without doubt one of the most popular – greeting the opposition on arrival and, if time allowed, telling one of his amusing tales. I recall one occasion, returning from a weekend at Brighton, his *au pair* asking, “Did you have a good time Mr. Oliver?” to which he replied, “Yes, the accommodation was satisfactory, the food was very good, but we played rubbish!” After that she always asked, “Did you play rubbish?” Bob was very competitive - his idea of ‘rubbish’ was not winning. Sadly Bob lost his sight some years ago and was no longer able to play, but that didn't end his interest in the club. Whenever any member visited him he always wanted to know how the club was progressing, who had won the competitions and news of members he hadn't seen for some time. The one event he looked forward to every year was the Christmas Party, which he attended up to the Christmas before he died. He would sit at a table with his glass of ‘red’ and enjoy the company so much he would still be talking about it months later. Sadly Bob had to spend his last months in a nursing home but I can confirm that when I visited him four days before he died he still wanted to know how the club was progressing.

He will be sadly missed by so many.

Bob Manser

Ted Marner

Ted's sudden death last September was a shock to us all.

Despite losing his father at the age of nine when, during the war, he went down with his ship in the Mediterranean, Ted followed him into the navy and spent much of his nine years service in submarines. On demobilisation he joined the Civil Service as an overseas telegraphist remaining in post for over a quarter of a century until taking early retirement.

Previously a London County member, Ted had played bridge in both the Civil Service League and the London Business Houses before retiring in 1983 when he changed his county of allegiance to Kent and joining both the Beckenham and Gravesend bridge clubs. His constant support for Lilian at their West Wickham club will be remembered by all those who had their early instruction at their afternoon sessions. He will be sadly missed there as well as at Beckenham.

Bob Manser and Lilian Fawn

An unfortunate lead?

by Steve Burton

Here is a hand on which my team lost imps in an South Eastern Bridge League match recently.

Board 7- Game All - dealer S

	<u>North</u>	
	♠ 10 9 8 6 3	
	♥ 3	
	♦ Q 9 6 3	
	♣ A 9 4	
<u>West</u>		<u>East</u>
♠ 7 2		♠ 5
♥ 10 9 8 6 5 2		♥ K Q J 7
♦ K 7		♦ 10 8 4 2
♣ Q 10 8		♣ 7 6 5 2
	<u>South</u>	
	♠ A K Q J 4	
	♥ A 4	
	♦ A J 5	
	♣ K J 3	

The Auction:

S (DB)	W (SB)	N (GB)	E (TP)
1C [1]	P	1H [2]	P [3]
1S	P	2S	P
3C [4]	P	3H [4]	P [3]
3S	P	4S [5]	P
4NT [6]	P	5D [7]	P
6S [8]	P	P	P

Comments *[based partly on N/S explanation of their system]:*

[1] Blue Club = 18+

[2] >5 HCP, <3 controls (A=2, K=1), game-forcing

[3] Twice missing his chance to double for a heart lead

[4] Cue bid showing 1st or 2nd round control

[5] No extras

[6] Roman Blackwood, despite [5]

[7] 1 or 4 Aces

[8] The usual over optimism with a good hand; North's bidding is entirely consistent with:-

♠ xxxx ♥ Q ♦ xxxx ♣ Axxx, when 6S is hopeless & 5S could fail.

The D Q963 & C9 are 'Golden' cards which put the slam with the odds.

The Play:

After some thought I ventured ♦K (remember [3], and partner can hardly be expected to double 5D with just ♦Q). We were soon entering -1430 (losing 13imps). How do you think the play should go if East requests a heart lead?

Analysis:

I think South should still make 6S by drawing trumps, eliminating Hearts, cashing AD, crossing to dummy to lead a second Diamond, end-playing West. You need only consider the 4-2 / 5-1 / 6-0 diamond breaks, since 6S is cold on any 3-3 break. However would declarer have found this line at the table?

["Who would believe me if I said I would?" says South]

A difficult hand

by Jenny Kirkby

♠ K 7 6 4
♥ A K Q J 10 2
♦ K 7 3
♣ -

♠ Q 8
♥ 8
♦ J 5 4 2
♣ A 10 6 5 3 2

♠ 10 9 2
♥ 9 6 5 4 3
♦ A Q 8
♣ J 4

♠ A J 5 3
♥ 7
♦ 10 9 6
♣ K Q 9 8 7

The auction:

South	West	North	East
		1H	P
1S	P	3S	P
4S	P	5H	P
5S	P	P [1]	P

[1] Reluctantly

The Play:

What will West lead? The ace of clubs allows South 13 tricks if the risky spade finesse is avoided, so as not to let West in to lead diamonds. With the spade queen dropping in two rounds, South makes 4 spades, 6 hearts, 2 clubs and a club ruff.

