



NEWSLETTER

AUSTRALIAN BRIDGE FEDERATION LTD.

Editor: Brad Coles (editor@abf.com.au)

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The playing area at the
2022 World Champion-
ships in Italy



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Front cover image: the playing area at the World Championships in Italy. Photo courtesy of World Bridge Federation.

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**IMPROVE
YOUR
DEFENCE**

with
Ron Klinger

Solution on page 31

E/All

♠ Q 10 9 8 5 3

♥ Q 8

♦ K 10

♣ 10 9 5



♠ —

♥ A 10 9 7 4 3

♦ J 6 5 4 2

♣ 8 2

WEST

NORTH

EAST

SOUTH

pass

3♥²

pass

3♠

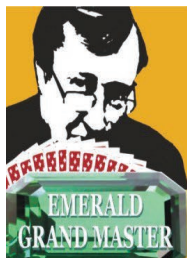
pass

4♠

all pass

1. Weak two in hearts or spades. 2. Transfer to spades.

West leads the ♣A. Which club should East play if (a) playing attitude signals, (b) playing count signals?



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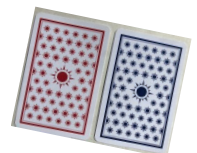
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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Allison Stralow

president@abf.com.au



ABF Board Changes

At the ABF's Annual General Meeting held in Adelaide on May 2th, the ABF Board for the period 2022-2024 was announced as follows:

- **Allison Stralow**, WA (President)
- **Stephen Fischer**, ACT (Secretary)
- **Ian Thomson**, ACT (Treasurer)
- **Robert Ward**, NSW (Board member)
- **Richard Ward**, Qld (Board member)

Philip Markey joins the ABF as General Counsel. Michael Bryan remains as Deputy Legal Counsel.

The outgoing Secretary, Kim Frazer, and Board member Adel Abdelhamid are thanked for their long and valuable contributions to the ABF.

Dallas Cooper was elected to the Committee of Honour as recognition of her outstanding service to bridge in Australia. Dallas first became an ABF Council member representing the Tasmanian Bridge Association in 2000. She was a member of the Management Committee from 2014-2022. Dallas' calm, unflappable nature has been greatly appreciated, as has her corporate knowledge and considered view on issues. Council thanks Dallas for her many years of dedicated service to the ABF.

ABF Council changes

ABF Councillors are an integral part of the administration of Australian bridge. Thank you to the retiring councillors for their time on the ABF Council: Kim Frazer (Victoria), Dallas Cooper (Tasmania) and Neil Williams (Northern Territory). A warm welcome to Jenny Thompson (Victoria), Hugh Grosvenor (Tasmania) and Rosemary Mooney (Northern Territory).

Council re-elected Peter Reynolds (ACT) and Dr Laurie Kelso (Victoria) as Supplemental Councillors.

Capitation and Masterpoint Fees

Council agreed to a recommendation from the Treasurer that effective 1 April 2023 the Capitation Fee



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will increase 2% to \$16.40 for a full year and \$8.20 for six months from October 2023 to January 2024.

Registrations made during the period January 2024 to March 2024 will not be charged but will automatically be renewed and invoiced for the coming year.

Mandatory vaccinations for Gold Point events

The ABF notes that all state and territory governments no longer mandate showing proof of vaccination and the wearing of masks when entering venues and businesses. Effective from 1 June 2022, ABF Licensed event are free to make their own decisions as to whether they will relax or cancel the existing COVID-19 Vaccination Policy in respect of their event.

Note: As the GNOT heats were held under the vaccination and mandate policy, the 2022 GNOT Final will require proof of vaccination and mask wearing.

Youth Bridge

Australia plans to send participants to Italy for the World Youth Transnational Bridge Championships held from 7 August - 14 August 2022.

Details for expressions of interest from pairs in U31, U26 and U21 categories can be found at abf.com.au under the following news item:

Australian Bridge Federation » 7th World Youth Transnational Bridge Championships

U31 pairs will only receive a partial subsidy.

Justin Mill joins Rebecca O'Reilly (Chair), Warren Lazer, William Jenner-O'Shea, Jane Reynolds, Julie Rhodes, Justin Williams, and Paul Brake on the Youth Committee.

National Director Register

The Board accepted their recommendation to modify the current ABF National Director Register to include:

Promotion to National Director - Level 2

Ronnie Ng (NSW)

Chris Snook (QLD)

Promotion to National Director - Level 3

Julie Jeffries (QLD)

Transfer to the 'Inactive' category with retention of current classification

Tony Howes (NSW) – Level 1

Peter Marley (VIC) – Level 1

Dave Parham (WA) – Level 2

Trevor Strickland (QLD) – Level 2

The WBF TD Committee has also accepted the request that Sebastian Yuen be added to the WBF TD Register as an NBO International Tournament Director. Congratulations to Sebastian.

The ABF has continued to do all we can to ensure that proper procedures are in place to detect cheating, deal with allegations, and protect the majority of players who respect and follow the rules and laws of bridge. Recorders and reviewers use statistical methods to infer that cheating is taking place and that specific pairs are cheating. While the ABF appears to have a low level of cheating amongst our players, we need to continue taking steps to combat cheating. The ABF will review the by-laws relating to cheating and online bridge.

International relations

At the Zone 7 meeting in January 2022, Ben Thompson was re-appointed President of the South Pacific Bridge Federation and as the zonal delegate to the World Bridge Federation. Both appointments are for the period 2022-2026. Ben has worked closely with the ABF and NZBC to make sure our views are heard and shared key points of interest from WBF meet-

ings. We continue to have Zoom meetings with New Zealand Bridge to discuss issues and share resources.

ABF Constitution and Governance

The Governance Committee proposed a timetable for the development and implementation of a new organisational model for the ABF, building on previous work that has continued since 2017. The new Governance Committee, chaired by Richard Ward, will look at suitable models and seek legal advice.

Nationwide Online Pairs

The ABF Board has decided to discontinue the Nationwide Online Pairs as of the end of May. The last weekly session will be held on Sunday, May 29. Online pairs events were always intended to be a temporary initiative for players when bridge games around the country ceased during the pandemic. With the removal of most government restrictions, club bridge has returned and there is now a wide range of online options available, including Step-Bridge, RealBridge, Real Deal Bridge and BBO, and many of our member clubs host regular games on these platforms.

GNOT

The Chair of the Tournament Committee will chair a committee to review the 2023 GNOT format and provide recommendations to Council at the Mid-Term Meeting. The 2022 GNOT format and the PQP allocations will not change. Ray Ellaway will continue in the role as Tournament Organiser.

Feedback and Future Meetings

The Board welcomes feedback and suggestions on the above matters or other subjects.

The next Board Meetings are Friday 3rd June, teleconference, and Friday 8 July, Adelaide.

The James O'Sullivan Trust

In 1985 the ABF established the James O'Sullivan Trust Fund (JOS Trust) in honour of the late James de Courcy O'Sullivan who was a great contributor to the game of bridge in Queensland, and one of the game's most distinguished administrators at the national and international level. He was the President of the ABF from 1972 to 1982.

The JOS Trust is administered by its trustees who are currently ABF President Allison Stralow, QBA President Richard Ward, ABF Secretary Stephen Fischer, ABF Treasurer Ian Thomson and ABF Board member

Rob Ward. Over the years the fund has been augmented by the ABF or by individual bequests to commemorate notable Australians such as Frank Cayley, Hans Rosendorff, Barry Turner, Keith McNeil, Tim Seres and Jessel Rothfield.

In recent years the JOS Trust has assisted clubs with low interest loans to develop their club rooms including Adelaide Bridge Centre, Armidale Bridge Club, Hawks Nest Bridge Club, Maitland Bridge Club, Tamborine Mountain Bridge Club, Taree Bridge Club, Toronto Bridge Club and Yarra Valley Bridge Club.

Any club requiring a loan to assist with building work at their premises is invited to contact the ABF at secretary@abf.com.au

Meet the new ABF board members

The ABF Annual General Meeting was held in Adelaide on May 2nd. Allison Stralow was re-elected to the Board for her third term as President. Also re-elected were Ian Thomson as Treasurer and Rob Ward as Board member, who are both in their second terms.

With Kim Frazer stepping down as ABF Secretary and Adel Abdelhamid also retiring from the Board, two new Board members were elected by the ABF Council: Richard Ward from Queensland joins as an ordinary Board member, and Stephen Fischer from the ACT takes on the role of ABF Secretary.

Philip Markey has been appointed as ABF General Counsel replacing Geoff Chettle, who stepped down in 2021 for personal reasons.

Richard Ward



Richard Ward is a retired teacher with two adult children and one grandson. He has been playing bridge for more than five decades.

Born in Townsville, he was involved in the organisation of several of the early North Queensland congresses and won his first State championship in 1976 before moving to Brisbane in 1978. Since that time Richard has represented Queensland on numerous occasions and won many more state, plus a few national, championships.

He was one of Queensland's prominent directors for thirty years as an accredited National director, but has been inactive since 2001.

Richard was honoured to be asked to take over the job of Courier-Mail columnist following the passing of distinguished player, Tony Jackman, in 2018.

He was the QBA President in 1981-1982 and took up those reins again in 2020. This meant once again joining the ABF committee as a councillor and then subsequently accepting an appointment to the ABF Board.

Stephen Fischer

Stephen Fischer is a business and technology consultant with almost 30 years' experience in systems administration, software development, and strategic governance. He has brought these skills to volunteer roles, serving as treasurer of the Canberra Repertory Theatre and the Canberra Youth Theatre over the past decade.

In the bridge world, he was president of the Northern Territory Bridge Association from 2005-2006, president of the Canberra Bridge Club from 2011-2013, and has been an ABF Councillor representing both the NT and the ACT over the years.

Stephen was first introduced to bridge in high school and has played competitively since the late 80s, starting in Houston before moving to Australia.

He's represented the NT and the ACT in the ANC championships, winning the title in 2014. Most recently he was on the Australian Mixed Team which finished 10th in this year's WBF world championships.



