



### Welcome

Happy Birthday to Club Focus! It's our first birthday this issue, and so it's quite apt that we have another bumper edition for you to enjoy.

We all love the game of bridge for so many reasons, and we are continually amazed to hear differing reasons from players on why they enjoy the game so much. However, have you ever considered that bridge is also helping to give your brain a work out? Challenges are extremely alluring and bridge is no different. Past research has shown the benefits bridge can provide for the mind.

Bridge can also help in other ways too. Research done this decade by a University of California, Berkeley researcher, Marian Cleeves Diamond, found that playing contract bridge leaves people with higher numbers of immune cells: "Contract bridge was ideal for what we were after," she said. "It is the closest activity to a challenging card-sorting task that also contains multiple factors that should stimulate the dorsolateral cortex. Bridge players plan ahead, they use working memory, they deal with sequenc-

ing, initiation and numerous other higher order functions with which the dorsolateral cortex is involved."

Bridge (and MiniBridge) has also been proven to be good for young people. A study commissioned by the EBU at St Paul's School in Manchester showed that bridge and MiniBridge taught skills in numeracy, problem solving, probability, speaking, listening, education, rule following, team building, mental capacity and much more. At the time of the study, David Miliband, then Minister of State for Schools Standards said, 'Innovations such as MiniBridge are to be encouraged...it was a pleasure to witness primary school children's complete concentration, whilst so obviously enjoying playing a game that is proven to improve their school learning ability.'

So, next time you are playing your favourite game, don't forget it is not only enjoyable, it's also benefitting you in hidden and unique ways.

Until the next issue,

**Matt Betts and Krys Kazmierczak**

### Fundraising Fun

Last year the Normandy Bridge Club in Yeovil raised £182.00 for the Fund a Physio appeal run by the Western Gazette for St Margaret's Hospice. This special event was a 'teach and play' session, where bridge tutor Chris Catchpole was hoping to gain a 'full teacher' qualification from the English Bridge Union.

The evening began with a short address by Sue Medlicott, fundraiser for St Margaret's Hospice, closely followed by a presentation and supervised play session organised by Chris Catchpole. The entire session was observed by EBU official Mrs Anne Harris from Taunton, whose task was to assess Mr Catchpole's teaching skills.

Sue remarked, "I was delighted to be offered the opportunity to speak to this group of people from all parts of Somerset about the work of St Margaret's and particularly about our appeal to support the domiciliary visits of our physiotherapists. The bridge lesson was intriguing to a non bridge player, but the players, support for St Margaret's was transparent, as their generosity demonstrated. Thank you, Chris, for your invitation and support of St Margaret's."

Mrs Harris got the fundraising off to a good start by contributing a very generous £25

to the charity. After the event Chris Catchpole said, "I just hope I've done enough to pass, then I can teach everyone wanting to learn."

The Normandy Bridge Club is run by husband and wife team, Alison and Chris Catchpole, who have over 50 years of bridge experience between them. Alison, also a fully qualified teacher, runs the teaching sessions with Chris. Chris is keen to recruit new students for a class for absolute beginners which starts in September. He said, "This time last year we started with a small group of less than 20 but this increased during the year as word spread. I hope we can do at least as well this year."

#### Club Committee Update

The members of the Club Committee have been busy over the past few months. Towards the end of January we will be sending a special mailing to all our clubs with information about the Committee's work so far.

### Limerick Competition

Congratulations to the winner of the limerick competition from our November issue, Tim Johnson of Market Harborough in Leicestershire, who penned the following excellent lines:

*An eager young pair from Land's End  
Were short of a few quid to spend.  
They both moved to Truro  
For rubber at a Euro.  
Their finances were soon on the mend!*

Mr Johnson managed to fit not just one but two Cornish place names into his limerick. As a prize he receives a copy of the *British Bridge Almanack* by Peter Henson. Thanks to everyone who entered the competition.

Limericks for our next competition must have a Bridge theme and include the name of a place in the (Bridge) County of Cumbria. Entries should be in to the address on page 5 by 15 February 2009. The winner will receive a copy of *Playing to Win at Bridge* by Ron Klinger.



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## Down Our Club

*A local journalist tries out some bridge at Bradford Bridge Club.*

In at the deep end? I certainly was when I went along to what must be one of the friendliest, most welcoming clubs in Bradford to try my hand at bridge.

My late grandmother was a keen bridge player. Whenever we went to her home she would chat animatedly about the previous night's game, while looking forward to the next one.

The moment I arrived at the elegant stone building, with the sun flooding through huge windows, I was enveloped in a sea of helpfulness. As they arrived for the afternoon drive - a social event at which members sit at tables of four and play hands against different opponents - people came over to chat. In no time I felt like I'd been going for years.

