

# Beckenham Bridge Club

Newsletter

March 2009

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## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

*by Nick Kanaar*

Time flies when you are having fun! Never more true than when applied to a year in the chair at Beckenham Bridge Club with its notable learning curve. But surprisingly the first year is about up. It has been fun and rewarding and the quiet continuation (in spades) of assistance from so many is one of the factors in making it so rewarding. The help support and assistance is one of the high points of the club but I would address a couple of the lower ones.

While it is just a myth that this is an unfriendly club, that myth is still abroad. Please renew your efforts in speaking to the outside world to dispel it as well as continuing the welcome within. It is so easy to be caught up in the concentration that the cards and an ambitious partner demand but please be aware and avoid unwittingly giving the wrong impression. This is only a game however serious.

Slow Play continues to annoy. Our directors are being asked to look at this and specifically to impose strict time tables so that it will be imperative that if the first card has not been laid on the table when the move is called then the board will be taken away. Whether this results in "an average" or a "not played" or an adjusted score where fault can be attributed is something that the committee and directors will consider further.

We can all help by being aware of slowness. Obviously the following all helps with vital seconds: it should be part and parcel of an opening bid to already anticipate the range of partners responses so that one's rebid is essentially ready and needs no delay; please make your opening lead at once and afterwards record the contract on Bridgemate or your own card whilst declarer is planning his play

Late Play also causes some concerns and is partly the result of starting late. Directors are to be requested to get play starting promptly and, however regretful, to be less tolerant of those who arrive after 7.30 p.m. And, of course slow play compounds the problem.

The E.B.U. and universal membership. This scheme will almost certainly come next year. The main thing wrong with it is the dictatorial and ham fisted approach adopted by the E.B.U. None of us like being told what to neither do nor do we like being patronised. But I urge you to rise above these complaints and its idiocy and look at the broader picture. The essence is a sincere intent to preserve and enhance the game of bridge. I am sure that each and every one of us can see the benefit in that. If these are your earlier years in bridge or the later ones where serious competition holds no interest we should all be prepared to support the game that has given us so much enjoyment. The reality is that it will not actually cost you much and your committee is devising methods whereby it is hoped that the club can absorb most if not all the cost. Please think positively and support the club and the game.

Thanks for the fun and best wishes for another year of enjoyable bridge.

## New Memberships

We welcome the following new members who have joined or rejoined the club during recent months: Sheila Barham, Valerie Chibnall, George Fish, Mike McHugh, Joan Standish.

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

## 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).

### NATIONAL EVENTS

National Ranked Masters Pairs	1st: <b>Ian Draper</b> & (Jeremy Willans)
Premier Grand Masters	4th: <b>Keith Ashcroft</b> & (Dean Mortlock)
National Masters	
Tollemache Cup	<b>Ian Draper</b> was a member of the Kent team that won the inter-county teams of eight championship in February 2009.

### KENT EVENTS

George Griffiths Cup (Senior Pairs)	3rd: <b>David Hudson &amp; Bob Manser</b>
Hunter Homines (Mens Pairs)	3rd: <b>Ian Draper &amp; Michael Prior</b> 4th: <b>Steve Burton</b> & (Malcolm Pryor)
Fleming Femina (Ladies Pairs)	2nd: <b>Dorothy Holland &amp; Pat McBain</b>
Kent Congress – Swiss Teams	2nd: <b>Eddie Richart</b> & teammates
Kent Congress – Swiss Pairs	3rd: <b>John Griffiths</b> & (Graham Pollack)
Dyer Smith Cup (Mixed Pairs)	1st: <b>Ian Draper &amp; Gwyneth Davies</b>
Brook Shield (Area Leagues playoff) Viles)	1st: <b>Allan &amp; Gillian Foster</b> , (John Hemington, Jennifer Viles)

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**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.**  
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## Ladder Competition

With three rounds to go, last year's champions, Keith Ashcroft and Michael Prior, have found some consistent form and have opened up a small lead over their nearest challengers. Their pursuers are tightly bunched and the battle could well go to the wire. Will we be seeing new champions this year, or can the holders cling on to their lead? The leading positions after the February round are:

1	Keith Ashcroft & Michael Prior	128 points
2=	Pat McBain & Jackie Wotherspoon	121 points
2=	Bob Manser & David Hudson	121 points (32)
4	Richard Creamer & Mike McHugh	117 points (16)
5	Colin Game & Norman Innis	117 points
6	Tony Barker & Bob Bruty	104 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:

