

Entry Form for the Welsh Cup 1999/2000

Entry fee: £5.00 per team. Cheques should be made payable to WBU.

Closing date for entries 31/8/99

Entries to : Frank Scott-Verdon, National Tournament Organiser, 37 Heol Hendre, Cardiff CF4 6PL

Captain:..... Team..... WBU No.....
 Address..... WBU No.....
 WBU No.....
 PostCode..... WBU No..... WBU No.....
 Telephone No..... WBU No.....

Teams who win any match (other than the final) in this competition must pay a further £5 per team to proceed to the next round.

Teams who lose their first match in this competition will, automatically, be entered into the draw for the first round of the Welsh Plate.

No fee is charged for the first round of the Welsh Plate.

Entry Form for the Cambria Cup 1999/2000

Entry fee: £5.00 per team. Cheques should be made payable to WBU.

Closing date for entries 31/8/99

Entries to : Frank Scott-Verdon, National Tournament Organiser, 37 Heol Hendre, Cardiff CF4 6PL

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 PostCode..... WBU No..... WBU No.....
 Telephone No..... WBU No.....

Teams who win any match (other than the final) in this competition must pay a further £5 per team to proceed to the next round.

Teams who lose their first match in this competition will, automatically, be entered into the draw for the first round of the Cambria Plate.

No fee is charged for the first round of the Cambria Plate.

Welsh Bridge Union



Editorial

As you will recall in the last issue, I was looking to retire as newsletter editor, and this should be my last issue, as a replacement will be appointed by the executive before the AGM in May. Both candidates for the editorship are extremely capable, and I'm sure will do a good job, but as ever they will need your support in the form of articles. I will be happy to pass on any that arrive.

This year the AGM is being held at Gwent Bridge Academy at 11.30 a.m. on Sunday 16th May. AGM's are not riveting events, but they are the one opportunity during the year for the members to be directly involved in the running of the Union. The AGM rotates around the areas so that members can attend easily every four years, and it is a shame that more members do not do so. The final session of the Perry & Spickett takes place afterwards, and members are welcome to watch.

As treasurer, I am trying to trace The Thomas James Cup, which is won by the pair climbing the most number of places on Sunday in the Graded Masters. The cup has not been seen for several years. If it lies forgotten in your cupboard, please return it to the WBU, via your club/area.

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Results Round-up

NATIONAL OPEN PAIRS FINAL RESULTS

1st.	Dean Hardie & Tony Ratcliff	63%
2nd.	John Cox & Peter Holland	59%
3rd.	Alex Maddocks & Simon Edwards	57%

NATIONAL MIXED PAIRS FINAL RESULTS

1st.	Mary Moore & Glyn Williams
2nd.	Val Kennewell & Steve Kennewell
3rd	Liz Atkinson & Trevor Towers

NATIONAL MENS PAIRS FINAL RESULTS

1st.	Alex Maddocks & Steve Daniel
2nd	David Stevenson & Ron Higgins
3rd	Ken Richardson & Chris Rochelle

NATIONAL LADIES PAIRS FINAL RESULTS

1st	Glenda Dorling & P. Woodhouse
2nd	Sheila Shea & Andrea Martin
2nd	C. McCreary & M. Paschkes

WBU FLITCH WINNERS

1st	Jill & John O Sullivan	Haverfordwest	70.31%
2nd	Rita & Harry Ashton	Crickhowell	67.92%
3rd	Patricia & Patrick Maslin	Aberystwyth	65.20%
4th	Kath & Neil Jenkins	Vale of Glamorgan	61.90%

REMINDER – NEW VENUE

WEBBER CUP FINAL TO BE HELD IN LLANDRINDOD
AT THE
GLEN USK HOTEL

EWBA Duplimate Charges

Congress/Event Organisers please note that EWBA have increased the cost of sheets of copied hands to 6p each to cover costs. The cost of making up boards remains at £6.00 per set.

