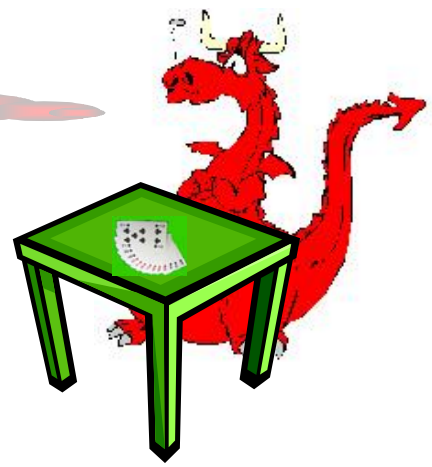


# Welsh Bridge Union

Newsletter 87, December 2010



## Adrian Thomas

*Adrian Thomas, our present WBU President, is one of Wales' very best international players. He is also one of the most genuine, friendly people you could wish to meet. Since he graced our club for several months, many years ago, I have followed his Bridge career with interest, and it is a real pleasure for me to introduce him to the many people who don't yet know him.*



**JK:** *Adrian, no-one could imagine you were anything but Welsh. Where were you born?*

**AT:** I was born in Oakfield, Cwmbran in 1958, but at the age of 3½ I moved with my family to Ruthin. My only memories of there are haystacks and learning to ride my bike. When I was five we returned to Cwmbran (Llanyravon) before moving to my parents' current address in Cwmbran. University took me to Bangor where I studied Psychology (hard to believe) and where I first met you playing bridge in Llangefni Bridge club during 1976-77. While a student I spent time working at the Peebles Hydro hotel as a silver service waiter (I kept scalding myself) and in a Weymouth hotel, on the bar staff. Those were my drinking days. After university I spent a gap year in Australia, returning home after being jilted by a love interest I met there. I couldn't get work in Cwmbran, so I became a residential social worker in Oxfordshire. I resigned after being attacked with a knife. Call me chicken if you like, but it was time for me to

return to Cwmbran to work for the local Authority where I have remained for 26 years.

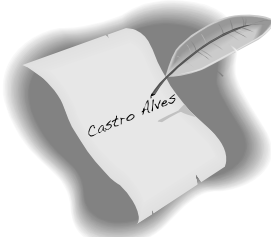
**JK:** *I would call that sensible. When did you first become interested in bridge?*

**AT:** My grandfather used to play cards with me from the time I was five and I used to take friends there for games for three or four people. I played lots of card games as a teenager, all trump based. I also escorted my grandfather to regular winter Whist drives. Mum encouraged this after one or other of us won the Christmas turkey. At these sessions I would get frustrated that I had no say in what trumps were. Then I learnt of bridge and was keen to try it, but school didn't allow people to join the bridge club until the sixth form, so I spent all summer after my 'O'-levels reading bridge books, and presented myself to play on my return to school.

John Tremayne, the bridge teacher, said I should have lessons first, but after much argument he gave me a chance to prove myself and bypass his lessons. The very first session, I won! I was away! Needless to say, I finished near to bottom in the following sessions, so conceded there was more to this game than met the eye and had some lessons after all. Still, I played with great enthusiasm and I soon made the school team, which reached the

**continued on Page 4**

## Jill's Quill



When the sweet showers of April came, in spite of our hard work and good intentions, technology conspired against us and sabotaged the newsletter. You did not get the one we had meant for you (which we would like to think was perfect in every way). For this, we are truly sorry and hope that it will not happen ever again. 'Hope' is the best we can manage, but be assured, we shall do our very best.

This edition has plenty of contributions sent in by some of our best players. There is a piece about them in a European Open Teams match, Wales against Germany, where the bidding is described. It certainly made me laugh. Although 'views' taken were not always the right ones in this particular match, the Welsh team actually played very well during the long days of the competition.

There is also a great account of the two Welsh teams who played so well in the most prestigious English event, the Shapiro Spring teams, that the world was provided with an all-Welsh final. The interest is as much in the drama of it all as in the hands themselves. We have players to be proud of, and the Shapiro teams proved it. Some people find it difficult to follow hands, but practice make perfect and, as with any kind of reading, it becomes easier to do. Don't miss the Bridge articles. Sincere thanks to the contributors.

We are always short of human interest stories, though. It would be so nice to hear news from clubs, so am asking club secretaries to send me news of anything that players in Wales would enjoy hearing about. Good news and funny incidents are always enjoyed.

The WBU Management Committee is now in place, and they are busy holding a telephone/Skype conference once a month. Their main priority is to cater for the club player, and they are open to ideas, pleas and criticisms. Your member is named in the area reports and they are there to help, so contact them if you need help or advice. Three of the area members are Chairman and they are in the journal. Their reports are showing what the

areas are doing to encourage club players to take part in gentle, competitive social bridge. You must read Irene Thomas' account of the Porthcawl congress. It was such a success. What a star! The full results are on the website, and there is a link to the brochure of the very first Porthcawl congress, in 1951. Fascinating. Those were the days when people dressed up for Bridge. None of your men in shorts, few of whom have the figure to justify wearing them on the beach, never mind anywhere else (pic of MT excepted).

As fast as you good people work hard to bring Bridge to new people, the old ones are, inevitably, leaving this world. An idea from our President seems a good one. He believes we should target not just the Third Age people and the youngsters, but people in their thirties and forties who will have many years of bridge ahead of them, and the energy to take over from the rather tired Us. If someone offered to teach bridge in the workplace, this might prove a fertile hunting-ground. Bridge lessons in the lunch hour could concentrate the workers' minds and please the management. Everyone needs a hobby.

Our Management Committee have suggested a *quarterly* newsletter, to keep members more regularly in touch with bridge throughout Wales. Obviously this would mean thinner newsletters, but with more up-to-date news. What do you think? I am going deaf, but I can still catch what you say. Please talk to me. Meanwhile, I wish you a very happy Christmas and a New Year full of good hands, good company and good health.

*Jill*

([Polly64335@aol.com](mailto:Polly64335@aol.com) ☎: 01248 853033)



**Top Twenty in John Hockey Trophy**  
*(most points registered in one year)*  
as at 14<sup>th</sup> November 2010

Adrian Thomas	173
Mary Moore	121
Julian Pottage	118
Peter Goodman	112
Filip Kurbalija	101
Glyn Williams	97
Val Kennewell	91
Graham Simmons	88
Paddy Murphy	86
Steve Kennewell	79
Tony Ratcliff	78
Sheila Pike	74
Joan Jenkins	69
Liz Commins	68
Roger Eastwood	67
Robin Lewis	64
Graham Fifield	63
Patrick Jourdain	61
Gwynn Davis	58
Diane Kurbalija	58

*(Table prepared by Noelle Bond)*

\*\*\*\*\*

**ONCE IN A LIFETIME?**

*by Chris Davies*

How often do you get a chance to make a Lightner double of a grand slam? In a recent WWBA competition I picked up a hand with 6 diamonds to the AQ and 5 clubs to the KQJ, a small doubleton spade and a void in hearts. I was sitting South and the bidding went

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	4♣*	5♦
5♠	6♦	6♠	Pass
Pass	7♦	Pass	Pass
7♠	Pass	Pass	Double
All pass			

*\*Spade support and a feature.*

My double asked for an unusual lead, obviously a heart from where I was sitting; so 7♠ was one off for +200 and a tale I could tell many times. Unfortunately, partner did not receive my telepathic thoughts and led something else; they had a big fit in hearts as

well as spades; and no problems in making the contract for a score of -2470.

Oh well perhaps it will come up again in 10 years time.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Don't do as I say**

*by Mary Moore*

Playing against one of my students one night I finished with egg on my face, and have not stopped laughing since.

After MANY lessons on leads and all the usual entreaties (aces are to kill kings, lead 4th highest of your longest suit against no trumps if there are no clues to suggest otherwise), this is what happened:

♦A, ♦K, ♣A, small club ...

The full deal:

♠ A 6 3			
♥ A K Q 9 2			
♦ 8 3			
♣ Q 9 6			
♠ 10 8 7 2		♠ J 9 4	
♥ 8 7 6 4		♥ J 10	
♦ A K		♦ Q J 7 6 2	
♣ A 8 7		♣ K 4 3	
	♠ K Q 5		
	♥ 5 3		
	♦ 10 9 5 4		
	♣ J 10 5 2		

West	North	East	South
-	1♥	Pass	1NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

You will see how devastating this was: one off when everybody else made 8 tricks or so on a spade lead.

How am I now going to justify my rules? My student's explanation was "Well so often I go to bed with my aces and kings".

I have called this THE WICK DEFENCE; the perpetrator will know why.

I love this game.

♠♥♦♣♠♥♦♣♠♥♦♣

**Adrian Thomas** (continued from Page 1)

Final of the Daily Mail Schools Bridge competition in London. 270 teams entered originally, and only 10 made the final. Croesyceiliog School came 3<sup>rd</sup> overall. How school bridge has changed!

**JK:** *Exactly! I twice took a team to Cardiff (we were annihilated) not long after you must have been playing in it. I first met you when you were at Bangor and you came to play in our club. How come you were so good at the game, even then?*

**AT:** I think ‘card sense’ was there at an early age. Card play first, bidding theory second. I was an avid reader of bridge books during my university years. I’d had only five or six lessons with John Tremayne, my French and bridge teacher. He was also the person who introduced me to Gwent Bridge Academy, where I remain an active member. I still think you can tell those players with card sense and those who learnt bidding first. Regrettably, few of today’s learners have a card-playing background. One learner I spoke to recently said she didn’t know what a trick was when she started.

You can still be a successful player. Bridge requires you to have an analytical brain, a good memory and plenty of experience. People can be successful without the card sense I am talking about; it just takes longer. I wouldn’t recommend they play poker, though.

**JK:** *I know you are clever and have a natural talent for the game, but are there other influences that helped you?*

**AT:** Clever? Many people would disagree! Geoff Evans used to regularly feature me in his Cardiff Christmas party skits. I am one of those impractical people who also has problems expressing what they mean, which always caused Gilly much amusement, the classic being describing the lady of a couple we met on holiday as ‘vaginal’, rather than ‘virginal’. I have a logical, rather than a literate, intelligence.

Of all the bridge writers I have read, Terence Reese and Mike Lawrence have been the greatest influence on me. I prefer those writers who set problems regularly, to make

you think, rather than those who write pages and pages of theory. I hope this comes out when I am doing teaching or training.

I have had advice from many players, most of it humorous and perhaps not suitable for this interview. One piece of advice that has always stuck in my mind, though, was from Victor Silverstone on the Sunday morning of a Wales v. Scotland Camrose match – one of my early ones. I was feeling particularly pleased with myself and proudly announced that I hadn’t made a single mistake in the match up to that moment. “Let’s have a look then”, he said, and proceeded to go through every hand, bid by bid and card by card, pointing out where I could have done better, and asking questions such as “Did you play the six or the three?” In effect he taught me that I might have made *no mistakes that cost*, but that I wasn’t always doing the right thing. From that point on I started analysing my own bidding and play and I have records going back years that I regularly refer to, to make sure I am not making the same mistakes. I shudder at some of the things I did.

He taught me that however good you are or think you are, everyone makes mistakes; and if you learn from them, and not try to justify them to yourself, your bridge will benefit from them. I might try to justify mistakes in public but in private I am my own severest critic. I also learned from this experience that if someone offers you advice in good faith, you do well to listen and learn from it.

The other person who had a big influence on my bridge behaviour, was Gilly: “Aid, don’t keep telling people how good you are. Be more humble.” Believe it or not, I try to follow this advice, but whenever I do something good or win an event, a self-satisfied smirk appears on my face, which comes across as a gloat. Gilly pointed this out, as well. Nowadays I also listen to our non-bridge-playing daughter. Mel, who is wise beyond her years and has me perfectly weighed up. And we are supposed to learn from them!

**JK:** *What do you feel was your greatest achievement in bridge?*

**Adrian Thomas** (continued from Page 4)

**AT:** It has to be winning the Spring Foursomes this year, at Stratford. Prior to that it was winning the Tollemache in about 1993, partnering Filip Kurbalija. Except for the National Open Pairs and the Cambria Cup I have won all the major Welsh events. I am always delighted to win anything. A non-bridge-playing friend asked me the other day whether I was competitive. I just burst out laughing.

However, learning to be a good loser has been important – realising that I have done my best and that winning is not the be-all-and-end-all of playing. Again, I have Mel to thank for this. Children are great at opening your eyes to reality.

One important achievement has been learning to control my temper. I have behaved badly in the past and suffered the consequences. Once, I virtually jumped across the table at my poor partner, Liz Atkinson. Fortunately for me, she never lodged a complaint against me, so I avoided a ban. My temper is probably one of the main reasons Filip and I stopped playing together. I am not the most perfect partner, even now, but I have made tremendous progress in controlling that side of my nature.

I feel pleased with my ability to get the best out of partners and to adapt my game to their style and stage of development. Partners may initially feel nervous, but nowadays they soon learn that I don't bite. I am one of few international players around who is prepared to play with partners of varying standards. Other internationals may think this is mad and wonder how I can possibly enjoy it, but I just like playing cards and the mental challenge it gives.