Phil Markey



Phil Markey first learnt bridge from his grandmother and reportedly neglected his studies horribly at University as a result of never leaving the lunchtime game of either poker or bridge. He has played at the SA Bridge Association at least once a week for the last 29 years and attributes his improvement in bridge to numerous mentors including a regular rubber bridge game in the early 90s with great SA players Zoly Nagy and George Smolanko.

He practiced law as a criminal and personal injury lawyer for 15 years before taking a break to pursue his passion for poker, which he now enjoys online while continuing to practice law where he now specialises in compensation for infant victims of crime.

Phil lives with his partner of 30 years Belinda and their two children Rebecca and Elijah. He is also a slightly obsessive dog lover and has owned many

large dogs including a Great Dane and an Irish Wolfhound, although now has gone to the other end of the spectrum with Linguine – the miniature Dachshund.

He has represented Australia in bridge on the world stage on two occasions, and mentors many of the current youth players. He aspires to winning the National Open Teams in Canberra.

Kim Frazer

ABF honour for Dallas Cooper



The Australian Bridge Federation recognizes individuals who have given outstanding service to bridge in Australia through election to the ABF Committee of Honour. This honour has been awarded to only 28 individuals throughout its near 100 year history.

I am pleased to announce to members of the Tasmanian Bridge Association that at the recent ABF Annual General Meeting our club member Dallas Cooper was elected a member of the Committee of Honour. Dallas is only the third Tasmanian to receive this prestigious award. Previous Tasmanians elected were Brenda Jones in 1978 and Roger Penny in 1998.

Dallas retired this year after serving as a TBA Councillor to the ABF for 22 years, including the last six years as a member of the committee of management, now known as the ABF Board.

In addition to her contribution to the ABF, Dallas has provided an outstanding contribution to the

management of the TBA, being a committee member for 27 years, twice president in 2001-2003 and 2007-2008, a coordinator of the Tasmanian Festival of Bridge over many years, and coordinator of the Australian National Championships in Tasmania on three occasions.

Bridge has not been her only community passion in Tasmania, having given similar dedication to the game of badminton. In 2020 Dallas was awarded the national honour of OAM for her services to badminton and the community, with her contribution to bridge featuring on the citation.

I am sure you all join with me in congratulating Dallas on this magnificent achievement and look forward to her ongoing activities as a director and competitive player at the TBA.

Graeme Poulton
Tasmanian Bridge Association President

HOW WOULD YOU PLAY?

with
Barbara
Travis



Solutions on page 20

QUESTION 2

♠ Q J 8 2
♥ A 4
♦ A J 10 8
♣ 9 7 6

♠ A K 10 9 7 6
♥ 5
♦ Q 9
♣ K 5 4 3

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	dbl	2♥	4♠
all pass			

West leads the ♥K. What is your plan?

QUESTION 1

♠ Q 6 2
♥ J 8 3
♦ 9 7 5 2
♣ J 10 3

♠ A K J 10 9 7 4
♥ A 10
♦ A
♣ A K 5

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			2♣
pass	2♦	pass	2♠
pass	3♠ ¹	pass	6♠
all pass			

1. North's 3♠ showed some values, being stronger than an immediate raise to 4♠.

West leads the ♦Q, which you win with your ♦A. How would you play?

QUESTION 3

♠ J 10 5
♥ A 7 5 3 2
♦ 5 4
♣ 9 6 4

♠ A K Q 6 2
♥ 4
♦ Q 9 3
♣ A K 5 3

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♠
2♠ ¹	pass	2NT ²	3♣
3♦	4♠	all pass	

1. Michaels cuebid: five hearts and a five-card minor.
2. Asks for the minor.

West leads the ♦K, East giving a count signal showing an odd number of diamonds.

At trick 2, West shifted to the ♠3. How would you play?



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MARKETING REPORT

with Peter Cox
marketing@abf.com.au



Abridged Marketing Report to the ABF 2022 AGM

The last year has provided many challenges for Bridge in Australia as we transition from COVID lockdowns and restrictions to a so called New Normal. But what will be the New Normal for Bridge? This Chart shows the number of registered players with the ABF Masterpoint Centre from pre-pandemic to end of March 2022.

As you can see, when COVID hit Australia in March 2020 a number of clubs quickly cleaned out nearly 1,000 inactive players. The spread of COVID particularly hurt NSW, Victoria and Queensland with lockdowns and border restrictions and the closures of bridge clubs. The total registered players fell by a further 2,590 in the 12 months to March

2021. However SA, WA and Tasmania with low COVID cases and mortality also had a decrease in registered players and lower player frequency showing that the older demographics of bridge players were concerned about their health. This cohort was also less likely to play on-line and at least half the members did not play online at all.

ABF Registered Players by State End March 2019 - 2022

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2021-2022		2019-2022	
					Diff	Chge	Diff	Chge
ACT	902	853	904	913	9	1.0%	11	1.2%
NSW	13074	12,734	11,071	10,459	-612	-5.5%	-2615	-20.0%
VIC	5176	4,710	4,533	4,477	-56	-1.2%	-699	-13.5%
QLD	7123	7,101	6,456	6,267	-189	-2.9%	-856	-12.0%
SA	2137	2,025	2,074	2,046	-28	-1.4%	-91	-4.3%
WA	3963	3,956	3,782	3,779	-3	-0.1%	-184	-4.6%
TAS	823	865	845	791	-54	-6.4%	-32	-3.9%
NT	126	124	113	130	17	15.0%	4	3.2%
Total	33,324	32,368	29,778	28,862	-916	-3.1%	-4462	-13.4%
Growth		-956	-2,590	-916	-4,462			

In the 12 months to March 2022, the number fell by a further 900 players for a total decline of nearly 4,500 members largely due to the pandemic. Part of this fall was as a result of the loss of 1-2 years of beginners intakes not replacing the natural attrition rate of an ageing membership.

ABF Marketing worked on a number of projects over the year to try and lessen the rate of loss of members and to grow bridge in the future including:

Statistics: In depth analysis of new players, inactive players, club memberships, congresses, international comparisons, online and F2F to provide clubs and TOs with evidence-based advice on future actions.

Marketing Themes: Clubs to contact absent members personally to encourage return, plan and start beginners courses again, strategies to increase conversion rates, ABF grants available to clubs for marketing, integrating online with F2F in clubs.

Congresses: Conducted Player Survey with 2,500 responses including on attitudes to congresses which showed lower expected participation in the future. This requires the ABF and Tournament organisers to reassess events, formats, locations, entertainment, accommodation, behaviour and promotion.

Many congresses were cancelled, including the SFOB in 2022 which was played online. GCC was down by 56%, TFOB by 40%, the ANOT in Adelaide by a relatively smaller amount, and the VCC is reduced. Both Australian and International congress attendances are under threat.

ABF Newsletter: Provided at least two pages of marketing advice in every edition of the newsletter to clubs, players and tournament organisers. Contributed to Kim Frazer and the editor Brad Coles, to making the newsletter more modern and relevant to club and intermediate players.

Teaching: The ABF webmaster established listing space on the ABF web site for Online Beginners Lessons and now Online Intermediate and Advanced Lessons with William Jenner-O'Shea.

ABF Approved Online Teachers: Contributed to the project of Rob Ward with assessment and promotion of the first ABF approved Online Teaching program.

ABF Strategic Plan 2025: Attended meetings and contributed marketing strategy input to the Strategic Plan.

ABF Foundation: Attended board meetings, provided advice and worked on Foundation Brochure.

ABF Council and Board meetings: Attended meetings and provided marketing perspective.

Australia Wide Teams Club Knockout:

Promotion of the new event to clubs and players.

BAMSA:

Produced three video presentations for the [Online BAMSA 2022 Conference](#) in the UK on the Australian bridge experience after COVID.

SFOB:

Provided marketing input and promotion for the SFOB online congress.

GCC:

Created new marketing material and Media wall and manned the Marketing Stand for a week at the Gold Coast Congress. Also conducted video interviews with leading officials and players which are shown on the BridgeTV website including the [ABF President](#).

Australian Team profiles:

As part the ABF Marketing objective of promoting the leading Australian players developed individual profiles for the Australian members of the World Team Championships in Italy. These are on the [ABF Website](#) and also promoted in the [February ABF Newsletter](#).

Sports and Entertainment Marketing Summit:

Attended the [sports marketing conference](#) sponsored by Nine Entertainment. Used question time to promote Bridge before several hundred of the top Australian marketers, agencies and media in the Sports sector. [Here](#) is a recording of my comments and the responses from the M&C Saatchi presenters.

BridgeTV:

Built a specialist video web site for BridgeTV and launched the service with live commentary on the World Team Championships in Italy for six hours a night for thirteen consecutive evenings.

THE FUTURE

Bridge is not only under threat from the impact of COVID, but the ageing of our members which averages about 74, the resultant attrition, the lack of younger people entering the game and a highly competitive market for sports and leisure activities.

As communications, including for bridge, have transitioned from printing to digital (as we have done for the ABF Newsletter) the next stage is to pivot to video and streaming. Video is highly effective for communicating, interacting, learning and teaching many activities, hobbies and sports with a much higher level of retention. It is well suited to retaining and growing the bridge market, and provides an opportunity to appeal to younger people who are seeking new leisure activities and sports.

BridgeTV Interviews at the GCC

At the Gold Coast Peter Cox recorded a number of [video interviews](#) with Laurie Kelso, Tim Runting, Steve Weil (TBIB) and American visitor, Marshall Lewis.

Allison Stralow, the first female President of the Australian Bridge Federation discusses how she went from being a school teacher to the President of a national sporting organisation. She discusses her strengths and weaknesses and gives advice on how to handle your mistakes, build a team, work collegially, engage with your members and build a bridge community. Allison applauds the QBA going ahead with the Gold Coast Congress, the importance of face-to-face bridge, and the opportunities to give back to your organisation.



Jamie Thompson: an interview with an outstanding young professional bridge player, teacher and director, will be featured in June in time for the VCC in his hometown, Melbourne.

The GCC 60 Years Memory Lane

At the Gold Coast Congress a fun montage was made of photos from over the last 60 years.