On the lead of a low diamond, East wins with the queen, and the best defence is for East to follow with ace and another diamond. The contract now depends on finding the queen of spades, but with diamonds eliminated, West is no longer the danger hand, so South is likely to take the percentage play of finessing the jack of spades, thus finishing with only ten tricks.

If East fails to cash the ace of diamonds after winning the queen, you can make 12 tricks (by dropping the queen of spades in two rounds and taking a ruffing finesse in clubs).

Try playing a heart contract by North. The lead of the ace of diamonds gives you 12 tricks, following the line above. But a club lead restricts you to 11 tricks, because you can't avoid two diamond losers.

So how far should North push the bidding? Look at your opponents – will they lead an ace against a slam? If either of them does, the slam can make. But should you really be in a slam on that hand?

Communication changes

by Lindsey Lamb

Here are two new decisions from your committee.

We currently do two mail-outs a year – AGM papers and a newsletter in February and the club programme and another newsletter in August. – which is costly in postage. From summer 2008 we will no longer post these papers to you. Please email me - lindsey1lamb@yahoo.com - if you want them emailed to you, and there will also be copies available at the club for collection.

To make it easier for members to contact one another to arrange to play, a list of members' phone numbers will be kept on the noticeboard. To have your number included, please sign the sheet on the noticeboard. This scheme is voluntary, and no-one's phone number will be listed unless they have requested it.

Bridgemates – some tips

by Chris Lamb

Most members have become dab hands at using Bridgemates by now. But there are one or two ways in which we can all help each other and avoid unnecessary delays when we're using the Bridgemates. Please remember that North is always in charge of the Bridgemate.

If you sit North:

- At the start of the evening, **wait for the director's instructions** before attempting to enter any information into your Bridgemate – the central Bridgemate server must be programmed before it can accept inputs from the individual Bridgemates.
- **Enter information during the progress of each hand**, rather than waiting till it's over. Board number, contract and lead can all be entered while dummy's hand is being tabled, for example. Then only the result needs to be entered when the hand has been played – this can save valuable time.
- When East returns the Bridgemate to you after verifying the result, you can inspect the results obtained on other tables if there is time to do so. **Please turn the Bridgemate round** so that all the players can see the display.
- When a board is not played, ensure that this is entered appropriately:
 - o for a passed out board, press the 'Pass' key instead of entering the contract
 - o if the director awards an average (or A+ / A -) – e.g. if a board is removed due to slow play – the director must enter it, then or later. Players can not do this themselves.
 - o a board not played for other reasons (e.g. an absent pair) should be entered as not played by entering a zero in place of the contract. This displays as 'NP'.

If you sit East:

- When North passes you the Bridgemate for verification, **wait till the result appears** on the screen before pressing OK. Pressing it prematurely will not speed up the appearance of the result.
- After verifying the result, **return the Bridgemate to North**, who will then allow the rest of the players to see the other results obtained on that board.

Everyone:

If the move has been called and you are already late in moving, please do not cause further delay by insisting on inspecting all the previous results for the board just played. You can look at these online later if you have access to internet.

Stop and wait!

Do you regularly go through red lights when you're driving? Probably not, but many of us do so at the bridge table. We are so used to whipping out our 'Stop' card before making a jump bid that we tend to treat it as a tiresome technicality and forget what its purpose is. It warns your left-hand opponent that your next bid is at a higher level than required, so they must reflect on it before taking any action. In particular, they should not pass quickly, since that could give their partner unauthorised information. You should leave the 'Stop' card on the table for around ten seconds, and the next player may not bid or pass until the card is replaced. It is an offence not to pause, so let's try to remember that, and obey the 'Stop' sign when we see it.

New Memberships

We welcome the following new members who have joined or rejoined the club during the last six months: Rachel Bingham, John Erdos, Susan Hughes, Kate Mitchell, Chris Percy, Bryan Pinto, Graham Pollack, Stephen Walsh, Jilla Wright, Peter Wright.

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

Editor's note

by Chris Lamb

Contributions for the newsletter, especially any interesting hands you've played, are always welcome, and can be e-mailed to me at chris7lamb@yahoo.com, or given to me at any time.