

Results

Friday Night Speedball

1	Ian Mitchell & Phil Godfrey	67.97%
2	David Ewart & Mark Letho	60.46
3=	Tom Slater & Liam Jones	58.17
	Cameron Small & Fiona Hutchison	58.17

Speedball KO Teams

In the final,
Laura Perryman, Geraint Harker, Clare Dutton, Nick Schurch,
 defeated
 Ned Paul, Steve Hooker, Dave Straswbridge, Neil Tregsby, by **10 IMPs.**

Sunday Evening Open Pairs

1	Angela Fenton & Coral Fallon	65.42%
2	Bill Taylor & Ron Davis	61.38
3	Mike Huggins & Irene Robinson	59.30

Sunday Open Teams – Orange Section

1	Andrew Woodcock, Catherine Draper, Sue & Nick Woodcock	+45 IMPs
2	Samantha Punch, Dee Harley, Susan Aitchison, Jim Forsyth	+43

Sunday Open Teams – Red Section

1	Ann Husk, Susan Gregory, Sula Turpin, Jan Whitehouse	+46 IMPs
2	David S. Jones, Janine Griffiths-Baker, Mike Bell, John Rafferty	+40

Monday Afternoon Open Pairs

1	Cecil Leighton & Ranan Rimon	63.60%
2	Sheilagh Flett & Pauline Cooper	62.06
3	Dennis Bennett & William Coley	60.51

Midweek Knock-out Teams – Round 1

Julian Mitchell Beat Paul Huggins (+28);	Phil Godfrey Beat Debbie Sandford (+20)
Catherine Draper Beat Colin Webb (+51)	Eddie Lucioni Beat John Beard (+35)
Waseem Naqvi Beat Luke Porter (+26)	Graham Bartley Beat Alex Wilkinson (+9)
James Thrower Beat D. Evetts (+9)	Benjamin Paske Beat Robert Miller (+22)
Tom Copeland Beat Chris Simpson (+55)	

The Best?

Who is the best bridge player in Britain? I'm betting that a lot of readers will have their own ideas on this matter, but the answer is perhaps not quite so simple as one might think. It is rather like asking which is the better footballer, Wayne Rooney or Peter Cech, a nonsense question. Firstly, Teams and Pairs are two very different games, requiring different specialised skills – as well as general bridge knowledge and technique. It is by no means clear that the answer will be the same for the two forms of the game. But it is more complicated even than that.

I asked the question because a little while ago I was accused of being the best Pairs player in Britain. I know that it must be true, because I read it in one of our leading newspapers and, of course, one must believe anything one reads in the newspaper. But I play virtually all my bridge professionally, partnering lesser players. The reason why some believe me to be the best pairs player in Britain is because I have had so many successes playing with my clients in big events where the field is of mixed standard.

All these results actually show is that I am the best, or one of the best, at getting good results playing with a client against mixed-ability fields. Nobody knows if I am equally effective in a top class international field, because I have never played a World or European Pairs Championship with a player of my own level.

There are, arguably, four different best Pairs players in Britain – the best playing a strong event with a strong partner, the best playing a strong event with a weaker partner, the best playing a weak event with a strong partner, and the best playing a weak event with a weaker partner. Now, do you want to stick to your original answer or think again?

It has been suggested to me on a number of occasions by fellow players that I should write a book showing how I do so well in Pairs events. I have always declined because so many of my good results come from my opponents making dreadful errors. However, what I am good at is putting myself in the position of a weaker player and imagining the sort of error they might make. Then I give them the opportunity to make that error, even if this involves me in making a play which is not very sound from a technical point of view.

There are a whole host of psychological or deceptive plays that have been pretty well documented by various authors. To look at just one situation, suppose that you have a side-suit of K432 in dummy and QJ doubleton in hand. We all know that if we need to steal a trick without losing one the best chance is to lead the jack from hand. If left-hand-opponent does not hold the ten, he may think we are about to take a finesse to his partner's queen, so may duck the ace.