Ian Draper: Premier Grand Master	Ossie Saeed: 5 star Premier Master
Steve Burton: Grand Master	Joe Dos Santos: Tournament Master
John Griffiths: Life Master	Alf Ricketts: Tournament Master
Jean Fishleigh: National Master	Farah Diggens: County Master
Paul Fishleigh: National Master	Tom Brettle: District Master
David Hudson: 9 star Premier Master	David Futcher-Smith: District 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 2008)

1. John Penwill	67.70%
2. John Erdos	65.22%
3. Bettine Dunne	62.73%

### Watson Flicht (September 2008)

1. Malcolm & Pat McBain	67.36%
2. David & Gretta Blacknell	54.17%
3. Nick & Claudine Kanaar	49.54%

### Cicely Caro Mixed Pairs (October 2008)

1. Gordon McDermott & Joan Tinson	62.20%
2. John Penwill & Patricia Hepburn	60.12%
3. Malcolm & Pat McBain	58.63%

### Vi Bulman Pairs (October 2008)

1. Jalil Bhuia & Joe Dos Santos	61.67%
2. Bob Bruty & Tony Barker	58.33%
3. Farah Diggens & John Penwill	56.25%

### National Pairs Heat (January 2009)

#### Qualifying Pairs

Roger Pechey & Dorothy Holland  
John Griffiths & (Tricia Gilham)  
Ian Draper & (Anne Rosen)  
Eddie Richart & Peter Bentley

### Larsky Cup Heat (February 2009)

#### Qualifying Pairs

Pat McBain & Dorothy Holland  
Chris Lamb & Tony Smith  
Ian Draper & (Jeremy Willans)  
Gwyneth Davies & (Jill Skinner)  
Claudine & Nick Kanaar

### Jack Hibbert Trophy

*for highest percentage score during calendar year 2008*

John Penwill & Carol Hawkins	73.02%
Len Dreebin & Joyce Levy	72.87%
Bob Bruty & Don Gibb	71.43%

## Club Focus, March 2009

The latest issue (Vol II, no. II) of the EBU's newsletter for players in affiliated bridge clubs is now available. Articles in this edition include: Down Our Club, Banking for Bridge Clubs, Bridge Tails, Bidding Tools: Responding to 1 NT – Baron 2♠, Club insurance, EBU Updates, Bridge on TV, Strong 2 Openings, etc.

The current issue, as well as earlier issues, can be downloaded from the EBU website:  
<http://www.ebu.co.uk/cf/documents/Currentedition.pdf>.

For those without internet access, a copy of **Club Focus** is also available on the Beckenham Bridge Club noticeboard. You may borrow it to read at home, but please bring it back when you next come to the club.

## 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. This spring we've received a letter from abroad ... well, from another country, anyway.*

**Simon Burrage** writes:

Thanks for news from Beckenham Bridge Club. I now live in Hay-on-Wye, 200 yards inside Wales. My garden borders the old stone wall of Hay and looks down on the Offa's Dyke Path and those stalwarts who walk the walk.

Glorious country abounds but as I am essentially urban, it was important that public library, doctor, post office, bank, etc should be within walking distance. To say nothing of over 20 bookshops and nearly as many pubs and caffs. My daughter lives half a mile away and keeps a vigilant eye on me. As there are several active hunts nearby, my garden doesn't see as many foxes as yours; but we've had hedgehogs, a heron, and hen peacocks.

I'm now an international bridge player as I play at a club in Brecon in Wales, and at Ledgemoor in England. My bridge partner's name and mine receive frequent mention in the Hereford Times for achieving a 'top' (Honest!). You will also be amazed that I teach bridge to U3A members. The game is doomed, you might think.

There is a lot of social bridge and at least once a month I am invited to play in other peoples' houses or in charity bridge 'drives'.

There are not too many secrets in Hay. As an ex-submarine commander I've been cajoled into becoming chairman of the local Royal British Legion; and my hobby of oil painting has led to being asked to talk to the local art club.

I send my best wishes to all at Beckenham, and may the club prosper. As for myself, I find that in my eighties I have become a large toad in a small puddle. Which suits me very well.

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***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.***

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## High level bridge

*by Don Gibb*

Mid-January saw my annual trip to Champagne, in the French Alps, for a combined ski/bridge holiday. The mountains here rise to over 10,000 ft, so we were, quite literally, playing high level bridge.

The participants came from all over Britain, so it was a most pleasant surprise to find two other Beckenham chaps (Chris Lamb and Jay Rastall) making up the party.

