



# THE SPRING FOURSOMES

DoubleTree by Hilton Bristol City Centre

1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> May 2026

## PROGRAMME



## Introduction

We return to the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Bristol City Centre, which has been popular the last two years.

We have the strongest field ever and the anticipated entry is the full 64 teams, which allows for all teams playing 32-board head-to-head matches in Rounds 1 & 2. In Rounds 3 – 6, there are head-to-head matches between undefeated teams and between once-defeated teams. Teams eliminated from the main event in Rounds 2, 3 and 4 will enter the Punchbowl round robins and mini-knockout/triangles, with qualifiers from them playing in the Punchbowl knockout stages.

There are board requirements for the winners of this event: a member of the winning team must play at least half the boards scheduled for that team throughout the entire event and at least one-third of the boards scheduled for the final day, in order to be considered as a “Winner of the Spring Foursomes” and to have their name on the trophy.

The intention is that once again head-to-head matches in the main event will not play the same boards as adjacent tables, to reduce extraneous information.

### **Jeffrey Allerton 1970-2024**

The Spring Foursomes was one of Jeffrey’s favourite events, which he won for the last time in 2022 in what was to be the last bridge he played. In his memory, once again this year free tea and coffee will be provided for players throughout the event, as well as extra caddies to help manage the boards during play, with different sets of boards in play to reduce the likelihood of overhearing things from nearby tables. There will also be additional prizes in the Punchbowl and one in the main event aimed particularly at lower seeded teams, as detailed below.

### **Sandra Penfold 1946-2026**

Sandra Penfold was a regular captain of successful teams in Spring Foursomes, winning in 2011 and reaching the final stages many times since (including the final in 2013, and the semi-final in 2024).

Sandra represented Great Britain and then England in Women’s European and World Championships, and England in Senior European and World Championships.

in her last few years Sandra suffered health issues, impacting both on her ability to play at the level she would have desired and on her enjoyment, but she always loved the game. She was a popular figure in the British bridge scene, and will be sadly missed.

### **Jacek Pszczoła “Pepsi” 1967-2026**

Pepsi played in last year’s Spring Foursomes and was due to play this year in the EA Bridge team, until he had to withdraw a short while ago. We were very sad to hear of his untimely death last Sunday but glad that we can still welcome the team he was to have played in.

## Starting positions and results

Please see the separate sheet and/or notice board for details of the Friday evening and Saturday morning matches. After that, teams should refer to the main notice board for details of their next match.

## The basic format – in numbers

<i>Session</i>	<i>Undefeated</i>	<i>Once defeated</i>	<i>Punchbowl qualifiers</i>
Friday afternoon (Rounds 1)	64	–	–
Saturday morning (Round 2)	32	32	–
Saturday afternoon (Round 3)	16	32	2 from 16
Sunday morning (Round 4)	8	24	3 from 16
Sunday afternoon (Round 5)	4	16	3 from 12
Monday morning (Round 6)	2	10	Punchbowl QF + SF
Monday afternoon (Round 7)	1 (bye)	6	Final
Tuesday morning (Round 8)	Semi-finals		
Tuesday afternoon (Round 9)	Final		

## Bridgemate scoring

This event will be scored using Bridgemates until the end of Round 6, after which Lovebridge tablets will be used for the auction in conjunction with Bridge Owl to record the play of the cards for display on the RealBridge kibitz server.

It is the players' responsibility to ensure that they are seated at the correct table in the correct orientation.

Players will need to enter their numbers (which will be provided to each team at the start of the event) in the Bridgemates. This will enable us to provide Cross IMP scores for each round.

Please enter all scores for your match and use the Recap facility before leaving the table at the end of the match to ensure they have all been put in correctly. Team captains please confirm that the score displayed on the monitor, as produced by your Bridgemate entries, matches your own record before you start to play the next match.

**It is an offence to attempt to access the TD screen or change a score in the Bridgemate without calling the TD.**

***Bridgemate UK is the EBU's "Official Wireless Scoring Provider"***

## Catering arrangements

Bridge finishes at 20:00 each day - the restaurant will be open for all those on half board and the bar will be open for everyone.

Bar snacks are available daily from 12.00 – 21.30, and tea and coffee are provided all day in the playing area.

## Supplementary regulations

- 1 This is an EBU level 5 competition. All systems and systems permitted at EBU level 4 are allowed, as is anything permitted under WBF/EBL system policy that is not a 'HUM' or 'Brown Sticker'. WBF system cards are permitted. You are required to have a pair of identical completed system cards and you should exchange them with your opponents at the start of each round.