Counter-Measures

by David Hamilton

The invention of a weapon of any kind usually leads to counter measures to dilute its effectiveness. This is equally true at the bridge table.

Dealer South
N/S Game

843

AQ

65

A95432

K75

J109

109873

K62

Q10

J9873

J87

Q6

AQ62

J54

AK42

K10

South	West	North	East
1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

This deal took place in a team event and the bidding and opening lead were the same in both rooms. At the first table, the heart lead lost tot the King, and a heart was continued. Declarer found the best play by leading a low club from the dummy and inserting the C10. West won the CJ, continued hearts but South on winning the HJ, overtook the CK with the CA, dropping the CQ and claimed 10 tricks.

In the other room declarer found the same play of looking for a doubleton club honour in the East hand, but this time West countered by refusing to win the CJ, allowing the C10 to hold! South was unable to run the club suit and finished two down.

Master Point of View

By Noelle Bond

19th March 1999

As far as I can see, I was the only one optimistic enough about the publication date of the Winter Newsletter to wish everyone "Happy Christmas", rather than just "Happy New Year", and then the gremlins crept in and caused a great delay. This has left me almost reluctant to mention the nearness of the master point year end. But, if it is not already too late when you read this, let me remind you that points for registration, with the total and your record card please, should be sent to me by the 30th of April. Otherwise you will not see your latest totals in the 1999 Journal. Also make sure you have sent in your membership subscription for the year, or you will not appear at all.

We now have what must surely be our youngest ever Club Master, in Claire Evans, aged nine-ish. She and her sister, Catherine were recently selected for the Welsh Under 20's team. I've said this before, I'm sure, but I think their interest shows that this game we love is one that the young can enjoy equally, and it is a pity that not more are exposed to it. The game needs young players to grow, and the social aspects, and competing against all age groups, must be beneficial for the young people themselves, far better, perhaps, than solitary hours in front of a computer screen. But I'm afraid that these two young ladies alone will not change the average age of Welsh players very much, for as a member wrote to me recently, "not many (of his club's members) are not pensioners. Where are the youngsters?"

Several Welsh schools used to run bridge lessons for their children, but the increasing demands on teachers' time, for sessions must always be supervised by teachers even when not taught by them, have forced most of these to end. When I became involved with this at a local school, I soon learned how interested the children become. Recently we were chatting with one of the young men painting our house, and mentioned we would have to get the car past their scaffolding to go to bridge. "Now I know where I remember you from," he said. "You used to teach me bridge at school." Sadly he has never played since.

I suppose that more could be done by bridge players at home, but then, we failed ourselves. When our children were young we played many games with them, sat around the dining table, but after stumbling by chance on to duplicate bridge, we were too excited by playing ourselves to think of teaching the children before they all left home. I heard that chess had just been accepted as a sport, perhaps bridge will follow someday, and the publicity may help.

Don't worry (I'm assuming you will be reading this in April) if you send in points now and do not get your MP record card back from me for a couple of weeks or more. As the year end mail floods in, a backlog soon builds up and, consequently, delay occurs. But, as I've said before, if you are worried about your points give me a call. It seems I frequently get calls from people immediately after posting their points back, I wonder if they pick up some psychic vibrations from me, and suddenly think "Noelle! I haven't heard from her, I'll give her a ring." I know this kind of thought transfer does occur, even if we don't know how or why. If only we could do it at will, especially when we think of something we need urgently, just after someone has left for the shops.....

As far as I am aware, not many letters have gone astray lately, and, oddly enough, the only damaged letter recently was one sent Recorded Delivery. This looked as if something had eaten part of it. Now if you are up to date with technology, you can E-mail me, which might be surer, but please don't try to send in points this way. When we first went on-line a few weeks ago, having heard so much about the Internet, I decided to look for the Welsh Bridge Union entries. I was quite disappointed that putting in WBU produced nearly a page of entries for Wild Birds Unlimited.