Margaret Mobbs has made a lovely video with players commenting on the photos and says, "In this collection of clips, many people share memories of organisers, staff and players who have created and enjoyed the Gold Coast Congress over the 60 years of its existence. Tim Runting, the 2022 convenor and Sue Ziegenfuss created the photo collage to spark the memories."

Videos show 2022 [Congress Highlights](#), [Differences due to COVID Restrictions](#) and [Memory Lane](#) – from humble beginnings 60 years ago to a major international event.



MYABF UPDATE

with Julian Foster

julian.foster@abf.com.au



Some milestones!

To start with, MYABF has recently passed two milestones:

a) \$1 million entry fees

Since its launch in December 2020, MYABF has now taken over \$1 million in entry fees for congresses through the Bridge Credits system (which have been reimbursed to clubs). Had it not been for COVID, we'd probably have reached this much earlier. We expect this to grow substantially when clubs can also accept bridge credits as payment for club sessions through the system. More on the upcoming pilot for that below.

b) 150,000 lines of code

Our developer just recently wrote the 150,000th line of code (the first was around April 2020). Those lines in total contain 522,000 words. By way of comparison, the complete works of Shakespeare are about 118,000 lines and 885,000 words!

The different sections of MYABF

The lines of code show that MYABF is now pretty big – in fact probably bigger than most people realise. Most users just see a limited part, so it's easy to assume that's all there is. But in fact there are many sections and these are going to expand further. So it's perhaps worth listing the different "stakeholders" and what they can see and do in MYABF:

Stakeholder group	MYABF Functions
Players	Maintain own personal details. View, enter and pay for congresses. View and maintain an online ABF "bridge credits" account. Participate in forum discussions.
Directors	Access to Congress admin including entry lists.
Tournament organisers	Create congress listings. Accept entries and payments. Manage congress admin.
Club managers	[COMING NEXT] Manage the club's basic information, its member list and assorted other areas.
Club treasurers	View the club's own statement to track entry fee income.
State and National administrators	View all members and clubs. Manage bridge credit settlements to clubs.
System administrators	See assorted data about the health of the system. Manage the helpdesk function. Manage who gets access to what area.

Why does this matter? Well, one important implication is that we have to balance doing updates or new development across all of the areas. So if you are making a request for improvements please be mindful of that. We will always do our best to act upon requests, but it is a balancing act. Our developer can't be building something new in one area at the same time as changing things in another!

Bridge credits for club sessions – upcoming pilot

Last edition, I talked about the Club administration area. Quite a few of the things in there are getting ready to facilitate the next major area coming to MYABF – allowing club sessions to be paid for with bridge credits.

Just for the avoidance of doubt let me once again explain bridge credits:

a) **Bridge Credits are just Australian dollars sitting in an online account you can have with the ABF.** Just think of it like a bank account. You can keep money in it if you want to or keep it empty – entirely up to you!

b) **You never need to buy Bridge Credits in advance before doing an entry.** Just complete the entry as normal. If you want to pay online and you don't have money in your account, you are just taken to the credit card payment screen exactly as you would be if you were buying something else online.

So far, bridge credits can be used to pay for congresses, but not for club sessions. Later this year three clubs are going to be starting a pilot with us to offer this extension for their members and, after we've completed that and no doubt made some further improvements resulting from their feedback, we'll be rolling it out nationwide. One of our pilot clubs published this in their newsletter, which gives a great flavour about what it's all about:

Imagine if you will this version of a Brave New World – being able to walk into the bridge club, any bridge club, no voucher needed, no one at the door to collect money because you don't need it, just sit down, relax, and everything is taken care of. Sounds good? It's just like travelling through the tunnels or on the toll roads. There is a "toll", but you don't notice it because it's automatically deducted from an account that you've already set up, and the account is automatically topped up when it reaches a certain low threshold. Do you ever check your Toll account? I don't, and I don't think many do.

This is the scenario that we hope our members will embrace when MYABF runs its pilot program for automatic payment at club sessions. Volunteers will no longer be needed to collect coupons or EFTPOS receipts, or to assist with payment reconciliations, and certainly much less time is required by the Club Administration and Office Bearers in managing all the finances.

Our club is currently one of three in Australia involved in the pilot roll-out of paying for Club sessions through MYABF before it goes Australia-wide. This roll-out will enable members to enjoy the utopia outlined above.

Our members have dealt with many changes in the past two years, and have done so with good heart all along the way. This new change we hope will be

the last! NSBC will have a dedicated team who will assist members in setting up their MYABF accounts, backed up by the very able technical support from MYABF.

More details about the "mechanics" of the new system will be forthcoming as we get into it, but that is still some months away. To prepare, it would be a good idea to sign up to MYABF as soon as you can. If you need assistance, now is the time to ask before others start asking!

In many ways it's an exciting time to be a member of a club that's at the forefront of such an exciting initiative. Once everything is bedded in, as I said, it's a case of just walking in the door, and playing bridge, Heaven!

It might seem a pretty simple extension to take payment for club sessions, but there are two key differences to congresses that have to be catered for:

1. How much to pay?

Congresses normally have a single entry fee (perhaps discounted for youth or early entry, but that's all). Club sessions don't – usually there's a table money rate for members and a different rate for visitors. So we need to know whether someone's a member (and sometimes what type of member) to work out what table money to charge them. Hence the work in the Club administration area to allow clubs to create and manage their membership list.

2. When to pay?

Congresses normally have people enter and pay in advance. Club sessions don't – you just turn up on the day to play. So we need to be able to get player names into the system on the day, sort out who is paying by what means, and process the payments for those who are using bridge credits.

These are some of the areas we are working on and which the pilot clubs will be helping us with. More to come in future editions!

Julian Foster, MYABF Project Manager



For those bridge players who care about the environment, the ABF's sponsor, PENLINE, makes Reusable Coffee cups and Water Bottles, as part of its "War on Waste". If you are interested in more information, please contact Maryo Derofo by email: maryo@penline.com.au



2022 BARRIER REEF CONGRESS

**Kim Frazer reports on
Far North Queensland's
biggest event**



Earlier this year, the organisers of the Barrier Reef Congress invited me to attend and give a talk on behalf of the ABF on the ABF Youth Development Program. Having never been to the BRC previously I was quite excited to attend and set about finding a partner and teammates. I quickly solved the partner problem by asking Richard Wallis, who had been a teammate at the Gold Cost in February, if he would like to play. The teammates problem was solved when I put our entry in on MYABF with TBC as teammates, and I was contacted by Ben Kingham and his bridge partner Sylvia Gluck.

The BRC rotates between three North Queensland locations, and this year was Townsville's turn. The event runs over five days, with warm-up Pairs on Day 1, a one-day event (the Eric Parsons Open Pairs, featuring 8 x 9-board matches) on Day 2, celebrity speaker sessions on the morning of Day 3, followed by four sessions of 2 x 14-board match Teams in the main event – the John Brockwell Open Teams over

Wednesday afternoon, Thursday and concluding on Friday at lunchtime. The 2pm finish on Friday after presentations allows participants time to catch an afternoon flight home, or to spend the weekend sight-seeing. The BRC team, led by Tournament Organiser Margaret Dousett, provided everyone with wonderful snacks for morning tea, and a delightful hospitality session at the end of both the Pairs and the Teams events.

My partner and I got off to a slightly rocky start when our SatNav took us to the wrong stadium, where we struggled to find someone who even knew what bridge was! We called Kim Ellaway, who told us where the correct place was (15 minutes away) and we got to the venue feeling slightly embarrassed about our tardy arrival and apologising profusely to our very pleasant opponents who were patiently waiting at the table. Notwithstanding the late arrival Richard's speedy declarer play helped us

to finish the first round while most tables were still in play.

Board 3 in the first match of the Teams was very distributional, and at many tables EW defended 2♠ doubled making +500:

Round 1	♠ 4 3		
Board 3	♥ A K J 6 4 3		
S/EW	♦ 4 3 2		
	♣ J 10		
	♠ K J 9 5 2	♠ —	
	♥ —	♥ Q 9 8 7	
	♦ 10 9 8 5	♦ A K J 7	
	♣ K Q 7 3	♣ A 6 5 4 2	
	♠ A Q 10 8 7 6		
	♥ 10 5 2		
	♦ Q 6		
	♣ 9 8		
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			2♠
pass	pass	dbl	pass
3♣	3♥	all pass	

At our table, after South's weak 2♠ opening, holding a weakish hand and a doubleton spade my partner did not see any reason to bid over Kim's weak 2♠ opening, but when West bid 3♣ after East's takeout double (why not pass?) partner now thought the six-card heart suit was worth a mention and 3♥ was passed out for -100 resulting in a big pick-up when our teammates found their club fit and played safe in 5♣ for 11 tricks and +600, so 11 imps to us.

In the second match, this board was an exercise in the value of preempting rather than using a gadget:

Round 2	♠ A 7 4		
Board 19	♥ A Q 9 4		
S/EW	♦ J 10 9 5		
	♣ 8 5		
	♠ 8	♠ K J 10 6 5 3 2	
	♥ J 7 5 2	♥ 8	
	♦ 7 6 3 2	♦ —	
	♣ 9 7 3 2	♣ K Q J 10 4	
	♠ Q 9		
	♥ K 10 6 3		
	♦ A K Q 8 4		
	♣ A 6		
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♦
pass	1♥	2♥	4♥
pass	pass	4♠	pass
pass	5♥	all pass	

Sitting South I opened 1♦ showing at least four, and I had no hesitation in bidding 4♥ over the 2♥ bid by East to describe a black two-suiter.

East was not finished yet, and bid a bold 4♠ in the passout seat. My pass over 4♠ was forcing, and Richard at North elected to go to 5♥, for insurance if nothing else.

The opening lead was the ♣K, and East had given up a lot of information from the bidding. North won on the table and led a heart back to hand, and breathed a sigh of relief when East followed. A trump to dummy revealed the 4-1 break, and North could now cash out the red suits submitting East to discard pressure.

East had to let go three clubs and five spades, so North threw him in with the ♣8 and he had to lead back a spade for the ♠Q in dummy and 12 tricks.

