

## WALES IN THE TELTSCHER: BELFAST – May 2014

This is the seventh running of what is affectionately known as the Seniors Camrose – the competitors being the five nations that compete the Camrose plus a team which was initially labelled “Patron” and now is labelled “Great Britain” and is captained by Bernard Teltscher. Bernard, playing with Tony Priday who is also 91 years old, have ensured that there is a considerable age range present at this event, whatever the label.

The Welsh team were winners of this trophy in 2011 but only one of the players from there is here this year, and that is Mike Hirst now playing with Philip Felman. Mike Tedd who NPC'd the win is playing with John Salisbury and the team is made up by Patrick Jourdain and Patrick Shields. Ann Hirst is our NPC this year. The event is run as 10 14-board matches, playing each of the other teams once and then again (in a different order).

**WALES & REPUBLIC OF IRELAND.** We started with the Republic who fielded the very experienced O'Briains (Micheal & Padraig) against Mike & John, and David Jackson & Tom Gibson against Mike & Philip. Our match was remarkably low scoring (28 imps turned over in 14 boards) but the hands were interesting and the other two matches saw a lot more swings.

Board one started the swings with 12 opposite 12 and three tables in game and three not. Board two gave West the very strong Q83 - void – AKQT6532 – A6 and you hear pass from partner and a 1H opener on the right. Some tried double and some tried 3H (asking partner for 3N with a stop). Next hand bid 3S and you try 5D but partner delivers just one trick to you and that's not enough. One table however had a Lucas 2H opening (hearts+minor) in first seat and then pass to this hand, which chose 3N. It went P-P-X (for a heart lead)-P and this contract would have gone six off but LHO bid 4S converting +1400 into -800. The hosts were just too generous. Flat board for Wales but a whopping 15 imp gain for England against N Ireland.

The next three boards showed up as potential slam hands on the Deep Finesse analysis and all had some play; only one hand was bid to slam and that only at one table – and that declarer went off. So maybe stopping in game was the right tactics ! This excellent slam came up not long after – this time for the pairs sitting North-South

T97	A863	Only Hallberg-Holland bid this slam and they bid 1N(15-17)-2C-2D(no major)-3D(natural)-4D-6D. With around 30 hcp it is usually worth investigating for a fit but no other pair – even those with a natural 1D opener – did. Easy 12 imps also for GB against Scotland when the latter tried 6N after 1D-1S-2N-6N and was always a trick short.
AQ	KJ2	
AQJ62	KT73	
K98	A2	

The most interesting play hand was actually board one

A9873	K6542	North dealt and passed and left East a choice of poor alternatives. Two chose a weak 1N, one chose 1C and the fourth we know of chose a pass! It was then a close call as to whether West insists on game, and half the field did. It was a red suit lead (twice diamonds and twice hearts) against 3N. The diamond was most naturally won with the DK to keep entries fluid and Hastings Campbell now ran the HT; this lost and the DJ return was won by the queen. With no entry to spades he had to turn his attention to clubs and CK held the next trick, followed by a club to the queen. The defence had nowhere to turn and he soon wrapped up 9 tricks.
	K842	
	9	
	QT8	
T97	Q	Victor Silverstone also in 3N let the D4 lead run to the D9 and DA, and now played a club to CK and a club back to the CT-CJ and ... ducked again! So he cleared the suit and ended with 11 tricks.
KQ7	AJ3	
K9	A862	
	J7632	
	JT	
	Q65	
	JT543	
	A54	

The set ended with Wales having a 12-8 win, Northern Ireland had a decent 15-5 win over England despite board two, and Scotland had a small win over GB.

**Match 2 : WALES & ENGLAND.** The two Patricks came in now to replace Mike & Philip. This set also had 4 hands in the slam zone – three in one direction and one in the other. These were a poor slam nobody bid, an excellent slam nobody bid, a good slam bid at two tables, and a cold grand bid at all tables except the one where a cow flew by. So some successes, but not as good a success rate as we need from top quality bridge. Slam bidding is difficult.

