

Interview of Tom Hanlon

At great expense to this publication, **Tom Hanlon**, Irish Bridge International talks to our editor Thomas MacCormac.

TMC: "Thank you very much for agreeing to do this interview with me Tom. Let's start with something about your family life?"

TH: "I was born in 1967 in the county of West Meath. I work as an insurance broker and currently live in Dublin with my partner Nuala and Lee her sixyear-old girl. My mother Annie influenced my bridge career, as at the tender age of 14 my best friend and I were badgered to go to classes' and as his father was the teacher, we had little choice. But to be fair it wasn't all that bad, generally we'd sneak out and play pool just doing enough to keep the oldies off our backs".

TMC: "I know that yourself and your current partner Dr Hugh McGann (bridge partner that is) are considered Irelands top pair and indeed are well respected throughout the bridge world could you outline your bridge career main partners and achievements".

TH: "Sure I'll list them off as best I can...at junior level in the European and Common Market Championships I played with :

1986 Heber O'Farrell

1987 Mark Moran

1988 Did not play

1989 John Nolan

1990-91 Donal Bell

(BELLADONNA)

4th I.B.U. Junior Bridge Friendship Trophy

Tom Hanlon (a.k.a. Kinder)

1992-93 Dr. Hugh

McGann

At Senior/Open level..

1990 John Cunningham

1991 Donal MacAonghusa

1992-93 Pat Walshe

1994 - ? Dr.Hugh McGann".

As can be seen, Tom has been playing for Ireland for many years at all levels. He got his nickname Kinder while playing in Budapest in 1986, in chatting to a gorgeous barmaid, while rebuking his amorous advances, all she could mutter was "kinder" meaning child and to this day he still has a youthful look about him according to his partner Nuala. His most notable achievement at junior level was a silver medal in the Common Market Championships in 1993. At open level he is one of only a handful to have won the prestigious Camrose Trophy in 1999. Tom has won the EBU's Brighton Swiss pairs, the Young Chelsea's London Bridge Marathon and has also been runner up in the Lederer many times behind Zia's All-stars. At National level he has won all the major championships, Holmes Wilson, Geraldine, Davidson, Egan, Revington, Moylan. The one title that has eluded him is the Spiro, which Tom says he will rectify next weekend playing with his Mum Annie.

TMC: "Have you any interests Outside of Bridge."

TH: "Apart from Nuala and Lee and my own wonderful 15 year old son Colm. I play poker and people have remarked that I am not a shabby player. I also support Man Utd F.C. (Ed note; getting Tom to a bridge table on a Saturday when Man Utd are playing is next to impossible.)"

TMC: "If you could change anything about bridge what would it be?"

TH: "My pet hate is hesitations at the bridge table. I do not alone blame the players; the association and directors need to do more to educate beginners about this infraction. It is not out of malice or ethics people hesitate it is from lack of knowledge. I would insist bridge associations and unions would do more on this front if possible."

TMC: "Have you any tips for our young players."

TH: "I always think two things can radically improve your results at the bridge table. Number 1: before you make an opening lead invest a little bit of time in thinking about the bidding. And number 2: play at your own tempo; do not allow the opposition to set the tempo."

TMC: "Thank you very much Tom for your time I wish you good luck in the upcoming Welsh Invitational Pairs and of course with your mum Annie in the Spiro next weekend."