At the other table a normal 4♠ preempt overcall, which prevented South showing their hand strength and fit, got doubled and went one off.

Throughout the teams it was very close, however on the last day the Bloom team prevailed, having not lost a match throughout.

TEAMS

1. Greer Tucker, Liz Sylvester, Peter Gill, Martin Bloom
2. Laura Ginnan, Justin Mill, Greg Lewin, Pete Hollands, Simon Hinge
3. Watson Zhou, Charlie Lu, Bill Nash, James Wallis

RESTRICTED TEAMS

1. Debbie Gibbards, Elizabeth Van Vugt, Julie Scott, Gary Gibbards
2. Laura Maguire, Ched Twyman, Charlie Georgees, Cathy Crawford
3. Geoff Cowan, Anne Lutz, Annie Lynch, Sandra Morris

OPEN PAIRS

1. Watson Zhou - Charlie Lu
2. Allison Stralow - Kim Ellaway
3. Kim Frazer - Richard Wallis

RESTRICTED PAIRS

1. Jan Harris - Richard Wix
2. Ann Smith - Robyn Green
3. Lee Chenoweth - Sue Rohrig

Bairnsdale Congress

Saturday 15 October 12pm (Swiss Pairs)
Sunday 16 October 10am (Swiss Teams)

Venue: St Mary's Parish Hall, Bairnsdale

Convenor: Alison Farthing
0428 729 519
Alisonfarthing45@gmail.com

Enter: www.bridgeunlimited.com



YOUTH BRIDGE NEWS with Rebecca O'Reilly

WORLD YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS

Another newsletter and another event to report on. The Autumn Nationals held in Adelaide doesn't usually get the biggest youth turnout, but with the lack of face-to-face events recently a number of both interstate and local players were in attendance.

Slightly too old to still be considered youth, but can't be forgotten, Jamie Thompson came 2nd in the Open Pairs playing with Rob Fruewirth. As far as "real" youth players, a great effort by Bertie Morgan playing with Deb Wellman coming first in the Under Grand Swiss Pairs.

Looking forward to having more great results to report and seeing both new and old faces at the upcoming ANC in Adelaide. Best of luck to all teams!

* * * * *

The 7th World Youth Transnational Bridge Championships is to be held in Palazzo dei Congressi, Salsomaggiore Terme, Italy.

Australia plans to send participants to Italy for the World Youth Transnational Bridge Championships held from 7 August to 14 August 2022 and called for expressions of interest in early May from pairs in U31, U26 and U21 categories.

A selection panel headed by Justin Mill will assess the expressions of interest received based on the selection criteria below, as well as overseeing play where necessary, and make a recommendation to the ABF Board.

- The names of both players in the partnership, how long they have been playing for and any partnership experience.
- System Card and notes.
- Any regular participation in youth events and ANC's (including trials).
- If you plan to play in any future youth events (ANC & Youth Week).
- What time you have each given back to youth bridge?
- Will you commit to regular practice overseen by a mentor?
- Why are you interested in competing with your partner in this event?

The successful pairs will be announced on Monday 20 June 2022.

If you have any questions regarding the event or nominations, email

youth@abf.com.au

2022 | NZBridge Congress

LIVE AT BAY PARK, MT MAUNGANUI



**Saturday 1st-
Saturday 8th October
2022**

New venue and new location

For general enquiries or to find a partner/teammates contact Richard Solomon at richard.solomon@nzbridge.co.nz

for event info and to book and pay (early bird closes 31 August) via:

www.nzbridge.co.nz/congress

NORTH SHORE BRIDGE CLUB

East Lindfield / The Willis / Online on RealBridge

North Shore Bridge Club Sydney has a fantastic online platform on



RealBridge

You can join North Shore Bridge Club from anywhere in Australia or overseas, and join in our online games every day except Sunday. There are games for all levels: we have Supervised play, Rookie, Restricted, and many Open sessions. Please see our sessions using the link below:

<https://www.northshore.bridge-club.org/node/1509>

We have a great championship evening game every Thursday, except when there are live congresses.

Our Thursday night games attract many expert and experienced players. This always ensures an exciting bridge game for all participants. Most of these events have prize money, sometimes sponsored with generous prizes.

To join the North Shore Bridge Club simply use the link below to become a member. Once you have filled this out you will be taken to our payments page where you set up a Pre-Paid account to pay for your online games. We email you a statement at the end of each month.

https://www.northshore.bridge-club.org/contact/membership_form

For any future enquiries please contact Michael Prescott
manager@bridgeclub.com.au
Phone 0435 528 872



INTRODUCTION TO BRIDGE

A 6-week initial program with the North Shore Bridge Club

ONLY
\$150
6 Week Course,
including 2hr lessons
and supervised play



LEARN BRIDGE in Sydney

We are pleased to announce our teaching program for the remainder of 2022. We will be running 3 new courses, face-to-face evening and morning, and another online course.

ALL OUR COURSES COMPRISE TWO COMPONENTS EACH WEEK:

LESSON

There will be a 2-hour lesson each week and the options are:

- Face-to-face, Monday evenings at 7pm, starting 2 May 2022 at East Lindfield.
- Face-to-face, Monday mornings at 10am, starting 15 August 2022 at East Lindfield
- Online, Tuesday mornings at 10am, starting 13 September 2022, with a recording that can be watched and re-watched for reinforcement.

SUPERVISED PLAY & PRACTICE

With all 3 courses we offer the opportunity each week to play practice hands yourself, in an informal, supervised environment, on the RealBridge online platform.

With RealBridge, you can see and chat to all four players, providing a friendly and enjoyable environment.

WHAT OUR PAST PARTICIPANTS HAVE SAID...

"Your teachers are wonderful, and the Practice sessions are invaluable."

"I was a reluctant participant in the online course, but I have loved it!"

VENUES

THE WILLIS SPORTS CENTRE
325A Eastern Valley Way,
Castle Cove

EAST LINDFIELD
Lindfield Rollers Bowling Club
2b Carlisle Road, East Lindfield

ENQUIRIES & BOOKINGS

Contact Kay Moyes at moyes_kay@hotmail.com, or visit the web at <https://www.northshore.bridge-club.org/>





Joan Butts



How Eddie Kantar helped my teaching of defence

Bridge – teaching, writing, and playing – lost one of its greats in April. Eddie Kantar passed away in the US, at the age of 89.

There have been many accolades about Eddie, but what I'll remember most is his ability to help teachers take their students beyond the basic "rules", especially in defence, while still retaining the logic, and offering explanations as to "why".

Here are some examples of what I mean:

Eddie Tip 1

If the opponents have used Stayman but they end up in notrumps, avoid leading the other major (say, spades when the answer to Stayman was 2♥) because one opponent will have length in spades to have asked about a major in the first place.

You, South, are on lead with

♠ K J 4 3 2 ♥ 7 6 ♦ K J 4 3 2 ♣ 2 ,

and the bidding has gone:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1NT	pass
2♣	pass	2♥	pass
3NT	all pass		

Lead the ♦3, not the ♠3.

The full hand:

♠ Q 10 8 5	♠ A 7
♥ J 3 2	♥ A K 5 4
♦ 8 5	♦ A 10 9
♣ A K J 6	♣ Q 10 5 3
♠ 9 6	♠ K J 4 3 2
♥ Q 10 9 8	♥ 7 6
♦ Q 7 6	♦ K J 4 3 2
♣ 9 8 7 4	♣ 2

Eddie Tip 2

If dummy is known to hold a long strong suit, make a more attacking lead (eg. ♥KQ4) than from a long weaker suit (eg. ♦J9843). The idea is to get in and take tricks before they can run tricks in the known long suit.

You, South, are on lead with

♠ K Q 6 ♥ J 10 9 3 2 ♦ J 2 ♣ 7 4 3 ,

and the bidding has gone:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
3♣	pass	3NT	all pass

Lead the ♠K, not the ♥J.

The full hand:

♠ 5 4	♠ A 9 8 3 2
♥ Q 8	♥ K 6 5
♦ 8 7	♦ Q 10 9 5
♣ A Q J 10 9 8 2	♣ 5
♠ J 10 7	♠ K Q 6
♥ A 7 4	♥ J 10 9 3 2
♦ A K 6 4 3	♦ J 2
♣ K 6	♣ 7 4 3

Eddie Tip 3

Consider another lead when holding a four-card suit, eg. ♣AQJ3, because the strong hand may have the ♣K, and you'd only develop three tricks there anyway. If partner were to win a trick in another suit, they may work out to lead the suit you want them to, through declarer, and then you might take four tricks in the suit, not three.

You, South, are on lead with

♠ A Q J 4 ♥ 10 8 4 3 ♦ 7 3 ♣ 8 6 5 ,

and the bidding has gone:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
pass	pass	1NT	pass
3NT	all pass		

Lead a high heart, not the ♠Q.

The full hand:

♠ 10 9 7 2	
♥ Q J 9	
♦ K 5 2	
♣ 9 8 4	
♠ 8 6 3	♠ K 5
♥ 6 5	♥ A K 7 2
♦ A J 10 6	♦ Q 9 8 4
♣ A Q 7 2	♣ K J 3
♠ A Q J 4	
♥ 10 8 4 3	
♦ 7 3	
♣ 10 6 5	

Eddie also believed that teachers, to be successful, need to be funny. The teacher is the entertainer



and needs to make their students laugh. How true... bridge is such a hard and serious pursuit that lightening it up is essential! If you don't think you're a very funny teacher, take a leaf or two out of Eddie's book *Classic Kantar: A Collection of Bridge Humor*. When I read it even for the second time, I found myself laughing out loud. Suggestion: read a page before you go to a class.

Thanks Eddie!

One hundred cameras

*From the World Championships Bulletin
(Tuesday, 5 April 2022)*

At the 2019 World Youth Championships in Opatija WBFF President Gianarrigo Rona asked our Internet Broadcasting Manager Traian Chira if he could design something that would enable all 96 tables at a World Bridge Team Championship to be on camera.

