



# Bristol Bridge Club

## News Letter

April 2010

### Chairman's Report

Dear Members,

I am now entering the last 3 months of my Chairmanship and looking back, it has been a most pleasant experience. My bridge has improved a little and I hope you agree that the Club has also improved. When I started I said that a priority of mine was to make the Club a friendlier place so that new members and guests can always feel welcomed. I think this objective has largely been met although, often at the table, there is still some North/South talk about the previous hands whilst East/West are waiting to start playing a new set of boards. We all need to avoid this.

The membership continues to increase and the standard of bridge remains at a high level although it was slightly disappointing to have only one pair qualifying for the National finals this year. Congratulations to Sue O'Hara and Nelson Stephens for achieving this and let us hope that they will do brilliantly in the final.

I am writing this on the 7 April and the renovation work started yesterday. I was pleased to be able to get the Club in a fit state last night for a full session of play and hope the games will continue with minimum disruption, during this period. I must thank all the members who have pledged money for the Club to be improved. The support of the members has been outstanding and I sincerely hope that once the work is completed, most of us will be pleased. At least we will have decent toilets and a very much improved playing area.

P2P has started on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April and we are all now members of the EBU. Thanks to Sue O'Hara for all the hard work she has done to prepare the data base to fulfil the EBU requirements. As you know the Club is funding our participation in P2P for a year; this time next year we will have to decide whether to continue within the scheme which will then have to be funded in some way by the members themselves.

I believe this will be the last Newsletter that John Styles will be publishing and I would like to thank him for all his efforts towards making the Newsletters always interesting and often amusing. We will continue to publish regular Newsletters under a new Editor as we believe it is a good way of periodically informing the members of the major events concerning the Club.

Finally you are invited to play in a tournament on Sunday 20 June to mark the opening of our new Clubhouse and the end of my Chairmanship. The tournament will be followed by a reception and a list will be up on the board in due course to enter your names.

Good Bidding,

**Oli**

## Secretary's Section

### News of Bridge Competitions

**The Curtis Cup** Round 1 of the Curtis Cup is on Wednesday May 19<sup>th</sup>. There are cash prizes for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> for each round thanks to generous sponsorship by Bob Curtis. Please sign up on the noticeboard and be sure to record in your personal diary that you have signed up for this. Being a teams competition, we need everyone to arrive who has signed up to play.

**The Hockey Cup** This is the Club Mixed Pairs Championship to be held Thursday May 6<sup>th</sup>. There is no sign up list – just turn up at the usual time that evening. Please note that there is only mixed pairs this evening – contact Sheilah Da Silva if you need a partner.

**Mendela Trophy Competition** This competition is normally on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday in each month. However in July please note in your diary that it will be on July 8<sup>th</sup> and the AGM will be on July 15<sup>th</sup>. This is a change from what is in the Club Calendar. You do not need to arrange a partner to play after the AGM since there is a draw for partners and the bridge is free, the winners being awarded the Bernard Shannon Cup.

### SOCIABLE SATURDAYS

Because of the work being done on renovations and the consequent greater use of the bar area, there will be no "Sociable Saturday" in either April or May.

Make a note of the dates for the next ones in your diaries:

**June 5<sup>th</sup>, July 10<sup>th</sup>, August 14<sup>th</sup> and September 11<sup>th</sup>**

Future dates will be on the Club website and in the new calendar.

### Sticky cards

There have recently been complaints about sticky cards. We believe they get sticky from hands which have been eating crisps! In future a paper napkin will be given to those ordering packets of crisps and we are considering not serving crisps with sandwiches. However, once the Club renovation work is complete the cards will be replaced with new ones.

***Stephen Royal***

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### Your Committee

The Club AGM will be on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> July (please note this change of date in your diary) and several members of the present committee will be retiring. We welcome Hilda Ball, Nelson Stephens and Mike Letts who have joined the committee as co-opted members and who, with your approval, will become full members. Any other volunteers?

## **Membership Secretary's Report**

It's a bit difficult to work out who should write this report as Sue O'Hara is now our new membership Secretary, congratulations for volunteering!

But since I came back from holiday with a broken leg (no more sympathy here please everyone has been very kind for which many sincere thanks) I have been housebound. So I have carried on with one of the few Club tasks I could do without having to leave home.

