

Peggy Bayer 2009 – Captain's Report

The Welsh team for the Peggy Bayer:



(l-r) James Harris, Becky Watkins, Claire Evans, Jonathan Richards

This year's Peggy Bayer competition was held in Belfast, NI, and the team went into the competition with hopes of improving on last year's position (3rd).

The draw was made, and Wales were drawn as team 'A'. This meant an opening match against the Scots. A strong Scottish side managed an emphatic 24-6 victory. Undeterred, the team then faced Northern Ireland followed by the Republic of Ireland and collected 20-10 and 22-8 victories respectively – both tables bringing in good cards. Notably, board 6 of match 2 (vs NI):

James Harris and Jonathan Richards picked up the following cards on a board which was to result in a big swing to Wales:

AQ/x/xxx/KQJTxxx opposite xx/KQxxx/AKxx/Ax

After a relatively swift auction to 6C, 12 tricks were wrapped up for +1370. As is typical in this game, you never can tell what's happening in the other room. The Northern Irish pair chose to play in 4C which netted Wales 15 IMPS which went towards the 20-10 victory.

The final match of the first round robin was against England who up to this point had scored a maximum in all their matches. Notably, several of the English players present were part of the silver medal winning team in Beijing. Unfortunately, England continued their good form and recorded a 25-5 victory. This brought to a close the first round robin and Wales were sitting in third place:

Team		A	B	C	D	E	Total
A	Wales	X	22	20	6	5	53
B	R of Ireland	8	X	16	0	0	24
C	N. Ireland	10	14	X	2	5	31
D	Scotland	24	25	25	X	5	79
E	England	25	25	25	25	X	100

The second round robin matches were to be played in the same order as the first, and Wales needed a convincing win against the Scots if they were to catch them. Much closer than the first match, Wales were narrowly defeated 16-14. This was then followed by wrapping up the ‘double’ against both Irish teams, collecting 16-14 and 19-11 victories. The final match of the weekend was against England who, up to this point, had collected a maximum of 25 VPs in every match and had a running score of 175. Another maximum would see this England team be the first ever to record a maximum VP total of 200 – Wales had other ideas. Despite losing the match, Wales managed a 23-7 defeat and denied the English a ‘perfect score’. Quite an achievement to be the only team to deny England the full 25 VPs. After a long weekend of almost 100 boards, Wales finished third (comfortably) with a total of 109 VPs:

Team		B/F	A	B	C	D	E	Total
A	Wales	53	X	19	16	14	7	109
B	R of Ireland	24	11	X	12	9	0	56
C	N. Ireland	31	14	18	X	4	0	67
D	Scotland	79	16	21	25	X	2	143
E	England	100	23	25	25	25	X	198

Unfortunately for Wales, the two defeats to Scotland dented our chances of second. Next year we have home advantage and the team will be looking for revenge.

This is my first year as Junior Co-ordinator and NPC of the Peggy Bayer team. May I take this opportunity to thank the players in Belfast for their excellent behaviour throughout the weekend and congratulate them on the high standard of bridge played throughout? Welsh junior bridge is on the up, and every Welsh bridge player should be proud of our juniors – after all, they are the future.

Alan Jones