The first problem to be solved was to create a system which could be wireless, as it would be physically impossible to wire so many cameras. Traian started by seeking out a 5V IP camera, an essential element, as it had to be powered by a battery. Having found the camera, he then turned his attention

to the battery, eventually locating a 30000mA/h battery which can power the camera for an appropriate amount of time. Although that meant a large part of the problem had been solved, there was still a lot to do. Traian had to construct pouches for the batteries and an adapter that would allow the camera head to be attached to the support. Once this massive task had been completed Traian contacted IT Systems Manager Hans van Staveren, and together they created a network system for the cameras.

The key features of the system are as follows:

1. All the cameras record at 1080 pixels onto an SD card, so it is super safe, as even if the Wi-Fi fails, the recordings are saved.
2. All the cameras are completely mobile (no wires), so they can be moved to any location desired. They have an operating time of 60-70 hours.
3. All the recordings are available to the directors in real time. So, history was made this year in Salsomaggiore, as it was the first time at a World Team Championship that the action at every table has been recorded. It has already proved to be an invaluable aid to the directing staff, who have repeatedly consulted the videos, which have already proved their worth by resolving numerous cases where the facts were disputed. It is estimated that they have already been used more than 100 times.

These cameras can also be used in cases where the possibility of unfair play is being investigated.

Australia's Traian Chira co-ordinates all the live broadcast activities for the WBFF



HOW WOULD YOU PLAY?

with Barbara Travis

Solutions to problems on page 8

HAND 1

♠ 8	♠ Q 6 2	♠ 5 3
♥ 7 6 4 2	♥ J 8 3	♥ K Q 9 5
♦ Q J 10 8	♦ 9 7 5 2	♦ K 6 4 3
♣ Q 9 8 2	♣ J 10 3	♣ 7 6 4
	♠ A K J 10 9 7 4	
	♥ A 10	
	♦ A	
	♣ A K 5	

Against South's 6♠, West leads the ♦Q, which you win with your ♦A. How would you play?

The hand seemingly depends on the club finesse. Is there any other option to improve your prospects?

The answer is: yes, as long as spades break 2-1.

At trick 2, you cash the ♠A, and both opponents follow. This means that you now have two entries to dummy – the ♠Q and the ♠6 (as long as you

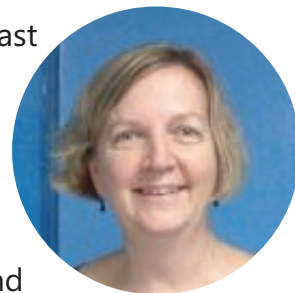
keep the ♠4 in hand). Now, if East should hold both the ♥K and ♥Q, you can develop an extra trick in the suit, and no longer need the club finesse.

So, you cross to dummy by leading the ♠J to the queen, and lead a small heart towards your ace-ten. You plan to try the ♥10, if East plays low. If East plays the queen, you win with the ace, then simply return the ♥10, establishing the Jack as your twelfth trick.

East tries cashing the ♦K, but you ruff high, then reach dummy by leading the ♠4 to dummy's ♠6, cashing the ♥J and discarding the small club.

If this line proves unsuccessful – i.e. West wins your ♥10 with an honour – you can cash the ♥A (in case there is a doubleton honour coming down), then you still cross to dummy's ♠6 to try the club finesse.

This line of play combines all your options, maximising your prospects of success.



HAND 2

♠ 5	♠ Q J 8 2	♠ 4 3
♥ K Q J 10 3 2	♥ A 4	♥ 9 8 7 6
♦ 6 5 3	♦ A J 10 8	♦ K 7 4 2
♣ A Q 2	♣ 9 7 6	♣ J 10 8
	♠ A K 10 9 7 6	
	♥ 5	
	♦ Q 9	
	♣ K 5 4 3	

In response to partner's takeout double of West's 1♥ opening bid you have jumped to 4♠. West leads the ♥K. What is your plan?

It looks like you need the diamond finesse, which is likely to be working.

The one thing that is important, though, is to keep East from the lead. You cannot afford for East to lead a club (honour) through your king because you may then suffer three club losers.

Is there a way to utilise the diamonds, yet keep East from the lead should he have the ♦K? Does the position of the ♦K matter?

The solution is to DUCK the ♥K at trick 1. If West shifts to a diamond, it is too late. Win the ♦A. Draw trumps ending in dummy. Cash the ♥A, discarding your ♦Q! Now you can lead the ♦J. If East covers, ruff – and discard two club losers on the winning diamonds in dummy. If East ducks, you discard a club loser (a loser-on-loser play). Should West win the ♦K, your ♣K is still safe. You will make ten tricks, no matter who holds the ♦K.

HAND 3

♠ J 10 5
♥ A 7 5 3 2
♦ 5 4
♣ 9 6 4

♠ 3
♥ K J 10 9 8
♦ A K J 7 6
♣ 8 2

♠ 9 8 7 4
♥ Q 6
♦ 10 8 2
♣ Q J 10 7

♠ A K Q 6 2
♥ 4
♦ Q 9 3
♣ A K 5 3

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
2♠ ¹	pass	2NT ²	1♠
3♦	4♠	all pass	3♣

South is playing in 4♠ after West has made a Michaels Cue Bid, showing 5-5 in hearts and a minor. East has asked for West's minor.

West leads the ♦K, East giving a count signal showing an odd number of diamonds.

At trick 2, West shifts to ♠3. How would you play?

You have eight tricks. You can only make ten tricks if you can trump two losers in dummy. Consequently,

if the defenders are able to lead a second round of trumps, your contract will fail.

To prevent this from happening, you need West to have only one trump, and must also prevent East from gaining the lead! This can be done if West holds a 1-5-5-2. You also need East to have – at most – only one of the ♦J and ♦10. At trick 2, you win the trump in dummy, and lead a small diamond! West East follows with the ♦8, just cover it with the ♦9. West will win the trick, but has no trump remaining.

West shifts to the ♥K (assuming South has five spades and at least four clubs), which you win with the ♥A. Now you cash the ♣A and ♣K, then lead the ♦Q! When West covers with the ace, you discard dummy's remaining club (to keep East from the lead)!

West can continue with another heart, but you can trump. Now you embark on a cross-ruff, ruffing one diamond and one club in dummy, bringing your winners to ten.

You simply 'swapped' your losers around, keeping a specific opponent from having the lead (and being able to lead a trump. Make sure you remember to use information from the auction to your advantage.

FINESSE HOLIDAYS (www.finessebridge.com director@finessebridge.com.au)

TERRIGAL – OCT 31 - 04 STAR of the SEA Apts \$ 1040 pp Twin Share



Absolutely 5* Luxury. Included in this price is 4 nights accommodation in exquisite luxury apartments, 4 dinners at local restaurants & in-house, and all lunches. Bridge includes a 6 session B4Red pairs event, 2 optional walk-in pairs, 3 tutorials & champagne reception. 3 Swimming Pools, Gym, Tennis Court etc. Those who go on this holiday always return.

A HEADY MIX of BLISS in HOLIDAY HEAVEN in SOUTHERN THAILAND

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Includes:

- 7 nights Absolute 5* Mom Tris Villa Royale.
- 4 Nights on Koh Yao Yai @ Santhiya 5*
- All Breakfasts, 10 dinners & 3 lunches.
- All bridge fees & Workshops.
- All group transfers.
- 2 light private tours 1 discounted Red Sail Dinner
- 3 Cocktail Evenings.

New weekly game on StepBridge



StepBridge Australia is an internet bridge club based in Australia. The club has been in existence for more than 15 years and is affiliated with the Australian Bridge Federation and South Australian Bridge Federation. StepBridge Australia offers a bridge platform in a friendly and controlled environment. The benefit of our club is the ability to play from the comfort of your own home, or on holidays or abroad.

Since 2020, due to COVID-19 pandemic, the club has grown from 100 members to well over 2,000 members, most of which enjoy the \$10 Associate Membership so they can retain their current Home Club Membership. Sessions are conducted for Novice, Restricted and Open players with a range of times throughout the day.

For other clubs who wish to offer sessions exclusively for their members, StepBridge has a Virtual Club facility which is available at very little cost. This is a facility which helps our Virtual Clubs to increase their session exposure to their members.

StepBridge has a philosophy of wanting to give back to the bridge community, as well as the wider community. In addition to providing inexpensive club rooms, StepBridge has already done this by becoming the sponsor of the Gold Coast Congress Open Teams, which it hopes to be involved with for many more years to come.

On Thursday 19 May, StepBridge held a special fund-raising day to support the people of Ukraine. All table fees from the day, of all Red Point Sessions, were matched by StepBridge Australia from club funds, and together with separate donations made by members were donated to the UNHCR to assist in the Ukraine Emergency. Total funds raised and donated for this important cause was just over \$5,000.

Following the ABF announcement that their Sunday Nationwide Pairs would cease at the end of May and subsequent feedback from players, June will see the start of a new weekly Sunday Afternoon Red Point session on StepBridge Australia called All Around Australia. This session each week begins at 2.30pm AEST, and consists of 27 boards. There are three separate fields of Open, Restricted & Novice available, with the masterpoint cut-off for the Restricted & Novice fields being as at the end of the previous month. Cost for the session is 75 Participation Points per player (approximately \$5). StepBridge welcomes anyone who is looking for a regular Sunday Afternoon online bridge session.

For further information about StepBridge Australia, please visit our website

www.stepbridge.com.au

or send an email to

support@stepbridge.com.au

Advertisement

Get 5 free tournaments

Masterpoints awarded with ABF

Low table fees

Tournaments everyday. Red Point sessions during each month.

StepBridge
The Australian Internet Bridge Club

WHAT STEPBRIDGE OFFERS

- For new players joining StepBridge, we offer 5 free games.
- Play bridge with real people online: No robots!
- A friendly and controlled environment.
- Play daily bridge sessions: we offer Novice, Restricted and Open sessions.
- Red Point sessions each month.
- Youth Players bonuses:
 - ◊ Additional free games for new players joining StepBridge.
 - ◊ No membership fee, when an ABF Youth Home Club Member.
 - ◊ Match Participation Point purchases, thus giving half price table fees.
- Virtual Club facility: organise club sessions exclusively for members of your own local bridge club, as well as online congresses.
- Available for Windows, Mac OS X, iPad, Android and every modern browser.