With master points, I do sometimes get notes on little cards with flowers or cats on, which is nice, but I had something new the other day. As I tipped the master point slips out of a jiffy bag, a batch of peculiar small white beads of varying sizes, fell onto my desk and rolled off onto the floor. If they are a gift, I wish I knew what to do with them.

Those of you who heard about the member who, after some wavering, decided to spend her bridge winnings having her teeth capped rather than neuter the cat, might like an update. It seems that a lottery win has finally put paid to pussy's fun.

I had a nice little verse recently:

I've checked through my handbags
Looked in my drawers
Emptied the dishwasher
Swept up the floors
Looked under the carpet
All over the stairs
Seem's I'll just have to win
The Open Pairs!!!!

I don't know if I'm to reveal the author, but I do know how she feels.

My husband recently had a phone call from a member wanting to know how long points remain valid. She told him that for some years she had been putting her points in a vase, and it was now full. I was expecting to see her points soon after that, but they didn't arrive for some time, leaving me wondering if she had found a larger vase, or was just being evasive. For those with deep vases, points have a shelf life of three years.

In the last newsletter, I wondered when the various Welsh clubs were formed, but I have heard nothing yet. I'm still interested though. Perhaps that information should be in the clubs listing of the Journal. (Although the editor may not be pleased if I suggest this!) You know the sort of thing, "Established 1997" such as one sees printed on builder's notepaper, where it is intended to give you a warm sense of security, so you don't think they're only riding the range.

Sincerely,

Noelle

My E-mail address is "noelle@glanmor45.freemove.co.uk"

Please send your points to:

Mrs N. Bond, 45 Buttrills Road, BARRY, Vale of Glamorgan, CF62 8EG

Master Point Promotions

Club Master

Mr Chris Blackman	CAS
Mrs M M Bolger	MH
Mr P E Bolger	MH
Mr John Bunker	CAS
Mr Alan Cleaver	R
Mrs Julia Davies	MB
Mr J E Deering	PN
Miss Claire Evans	AM
Mrs Jean Flower	P
Mr Peter Gillett	NT
Mrs Wendy Jenkins	WS
Mr Neil Lancaster	CAS
Mr Lyn Millinship	GA
Mrs Joan Nolan	CBY
Ms Cathy Redshaw	PR
Mrs Cynthia Sadler	R
Mrs Doreen Salter	SU
Mr Alan Screen	CAS
Mr David R Williams	M
Mrs Joy Williams	CD
Dr Meriel Williams	S
Mrs Connie Wilson	WS

Local Master

Mrs Roe Bissett	CRI
Mrs Philomena Boyd	MB
Mrs Audrie Burgess	LD
Mr Peter Cotterill	GA
Mr Colin Cridge	A
Mrs Janet Deering	PN
Mr Granville Dodd	S
Ms Margaret Doig	LD
Mrs Megan Evans	Y
Mrs Beryl M Gibbs	AM
Ms Isabel Good	C
Mr Alan Gray	PN
Mrs Sheena Gray	PN
Mrs Audrey Hall	PN
Mr John B Jones	W
Mrs Sally Jones	WS
Mrs Monica Mulford	MT
Mr Peter Nolan	CBY

Mrs Judith Owen	BV
Mrs Eileen Parry	MB
Mr Richard Shephard	CN
Mrs Rose Susman	WS
Mrs Hazel Swift	MT
Mr James Williams	CN
Mr Monash Woolfe	GA
Mr Robert Yates	GA

County Master

Mrs Janet Bradley	S
Mr Allan Lewis	MG
Ms Enid Lewis	C
Mrs H Pearce-Geary	CBY
Miss Mary Price	LD
Mr John Shelmerdine	WS
Mr Douglas Thomas	GA
Mrs Jean Thomas	GA
Mrs Chris Welson	AA
Mr Harry Woolley	WS
Dr Jim Wright	PN
Mrs Tina Wright	PN