**JK:** *What would you say were the most important requirements for someone to be a successful bridge player?*

**AT:** The usual things needed for success at any sport or game: dedication, application and practice, practice, practice. We are back to this 'card sense', which is difficult to define. The natural flair for card play must be developed so that you acquire an ability to count and visualise the opponents' and partner's hands, build up pictures from the

bidding, leads and signals, be able to make inferences, form strategies and be able to change tack when the situation changes, so that like driving, it becomes automatic. Here's a funny tale: On the boat back from Ireland one year, I passed the time with Gwynn Davis and Pat Davies (an English world champion) by introducing 'Jacks', a popular Australian game involving taking tricks without jacks in them (jacks are penalty cards). After two or three hands, Gwynn suddenly announced, "You two are counting all the suits. I am only counting trumps!" Pat and I burst out laughing. I suspect Gwynn counts more than trumps nowadays, as it is practice, practice that gets you there and it does improve with time.

One indication of when you're there is when you regularly know the small cards that are winners. Bidding systems can be learnt; card sense needs to be nurtured.

**JK:** *Any funny stories from your bridge experience.*

**AT:** People who know me well will be aware of my love of Ireland and Irish ways.

One of my first ever bridge events in Ireland was the Galway Congress in the early 90s. Filip and I drove over and presented ourselves at the venue at 2.15, for a 2.30 start. There wasn't a soul there. They started drifting in at about 2.30; the event started at 3.30-ish. After about four rounds the director announced he had messed up the movement and we would have to start again. We all peacefully drifted back to our seats – no moans – and the net effect was that the Pairs finished at 1.30 a.m., with drinking time after that! I don't think Fil has attended an Irish congress since, whereas for me it was just the start. Organisation has improved, but Irish congresses are still very relaxed about time-keeping, and I make little attempt to rush the Irish.

The next time, I got Gilly to come. In the Sunday teams, after waiting 15 minutes (yes! Gilly waiting!) for them to arrive, our opponents sat down and North immediately opened one spade. "You can't do that", I said, "you haven't looked at your hand", and North replied "So?" I had at least by now learnt not to disturb the director, so I doubled. "What

**Adrian Thomas** (continued from Page 5)

does that mean?" asked South. Gilly replied she had no idea; we hadn't discussed a defence to the Blind Spade! I have no recollection of the result of the board.

One final Irish tale I borrow from Jim Luck. He arrived back at his B&B at 4a.m. to find he had no key. He gingerly rang the bell and was answered by the owner whose question was "What'll you have to drink?" How could Jim refuse? Not everyone can cope with the Irish way, but the group of Welsh attendees is widening. I get my Irish fix four times a year. Sheila Shea's complaint at last year's Lady Milne was that I was supposed to be the Welsh, not Irish, captain. I have my invite for the 2011 Camrose, whether or not I make the Welsh team for the first weekend in Dublin.

**JK:** *I must point out to the reader that Sheila's 'complaint' was in jest. We all agreed you were a very good captain. But what was your worst bridge experience?*

**AT:** It's all the times I embarrassed myself by losing my temper. I used to feel terrible for days afterwards, but was never good at apologising. Filip, for one, used to get fed up with my saying sorry when I didn't seem to mean it (and sometimes I probably didn't.)

My biggest disappointment was failing to win the Camrose back in 2000. I think we were well clear with about 20 boards to go.

**JK:** *What are the most important things in your life just now?*

**AT:** Without doubt, my daughter, Melanie. Although we have lived separately since she was 4½, we have always got on really well, and I am delighted she still enjoys doing things with her dad. She has also been the reason my temper has subsided, helping me to see that there are more important things in life than bridge. Related to this is that although Gilly and I split up about 12 years ago, in many ways, now, we have grown even closer as I have come to understand and accept why we split up, and my major role in it. We still go on holiday together, and not just for Mel's sake. We also enjoy each other's company – more so than when we lived together. When reminiscing, the three of us poke fun at one another. Mel has, this summer, been well and truly introduced to the Irish. First in Ostend



and now a weekend in Dublin. She is hooked as well, now, even if she doesn't yet understand their Postman Pat jokes.

**JK:** *Congratulations on becoming President of the WBU. What qualities do you think you can bring to this position? What are your plans for the WBU?*

**AT:** Enthusiasm, and empathy for the club player. As President, I am an administrative novice, having concentrated up to now purely on the playing, with teaching and training as a sideline. I stated in my opening speech as President that the keyword of my presidency will be *Development*: of players of all standards, of teaching and introducing new people to the wonderful game of bridge. With this in mind I am touring Wales, visiting as many clubs as will have me, and listening to what people have to say to the WBU. Of course, I am green in the ways of admin, but I have been delighted and refreshed by the positive comments I have received. Yes, I have had negative feedback ranging from accusations of bias towards my friends, to having an unprofessional approach. I welcome open criticism. I need it to keep me on my toes. Most fellow administrators and members seem happy that I am trying to bring a new outlook to the scene. I am prepared to listen and consult. Certainly, at my first Council meeting I felt a collective enthusiasm from around the table. There are many different views out there. Inevitably, some will disagree, but nearly all seem to have the improvement of Welsh bridge at the forefront, and their own personal interests second.

**JK:** *Thank you, Adrian. It has been such fun talking to you. I hope next time we meet, you will tell me some Irish Postman Pat stories.*

## TRUE GRIT

*This article is from Gwynn Davis's brilliant **Cautious Bidder** series on the East Wales Bridge site. Thanks to him and the East Wales webmaster, Bill Parkinson, for giving me permission to use it.*

### The Shapiro Spring Fours

Last weekend – a rather long weekend, running from Friday 30th April to Tuesday 4th May – saw what is quite possibly the finest bridge achievement ever recorded by a group of Welsh players. It also witnessed drama on a scale almost unimaginable for a bridge tournament, with triumph for some and disaster, even tragedy, for others (I know such language is inappropriate in a sporting context, but believe me, this came close). The occasion was the most demanding and prestigious tournament on these islands, the Spring Foursomes, held at Stratford-upon-Avon.

The Spring Foursomes is exceptionally tough. It regularly attracts some of the world's biggest bridge names, along with virtually all the top UK players. Typically there are about 50 teams (51 this year), of which the top 30 or so are serious contenders (the remainder are like you and me, except they have no objection to having their heads bashed in).

Filip Kurbalija and Tim Rees were members of the team that won this event two years ago, and they were once more in the lists with their English team-mates. So were two all-Welsh teams of note, **Denning** (Paul Denning, Patrick Shields, Peter Goodman, Adrian Thomas, and the father and son pairing of Gary and Dafydd Jones); and **Jourdain** (Patrick Jourdain, Tony Ratcliff, John Salisbury and Mike Tedd).

The Spring Foursomes is typical of much top-level bridge these days in that many teams have a 'sponsor' who is paying the other players. Teams also routinely comprise three pairs, partly so that the sponsor doesn't have to play all the time and thereby ruin their chances, and partly because bridge at this level is in any event exhausting. **Jourdain** had only four players, who would therefore have to play throughout; which is to say, for as long as the team survived in the competition.

The Spring Foursomes takes the form of a series of head-to-head matches and is run on

'double elimination' lines: you remain in the competition until you are defeated twice. Teams are seeded, so in the early rounds the strongest outfits are kept apart. **Denning** was seeded 15; **Jourdain** 19. The final stages of the event were available online by means of the magnificent BBO (Bridgebase Online), but until that point was reached those of us not present at the event had to be content with the daily results as reported on the EBU website.

Round 1 (and effectively also Round 2) saw **Denning** and **Jourdain** drawn to play in two separate 'triangles' of three teams. **Denning** won both his matches; **Jourdain** won one and lost the other – once defeated already! In Round 3 **Jourdain** and **Denning** both won, **Denning** thereby retaining his undefeated status.

Round 4 saw both teams encounter strong opposition; again both triumphed, **Jourdain** defeating Ash, while **Denning** overcame Liggins. **Denning** hence remained undefeated, while **Jourdain** was still hanging on in there.

In Round 5 the **Jourdain** foursome came up against the England Junior squad of Paske. They won again. **Denning** faced Mestel and lost. That was their first loss, so now both Welsh teams were once defeated.

Round 6 saw an encounter which many Welsh bridge players would pay good money to see, **Jourdain** being drawn to play the team of Tim Rees and Filip Kurbalija (likewise once defeated). Rees were probably the favourites, but it was **Jourdain** who prevailed. **Denning** meanwhile faced Mizel, and also emerged triumphant. This meant that the two all-Welsh teams had made it to the quarter-finals, no mean achievement in a field of this quality, and especially so for **Jourdain** who had had to field the same four players through six demanding 32-board matches. Could either team go further? We were soon to find out.

In the quarter-finals **Jourdain** had to face Mestel, while **Denning** encountered Allfrey, the No. 1 seeds who featured the redoubtable Tony Forrester and Andrew Robson. Cymru

am Byth!!!! (as an English BBO commentator observed): both Welsh teams won again. **Jourdain** defeated Mestel with apparent ease, whilst **Denning** scraped by Allfrey. What an amazing result – two Welsh teams into the semi-finals; almost certainly (although I stand to be corrected) for the first time ever.

Seven 32-board matches had been completed, and we'd reached Monday night, at which point the **Jourdain** team faced an additional handicap. Tony Ratcliff had not anticipated surviving in the competition this far. He had not booked accommodation for the Monday. More seriously, he was due to be in work on the Tuesday morning, when it was his responsibility to ensure that the company workforce was paid. Tony therefore had to drive home to Barry late on Monday evening. He rose at crack of dawn, and at 6a.m. he was in his office. Whatever needed to be done to fulfil his responsibility to his employer had to be done over the next two hours. A dog-tired Tony Ratcliff then drove the 130 miles back to Stratford in time for a 10.30 start. Not the best way to prepare for one of the most demanding bridge days of your life!

This story, incidentally, greatly entertained the BBO commentators giving their thoughts on the semi-final. They all knew that Tony had travelled a long way, but none of them knew quite where he'd gone. Early on it was suggested (fairly accurately) that Tony had driven 300 miles, but later in commentary it was reported that he had driven 600 miles. "Where to?" asked one commentator incredulously, "Inverness?" It was later confirmed that Tony lived in Barry. Even so, for someone who can give the impression that he has difficulty finding his way across the road, it was a daunting undertaking.\*

De Botton, as the one remaining undefeated team, had the right to choose their semi-final opponents, and chose **Jourdain**. Accordingly the semi-finals were between **Jourdain** and de Botton, and **Denning** and Irens. Both sets of opponents were professional squads stuffed with world-class players. Only one match, that between **Jourdain** and de Botton, was shown on BBO and I watched it all. Needless to say, de Botton were heavy favourites. How would Ratcliff cope with the strain of his journey? Or Jourdain with the strain of

wondering whether Tony would get back? and all this after 64 boards a day straight, over five days, against top-class opponents.

The answer is, they both played magnificently, in my judgement clearly the best pair on view. The match as a whole was fairly error-strewn, perhaps a result of fatigue, but Tony and Patrick made fewer mistakes than anyone else, and there were some moments of high-class bridge. Take this from Tony, sitting West. I'll give you just his hand to begin with, which was: ♠J9753, ♥Q87, ♦A96, ♣82.

The bidding went:

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	Pass
Pass	1♣	3♦	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All pass	

Your partner has made a weak jump overcall in diamonds. It's your lead. Make up your mind before you look at the full hand. I can tell you there is only one lead to defeat the contract, and Tony found it.

This was the hand.

	♠ K Q 8	
	♥ A K 6	
	♦ Q 8	
	♣ A K J 10 4	
♠ J 9 7 5 3		♠ A
♥ Q 8 7		♥ J 10
♦ A 9 6		♦ K J 10 7 5 4 3
♣ 8 2		♣ 7 6 3
	♠ 10 6 4 2	
	♥ 9 5 4 3 2	
	♦ 2	
	♣ Q 9 5	

Tony led a spade. Commenting on BBO, David Greenwood of Northern Ireland had spotted the potential of a spade lead, and the next moment Tony had it on the table. 'Wow!' said Greenwood, 'he heard me'. So the play went: ♠7 to Patrick's ace; ♦J returned to Tony's ace; spade ruff; following which the defenders' heart pips were just good enough to ensure a further natural trump trick. One down! Of course the spade lead was not guaranteed to pay dividends, but it was well reasoned. A touch of class, I thought.



Both **Jourdain** pairs continued to perform strongly, with Jourdain and Ratcliff very much to the fore. After twenty-four boards they led 40-34. A further eight boards and the lead had been maintained: **Jourdain** were ahead, 51-40. Did that mean they were through to the final? Sadly not. One of the quirks of the competition is that the undefeated team, as well as choosing their semi-final opponents, can ask for an additional 8 boards if behind after the regulation 32. So back they went for a further 8 boards. This time the result was clear-cut. The two Welsh pairs played accurately while the de Botton foursome continually overreached in an attempt to make up ground. When the dust settled **Jourdain** had won 74-45. They were through to the final.

The **Denning**/Irens semi-final was not on BBO but we had regular score updates. After twenty-four boards, Denning led by 14 IMPs. Long before the conclusion of the **Jourdain** match, we knew the final result: **Denning** had won 83-49. It was to be an all-Welsh final, played out on BBO by two exhausted teams!

The **Jourdain** foursome in particular must have been operating on automatic pilot by this stage. The team had had to play 264 boards over five days, most of them against strong opponents, with no sit-outs. The **Denning** squad had played just eight boards fewer, but critically, as a team of six, each partnership would have enjoyed regular sit-outs. Needless to say, both teams had done outstandingly well to get this far – a genuine fillip for Welsh bridge, which has enjoyed precious few triumphs in events with this high a profile.