JOIN UP & CHECK US OUT!

www.stepbridge.com.au

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All Around Australia

Sunday Afternoon Online Red Point Sessions

Open

Restricted (<300 Masterpoints)

Novice (<100 Masterpoints)

27 boards per session

Starting Sunday 5 June 2022

Time: 2.30pm AEST

Cost: 75 Participation Points per person

Further Details: www.stepbridge.com.au

StepBridge
The Australian Internet Bridge Club

Mixing it up in the River City

Liam Milne, Sydney

This year saw the first rendition of the newest national on the ABF calendar, the River City Gold Mixed Pairs in Brisbane. Adapting and enhancing the Queensland Mixed Pairs event held since 1974, the 2022 version over the weekend of 14-15 May added gold points and PQPs, with the hope of building a prestigious mixed event.

Admirably, the format was Matchpoint Swiss pairs (similar to the superb Dick Cummings Swiss Pairs at the Spring Nationals) rather than the usual 'Swiss against the datum' drudgery. The skill edge in Matchpoints is higher and every board is interesting.

I saw the event listed on the calendar and decided to have a hit-out with Ella Jacob, recently returned from New Zealand (now living in Sydney). So off we flew up to Brisbane for the weekend to ply our trade and try to get some tops.

It was pretty clear starting from the first match that Ella was in fine form:

S/EW	♠ K 6 5		
	♥ Q 6 4 3		
	♦ A K		
	♣ A J 10 4		
♠ 9 8 3		♠ A Q 10 7 4	
♥ 8 2		♥ A	
♦ J 8 7 6 5		♦ Q 9 3	
♣ Q 9 3		♣ K 7 6 5	
	♠ J 2		
	♥ K J 10 9 7 5		
	♦ 10 4 2		
	♣ 8 2		
WEST Milne	NORTH	EAST Jacob	SOUTH
pass	2NT	3♠	2♥
pass	4♥	all pass	pass

I led my lowest spade to show I had three, having not supported the suit. Ella won the queen, and unwilling to commit to the heroic (suicidal?) club switch, she switched to a diamond to 'see some cards'.

From my point of view, it is obvious that declarer is about to set up a spade discard for their club, and

the only relevant hand is where partner can win an early trump trick with their bare ace. If so, they will need some encouragement to switch to a club away from the king.

I wish I could say I played my lowest diamond, suit preference, but I didn't. At least it was low-ish?

Declarer meandered along by playing on trumps (she should have played a spade immediately). Ella looked at my previous murky diamond, then the deuce of hearts, shrugged and played the crucial club. +50 and a great score – not an easy play by any stretch.

One of the themes of the event (and often of the art of Matchpoint declarer play in general) was "play on your weak suit and wait for them to help you":

W/All	♠ 7 5		
	♥ 3 2		
	♦ A K J 9 8 6		
	♣ K 6 3		
♠ A K 2		♠ Q 10 9 8 4 3	
♥ K Q 4		♥ 10 6	
♦ Q 7 5 2		♦ 10 3	
♣ A 9 2		♣ Q 7 5	
	♠ J 6		
	♥ A J 9 8 7 5		
	♦ 4		
	♣ J 10 8 4		

WEST Milne	NORTH	EAST Jacob	SOUTH
1♦	pass	pass	1♥
1NT ¹	pass	2♥ ²	pass
2♠ ³	all pass		

1. Must be strong... 18-19 or similar.
2. Improvised attempt at a transfer to spades.
3. On the same wavelength this time.

Ella found another masterstroke, coming up with a bid I've never seen before to right-side the spades and attempt to give us the best chance for some overtricks. I read 2♥ as a transfer and bid 2♠ with some unfounded trepidation, but fully expected the defence to start with a heart lead to the ace and another heart for lots of tricks (for me).

Annoyingly, North led a trump. If I drew trumps and played a heart up, South would duck and I would be nowhere towards building extra tricks and discards. Normal lines of play simply don't give the defence enough of a chance to go wrong.

Accordingly, I played three rounds of trumps (two would have been better) ending on the dummy and ran the ten of diamonds for a 'finesse'. Knowing that I am full of rubbish, North should absolutely cash a second diamond, but they did not see the rush and played a heart to South's ace. On the heart return I could get rid of dummy's other low diamond and play on clubs for a dirty +170.

Note that 2♠ from Ella's side is far less likely to make ten tricks.

Ella liked this whole 'play on the weak suit' thing and decided to try it out a few matches later:

W/All		♠ J 4 3	
		♥ Q J 7	
		♦ K 10 7 6	
		♣ A K 2	
♠ K 9 7 5		♠ A Q 8	
♥ A 8 5		♥ K 10 3	
♦ J 9 5		♦ A Q 8 3 2	
♣ 8 5 4		♣ 9 6	
	♠ 10 6 2		
	♥ 9 6 4 2		
	♦ 4		
	♣ Q J 10 7 3		
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	Jacob		Milne
pass	1♣ ¹	1♦	3♣ ²
all pass			

1. 2+, and trying to deflect a club lead, or something?
2. 6-9, or at least that's what the bid meant. Maybe I was encouraged by the vulnerability. Don't ask.

We had sort of won the auction, but going two down for -200 was not going to be a fine Pairs score.

The opponents started with a heart to the ace, a heart to the queen and king, then a trump switch. Ella cleared trumps ending in dummy before firing off the obvious low spade to her jack ("lead towards the closed hand" is the next level up of "play on your weak suit").

Seeing one down in her hand, East gratefully cashed the ♠Q, ♦A, and ♠A before exiting a... heart. Even more gratefully, Ella chucked dummy's last spade on her ♦K and that was that for -100. That was over 80% our way, while losing another spade would have been a similar score their way.



It is easy to crime East for not realising that Ella was marked with the ♥J, but the decision by declarer to play on spades threw down a mysterious mist of strength/trick development that lingered long after it should have dissipated. It is all too easy to go with the flow and it is a sin that we are all guilty of from time to time. If you can create a 'flow' that benefits you, all the better.

I had another chance for some mama-papa tom-foolery on this next deal:

E/EW		♠ Q 8 7 4 2	
		♥ A 3	
		♦ 9 5 4	
		♣ 10 8 7	
♠ A 9 5		♠ K 6	
♥ J 8 7 6		♥ 9 5 4	
♦ A 10 8		♦ K 7 6 2	
♣ J 4 3		♣ K Q 9 5	
	♠ J 10 3		
	♥ K Q 10 2		
	♦ Q J 3		
	♣ A 6 2		

East dealt and passed and starting with me as South, we bid undisturbed 1♣-1♠-1NT-pass. Perhaps Ella should bid 2♠ – who knows. What we do know is that we like to declare 1NT and the opponents do not like to defend.

West started with the normal but unfortunate low heart around to my ten. I ran the ♠10 to East's king, who returned a heart to dummy's ace, and West ducked my spade to the jack.

After cashing two more top hearts, I had six tricks in hand and I needed a diamond to make my +90. Aside from the fact that I had carefully arranged to be in the wrong hand to play diamonds, it was about to be blindingly obvious to the opponents to play the remaining suit, clubs. So I played a club myself, making the remaining suit diamonds.

East won the queen and returned a diamond as planned. West won, cashed the ♠A, thought about matters (probably which diamond to return) then gave me the contract by playing a diamond. All according to the natural order of things, of course – play three suits and they will play the fourth, as night follows day.

At the halfway mark Ella and I were lying tenth, having won four out of our six matches on the first day, but still recovering from a solid thrashing at the hands of Peter Gill - Liz Sylvester. They were coincidentally (or not) out in front of the field. I don't mind Liz winning, but surely Peter should leave some for the rest of us, so it was our duty to elbow our way past them on day two.

E/NS

♠ J 9 8 7
♥ —
♦ Q 10 3
♣ A J 8 7 4 3

♠ Q 4 2
♥ A Q J 10 7 5
♦ 6 5
♣ 6 2

♠ 5 3
♥ K 9 4 3
♦ A K J 8
♣ K 9 5

♠ A K 10 6
♥ 8 6 2
♦ 9 7 4 2
♣ Q 10

Sitting East-West, we were doing well already just getting to 4♥ with a lucky system quirk (Ella opening a 14-16 1NT when the rest of the room was opening 1♦). North was able to double an artificial 4♣ Texas transfer and South dutifully led the ♣Q against Ella's game in hearts.

This looks like the flattest ten tricks in the world, and so it proved. Except at Ella's table...

To make 11 you somehow need to throw two spades on the diamonds, making all four tricks in that suit. You might run all the trumps, South pitching a diamond at some point, then read the position and hook a diamond for all the marbles. Of course, that risks going down if you are wrong, and even worse, some dark looks from across the table.

Why play the diamonds when the opponents can do it for you? After a club to the ace and a club return, Ella won in hand, eliminated the club suit, drew two rounds of trumps ending in hand, and played a SPADE.

South won, and not fancying helping declarer 'set up the spades', switched to diamonds.

Curtains. Ella won and ran the rest of the trumps, catching South in a brutal spade-diamond squeeze for +450 and an intergalactic top.

Having hit a run of form at the right time, Ella and I had taken the lead going into the last round. That's when you need to focus and knuckle down, playing your cards in a workmanlike manner:

S/Nil

♠ K Q 5 4 3 2
♥ A 9 5
♦ K 9
♣ 8 3

♠ 9 7
♥ 10 7 4 2
♦ 10 7 6 3
♣ A 9 7

♠ J 10
♥ Q J 8
♦ A Q 8 4
♣ K J 10 2

♠ A 8 6
♥ K 6 3
♦ J 5 2
♣ Q 6 5 4

WEST	NORTH Jacob	EAST	SOUTH Milne
pass	1♠	dbl	pass
pass	2♠	all pass	2♥ ¹

1. For us, an 8-10 spade raise after the double.

Not liking any of his risky side suit holdings, East led a trump.