Now, suppose that we want two winners and no loser in the suit. There is a chance again, but this time it is no good to lead from hand. Rather, declarer should lead low from the dummy, putting in the queen. If that scores, go back to dummy to lead a second low card towards the jack. Right-hand-opponent may duck again, hoping to find his partner with the jack. You don't think so? Excellent! If you are a player who would never dream of ducking the second round, then you are ripe to be caught when declarer actually holds queen-small doubleton in hand. Again, he leads low to the queen and, when that scores, crosses to dummy to lead low away from the king once more. If RHO holds the ace but not the jack, he has a problem – maybe you lose a trick, but you win two when you were entitled to only one (of course, there are two tricks legitimately if RHO has only Ax or Axx in the suit as the ace can be forced out).

All the following deals come from recent tournament play.

Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ 3 2	♥ A K 8 3	♦ 8 2	♣ J 8 7 6 4	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ K Q 8	♥ 10 9 4	♦ K Q 9 3	♣ Q 5 3
N											
W E											
S											
♠ 10 4	♥ J 7 6 5	♦ A J 10 6	♣ A K 10		♠ A J 9 7 6 5	♥ Q 2	♦ 7 5 4	♣ 9 2			

West	North	East	South
–	–	2♠	Pass
Pass	Dble	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

West led the three of spades to East's ace and back came the ♠7. This looks to be the flattest board of the day – nine top tricks, no more and no less. Is there any prospect of a tenth trick?

Were the weak two bidder on declarer's left, there might be some possibility of leading hearts from dummy in the hope that the actual heart position would be reversed and East might go in with both ace and king, thereby crashing West's doubleton queen. But there is no prospect for that with the actual position.

The one thing that declarer must not do is to play on hearts early. That would tell the defence what was going on in that suit and there would be little prospect of a subsequent error. I simply cashed four rounds of diamonds. It was lucky to find East with the diamond length, as that meant that West was the one who had to find two discards. He chose two hearts – after all, what use were the small cards? Now when I played on hearts the suit broke two-two and I had my tenth trick.

Lucky? Certainly, but the more often you give yourself the chance to get lucky the more often it will happen.

Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ 8 3 ♥ Q 10 9 5 ♦ 10 6 3 ♣ A J 10 3	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 5 4 ♥ J 6 ♦ K J 7 5 ♣ K Q 8 7 2	♠ K J 10 6 ♥ K 7 4 2 ♦ A 9 4 ♣ 6 5
	N											
W		E										
	S											
		♠ A Q 9 7 2 ♥ A 8 3 ♦ Q 8 2 ♣ 9 4										

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♦	1♠
Dble	1NT	2♥	Dble(i)
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

(i) Extra values, take-out

West led the ten of hearts, ducked, followed by a heart to the jack, king and ace. A club was led towards dummy and West rose with the ace to play a diamond to the king and ace. Back came a diamond to declarer's queen.

Declarer has no side losers – he just needs to ruff his remaining heart – so his only problem is to limit his trump losers to the minimum. The bidding and defence to date strongly suggest that the distribution is the actual one – East should be 4-4-3-2 for his better-minor 1♦ opening as West's carding and failure to lead a diamond at trick one both suggest three diamonds. I could have simply ruffed a heart then played a spade to the queen, ♠A, and a third spade. Instead, I led a club to the king then played the ♣Q, as though I wanted to discard a loser from hand. East ruffed in with the jack and I over-ruffed, took my heart ruff, and led dummy's remaining trump. East had to split the ♠K10 so I won with the ace and returned the ♠9, pinning West's doubleton eight.

The overtrick was worth a lot of matchpoints. Lucky again?

Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ J 10 3 2 ♥ A 8 2 ♦ 4 ♣ K 10 8 7 2	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ Q 8 ♥ K 7 5 3 ♦ A K Q J 2 ♣ J 4	♠ A 9 7 5 ♥ Q 9 ♦ 8 5 ♣ Q 9 6 5 3
	N											
W		E										
	S											
		♠ K 6 4 ♥ J 10 6 4 ♦ 10 9 7 6 3 ♣ A										

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

West led the four of diamonds, an obvious singleton. I won in hand with the ten and led a low heart to the king. Assuming a three-two trump split, the contract is now secure, while it is doomed to failure if trumps are four-one. Rather than simply play a second trump, losing to East's doubleton queen, and settling for ten tricks, I crossed to hand with the ace of clubs and led the jack of hearts. Sure enough, West went up with the ace, crashing his partner's queen. And, as I had so helpfully established his club winner, he tried to cash it. There was no diamond ruff now and I had eleven tricks and a lot of matchpoints.

