

# Cambs & Hunts Bridge

Number 52, May 2009

## News

Congratulations to Jon Cooke for winning the 2009 Camrose Trophy, as part of the EBU team. In April, Jon partnered Jonathan Mestel in the National Pairs Final coming joint first, though lost on a split tie.

The University's new captain Graeme Robertson and his partner have been awarded the Young Pair of the Year Award for 2008.

Roger Courtney & Robin Cambery won the National Masters at the Ranked Pairs.

Catherine Jagger has made it to Premier Grand Master in a desperate bid not to be the same rank as Jonathan Mestel (who made it to Grand Master in the last issue) for the purposes of the Ranked Pairs.

Stop Press: Jonathan Mestel, Catherine & Chris Jagger, Julian Wightwick and Ian Pagan win the Crockfords Cup.

## In this issue...

Jonathan Mestel begins in January with some New Year's resolutions, then Aunt Agony responds to a letter from her nephew, warning him about unfounded crocodiles – or are they alligators? Barden & Mestel collaborate to get to the heart of the matter, there's a report on the Young Pair of the Year award, and the usual results round-up and club news.

Visit the county's website at

[www.cambsbridge.org.uk](http://www.cambsbridge.org.uk)

- information on bridge clubs
- this and previous newsletters
- details of competitions and results

Please send items for the website to **David Allen** on [david@djallen.org.uk](mailto:david@djallen.org.uk)

The next newsletter will be published in September.

Please send in news, letters and hands no later than 15<sup>th</sup> August. All contributions welcome!

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## New Year's Resolutions by Jonathan Mestel

Playing in the National Pairs Qualifier, I picked up my usual four count. Opponents bid swiftly to slam:

All Vul	♠ J98		
Dealer N	♥ AK53		
	♦ AKQ6		
	♣ J6		
♠ Q103		N	♠ K742
♥ 109		W	♥ 742
♦ 75		E	♦ 109843
♣ Q109753		S	♣ 8
	♠ A65		
	♥ QJ86		
	♦ J2		
	♣ AK42		

Vin Vachher	Jon Cooke	Bryan Last	Me
1♦	P	1♥	3♣
4♣	P	4NT	P
5♣	P	6♥	All pass

I'm a believer in active leads against slams and a spade stands out in my view.

I led a low spade to the 8, K and A. Declarer drew trumps in 3 rounds and played 4 rounds of diamonds discarding spades. I was in trouble. I could discard two clubs but then had to decide between throwing ♠10, which would allow Bryan to ruff down my ♠Q, or come down to ♣Q109, which was my actual choice. Reading the lie perfectly, Bryan played 3 rounds of clubs, came back to hand with a spade ruff, and claimed 13 well-deserved tricks. This is often called a trump squeeze, but I think "ruff-out squeeze" is a better term, as whichever suit I unguard is ruffed out.

At the time I apologised to partner – who seemed incidentally to be enjoying my discomfort immensely – for not finding ♠Q lead, thinking that

if partner could guard spades in the ending I would have been fine. But I now realise this was nonsense. If I had led ♠Q and later come down to a stiff ♠10, Bryan would doubtless have led ♠J from dummy establishing ♠9 for trick 13. This is a sort of "vice squeeze" – my ♠10 is held in a vice by dummy's J9. Interestingly, this squeeze would work even if partner also held four clubs (I know making 14 clubs in the deal!). On the last diamond the position would be:

		♠ J9	
		♥ 3	
		♦ A	
		♣ J6	
♠ 103		N	♠ K7
♥ —		W	♥ —
♦ —		E	♦ —
♣ Q975		S	♣ 10853
		♠ 5	
		♥ 6	
		♦ —	
		♣ AK42	

When declarer leads ♦A throwing a spade, neither of us could afford to throw a spade without allowing spades to be ruffed out while if we both throw clubs, clearly clubs can be ruffed out. But declarer would have to guess which spade to lead from table if we discarded well.

No, to hold the contract to 12 tricks I must lead a red suit, which I'd never manage. But I shall make the following resolutions for the rest of the year:

- (a) No-one shall vice-squeeze me.
- (b) I shall not perform over-hasty analysis immediately after a hand.

Wonder how long I'll last out.

[Ed: well (b) is long gone already!]

## The unfounded crocodiles – letter to Aunt Agony

Dear Auntie,

Do you recall, back in the 60s, taking me for a walk in the botanical gardens?