The key decisions in this match were whether to bid on in a high level competitive auction. The first was this; you hold 962 – A842 – KQ7643 – void and the auction goes from partner 1C-<1S>-X(takeout, usually hearts)-<2C(unassuming cue)>, 2H-P-4H(from you)-<4S>, P-P to you. Three tables decided to defend (although they might not all have had this Wales-England auction) and 4S made. To beat it you need to wake partner up to why you are not leading his first suit, by leading something strange - any of DQ or D2 or H2 will work get you three off for +500 . When the three defenders failed that test, the contract made. Better choice at two other tables was to bid 5H and collect +650 (the sixth table played 4H), but in fact partner has 3 – KQJ5 – AJT – Q7543 and the slam just depends on the hearts 3-2 and nobody having a void diamond. Wales lost 15 on this hand.

There were curiously three boards in this set of 14 where the contract and result was the same at all six tables – not the leads of course, that would be too much to ask! On the last board of the set Patrick Shields faced this lead problem : holding 986 – AQ4 – AQ54 – 986 he had heard RHO open the bidding and it proceeded (with Wales silent) 1C-1H-2C-3C-3N. Reasoning that declarer's weakness must surely be in hearts he led out the HA and dropped declarer's singleton king and duly beat the contract by three tricks. Leading a diamond or a spade gives declarer an easy 9 tricks.

Wales lost this match by 19 imps and fell close to the bottom of the table.

**Match 3 : WALES & NORTHERN IRELAND.** This was a very interesting set of boards; as well as the three slam hands there was potential in the play on a number of games. The first slam – 6D on a finesse if they find the right lead, and on just under one of two finesses otherwise – was bid by nobody; in fact nobody played the hand in diamonds and two went off in the wrong game! The second slam was exactly slam on a finesse but nobody bid it. The third was a respectable grand slam in spades, with only three tables reaching to the small slam and one of those in the wrong suit and going off. Here they are for you to bid with your favourite partner

JT52	AQ8		AQ962	JT7		95	AKQT62
65	A7		8	T42		3	AJ84
AQJT4	652		KJ94	AQ8		AKQ2	76
AQ	KT873		Q75	AK82		KJ9873	A

The most sensible and natural auctions seems to be

1D	2C		1S	2C		1C	1S
2S (an overbid?)	3D		2D	4S		2C	2H
4C	4H		p			3N	4N
5D	6D					6N	

Here are a couple of play hands – first Sam Hall for NI playing in 4S

AKJT6		The bidding had been (North-South only) 1S-1N-2C-2S-2N-4S-end and the lead was the H4 to dummy's ace. This was followed by a club to CK and CA and a second heart ruffed. He continued with a top club and a ruff and then returned to hand with a spade. Now came the fourth club – not expecting to win the trick but perhaps someone would have to over-ruff with a trump trick. But it wasn't so – and the S7 won that trick.
3		
QJ7		
KQ65		
9	Q854	Sam now ruffed the third round of hearts and pushed out the DQ. This was won by the ace and D8 came back to the DJ. Holding just one diamond and two spades, he played the diamond and Shields had to ruff in the East hand and lead into the KJ of spades – 10 tricks and 7 imps to N Ireland against 2S in the other room.
KQJ86	742	
T642	A8	
T98	AJ32	
	732	
	AT85	
	K953	
	74	

And then Patrick Jourdain who as West played this in 4S ...

Q754 Q8743 T6 T4	T932	AKJ8 A6 AK54 AJ6	North led the D3, which unlike the more common club did not give away a trick. There are 9 likely tricks (four outside plus five trumps) and one more needs to be found. Patrick won the opening lead and played one top trump and then a small heart away from the ace. Hastings Campbell won the HK and continued diamonds. Now came the second spade and the bad break came to light.
	T2		
	Q83		
	K973		
	6		Patrick continued with HA, a diamond ruff (S7) and then HQ but this was ruffed, and overruffed. He was now able to cash CA and ruff the last diamond with the SQ. The fourth round of hearts allowed the S8 to be made en passant – and that was 10 tricks.
	KJ95		
	J972		
	Q852		

Match 4 : **WALES & GREAT BRITAIN.** This set of boards had only one real slam hand and this time we had five tables out of six bidding the slam.

