

**WALES
JUNIOR CAMROSE TEAM**



Stephen Loat

Stephen has been a mainstay of the Wales Junior Camrose team for many years, and it is with a heavy heart we acknowledge this year's competition will be his last. Stephen has done many great things in his time, such as bidding without nearly enough points, and once making 2 Diamonds, which is a hard feat to accomplish when the hand is set up for 6 Notrump. But enough of the sappy stuff, it's time to learn a bit more about the enigma that is Stephen, and make no mistake, it is *Stephen*. Not Steph or Stee, and nothing with a "V", and that includes Stevie, Steve, Stevo, Stev, Stevanopoulos, or even Steven. Being a busy and bustling marketing guru, a postmodern influencer for the ages, Stephen resides in London, best match for his energetic ambitions. Splitting his time between his marketing work and his online dating profiles, Stephen likes to get out and about. He is an avid runner, and loves a bright summer game of Ultimate Frisbee, so it comes as no surprise that he chose bridge, a game where one sits perfectly still in a small room for hours on end.



Iwan Williams

Iwan Williams is an aspiring corporate solicitor who is currently in his final year at Manchester Metropolitan. He is studying an LPC Masters (don't ask his partner what that means, he doesn't have a clue either). He but he plans on sticking around the Manchester area after his studies. This is because, as a Liverpool fan, he sees it as his duty to wind up as many Mancunians as possible at the pub watching football. When asked what his favourite contract was Iwan said "One Diamond because it's really easy to make". That could be the reason or it could be because it gives him the best chance of playing the beer card on the last trick. When asked what his favourite playing card was, "the joker" was the answer given. It's an interesting answer considering it is not a playable card in a game of bridge but then again Iwan's proclivity for very aggressive overcalls reveals a man who doesn't care much for rules.



Sophie Akers

Much like Achilles, Sophie only has one weakness – her bridge play. To everybody’s surprise, Sophie has made it to this year’s Camrose. I think she bribed her way in... Sophie has studied biosciences for three years and is a lover of nature, which is evidenced by the rate at which her houseplants are multiplying, her collection is currently at about 40 (rounded down). I think its safe to say she has an addiction. Also on Sophie’s list of addictions: board games. She harasses her housemates daily, guiltng them into playing way more than they actually want to. Her favourite boardgames include: every board game ever, except monopoly, which is for babies. Since last years Peggy Bayer, Sophie has survived, which is an impressive feat, considering how accident prone she is. In this year’s Camrose, Sophie hopes she can go the distance and do her team proud.



Steph Dux

When we asked Steph what she’s been up to since last year, she informed us that she has been eating bread. Which is exactly the kind of thing a duck would say, which makes sense, because Steph is in fact a duck. Although this is a secret, so please don’t tell anyone. Being a maths student (and probably the first duck in Britain to study maths), Steph has no friends. Bridge is a great opportunity therefore for Steph to continue to be friendless. Or at least she will be, if she undervalues her hand again, she really needs to stop only bidding the bear necessities... Steph tells us that her hobbies include and having an identity crisis and being a master at the oboe. She claims her oboe playing is so good that people always ask her to stop because it makes them feel bad about their own musical talent. She also considers her best attribute to be her humility...



Joseph Bentley

For the time in forever, Joe is playing in the Junior Camrose. Despite being an aggressively proud Welshman, Joe was not actually born in Wales. An Aussie in denial, Joe is in his third and final year of his environmental geography degree – which is basically just maps. Joe owns two dogs, one of which he only refers to as a “the worst”, and the other is the love of his life, don’t ask. Joe is as about as close to a recluse as you can be before somebody contacts a psychiatrist, something he claims is, “totally fine and normal”. Having recently taken up squash, bridge is no longer the only thing in Joe’s life. Since the last Peggy Bayer, Joe has also taken up collecting Hawaiian shirts as a substitute for a personality and to convince people that he is as cool as he thinks he is (he’s not). Here’s to hope that he doesn’t embarrass himself this Camrose...



Alua Serikbaveva

Alua is entering the Junior Camrose for the first time this year, with abundant enthusiasm. A little too much if you ask me. Although a participant of the pervious years Peggy Bayer, bridge isn’t the only game in Alua’s life, she also enjoys volleyball, as well as having a passion for skiing and snowboarding. An avid student, she is quadrilingual, and in the final year of a biomedical sciences degree. Alua views this year’s Camrose as a whole new world of opportunities to be able to drink an excess of coffee and bid to 7NT.



NPC Mark Roderick

I live in Barry South Wales not far from Cardiff and home of Gavin and Stacey (though I claim to be the only person from Barry never to of watched it). I started playing Junior Camrose bridge way back in 1993 and still consider those 7 years to be my favourite bridge years to date with the highlight being the Junior Europeans in 2000, which was actually my last ever game as a Junior. I have played in many Camrose weekends since my junior days with 3 different partners. Paddy has stuck around longer than my previous partners so either he has thicker skin than the others or I’m getting softer (I hope it is the former). Although I have coached the Welsh Juniors for many years on and off this is my first time as NPC so I am glad I am doing it with Paddy because apparently he knows what he is doing!! Not sure if joint NPCs has ever been tried before but Paddy and I are going to implement the good cop bad cop technique. As Paddy often refers to me as the Rottweiler I therefore must be bad cop, so look out!!



NPC Paddy Murphy

Having the ideal name for a Welshman it is only natural I have been given the honour of co-captaining the Welsh Juniors for the 1½th time with Mark Roderick. I live in beautiful North Wales diametrically opposite the home of Gavin and Stacey and I've seen it quite literally a lot of times. I never played junior bridge but people still think I bid and behave like I did and have never stopped. I have played in some Camrose weekends with Mark and the reason I've lasted so long I feel is that I have thicker skin than his previous partners.

I have been NPC once before, but I left most of the tricky decisions to the dragon, so I pray to God Mark knows what he's doing. Apparently, the secret of good team management is to set achievable goal, establish a team mission, provide effective feedback, and maintain positive vibes, however if all that fails then I intend to set the rottweiler on them.