As you hugged me after I'd leaped from rock to rock across the pond, I remember the gleam in your eye as you joked you were giving me a "stepping stone squeeze".

I thought of you during the following hand:

♠ J9xxxx	N	♠ AK
♥ Q8x	W E	♥ A10xx
♦ Kx	S	♦ J10xx
♣ 8x		♣ 9x

I opened 2♠ and played there. North led ♥9 to South's king and a trump was returned. I cashed ♠AK, no queen appearing, and ran ♣9 to North.

North cashed ♣A and continued with a low heart which ran to my eight. I was now able to avoid a diamond guess, running all my trumps.

Last three cards were:

♠ —	N	♠ —
♥ Q	W E	♥ A10
♦ Kx	S	♦ J
♣ —		♣ —

In order to keep ♥Jx, South had been forced to bare his diamond honour, whichever it was. I now cashed ♥Q and exited with a low diamond.

Showing North my cards I announced, "I'm safe unless you have them both."

But my thoughts were with you, all those years ago. You said "I'd

understand when I'm older". At last I think I do.

Your affectionate nephew.

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Dear Nephew,

Ah yes, I remember it well. In those days your childish chatter could charm a churl. Ou sont les neveux d'antan?

I'm pleased to note that somewhat uncharacteristically, you may not have played a card wrong on this hand. Your analysis, is, regrettably, down to its usual standard.

Had North been awake enough to keep a club amongst his last four cards, then if you played off the last trump you would lose two tricks if ♦A is with North. So you are not really much better off than guessing whether he holds ♦Q or ♦A. However, if all the clubs are gone, then your line works.

As so often, though, you haven't considered the problem from your opponents' standpoint.

It's clear you had mentally given up if both diamond honours were wrong. Was there any hope had North's last two cards been ♦AQ? Is there any reason why he might have gone up with the ace?

I am reminded of an occasion, also from the 60s, when a politician was accused of corruption. He angrily announced "There have been unfounded allegations made. But what I want to know is: who are the allegators?"

Give thought to those unfounded alligators, nephew, or rather crocodiles.

From North's point of view at trick 12, his partner might hold ♦K and ♥J. In that case he would have to go up with ♦A, the "crocodile coup" to prevent you scoring another trick. Your premature claim could have saved him from an embarrassing unfounded crocodile.

True, the trump switch makes this unlikely and there are a few reasons why he should get it right anyway, but it doesn't hurt to try.

Yours ever,

Auntie.

## Young Pair of the Year Award

The Young Pair of the Year award is awarded annually to pairs that achieved a variety of good results at the bridge table, whilst also conducting themselves in a pleasant and friendly manner.

The title of Young Pair of the Year 2008 is awarded to Graeme Robertson and James Paul.

Graeme is 19 and from Bedford, he is in his second year studying Maths at Cambridge University.

James is 18 and from Reading in Berkshire, he is in his first year reading Maths at Balliol College Oxford.

In just one year this up and coming pair went from being thought of as youngsters who were promising but had a long way to go, to being a pivotal and integral part of the Under 20 squad. They started the year by rising from below average to 3rd place in the Year End Congress Men's Pairs.

By February they were the leading English pair at the Peggy Bayer trophy. In April they went on to score some tremendous results at the Spring Fours by reaching round 4 – indeed at the beginning they knocked out a team of four open internationals by over 30 imps.

In the Summer they were England's best placed pair in the European youth pairs, finishing tantalisingly close to a medal.

As members of the under 20 squad they approached the challenges they faced at and away from the bridge table with enthusiasm and drive, and have always maintained a friendly and helpful attitude.

They finished playing together last Autumn and still play together on many teams – such as the 2009 Spring Fours!

[from the EBU website]

## Heart Spots in Herts. Spot by Jon-Paul Bartel

Some of us commute to London and very occasionally we get stranded in out-of-the-way places, such as Hertfordshire. On one such instance I

strolled into Welwyn Bridge Club and got more entertainment than I expected kibitzing the following deal. I was sitting South-East.

Love all	♠ AQ87
Dealer E	♥ 8
	♦ Q82
	♣ Q8543
♠ J3	♠ 92
♥ A109	♥ KQJ64
♦ J753	♦ K94
♣ A1097	♣ K62
	♠ K10654
	♥ 7532
	♦ A106
	♣ J

N	E	S	W
	1♥	1♠	2♠
4♠	All pass		

Some might have doubled with West's hand, but playing 5-card majors he felt it would be more descriptive to show a high card raise to 3♥, even though this systemically showed 4-card support.