QJ953 84 AKJ QT2	AK7	There were 13 top tricks but only three tables bid the grand slam. Salisbury & Tedd produced the most convincing auction with 1S-2D-2S-4C(cue)-4D-4N(ace ask)-5C(one)-5D(queen ask)-6D(SQ+DK)-7S. The GB team get the prize for the shortest auction : Priday & Teltscher bid this 1S-2D-3D-5N-7D. The others in the grand slam were Liz McGowan & David Liggatt for Scotland.
	AKT5	
	QT965	
	A	

This hand provided some defensive interest

64 KJT5 Q73 AK74	83	KQT9 A942 KJT4 6	Everyone was in 4H, mostly by East (but West at the table where South failed to overcall with 1S). Twice the lead was SA which made life too easy, once a trump which found the queen, and three times a club. On a club lead it is natural to knock out an ace and then ruff a club return before mis-guessing the trumps – and that is what Priday did, playing spades first. The sharpest defence could beat the contract at this point by pushing through a second spade, setting up the jack before the DA is knocked out. Scotland actually guessed the hearts right on a club lead, drawing two rounds, but then played on diamonds and ran into <u>two</u> ruffs and with two aces to lose that was one off. Ireland mis-guessed the hearts and ran into one diamond ruff for one off.
	Q873		
	86		
	QT852		
	AJ752		
	6		
	A952		
	J93		

Wales lost that match by 4 imps, while Ireland continue to lead the table.

Match 5 : **WALES & SCOTLAND.** This set had (feeding my obsession?) just one slam and it looked the easiest in the world to bid. Opener held K3 – AKQT3- AQJT8 – 5 and opened 1H. If partner bids 1N you bid 3D and get raised; if partner bids 2C you bid 2D and get raised. In both cases 4N tells you partner has two key cards and you bid the cold 6D opposite Q2 – 82 – K642 – AJ762. This was bid at only 3/6 tables. ☹ Wales gained on 9 boards out of 14 in this match – lots of dribs and drabs - and ran out as winners by 15 imps, our best results to this point. This was an amusing board ...

AJ AKJ876 JT5 A4	KQT63	98752 2 A974 Q72	Mike Tedd played in 4H as West against the Outreds, after North had overcalled 1S. He got a CT lead, won that with the ace, and then ran the DT to South – who now switched to the singleton spade. Mike won the ace. He played DJ next to the queen and ace and was now in dummy where he can take a heart finesse. But if the finesse was working and he has diagnosed the shape of South correctly, he doesn't need to as giving South the HQ will find her end-played to lead a minor. So he cashed the top hearts; Vi Outred could see the end play coming, so she unblocked the HQ on the second round and now Mike got to draw trumps for no loss! He had to lose a spade eventually but made his contract. Gain of 10 imps for Wales as the other table stopped in 3H.
	T94		
	Q3		
	T93		
	4		
	Q53		
	K862		
	KJ865		

This was the half way mark and Wales was just above average in second place overall.

Match 6. **WALES & N IRELAND.** Two slams in this set and for the first time – on the 78<sup>th</sup> board of the weekend we have all pairs reaching the right level on a slam hand – three in 6D and three in 6S but all sensible and all making! The other hand was

KJT752	AQ9	With 12 top tricks you want to be in 6S but only Gunnar Hallberg & John Holland managed that. Wales and NI both played 4S after 1S-2D-2S-4S. The successful auction was 1S-2D-2S-3S(forcing)-4H(slam interest, cue)-6S and partner had the perfect hand.
A	76	
J	KT872	
QT953	AK2	