Having played an additional eight boards, the **Jourdain** team had virtually no break before embarking on the final. Amazingly, they pulled out a substantial lead over the first three sets. Again it was Ratcliff and Jourdain who, in my opinion, performed most strongly of the five pairs on view. With twenty-four boards of the thirty-two-board final completed, **Jourdain** led by 51 IMPs to 32, a nice lead to have, but far from decisive. At that point, regretfully and somewhat anti-climatically, I had to tear myself away: to play bridge, wouldn't you know. So for me there was a 4-hour hiatus before I learned the

final outcome. Not wishing to miss any of the drama, as soon as I got home I went to the BBO history of the final, which gives results board by board, as well as displaying the hands.

The **Denning** team had staged a fightback. Crucially, Salisbury and Tedd had played a hand in the wrong game – 3NT rather than 4♥. The Joneses had made no mistake in the other room, so that was 11 IMPs away. There were other minor losses. Still, when the 32nd and final board of the final was put on the table, the 296th board of the event for the weary **Jourdain** team, **Jourdain** was still in the lead, albeit shrunk to a precarious 5 IMPs. This was the final hand of the whole event.

<b>Board 3</b>	♠ A Q 10 7 5 4 2	
<b>Dlr: South</b>	♥ Q 9 7 6	
<b>Vul: EW</b>	♦ Q 10	
	♣ void	
	♠ 9 8 3	♠ K
	♥ 10 8 5 3	♥ A K J 2
	♦ 7	♦ K 9 6 4 2
	♣ Q 10 9 8 3	♣ K J 6
	♠ J 6	
	♥ 4	
	♦ A J 8 5 3	
	♣ A 7 5 4 2	

Gary and Dafydd Jones held the North/South cards for the **Denning** team. They bid to 4♠. In the other room, Salisbury and Tedd signed off in 2♠. It is a thin game, but in both rooms declarer made 10 tricks. +420 for the Jones pairing, +170 for Salisbury/Tedd, and 6 IMPs to **Denning**, who had won the final by 1 IMP.

The six members of Paul **Denning**'s team achieved a result they will have long dreamed of. It is a wonderful achievement, and a positive augury for the future of the Welsh Open team. But some members of the **Jourdain** foursome, notably Patrick himself, have been waiting even longer to win this event. To come up just one IMP short after battling so hard over five days and seeing off so many distinguished opponents must have been heartbreaking for them. It's rare in any sport for those twin impostors, triumph and disaster, to be seen in such close proximity.

*\*Editor's note: Tony once took 9 hours to drive from Cardiff to Aberdovey. When asked "Haven't you got a map?" he replied "No, but I enjoyed the drive. I'm tired, mind you."*

After two years of minimal profits, the first bombshell to hit us was that the EBU had moved the date of its Autumn Congress which now clashed with our congress. Our next problem was that the Rest had extended their season so we couldn't have our congress there.

Finding another venue in the area was very difficult; we were looking from Port Talbot to Rhose. By chance Barrie Robinson tried the Seabank at Porthcawl and whoopee! It was available, the price was right and they would arrange a special accommodation rate from £43 p.p. dinner, bed and breakfast. The only snag was that we had to be out by six o'clock on Sunday. Thinking back, we didn't finish playing until after six last year, and there is a lot of clearing up. We had to change the Sunday timing where possible, having already decided to finish early on Saturday evening at about 7.30. The majority of players preferred the new times.

After the brochures were produced and distributed everywhere, the entries started coming in thick and fast - four times faster than in other years.

Then the Seabank changed hands. Our booking was honoured, but we could only have a carvery and not a buffet lunch on Sunday. My sleepless nights changed from 'When are the entries coming in?' to 'How can the hotel serve a carvery to over sixty people in the one hour we have allocated?'

As the time neared, the entries had already exceeded the two previous years, but I was told the venue could take fifty tables, so not too much of a worry. Other major concerns were transporting the tables and equipment from storage at the Rest, and preparing the hotel for the hordes of bridge players all wanting the same thing at the same time.

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> November arrived and there was sufficient room for the thirty tables needed that day. It was obvious that there was no room in the main playing room for the eight tables of novices I was expecting on the Saturday, in addition to the eighty-four pairs booked in for the main events. Fortunately,

the hotel had another room that they could use.

The main playing room was restricted by a large Christmas tree, and getting forty-eight tables in was a squeeze. It was very congested in one corner, but we managed it.

Amazingly, bookings were up 40% on last year, and the hotel was fully booked two weeks before the event.

The entries may have been better than expected but my bridge wasn't. The standard was very good. With my very tolerant partner we didn't manage to qualify for any of the three Pairs finals. We played in the 'Seagull' - a pivot teams event for the also-rans, only to find four Grand Masters, three Camrose players and three Lady Milne players, all in the same group. We didn't do very well; perhaps I was still concerned about how long now ninety persons were going to take over lunch the following day.

No rest on Saturday evening, as I had to calculate, identify, label and fill the 33 prize envelopes with the £1860 prize money. It took three of us two hours to complete this task. Sunday dawned and forty-eight tables, the maximum, were in play. The venue was FULL. The luckiest team was probably Barrie Jones' team. Their entry was the 48<sup>th</sup> and they won the Teams event. I'm sure they'll enter earlier next year.

My biggest worry for the Sunday, the carvery, was competently managed by the hotel staff, who served ninety-nine meals in three-quarters of an hour.

I like this congress format. It caters for, and gives prizes to, all standards of players as well as their being able to earn green points. Having the novices playing just added to it.

The full results of the nineteen separate events were on the WBU website by Monday evening.

I had difficulty trying to establish whether we could have the venue in 2011. Late on Sunday I had my answer: we could, and my happiest moment came when the WBU president announced the news and a resounding cheer came from the playing room.

*(contd. on page 11)*

The mammoth task of packing and returning the 57 tables and equipment to The Rest was carried out by a band of volunteers, whose help is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Was the success of the congress due to change of venue, the early Saturday finish, or

some other factor? I don't know. Whatever the reason, if you want to play next year you'd better send your entry in early.

**Irene Thomas**

### **PORTHCAWL CONGRESS RESULTS**

Friday afternoon Open Pairs:

Ladies' Pairs:

Men's Pairs (Max Powell trophy):

Mixed Pairs:

Friday evening Open Pairs:

Championship Pairs Qualifier:

RED DRAGON Championship Pairs Final:

LITTLE DRAGON Consolations Pairs:

Novice Pairs:

Saturday evening Open Pairs:

Seagull Mixed Pivot Teams:

Teams Qualifying winners:

Championship Teams final Winners:



Mick Mahoney and Alison Nichols

Aida Aris and Liz Atkinson

Alan Williams and Jim Luck

Fiona Littlewood and Paul Littlewood

Pam Pearce and Susan Sharp

Gilly Clench and Gerald Tredinnick

1<sup>st</sup> Dan McIntosh & Tony Ratcliff

2<sup>nd</sup> Jeremy Dhondy & Alan Kay

3<sup>rd</sup>= Gilly Clench & Gerald Tredinnick

3<sup>rd</sup>= Ian Haston and Peter Milewski

Pru Knight & Adrian Knight

1<sup>st</sup> Pat Smith & Dorothy Legg

2<sup>nd</sup> Viv Brown & Cherry Cadwallader

3<sup>rd</sup> Pam & Alun Jennings

Barrie Cavell and Christine Dean

Marian Brooke, Mike Vail, Margaret Lane,  
Patrick Jourdain

(*Green*) Chris Smart, Jackie Davis, Trevor  
Thrower, Bill Thurl

(*White*) Gwynn Davis, Sue Ingham, Chris  
Rochelle, Liz Atkinson

(*Red*) Diane Kurbalija, Filip Kurbalija, Alan  
Kay, Jeremy Dhondy

(*Blue*) Carol Brown, Albert Brown, Jutta  
Shadforth, Janet Miles

1<sup>st</sup> Liz Commins, Barry Jones, David Birt,  
Philip Felman

2<sup>nd</sup> Mark Roderick, Mike Best, Trevor  
Towers, Simon Richards

3<sup>rd</sup> Paddy Brown, Brian Browse, Robert  
Mabley, Alan Biggs

**DON'T MISS!!!!**

**East Wales Congress**

**St David's Day Sims**

**27<sup>th</sup> March**

**2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> April**

Cwmbran 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2011

Clubs 28<sup>th</sup> February – 4<sup>th</sup> March

Portland Pairs North Wales

Swiss Teams Congress, North Wales

***For further details of congresses: brochure, entry form, etc. see WBU website***

## Area news *(This will be a regular feature, so make sure you get your news to Jill Knight)*

### East Wales

Much subsidising of area events, including free buffets, has helped to stabilise entries; but increasing entries is limited by many players' reluctance to compete with high-status players. We would very much like to help set up events for less experienced or less prominent players but require more input of ideas and work by those players. A £20 prize has been offered to each club for a Handicap event of their choice, specifically to be won by those less often in the limelight.

The Area Pairs Championship (Stan Berger) was won by Diane and Filip Kurbalija, with Ian White and Paul Relph winning the Handicap event.

As expected, Gwynn Davis and Sue Ingham demonstrated the 'down the middle' style needed to win the £10 prize for coming 10<sup>th</sup> in the ten-table event on the tenth day of the tenth month of the tenth year.

The Area Teams (Louis Lermon) was won by Diane and Filip Kurbalija again, assisted by Tony Ratcliff and Dan MacIntosh.

This Area (mostly Joan Jenkins) has again organised the August One Day Events at Cwmbran and the Welsh Foursomes continuing the approved early-starts-and-finishes-with-short-breaks timing policy, with generous and well spread prize structures, more than arresting the decline in attendances, and competing successfully with the Brighton Congress. Our main objective was to create events that were memorably enjoyable and so attract return business, but in practice modest profits were also achieved.

The EWBA charity simultaneous pairs will be held on 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> February (same hands). The commentary is by Adrian Thomas and proceeds will go to 'Help for Heroes'.

The East Wales Congress will be held on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> February.



**Best wishes to Mike Best who is now on the Management Committee**

### Results

1-day events, Cwmbran

#### Saturday Swiss Pairs

- 1<sup>st</sup>: Steve Tomlinson & Ralph Smith
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Mary Moore & Diana Jones
- 3<sup>rd</sup>: Ann Sharples & Helen Ackroyd

#### Sunday Swiss Teams

- 1<sup>st</sup>: Patrick Jourdain, David McAndrew, David Birt, Geoff Evans
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Diane Kurbalija, Aoife McHale, Tony Ratcliff, Peter Goodman
- 3<sup>rd</sup>: Bryan Dyde, Peter Sherry, Mike Davies, Cathy Walker

### EVENTS

**7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> February** EWBA Simultaneous Pairs

**12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> February** Cwmbran Congress

**27<sup>th</sup> March** Webber Cup Qualifier at Cardiff Bridge Club

### Perry Shield & Spickett Bowl:

We are expecting to hold these events at the David Lloyd Centre.

**Tollemache Selection:** The following pairs have been selected to represent East Wales:

Filip Kurbalija (Captain), Diane Kurbalija  
Adrian Thomas, Jim Luck  
Patrick Jourdain, Mike Pownall  
Sue Ingham, Gwynn Davis  
Simon Richards, Trevor Towers  
*Reserves: David Birt, Geoff Evans*

**Leone Sextus Denys Oswolf Fraudatifilius Tollemache-Tollemache de Orellana Plantagenet Tollemache-Tollemache** was a captain in the British Army who died during the First World War.

• *Mike Best*

## Mid Wales

Our Chairman, Mike Tedd, was voted unanimously to be the Mid Wales member on the new Management Board, which is now up and running. We wish him and the Management Committee well.

The Mid Wales Congress was again a great success. Warm thanks to Jean Cuffley and her team for their fine efforts. Jean will also be running the second Camrose next year. 6 teams from 5 countries will be taking part, so it is going to take a great deal of organisation and hard work, and she and her helpers will have a lot of work to do. We wish her every success with this prestigious event.

Next year the Metropole will be increasing its charges. With the cost of hosting the Perry and Spickett this year our funds are depleted, but the increased area membership charge has helped to defray the extra cost a little.

Our two main concerns are to organise a teaching programme and to encourage existing players. To begin with we are looking to visit schools in Aberystwyth to see if bridge lessons can be run there. In order to encourage our existing players, we are holding competitions simultaneously in several clubs; for other events we may try two Divisions so that people do not have to travel too far; other ideas include mid-week events and changing our teams league to a knockout.

The Aberystwyth Congress was held in July. The atmosphere was very friendly and numbers were up by >50%, thanks to better publicity and Green point awards. Directors: Ted Hill & Ken Richardson. Congratulations to all concerned in the running of the event.