The club play is not technically sound. If hearts are actually four-one, releasing the club control may lead to extra undertricks – but the table feel was not of a bad break, and East had never looked like joining in the auction, which he might well have done with ten black cards.

Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ K 9 3 ♥ Q 10 8 2 ♦ 8 6 3 ♣ J 4 2	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 10 8 5 2 ♥ K J 5 3 ♦ 9 ♣ K 10 9 6	♠ Q 7 ♥ 7 6 4 ♦ K Q 10 7 4 2 ♣ 8 5
	N											
W		E										
	S											
		♠ A J 6 4 ♥ A 9 ♦ A J 5 ♣ A Q 7 3										

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

West led the two of hearts, fourth-best, to the king and ace. There is no point in ducking here – indeed, it is much better to win as LHO may not then be sure of the heart position, whereas he will know everything after a duck.

There are nine top tricks so in a Teams event the board would be of little interest. At Pairs, however, an overtrick could prove to be very valuable. How should declarer decide between the black finesses for his tenth trick?

I crossed to dummy with a diamond at trick two and led the queen of spades. At this early stage in the hand it would have been very difficult for East not to cover if he held the king. When he played low without any sort of a problem, I went up with the ace and rattled off all the diamonds. West held onto the heart winners and ♠K,

throwing clubs away, and it was heavy odds on that the club finesse would be working – ten tricks.

Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ Q 8 3 ♥ 6 5 4 ♦ J 9 6 2 ♣ J 7 5	♠ 10 9 4 ♥ Q 10 7 3 ♦ K Q 5 ♣ A K 9	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; text-align: center; width: 60px; height: 60px;"> <tr><td> </td><td>N</td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>E</td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td>S</td><td> </td></tr> </table>		N		W	E			S		♠ A 7 5 2 ♥ J 2 ♦ 10 8 4 3 ♣ Q 10 6
	N											
W	E											
	S											
♠ K J 6 ♥ A K 9 8 ♦ A 7 ♣ 8 4 3 2												

West	North	East	South
–	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

West led a trump so they were drawn in three rounds. The contract was secure, with one club and either one or two spades to be lost. There was the possibility of cashing the diamonds then playing three rounds of clubs in the hope that the suit would break evenly with West winning the third round, when he would be forced to open up the spade suit or give a ruff and discard. I preferred a deceptive play.

On the third diamond I threw the jack of spades from hand, then led the ♠10 from the dummy, attempting to look like a man trying to sneak past the ace to make a bare king. Had East played low, I would have run the ten on the basis that if he held the ace he would go in with it a significant proportion of the time, so it was better to play him for the queen. But, of course, that did not prove to be necessary. East rose with the ace of spades and there was no longer a guess; eleven tricks.

If you look for them, you will find a never-ending number of opportunities to put your opponents under pressure in the defence. Some will work against one level of player, some against another. The important thing to remember is that you will get lucky more frequently if you give yourself a chance to do so.

Trivia Quiz 4

Movies

What was the name of the character played by these actors?

1. Harrison Ford in Blade Runner
2. Sean Bean in Lord OfThe Rings
3. Trevor Howard in Brief Encounter
4. Humphrey Bogart in Casablanca
5. Lauren Bacall in The Big Sleep
6. John Travolta in Pulp Fiction
7. Gene Kelly in Singin' In The Rain
8. Marilyn Monroe in Some Like It Hot
9. Paul Newman in The Hustler
10. Ursula Andress in Dr. No

More From The Swiss

Ben Green and Michael Byrne are two of our most talented young players but only very occasional partners. These three deals produced three huge results for them in the third session of the Swiss Pairs.