### **New Members**

A warm welcome to our new members the Ms's Beadsley, Bowden, Riboulet and Southall, the Mrs' Drugan, Gardner, O'Callaghan, Owens, Powell, Sidgreaves and Simmonds, the Mr's Eveleigh, Mortimer, Plumb, Staples, Turner and White and Mr & Mrs O'Neill and Small.

### **Subscriptions**

It's that time of the year again when subs are due and so many have paid! If you have overlooked payment please remember £20 before the end of April; £25 is due once May and hopefully the blossom arrives.

### **Pledges of Loans and Donations for the Club building project**

Many thanks once again for those very prompt in sending in their cheques and please for those payments still outstanding - send them in. The builders are on the premises and we will need to pay them soon.

I am acknowledging all pledges (but the acknowledgement takes about 2-3 weeks) and at the time of writing I have done all those up to the 7 April 2010.

If in doubt send me an email.

**Address changes** – Please remember to advise the Membership Secretary of any change to your address, phone number or email address by an email to [theseymours@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:theseymours@blueyonder.co.uk) or by a note left in Phil Seymour's pigeon hole by the Club entrance door.

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## **Do You Have Confidence in the NHS?**

*These are a few of the phrases (allegedly) typed by Medical Secretaries at a Glasgow Hospital.*

- ◆ She has no rigors or shaking chills, but her husband states she was very hot in bed last night.
- ◆ Patient has chest pain if she lies on her left side for over a year.
- ◆ On the second day the knee was better and on the third day it disappeared.
- ◆ She is numb from her toes down.
- ◆ While in ER, she was examined, x-rated and sent home.
- ◆ The skin was moist and dry.
- ◆ Occasional, constant infrequent headaches.
- ◆ When she fainted, her eyes rolled round the room.

## DIRECTOR'S CORNER

I am continually amazed by the question "where do the boards go?" I often see highly intelligent people wandering aimlessly around the playing area carrying boards and sometimes just dumping them on a random table.

Please just stop here for a moment, and before reading on, think back through your whole bridge career at normal pairs and teams. Where did the boards go? How many different methods have you used?

Now for the complicated bit...down one. This means your table number minus 1, except for table 1 which goes to the highest table, or a relay (empty) table.

The tables should be numbered consecutively and clockwise (viewed from above). Some TDs like to start at north, whilst I start nearest to where I am. This allows me to keep an eye on table 1, which usually plays the boards from 1 upwards. Also, if there is a relay table(s), it (or one of them) will usually be between 1 and the highest-numbered table. The boards being played at table 1 also act as a "clock" giving an idea of the event's progression.

One or more relay tables are used to hold boards for a while before they move back into play, but they will still be in numerical order and go down one onto the relay and down one off of it.

In very simple terms, there are 2 types of pairs movements, **Howell** and **Mitchell**. Each has its faults and benefits.

**Howells** produce a single winner, and plays a larger percentage of the field. A "perfect" movement plays all the pairs and all the boards. On the down side, there are few sitting seats, and there is a lot of moving about.

**Mitchell** movements have more sitting places, and a simple move to the next table for the EW pairs. The downside is that there will (normally) be two exclusive ranking lists, which cannot be compared in any way to each other. If one NS pair has (say) 59% and one EW pair has 54% it cannot be said that the NS pair has done better. Mitchells are particularly good if the playing area is 3 or 4 small rooms.

A mathematical trick to create a one-winner Mitchell is the "arrow switch" (look for the arrow on the boards!). Technically this involves various tables switching the polarity of the boards on various rounds (which is a nightmare) in order to emulate a Howell. So we switch all the tables at once, for about 12% to 16% of the total boards.

In the next Newsletter I shall explain what is meant by 'an average' but I would be pleased to receive any suggestions for matters you would like me to cover.

Larry B

## The Hicks Team Event and Tactics

Nelson Stephens has kindly contributed the following interesting article.

