

## Eastbourne Bulletin 4

By Michael Byrne

The midweek events started on Monday with no fewer than 6 separate events taking place. In the afternoon 4 teams gathered for the midweek teams championship, while there was an open pairs event for those who hadn't had enough of chasing overtricks at the weekend. For less experienced players the really easy congress and the golf/bridge event provided an alternative.

In the evening the real action started, with the "Play with the expert pairs" taking place alongside the senior pairs qualifying.

The play with the experts pairs is a really interesting event, although the name is slightly misleading, since it is neither a match-pointed pairs event, nor one in which you partner an expert. Instead you play a pairs movement but score up with international team-mates who have played the hands some years previously.

If you sat EW you got to score up with Bobby Levin & Steven Weinstein, while NS got the perennial favourites Meckstroth & Rodwell.

The winners by a fair margin were Tom Townsend & Alex Hydes, who scored +86 to beat average by about 60 imps.

On this hand Tom read the cards well to make a game that many people went off in.

	♠ K1053	Board 13 Dlr N Game all
	♥ K954	
	♦ AQ3	
	♣ J2	
♠ QJ842		♠ 76
♥ 1083		♥ AJ7
♦ KJ102		♦ 854
♣ A		♣ 96543
	♠ A9	
	♥ Q62	
	♦ 976	
	♣ KQ1087	

Playing strong no trump and 4 card majors NS bid uncontested 1♥ – 2♣  
2NT – 3♥  
3NT

(Here West wisely kept his powder dry; at several tables West overcalled 2S and at least one poor soul went for 800 - I know because it was against me!)

East led a spade to the jack and king and North led the jack of clubs which went to West's ace. He played a spade and North won in dummy and took a diamond finesse, then played a heart to the queen and a heart, ducking. East now exited a diamond and Tom was at the cross roads. He had to make 4 club tricks and this

meant working out if they had started life 5-1. There were not enough clues from the shape of the hand (East had led a short suit remember) but Tom was confident that West would surely have held up the Ace of clubs to ruin his communications, so he bravely played a club to the 8 and made his game.

One of the features of the play with an experts is that there are always a few good slam deals to get your teeth into, and this was no exception, with 2 for EW and a thin one for NS. Board 15 was a good bidding challenge:

♠ KJ1082	♠ AQ6	Uncontested how do you reach a grand slam?
♥ 10	♥ A752	
♦ AJ97	♦ 5	
♣ Q97	♣ AKJ106	

7♠ and 7♣ are both fantastic grand slams, nearly lay down even if trumps are 5-0.

A popular start to the auction was 1♠ – 2♣  
2♦ - ?

For those playing acol they would bid 2♥ (4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing) and now when West bids 3♣ showing 5-1-4-3 East could bid 4NT, hear one key card, and ask for the queen of trumps. When West says yes he has it and the King of spades then 7 could be bid.

1♠ – 2♣  
2♦ – 2♥  
3♣ – 4NT  
5♣\* - 5♦  
5♠ – 7♣.

From East's point of view 7♣ would be safer than 7♠ if West had a poor suit such as K8542 and some extra value such as the ♦K.

Playing 2/1 game forcing East could bid 2♠ on the second round, and again the 3♣ bid would pattern out and RKCB would get the job done. Only 4 pairs bid the grand slam, and only 2 bid 7♣, so well done to Matthew Coville/Diana Nettleton and Mike Bell/Sarah O Connor. (For those of you wondering what the expert teammates had done, the score you matched up with was 940 so both 7♣ and 7♠ gained you the same 11 imps)

Today every event is match-pointed pairs (apart from the U25 pairs) so the overtricks will once more be dominating the days play!