If you do not have two completed system cards, you may be required to fill them out on the spot and to score -3 IMP for any boards you are unable to play due to the time taken to do this.

- 2 Best Behaviour at Bridge - Please be nice to your partner, be pleasant to your opponents and be polite to the Tournament Directors. Otherwise you may well be given a Disciplinary Penalty!
- 3 Protest time in respect of any given stanza in a match expires upon the resumption of the match. Protest time in respect of the final stanza of the match expires half an hour after the end of the match. Once protest time for a stanza has expired, no request for a ruling from that stanza and no appeal in respect of a ruling already received during that stanza will be entertained.

It follows that if a team might wish to appeal a ruling, they must consider the matter during the scoring break and notify the tournament director of their intentions one way or the other before they resume play. The fact that the appeal will not be heard until the end of the match is irrelevant for the purpose of notifying the tournament director (and the team's opponents) of their intention to appeal. The actual timing of the appeal will be a matter for the Tournament Director in charge to determine.

- 4 Please note that teams of four or five players may be extended up to a maximum of six players, but that any extra players must have been nominated prior to the commencement of Round 5 on Sunday afternoon. Once Round 5 is under way (or the equivalent time in the Punchbowl on Sunday afternoon), additional players will not then be permitted, save under the most extreme circumstances with the permission of the Tournament Director in charge. Under no circumstances may a player ever represent more than one team in the combined Provost Cup and Punchbowl competitions.

- 5 For a player to be called a winner of the Spring Foursomes and to have their name engraved on the trophy, they must play at least half of the boards in the event. Additionally, they must play one-third of the boards scheduled to be played in the semi-final and final.**
- a. Extra boards played for tie-breaking purposes do not count as boards in the event or as boards played.
  - b. Extra boards played as of right by an undefeated team do not count as boards in the event but do count as boards played.
  - c. If the winning team had a bye as the undefeated team, that Round does not count as boards in the event.
  - d. Conceded stanzas count as boards in the event (and in the match).
- 6 If there is a concession, both teams can nominate which four players would have played each unplayed stanza, for the purpose of Note 5 and master points.
- 7 There is no provision for teams to replace a player for the Tuesday matches. Teams that might need a new player on Tuesday must ensure that they are registered in time as required in note 4 above.
- 8 Mobile telephones and other electronic communication devices in the playing area must be switched off at all times. Throughout the event, such devices should be visible during play and players who leave the playing room for any reason before the end of a stanza must leave behind such devices in the playing room. Texting or any other use of electronic communication devices is strictly prohibited in the playing area. Electronic cigarettes may not be used in the playing area.
- Exception: If you must have a mobile phone on for emergencies, please talk to the Tournament Directors and follow their instructions. If you have to take a call during play, please leave the playing area to do so.
- 9 All these conditions may be varied by the Tournament Director in charge in order to facilitate any unforeseen or unexpected circumstance that might arise. In particular, the pre-published draw for any event may be altered should one or more teams withdraw from, be added to, or fail to arrive at the competition in question.

# A Main event – Provost Cup

## A1 Timetable

<b>Friday</b>	15:30 – 20:00	Round 1 head-to-head matches	(32 boards)
<b>Saturday</b>	10:00 – 14:30	Round 2 head-to-head matches	(32 boards)
	15:30 – 20:00	Round 3	(32 boards)
<b>Sunday</b>	10:00 – 14:30	Round 4	(32 boards)
	15:30 – 20:00	Round 5	(32 boards)
<b>Monday</b>	10:00 – 14:30	Round 6	(32 boards)
	15:45 – 20:45	Round 7	(32 boards)
<b>Tuesday</b>	10:00 – 15:00	Semi-final	(32 boards)
	16:00 – 21:00	Final	(32 boards)

Teams eliminated after Rounds 2 or 3 enter the Punchbowl round robins.

Teams eliminated after Round 4 enter the Punchbowl mini-knockout (or triangles).

Teams eliminated after Round 5 may enter the Hamilton Cup Swiss Teams.

## A2 Format of the main event

This is a knockout competition in which a team must be twice defeated before it is eliminated. Undefeated teams meet each other in one pool, and once defeated teams meet in another. Matches are of 32 boards throughout, played in four stanzas of eight boards per stanza.