Master

Mr Alan Ashton	CBY
Mr Ken Brinkworth	C
Mrs M Caulfield-Giles	CBY
Mr Alan Clegg	WS
Mr B Dalton-Jones	CN
Mr Mike Dennis	CBY
Mr Terry Evans	MG
Mr Neville Fonseka	S
Mr Heath Golding	CR
Mrs Marion Green	CD
Mrs Jean Herbert	GA
Mrs Anne E Hughes	PR
Mrs Kath Jenkins	VOG
Mr Neil Jenkins	VOG
Mrs Georgina Laing	CBY
Mr Ian Laing	CBY
Mr Jim Morton	WS
Mrs Denise Nicol	D
Mrs Viv Price	R

Advanced Master

Mrs Aida Aris	R
Miss Pat Crowley	GA
Mrs Janet Davies	A
Mrs Con Fielden	LD
Mr Les Fletcher	CBY
Mr Phil Forbes	OH
Mrs Joan Jones	PN
Mrs Dorothy Loxton	C
Mrs Muriel Richardson	WS

1 Star Master

Mrs Angela Barker	D
Mr Owen Barker	D
Mr Jock Barlow	PR
Ms Teresa Byrne	PN
Mrs Margaret Cole	PN
Ms Rosemary Evans	MG
Mrs Beth Forbes	OH
Miss M D Gorst	LD
Mr John Rudgley	S
Mrs Trish Tracy	PN
Mr Peter Williams	CBY
Mrs Anne Woods	MT

2 Star Master

Dr Betty Gardiner	GA
Mrs Muriel Maslin	R
Mrs Lena Morgan	S
Mrs Mary Rudgley	S
Mrs Marjorie Young	AM

3 Star Master

Mrs Win Durant	GA
Mrs Hannah Roberts	PV
Mrs Mary E Smart	S
Mrs Beryl Williams	MB
Mr David Wright	VOG

4 Star Master

Mr Peter Hayward	GA
Mr Emyr Tudwal Jones	STD
Mr Ian G Metcalfe	LD
Mr Peter Oepen	SP

Continued on Page 15

When Silence is Golden

Adrian Trickey

What do you do when you have a fair hand but the opponents bid your best suit before your turn to bid? This frustrating scenario occurred in the following deal from the Mid Wales Congress last year. My partner, South, was dealt: ♠ A J 10 x x x, ♥ void, ♦ K Q x x, ♣ A J x. West was the dealer and opened the bidding with 1♥. I passed and she heard 1♠ from East.

What are the options? It would be nice to play 2♠ as natural, showing this sort of suit and strength. However, if you have not discussed the bid with partner it is best not to surprise him with it now. That is what my partner thought. On the other hand, she had not travelled all the way from Cardiff to pass lovely hands like this. So, "double". West passed and I, with a 1-6-2-4 shape and 3 points, bid 2C. East now passed, and so did my partner. West now asked what "double" meant. I told him that it was take-out for the other two suits (in this case the minors), which is our standard partnership agreement. However, I was uncomfortably aware that a lot of spades had gone missing. (On the bidding, from my point of view, the opponents ought to have at least nine between them, yet for some reason they are not bidding up.) Eventually, after much thought. East, who had a doubleton Q of spades, raised his partner's spade suit. 2♠ was passed out and went four off, vulnerable. The opponents were nice enough to share the joke rather than call the director.

So is the double vindicated? I was surprised when several experienced but non-expert players told me they would double too. "What else can you bid?" they asked. Well, nothing, in my view, that is why we are provided with those little bits of green plastic in our bidding boxes. The hand is clearly a misfit. The only conceivable contracts for N-S are in spades. The only way North can get to 2♠ is to pass, when West bids 1♠. If West re-bids his hearts, and if this is passed round to North, a protective bid of 2♣ will then be unambiguously natural. If anything else happens, and the level of the bidding rises, North should be very glad that it will be E~W struggling in the misfit.

If you and your partner double on such hands, I wonder whether your doubles ought to be alerted, and explained as "take-out in principle but we also double when we have a good hand that has a fine holding in your suit but is not suitable for a One No Trump overcall". (Perhaps I am not being entirely serious here).