The Hicks Handicap Teams at the Club is a monthly event and usually attracts a large number of teams. Its popularity is due in part because the system of scoring is easier to understand. Each result on your scorecard is directly compared with the result of your team-mates at the other table and the difference converted to IMPs. Another advantage of the teams event is that at the end of the evening it's fun to get back together with your other pair and compute your own score rather than have it delivered by the computer. This has a learning aspect too. When you get back and see that you stopped in 3 spades, making one overtrick whereas your opponents for that board bid and made 4 spades, the team can consider whether or not some fine tuning on the system will help to get to the game hands.

So what are the tactics when playing in a teams event? In general, in bidding games, it is better to be optimistic rather than pessimistic. Here is an example to illustrate why this is so. You are sitting East in 4 spades having opened a weak no trump and the bidding goes: 1NT, 2H (transfer), 2S, 3S, 4S pass. The defence starts with three top diamonds and then leads a club:

A9875	QJT
A5	K873
876	J52
K96	AQ4

You win the club in your hand and now you have to hope that the finesse of the King of spades is successful. Half the time you win, half the time you lose? That's true, but how much do you win and how much do you lose?

Suppose you are vulnerable. If the finesse works you get 620 and if it loses you get -100. Now suppose on this hand your opponents had been more cautious and stopped in 3 spades. If the finesse works they get +170 and if it loses they get +140. So the net gain for your team by bidding 4 spades rather than 3 spades is  $620 - 170 = 450$  if the finesse works. But the net loss is only  $100 + 140 = 240$  if the finesse loses. So half the time your team gains 450 and half the time it loses 240.

You can think of it another way to appreciate the effectiveness of taking the optimistic view. If I spun a coin and said that if you called correctly I would give you £4.50 but if you get it wrong you would lose £2.40, would you take me on? I think so. After ten tosses you would expect to be more than £10 better off!

In the Hicks teams in March, the bottles of wine went to Judy Archer & Cherry Scott and Philip Lynch & Sue Lovell. Sue and Phil reached an excellent 4 spades on the following hand:

Both vul: Dealer S	J753	K9864
	AQ2	KJT3
	A5	K6
	AT53	97

Sue opened 1 club and Phil bid 1 spade. Now Sue bid 3 spades, evaluating her three aces and the spade fit as good support, and Phil had no hesitation in bidding the game. Ten tricks were made easily, Phil just losing two spade tricks and a club. Only 7 of the 12 pairs managed to bid 4 spades

Another well bid hand was the following:

N/S vul: Dealer N	K	J852
	Q832	K
	A7643	KJ982
	754	AKJ

Gill Davies & Richard Blacknell bid this to 3NT. West (Richard) opened 1D and East (Gill) responded 1H (it is a good policy to bid your major before raising partner's minor suit opening). West bid 1S and East bid 3D to show a good fit and some values. West has still something to spare and bid 3N. The defence had no chance and Richard made 10 tricks for a score of 430 whereas their teammates were defending only 2NT up one and lost 150. That was a swing of  $430 - 150 = 280$  and 7 IMPs. Only 6 pairs managed to reach the game contract.

The next Hicks Teams event is on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Come along and enjoy an interesting competitive evening. It's a handicapped event so there's a good chance your team will win the wine!

As Oli mentioned, **Sue O'Hara** has been most helpful in preparing the Club for P2P and has written the following article.

### **Pay To Play (P2P)**

April 1<sup>st</sup> saw the introduction of Universal Membership (of the English Bridge Union) and P2P. The Bristol Bridge Club Committee decided that as the largest bridge club in the South West we should affiliate to the EBU and support P2P, at least for its first year of operation. We will then review our continued commitment to it when we have seen it in action and are better able to assess the pros and cons. We also decided that we could afford to fund P2P for the first year so our members will not see any increase in table money at least until 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011.

The EBU has introduced Universal Membership to address the declining membership of the EBU and to try to secure the future development of duplicate bridge in England. They have undertaken considerable consultation of all the clubs and county associations in England and they believe that P2P is a fairer way to provide funding for the future.

### **What will it mean to you?**

For every bridge session you play at an affiliated club, 29p will be paid to the EBU and at ACBA clubs a further 6p will be paid to Avon. For those of you who were already members of the EBU prior to April 1<sup>st</sup> you will no longer have to pay for membership of the EBU. All members of Bristol Bridge Club will be members of the EBU. You will receive the members' magazine; English Bridge, as long as you play in more than 12 sessions in a year and you will receive the members' diary with the August edition of English Bridge magazine. Full details of the benefits for members are displayed on the club notice board or you can view them at:

<http://www.ebu.co.uk/pay2play/BENEFITS%20FOR%20INDIVIDUAL%20EBU%20MEMBERS%20%20April%202009.pdf>.