The first six rounds of the competition are pre-drawn by reference to team number, the full effect of which is on display. The pre-draw is expressed in terms of the lower numbered team winning any given match, and the higher numbered team losing it. Thus, should the higher numbered team win the match, it then exchanges its team number with that of its opponent.

The seeding of the top 32 teams is based on the current (end of March) average number of Gold Points held by the team members as a whole, with suitable adjustments being made as necessary, such as in the case of teams containing non-English players. Team numbers 33 and above are by random draw.

## A3 Seating rights

Seating rights in four-stanza head-to-head knockout matches are determined as follows. Team captains toss a coin, and the winner of the toss may choose first or may pass that option to his opponent. The captain who chooses first selects any one stanza in which he will have seating rights (i.e. the right to seat his players after the opponents have seated theirs). The other captain then chooses any two of the

remaining stanzas in which he will have seating rights. The captain who chose first then has seating rights in the one remaining stanza.

## **A4 Special notes**

1 On Monday, after Round 6, one team only will remain undefeated, and six other teams will remain. The undefeated team will receive a bye, whilst the other teams compete in the quarter finals. The draw for the quarter finals will be arranged so as to avoid re-matches. This will be achieved by listing the 15 possible combinations in which six teams can be drawn into three pairs, ordering them randomly and then deleting all such combinations that involve a re-match. The first of those combinations that remain will determine the entire composition of the quarter-final draw.

2 After Monday's Round 7, four teams will remain, one of which is undefeated. The undefeated team has absolute choice of opponents in the semi-final, so re-matches may be created. The choice should be notified to the Tournament Director in charge by the conclusion of the Round 7 matches.

If the undefeated team wins their semi-final and is in arrears after 32 boards in the final, the match will be extended to 40 boards. There are no seating rights in the fifth stanza — both teams write down their proposed line-up.

3 Matches from the quarter final onwards will be played behind screens. Standard WBF screen regulations and alerting procedures apply, full details of which are available on request. There is an additional time allowance of 5 minutes per 8-board stanza over that contained in section A5 below.

## **A5 Slow play**

The time allowed for an 8-board stanza is 65 minutes – beyond that time, penalties apply – there is no grace period. The team or teams responsible will be fined 1 IMP for each minute delay, of up to ten minutes, and 2 IMP for each minute delay beyond ten minutes. The total amount of the penalty will be apportioned between the two pairs according to their respective responsibility for the delay. IMP penalties are expressed to one decimal place.

For a second offence by the same pair in the same match, their second penalty is doubled (after the total amount of the penalty is apportioned). For substantial or repeated delays, the Director should impose a more severe penalty or may refer the facts to an Appeals Committee, which shall have the powers to so do; any such penalty may include the requirement to withdraw the offending pair from the next stanza of the match in question (this may involve a change of partnerships in teams of four).

## A6 Late arrival

One board will be removed from the match after 10 minutes of lateness and further boards removed at the rate of one per 7½ minutes thereafter. Such boards will be scored as plus and minus 3 IMP. A more severe penalty may be awarded under aggravated circumstances or for repeated offences by the same team.

## A7 General

General EBU regulations as contained in the EBU's White Book apply in respect of any issue not specifically covered by these regulations. In particular, appeals will be handled using a committee or referee (not the review system, used internationally). This condition applies equally in both the main event and in the various consolation events.

## A8 Master Point awards and the NGS

All awards quoted are expressed in terms of Green Points per player, provided that the player has participated in at least one-third of the total number of boards in the match in question. Any member of a team who does not play sufficient boards in any match should inform the Tournament Director.

	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	QF	SF	Final
Undefeated pool	1	1.5	2	3	4	6	–		
Once defeated		1	1.5	2	1	4	6	8	12

None of the events in the Spring Foursomes will be graded for the National Grading Scheme (NGS) with the exception of the Hamilton Cup (Swiss Teams).

## A9 Prizes

All prizes are quoted per team, regardless of whether this be a team of four, five or six. Prize money will be credited directly to the member's EBU account, and may be redeemed at any time on application to the EBU. Separate arrangements will be made in respect of non-English visitors.

Winners	£2000	Runners-up	£1000	3 <sup>rd</sup> /4 <sup>th</sup> place	£500
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### Biggest upset prize

There will be an extra prize of £300 to the team that wins the biggest upset in rounds 1-3, based on the difference between seed numbers, with all teams seeded over 33 being considered to be seeded 33.