*Mike Tedd*

**Best wishes to Mike Tedd who is now on the Management Committee**

### **Aberystwyth Congress July 2010 results**

#### *Mixed Pairs*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Diana Harris & Paul Gagne
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Judy Belcher & Robin Belcher
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sheila Shea & Wyn Williams

#### *Friday Open Pairs*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Mike Short, Fred Rebello
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Keith Shuttleworth, Brian Nicholls
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Rob Pringle & George Novak

#### *Open Pairs*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Lavinia Thomas & Colin Thomas
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Rob Pringle & George Novak
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Janet Ross & Margaret John

#### *Championship Pairs Qualifier*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Diane Kurbalija & Filip Kurbalija
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Kim Marsh & Adrian Thomas
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Judy Belcher & Robin Belcher

#### *Championship Pairs Final*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Sue Ingham & Gwynn Davis
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Judy Belcher & Robin Belcher
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Diana Harris & Paul Gagne

#### *Championship Pairs Consolation Final*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Hazel Heard & Colin Heard
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Daphne Patrick & Joe Patrick
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Keith Shuttleworth & Brian Nicholls

#### *Swiss Teams*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Mike Tedd, John Salisbury, Diane Kurbalija, Filip Kurbalija
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Beth Wennell, Barry Wennell, Gilly Clench, Adrian Thomas
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Judy Belcher, Robin Belcher, Daphne Patrick, Joe Patrick

### **Mid Wales Congress July**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Filip Kurbalija, Diane Kurbalija, Dan McIntosh, Tony Ratcliff
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Andrew Thompson, Mike Fletcher, Stefan Lindfors, Jim Grant
- 3<sup>rd</sup> John Salisbury, Mike Tedd, Mike Best, Mark Roderick

**King Arthur Cup** (Swiss Teams, April 2010): Alan Screen, Jean Cufley, Paul Gagne, Diana Harris

**Harrop-Griffiths** (Mixed Pairs, Oct. 2010): Jo Davies & Ralph Lamb

**McKinley Cup** (Teams of 4, October 2010): Geoff Fielding, Les Mann, Monica Garbett-Edwards, Chris Blackman

**Graded Masters** (held as Simultaneous Pairs, October 2010)

*Overall winners & Bunty Richards Salver:* Dewi Jones & Dylan Raw-Rees

*Norman Riches Trophy:*

Herbie Rowley, David Batterley

*Jodo Cup:* Heather Cummins & Jeremy Dawes

## North Wales

We are sorry to report that Jean Hand has decided to retire from running the April congress. Jean took over from Rona Morgan-Edwards over 10 years ago, having kept the traditional Llangollen Congress, which was struggling, going with many phone calls until it died the inevitable death. She ran the Spring Congress, which eventually moved to Llandudno and then farther East. She also inaugurated the two 1-day events in our area, held on the same weekend. Meticulous in detail, Jean's congresses have always been well received. Congratulations on all her hard work, and best wishes. Now she can enjoy bridge for its own sake, we hope she enjoys her freedom. We shall miss her in April.

Sheila Shea has decided not to relinquish the ATO's job this year as she had planned to do after accepting the National Tournament Organiser role last year. In addition, she is taking over Jean's work with the help of others who will, no doubt, take over from her in due course. We are very grateful for this. Good luck to Sheila and her group.

In competition, North Wales has not particularly shone in the year since Frank and Brian won the Graded Masters. The Perry team did not play to their full potential, and the Spickett team, who were in contention for the Spickett Bowl, had a bad penultimate stanza and then met the leaders – the East – and were unable to beat them. Close, but no cigar. However, North Wales players have represented Wales in the Lady Milne, the Senior Camrose and Europe (Women and Seniors). It is encouraging that people are ambitious and working hard as contenders in the Home and European international arenas.

Our treasurer, John Wain, is continuing with his Novices Swiss Pairs despite increasing ill health. We owe a great debt of gratitude for his excellent work, not least as our Treasurer. Sincere thanks, John, from everyone.

As in all areas, we lament the dearth of new, young people in the game. Although most clubs are thriving, one only needs to look round to realise that there is no one to replace those who will inevitably leave the scene.

The North Wales member of the new WBU Management Committee is Jill Knight. She was voted for at the recent NWBA council meeting. Best wishes to you and the Management Committee.

*Marie Topp*

**Website:** Wyn Williams has been working hard on the NWBA website, with excellent results. The site has plenty of information about results, competitions and news. We now have instant access to a lot of information. Thank you, Wyn, for a job well done.

**Double congratulations** to Margaret Smith and John Owen on winning the Friday session of the WBU Simultaneous Pairs. Margaret makes a fine job of running the Swiss Pairs and John helps with taking cash entries on the day, so it is especially pleasing that they came top in Wales. They have also announced their engagement and we wish them every happiness together.

### Results

#### **Open Pairs Qualifier**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Olwen Brown and Martin Thorne
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Wendy Jenkins and Martin Shaw
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Pam Edwards and Bryan Edwards

#### **Harold Griffiths Area Teams:**

Diane Knight, Peter Nickson, Brian Crawford, Frank McAleavy

#### **One-Day Swiss Pairs:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> David Flacks and Paul Roberts
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Bob Pitts & Simon Whitehouse
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Louise Orme & Arthur Orme

**AGM Teams:** John Dow, Norman Large, Sheila Pike, Wyn Williams

**Laszlo Cup Area Pairs:**

Paddy Murphy and Chris Pope

#### **Spring Congress:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Stuart Matthews, Alan Stephenson, Bill Niccol, Ted Reveley
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Liz Commins, Adrian Thomas, Paddy Murphy, Chris Pope
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sue Ingham, Gwynn Davis, Jean Hand , Peter Hand

#### **WBU Llandudno Swiss Pairs**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Liz Wattleworth and Bill Wattlewoth
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Pamela Pearce and John Sansom
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sue Woodcock and Nick Woodcock

## Events

### **30<sup>th</sup> January 2011**

John Wain Swiss Pairs, Prestatyn Bridge Club

### **20<sup>th</sup> February 2011**

Valance Cup Individual final Colwyn Bay

### **2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> April**

Swiss Teams Congress (venue to be arranged)

### **10<sup>th</sup> April**

Laszlo Pairs Cup, Colwyn Bay CC

### **15<sup>th</sup> May**

NWBA AGM Teams, Prestatyn Bridge Club

### **2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> July**

WBU Swiss Pairs, Venue Cymru, Llandudno



## **West Wales**

The highlight of the last few months has been the Porthcawl Congress. Numbers have been in decline for several years but a move back to the Seabank Hotel saw entries increase by 50%. Irene Thomas must be congratulated for the energetic way she has gone about publicising and revitalising the congress. We must also thank the team of helpers who moved all of the equipment from the Rest to the Seabank and back again.

Most tournament players will have been unaware that WWBA held an event for Novices on the Saturday in a smaller room at the Seabank. This attracted 16 pairs and turned out to be very enjoyable. Two pairs stayed on in the evening for the Congress open pairs. Players commented how nice it was to play people just like themselves. They were enthusiastic and asked if there would be any more. The Area organises a similar event on the day of its AGM which attracts similar support, but that will be in Haverfordwest, 80 miles from Porthcawl. There is clearly a demand for such competitions, but they tend to attract entrants from a small local area rather than the whole of West Wales. We will be looking at how we can meet this developing interest in No Fear type competitions.

*Chris Davies*

**Congratulations** to Mildred Trigg-Knight who celebrated her **95<sup>th</sup>** birthday in November. She still plays competitive bridge

most days of the week. Mildred start playing at the age of 15. Is this a record?

**The New WBU Management Group** is now up and running and Chris Davies, our Chairman, will be the member from the West. Bob Alderdyce will be the new representative on the Executive council.

### **Andrew Robson Seminar**

The 'very tall' (as he often refers to himself in his Times Bridge articles) Andrew Robson is coming to Swansea Bridge Club to give a seminar at St Helen's Rugby and Cricket Ground, Swansea on **January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2011**. A brilliant player and teacher, Andrew has his own successful bridge club in London. All are welcome, but book early. The event is limited to 80 people. You can download the entry form or contact Diana Panniers at Swansea Bridge Club. The event is sponsored by Margaret and Peter Lane.

## **Results**

### *Vince Bevan Session 1*

1<sup>st</sup> David Melville & John Cox

2<sup>nd</sup> Robin Parris & Colin Nash

3<sup>rd</sup> Lee Collier & Eric Hartland

### *Vince Bevan Session 2*

1<sup>st</sup> Chris Davies & Martin David

2<sup>nd</sup> Denys Maddock & Eleanor Price

3<sup>rd</sup> Sylvia Davies & Diana Panniers

### *Vince Bevan Session 3 (Combined)*

1<sup>st</sup> John Cox & David Melville

2<sup>nd</sup> Lee Collier & Eric Hartland

3<sup>rd</sup> Beryl Warner & Wally Heaton

### *Men's and Ladies*

NS: 1<sup>st</sup> Christine Norman & Eleanor Price

2<sup>nd</sup> Mary Moore & Diana Jones

3<sup>rd</sup> Beryl Warner & Wendy Thornton

EW: 1<sup>st</sup> Keith Davidson & Colin Nash

2<sup>nd</sup> Wally Heaton & Chris Overton

3<sup>rd</sup> Ray Curry & John Jamieson

### *Men's Pairs*

1<sup>st</sup> Wally Heaton & Chris Overton

2<sup>nd</sup> Graham Fifield & Ifor Davies

3<sup>rd</sup> Tony Haworth & Rob Charlesworth

## **Events**

### **3<sup>rd</sup> April 2011**

Laidlaw Murray Teams

### **15<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

AGM, John Isaac and Ann Dolan Trophy.

## The Buffett Cup by Gwynn Davis



This September, golf's Ryder Cup, the biennial contest between Europe and USA, came to Wales, to the Celtic Manor course just outside Newport. Hard on its heels (actually, two weeks in advance) came the bridge equivalent, the Buffett Cup, named after the American investor and bridge enthusiast Warren Buffett. As far as I'm aware, Mr Buffett's enthusiasm for the game has not as yet led him to divert a few of his millions in the direction of the event that bears his name, but perhaps there'll be a bequest.

Anyway, the contest itself, largely the brainchild of Paul Hackett and Patrick Jourdain, has proved strikingly successful in attracting some of the most lustrous names in the game. I had a glancing encounter with these bridge glitterati when, as a competitor in this year's Welsh Invitation Pairs, that event was followed by a dinner at the venue (St. Mellons Golf Club in Cardiff) to which the Buffett Cup players were also invited. We all did our best to look nonchalant as Zia, Hamman, Meckstroth, Rodwell, Duboin, Auken, Fantoni, Nunes *et al* made their way into the room. Personally I doubt they had the faintest idea who we were or what we were doing there, but it was an occasion to savour and, if I had any grandchildren, it's one they would be hearing about.

The Buffett Cup itself was held at Miskin Manor, north of Cardiff. One had the option of watching the action on Bridgebase Online (actually, you could do that if the event were held in Timbuktu), or of going to the playing venue where one could choose to watch in the Viewgraph Theatre or observe play at one of the tables. My advice, if you ever have this opportunity, is to watch at the table. The Viewgraph commentary is informative, and in the Viewgraph Theatre it is possible to keep track of all six tables in play, but for getting a sense of how the top players approach the game nothing beats watching at the table. For example, the tempo is striking: slow; dead slow; are they still breathing? and then, suddenly, it's all over!

The top players generally know one another well, and there is a mutual respect. Some, you can sense, are genuinely friendly; others

perhaps less so. Hands tend to finish rather abruptly because everyone understands from the bidding and play to that point what cards are held by their opponents. If lesser players were exposed to this level of expertise it would be hard not to feel intimidated. They are polite, but there is a steeliness, and the impression that they know what cards you hold better than you know yourself - well, some of us might find that disconcerting.

Mainly I followed the event on BBO, but I



*Eric Rodwell playing ...*

watched two sessions at the table. My personal favourites are Meckstroth and Rodwell, and I was not disappointed. It wasn't that they did anything obviously brilliant when I was watching (or perhaps they did, and I didn't notice), but I admire the calm that they both exude at the table, the sense that bridge is a series of problems, and they have the patience, and the resources, to work on those problems until a solution is found. As most people are aware, they play an exceedingly complex system, and they know it backwards. They also explain it to their opponents in impressive detail. They are unfailingly polite, and at the same time, terrifying.

One oddity, to most of us, is that the Buffett Cup apes the scoring system of the Ryder Cup in that each board is won, lost, or drawn. So



normal IMP scoring goes out of the window; it doesn't matter how much you win (or lose) by, just as long as your score on the board beats that of your counterparts at the match table. This leads to what might appear to be some odd decision-making (for example, choosing to play in a risky 6NT rather than a much safer suit contract at the same level, simply in an attempt to win the board). This was reflected in the players' actions on the following hand, particularly the course followed by former Bermuda Bowl winner Tor Helness of Norway, in the North seat, which has been much commented upon. If you haven't come across it before, it might surprise you.

<b>Dlr: West</b>	♠ A K Q 10 9 7 6 4 3		
<b>Vul: N S</b>	♥ void		
	♦ 9 7		
	♣ 10 8		
♠ J 2		♠ 8 5	
♥ K J 9 8 4	■	♥ A Q 6	
♦ Q J 10 6 5 2		♦ K 3	
♣ void	♠ void	♣ K J 9 7 3 2	
	♥ 10 7 5 3 2		
	♦ A 8 4		
	♣ A Q 6 5 4		

With North South vulnerable, the bidding went as follows

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	2♣	Double
2♦	2♠	All pass	

Those of us who teach beginners may feel that we are familiar with North's hand evaluation, but since Helness is one of the world's great players we can be confident that he had looked more deeply into the hand. His ultra-conservative approach, sometimes known as 'walking the dog', was designed to mislead his non-vulnerable opponents as to his real playing strength so that they would misjudge the appropriate level to sacrifice. In the event, because Helness in the South seat had shown a heart suit by means of his double, they opted to leave Helness to his own devices. It is likely that he was not too enamoured of his final contract, made with four overtricks, scoring +230 for North-South, but his judgement was vindicated in the end.

At the corresponding table North also opened 1♠, but South passed East's 2♣ overcall, hoping for a penalty. East-West then located

their heart fit, and over North's 4♠ rebid they competed to 5♥, doubled by South. 5♥ doubled was just one down, for 100 to North-South, so Helness's modest 2♠ contract was more than sufficient to win the board.