The most interesting hand was this part score (board 23)

64		The bidding at both tables was 1S-1N and North led a heart to the ace and got a heart back, which he ducked since he didn't know whether declarer had three or four hearts. Declarer now played CK and a club to the ten, jack and queen. Almost everything manages to defeat the contract at this point but Wales muddled and let it through.
KT632		
A9		
Q832		
52	AKT83	Mike Tedd was in better control at the other table when North won the second heart and switched to spades. He could duck that and South's best choice was to clear the diamonds. However North's shape shows up here as 2524 and whatever discards are chosen for the third diamond and third spade, North can be end played in clubs to lead a heart into the queen nine.
Q985	J4	
843	QJT	
AJ65	K97	
	QJ97	GB and Scotland both opened the North hand in third seat avoiding a repeat problem there, while in England-Ireland it was a 1N opening from East and the diamond lead worked well for the defence and the contract drifted two off in both rooms.
	A7	
	K7652	
	T4	

Wales won the encounter by 6 imps, improving on the 4 imps by which they beat N Ireland in the first 14 board match.

Match 7 : **WALES & SCOTLAND.** A set with no slam hands for once ! Here's a game to puzzle over

AT84	J53	Some were in 2N and some in 3N, all on a diamond lead to the king which held. It all comes down to the club suit. A priori playing for Kx (and singleton K or KT) onside is a 16.4% chance compared to 24.9% for leading the queen and later finessing for the onside ten. Even giving LHO longer diamonds than RHO, the odds still favour the double finesse (more like 7:6 now). Patrick Jourdain in 2N chose the double finesse to make his 8 tricks while the two declarers in 3N both chose small to the jack followed by the ace, and scored the nine tricks they needed ! Wales lost 11 imps ☹
AK63	Q72	
87	K2	
Q96	AJ853	

Wales had a terrible match, losing double figure swings on 4 boards only one of which was a play error. Scotland's system fitted perfectly on this ..

AK6	83	Vulnerable and first in hand Bob McPaul for Scotland, with a 14-16 NT system, chose to start with 1D and over a 2S jump overcall, Tony Wilkinson doubled and then bid 3H over his partner's 2N. This was deemed forcing and got raised to 4H which was unbeatable. For Wales playing a weak NT, the 12-count passed and when the Scots opened a weak 2S, there was no way back into the auction. The weak NT-ers from N Ireland and England also passed the hand as dealer. That was 11 imps out.
KQ9	AT762	
T962	A	
952	QT874	

Wales had its worst result, -42 imps here, and picked up only 1.35 VPs.

Match 8 : **WALES & GB**. Another set with no slam hands – what is the world coming to? But one table did bid a slam – as well as the DA inside it needed no loser from AT7432 opposite K5. Not good odds and to the benefit of England this time.

The two hands of interest were tight 3N contracts

KT83 QJ32 J5 T98	Q65 A97 A86 K732	J7 T85 KT43 QJ54	Every table played 3N, five by North and one by South. With a weak NT opening it was Stayman from South and then game. The spotlight shines on East. Two tables led a diamond, two a heart and one a club (West led CT when South declared). The diamond lead gave declarer a third trick in that suit and with the SK lying well that was nine tricks. With the neutral leads declarer could try first the spades and then the diamonds, but unless East rose with the DK (and John Holland refused to against Wales) it was only 8 tricks.
	A942 K64 Q972 A6		
			The swings here were 11 imps to England against N Ireland and 11 imps to GB against Wales.

and

53 K54 9743 KJ64	T7 AJ63 A86 T975			Patrick J played in 3N from South and had the favourable lead of a club. He won the CT gaining an entry to dummy and played ST, covered and won, and next ran the DT. The club return was won by CA and now D2 to the ace dropped the king and two heart tricks gave him the contract.
		K9872 T987 KQ 83		Micheal O'Briain also got a club lead but played the C7-C8-CQ and now led a diamond to the ace – which was even more successful. He made 11 tricks.
				Where (twice) the lead was D7 both declarers ducked trick one, won the ST at trick two, lost to the CK at trick three and ducked the D3 at trick four. Not best when they make such an informative lead, but the contract was still there.
	AQJ4 Q2 JT52 AQ2			Except where one declarer blocked the entries to the long diamond and went one off.