And some of the members have. "I joined in 1969," says Joan Aspland, a sprightly octogenarian from Wibsey. "I went for 12 lessons at night school then joined when I moved to Bradford. I was in at the deep end because it is quite intense, but I stuck with it, and it is such a good, enjoyable game - I shall be playing six times this week."

I am sitting in one of the two spacious card rooms, full of small square, green-topped card tables. I am seated beside

Ann, who is playing with Joan, against Leeds pairing Andrew Peel and Paul Renton. They are talking tricks and contracts, which to me sounds more like the language of underworld gangsters than four people playing bridge on a Tuesday afternoon.

Club secretary Gill Copeland uses whist to start beginners - both adults and juniors - on the road to bridge expertise.

"You soon get the hang of it," says former information technology lecturer Gill, who teaches youngsters at schools in Leeds.

Along with other members, Gill is eager to introduce youngsters to the game. "They soak it up. It is the most absorbing hobby in the world for people of any age. There is logic, communication skills, interacting with a partner, forward planning, tactics - the game covers so many useful life skills."

She adds: "My son Tom started playing when he was 13." With his partner, Tom (now 18) recently won the Yorkshire Schools Pairs competition held in Harrogate.

The club has among its members a number of top national and international players. Stuart Davies, the club's tournament committee chairman, travels across the country in his role as national tournament director for the English Bridge Union. He

and tournament director Tony McNiff play at national events. England player Sarah Teshome is also a member.

Watching the players, seeing the concentration etched on their faces as they tried to work out who had what cards, I could see how the game could become addictive. A lovely cup of tea was an added bonus on the enjoyable afternoon I spent at the club. There's a bar too, so players can enjoy a beer or glass of wine while giving their brains a break.

The club has a full-time, live-in steward, Bob Nicol, who has been with them for 21 years, many of those with his late wife Valerie. He doesn't play - for a reason. "If I started to play I wouldn't be able to do my job. As you can see, it gets hold of you. I'd be so engrossed I wouldn't be able to think about anything else."

**Bradford Bridge Club, 8 Morningson Villas, Bradford BD8 7HB**  
For more information on Bradford Bridge Club, including classes for beginners and improvers, contact Gill Copeland on (0113) 2257237 or visit [www.bradfordbridgeclub.org](http://www.bradfordbridgeclub.org).

**Helen Mead**

(The article was originally printed in The Telegraph & Argus and has been shortened for Club Focus)

## Mentoring

There is one thing that I do when I am teaching which seems to be totally uncommon amongst bridge teachers. Having taught the students how to play and what the rules are, so as to avoid embarrassment, I take them to bridge clubs as my partner for their first few times. (Sometimes, if they are brilliant, they stay as my permanent bridge partners.)

This ensures:

They are not put off by anyone trying to tell them what to do, which might happen if there were two learners playing together for the first time in a club. Furthermore this avoids the problem of their not understanding what they are being told.

They have confidence in their teacher that he will guide them through what is right and wrong and stand up for them if they are right.

They know their teacher would not take them to a club where the standard is so high that their presence would embarrass the other players.

This works. I am amazed at what rules are sometimes quoted to learners playing on their own, who have no defence but to come back to me asking "are they right?" Quite often they are not. For example, one of my recent students was bawled out because she used Stayman and did not have a four card major suit!

I think it is not only good fun but quite rewarding when your learner does well.

**Derek Oxbrow**

**Editors' note:** If your club has classes, or is associated with a bridge teacher, why not ask some of your more experienced members if they might not be willing to occasionally devote an evening to mentoring an up-and-coming player. As Derek says, it can be good fun and very rewarding.

### Focal Point

Does your club have a website? Why not put a link in to Club Focus? Our permanent web-address is: [www.ebu.co.uk/cf](http://www.ebu.co.uk/cf)

## Bridge Tales

Some years ago my husband and I were directing at a bridge holiday abroad. We were in a very pleasant venue by the sea. It was a balmy October evening, and the cicadas outside were quite loud. I was called to a table and asked to stop the noise! Now, a TD can handle most things, but acts of God are not one of those things. Keeping a straight face, I said I would look outside, pleased for the chance to have a break in the fresh air. Naturally, I didn't see anything - it was strangely quiet while I was about.

On returning to the bridge room, I found they were in the midst of moving tables for the next round. A gentleman swayed towards me (having enjoyed an excellent dinner with plenty of wine). "It's all right!" he shouted, "I've seen one. I'll get it for you," and turned to hurry towards a window. I quietly let him get on with it. How do you explain to a well meaning intoxicated gentleman that he is trying to kill a curtain hook?!