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ J 8 7 3 ♥ K Q 9 6 3 ♦ 6 ♣ Q 10 3	♠ 9 4 ♥ J 10 7 ♦ A Q 9 8 5 3 ♣ 9 6	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; text-align: center; width: 60px; height: 60px;"> <tr><td> </td><td>N</td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>E</td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td>S</td><td> </td></tr> </table>		N		W	E			S		♠ K Q 10 6 2 ♥ A 8 5 4 ♦ J 10 ♣ 8 5
	N											
W	E											
	S											
♠ A 5 ♥ 2 ♦ K 7 4 2 ♣ A K J 7 4 2												

West	North	East	South
–	Green 2♦	2♠	Byrne 4NT
Dble	Pass	Pass	5♣
Pass	6♦	Pass	Pass
Dble	All Pass		

Two Diamonds was a weak two bid and 4NT asked for key cards. For an irregular partnership, West's double created some potential for a misunderstanding – Green intended his pass as showing one key card, but would Byrne take it that way?

Byrne, did understand the pass as intended and, having seen plenty of five-card weak two openings at this vulnerability, judged it wise to check for the queen of trumps before committing his side to slam. Looking at ace-queen to six, Green was more than happy to jump to six and West made a horrible double to end the auction.

Discuss it with an Expert

(11.00 am in the Cambridge Room)

This morning's expert will be the entertaining

Graham Jepson

Why not come along and have your
problems solved?

With the club suit breaking evenly, it could be established with one ruff and that meant twelve winners and a huge +1090.

Board 19. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ 8 4 ♥ J 7 5 4 3 2 ♦ 10 6 ♣ A J 3	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ Q 7 ♥ – ♦ A Q 9 8 5 ♣ Q 10 7 6 4 2	♠ J 10 6 5 ♥ Q 9 8 ♦ K J 7 3 ♣ 8 5
	N											
W		E										
	S											
		♠ A K 9 3 2 ♥ A K 10 6 ♦ 4 2 ♣ K 9										

West	North	East	South
–	Green	–	Byrne
Pass	2♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	4NT
All Pass			

The North hand would be tricky to describe in any system when partner opens 1♠. When the system in use is two-over-one game-forcing, it becomes even more difficult as North has to make a very committal decision at his first turn.

With no obvious route to show the hand, Green decided to upgrade his hand to a game-force, bolstered by the partial spade fit. However, rather than start with 2♣, he decided that he could at least hope to get across a five-five minor-suit hand if his initial response was 2♦. At his next turn, 2NT looked clear enough, and it was also clear to pass the invitational raise to 4NT.

East led the eight of clubs, surely top of a weak holding, because he would have communication problems if he played low, Green correctly rose with dummy's king at trick one and West took the ace. West did not appreciate what the position was so returned the ♣J, which did not exactly disappoint declarer.

Green won the club and cashed the rest of the suit then played queen of spades and a spade to dummy. West showed out on the third spade so Green cashed the top hearts and East, who was known to hold a spade, was forced to pitch the ♦J. A diamond to the ace felled the king and the ♦Q gave Green his twelfth trick and another excellent score of +490.

Correction

Please note that there is an error in the official programme. As most of you will already be aware, the **Mixed Pairs Championship** will be played on **Thursday evening at 8.00 pm.**

Board 24. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ A Q J 8 ♥ K 6 5 2 ♦ 7 5 ♣ K 7 6	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 10 7 4 2 ♥ A J 9 ♦ A 8 4 ♣ A 5 2	♠ K 6 5 ♥ 10 3 ♦ K Q 10 ♣ Q J 8 4 3
	N											
W		E										
	S											
		♠ 9 3 ♥ Q 8 7 4 ♦ J 9 6 3 2 ♣ 10 9										

West	North	East	South
	Green		Byrne
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♥	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Green led the seven of spades to the five, nine and queen. Declarer played on clubs and Byrne firstly followed nine, ten, denying interest in spades as the partnership play Smith Peters, where to play high-low in clubs would show a liking for the suit led at trick one. Green ducked until the third round, on which Byrne discarded a neutral card in diamonds.