In fact the optimal result for North-South on this hand is 6♠ *played by South* – not easy to get to, I think you'll agree. And absolute par on the board is not, as you might imagine, 7♥X down three for 500 to North-South. No indeed: they can do better than that by playing in 6NT from the East hand. That's only down two, for 300 to North-South. 6NT played by West, on the other hand, fares rather less well since North-South take the first 13 tricks.

There are those in the Welsh Bridge Union who regarded the Buffett Cup with a deal of scepticism, and I agree that it would not be justified for the WBU to expend significant resources on professional visiting bridge players. It is also doubtful whether many WBU members derived the slightest benefit from having these stars of the game on Welsh soil. But the opportunity was there. Bridge is not a natural spectator sport, and most people simply want to play, but any sporting activity has a hierarchy and it seems rather churlish not to want to celebrate excellence when it appears on one's doorstep.

#### Patrick's letter to the editor

I would like to express my thanks to all the people, mainly WBU members, whose volunteer help contributed largely to the great success of the Buffett Cup event. More than £1,000 was raised for the Educational Trust for British Bridge through sale of the event brochure to spectators (mostly WBU members). Thank you, also, to the WBU for the loan of essential equipment.

Those who came to watch were delighted to see the world's best in action, and many thousands saw the match on BBO over the four days. The President of the World Bridge Federation, Gianarrigo Rona, made his first visit to Wales to present the trophy to the winning captain, and the players went home happy with the welcome they had had in Wales.

Yours

**Patrick Jourdain**

## THE RUFFIT CUP by Rob Charlesworth

This was the third of a series of social bridge events organised by Liam Sheridan, a 24-player individual played as a team event with eleven 4-board matches. It was played in the hall in Aberthin, a small village near Cowbridge. The event was a great success apart from a slight mishap when Marjorie Morris tripped and had to be ambulated off to the local hospital with a broken kneecap. She and her escort, Irene Thomas, missed the last three rounds and Tony Haworth had the headache of reorganising the movement.

The eventual winner was Diana Jones, beating Anne Fox by 1 IMP. Well done, ladies! Ken Bawdon from Nailsea (near Bristol) was the only man in the top four, a respectable third.

Diana played this against me for a nice 9 IMPs to help her to a deserved victory.

The auction was fairly straightforward:

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1NT <sup>(a)</sup>
Pass	2♦ <sup>(b)</sup>	Pass	2♥
Pass	3NT	All pass	

(a) 12-14; (b) Transfer to hearts

<b>Dlr: South</b>	♠ 10 8 2
<b>Vul: NS</b>	♥ A Q 10 7 5
	♦ A Q
	♣ Q 6 4
	■
	♠ A J 6 4
	♥ 6 4
	♦ K 10 6
	♣ A J 10 8

The lead was ♦7, as at most other tables. How do you play the hand?

Counting your tricks, you can assume three diamonds, one heart and one spade, and you can set up three club tricks. But where is the ninth trick coming from? The options are:

- A fourth trick if the club finesse works and the ♣9 comes down in three rounds. This has about a 30% chance of success.
- A straight finesse of the ♥Q - 50%
- A double finesse in hearts, firstly finessing the ten, and then the queen - 75%.
- Cash ♥A, followed by the ♥Q. When in dummy again with ♦A, cash another heart.

After winning the next diamond in hand you may be able to return to dummy via ♣Q. But this line also depends on the hearts breaking 3-3, which is less than 50% (this line was successfully taken at one table).

Diana took none of the above, but instead decided to play spades losing twice, and then cashed the ace, hoping for a 3-3 spade break, which is a poor 35%.

Perhaps I'm being a little unkind because Di did combine her chances by trying the (losing) club finesse first. Now another diamond took dummy's ace. Diana cashed her three club tricks, West discarding a heart and East a diamond (well at least the diamonds were 4-4).

Diana refused the double heart finesse (was she helped by the discards?), and was forced to play ♠4 to dummy's ♠10. When West played the 5, Diana rose with ♠10 and East's ♠Q won the trick (again she could have improved her chances slightly by putting in the 8). A diamond was returned, clearing the suit, and declarer again played a small spade to the 8, won by West's 9. West now cashed the winning diamond on which East threw ♥9 and Diana ♥6. A heart was returned and Diana held her nerve rising with the ace. She now played ♠8 from dummy, East played the 7 and Diana played the ace from hand. There was an audible shout of delight (would you expect anything different from Diana) when the spades broke 3-3, setting up a fourth spade, and the contract romped home.

At the other tables the heart finesse was taken either once or twice, and with both ♥J and ♥K offside the contract failed. The full deal:

<b>Dlr: South</b>	♠ 10 8 2	
<b>Vul: NS</b>	♥ A Q 10 7 5	
	♦ A Q	
	♣ Q 6 4	
	♠ K 9 5	♠ Q 7 3
	♥ 8 3 2	♥ K J 9
	♦ J 9 8 7	♦ 5 4 3 2
	♣ K 5 2	♣ 9 7 3
	♠ A J 6 4	
	♥ 6 4	
	♦ K 10 6	
	♣ A J 10 8	

*This year Mike Tedd, always a generous contributor to the Newsletter, gave a talk to Aberystwyth Bridge Club about his early bridge-playing years, and he kindly agreed to share it with us.*

### **When we were young**

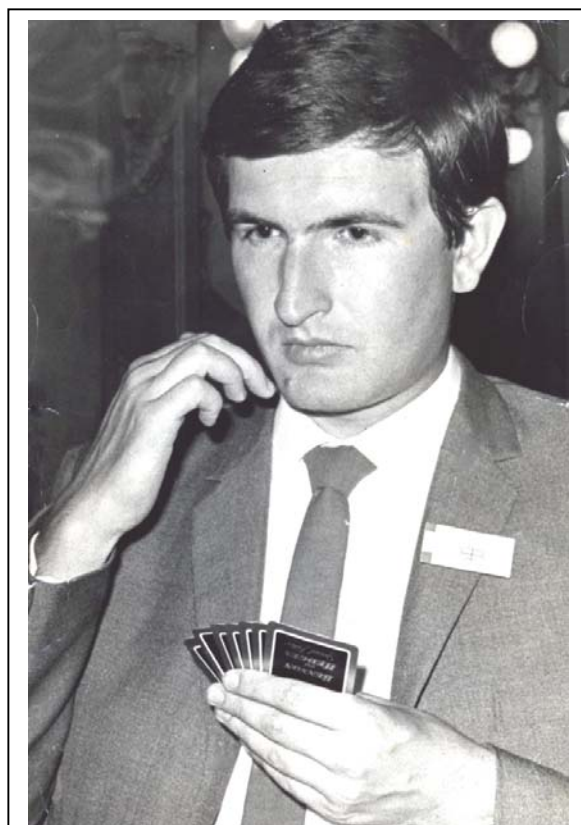
Frighteningly, it must be almost exactly 50 years ago when I started to play bridge. In the 6<sup>th</sup> form at our Boys' Grammar School, a group of us decided to teach ourselves. It was quite an adventure – playing Qxx opposite Axx we used to lead the queen, and I can remember when we discovered the need to put the king on the queen, so learned to lead towards the queen. Cards were forbidden; one day a teacher found us playing bridge and ripped up the cards. Hearing about this, a Maths teacher took my friend John Greenhalgh and me to a local club to play with him and his wife. If we had come bottom it might have been the end of it, but we came 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> and we were hooked.

So John and I joined the Wolverhampton club. I remember being greeted and bought drinks by two men in their 30s; “Now they will stop calling *us* the boys!” Play was fast, as many as 12 boards an hour, and the post-mortems in the bar taught us a lot. John went to Oxford where the likes of Rob Sheehan, Jonathan Cansino and Tony Milford meant a high standard of play. I went to Cambridge where I didn't play bridge seriously until my degree was assured, but I played with John in the vacations and he passed on what he was learning in Oxford. When I did join the university club (typically 25 tables in those days) I was immediately picked for the team, and became club president a year later. Sadly Oxford were far too strong for us and we lost both times I played against them.

Leaving university, I lived in London. It was the Swinging Sixties, and life was great fun both at and away from the bridge tables. There was a circle of young players, mostly recent graduates from Oxbridge, who played together. We all went on to substantial careers – John an actuary, others became top lawyers (one now a high court judge), successful businessmen and city fund managers.

We played in prestigious clubs such as Crockfords (for whom the bridge in the top room provided a steady income when they lost

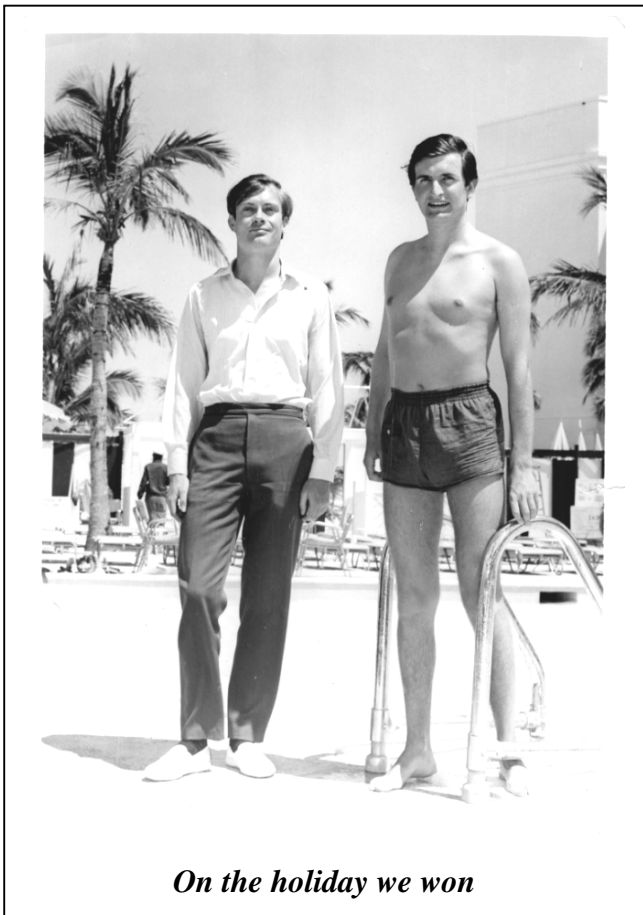
their gaming licence), the Hamilton near Hyde Park Corner, and the London Duplicate (which met in the National Liberal Club with all the famous portraits on the walls). We also played in less grand clubs such as the Acol where the system was invented and the Grand Slam near Paddington (which was rumoured to have a brothel up the stairs).



***Bridge players were smart in those days***

We played mainly duplicate, with some money rubber bridge. I gave that up after one really scary hand. I was vulnerable, playing with a bossy woman, and I held 8 spades to the KJ and little else. After 1♣-1♠-3NT I kept bidding my suit and she kept bidding NTs until I was allowed to play 7♠. The man on lead had an ace that would win, but perhaps he believed the bidding so he didn't lead it and so I made it. Dummy had a stiff ♠A and NTs would have been a disaster. So I won more on this hand than I could then afford to lose and decided that it was time to quit.

At weekends we would play in competitions and congresses, which were much more glamorous in those days, held in posh hotels with strict dress codes. We won quite a lot of prestigious events. One of the biggest successes for John and me was the New Year tournament at the end of 1967 which had the biggest prize offered in British bridge up to then – a fortnight’s holiday for two in the Bahamas. All the best players took part but it was our weekend; our only poor boards were when we first met in the flesh Leo Baron, by then an important lawyer in Africa, and the inventor of the Baron system that greatly influenced us. In a sensible world one of us would have bought the other out and taken a girlfriend, but we couldn’t afford that, so we went together and enjoyed incredible luxury in a hotel complex that had recently entertained the Beatles.



*On the holiday we won*

It is interesting to wonder how we become good at the game. We played with people with more experience. We read books, notably Reese’s classics. Perhaps most importantly we were merciless critics of each other’s play. We conducted comprehensive, sometimes

vicious, “chuck analysis”, where every error was identified and every minus score blamed on someone.

The fascination that bridge had for us had several parts:

*The social side.* We were close friends who spent a lot of time together. Bridge events were held in nice places and the general atmosphere was welcoming and enjoyable. (I dabbled with chess, but never found the same enjoyment.)

*The exhilaration of winning.* We loved to win and hated to lose. Not a lovely trait I’ll admit, but it may have had something to do with our success in other spheres.

*The problem-solving.* After all these years, bridge still presents me with interesting problems, often ones that are totally new. I still lie in bed after playing, enjoying again the things I did right and trying to analyse and learn from the things I did wrong.

One disappointment was that we never played international bridge for England or Britain. Although we were invited to the trials, some years, it was the era where a lot of the famous names dominated the game. People like Reese & Shapiro, Friday & Rodrigue, Rose & Swimer, the Tarlo brothers, the Sharples twins, Flint, Hiron, Rixi Markus were all in their prime – they seemed old to us, but were actually only in their 40s and 50s, with 20 years’ experience of top-level bridge behind them.

By the early 70s, the obsession with bridge was coming to an end. We all had developing careers, wives or girl friends and several of us were moving away from London. So I’ll stop there.

The winner of this year’s **Darwin awards** (*commemorating the remains of those who improve our gene pool by inadvertently removing themselves from it*) is would-be robber James Elliot, who when his 38 calibre revolver failed to fire at his intended victim during a hold-up in Long Beach, California, did something that can only inspire wonder. He peered down the barrel and tried the trigger again. This time it worked.