## B Consolation event (Punchbowl)

### B1 Timetable

#### Saturday afternoon and Sunday (Punchbowl A):

##### Teams eliminated on Saturday morning (after Round 2)

The 16 teams eliminated from the main event will play a round-robin of 6-board stanzas over three sessions, with two teams qualifying for the Punchbowl final stages on Monday.

<b>Saturday</b>	15:30 – 19:45	Punchbowl qualifier group A round robin – 5 x 6-board stanzas
<b>Sunday</b>	10:00 – 14:15	Punchbowl qualifier group A round robin – 5 x 6-board stanzas
	15:30 – 19:45	Punchbowl qualifier group A round robin – 5 x 6-board stanzas

#### Sunday all day (Punchbowl B1 & B2):

##### Teams eliminated on Saturday (after Round 3)

The 16 teams eliminated from the main event will play a two-session round robin in two groups of eight comprising seven 8-board matches. Three teams will qualify for the Punchbowl final stages: the winner of each group, and second placed team from one group that is closer (in VPs) to first place.

<b>Sunday</b>	10:00 – 14:30	Punchbowl qualifier groups B1 & B2 round robin – 4 x 8-board stanzas
	15:30 – 19:00	Punchbowl qualifier groups B1 & B2 round robin – 3 x 8-board stanzas

#### Sunday afternoon (Punchbowl C):

##### Teams eliminated on Sunday morning (after Round 4)

The 12 teams eliminated from the main event after four rounds will be play in three groups in a single session comprising a two-round knockout of 16-board matches. If teams withdraw, some groups will play triangular matches of 4 x 6-board stanzas. Three teams will qualify for the Punchbowl final stages: the winner of each group.

<b>Sunday</b>	15:30 – 20:00	Punchbowl qualifier groups (32 boards)
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Teams that fail to qualify may enter the Swiss Teams on Monday; 11:30 start.

## The Punchbowl knockout stage

The tournament is then pure knockout comprising three rounds on Monday. The quarter finals and semi-final matches are of 16 boards each, played in two stanzas of eight with a compulsory change of opponents at half-time. The final is 32 boards.

**Monday**      10:00 – 12:15                      Quarter-final: 16 boards

Teams eliminated in the quarter final may enter the Hamilton Cup Swiss Teams — see below for details. The third Swiss match starts at 14:00 on Monday afternoon.

                  12:45 – 15:00                      Semi-final: 16 boards

                  15:30 – 20:00                      Final: 24 boards – teams may agree fewer/more.

There is some flexibility in the start time of the Semi-final and Final, by agreement.

The Swiss Teams is not normally available to defeated semi-finalists.

## B2 Format of the secondary event

This event is open to all teams eliminated from the main event after two, three or four rounds. The format of the event assumes that all such teams will wish to participate. However, if a team would rather withdraw then that is permitted, provided that notice of this intention is given at the time. This may require certain modifications to be made to the basic format. A team may not elect to enter the event and subsequently decide to withdraw at a premature stage except that a team may play in the round robin and then withdraw before the knockout stage commences.

As with the main event, the entire composition of the Punchbowl has been pre-drawn, and all details are on display.

**The first group of teams** to enter the competition contains the 9 teams that are eliminated from the main event after Round 2. They will play a round-robin of 10-board stanzas over the next three sessions, scored by VPs. The winning team will qualify for the Punchbowl quarter-final on Monday morning (see also section B4).

**The second group of teams** to enter the competition contains the 16 teams that are eliminated from the main event after Round 3. They will play in two separate groups of eight teams, each playing a round robin over two sessions on Sunday, comprising seven 8-board matches scored by VPs. The top two teams from each group will qualify for the Punchbowl quarter-final on Monday morning (see also section B4).

**The third group of teams** to enter the competition comprises the 12 teams that are twice defeated after Round 4. They will play a mini-knockout in groups of four: consisting of 16-board matches. If there are withdrawals, some groups will play triangular matches, consisting of four 6-board rounds. The winner of each group (mini-knockout or triangle) will qualify for the Punchbowl quarter-final on Monday morning (see also section B4).

## **B3 The knockout stages of the Punchbowl**

The quarter finals and semi-finals are 16-board matches, played in two stanzas of eight boards per stanza. The final is a 32-board match, played in four stanzas.

## **B4 Seating rights**

In the round robins, teams may change line-up for each match. There are seating rights based on 'H' (Home) and 'A' (Away) on the assignment cards – the away team sits first and the home team can choose where to sit.

