

Warwick University - 2018 Inter-University Bridge Festival

The 2018 Inter-University Bridge Festival organised by Warwick University Bridge Club took place on Saturday 24th February, and was hosted by Coventry & North Warwickshire Bridge Club. Open to teams of university students, and alumni, teams from University College London, Imperial College London, London School of Economics, Southampton, Nottingham and, of course, Warwick Universities competed.

13 university teams participated, but that was not all! As is now tradition, the Warwickshire Juniors, comprising under 21 squad members Megan Jones and Imogen La Chapelle, the under 16 squad member Andy Cope, and the definitely-a-junior Darren Evetts, were once again invited to terrorise the university teams!

The event does have its quirks! In particular, the fish hat and the dunce hat! These were awarded each round by the gracious dictator, sorry director, Darren, to the players making the most “inspired” decisions, such as bidding 7 spades missing 2 (cashing) aces, or, perhaps, doubling 3 hearts when it’s cold for an overtrick or two!

Living up to their reputation Warwickshire Juniors destroyed almost all the opposition and claimed the overall spot on the ranking list. The UCL ‘C’ team held them to a mere 11-9 win, with the Imperial ‘A’ team scooping an overwhelming 11-9 win in the final round. Well done, guys - they must have been getting tired, the poor dears! Warwick A, of whom I was a member, and despite hoping to topple the juniors this year - having come close last year – conceded 17VPs after a brilliant pre-emptive 4 heart bid by Andy Cope prevented me from finding the cold 6S, and teammates who gifted Megan and Darren two impossible games! Of course, it couldn’t be entirely my fault, right?

All was not lost to the University Teams, however, because the winner of the Inter-University Bridge Festival can only be a University team, phew! Thank goodness for that rule! So, the official result, terrifyingly younger youngsters aside, and the real podium finishes of the day were, in third place, Warwick A with 74VPs; in 2nd place, Imperial A with 77VPs, and a well deserved 1st place with 78VPs going to the UCL ‘C’ team. Congratulations to Roy Goh, Ren Ziyu, Chua Teeyong and Lien Chongyou taking home this year’s Warwick Bridge Festival trophy. We will ignore our frustration that we were all blown out of the water by the Warwickshire Juniors’ massive 95VPs. Watch out next year!

Our sincere thanks go to the event sponsors, Warwickshire Contract Bridge Association, Coventry & North Warwickshire and West Midlands Bridge Clubs, and the tournament director, Darren Evetts.

The 6 rounds of 8 board Swiss proved to be difficult for many of the players, many with as little as 4 months’ playing experience. However, this did not stop them from performing well. Gillian Yu, in particular, a newbie, only started playing in September, was faced with the daunting prospect of being paired with the under 26 player, John Mewes, in a rag-tag LSE/Warwick/Oxon team, managed to come 5th out of 28 pairs in the Cross Imps. Just goes to show, with the right enthusiasm anyone can come into bridge and do well!

Jason Ly
President, Warwick University Bridge Club