## The Dragon and The Eagle: Wales v Germany

by Chris Dixon at the European Championships, Ostend

There were rather more slam hands for Wales and Germany in their Round 7 encounter than were dealt at other tables, or so it seemed. I watched Peter Goodman and Adrian Thomas for the Dragons take on Andreas Kirmse and Michael Gromoeller for the German Eagles.

The first four hands were quiet enough but the excitement started on Board 5:

<b>Board 5</b>	♠ K J 9		
<b>Dlr: North</b>	♥ K J 6		
<b>Vul: N S</b>	♦ K J 10 9 3		
	♣ 9 2		
♠ 10 8 6 5 3		♠ A 4 2	
♥ Q 8		♥ A 10 9 7 5 4	
♦ 5		♦ A 6 2	
♣ K Q 10 4 3		♣ A	
	♠ Q 7		
	♥ 3 2		
	♦ Q 8 7 4		
	♣ J 8 7 6 5		

West	North	East	South
<i>Kirmse</i>	<i>Goodman</i>	<i>Muller</i>	<i>Thomas</i>
-	1♦	Double	3♦
4♠	Pass	6♠	All pass

On a good day, West's holdings in the black suits might have been the other way around and 12 tricks would have been possibly available. Today was not a good day for the eagle and this contract failed by two tricks and 11 IMPs to the Dragons.

<b>Board 6</b>	♠ 7 6 2		
<b>Dlr: East</b>	♥ Q J 10 9 8 4		
<b>Vul: E W</b>	♦ 9 4 2		
	♣ J		
♠ 9 5 3		♠ A K Q 8	
♥ A 6 5 2		♥ void	
♦ 8 3		♦ 7	
♣ A K 10 6		♣ Q 9 8 7 5 4 3 2	
	♠ J 10 4		
	♥ K 7 3		
	♦ A K Q J 10 6 5		
	♣ void		

On the next board, in the Closed room the auction was short and simple. The Eastern Dragon opened a natural 2♣ and the Eagle's

overall of 5♥ was doubled and defeated by two. In the Open room this was the bidding:

West	North	East	South
<i>Kirmse</i>	<i>Goodman</i>	<i>Muller</i>	<i>Thomas</i>
-	-	1♣	3♣ <sup>(1)</sup>
Double	3♥	3♠ <sup>(2)</sup>	4♥
4♠ <sup>(3)</sup>	5♥	5♠	6♦
Double	All pass		

(1) Asking partner to bid 3NT with a ♣ guard

(2) Who wants an 8 card suit as trumps?

(3) Who wants a 12-card fit as trumps?

Kirmse felt himself on safe ground with his opening lead of the ♥A, knowing partner to be short. The ♣2 was discarded and a second heart seemed automatic. But this Eagle dithered. He fingered the king of clubs (my heart stopped) and eventually decided on the ♠3 (3rd & 5th). East took the queen and the 10 dropped. Seeing the ♠2 in dummy, Gromoeller could read the lead as from three or five, and five seemed more likely so he tried a club and that was it: a 100 penalty in compensation for the cold 6♣. Of course the Eagles were almost on their way to 6♠, and we'll never know if the Dragon would have found the low diamond lead.

<b>Board 8</b>	♠ 10 9 2		
<b>Dlr: West</b>	♥ 10 9 7 3		
<b>Vul: Love all</b>	♦ A Q J		
	♣ 10 8 5		
♠ A 8 4 3		♠ J	
♥ Q 8 2		♥ K J 5	
♦ 10 8 7 2		♦ K 9 6 5 4 3	
♣ A K		♣ Q J 9	
	♠ K Q 7 6 5		
	♥ A 6 4		
	♦ void		
	♣ 7 6 4 3 2		

Board 8 was a simple part-score deal at most tables, but not for our Eagles. The bidding:

West	North	East	South
<i>Kirmse</i>	<i>Goodman</i>	<i>Muller</i>	<i>Thomas</i>
1NT <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	2♠ <sup>(2)</sup>	Double
Pass	3♠	4♦	Pass
4♠ <sup>(3)</sup>	Double	5♦ <sup>(4)</sup>	Pass
6♦ <sup>(5)</sup>	Double <sup>(6)</sup>	All pass	

- (1) 11-13
- (2) Invitational, or single suited with a minor
- (3) In case partner is interested in a slam
- (4) No, I am not
- (5) Maybe you are wrong, partner
- (6) No, he was right

This was only a 5 IMP loss since 5♦ was reached and defeated in the Closed room. We'll switch to the Closed room for the next deal to give you a little lead problem. You (East) hold:

♠ 10 9 8 2, ♥ 7 5 4 2, ♦ 1 0 8 5 4, ♣ 7

North opens 2♦ in second seat and the bidding goes like this:

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
-	2♦ <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	2♠ <sup>(2)</sup>
Pass	2NT <sup>(3)</sup>	Pass	3♦ <sup>(4)</sup>
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♣ <sup>(5)</sup>
Pass	4NT <sup>(6)</sup>	Pass	6♥ <sup>(7)</sup>
Pass	7♥ <sup>(8)</sup>	All pass	

- (1) Various
- (2) Relay, 9+ HCP
- (3) Balanced 20-22
- (4) Transfer
- (5) Roman Keycard for hearts
- (6) 2 keycards + trump queen
- (7) That's enough
- (8) Oh no it isn't

Just *seven victory points* hinge on your decision. I suppose on this undisciplined auction there is a good chance that a vital keycard is missing, so you probably should select between a spade and a diamond. This was the full deal:

<b>Board 12</b>	♠ Q J
<b>Dlr: West</b>	♥ Q J 10
<b>Vul: N S</b>	♦ A K 9
	♣ A K J 8 6
♠ A 7 6 5 4 3	♠ 10 9 8 2
♥ 6	♥ 7 5 4 2
♦ J 6 2	♦ 10 8 5 4
♣ Q 10 9	♣ 7
	♠ K
	♥ A K 9 8 3
	♦ Q 7 3
	♣ 5 4 3 2
Value of lead:	♦: -15 IMPs
	♠: +15 IMPs

What an easy game this is! In the Open room, after a weak 2♠ opening the Eagles saved in 6♠ against 6♥, losing 1100.

There was more excitement to come.

<b>Board 15</b>	♠ A K Q 10 5 4
<b>Dlr: South</b>	♥ 10 9 6
<b>Vul: N S</b>	♦ 9 6 5
	♣ 7
♠ J 9 3	♠ 8
♥ A K 8 4	♥ Q J 3 2
♦ J 7 2	♦ A 3
♣ A K 3	♣ J 9 8 5 4 2
	♠ 7 6 2
	♥ 7 5
	♦ K Q 10 8 4
	♣ Q 10 6

In the Closed room, the Dragons opened a Strong 1NT and after a routine Stayman sequence played in 4♥ making eleven tricks.

This was the bidding in the open room:

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Kirmse</i>	<i>Goodman</i>	<i>Muller</i>	<i>Thomas</i>
-	-	-	Pass
1♥ <sup>(1)</sup>	1♠	3♠ <sup>(2)</sup>	4♦ <sup>(3)</sup>
4♥ <sup>(4)</sup>	4♠ <sup>(5)</sup>	5♥ <sup>(6)</sup>	Pass
Pass <sup>(7)</sup>	5♠ <sup>(8)</sup>	Pass <sup>(9)</sup>	Pass
6♥ <sup>(10)</sup>	All pass		

- (1) Playing 11-13 NT and 4-card majors
- (2) Splinter
- (3) Fit non-jump
- (4) I don't like the look of things
- (5) I do!
- (6) So do I!
- (7) I still don't like the look of things
- (8) I'll give you another chance
- (9) I'll see if partner wants another chance
- (10) Yes, I do

Goodman cleverly avoided the singleton club lead, preferring to cash a high spade before switching to a low diamond. Two rounds of trumps revealed the 3-2 break and the Eagle was now in dummy. The moment of truth: the Dragons had bid to the 5-level vulnerable against not with meagre values; surely North must have good shape; should the ♣J be played and run next? I think so but it is so much easier seeing all the cards. Kirmse drew trumps and played clubs from the top for two down.

There was one more swansong: for the Eagles to seal their victory over the Dragons.

**Board 17** ♠ 9 2  
**Dlr: North** ♥ 10 4  
**Vul: Love all** ♦ Q J 4 3  
 ♣ K Q 8 5 3

♠ 8 7 ♠ A K  
 ♥ A J 8 6 5 3 ♥ K 9 7 2  
 ♦ 6 5 2 ♦ A K 10 9 8 7  
 ♣ J 10 ♣ 2

♠ Q J 10 6 5 4 3  
 ♥ Q  
 ♦ void  
 ♣ A 9 7 6 4

In the Open room, Gromoeller opened 1♦ (natural) and the bidding went rapidly:

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Kirmse</i>	<i>Goodman</i>	<i>Muller</i>	<i>Thomas</i>
-	-	1♦	4♠
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
5♥	All pass		

No more pushy slams, said Gromoeller to himself even though he must have been quite tempted. Anyway, after a spade lead Kirmse did not take the double finesse in diamonds, so just made a safe 11 tricks for +450.

In the Closed room, the bidding was even shorter. The opening bid was 1♣ (Strong) by the Dragon, and after the Eagle's 4♠ overcall everyone passed. Yes — really. That was another 420 to the Eagles and a double game swing of 14 IMPs, producing a final score in the Eagles' favour of 19VPs to 11.

\*\*\*\*\*



**The winners and runners-up (by 1 IMP) of the Spring Foursomes 2010. See Gwynn Davis's report on Page 7**

**Viscount Camrose**, of Hackwood Park in the County of Southampton, is a title in the Peerage of the United Kingdom. It was created on 20 January 1941 for the prominent newspaper magnate William Berry, 1st Baron Camrose.

### CAMROSE 2010:

#### Trial results and selected teams

This year Wales will host the second and final Camrose weekend. We are therefore allowed to field an extra team to even up the numbers.

The Selectors have chosen:

**Wales:** Paul Denning & Patrick Shields  
 Dafydd Jones & Gary Jones  
 Peter Goodman & Adrian Thomas

**NPC** Alan Stephenson  
**Reserves** Mike Tedd & John Salisbury

**WBU:** John Salisbury & Mike Tedd  
 Alex Hogg & Alex Maddocks  
 Mike Best & Mark Roderick

**NPC** Gwynn Davis  
**Reserves** Simon Richards, Trevor Towers

PAIR	1 <sup>st</sup> trial	2 <sup>nd</sup> trial	VP total	%	IMPs
Jones Jones	199		199	60.30	103
Denning Shields	182	146	328	54.67	98
Towers Richards	151	164	315	52.50	61
Hogg Maddocks	182	132	314	52.33	50
Tedd Salisbury	173	135	308	51.33	34
Thomas Goodman	166		166	50.30	3
Best Roderick	166	128.5	294.5	49.08	-8
Birt Evans		130	130	48.15	-14
Davis Ingham	163	124	287	47.83	-48
Rochelle Atkinson	146	130	276	46.00	-80
Stevenson Commins	150	121.5	271.5	45.25	-84
Roxburgh Gottschalk	118	132	250	41.67	-115

*Ynys Môn and Caernarfon News:*

### **The Betty Reynoldson Cup**

Betty was a delightful lady. Always impeccably dressed, bright as a button, charming and rather beautiful. She had a quiet charisma and people warmed to her. She was a special lady with a great sense of humour. When she was widowed she did not sit at home bemoaning her loss. She carried on playing her bridge at Môn and Caernarfon bridge clubs. In her seventies, she was game for anything and went to all the qualifiers and congresses locally, and thought nothing of travelling farther afield when she qualified, even when she was well into her eighties. She had a sparkle; a wonderful zest for life. A gritty Yorkshirewoman, when told she needed a serious operation she instructed the specialist to do the operation quickly and thoroughly so she could carry on living her life and playing her bridge. Eventually her son, Trevor, who lived in Canada, persuaded her to go and live with him and his family. Betty duly sorted out her affairs and off she went, having been promised that there was great bridge in Canada. But she pined, and came back to regain contact with her friends, especially her bridge friends, and was back in her element. Her son and his family reluctantly said farewell.

The illness recurred and she knew she it was time to be with her beloved son. She returned to Canada, where she died. Trevor, grateful for all the joy she had derived from her bridge and her bridge friends, sent money for a trophy to be awarded in her memory. He specifically asked that the trophy relate to both clubs.

So last year, Ynys Môn and Caernarfon clubs held an inter-club teams event for the Cup. It was agreed that Caernarfon should host the first one, in a nice hotel where the WBU Swiss pairs had once been held. Many of the members were interchangeable, which meant that they were able to share out the pairs between the two clubs to get a fairly even balance. There were two teams of twelve and they had refreshments half way through. It was such a lovely evening and it was nice for those who did not play in both clubs to meet the others. Ynys Môn won, but that was beside the point. Two clubs, close together, had had an event which was most enjoyable.

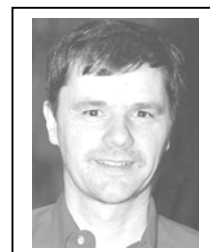
This week Ynys Môn (Isle of Anglesey) returned the compliment and we enjoyed another sociable and pleasant evening. One member of Caernarfon was late, so she received a huge round of applause when she arrived. Meanwhile, when we were all seated and waiting for the boards, an alarmed lady said her partner had disappeared and went to try and find her. We waited, then heard the missing lady say to her partner "Is there a sit-out?", quite oblivious to the situation. A great roar of laughter from the playing-room. So we started on a joyful note, and the mood continued. Break after three matches for food and socialising, then back to the tables. We played six three-board matches, so there was plenty of time to play, eat, socialise and finish by ten o'clock. Benllech and Beaumaris (where Gay's pupils play) are going to organise something similar. I would recommend this to all clubs in outlying areas to try. It really is fun.