West led ♥A on which East played the king. A trump switch was won with ♠Q and a low club was led from the table. East had been mentally reconstructing the unseen hands. He could see all the high cards except for the ♠K, which was surely with South, and the minor suit aces and jacks. On the bidding, the aces had to be divided between the unseen hands. That left South with a rather light overcall: he was likely to have only five spades since he was playing weak jump overcalls and hadn't made one. So he should have some shape, almost certainly a singleton or void club. The contract was going to make easily if South had a singleton ♣A, but if he had the singleton jack in a 5341 shape it might be essential to rise with the king, allowing partner to guard the fourth round of the suit with the ace.

So East played ♣K smoothly and smiled smugly as South followed with the ♣J and West with the ♣10 – yes, South was 5341. Declarer won the trump continuation in dummy and

cross-ruffed clubs and hearts, East following to the hearts with the 6, to show his remaining even number, and the jack, the middle of three to show nothing in particular. When a fourth round of clubs was led from dummy, this was the position:

	♠ —	
	♥ —	
	♦ Q82	
	♣ Q8	
♠ —	♠ —	♠ —
♥ —	♥ Q4	♥ Q4
♦ J753	♦ K94	♦ K94
♣ A	♣ —	♣ —
	♠ K	
	♥ 7	
	♦ A106	
	♣ —	

South was looking confident; he planned to ruff East's ♣A and lead a diamond, expecting West's last four cards to be ♦Kxxx. But his heart sank as East pondered his discard – despite East's earlier play of the ♣K it was West who had the ace, and East therefore needed ♦K for his opening bid. Was there any hope left I wondered? Why yes – as the cards lie the contract is cold. If East throws ♥4, declarer can ruff and endplay him with a heart. Whereas if he throws a diamond, declarer can discard a heart on the club endplaying West instead! If you look at the diamond lie, you'll see South would then make three tricks in the suit. Very elegant – endplaying both opponents on the same trick.

East, however, threw ♥Q. He was convinced from the auction that West held four hearts and it looked more natural to keep a low heart so as to avoid being endplayed and having to lead from ♦K. I rather think he must have miscounted trumps, or surely he'd have kept both heart winners. We all lose the plot sometimes.

Declarer ruffed and led ♥7 from hand. East flinched – just a little, but nothing escapes the eye of your roving reporter. “Play the –” declarer began confidently but then fell silent. He’d been intending to throw a diamond endplaying East, but a horrible thought had occurred to him. An awful lot of high hearts had gone. Could ♥7 conceivably be a winner? If it was, and he threw a diamond he’d lose two tricks whoever held D9. Instead he should throw a club. Then a diamond to the 8 would score the last two tricks. But if ♥7 was a loser, as it surely deserved to be, throwing a club wouldn’t work – East could safely exit with any of his three diamonds.

Time passed. I suspected declarer couldn’t remember dummy’s heart spot from trick 1. North was doubtless wishing he’d remarked jovially “I’ve got all the eights, partner!” as he tabled his hand. Clearly, he had to keep silent now.

Somewhat mystifyingly, South picked up his opponents’ convention card. Afterwards he explained that he had no

idea who EW were. He was trying to judge whether East was a superstar, Zia Meckbergski or someone, capable of foreseeing the end-position and deliberately trying to bamboozle him with heart spots. No joy there.

Eventually, South threw a diamond. When East followed with the four, West exploded. “What are you playing at??” he fumed at East. “I thought you’d like to win the fourth heart you’d promised,” East snarled back. Declarer exited with the ♦6, and despite his evident resentment at his partner’s bidding and especially his manners, East won dummy’s eight with the nine and returned the king to pin dummy’s queen, for one down.

That was enough for me and I made my way northwards to the fens. I hadn’t realised how exhausting kibitzing was. They play a tough game down South. And South played a tough game down.

## Results round-up

### National competitions

Cambs & Hunts players have achieved several victories this year already:

Jon Cooke was part of the EBU team that won the Camrose home internationals trophy.

Then he and Jonathan Mestel lost a split tie for first place in the National Pairs.

Meanwhile, Jonathan with Cath & Chris Jagger (and Alan Mould) had won the Harrogate Spring Congress Swiss Teams.

The Jagers, Jonathan, Julian Wightwick and Ian Pagan won the Crockfords Cup.

At the Ranked Pairs, Roger Courtney & Robin Cambery won the National Masters., while Mike Seaver came third in the Life Masters.