Two-stanza events involve a compulsory change of opponents at half-time. The winner of the toss may elect to be at 'home' or 'away'. For the first half of the match, the away team must take its places first: the home team then sit around them. For the second half of the match, the home team must take its places first. Any pair of the home team that is retained for the second half must stay at the same table (and position). The away team then take their places in such a way as to ensure that no two pairs are playing against one another for a second time in the match. In normal circumstances, this entails the away team pairs changing tables and direction, but exceptions can arise when teams-of-six are involved or when changes in partnership occur (such a change creates a new pair). The overriding consideration is that playbacks cannot arise, and the away team must seat themselves accordingly.

Seating rights for the final depend on the number of boards/stanzas.

## **B5 Master Point awards**

All awards quoted are expressed in terms of Green Points per player, provided that the player has participated in at least one-third of the total number of boards in the session.

Punchbowl A: 0.20 Green for a match won over 6 boards.

Punchbowl B1/B2: 0.25 Green per 8-board match won/drawn.

Mini-knockout/triangular matches 0.50 Green per match won/drawn (no bonus for overall ranking).

	<i>Quarter-final</i>	<i>Semi-final</i>	<i>Final</i>
Knockout:	1	1.5	2

## **B6 Prizes**

All prizes are quoted per team, regardless of whether this be a team of four, five or six. Prize money will be credited directly to the member's EBU account, and may be redeemed at any time on request. Separate arrangements will be made in respect of non-English visitors.

Winners £400, Runners-up £200,  
£100 to each of the other teams in the quarter-finals.

## **C The Hamilton Cup: Swiss Teams**

### **C1 Timetable**

Teams new to the congress, or reorganised teams from within the congress, are welcome in the Swiss Teams. Teams may add players (up to a maximum of six) up to the start of match 3.

Refreshments will be available from the bar during the lunch break.

11:00 – 13:10          2 x 8-board matches

14:00 – 18:20          4 x 8-board matches

### **C2 Format of the Swiss Teams**

This is a normal Swiss Teams event, comprising six matches of eight boards per match.

Teams new to the congress, or rearranged teams from within it, are welcome to join the Swiss Teams on Monday.

Teams eliminated from the Punchbowl on Monday morning may join the Swiss with a pre-assigned carry-forward score of 28 VPs out of 40. For their first match (round 3 of the Swiss), such teams will be drawn against a corresponding number of leading teams from the Swiss at that stage. Thereafter, no more teams may join the event.

Should numbers prove to be unsuitable for a Swiss Teams event, we will instead offer a different teams format, such as mini-knockout teams with plate and playoffs.

### **C3 Master Point awards**

All awards quoted are expressed in terms of Green Points per player.

Per match won/drawn: 0.28/0.14 Green For overall ranking (bonus) to the top quarter of the field:

top award 4.0 Green, last award 0.5 Green;

awards to intermediate places in accordance with standard EBU Congress formula.

### **C4 Prizes**

All prizes are quoted per team, regardless of whether this be a team of four, five or six. Prize money will be credited directly to the member's EBU account, and may be redeemed at any time on application to the EBU. Separate arrangements will be made in respect of non-English visitors.

Winners:          £300                          Runners up          £100

## Summary of times

<b>Friday</b>	15:30 – 20:00	Provost Cup, Round 1
<b>Saturday</b>	10:00 – 14:30	Provost Cup, Round 2
	15:30 – 20:00	Provost Cup, Round 3
	15:30 – 19:45	Punchbowl group A
<b>Sunday</b>	10:00 – 14:30	Provost Cup, Round 4
	10:00 – 14:15	Punchbowl group A
	10:00 – 14:30	Punchbowl groups B1 & B2
	15:30 – 20:00	Provost Cup, Round 5
	15:30 – 19:45	Punchbowl group A
	15:30 – 19:00	Punchbowl group B1 & B2
	15:30 – 20:00	Punchbowl group C
<b>Monday</b>	10:00 – 14:30	Provost Cup, Round 6
	10:00 – 12:15	Punchbowl, quarter final
	11:00 – 13:10	Hamilton Cup, 1–2 – Swiss Teams
	12:45 – 15:00	Punchbowl, semi-final
	14:00 – 18:20	Hamilton Cup, 3–6 – Swiss Teams
	15:30 – 19:00	Punchbowl, final
	15:45 – 20:45	Provost Cup, Round 7
<b>Tuesday</b>	10:00 – 15:00	Provost Cup, semi-final
	16:00 – 21:00	Provost Cup, final





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but do not send text messages to this number