It is ironic that it took a man in Canada to instigate something so simple and so enjoyable in the outer reaches of North Wales. Thank you, Trevor. Thank you, Betty.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Play these hands with me**

*by Peter Goodman*



Two hands from the final Welsh Trials proved instructive for card play technique.

1.           ♠ A K 7 6  
              ♥ J 10 8 3  
              ♦ K 10 5 2  
              ♣ 2

♠ J 9 5	♠ Q 10 8
♥ A 6 2	♥ 9
♦ Q 7 3	♦ A J 9 8 4
♣ K Q 7 4	♣ J 6 5 3

♠ 4 3 2  
♥ K Q 7 5 4  
♦ 6  
♣ A 10 9 8

You arrive in a thin 4♥ after West opens a weak no trump, North overcalls 2♣ (majors) and East bids 2♦. West leads ♦3.



Stage 1: Assess the problem: this is a 'thin' game and although you have 1♠, 1♦ and 1♥ to lost, you lack 10 winners!

- Assuming ♦A is wrong after the lead, you will need two spades, four hearts, one club and three ruffs in dummy.
- However, East wins the first diamond and switches to a trump, which West wins and returns a 2nd trump.

Your contract has got 'thinner'. Time to re-assess.

A good rule of thumb is to think long at trick 1 about the whole hand, and then re-assess when you first regain the lead. Thinking for a long time during the play often helps defenders.

♠ A K 7 6  
♥ J 10  
♦ K 10 5  
♣ 2

♠ J 9 5	♠ Q 10 8
♥ 6	♥ none
♦ Q 7	♦ A J 9
♣ K Q 7 4	♣ J 6 5 3

♠ 4 3 2  
♥ K Q 7  
♦ none  
♣ A 10 9 8

You need a further 9 tricks and the lead is now in dummy. Even if you make all five trumps separately, ♠AK and ♣A, you are still a trick light. But look at the effect of reversing the dummy (by NOT ruffing clubs):

Ruff a diamond with the ♥7, a spade to the king, ruff a diamond with ♥Q, a spade to the ace, and ruff the ♦K with ♥K (West discarding a club), to arrive at this position:

♠ 7 6  
♥ J 10  
♦ none  
♣ 2

♠ J	♠ Q
♥ 6	♥ none
♦ none	♦ J
♣ K Q 7	♣ J 6 5

♠ 4  
♥ none  
♦ none  
♣ A 10 9 8

When you now play your last spade, East must win. Whatever he plays next, he cannot stop you from ruffing a club or diamond with ♥10 and drawing West's last trump before cashing the thirteenth spade and chalking up 12 IMPs.

The second hand, although very different, follows the same though process and was very well managed by Gary Jones as follows:

2. ♠ Q 7 5  
♥ 9 7 4  
♦ Q 7 5  
♣ A Q 7 2

♠ A K J 9 2  
♥ A K 3  
♦ A K 9 4  
♣ 5

You arrive in a very good 6♠ on the lead of the ♥Q, and assess your options at trick 1.

- If diamonds are 3-3 and ♣K is with West, 13 tricks are possible (you only need 12);
- You may be able to ruff out the KC, but the finesse is more likely.
- You can also draw 2 rounds of trumps and ruff the 4th diamond if the person with four diamonds has only two trumps.
- You must also allow for a 4-1 trump split.

Gary spotted the extra chance of a 'show-up squeeze', which combined all the options. He won with the ♥K, cashed the ace and king of spades to check that trumps broke and then played a club to the queen, which lost. After East returned a heart, Gary won, crossed to the queen of spades and played the ♣A to discard his small heart

♠ none  
♥ 9  
♦ Q 7 5  
♣ 7 2

♠ none	♠ none
♥ J?	♥ ?
♦ ?	♦ ?
♣ none	♣ J 10 9

♠ J 9  
♥ none  
♦ A K 9 4  
♣ none

Next is the key play and assumes you were watching at trick 1:

- Which heart did East play after West led the ♥Q? Oh yes, he played the 6 and when he got back in returned the ♥5 (so probably holds two or four). Park that information in case you need it later to guess the diamonds.

Now Gary found the key play of ruffing a small club, on which West showed out. Now East is known to have started with two spades and six clubs, so has three red cards left. West is known to have the ♥J and may hold the ♥10. If the opponents have given true count, all is revealed. When Gary cashed his remaining trump, poor West was probably done for, even if he had four diamonds. In fact he threw a diamond and declarer threw his ♥9. Two declarers went down after finessing the 9 of diamonds on the third round of the suit. This was the complete deal:

	♠ Q 7 5		
	♥ 9 7 4		
	♦ Q 7 5		
	♣ A Q 7 2		
♠ 8 4 3		♠ 10 6	
♥ Q J 10 8 2		♥ 6 5	
♦ J 10 2		♦ 8 6 3	
♣ 9 3		♣ K J 10 8 6 4	
	♠ A K J 9 2		
	♥ A K 3		
	♦ A K 9 4		
	♣ 5		

It will come as no surprise that Dafydd and Gary Jones went on to win the first trial by a big margin.

\*\*\*\*\*

Adrian and I played in Limerick where we won both the Teams and the Pairs. Adrian and his partner also came second in the Mixed Pairs. Good results for Welsh pillagers! Here is an interesting hand from the Teams final:

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♠
2♥	3♣	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠		

<b>Board 24</b>	♠ Q 7
<b>Dlr: West</b>	♥ A Q
<b>Vul: None</b>	♦ 10 6 5
	♣ A 10 8 7 6 5
♠ 8 4	♠ 10 9 6
♥ K J 10 9 3	♥ 6 2
♦ A Q 9 3	♦ J 7 4
♣ 9 3	♣ K Q J 4 2
	♠ A K J 5 3 2
	♥ 8 7 5 4
	♦ K 8 2
	♣ void

West leads the ♠8.

After the overcall it looks like the ♦A is wrong and I probably have 6 spades, 2 hearts and 1 club, so need another trick from somewhere. It may be possible to ruff the third heart high, but the 2♥ bid makes this line unlikely (hearts may be 6-1). To combine your chances, win the first spade with the jack and the second spade with the queen.

If the spades are now 4-1, consider leading a diamond to the king as the best line.

When the trumps break 3-2, however, you can ruff a small club and draw the last trump noting carefully what West throws (a diamond is best). Now a heart to the queen, cash the ♣A and ruff another club. West throws ♥9 and begins to look worried. When you play a heart to the ace and ruff another club he looks more worried, rightly, because he is down to:

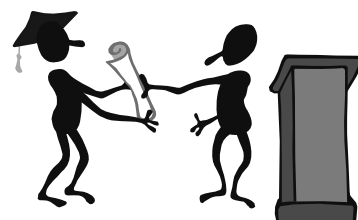
♠ none	♠ none
♥ K J	♥ 8 7
♦ A Q 3	♦ K 8 2
♣ none	♣ none

After he discarded a diamond, I threw him in with a small heart to lead a diamond round to my king for the 10<sup>th</sup> trick. (If West had thrown a second diamond instead of the ♥10, I would not have played a second heart: I could simply knock out the ♦A in two rounds.)

West politely asked: "Could I have done anything to avoid the end-play?" and I was able to reply that his play was perfect but he had paid a heavy price for his aggressive 2♥ overcall, which simply highlighted the winning line.

# Promotions

159 promotions from 16/03 to 27/07/2010



<b>Local Master</b>		Rita Lawrence	RY	<b>Advanced Master</b>	
Valda Jones	S	Rhona Mogford	GA	Jane Bancroft	WS
Joseph Mullally	CN	Mary Palin	W	Rosemarie Barr	LET
Elaine Robins	MG	Terry Parkes	C	Peter Blackwell	SU
<b>Club Master</b>		Anthony Stevens	T	Keith H Butt	S
Derek Adams	C	Sidonie Thomas	L	Belinda Davies	BRE
Phil Bowers	MG	Richard Tresias	W	Tony Davies	BRE
Michael Brown	S	David Tyman	CAS	Una Gavin	SU
Marie Craddock	L	Margaret Williams	OH	Nicky Hancock	T
Barry Harrison	M	<b>County Master</b>		David Hughes	PC
Mary Harrison	M	Jon Baker	CAR	Ceri Mowat	GA
Greg Howell	AR	Christine Cleaver	R	Rita Potter	BEN
David Jennings	LP	Janet Cunningham	C	Phil Roberts	NP
Pam Jennings	LP	Moira Currie	SU	Avis Sowels	SU
Angela John	H	Gwenda Davies	LP	<b>One Star Master</b>	
Molly MacDonald	GA	David C Hay	C	Hugh Arnold	S
Kim Marsh	A	Judith Hulme	M	Alan Cleaver	R
Patrick O'Sullivan	MG	Sarah Hurst	W	Brian Griffiths	R
Christopher Rawlings	P	Sean Macdougall	BV	Kenneth Jenkins	P
Kay Taylor	K	David Opie	BRE	Angela Mayner	LD
<b>Area Master</b>		Mearl Owen	OH	Bryan Morgan	GA
Jane Beale	GA	Shirley Powell	PN	John Owen	BEN
Mike Beale	GA	Kath Pratt	CAS	George Williams	GA
John Coghlin	S	Glenda Roberts	OH	<b>Two Star Master</b>	
Dan Gordon	R	Frances Robinson	BEN	Ray Bowen	WS
Kathleen Grossey	P	Hazel Rudland	GA	Pat Roe	A
Sylvia Hilton	RY	Verena Russell-Clarke	AG	Pat Walker	PN
Paul Holt	DEE	Ashleigh Scrimshaw	MER	<b>Three Star Master</b>	
Charlotte Ingham	C	Nigel Symons Jones	LP	Aileen Ashmore	C
Marilyn Jones	MG	Donald Weir	PC	Iain Brisbane	AG
Lynn Morris	L	<b>Master</b>		Ray Clements	DM
Patricia Pledger	LP	Joan Boothe	S	Roger Cradick	SU
Richard Pledger	LP	Angela Chatfield	WS	Julia Davies	MB
Mary Savage	LP	Mike Cohen	LDB	Estelle Evans	S
Jane Thomas	S	Aeron Evans	R	Ron Pepper	GA
Roz Thompson	GA	Mary Harris	S	Theresa Pollard	MG
Ann Williams	S	Robert Hellier	GA	<b>Four Star Master</b>	
<b>District Master</b>		Glan James	L	Alan Clegg	WS
Dawn Bowers	MG	David M Jones	BEN	Jean Gomersall	PD
Tim Butler	GA	Owen E Jones	LP	Kay Jones	S
Marlene Carter	NT	Philippa Prentice	GA	Dorothy Loxton	C
Deborah Davies	PT	Christine Redman	MON	Marcia Rogers	MB
Elinor Ellis	PW	Olga Salt	GA	Dennis Smith	OH
Gillian Greensides	S	Ann Slaughter	S	<b>Five Star Master</b>	
Bob Hughes	MB	Margaret Smith	BEN	Barbara Ellis	S
Peter Knott	LP	Vic Smith	BEN	Hilda Williams	MB
<b>Premier Master</b>		Vida Halford	PC	Megan Jones	WS
Keith Bellamy	A	Allan James	PR	Philip Moody	NT
Margaret Doig	LD	Malcolm James	NT	Stan Newman	WS

Peter Saunders	M
Colin Steer	T
Pat Williams	NT

**Regional Master**

John Bell	M
Jean Cuffley	NT
Roy Hobson	PR
Robin Lewis	BRE
Christine Norman	M
Trish Tracy	PN

**Premier Regional Master**

Andrew Phillips	LP
-----------------	----

**National Master**

Les Mann	CAS
Peter Swingle	W
Wendy Thornton	H

**Premier National Master**

Stephen Doubt	W
Ian Haston	H

**Life Master**

Isabel Evans	R
Joan Jenkins	PN

**Senior Life Master**

Tim Barsby	PN
John J Evans	LP
Roger Penton	S
Andrew Scott	BR

**Grand Master**

Michael Close	BR
Simon Richards	C

**Premier Grand Master**

Diane Kurbalija	C
-----------------	---



**47 Promotions  
from 07/08 to 14/11/2010**

**Club Master**

Margaret Bird	GA
David Hill	GA
David Jones	R
Eira Jones	BRE
David M Potter	BRE
Cecilia Rossiter	H
Jeff Thomas	A
Mary Thomas	PT
Jan Vanringelstein	H

**Area Master**

Brenda Connor	CBY
Helen Davies	K
Delma Simon	MER

**District Master**

Darren Bellamy	C
David Alan James	PN
Angela John	H
Anna Levi	CN
Kim Marsh	A
Stephanie Nicholas	PT
Olwen Parry	CN

**County Master**

David Bonello	MG
Tim Butler	GA
Martin Davies	BRE
David Dunn	LET
Hugh Nicholas	PT

**Master**

Doreen Chapman	D
Suppiah Navaratnam	W
Margaret Richards	K
Herbie Rowley	CD
Irene Wickham	PC

**One Star Master**

Marion Shewell	AR
Doug Silcox	T

**Two Star Master**

Audrey Hall	PN
-------------	----

**Three Star Master**

Cathy Barlow	WS
Sue Lowe	CN

**Four Star Master**

Greg Howell	AR
-------------	----

**Five Star Master**

Jock Barlow	WS
-------------	----



**Tournament Master**

Barrie Waite	MG
--------------	----

**Premier Master**

Ray Clements	DM
Neville Richards	K

**National Master**

Keith Davison	S
Margaret John	L

**Premier National Master**

Dai Hayes	A
-----------	---

**Life Master**

Simon Gottschalk	BR
Graham Jones	MG
Terry Parkes	C

**Senior Life Master**

Andrea Martin	LD
Alan Screen	CAS

**Kaplan Quips**

*Quotations from the late (and inimitable) Edgar Kaplan:*

‘Four Hearts is a very good bid – but on some other hand.’