Ella worked out that on some fairly ordinary layouts (like the actual one), she might only make eight tricks for +110 when the room was frequently going to be given some sort of gift (perhaps on a more active lead). Leading diamonds towards the king didn't look great with the doubler on her left (and no diamond lead, suggestive of the ace), and likewise leading clubs towards the queen was not going to be a winner (East would have led a top club from ♣AK).

Surely it would be much easier to make an overtrick with some assistance?

Ella won the spade lead in hand and drew the remaining trumps with the ace. Now she tried the "lead towards the closed hand"/"play on your weak suit" gambit with a low club, taken by West's nine.

The best switch on the layout was a heart, but this would cost when declarer had three useful hearts, e.g. ♥AJ9. West instead played a diamond and it was all over, Ella able to play low and build up the ♦J for her overtrick.

Yes, you may have observed that double dummy, Ella needed to play diamonds herself to legitimately make the overtrick. This would be wrong if West had the ♦Q and East the ♦A. More importantly, this only takes into account perfect play.

If everyone played perfectly, bridge would not be very interesting. On every hand in this article, the opponents misdefended. This is typical of the games that we all play in – up to the very highest level. Bridge is too complex to play without error, and navel-gazing about what should happen in an ideal world will do nothing for your practical game.

With six straight wins on the second day, Ella and I were thrilled to come out in front in the first River City Gold Mixed Pairs. Coming in second were Peter and Liz, while in third place and defending their Queensland Mixed Pairs title were Terry Strong and Jill Magee. Plaudits to the organisation team involved, particularly Janet Lovell and the wider Toowong Bridge Club team, for an enjoyable and well-managed event.

And if you found some of these hands entertaining, maybe try declaring your next tricky hand a bit differently: play on your weak suit and see what happens. You may be delighted with the results.



Australia was represented in each of the four divisions at the 2022 World Championships:

The Mixed Team (David Beauchamp, Stephen Fischer, Leone Fuller, Trevor Fuller, Pele Rankin, Jodi Tutty, Julian Foster npc) finished in 10th place.

The Open Team (James Coutts, Nabil Edgtton, Peter Gill, Sartaj Hans, Andy Hung, Liam Milne, David Wiltshire npc) finished 12th.

The Women's Team (Jessica Brake, Susan Humphries, Ella Jacob, Ellena Moskovsky, Rena Kaplan, Giselle Mundell, Ian Thomson npc) finished 16th.

The Seniors' Team (Peter Buchen npc, George Smolanko, George Kozakos, Paul Lavings, Robert Krochmalik, Stephen Burgess, Gabi Lorentz, pictured with the head of the Australian delegation Ian Thomson) finished 17th.

With the top eight teams qualifying for the quarter-final, the remaining teams moved on to the Transnational Teams, the plan being to play a 15-round Swiss of 14-board matches. We played four rounds out of five for the day and we were hearing reports of COVID spreading everywhere. Our team decided to withdraw, as did many other teams, and the event was cancelled after six rounds.

This deal was from Round 3 of the Transnationals (see top of next column). Note how the 2♥ opening on a five-card suit and 8-11 gives the opposition a big headache.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pessoa	Lorentz	Barbosa	Burgess
	pass	pass	2♥
pass	3♥	dbl	all pass

Board 21
N/NS

♠ A 7 6 3
♥ 10 9 7 5
♦ Q
♣ K 9 7 2

♠ Q 10 4
♥ Q J 4 2
♦ K 8 4
♣ A J 4

♠ K J 9 5 2
♥ —
♦ A J 7 3 2
♣ 10 6 5

♠ 8
♥ A K 8 6 3
♦ 10 9 6 5
♣ Q 8 3

Stephen won the spade lead, gave up a diamond, and ruffed the spade return. He then ruffed a diamond, ruffed a spade, played a club to the king, and ducked a club to West. West cashed his two club tricks and exited with a diamond. Stephen ruffed in dummy, leaving this position:

♠ 7
♥ 10 9
♦ —
♣ 9

♠ —
♥ Q J 4 2
♦ —
♣ —

♠ J 9
♥ —
♦ J 7
♣ —

♠ —
♥ A K 8
♦ 10
♣ —

A spade from dummy was ruffed with the ♥A, and then a small diamond forced West to ruff high and play back into the heart tenace for nine tricks.

Letters to the editor

THE POWER OF THE REVOKE

The following hand from a recent Swiss Pairs event illustrates a clear problem with Law 64A2.

W/NS	♠ J 9 7		
	♥ A Q 8 2		
	♦ K 8 7 3		
	♣ 4 3		
♠ A 8		♠ 10 3 2	
♥ K 7 4		♥ J 9 5 3	
♦ 6 5		♦ A J 10 4	
♣ K Q J 10 9 5		♣ A 2	
	♠ K Q 6 5 4		
	♥ 10 6		
	♦ Q 9 2		
	♣ 8 7 6		
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♣	pass	1♦	1♠
2♣	pass	3♣	pass
3NT	all pass		

Declarer won the spade lead and proceeded to run the clubs, and eventually lost the last five tricks. East then brought to the director's attention that on trick four South discarded a heart whilst still holding a club. Pursuant to Law 64A2, director adjusted the score to 3NT making. This meant that EW won 12 imps instead of losing 4, a difference of 16 imps.

In one respect, this result highlights the fact that face-to-face bridge is a completely different game from online competition, where a revoke is not possible. But the real issue is the rationale for the law itself which gave EW an undeserved windfall; they have gained an effective 16 imps and, most importantly, advantage over other competitors, unrelated to any bridge skill – the revoke did not affect the outcome of the hand!

This adjustment may have made some punitive sense in rubber bridge, where the outcome of the hand does not affect other competitors, but it leads to undesirable consequences in competitive bridge where it can (as happened here) affect the outcome of the competition. Competitive bridge is supposed to be designed so that, as much as possible, bridge skill and not luck, brought about by an opponent making an inconsequential mechanical error, determines the outcome.

Surely there is a case here for a review of this long standing provision in the Laws of Duplicate Bridge so that rulings are based on equity and rather than formality.

Ralph Berlinski, Melbourne

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Congratulations to Mrs Marie Milne, who celebrated her 100th birthday on 5 May 2022.

Marie plays twice a week at Forestville RSL Bridge Club, and drives herself to the club.



THE BETTER DRIVE STUDY

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

A trial of training programs to improve driving skills in older adults

Are you aged over 65? | Do you have a current drivers licence and drive regularly? | Do you plan to keep driving?

If you answered YES to these questions please contact us on: 9399 1135 or betterdrive@unsw.edu.au

Volunteers will:

- Have their driving assessed by professionals
- Get detailed feedback about their driving
- Have vision, memory and reactions measured
- Take part in a driving skills refresher program

The Better Drive study aims to test three different driver education programs, each designed to improve driving skills and safety in older adults in order to keep them on the road, safer and for longer. Each volunteer will have the opportunity to receive some form of driver training. We are based in Randwick and are looking for volunteers (aged 65+) across Sydney.

Driving greatly impacts people's independence and engagement in social activities like bridge. These activities are found to reduce dementia risk which our research group focuses on.

We are looking for volunteers who:

- are 65 years and older,
- hold a current drivers licence and third-party vehicle insurance,
- can be available for the duration of the study,
- have no significant health concerns that impact their driving.

You can also view more information about our study on our website accessed here:

www.neura.edu.au/clinical-trial/the-better-drive-study/

WORKSHOPS WITH WILL

with William Jenner-O'Shea

HANDLING A 1NT OVERCALL

During a competitive bidding discussion at this month's Workshop, the topic of 1NT overcalls came up. For the 1NT overcalling team, a 1NT overcall shows a balanced hand with around 15-18 points. It can be wider-ranging than an opening of 1NT. The important difference is that a 1NT overcall promises a stopper in the opponent's suit. The team that overcalls 1NT can then use Stayman, or transfers, and should get to the right spot if they have a good partscore or game.

This article discusses how the opening team can handle a 1NT overcall.

Here is an example hand. Your partner opens 1♦, and the opponent overcalls 1NT. This is your hand, what do you call?

♠ K 3 2 ♥ Q J 10 8 7 ♦ 7 ♣ A J 9 2

You should double the 1NT, showing 10+ HCP and intending the double as Penalties. Your partner has 12+ points, you have 11 points. The overcaller has around 16 points, leaving the fourth player with basically nothing! A double of any real notrump bid is for penalties (with the exception of a 1NT response, which is just a point count, not a real notrump bid – most people use double as takeout of opener's suit). You should plan to lead your ♥Q and look to defeat the 1NT by quite a few tricks if the opponents stay there.

Note that there is no guarantee that your team can make a game, but even if you can, you will score better taking ten tricks in defence to 1NT doubled



(down four is at least +800) than possibly making your game.

Responder should double a notrump overcall with all hands of 10+ HCP – even if they think that there is a game.

Here is another example hand. Again, your partner opens 1♦ and the opponent overcalls 1NT. This is your hand, what do you call?

♠ 4 3 2 ♥ K Q 10 9 7 5 ♦ 7 ♣ Q 3 2

With this hand, you want to compete in the bidding, but lack the usual strength to respond at the two-level. In many other auctions, you could only respond at the one-level, not the two-level with this sort of hand. After a 1NT overcall, the responding structure is a little bit different. Since all 10+ HCP hands would start with a double, this hand is perfect for a 2♥ bid. Your 2♥ bid shows a six-card suit, and roughly 6-9 HCP. Despite being a change of suit by responder, it is specifically non-forcing, and partner will usually pass you in 2♥.

Responder can bid a new suit after a 1NT overcall with a six-card suit and less than 10 HCP (around 6-9 points). It is not forcing, and is just a competitive bid.

If your team is the team that gets doubled in 1NT, a simple escape mechanism is to play no systems (no Stayman or transfers). Bidding any suit shows 0-5 points and a 5+ card suit. You can redouble to show 0-5 points and no 5+ card suit, and partner bids their lowest 4+ card suit to scramble to safety. Passing the double of 1NT shows around 5 or 6+ points, and is happy to play in 1NT doubled. There are lots of other escape systems, but this one is simple. Make sure you discuss this with your partner!

Will has recently been appointed to deliver ABF Online lessons. There are a few workshops available online each month. Check MyABF for Congresses and filter by Lessons for details.