Once P2P has settled in it is proposed that we will use your EBU membership number as your Bridgemate number – so only one number to remember and you will be able to use this number at other affiliated clubs. The EBU also plan to introduce a National Grading Scheme (NGS). This is in addition to the existing Master Points scheme. The NGS will give each player a rating based on their recent performance in all events.

### **Team Events**

Do you want more team events? Some do and some don't! Perhaps on one Tuesday each month we could have both a teams and a pairs event.

Anyway, we propose to discuss this at the AGM so come prepared to air your views.

## “The Solid Person’s Guide to the Strength of Opening Pre-empts”

Based on evaluating your hand on a scale of 1 -10

Position at table	Vulnerability			
	Non-vul v Vul	Love All	Game All	Vul v Non-vul
1 <sup>st</sup>	6	7	8	10
2 <sup>nd</sup>	10	10	10	10
3 <sup>rd</sup>	3	5	7	10
4 <sup>th</sup>	10	10	10	10

ie: in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> seat your pre-empts should be solid (10). Say 65 : 74 : AKQ6432 : 82

In other situations they can be weaker – down to a ‘3’ which could be as weak as:  
65 : 74 : Q1097643 : 82

*Taken from Tony Forrester’s book ‘Secrets of Success’*

### Request for a Lost Team Member

Many of you will have seen a letter written by Derek Fey and published in the December EBU magazine. He recalled being one of the team, in the early 1960s, who were the first winners of the Firestone Tyres Cup.

Two members of the team have since died but Derek had lost touch with Brian Watson, the 4<sup>th</sup> member. Happily Brian responded to the letter and he and Derek are now back in touch.

### Avon Logo

You may recall that there was no response to my challenge to draw a logo which could head the Avon news contribution in “English Bridge”. In fact I gave the Avon Committee a drawing of the Matthew which a friend of mine did several years ago and which we used on the front of the ‘Tourist Guides Bristol’ brochure when I was chairman of that organisation.

Avon are very pleased with it and kindly presented me with a bottle of wine. They now use it on their website (have a look) and plan to use it to advertise events but unfortunately it cannot be reduced in size sufficiently for use in the magazine. So there is still an opportunity for any budding artist to achieve fame if not fortune!

## Strong Opening Bids

What should your opening bid be on the following hands?

- |  |                                    |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| (A) QJ1095432<br>VOID<br>AKQJ3<br>VOID | (B) VOID<br>A<br>AKQ108543<br>KQJ9 | (C) A<br>AQJ107532<br>VOID<br>AKQJ |
|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|

### Answers

(A) **5S** – asking partner to raise to 6 with the Ace or King of Spades and to 7 if holding both.

(B) **4NT** – not Blackwood but asking for specific aces. If partner bids:

- ◆ 6 Clubs (Ace of Clubs) – bid 7 Diamonds.
- ◆ 5 Spades (Ace of Spades) – bid 6 Diamonds.
- ◆ 5NT (Two Aces) – bid 7NT
- ◆ 5 Clubs (No Aces) – bid 6 Diamonds.

(C) **6H** – Asking partner to raise to 7 holding the Ace or King of Hearts.

*They just might come up once in a lifetime so keep hoping!*

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## Farewell from your Editor

I produced my first Newsletter in May 2007 and feel that the time has come for me to hand over to a new Editor. I have enjoyed the challenge over the past years and hope you have enjoyed reading the end results.

My particular thanks to Barbara Bush for the really excellent job she has made in typing up the Newsletters for me.

Derek Fey has kindly agreed to take over and I do hope that you will support him with ideas and contributions.

His telephone number is **0117 962 0117** (yes this is correct!) and his email address:  
[df007j7745@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:df007j7745@blueyonder.co.uk)

### And Finally - What Would You Bid?

1S (P) 1NT (X)

(P) ? this passed hand was JXXXX, XX, XXX, QXX

I didn't know what to do! Would you have bid 2 clubs perhaps?

**John Styles**