I was on the other side of a similar situation at the Porthcawl Congress. I had opened 1♦ with 14 points and a 3-1-5-4 shape. The player on my left doubled with a strong 1-4-5-3 hand. See the similarity? She had better diamonds than I had. After my partner had passed, right-hand opponent, who was 4-4-2-3 bid 2♠. The doubler re-bid 3NT and my partner led a low diamond.

The lead was a singleton. However, seeing two diamonds on the table and assuming there were only two or three diamonds on my left, I misread it as third highest from a three or four-card suit. I took my ace and returned a diamond. Declarer made an embarrassing number of tricks. A club switch would have set the contract (and 4♥ would have gone down, if they had found the 4-4 fit!). I, incautiously, said that if the opponents agreed to play their doubles this way perhaps they should alert them, and if it was contrary to their agreement it was a gross distortion of distribution, i.e. a "psyche". My opponent, who would never knowingly psyche in her life, called the director who assured her that it was not a psyche and that he would have doubled too!

New Formats for Welsh Cup and Cambria Cup

Next season there will be big changes to the WBU's two knock-out teams competitions. Council has approved some radical proposals that are intended to widen the appeal of these two events. In recent years the knock-out cups have continued to attract the elite of Welsh bridge, but the overall number of entries has been disappointingly low. These competitions are for all members of the WBU.

It is hoped that the numbers entering will double in future. We must expect that, in our premier competitions, quality will tell in the end. But, in the early rounds, we can all enjoy some exciting matches. We might be drawn against another team of our own standard, or once in a while our team might succeed in slaying one of the giants. And if the giant slays us, we will in future have two compensations: there will be an opportunity to fight again in a consolation event; and the financial cost of taking part will be small.

Two Matches Guaranteed

When you enter a competition you probably hope, like me, that you'll get a good run in it. However, it's an unfortunate mathematical fact of life that half the teams that enter a knock-out cup get knocked out in their first match. It seems to happen to me more often than not.

Well, starting with the 1999/2000 competitions, if you should get knocked out in your first match in the Welsh Cup, then you, and all those other teams who share your bad luck, will automatically qualify to play in a "Plate" competition. And there is no entry fee for your first match in the Plate. An exactly similar arrangement will apply for the Cambria Cup.

Entry Fees Reduced by 75%

The cost of entering the Welsh Cup next year has been slashed from £20 per team to just £5! The Cambria Cup will also cost only £5.

Pay as You Go

How can the WBU afford to make this generous gesture? Well partly because it is expected that the number of entries will increase. There is, however, a little catch. If you win a match, you have to pay a further fee of £5 per team for the next round. When you send your completed results card to the National Tournament Organiser, proudly announcing that you have won a match, you will need to accompany it with your further £5 fee.

So those teams that reach the fourth round or further will continue to contribute £20 or more, but those who fare least successfully will enjoy one "cup" match and one "plate" match for just £5 per team, which of course is a bargain £1.25 per person.

Entry Forms for 1999/2000 Competitions

Entry forms for the Welsh and Cambria Cups can be found on the back page of this edition of the newsletter. You may like to use these to get your entries in early to the National Tournament Organiser. The closing date for entries is August 31st 1999. Further forms (and forms for other WBU events) will be included in the WBU Competition and Master-Point Journal when it is published later this summer. Remember that while any four, five, or six WBU members can form a Welsh Cup team, a Cambria team must have players of both sexes. So let's get on with forming our teams now. Good luck, and I hope to meet you in the final!

Obituary

It is with deep regret that I have to advise you of the loss of **Rob King**, who tragically passed away on 25th January.

True to his determined nature, Rob had been fighting a battle to overcome cancer, but sadly on this occasion, had not been dealt a winning hand. Rob was 42 years old.

From a personal point of view I have lost a good friend, and I know that many players from the Mitchell Troy club and within East Wales will feel the same loss.

