

WALES

Richard Plackett and Mike Pownall

Richard is a recently retired investment manager who returned to bridge a couple of years ago having been a Gold Cup winner in 1988. He formed a partnership with Mike Pownall for this year's Welsh Premier League which they won with Paul Denning and Adrian Thomas, guaranteeing them selection for this year's Camrose campaign. Richard and Mike played together in the European Championships in Opatija.

Mike makes his living as a professional gambler concentrating on horse racing, just as well the Camrose weekends don't clash with any major meetings. Mike is an experienced Welsh International having played in three European Championships, Tenerife, Dublin and Opatija and the World Pairs in Montreal in 2002 in partnership with Peter Goodman.

Simon Richards and Julian Pottage

Simon runs his own regulatory affairs and quality assurance company. He learnt to play bridge at school which was a long time ago. This will be his fifth Camrose outing with four different partners (so there is a trend there). His last Camrose cap was four years ago for the WBU team when Wales last had two teams involved in the Camrose. He is married with two children aged 20 and 22. The eldest also plays bridge and has represented Wales at Peggy Bayer and Junior Camrose level as well as in the Junior Europeans. Both children live away from home allowing Simon more time to play bridge, occasionally with his wife.

Julian has lived in Wales with his wife and 4 growing children for the last 10 years. His work background is in occupation pensions but he currently concentrates on family, bridge, dog breeding and photography. In 2014 Julian played in the Commonwealth bridge games in Glasgow, though not in the Gold medal winning team. He suspects that he is setting, jointly with team member Richard Plackett, the record for the longest interval between appearances in the Home International Series (32 years). Before moving to Wales, Julian finished runner up in the Gold Cup in 1994 and won the Pachabo/Tollemache double in 1999. He has written over 25 books on bridge, contributes to a number of bridge magazines and regularly provides commentaries for simultaneous pairs events and BBO vu-graph.

Paul Denning and Adrian Thomas

Paul was recently made redundant from his job in IT support for EDF but was very soon re-employed as a contractor in virtually the same role. This year he has re-formed a long standing partnership with Adrian Thomas (playing 13 Camrose matches together) winning the Welsh Premier League and earning selection. Paul is married to Barbara and lives near Tewkesbury.

Adrian has been coaxed out of retirement by some of his teammates and delighted they were able to carry him kicking and screaming through the WBU league trial system- a new experience being the weakest link.

Adrian plays very little competitive bridge these days spending his retirement working harder than ever running bridge holidays; he has just completed his 100th holiday over the Christmas period. Now he has to try to know as much about bridge rules as modern bidding methods. He finds a lot of satisfaction from the teaching that is involved.

Since he last played a Camrose he has married and moved to Dolgellau and spends his spare time walking, including around the golf course, and cycling in Snowdonia.

Alan Stephenson NPC

Alan was the non-playing captain for Wales historic first ever Camrose win which happened on home soil in Llandrindrod Wells in 2010. It is hoped that Wales and indeed the WBU Team will at least be in contention to repeat the feat in 2016. Alan is married to Krista a former Welsh Junior and Lady Milne International, living near Wrexham. Having taken early retirement a couple of years ago as well as playing bridge and snooker Alan spends a fair amount of time on the golf course and has been Captain of the Vauxhall Golf Society last year. He tries to get a monthly game with Adrian at the half-way venue of Bala.