Paul Fegarty, Catherine Curtis, David Kendrick & Roger Gibbons came third in the National Swiss Teams.

Damian Bell & Sam Hunt came fourth in the final of the Under 19 pairs at Easter, and also finished 17th nationwide in the EBU BfA Simultaneous Pairs.

Three University pairs did well in the EBU University Simultaneous Pairs: Graeme Robertson & David Faria came 6th, JJ Wilks & Ralph Owen 8th, and Jackie Ang & Ong Qunxiang 11th.

In the Wednesday session of the BGB Winter Pairs, Grzegorz Konopko & Chris Larlham from Saffron Walden came 5th. In the Monday session Bill Stevenson & Mike Neverton from Huntingdon came 16th and Ken Winterbottom & Tim Burns from Balsham came 27th.

Cambs & Hunts finished in equal fifth place in the final of the Tollemache Cup. The team was Jonathan Mestel, Cath Jagger, Julian Wightwick, Chris Jagger, Paul Fegarty, Catherine Curtis, Victor Milman & David Kendrick, with NPC Chris Larlham.

Only one Cambs & Hunts team, Ely A, has reached round five of the NICKO this year.

### Eastern Counties League

The county scored 1-19, 10-10 and 1-19 against Northants; and 13-7, 9-11 and 15-5 against Norfolk.

Final Standings for 2008/09 season:

#### A division

1. Norfolk with 87 VPs
2. Hertfordshire with 83 VPs
8. Cambs & Hunts with 51 VPs

#### B division

1. Northants with 96 VPs
2. Hertfordshire with 90 VPs
4. Cambs & Hunts with 77 VPs

#### C division

1. Hertfordshire with 100 VPs
2. Northants with 97 VPs
5. Cambs & Hunts with 52 VPs

### County Knockout

#### In the First Round

CURTIS beat STEVENSON  
SEAVER beat TILLEY

#### In the Second Round

CURTIS beat RILEY  
SEAVER beat MAY  
HOPE beat HOWARD

#### In the Quarter-final

CURTIS beat SEAVER  
HASLEGRAVE beat COWLEY  
JAGGER beat JACOBSBERG  
KING beat HOPE

#### In the Semi-final

CURTIS beat HASLEGRAVE  
JAGGER beat KING

#### In the Final

JAGGER beat CURTIS

### County Plate

#### In the Preliminary Round

MAY beat RICHER  
POLLARD beat TILLEY  
KUEH beat LAWRENCE  
JONES beat COPPING

#### In the Quarter-final

ANDERSON beat MAY  
RILEY beat POLLARD  
MAN beat KUEH  
STEVENSON beat JONES

**County Pairs**

1. Pat Atkin & Graham Clarke
2. Rod Oakford & Victor Milman
3. Catherine Curtis & Paul Fegarty
4. Chris Larlham & Grzegorz Konopko
5. Joanne Caldwell & Kevin Smith
6. Derek Oxbrow & Peter Somerfield
7. Fred Allen & David Carmichael
8. Neil Matthews & Verity Joubert
9. Jonathan Mestel & Julian Wightwick
10. Ross Midgley & Christopher Waites

**County Individual**

1. Gladys Gittins
2. Wendy Pollard
3. Stephen Goodwin
4. Simon Stokes
5. Colin Campbell
6. Derek Oxbrow
7. Ted Shaw
8. Malcolm Anderson
9. Brian Copping
10. Tanawan Watts

**Novice Pairs' Tournament**

1. Barbara Tayabali & Sheila Miers
2. Anne Vidler & Sherry O'Donovan
3. Rosalind Barden & Kay Hunt
4. Pat Pett & Laszlo David
5. Sue Paine & Frederick Webb
6. Jean Murray & Maureen Cahill
7. Patrick Coulson & Nicole Cory-Wright
8. Helen Singer & Chloe Cockerill
9. Barbara Talboys & Elaine Miller
10. Pat Bridges & Pat Fletcher

**Garden Cities**

Congratulations to Cambridge A for a strong performance at the county qualifier. The team was Julian Wightwick, Jonathan Mestel, Paul Fegarty, Catherine Curtis, Victor Milman, Rod Oakford, Chris Jagger and Jon Cooke.