Both the skiing and the bridge attract a varied range of talent, but there always seem to be some excellent players: on one occasion, for instance, David Kendrick headed the pack. There was no exception this year, as Lorne Anderson, from Weybridge, held sway both at the table and on the piste.

The weather was perfect, with plenty of snow and bright blue skies all week. The experience was only slightly marred by an early rib injury and the presence of four dentists in the party (including the director).

I am pleased to report that the Beckenham trio all gave a good account of themselves and, all in all, it was a splendid (if painful) break. As a way of enjoying superb scenery, physical exercise and mental stimulation, there is really nothing to beat a ski/bridge holiday.

## Everyone's passed – what shall we do?

*To re-deal or not to re-deal – that is the question. Here we present the arguments for and against. Which side are you on?*

### Let's have a re-deal

Those of you who read *English Bridge* magazine may well have perused Jeremy Dhondy's article (February 2009 issue), in which he responds to correspondents' queries concerning the Laws and Ethics of the game.

There was one particularly interesting point discussed concerning Law 22A1 (I wasn't aware that there was such a law – but that merely confirms my shameful ignorance of many of the game's laws). Law 22A1 says, effectively, that if, at one table, a deal is passed out on the first round of a club pairs, the score must be recorded as a 'pass-out' and the hands must be put back in the board without a re-deal.

I am not sure how many club pairs actually observe this procedure. Jeremy Dhondy defends this rule by saying that, later in the evening, other players may decide to open on the hands in question. Well, they might or they might not, depending on their methods – some pairs, for instance, may be playing a mini 10-12 No Trump (although I have met precious few pairs at Beckenham who do).

Jeremy Dhondy defends the law by quoting a recent example from his own club, where a particular deal was passed out at 10 out of 13 tables, but was opened at 3 tables, leading, apparently, to some interesting bidding and play. But he seems to miss the point that 10 out of 13 pairs are deprived of one board of play – not good value for your table money! And, at Beckenham at least, if a board is passed out on the first round, it is rarely opened on subsequent rounds.

If there are players at Beckenham who surreptitiously re-deal a board on the first round, I am not going to lose any sleep over it. I, like many others, like to play as many boards for my money as I can, and if the current law is 'equitable', then my name is Garozzo!

*John Penwill*

### It's unfair to re-deal

The Law that prohibits re-dealing a 'passed out' deal is soundly based. Its purpose is to allow players' bidding judgment to be tested against that of other players in the room.

Every bid you make during an auction is based on your judgment of the best action to take at that point. A decision to pass is a judgment just as much as an actual bid.

Say you pick up a poor 12-count which you decide is not worth opening. You are entitled to back your judgment against that of other players who automatically open on any 12-point hand. But if the deal is thrown in when everyone passes, you never get the chance to have your judgment vindicated. That is unfair.

In practice, it is extremely rare for a deal to be passed out at every table. Just this week, an unremarkable deal was passed out at our table in the first round, but was subsequently opened at five tables out of eight, with E/W going down each time. Our opponents had shown good judgment in passing their hands, so why should they have been penalised by having their good result nullified?

If a deal is opened at the first table and is then passed out at some subsequent tables, there is no re-deal, and all the results count. But if exactly the same deal had reached the tables in a different order, it might have been re-dealt, and would not have counted. It makes no sense to have the outcome of a deal depend on the pure chance of which table it starts at. Whoever gets the deal first, everyone should have the same chance to decide what action to take on it.

The assertion that players are deprived of a board when it is passed out and not re-dealt, is not strictly accurate. They have not had to demonstrate their declarer or defence skills, but they have had to exercise their bidding judgment, and that is just as important.

So let's stick to the law, and give everyone a fair chance to show their judgment.

*Chris Lamb*

## Inter-club competitions

by David Hudson

### Kent Contract Bridge Association - Teams of Eight Competitions

In previous years the Corbett Cup, Corbett Plate and the Mitchell Salver have been knockout competitions run by the K.C.B.A. This year however there was a different format. The events were held simultaneously over two Saturdays in February. On the first day 16 teams took part in a multi teams event which then ranked the teams into order. The top 5 teams then played off for the Corbett Cup. The next 5 teams were grouped to play for the Corbett Plate and the remainder to play for the Mitchell Salver. Our Beckenham team came 6<sup>th</sup> on the first day which left us playing for the Corbett Plate on the second Saturday. We then came equal third out of the five in that grouping.