Green reasoned that partner probably did not hold the king of hearts (when a low heart switch would defeat the contract), as he would then have discouraged diamonds, but he should hold the ♥Q, as declarer appeared to have 10 HCP in the black suits so could not have both heart honours in his weak no trump.

Having decided on the position, Green switched to the jack of hearts. Declarer could have grabbed the ♥K and cashed out for nine tricks, but he got greedy and ducked. Now Green could have cashed out to leave declarer with the same nine tricks, but he saw no need to do so and instead exited with a low diamond to dummy's king.

Declarer had clearly never seen a play like the heart jack from ace-jack-other up to the strong hand and was convinced that the ace of hearts had to be onside. His next play was a heart to the king and now the roof fell in as Green could win the ace, cash the ace of diamonds, and play the ♥9 for Byrne to overtake and cash the fourth heart. That was down two and left declarer a sadder, if not necessarily wiser, man.

Today in History

On August 14th 1945, following the dropping of atomic bombs on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan surrendered to the Allies to end World War II. VJ Day, Victory over Japan, is, however, officially celebrated on August 15th.

Trivia Quiz 4

Solutions

1. Rick Deckard
2. Boromir
3. Dr. Alec Harvey
4. Rick Blaine
5. Vivian Sternwood Rutledge
6. Vincent Vega
7. Don Lockwood
8. Sugar Kane Kowalczyk
9. Eddie Felson
10. Honey Ryder

Do You Cover?

There are some useful teams taking part in the Midweek KO Teams, and two of the better ones met in Monday's first round. Would you have got the declarer play problem right at the table on this deal?

Board 24. Dealer West. None Vul.

<p>♠ Q 7 6 2 ♥ Q J 10 2 ♦ A 4 ♣ 9 5 2</p>	<p>♠ 5 4 ♥ 9 7 4 ♦ 9 8 6 5 2 ♣ J 10 8</p> <table style="margin: 10px auto; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> <p>♠ A K J 10 9 ♥ K 8 6 3 ♦ 3 ♣ Q 4 3</p>	N	W E	S	<p>♠ 8 3 ♥ A 5 ♦ K Q J 10 7 ♣ A K 7 6</p>
N					
W E					
S					

The auction was short and sweet. Phil Godfrey opened the West hand with 2♥, showing 5-11 with at least four-

four in the majors, and Steve Raine jumped to 3NT in response, ending the auction.

Gad Chadha, partnering Deborah Sandford, led the jack of spades and Raine ducked, so Chadha continued with the ten of spades. When declarer ducked again, Chadha cashed three more spade winners for down one; -50. However, Raine's team picked up IMPs on the board as the contract at the other table was 5♦, down three, and they also won the match.

It is clear to duck at trick one as that blocks the suit whenever North has ace- or king-doubleton, and covering allows the defence to run all five winners. It is not so clear that to duck a second time is correct, however.

My feeling is that declarer should cover at trick two but it is very close. It could cost if the lead is from jack-ten doubleton, or when North has ace- or king-doubleton and the heart finesse is offside. But the actual holding is quite a likely one, given that South is leading one of dummy's suits – four-card holdings do not look so attractive, and AJ109x is also unattractive up to a possible doubleton honour. Perhaps table feel is the decisive factor – often declarer can sense how interested the defenders are, in this case particularly how interested North was at trick one.

SMOKING

The only approved smoking area is outside the front entrance of the hotel. Using the fire exits is not permitted. Local residents have complained to the Environmental Health Department, which has warned the hotel that further complaints could lead to the premature closure of the congress.

Today's Schedule

10.30 am	Partner Teacher Training
10.30 am	Tournament Director Training Course
10.30 am	'The Really Easy' seminar
11.00 am	Discuss it with an Expert
2.00 pm	Seniors Pairs , semi-final
2.00 pm	Afternoon Knock-out Teams , Round 2
2.00 pm	'The Really Easy' Session 2
2.00 pm	Open Pairs
8.00 pm	Seniors Pairs , Final and Consolation
8.00 pm	Tuesday Pairs Championship
8.00 pm	'The Really Easy' Session 3