Cambridge A		19	20	20	<b>59</b>
P'borough A	1		12	20	<b>33</b>
Cambridge B	0	8		17	<b>25</b>
P'borough B	0	0	3		<b>3</b>

**Jubilee Pairs**

1. Greg Konopko & Chris Larlham
2. Peter Bhagat & Jenny Jacobsberg
- 3= Chris Waites & Ross Midgley  
Fred Allen & Ann Aplin
5. Jonathan Cairns & Andre Kueh
6. Nicholas & Cynthia Bull
7. Peter & Bryan Last
8. Chris Hadley & Tania O'Farrell
9. Ian McDonald & Joanne Caldwell
10. David Man & Annette Gerloch

**Cambs & Hunts League**

#	Division 1	P	W	L	D	VPs	Ave
1	Cambridge 2	3	3	0	0	44	14.7
2	Ely 1	3	2	1	0	38	12.7
3	Peterborough 2	3	1	2	0	21	7.0
4	University 1	2	0	2	0	10	5.0
5	Peterborough 1	1	0	1	0	7	7.0

Division 1 is still undecided.

#	Division 2	P	W	L	D	VPs	Ave
1	Cambridge 4	5	3	1	1	57	11.4
2	Crafts Hill	5	2	1	2	56	11.2
3	Huntingdon 2	5	3	2	0	51	10.2
3	Thursday 1	5	1	2	2	51	10.2
5	Saffron Walden 1	4	1	2	1	35	8.8
6	Thursday 2	4	1	3	0	30	7.5

With all but one match completed in Division 2, congratulations go to Cambridge 4 (captained by Carole Parker) on their win this year.

#	Division 3	P	W	L	D	VPs	Ave
1	Huntingdon 3	5	4	1	0	65	13.0
2	Peterborough 3	5	3	2	0	54	10.8
3	Cambridge 3	5	2	3	0	44	8.8
4	Peterborough 4	4	2	2	0	42	10.5
5	University 2	5	2	3	0	41	8.2
6	Huntingdon 1	4	1	3	0	34	8.5

Similarly in Division 3 we have a winner with all but one match completed. Congratulations to Huntingdon 3 (captained by Bill Stevenson).



#	Division 4	P	W	L	D	VPs	Ave
1	University 3	4	3	0	1	57	14.3
2	Ely 2	4	2	2	0	39	9.8
2	Peterborough 5	4	2	2	0	39	9.8
4	North Cambridge 2	4	1	2	1	35	8.8
5	Balsham	4	1	3	0	30	7.5

In Division 4, congratulations to University 3 (captained by James Lawrence) who were already clear of the field with a match in hand.

## Around the Clubs

### Blinco

The Frank Weatherhead Cup was won by Neville Wilson & Shirley Rainbow.

### Cambridge

The Marie Johnson Salver was won by Eryl Howard, Eric Campbell, Victor Milman & Jimmy Cheung.

Rod & Sue Oakford won both the Thomas Kirkby Mixed Pairs and the Club Pairs, and teamed up with Julian Wightwick and John Liebeschuetz to win the Collis Plate Teams League.

The Spring Equinox handicap pairs was won by Cynthia Kirkby & Bob Speller.

The Cradock Trophy was won by Dave Harrison.

The Jacobs Shield Butler Pairs was won by Jonathan Mestel & Rod Oakford.

The Mad Hatter's Speedball Pairs was won by Alan & Margaret MacFarlane.

### Cottenham

The Championship Pairs was retained again by Peter Morgan & Mike Seaver.

The March Handicap Pairs was won by Kit Orde-Powlett and David Newman.

The David Haddock Cup was won by Vin Vachher.

### Peterborough

The Gentle Pairs was won by Anne Wilkinson & Jan Wilson.

The new Handicap Trophy was won by Margaret Dowell. Margaret also won the Committee Cup playing with Janet Porter.

The Club Teams Championship was won by Mark Tilley Trevor Thrower, Brian Hope, Karl Farquhar.

Mark Tilley & Trevor Thrower again won the Club Championship and the Peterborough Pairs, and also won the Club Teams with Brian Hope and Karl Farquhar, and the Club Pivot Teams with Mary Knights, Kieran Tilley and Karl Farquhar.

### Thursday

The President's Shield was won by Roy Newman.

The St John Championship was won by Joanne Caldwell & Ian McDonald.

The Mackenzie Plate was won by Verity Joubert & Neil Matthews.

The Swan Shields were won by Fred Allen & Roger Salmon.

### University

In the Portland Bowl semifinals, Cambridge B lost to Edinburgh B. Cambridge A had lost to eventual winners Oxford A in the quarterfinals.