This was a teams of 8 event where substitutes were allowed. The following 5 pairs played for the Beckenham Bridge Club team during this competition:-

Dorothy Holland and Roger Pechey  
Neil and Jackie Wotherspoon  
Chris Lamb and Tony Smith  
Paul and Jean Fishleigh  
Nick and Claudine Kanaar

Particular thanks must go to our Chairman and his wife, Nick and Claudine Kanaar, for turning out at short notice on the second day's play.

The final outcome of the competition was that Chislehurst "A" team won the Corbett Cup, Gravesend won the Corbett Plate and Count 123 won the Mitchell Salver. One club fielded 3 teams, three clubs fielded 2 teams and seven clubs entered only 1 team. I am keen that we endeavour to enter more teams in future years and will be very pleased to hear from any pairs who would like to be involved.

### **N.I.C.K.O**

The NICKO stands for the National Inter Club Knock Out which is for bridge club teams of four throughout the country. The draw for the early rounds are done on a geographical basis so that teams do not have to travel too far, but in the final stages of course you could meet another team from any part of the country.

This year Beckenham had two entries in the competition. The Beckenham 'A' team as it was colloquially known, was comprised of Paul and Jean Fishleigh, with Bob Manser and David Hudson. This team got off to a good start with a comfortable win against Hawkhurst 'A' team in the first round. In the second round however we met a much stronger team in Maidstone 'A' and were well beaten, and this Maidstone team have since progressed comfortably to the last 32 teams.

Our other team known colloquially as Beckenham 'B' team is comprised of Dorothy Holland and Pat McBain, with Neil and Jackie Wotherspoon. This team started with a real local derby against Farnborough 'A' team and after a very competitive match, and recount, were beaten by the cruel margin of just 3 IMPs. That allowed them entry into the NICKO Plate where they have progressed well. After a walkover in the first round against Thakeham 'B', they beat Hawkhurst 'A' in round 2 and are now due to meet Eastbourne 'B' for a place in the final 32 teams. We wish them every success in representing our club.

Some bridge clubs such as Young Chelsea often enter up to 10 teams into this competition. At Beckenham we are unlikely to achieve that but we are always keen to maximise our teams in this competition and I shall be very pleased to hear from any pairs who would like to be entered for future years. Speak to me at the club or email [dtchudson@hotmail.com](mailto:dtchudson@hotmail.com).

## Muddying the waters

by Chris Lamb

Bridge is a game of errors. We make them all the time – in the bidding, in the play, and even in the post mortem. What distinguishes the experts from us lesser mortals is that they make fewer mistakes than the rest of us, and are not often fooled into misreading the situation. So when, by making a deceptive play, you induce an expert to go wrong, perhaps you can be excused a particular feeling of triumph. Take this deal from a recent club evening:

	Dealer North	E/W vulnerable	
	<u>North</u>		
	♠ J 10 4 2		
	♥ 4		
	♦ K 10 9 7 5 2		
	♣ 7 6		
<u>West</u>		<u>East</u>	
♠ K 9 5 3		♠ A Q 7	
♥ A 3		♥ K Q 10 8 2	
♦ J 8 6		♦ 4 3	
♣ 10 8 5 2		♣ Q 9 3	
	<u>South</u>		
	♠ 8 6		
	♥ J 9 7 6 5		
	♦ A Q		
	♣ A K J 4		
<u>Auction</u>			
N	E	S	W
pass	1H	1NT <sup>1</sup>	pass
2NT <sup>2</sup>	pass	pass <sup>3</sup>	pass

- Notes: 1. 15-17  
 2. Transfer to diamonds  
 3. 'Ah, partner's made an invitational raise, so with a minimum I'll pass'

Your bidding, as South, has been dreadful. First, you have overcalled 1NT on an unattractive holding which you might have done better to pass. Then you have inexcusably forgotten that you are playing four suit transfers opposite the 1NT overcall. So you find yourself in 2NT which has only a poor chance of making. The defence could start by cashing 6 top tricks in the majors. If they fail to do this, you'll get home provided the jack of diamonds drops singleton or doubleton, giving you an entry to dummy's diamonds by overtaking the queen with the king. But the chances of that are less than 1 in 3, so you're not optimistic.

The defence start with two top hearts, then East unwisely cashes the queen, establishing your jack, while West (one of the club's top players) discards a spade and you throw two small diamonds from dummy, trying to suggest you have no prospects of establishing the suit. East now leads a small club, so you rise with the ace (finessing the jack at this point would make the club position obvious). The only legitimate play for eight tricks is to play the diamonds now, hoping the jack will drop. But hold on, since the defence haven't discovered their spades, why not try a bit of deception by leading a spade yourself? This ploy can be effective when short of tricks in a no-trump contract. East wins with the spade queen and understandably continues with a club, so this time you finesse the jack, which wins.