His friendly, relaxed nature made him good company and his love of bridge was legendary amongst his wide circle of friends. As well as playing, he also enjoyed talking about the game and was particularly keen to persuade younger players to learn and share his passion for cards.

Anyone who played against Rob will already know that he was an extremely good player. Those who were fortunate to partner him will appreciate his talent more.

He possessed that rarest of qualities amongst bridge players; the ability to play the cards he was dealt, without complaining about the unfortunate deal or the luck of the opponents and ever ready to offer words of encouragement to partner when things were going badly.

Qualities that remained with him until the end.

Richard Turley
On behalf of Mitchell Troy Bridge Club

What do I get for my subscription to the Welsh Bridge Union?

The membership year of the Welsh Bridge Union runs from April 1st to 31st March, so now is the time when the recruiters, and the clubs which pay their members' dues, may have to answer the queries of those who wish to know what the WBU does for them.

What does it cost?

The annual subscription is £5. To this may be added a small amount (about £2) to cover membership of the Area under which your membership is recorded. Direct membership, intended for those who do not belong to an affiliated club, costs more (£10) as documents are posted to the home address rather than being sent en bloc to the members' club, but there are few in this category.

The WBU has some two thousand members and sixty affiliated clubs, numbers which are gradually increasing. About a quarter of the WBU income is met by the annual subscription, the balance coming through master-points and tournaments.

Some clubs pay for all their members to join the Welsh Bridge Union, recovering the cost in their own club annual subscription. All WBU members are identified by name, and members who belong to more than one club may opt for their membership to be recorded against the club of their choice. The subscription only needs to be paid once per member. The club through which the payment is registered can improve that club's votes at Area level, and it also determines which club you may represent in the annual contest for affiliated clubs.

What are the benefits of membership?

Benefits come principally in three areas: administration, information and national pride.

Administration

All sports need decision-making bodies. The Welsh Bridge Union, being owned by its members, has a democratic structure with a Constitution, a Council and sub-committees designed to reflect the members' views expressed through their clubs, the four Area authorities, and the Annual General Meeting. The sub-committees run national tournaments, select and train the national teams, and administer the Laws and discipline.

Even if you choose not to play in national tournaments, all club members benefit from some of these services. You may care little about the Law of the land until you have a dispute with a neighbour, or someone burgles your house ... then you call upon the service of the police or Law Courts. All sports have bodies to resolve disputes, and to maintain the ethical and law-abiding running of the game, both at club level and without.

This service includes the training of Tournament Directors at all levels including club. Players only appreciate a well-trained Director when they come across the opposite. If your movements are often going wrong, or the rulings appear inaccurate, check to see whether your club is reaping the benefits of the training available.

Expenditure on all WBU administration is equivalent to about half the amount collected in subscriptions.

If you are **not** a WBU member, you can receive, but may not register your master-points, and you will not be permitted entry to most national tournaments.

Patrick Jourdain answers some of the queries

Information

Most players, even if they do not consider themselves part of the national tournament scene, are interested in what is going on, and wish to know what services are available. The Union provides an Annual Brochure and Quarterly Newsletters such as the one you are reading now, one per member. The Brochure gives the master-point ranking of the 1500 members who have won over 200 master-points. Most have had success in national-rated tournaments, as you can see by inspecting the "green point" record.

Clubs are sent copies of the new Laws, and the regulations governing which conventions which may be used at the various levels. There is a web-site open to all.

The cost of these services is equivalent to about a third of the annual subscription.

National Pride

The Welsh Bridge Union was created to run Welsh national tournaments, and the Welsh national teams, and this remains a major part of the Union's activities. The Union covers the cost of fielding two Junior teams, one Ladies team and four Open teams for the Home Internationals each year. It gives occasional, modest support such as entry fees for players representing Wales elsewhere, such as the World Junior Pairs or the European Pairs. The Union also meets the cost of Welsh Trials. Little is spent on training. The Union, via its support to the British Bridge League, also contributes a small proportion, about 4%, to the cost of British teams.