The end result was a loss by 1 imp for Wales against GB and an improvement ☺ (but not by much ☹) on the 4 imps loss earlier.

Match 9. **WALES & IRELAND**. This was a match against the clear leaders, whom only we had beaten in the first round robin. There were some spectacular hands here with big swings. The second board was ...

	7 AJ952 AKT AQ95		Two tables saw East pass as dealer, and there it went P-P-3S which North doubled for takeout. Liz McGowan raised to 4S and passed South's 5D which made easily. The other table proceeded X-P-4D-P-4H-end and that was much to East's liking and it drifted two off – not bad collecting 200 when the opposition have an easy 6D! A neat choice that pass of the double by Stan Lowe for Northern Ireland.
KQ98653 83 J2 82	AJT KQ64 5 JT763		The other four tables opened 1C and only one South bid; Robin Burns for N Ireland bid 2D and his partner duly raised to 5D which was doubled for reasons we don't yet understand. His +950 went with the +200 in the other room very nicely for 15 imps against GB. With a silent South the other three tables proceeded P-1S and twice North bid 2H, but Mike Hirst preferred a double. The 2H bid led to spade support from East and West bid 4S to finish the auction. Mike's double got Philip Felman to bid diamonds and now Wales pushed Ireland to 5S and doubled that. Tiny swing in our match but England got 14 imps against Scotland for making both 4S and 5D.
	42 T7 Q987643 K4		

Too many went off in 3N on this hand –



A652	QJ9	The lead was a small spade and the SQ won the first trick. Then came a diamond to the ace and a heart towards the jack. It lost and a spade through cleared the suit; the long spades had the CA and that beat the contract. To make, all you have to do is cash <u>two</u> top diamonds and see the JT fall, and now knocking out the CA gives you 9 tricks. Failures by every team except for team GB (John Holland we believe was South) ☹
AK852	J3	
AQ4	K985	
KQ	8642	

There were some difficult bidding choices to be made. On board 9 North held KQ953 – void – AJT832 – A6 and opened 1D to hear it go 1H-P-2N(good raise). Hallberg and Kendrick bid 4S at this point, to a comfortable game when partner holds a suitable 3 hcp, namely T82 – T976- K6 – T742. Scotland sacrificed against 4S and went for -800 (could have been -500) in 5H-x. Wales got to only 4D on this hand (but the Irish failed too ☺).

And then on board 10 third seat opens 1H with K873 – KQT96 – 4 – AKQ at both vul, and the bidding goes 2C-P-P. Our man bid 2H and played there (as did Michael O'Kane for N Ireland), but David Liggat for Scotland bid 2S and found partner with AJT62 – 85 – 983 – 762. The consensus is that double as found by Willie Coyle with (if partner bids 2D) correction to 2H, gets the hand over – although his auction went 2S-3S-end. Game missed in both rooms in our match.

And towards the end of the set ...

Q2 5 Q83 QT75432	KT9654	A AKQT842 KT7 AK	East was dealer and everyone opened 2C and West responded 2D. North bid 2S (except for Gunnar who bid 3S) and at this point and East introduced his hearts. The spotlight now shone on South who in two cases bid 3S, two cases bid 4S and two cases passed. Over 4S it was natural for West to introduce his suit and hearing a suit bid at the 5 level, East was able to support and 6C was the final contract.
	6		
	AJ92		
	J8		
	J873		Over 3S West could bid 4C and over North's 4S East bid 5H. That ended the bidding at both tables in the England-Scotland match. Brian Senior got away with making 5H but Liz McGowan didn't. So 11 imps to England. It's a close slam to bid but I'd rather be in 6C going off than in 5H going off !
	J973		
	654		
	96		

When the smoke had cleared this was a 13-13 imp draw against Ireland who remained in the lead. The other two matches turned over 52 and 62 imps on the same set of hands.

