

WALES IN THE CAMROSE: BELFAST – March 2015

MATCH FOUR

Wales had slipped in the third match but retained a healthy lead (11 VPs) as they went into the final day of the second Camrose weekend. Today they had two matches against two teams from the low end of the table, the second Northern Ireland team and then Scotland.

WALES & NIBU. The first board was fairly straightforward and successfully executed by most ...

	AQJ7		One table saw North open a strong 1C over which the bidding went X-P-2S and North saw the opponents playing in his best suit. With double being takeout he felt he had to pass and South was not inspired enough to re-open, so 2S-2 was the result at that table. All the others ended in 3N after a major suit investigation in which South had shown hearts and North had shown spades. Four of the five tables led a high heart, and three of those won the ace and returned a heart. Declarer cashed all the minor suit winners, leaving East with hearts and spades and threw him in with the third heart to lead into the S-AQ at the end. One table ducked the HQ (necessary if the lead might have been from KQ) and declarer didn't have the end play available but took the spade finesse himself while the hearts were still blocked. The last table led the H7; this could have been vital if partner had the HK and declarer the HA, but today it led to the same end play as the other tables.
8652	K8	KT43	
A3	AKT	QJT72	
J43	AK85	962	
QT32		8	
	9		
	9654		
	Q875		
	J974		

It was curious to see on board 3 how difficult some pairs found it to find a 5-5 fit

J963	---	When the dealer (the 11 count) passed, one table had the opponent open a multi 2D and stop in 3S, while the other saw a weak 2D opened from the third seat. One strong club pair opened 1D and ended in 5Dx one off. Two pairs opened 1C, one natural (they ended in 6D) and one opening was clubs or balanced (they ended in 4D). Only the one pair - who opened 2C in a strong club system - got an immediate raise and played in clubs.	
K	T87		
A54	KQJ32		
QJT98	A6542		

The next board gave a chance for the different opening styles to be displayed : at both vulnerable in second seat you hold QT9765 – 2 – KQT54 – T and RHO passes. Three tables passed but Wales and England opened 3S, while Ireland opened 2S. The passers got to bid spades later but it was only the 2S opener and one 3S opener that induced partner to sacrifice in 4S over the opponents' making game. More evidence for bidding up !

In general it was a less interesting set of boards, of which the best was this

	KQ864		It was EW vulnerable here when North dealt; three passed but we had openings of 1S (natural, for Wales), 2H (both majors) and 2S (spades+other). The first led to 4H by North going down 2, the next was passed round to West's 3C which ended the bidding (should it?), and the third got a raise from South allowing the opener to play in 3S which made.
	K9832		
	954		
	--		
AT7		J3	
4		AQT	The variety continued after P-P, with one South passing (so that West could open 1C), and the others opening 1C and 1H. The last of these got a game raise by partner but that was too high. The 1C opening silenced West for one round and the 2S response silenced both opponents and that made for +110. The final table where West opened 1C for Wales, led to North showing both majors, over which East showed some values and then bid 3N over the opponents' 3H. This proved an easy make and John Salisbury's 11 imp gain was the biggest swing on the hand.
JT2		Q873	
AQT965		J742	
	952		
	J765		
	AK6		
	K93		

At the end of the stanza Wales were 19 ahead of NIBU and England were 22 ahead of the NI team, but it was Ireland who were motoring, now 55 ahead of Scotland.

For the second half, Kurbalija & Shields came in to replace Jourdain & Ratcliff. England started the second half with a 7 imp gain when a weak two opening (with 46 in the majors) allowed Tosh to successfully pick up the diamond suit of AQ983 – J764 by playing RHO for KTx. Then came this hand ...

<p>AK873 A64 -- KQ653</p> <p>QT95 Q87 -- JT9742</p> <p>J642 53 AJ98542 ---</p>	<p>-- KJT92 KQT763 A8</p>	<p>East dealt at green and four opened 1H, while two opened 1D. After the 1D opener at both tables it proceeded P-1S-2C and opener overbid with 2H but both partners found a pass of that. North came back to life with 2S but at both tables partner wasn't there and 2S ended the auction.</p> <p>Over a 1H opener two Souths tried 2D, one 3D, and one passed. The 2D overcall saw heart raises but partner was there and the final contracts were 5S and 6S. Against Tony Forrester's 5S the lead of DK to DA was ruffed (low, and over-ruffed), highlighting East as having 11 cards in the red suits. Tony ruffed two low clubs, confirming the shape and made all his trumps eventually to go with two clubs and the HA for 12 tricks. He could have been held to 11 tricks if West had ruffed the first diamond with the S9 (and it is surprisingly often that such an insurance pays). But in 6S NIBU were declaring from South and a heart lead (and no knowledge yet of the East shape) meant the contract had no chance and declarer ended 3 down.</p> <p>The other two tables ended in 4Hx by East, escaping for one down when the DA was led, and going down 2 at the other table.</p>
--	---------------------------------------	--

This hand looked likely to produce a few swings; after the opening 1S bid at all tables, the next hand, at love all, held 2 – 73 – T4 – Q9876532. It's not often you pass with an eight card suit but three players passed here, and the others bid 3C once and 4C twice.

<p>AKJ864 T96 K763 --</p>	<p>Q76 AQJ84 Q8 AJ4</p>	<p>After 1S-4C one hand tried for slam and ended in 6S, while the other – opposite an opening limited by no strong club and a partner who likes to bid a lot – just bid 4S. Over the 3C overcall, opponents continued to 5C and England doubled to collect +500. Without an overcall, pairs reached 4S, 5H and 6H. It all depended on the HK, which was offside, but it was (essentially) flat all round as it was NIBU and Wales who bid the two slams.</p>
---------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	--

The penultimate board had slam interest too

<p>Q QJ832 AQ92 A63</p>	<p>AKJT7 A76 J8 K95</p>	<p>Four tables bid 1H-1S-2D over which East showed better than a raise to game, with heart support. Opposite that information three passed and one bid 6H. The other two tables were weak NT pairs and bid 1H-1S-1N showing extras; checkback confirmed the heart fit and the slam was bid by both. Everything was favourable and 12 tricks rolled in everywhere. There was one trump lead but – with everyone playing in hearts – we had two declarers led and ran the HQ (losing to 6 singletons), while three played the suit by ace and another (loses only to 4). It made no difference today.</p>
-------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	---

The last board was a damp squib in most matches, but had some interest in Wales – NIBU.

<p>AQ52 KJ9 QT652 7</p> <p>7 Q53 K9873 QT54</p> <p>T83 A764 AJ J983</p>	<p>KJ964 T82 4 AK62</p>	<p>After a pass from West every table started 1D-1S-X-P, and we saw three rebid 1N (and play there, making), while Forrester bid 2H for England (and got raised, ending 3H-2) and in the NIBU-Wales encounter system meant that both rebid 2D. NIBU played there and by somehow losing to the HT managed to go one off. Meanwhile Patrick Shields for Wales was raised to 3D and played a level higher. After an innocuous looking CA and CK, ruffed. He took the losing diamond finesse and West returned a diamond. There are rather a lot of losers now but he found a way – he played a heart to the HJ, drew two trumps, cashed the SA (removing West's only spade) and played out the remaining hearts. West could ruff with his last trump but then had to lead into the J9 of clubs and give declarer the ninth trick. Wales +4.</p>
---	-------------------------------------	--

When the counting was done, Wales had amassed 53 imps to 5 and came away with almost 19 VPs. Both Ireland and England had gained a little in the second half of this match, but not as much, and they collected 18.6 and 16.1 VPs respectively. Wales remained in the lead !