You hear the occasional grumble about the amount spent on these causes (about a third of the budget) usually along the lines of "all that money going to a small group of players". Most members, however, see it much more positively. They realise the national teams don't belong to the players but to the Union they represent. They are the teams for all the 2,000 members who share in their success or failure, just as in rugby only 15 players take the field whilst thousands share in their moments of joy and despair. Bridge-players representing Wales give up much of their own time, effort, and expense to represent the Principality and try hard to give you a record of success. No money goes to the players, though travel and accommodation expenses are re-imbursed at the Home Internationals.

The other main expense associated with the Home Internationals is the staging of the matches, particularly for spectators. This service is aimed, of course, not at the players in the event, but at the full spread of bridge-players, a range much wider even than those who take part in the national tournaments.

At the last Camrose, very well staged by West Wales in Swansea, there were spectators who had only recently begun bridge ... indeed so recently that one, who had thoroughly enjoyed watching, told me she had understood most of what was happening, but what was this word "double" which occurred during the bidding ... she had not yet come across it in her own experience.

I hope you are convinced, and can convince others, that the £5 subscription is a bargain for all members!

For the website address see <http://web.ukonline.co.uk/wbu>

SWANSEA CHARITY BRIDGE

SWISS TEAMS

7 x 7 board matches

SUNDAY 20TH JUNE 1999

2.00 PM

In aid of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (Mumbles)
Charity Number 209603

To be held at **Swansea Bridge Club**
22 St James Gardens
Swansea
Tel: 466965

Car Security

Director: Steve Kennewell

Entry Fee: £8 per person

Please send entries to:

Diana Panniers
13 Llewellyn Street
Sketty
Swansea SA2 9AL
Tel: 017921 297981

Cheques should be made payable to "Swansea Bridge Congress"

ENTRY FORM

Captain _____

Team _____

I enclose an entry fee of £32

Out of the East

by Adrian Trickey ATO

Oh dear! In the previous issue I announced the forthcoming restricted competition for teams of four for the Herbert Thomas Cup. Two blunders, I am afraid. Firstly it has been pointed out to me that the cup commemorates Mrs Herbert Thomas. Apologies. Secondly, due to a misunderstanding about publication dates, my piece appeared after the competition had taken place. Perhaps that was one reason for their being only seven entries. Congratulations to the winners, Marie George, Margaret Jones, Aileen Lloyd and Jill Alexander, and thanks to Noelle Bond for organising and directing the event.

February saw the return of East Wales' Congress at Cwmbran. This event has now been awarded national status, with higher master-point awards than hitherto. Perhaps in consequence, entries reached our limit of 96 teams. We are considering whether we can accept more teams next year. The effective limiting factor is the number of "duplimate" boards (and the time and labour necessary to prepare them). Having the computer-dealt, duplicated boards is a feature of the congress which has proved very popular with players and will certainly be continued. I hope that the enormous effort required of Anne Jones, East Wales' Duplimate Queen, is appreciated by the competitors. The East Wales Committee would love to receive constructive suggestions about further improvement and development of the Congress. We have a good product but we can always try to make it even better.

This year's results were a triumph for Ted Martin and Patrick Jourdain who won the Championship Pairs on the Friday evening and then went on, with Filip Kurbalija and A Kaludercic to win the main event -- the two-day Swiss Teams. The team was more than one whole match clear of the runners-up, K Slee, A Slee, J Thomas and A Bridgman. In the pairs event, C Draper and G Clench were the leading ladies pair whilst the mixed pairs award went to T Capal and S Capal. The separate competition for Novice Pairs, a much valued component of the Congress, was won by Terry Smith and Steve Bastible.

Thanks to the eclipse (yes, the eclipse) there will be a one-day green-point event in Cwmbran on Sunday 8th August this year. The event had been allocated to Cornwall, but the organisers realised that with millions expected to converge on the county to see the sun go in later that week, travelling and accommodation for a bridge event would be fraught with difficulty. So the event is transferred to Cwmbran. Entry forms will be available in all Welsh bridge clubs. The Entry Secretary is Myra Morris (01222 612129) who carries an immense work load on behalf of the EWBA in co-ordinating entries for all our events.