Match 10. **WALES & ENGLAND.** The last round saw Ireland in first place playing GB in second (GB needed a 30 imp win to overtake), England in third place playing Wales in fourth (the latter needing a 12 imp win to overtake their opponents), and Scotland playing Northern Ireland (the latter needing a 20-0 win plus a fine on Scotland to avoid the wooden spoon!). There was the obligatory slam disaster ...

J96	A	Opener bid 1C and LHO bid a weak 2S. At least sometimes. For Wales Shields bid 3S showing club support but then passed 5C. The two tables which opened 1N had silent oppo and continued 2D-2H-3C; John Holland bid 4D now waking partner up and they bid the small slam but missed the excellent 7C. England bid only 3D and stopped in 5C to match Wales' effort. Three tables played game, two in small slam and only Liz McGowan & David Liggat bid to 7C : they had the benefit of no intervention and they bid 1C-1H-1N(15-17)-2D(gf checkback)-3C(long clubs)-4D(ace ask)-5C(two+CQ)-5D(any more?)-5H(HK)-7C. Well done.
K3	AQ872	
A6	984	
AQJ542	K973	

This hand produced a few swings and could have turned over the match between the top two

72	AQT954
AQJ	2
A96	85
T9762	KJ84

Wales opened 1N (11-14) and it went P-2H-P-2S and then LHO woke up with 3D but responder concluded things with 4S. The lead was DQ overtaken by the DK and DA. There are only two entries in opener's hand and there is interest in leading up twice in each black suit. Shields found the winning spade to the queen first, and later club to the king. Roger Gibbons found the same play at the other table for a flat board. Team GB was playing a strong NT and passed first in hand and ended in 5C; after a diamond lead as before Ireland were able to rise with the onside CA and play a third diamond to promote the offside CQ and defeat 5C. Finding and making the 4S game would have won the weekend for the team with two 91-year olds.

Wales was on its way to third place, 18 imps ahead of England, when this disaster arose ...

	73	
	--	
	AK72	
	KQJ9863	
A86		KQT9
AJT743		KQ9852
T9		53
T4		7
	J542	
	6	
	QJ864	
	A52	

Amazingly there were exactly two auctions across the six tables. Every table started with 1H from East and very positive support from West. In our match (and one other) it was 2N, and the other four chose 4H. Over all of these North bid 5C. On the raise to 4H, every East continued with 5H and played there. Opposite the 2N response, both Easts passed and Priday continued with 5H for GB, but Wales chose to defend (they even doubled!).

The 5C contract made an overtrick on a top heart lead. Against 5H the lead was CA followed at four tables by the DQ. The spade switch at the last table, following a poor signal from North, was fatal – allowing 5H to make (so Wales lost 17 imps). On the DQ, all Norths overtook and all but one quickly grabbed the second diamond. The exception sitting North was not punished – East played for the SJ coming down and ended down one.

When the scoring was done, we found Wales had won by 1 imp, better than the early encounter but not enough. In total Wales had won 5 matches and drawn one, but had no wins big enough to cancel two of the losses and ended in 4<sup>th</sup> place, below average. This was a strong Welsh team and we had plenty of chances but unforced errors abounded and slam bidding wasn't good. Other teams suffered the same way but presumably with fewer errors.

Many congratulations to the Republic of Ireland, who registered their first win in this event. Their star pair was the brothers Padraig and Micheal O'Briain who played throughout and topped the Butler table. The second placed pair just behind was the wonderful old gentlemen, Bernard Teltscher and Tony Priday!

As we have seen before, the hosts – even through the smallest “nation” by far – put on an excellent show, which included BBO transmission from all six tables. Well done to the Northern Ireland Bridge Union and all their helpers.

THE END