

England into Final of The World Online Junior (Under 16) Bridge Championship

The World Bridge Federation has introduced two new competitions for junior bridge, the [Under 16s and the Under 26s Online Knockout](#). The England U16 team have been enjoying success and have qualified for the final, beating the USA. The final will be played within the next couple of weeks.



Thirteen countries entered the U16 event and it commenced with a seven round qualifier back in March. Each round was played over a two week period, with a team of four playing a 14 board stanza against seven other countries. The England team is comprised of (from left to right – photo courtesy of the EBU) Dido Coley, Henry Rose, Roland Bourne, Jasmine Bakhshi, Liam Fegarty, Jamie Fegarty, Oscar Selby, and Warwickshire's Andy Cope.

By finishing in the top eight of the round-robin England qualified for the knock-out phase. In the quarter-final they narrowly beat France, thereby qualifying for the semi-final against USA. The match was three stanzas of 14 boards, for which England fielded three pairs, Henry and Jasmine; the Fegarty brothers, and Oscar and Andy, with each pair playing two stanzas. These are the same players who will be representing England on the “face-to-face” Junior World Championships in China in August.



With each Stanza taking scheduled for an hour and half, we were due a tense evening of entertainment, commencing at 5:00pm (after they had got home from school!).

<div>6</div>		N jobsful ♠ 3 ♥ 1072 ♦ KJ ♣ QJ108532	W N E S 2♣ P 1♦ P 2NT P 2♥ P 4♦ P 4♥ P 4NT P 6♣ P
W JasmineSB ♠ AJ8 ♥ Q4 ♦ Q102 ♣ AK764		E onriquez ♠ KQ106 ♥ AK53 ♦ A8643 ♣	
	S yzy1234 ♠ 97542 ♥ J986 ♦ 975 ♣ 9		6♦ E NS: 0 EW: 0

Board 6 turned out to be crucial. After Henry (onriquez) reversed with 2 hearts, Jasmine showed slam interest with an excellent 4 diamond bid. After Roman Key Card Blackwood Henry found himself in a slam missing King and Jack of trumps. South led a 5 of diamonds followed by 10, J, A. Henry now had to find the King. Based on the lead South surely didn't have it so led small from hand; South played 7 and now Henry has to find the 9 also. Small from dummy and the North's King fell. At the other

table USA stopped in 3N, so 12 IMPs in to England. After the 1st 14 boards England were leading 32-20

<div><div></div><div>2</div><div>D</div></div>		<div>Njamieliam</div> <div>♠ QJ9</div> <div>♥ Q963</div> <div>♦ 6</div> <div>♣ AK982</div>	<div>WNE S</div> <div>2♠3♣</div> <div>P5♣</div> <div>P</div> <div>P1♠4♥</div> <div>P</div>
<div>Wjobsful</div> <div>♠ 8</div> <div>♥ AJ542</div> <div>♦ QJ732</div> <div>♣ 105</div>		<div>Eyzy1234</div> <div>♠ 6432</div> <div>♥ 10</div> <div>♦ AK10985</div> <div>♣ Q4</div>	
	<div>Sliamjamie</div> <div>♠ AK1075</div> <div>♥ K87</div> <div>♦ 4</div> <div>♣ J763</div>		<div>5♣ N</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

In the 2nd stanza **Board 2** was critical. The England East-West opened a weak 2 diamonds; South doubled and West jumped to 5 diamonds. Without the double he says he might have tried a forcing 2 hearts (he had heart tolerance), or an “imaginative” 2 spades (really?). East went one off doubled.

The USA East did not play a weak 2 diamonds so East passed. West’s 2 spades showed hearts and an unspecified minor. South’s 4 hearts was a mis-click (it happens). He intended 4 diamonds as a splinter

agreeing clubs, but did notify oppo’s of the error. Undeterred North bid and made 5 clubs. 11 IMPs in to England.

USA recovered some IMPs later and the set was drawn at 35-35. England still 13 in front.

In the 3rd set, after 3 hours of playing. England had a good start, gaining 21 IMPs on the first 6 boards for a 34 IMP lead.

On **board 6** Andy and Oscar pressured the opponents in 5 hearts and took it one off. At the

<div><div></div><div>6</div><div>D</div></div>		<div>N jobsful</div> <div>♠ K862</div> <div>♥ QJ1085</div> <div>♦ 3</div> <div>♣ A73</div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div>2♦ 4♥ 5♦ 1♥</div> <div>P P X P</div> <div>P P</div>
<div>W andy03</div> <div>♠ J1074</div> <div>♥</div> <div>♦ AQJ764</div> <div>♣ J106</div>			<div>E oscar1099</div> <div>♠ A953</div> <div>♥ 9</div> <div>♦ K1095</div> <div>♣ K852</div>
		<div>S yzy1234</div> <div>♠ Q</div> <div>♥ AK76432</div> <div>♦ 82</div> <div>♣ Q94</div>	<div>5♥x S NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

other table the less aggressive American’s allowed England to play in 4 hearts making.

However in the next 3 boards England dramatically lost 24 IMPs to narrow the lead to 10 IMPs, partly due to some successful aggressive American bidding to try and recover the position. Kibitzers’ blood pressure was rising. How I pleaded for the lower drama of an England penalty shoot-out.

The American’s however were desperate for some more IMPs and on board 11 aggressively doubled Henry’s 3S contract which rolled in for another 11 IMPs, which was enough to see England home. Well done! Or so we thought....

But... All was not over, with a ruling requested by the Americans on board 2 of the 2nd stanza (see above). There was concern over South’s misbid/misclick and an incomplete explanation from South. This went on for about two hours whilst (some) juniors were tucked up in bed, confident of victory, whilst others (and their parents) stressed out! However, once the dust had settled and the matter resolved, the result stood, as did England’s victory.

We now await the outcome of China and Israel to see who we meet in the final at the end of July. It will be open to Kibitzers but only for the strong of heart. “Bridge is coming home!!”

Details results available here: [Set1](#), [Set2](#), [Set3](#)

Graham Cope
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