Coming up rather sooner, and in full sunlight (we hope) is the EWBA Swiss Teams for the Arthur James Bowl. This event will take place on May 23rd at Barry Memorial Hall. The Annual General Meeting of the EWBA takes place during the tea interval (there's an irresistible inducement to enter a team!). Well it ought to be a powerful inducement, at least to all those who have won (or come second or third in) EWBA events during the year because a significant item on the agenda is the award of prizes. Entry forms for the event are available in all East Wales clubs.

Junior Internationals

A report from our very biased Dublin correspondent.

On the last Friday in January a contingent of Welsh Junior Bridge players set off from Bristol Airport bound for Dublin, and the Peggy Bayer & Junior Camrose Home Internationals. The competition was held at the Howth Lodge Hotel, set practically on the beach of a beautiful bay to the north of Dublin.

The Junior Camrose (under 25s) team captained by the WBU Junior co-ordinator, Trevor Towers, were Adam Dunn & Jon "Fluff" Seavers in their last attempt at the trophy along with Mark Roderick and his partner Kevin Hughes. The format of this event would be three 10 board matches against each of the three other competing nations (England, Scotland and Eire) as Northern Ireland could sadly not raise a team this year.

The Peggy Bayer (under 20s) team captained by Paul Cunningham were Dafydd Jones & Ieuan Ward (his brother Kelvin playing for England) Jake Dunn & Tom Hillier and the young sisters Catherine and Claire Evans on their international debuts. Claire making history as the youngest ever participant in the event at the age of 9. The format of this event was slightly more complex as there were five nations competing. In each of the eight sessions, two teams were head to head for 12 boards whilst the other three played a half match against each of the others.

The Peggy Bayer started well with Dafydd & Ieuan and the young sisters being put in on round one, being a three way match against Scotland and Northern Ireland. They came out on top with +16 imps against NI and only 4 imps down against Scotland. This line up allowed Jake his first ever opportunity of sitting out in six years of Peggy Bayer competition. Throughout the remainder of the weekend Catherine and Tom took turns in partnering Jake allowing Catherine to play in 5 of the 8 matches in her first ever International competition. The final result of the Peggy Bayer saw Wales in a creditable third place between England and Scotland.

As I said in the introduction, I am a very biased correspondent, so here is one small example of the competent play of Catherine Evans, partnering Jake Dunn. Catherine a South opened 1H ands West intervened with 2C before the auction came to rest with 4H from North. West began by cashing the Ace of clubs and switched to a small spade. Catherine played a small heart to the King, identifying the bad break and then drew three more rounds of trumps. Catherine now played a spade to the ace and roughed a club and then eliminated the spades before exiting with her final club, end-playing west in diamonds.

♠	10xxx	♠	AQJx	♠	xx
♥	-	♥	KQxx	♥	Jxxx
♦	AQx	♦	Jx	♦	xxxx
♣	AK10xxx	♣	QJx	♣	xxx
		♠	Kxx		
		♥	A10xxx		
		♦	Kxxx		
		♣	x		

The Junior Camrose was a close fought battle to the very end, with the overall result depending upon the last few boards of the final match. Going into the last match only three victory points separated England, Scotland and Wales. Wales beat Eire by a comfortable 18-2 setting a very tough target for the others. However, a large swing on the penultimate board on view-graph, where England made 6 clubs at one table and 6 spades doubled minus one at the other, gave England the 17-3 win they needed to take the trophy with 115 points against Wales 113. A very creditable performance by the Welsh Juniors.

The weekend was capped off by a celebration dinner at the Hotel on the Sunday evening, followed by a party that went on till breakfast for some of the competitors, allowing the young from all the competing nations to socialise with their new-found friends. The weekend had clearly been enjoyed by all those taking part, particularly the two young Welsh girls.

Masterpoint promotions

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