There will be a Slam Bidding and Play Workshop on Friday 17 June, and a lesson on Improving your Bidding After Minor Suit Fits on Saturday 25 June.

BRIDGE INTO THE 21st CENTURY

by Paul Lavings, paul@bridgegear.com



YOUR RHO OPENS 4♠

What would you call on the following hands, nil vulnerable:

WEST	NORTH	EAST (4♠)	SOUTH ?
1. ♠ 2	♥ A 8 7 4	♦ A J 8 4	♣ A K 9 2
2. ♠ 5 2	♥ A Q 9 8	♦ K Q 4 3	♣ J 7 6
3. ♠ —	♥ A 8 7 5	♦ A 10 4 2	♣ A 9 8 5 3
4. ♠ 7 6 5	♥ K 10 8 4	♦ A K J 4	♣ A Q
5. ♠ A 10 7	♥ A K Q	♦ K 10 9 2	♣ A 8 4
6. ♠ K 4	♥ A Q	♦ A Q 9 5 4 3	♣ 10 8 7
7. ♠ 3	♥ K Q J 10 9 6 4	♦ A Q 7 3	♣ 7
8. ♠ 6	♥ A Q 7 6 5	♦ A Q J 5 2	♣ 6 2
9. ♠ 2	♥ J 7 6 4 3	♦ A Q J 8 7	♣ Q 4
10. ♠ 7	♥ A Q 9 6 3 2	♦ A 10 9 8 3	♣ 6

SOLUTIONS

1. Double. There was a time when double of a 4♠ opening was played by most for penalties – some still play it this way. The problem then is what do you do with a hand like this one?

You expect partner to pass with a good spade holding or with a flattish hand. With a poor hand you also expect partner to pass your double, and hope 4♠ fails, rather than bid onto the five-level with little chance of success. On this hand you will likely take the first four tricks in defence.

For the purist, a 4♠ opening is typically an eight-card suit with little outside. Nevertheless, opening 4♠ on a seven-card suit is very popular these days, say

♠ A K x x x x x ♥ Q x x ♦ J x ♣ x

This works well if your opponents bid to the five-level, but as often as not 4♠ fails by one or two tricks and the opponents can't make a contract above the three-level. Rather than gambling at my first turn I prefer to try to get to the correct level, whether it be 1♠, 2♠, 3♠ or 4♠.

2. Pass. You have an easy takeout double over a 1♠ opening, or even a 2♠ opening, but opponents have opened 4♠. Double can lead to many losing scenarios. Perhaps the worst is when you double and your LHO redoubles – for penalties! They could hold a good 15 or 16 HCP with a singleton spade; they figure 4♠ will make and if your side runs to the five-level, the doubled penalty will be sizable.

3. Double. Despite only 12 HCP you have the perfect shape for a takeout double, and your hand will make

an excellent dummy if partner bids on to the five-level. If partner decides to leave your double in, either with a good spade holding or a poor hand, you will at least take the first three tricks on defence.

The worst case seems to be when you get to defend 4♠ doubled and the contract makes. Minus 590 as opposed to minus 420 is not a major disaster.

4. Pass. You have 17 HCP, but length in opponent's suit is a key factor in deciding whether to come into the bidding, and three of their suit is a strong deterrent. Also you have a doubleton in one of the unbid suits. You are forced to pass and most likely register a small plus and hopefully a large profit.

5. Double. Indeed length in the opponent's suit is a negative when considering whether to enter the bidding, but you have 20 HCP, a 2NT opening. If partner is prepared to pass with a poor hand even with good shape then you should end up in the plus column in 4♠ doubled or making a five-level contract.

6. Pass. Deciding whether to come into the bidding is one of the times when I count my losers using the Losing Trick Count. This hand has six losers and bidding 5♦ could be right, but more likely it is a disaster waiting to happen.

Ron Klinger reported this deal recently in his Sunday Sun Herald column from the 2022 World Championships in Italy. The Polish player bid 5♦, was doubled and went down four tricks for -800. Predictably, 4♠ would have failed by one trick when partner held little else but ♣A.

7. 5♥. An easy choice with only four losers. A long strong suit is a big plus when deciding whether to venture into the auction at a high level. Provided partner has their share of high cards you will make 11 tricks and a bad trump break will not unduly concern you.

8. 4NT. For takeout, showing at least a 5-5. If partner bids 5♣, then bid 5♦ showing diamonds and hearts. You only have a minimum opening with a lot of queens and jacks, but with your shape and good suits you can't really afford to stay out of the auction.

9. Pass. You do have a 5-5, but this is not a good hand, not even a 1♥ opening, so forcing partner to bid at the five-level would be a drastic overbid.

10. 4NT. You might be tempted to bid 5♥, but showing two suits gives you two chances to find a fit instead of one. If partner bids 5♣, simply carry on with 5♦ showing hearts and diamonds. Perhaps partner with three hearts and three diamonds, knowing you are least 5-5, will correct to 5♥ to get a better score.

Remember two chances are better than one.

A new era for The Bridge Shop

The Bridge Shop is shaping up for the future

And we all know what Good Shape is in the game of bridge – a great advantage indeed.

We asked Nick Fahrer from The Bridge Shop how the pandemic has affected his business, and what the future holds for it.

Q: How has the pandemic affected your business?

A: Well, believe it or not – we seem to have come up trumps! While it was a shock at first, as players moved away from bridge clubs to playing at home – The Bridge Shop has been thriving.

Q: Are bridge players shopping more for bridge equipment?

A: Yes. I can't say that I saw the writing on the wall – but I knew that for The Bridge Shop to gain momentum, it would have to pivot from a bricks and mortar shop to one that could easily survive exclusively from e-commerce. So that's been my strategy in the past few years – getting my website and mail order side very well developed. I suppose then that the pandemic was good for me – tough as that may sound.

Q: What proportion of your business is no longer in-store shopping?

A: Most of it these days. Business analysts estimate the pandemic has globally accelerated the shift to online shopping by as much as five years – I just happen to be one of the lucky retailers that was able to plug into this phenomenon. You know, buying bridge stuff is not like buying designer shoes or needing to try things on.

Q: If most of your business is coming via the web or over the phone, is there a need to have a physical shop?

A: Well exactly – this is the point. I am glad to say that we are now well-positioned to run The Bridge Shop exclusively online.

Q: Do you monitor your customers' online experience?

A: All the time. Customer experience is the most important factor driving The Bridge Shop's growth. We have a reputation for outstanding customer service, and we need to maintain this. At the moment we have a 99% customer satisfaction rate – proof that we have a winning formula. My investment in building the best bridge website in the world has been worthwhile.

Q: Where to now for The Bridge Shop?

A: By becoming an online, phone and mail-order only business, I'll now be able to offer more to my customers – more products, more opportunities, greater efficiencies and lower costs.

Q: This must be quite a big step for you?

Yes, it is, and in some ways sad. The Bridge Shop has been a retailing institution in Australia since 1974 – who else can say this? But after 48 years, now is the right time to make this move. Going online and mail order only will only present me with more time and more opportunities to grow the business.

Q: What effect will this have on your customers?

A: The truth is... not a lot. All my customers outside of Sydney won't even notice a difference. And for everyone who loved to come in to browse or have a chat about bridge, I'll still be just an email or a phone call away offering the best possible advice I can.

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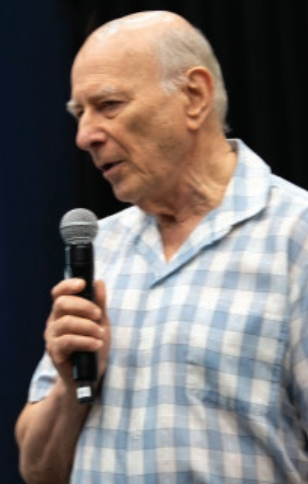


THE BRIDGE SHOP

IMPROVE YOUR DEFENCE

with Ron Klinger

Solution to problem on page 2



AUTOMATIC PILOT

Against a trump contract, partner leads the ♣A from a suit headed by the ace-king, and you hold a doubleton. How should you signal?

If playing attitude signals (encourage vs discourage) it is not automatic to encourage the continuation unless you wish to ruff the third round. If you do not want the suit continued, you should play a discouraging card (bottom card with standard signals, high card if playing upside-down signals).

Why would you not want the suit continued when you have a doubleton? Perhaps your trumps are winners anyway and the ruff will not produce more winners. Perhaps there is some other suit to which you would like partner to switch. Perhaps you have no trumps and cannot ruff the third round.

The third reason arose on this deal:

E/All	♠ Q 10 9 8 5 3	
	♥ Q 8	
	♦ K 10	
	♣ 10 9 5	
♠ J 7 6 2		♠ —
♥ J 6 5		♥ A 10 9 7 4 3
♦ 9 7		♦ J 6 5 4 2
♣ A K J 3		♣ 8 2
	♠ A K 4	
	♥ K 2	
	♦ A Q 8 3	
	♣ Q 7 6 4	

West led the ♣A against South's 4♠. East followed with the ♣2 (reverse count to show an even number).

West continued with the ♣K and a third club to give East a club ruff. Alas, no club ruff. North-South +420. Since a club continuation has such a high degree of probability in this situation, one wonders whether it might not be better to give partner false count here and show an odd number of clubs rather

than mechanically signalling a doubleton. Of course, you still have to play your club signal in normal tempo.

It is better still to use attitude signals on partner's lead. Witness the other table:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		2♥ ¹	2NT
pass	3♥ ²	pass	3♠
pass	4♠	all pass	

1. Weak two (a bit unorthodox).

2. Transfer to spades.

Lead: ♣A

East played the ♣8 (discouraging, using high-hate, low-like). West switched to the ♥6, taken by the ace, and back came a club. West won and cashed the third club to take the contract one down. When the fourth club was played, declarer ruffed with dummy's ♠Q. Now West scored the ♠J for two down and +11 imps.

If playing standard signals (high-encouraging), East should play the ♣2 (lowest card = 'I don't like this. Try something else'). The deal is a good illustration of the virtue of not playing automatically when you hold a doubleton.

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