‘North probably felt his high cards (3 points) made up for his lack of distribution.’

‘A contract becomes ambitious only if declarer makes it. We have other words for it if it goes down. This contract went down only one. It was nearly ambitious.’

South’s bid implied: I have four spades, four hearts, six clubs and the rest are diamonds.’

‘I don’t think anyone in this tournament can bid diamonds to show diamonds. We lost the club suit in the 1950s. Now diamonds are gone and hearts are sinking fast.’

# Master Point Of View

by Noelle Bond

I'm quite used to envelopes containing masterpoints being damaged by letter sorting machines so I wasn't too surprised by one with open flap and just the S.A.E. inside. I left a message for the lady who'd posted it and when she called me back I learned that her masterpoint record card had already been delivered back to her. But all by itself, no envelope, no note, no nothing, you might say. She was surprised to find I hadn't filled in her new points total, and wondered why I hadn't used her S.A.E. She lives fairly near me and thought perhaps I'd hand delivered it (not a service I offer, I'm afraid). But who had found her card and popped it in her letterbox we don't know, for when damaged letters arrive (if they ever do arrive) from the Royal Mail they are in a special "sorry" envelope. Luckily she'd made a note of her points so in the end all was well for her.

Now we hear that Royal Mail is to be privatised, and I'm wondering if things will be better or worse.....

Do you know the old song "There'll be some changes made"? (Published 1925 Mike has just informed me - I expect he looked it up, he's got books on everything.) The only line I remember from it is "I'm going to change my long johns for little short pants." Not very suitable for this time of year, I've already had the heating on for weeks - roll on the winter fuel payment.

Changes, changes! And to prove the Welsh Bridge Union isn't immune, a new computer system for handling masterpoints is being developed, all very 21st century! Roughly, instead of issuing those green or white masterpoint slips we all know and love (when we get them ourselves, that is - I'm sure you can all remember the excitement of your first slip for six or ten locals, I know I can) clubs will send masterpoints lists over the Internet to some other computer which then will magically enter them into each member's records. I'm quite sure that this new system is worthwhile and will save a great deal of work for everyone. All the information and players' records will be displayed on the WBU Membership and Master Points web-site,

14th November 2010



[www.welshbridgeunion.info](http://www.welshbridgeunion.info),

although quite what this will mean for those who don't have computers, I don't yet know. In fact I've told you all I can as I don't know much about how the system will work myself.

Although there is one thing I have learned: the Masterpoints Secretary's work under the new system will be greatly reduced, and also there will be very little contact with the members. These changes, especially losing touch with everyone, make the job not very interesting to me, so I decided to retire at the next AGM in May 2011. Although to make it easier for whoever takes over from me, I've now offered to stay on until the new system is in place.

I have to say that when I do actually retire, it will be a very sad time for me - it has been such a joy to get to know so many people, even if sometimes only by post, and to have the chance to make so many friends - I'm afraid I may shed a tear or two on the day. Just writing about retiring is hard enough!

As I don't know when I shall actually hand over the masterpoint work, and I don't know when the next Newsletter will be published, or even whether I shall be able to write to you again, I want to say a few words about Mike, my husband, for I don't think many members realise the amount of work he has done for the WBU over the years.

From the time I took over as Masterpoint Secretary 18 years ago, he has supported me and helped me in every way he could, purely because of his enthusiasm for the WBU, where we both met so many nice people. From early on, he wrote computer programs to print address labels (a great time saver) and produce the promotion lists etc.

Ten years ago he wrote a new masterpoint computer system, gradually adding more and more to it so I could do things which were impossible before. And then, when I needed a new computer a few years later, he rewrote everything to work on the new machine! He also designed and wrote the Gold Points system, and then the Automatic Entry

program which allows the points from Area and WBU events to be E-mailed to me and then entered straight into the machine (if the director has got the names right), another time saver. He then spent four years as membership secretary, I was really spoiled then. He resigned from this job in June this year, but, not as some people think, because of his ill-health but because he was very dismayed by how he had been treated by the WBU organisation - I felt the same myself.

And yet, since then he has written more programs to work with the parts of the new system that are already in place. Mike's health problems mean he can only work for a little while each day, but he was still prepared to set his own interests aside to do this work for the WBU. I really think the WBU have had two for the price of one, even if they are not aware of it!

But now, I'd like to end on a lighter note.

I've mentioned my granddaughter from time to time and now to stop my grandson Edward, also twelve, feeling jealous here's a "conversation" we had from our computer keyboards, in September, which was still on my computer:

*Me: Did you hear that another Ed has become leader of the Labour party?*

*Edward: that was me I changed my last name to Milliband*

*Me wow! how are you going to improve the Labour party's chances for the next election?*

*Edward: by giving out free cheese*

And then, on Saturday 8th November (**not** April 1st! As you might have imagined) our newspaper reported that the Irish government is planning to please the voters by giving everyone a free block of cheese! We now think *our* Edward definitely has a future in politics.

Please remember I'm not planning on giving up just yet, so keep sending your points to me! I'm very much hoping that I will have a chance to write a farewell note to you all sometime next year.

Meanwhile I want to wish you a very happy Christmas and New Year.

Very sincerely,

**Noelle**

## **PLEASE AIM TO PLEASE!!**

Whether you are a Grand Master or aiming towards your first registered points, I am making a plea on behalf of all the people who give their time to their club, area and national organisations. **Please help towards the smoother running of the WBU by observing deadlines** – for payment of subs, for entry into competitions and congresses and for completing privately arranged matches such as the Welsh Cup and the Cambria Cup within the allocated time. Consider how many people are affected, and how many extra hours are involved for organisers when people are late, and you will understand how important it is to observe deadlines. Here's why:

**Club subscriptions** sent off complete make life bearable for the Membership Secretary, Treasurer and Area Treasurers. Clubs can't send the membership subscriptions complete if one or two people's subs are still outstanding. So they have to remind people – stress! Or they send what they can, and outstanding ones go off piecemeal, at various times. This gives extra, and very bitty, work - and stress! - to those involved.

**Area and club qualifiers** need to be played in time so that the NTO can work out how many pairs or teams from each area may play in the Final. The NTO cannot assign the number of places until she knows how many players actually took part. If people ask to play after the area closing date, the NTO is late informing areas of qualifying numbers, ATOs are then late informing players; and by that time, people not in the top few of their area qualifier have often made other arrangements for the date. So you end up with a half table *or worse* at a national final, giving the ATO, the director and the players stress.

**Welsh and Cambria Cup** are open knock-out events. They take place in areas, first, then across the country in the later stages. There has always been a problem trying to arrange a date that suits eight or more players. Teams ask for an extension, so the next round is late and so on, until the final is played long after it should have been. If teams of more than four entered, then it might be easier for at least four of them, and four of their

opponents, to agree upon a date within the allotted time. If teams entered well before the closing date, the draw would be made in better time for arrangements to be made. These are most enjoyable events and would be even more enjoyable without the headache of trying to make a date suitable for all at the last minute.

**Congresses** are usually open. There is no closing date for entry unless there is limited space. It does, though, make life a lot easier for the organisers if they have a fairly accurate idea of how many to cater for – tables, boards, directors etc. Those entering late are, of course, very welcome, but a crowd of people paying on the day can hold up proceedings, as can having to search for extra tables and equipment if you haven't even registered that you are coming.

So *please*, when you get the journal look at the calendar, decide what competitions you wish to enter and *go for it*. Give notice in plenty of time that you will be taking part; send off your entry for the Welsh and Cambria Cups before the deadline, and remember to pay your subs. In that way all events will be better and organisers and players happier.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **IN THE BLEAK EARLY WINTER**

Nothing will stop a bridge player: witness the teams who turned out on to freezing, snow-fringed roads, to get to Llangollen for the Swiss Teams.

It was a first for everyone at the untried venue, the Bryn Howel hotel on the other side of the river from the town itself. Then there was the early snow and freezing temperature and a new organiser (Neville). The welcome was warm; the hotel was very good and spirits were high. We had some food (in the price of our entry) and play got under way.

There was a slight problem: an extra team turned up. Someone had 'booked' for them and was away. There was no record of their entry. The team arrived, in all innocence. Space limited the entry to 40 teams, but a table was squeezed in and Mike Amos changed the movement. No problem, at least for the players. My partner and I were moved from one end of the playing hall to an annex to

accommodate one of our players, but soon everything was under way.

The atmosphere was brilliant, and people who were not staying there managed to get to their scattered accommodation without a single broken bone. Those who were staying at the hotel enjoyed an excellent meal in very pleasant surroundings.

Play started at 10.30 the next morning. We were glad of this, since people were able to leave for home at a reasonable time. The roads had all been gritted and cleared, again, but there was always a threat of more snow. In the event, the snow stayed away. Our hands-on President stayed to help move the tables and chairs. As he was up North for club-visiting and was staying in Anglesey, he had offered to take me home, so I was ordered into the bar to get myself a drink while he grafted. I sat with my drink for a while, then thought I should be helping, but when I went to the playing room, they had finished. Adrian drove back along the A5 and the conversation made the time fly. Jim Luck was in the back, but on reflection I think I did most of the talking. Nothing new there ... Perhaps the journey dragged for them!

All in all, it was a very good weekend. Pity about our bridge, though. Anglo-Welsh teams featured at the top, a good reflection of the entente cordiale that exists in our congresses.

Congratulations to Neville for organising it and to Mike for directing, and to Sarah, whose calm judgements and permanent smile always add to the pleasant ambiance.

Neville has noted that another room in the hotel will take a dozen or so tables, so there may be a few more spaces next year. But I suspect there will be a rush, so book in plenty of time.

*Jill*

### **Results**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Stuart Matthews, John Salisbury, Alan Stephenson and Mike Tedd
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Rhona and Bernard Goldenfield, Jim Luck and Adrian Thomas
- 3<sup>rd</sup> John Gladders, David Harris, Bill Nicholl and Alan Oddie

**Information page** (Please mark changes and corrections in your copy of the current Journal)

Item	Page	Details
Calendar		The trials for the Lady Milne team are on 11-12 December.
Calendar		The Graded Masters Pairs is on 15 <sup>th</sup> – 16 <sup>th</sup> January in the International Pavilion, Builth Wells. <i>Note change of venue.</i>
West Wales Bridge Association	4	Change of Secretary: Eleanor Price, ☎ 01792 360686, email <a href="mailto:eleanorprice@talktalk.net">eleanorprice@talktalk.net</a>
Crickhowell Bridge Club	5	Change of Secretary: Mike Miles, 3 High Trees Road, Gilwern, Monmouthshire NP7 0AH ☎ 01873 830612, email <a href="mailto:mike_miles@btinternet.com">mike_miles@btinternet.com</a>
Gwent Bridge Academy	5	Better email contact: <a href="mailto:william.parkinson1@ntlworld.com">william.parkinson1@ntlworld.com</a>
Ynys Môn Bridge Club	9	Change of Secretary: Anne Ellis, Tyddyn ap Ifan, Graiglwyd Road, Penmaenmawr, Conwy LL34 6ER ☎ 01492 622335, email <a href="mailto:anneellis05@aol.com">anneellis05@aol.com</a>

**Contact Neville:** Neville Richards, Chief Executive, Welsh Bridge Union  
Meadow View, Llanddewi, Llandrindod Wells, Powys LD1 6SE  
Telephone: 01597 850050/05602 941492, email: [neville@wbu.org.uk](mailto:neville@wbu.org.uk)

**Preferred (*but by no means essential*) format for contributions**

**Font:** Times New Roman 12-point

**Margins:** 2cm all round

**Paragraph:** Single spaced, justified, 0 points before, 6-points after

**Bridge notation:** no capitals on cards and suits (ace of hearts rather than Ace of Hearts)

**Auctions:** all auctions start with West, whoever the dealer actually was; just put a dash under West and so on if the auction really started with someone else

**Hands:** South is always declarer **unless** you are describing a real board from a real event and the board number is important to the story, in which case you can use the real declarer.

**Diagrams:** If you can manage a Word Table (see Publications page of WBU website), that would be fab, but don't worry if not. Please don't use tabs and spaces, though, because they will almost certainly become garbled in the ether: a simple list separated by commas is better (North SAK43, HQ2, D974, CJ652 etc.).



Hallowe'en Bridge night at **Llandybie Bridge Club**, organised by Frances Williams [*not pictured*]

**And finally ...** a huge thank you to all those who have contributed to this newsletter. Without you there wouldn't be one. I am always glad to receive material the reader thinks would be of interest – 'Where are they now', letters, 'Heard at the table' humour – anything that the reader would enjoy. Contact me at [Polly64335@aol.com](mailto:Polly64335@aol.com), or telephone 01248 853033 **JILL**