

## Devon A vs Hereford A

With the Western League not happening this year thanks to Andrew Leslie for organising some friendly matches against some of our county rivals.

The first of these, against Hereford, took place this Saturday with Devon A being represented by Peter Wood, Howard Kent-Webster, Harry and Venetia Anoyrkatis. This is Venetia's first outing for the team, not bad for a thirteen year old.

With everyone's BBO names to hand and having explained to Venetia where Herefordshire was (schools these days!) off we departed to our computers. It is slightly concerning when one of your team mates calls himself *insanedoc*. Luckily I have played with and against Pete so know his Bridge is anything but insane. I have yet to be treated by him though.

16 board matches are a sprint in Bridge terms. If you can get off to a good start it often sets the tone for the rest of the match. Our match against Hereford started with this hand: -

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: auto;">                 D 1             </div>	<b>N</b> ChrisGC ♠ AJ3 ♥ 74 ♦ KQ1043 ♣ 1084	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 12.5%;">W</td> <td style="width: 12.5%;">N</td> <td style="width: 12.5%;">E</td> <td style="width: 12.5%;">S</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>P</td> <td>1♥</td> <td>P</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>2♦</td> <td>3♥</td> <td>P</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♦</td> <td>P</td> <td>4♥</td> <td>P</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6♥</td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> </tr> </table>	W	N	E	S		P	1♥	P	1♠	2♦	3♥	P	4♦	P	4♥	P	6♥	P	P	P
W	N	E	S																			
	P	1♥	P																			
1♠	2♦	3♥	P																			
4♦	P	4♥	P																			
6♥	P	P	P																			
<b>W</b> insanedoc ♠ K854 ♥ Q2 ♦ AJ52 ♣ A52		<b>E</b> projdoc ♠ Q10 ♥ AKJ863 ♦ 86 ♣ KQJ																				
	<b>S</b> GeorgeMJBa ♠ 9762 ♥ 1095 ♦ 97 ♣ 9763																					
		6♥ E      NS: 0 EW: 0																				

With Devon sitting East-West it was understandable to look for a slam once the heart fit had been established. Unfortunately, the duplicated shape in clubs meant there was nowhere for the diamond loser to go and the defence was easy after the diamond was led.

Over 3♥ a better bid might have been 4♣. This should be a cue bid as there is no gain introducing a new suit at this point in the auction. Partner now bids 4♥, denying a diamond control. If you now try Key Card Blackwood you discover you are missing and ace and very unlikely to be able to get rid of your diamond loser quickly enough. Hereford played in 3N which made an easy 11 tricks. Not finding the heart fit meant there was no problem on the hand. 11 imps down and the momentum with the opposition.

A couple of part scores were exchanged and the score was very much the same until board 8.

D 8	N har12345	W N E S
	♠ QJ106 ♥ 87 ♦ QJ84 ♣ A73	P P 2♥ P P X P P P
W benbritton		E mikeralph
♠ AK42 ♥ 64 ♦ 72 ♣ KJ654		♠ 975 ♥ QJ1093 ♦ 63 ♣ Q92
	S venetia_16	
	♠ 83 ♥ AK52 ♦ AK1095 ♣ 108	
		2♥x E NS: 0 EW: 0

2♥ would not be many people's choice for a weak 2 but seemed to be style for our opponents. Venetia has a marginal bid and decided pass. Bidding 3♦ will often propel you too high as it does here. After the reopening double she found herself with a choice. When juniors smell blood there is not much you can do to stop them so 2♥ doubled became the final contract. The defence was not a thing of beauty. These hands are often difficult. With declarer having a good source of tricks in clubs it led us to try to cash our tricks quickly thinking we had two hearts, a club and three diamonds. When declarer only had two diamonds this turned out to be suicide. Any other defence would have led us to success. Another 12 imps lost and the first half ended with Devon down by 24 imps.

D 2	N insanedoc	W N E S
	♠ 963 ♥ A64 ♦ AJ65 ♣ J94	3♠ P 2♠ P P
W benbritton		E mikeralph
♠ AQ42 ♥ K97 ♦ KQ104 ♣ 105		♠ KJ1087 ♥ 85 ♦ 932 ♣ Q83
	S projdoc	
	♠ 5 ♥ QJ1032 ♦ 87 ♣ AK762	
		3♠ E NS: 0 EW: 0

It worked once so why not try it again. Mike Ralph once again opened a weak 2 with a 5332 hand. This time it worked like a dream. Neither Howard or Pete felt they were worth a bid so 2♠ became

the final contract. With the heart finesse working and clubs breaking 3-2, 4♥ made for North/South in the other room.

6 D	N ChrisGC	W	N	E	S
	♠ 9652			1♦	1♥
	♥ 742	P	2♦	P	2NT
	♦ A	P	4♥	X	P
	♣ AQ765	P	P		
W har12345		E venetia_16			
♠ J104		♠ AQ73			
♥ 105		♥ KJ3			
♦ 8754		♦ KQ96			
♣ 9432		♣ K10			
	S GeorgeMJBa				
	♠ K8				
	♥ AQ986				
	♦ J1032				
	♣ J8				
		4♥x S NS: 0 EW: 0			

The final hand is one from our debutant. Venetia opened 1♦ and then sat back and watched the opponents bid to 4♥. Smelling blood once again she is not shy to punish. North had shown good values in the auction so many of her points should be well placed. On this hand declarer had too much to do and Devon had a welcome 9 imps as the contract was 2 down.

The match ended on a more positive note as we won the second half. We look forward to playing more of these matches.

Well done to Hereford. The final score was a victory for them by 22 imps.

*Harry Anoyrkatis*