

# WALES IN THE CAMROSE: MANCHESTER – March 2014

## MATCH ONE

The second weekend of the 2014 Camrose season brought a new pair into the Welsh team – with a first ever Camrose outing for Mike Close & Laura Woodruff. Tim Rees made a return appearance as non-playing captain. This year's Camrose has two teams from the England but after the first weekend they were lying fourth and fifth, only ahead of Wales. The Republic of Ireland led the table.

Most teams turned out a similar squad – with one change for each of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The Republic was unchanged but England fielded a completely new set apart from Jeffrey Allerton & Chris Jagger who gave some minimal continuity to the EBU team (and Ben Green who returned as NPC rather than player for England).

**WALES & SCOTLAND.** Wales had lost narrowly (9imps) in the January match and both teams had returned with one new pair. Wales started off with Mike & Laura, playing with John Salisbury & Mike Tedd in the other room. There were two bad slams bid by Scotland and two good slams, and these generated three of the four double figure swings in the first half. The other was a careless defence allowing 5C to make.

The first of the slams bid by Scotland – board one in fact – was missing two aces and the Welsh South doubled. This had the unfortunate effect (after all it was a Lightner double position) to dissuade his partner from leading the AK of their suit, and declarer had two singletons and was able to discard at trick two and avoid one of the losers he deserved. This was 15imps out when it could have been 4imps in. The second slam hand was more interesting (from a bidding perspective) ...

K8653	A
T	AKQ8432
A96	KT3
KJ65	A4

Everyone opened 1S here and the most common sequence (many playing 2/1 game force) was 2H-2S-3H-3N. Generally now the big hand lost patience and some bid the grand slam, some found a way to check for aces and bid the grand slam, but one person, Andy Robson, just settled for 6H. There were 13 easy tricks when the hearts broke but in fact most Easts knew at the point they bid it that partner could have at most one heart. With a 7-1 fit the grand is reasonable, but if it's a 7-0 fit you really don't want to be there. Only the EBU auction (in which 3H was raised to 4H) gave any real hint there was a heart in West. If you think the chances of 0/1 heart are about 50/50, then bidding the grand is against the odds. The auction that goes 1S-2H-2S-3H-3N-4D-4H(surely not a void)-4N(ace ask) and on to 7N seems quite reasonable but never happened.

The other slam hand was bid at only 2 tables despite having 12 top tricks ...

J5	AKQT98763
975	2
A9863	Q
A32	K7

Yes, that is a nine card suit and the opening bids on this hand in third seat were 1S (once), 2D as a strong hand (once), 3N (solid suit, once), 4D (good 4S opener, once) and 4S (twice). The fourth seat (a decent 0553 hand) came in at all tables and the competition twice went up as high as 5H. But it was just Laura & Mike after the 2D opener, and Frances Hinden & Graham Osborne for the EBU after the 3N opener, who got to the slam. Swings to Wales and to EBU.

The boards had little in the play – indeed there were three examples of everyone making exactly the same number of tricks, but it was too much to ask for them all to be in the same contract (5/6 being the closest). After the scores were in we found Scotland was 2imps behind Wales, the North was 21imps ahead of the Republic of Ireland, and England was 19imps ahead of the EBU. For the second half, Wales brought in Filip & Patrick to replace Mike & Laura, while Scotland gave Barton & Spears a rest and brought in the new pair – Phil Stevens & Alex Wilkinson.

There were four big swings in this set – one an unnecessary penalty collected by Kurbalija & Shields, another was when the bidding was dropped in a cue bid by the same pair – but the other two swings did happen in some other matches. The first went with the choice of opening bid: opposite a weak 1N opener the hand of AJT9 – J65 – KT7 – KJ6 just raised to game but this game was impossible, while the 4-4 spade fit found after the other four tables opened 1C or 1D, was impregnable. Swings against Wales and EBU on that. The other swing was the case of who held the diamond queen on board 32 ...

<p>T84 KQT84 K43 86</p>	<p>KQ2 A932 AJT2 Q4</p>	<p>After the third in hand opening (usually 1N) the contract was at most tables 4H and the lead from South was the C-AK. At two of these five tables South had shown long clubs (1N-3C, 1H-3C) but at all tables in the play the spades had shown up as 5-2 the other way, second seat holding AJ976 of the suit. If you had the perfect count the diamonds were 3-3. Where there was no bidding the clubs might have been 5-4 or 6-3 but the bidding made it certain they were 6-3. The two declarers with club certainty played the spade hand to have the DQ, while the others played the club hand to have the DQ. The DQ was with the spades in second seat, so game swings to Northern Ireland and to Wales.</p>
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There was one slam hand in the set, and not without interest ...

<p>A73 AQ AK754 AKJ</p>	<p>QT9654 T52 2 432</p>	<p>It was a 2C opener for all with a 2D-2H sequence usually showing hearts or a GF balanced hand. The default Kokish continuation is 2S which unfortunately wrong-sides a spade contract, so some play 2N or 3H as a weak hand with single suited spades. With this information (a 3H bid) Graham Osborne for EBU opted to try 6S which worked easily here with spades and hearts lying as nicely as they could be. But I have a lot of sympathy for bidding the slam anyway as just seven spades to the ten would give a good play for 6S. That was worth 11 imps to EBU.</p>
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When the smoke had cleared, Wales had gained another 17 imps to beat Scotland and this 13.62 VPs overcame Scotland's win in January, and got Wales the Jourdain trophy – now standing at five wins to each side. Meanwhile the Republic had pulled back to lose by only 14 imps to the North, and EBU had gained 13 imps to lose by 6 imps overall to England. This put Northern Ireland at the top of the Camrose table, ahead of Ireland, but with Scotland still in third place.

END OF MATCH ONE

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