Before playing diamonds, you first cash the winning ♣K and ♥J. On the latter, West has to discard from ♠ K 9, ♥ -, ♦ J 8 6, ♣ 10, with little information to guide him. He must keep the club guard, and is reluctant to bare his ♠K (placing you with the ace), so he lets go a small diamond. Now you play the ace of diamonds, overtake the queen with the king (the jack now dropping) and cash two more diamonds to score +120, giving you 70% for that board.

That's an undeserved result after your bidding errors, but a very satisfying one. But, of course, that smug grin will be wiped off your face by the mistakes you're going to make next.

## Bridge in a cold climate

by Chris Lamb

It may be late March, but the world outside is white, the lakes and even the sea are frozen over and there's a snowstorm blowing. So what better place to be than snug in a comfortable bridge room, with hot drinks and snacks being served, and the prospect of a pleasant evening's bridge to come. I'm in Helsinki, at the renowned Bridge Areena, the main centre of the game in the Finnish capital. Bridge is played there seven days a week throughout the winter, and on Monday to Friday right through the summer, too. The club occupies a very large room (one and a half times the size of the large hall at Beckenham) on the first floor of a modern office building in the Helsinki suburbs. The room is dedicated to bridge, so tables and bidding boxes are permanently set out, and the columns and walls are gaily decorated with bridge motifs and photographs. There's a café counter in one corner where food and drink can be purchased, and a small display of bridge paraphernalia available for sale. There are 26 tables, all of which get used when league matches occur. On a normal club evening there are likely to be anything from 6 to 16 tables in play. The strength of the sessions varies, with the Wednesday session usually being the strongest. Play starts at 6.00pm and finishes at 9.30pm, with no specific interval for refreshments, so players go and buy what they want before play starts or at convenient moments during the evening. The pace of play is quite comfortable, and we get through 27 boards during the session. Bridgemates are in use, and pairs' rolling positions can be seen on the computer screen throughout the evening, with the final results instantly available at the end.

The place is run by Finnish international player, Kauku Kostainen, who was recently battling against the Hacketts at the European Championships. As non-playing director he directs the sessions efficiently and with a light touch, and is happy to welcome visitors and to find them a partner. I am introduced to Kari, my partner for the evening, who regularly drives 60km to his evening game of bridge. Like most Finns, he has good English and, to simplify things, he proposes that we play their standard system, as described on a sheet that he hands me.

The sheet says:

PUOLUSTUSTARJOUKSET  
Heikot hyppäävät välitarjoukset

MERKINANNOT  
Pieni pyytää  
Pieni-iso parillinen = määrä kortteja

... and much more in the same vein.

I confess to him that I'm somewhat overwhelmed by the sophistication of the system, but after he has translated, it turns out that they play a strong no trump with Stayman (no transfers), 4-card majors, weak twos in three suits, simple Blackwood, and reverse signals & discards. I say I think I can cope with that, and we then have quite a good evening, and score well when we find a few accurate defences. One setback happens when I pick up ♠ J 9, ♥ A Q J 7 3, ♦ K Q 8, ♣ K 10 8 and hear partner open 1NT. A transfer to hearts is not available, and we haven't discussed cue bidding sequences, so I opt for a quantitative raise to 4NT as a crude way of ensuring we reach the slam if partner is maximum. Unfortunately he responds 5 hearts, treating my bid as Blackwood, since he's never heard of quantitative raises in NT. Although still in the dark as to his strength, I bid the slam anyway, only to find that it fails on a losing spade finesse. Everyone else has settled in game, since partner is minimum for his bid, with a doubleton heart. But we finish up with a satisfactory 54% after a most enjoyable evening. And as it was a Finnish simul, there's a print-out of the hands.

The Bridge Areena is at Perttulantie 6, Helsinki, Tel: +358 (0)9 684 8168. More details are on their web site: <http://personal.inet.fi/peli/bridgearena/>. Do go along and enjoy a game there if you're visiting Finland any time. You will be made very welcome.

## Editor's note

by Chris Lamb

My name appears rather too often in this issue, for lack of other articles. Unless more contributions are received, future issues will be reduced in size. Everyone must encounter triumphs and disasters whenever they play, so please make a note of yours and let me have the details. Contributions are always welcome, and can be given to me at any time or e-mailed to me at [chris7lamb@yahoo.com](mailto:chris7lamb@yahoo.com).