**Drene Brown, Lincolnshire**

## Bidding Tools: Responding to 1NT - Full Transfers

So, now that you are playing Red Suit Transfers, after partner's opening 1NT you will respond 2♦ with (almost) any hand containing five or more hearts, and 2♥ with five or more spades, including hands with which you would have previously made a simple weak take-out. This means that the 2♣ response is now redundant. Some players use 2♣ to show 11 points and 2NT to show 12 points, both bids balanced & invitational, but these bids are perhaps better used in other ways.

What do you do if partner opens 1NT and you hold one of the following hands?

- 1) ♠9 ♥874 ♦J93 ♣K87642
- 2) ♠9 ♥874 ♦J97643 ♣K82

With either of these, you would prefer to play in your long minor rather than No Trumps, even if you have to go to the 3-level to do so. You can't respond 3♣ or 3♦ directly, since that would be showing a strong hand.

When we introduced Stayman, the way to make a weak take-out with clubs was to respond 2♣, then bid 3♣ on the second round, regardless of opener's reply. You could still use that method, but most players incorporate their minor-suit 'weak take-outs' into either the 2♣ or 2NT responses (or both). There are many variations. We will look at just one of them in this article, and that is the extension of the 'transfer' principle to all four suits in a system known as 'Four-Suit Transfers' or 'Full Transfers': 2♣ is a transfer to clubs; 2NT is

a transfer to diamonds. Using Full Transfers, on the first of the above hands you would respond 2♣ and partner must rebid 3♣; on the second you would respond 2NT and partner rebids 3♦.

Just as with Red Suit Transfers, you can use these additional transfers not only to show weak hands, but some stronger hands as well:

- 3) ♠AQJ8 ♥87 ♦3 ♣AKJ842

Respond 2♣ (to show clubs), then bid 3♣ to show the 4-card spade suit. This shows a distributional hand with game values, expressing serious doubts as to whether 3NT is a viable contract (otherwise, with a 4-card major, you would just try Stayman followed by 3NT).

But what do you do if you have a balanced 11- or 12-count? Well, those who play Full Transfers normally also play 'Non-Promissory Stayman'. This means that with a balanced invitation, they respond 2♣, even when they do not have a 4-card major. I.e. the 2♣ bid does not promise a 4-card major. Whatever opener then bids, they respond 2NT to show a balanced hand inviting to 3NT. You have to remember that the sequence 1NT-2♣-2♥-2NT does not show a 4-card spade suit in responder's hand, but is purely invitational without 4 spades. A 2♣ rebid by responder, after a 2♥ reply from the opener, shows 11-12 HCP and 4 spades. In all other sequences, opener does not need to know whether or not responder started

with a 4-card major. Let us look at some examples.

- 4) ♠AQJ ♥87 ♦A954 ♣J1084
- 5) ♠AQ8 ♥A7 ♦1054 ♣J10984

With either of the above hands, after partner's 1NT opening, bid 2♣ (Non-Promissory Stayman) and whatever partner replies, rebid 2NT to invite your partner to 3NT if maximum.

- 6) ♠AQ108 ♥A7 ♦1054 ♣J1094

Opposite partner's 12-14 NT, bid 2♣. If partner responds 2♣, you can make an invitational raise to 3♣. If partner bids 2♦, show your balanced 11-count with 2NT (partner has denied a 4-card spade suit). If partner bids 2♥, rebid 2♣ (partner might have a 4-card spade suit as well as a 4-card heart suit).

If you decide to play Full Transfers with your partner, as always it is imperative that you go through all of the implications together, and perhaps try bidding some practice hands.

One point you should remember is that the system does not apply if an opponent has intervened with a bid or double over your partner's 1NT opening. What to do if that happens will be discussed in future articles. In the meantime, in the absence of any other agreement with your partner, your bid over an opponent's intervention should be natural.

In our next issue we will take a look at a couple of alternatives to Full Transfers.

## South Miami Bridge Club

I have just returned from a trip to America where I had the pleasure of playing at the South Miami Bridge Club. In the main the bridge club was fairly similar to the ones here, although it was interesting to see that most of the men wore shorts and sandals...not surprising, with temperatures in the 80s in November!

The club is run by a proprietor and a charge of \$8 is levied on all players. There was a free table of nibbles, sweets and plenty of coffee available throughout the afternoon. In deference to my host I learned the Standard American system, although I did have the odd lapse from time to time!

Generally, the players were friendly and enjoyed my English accent, although, as sometimes over here, there was one pair who were more than a little "frosty". The standard of play was high and the pace of play was generally good....although one pair found the TD standing behind them for a whole game to speed them up....very

intimidating I would think. It was interesting that several couples were allowed to have "late plays" after the others had finished rather than take an average when they were behind.

They are not as keen on etiquette as we are over here with "alerts" and "stops" being called rather than having a card produced. Bids were not left out until the first card was played, in fact I was told off a couple of times for leaving my bids showing!! But most amazing was that several times phones were ringing and then people took the calls!

An interesting point was that at the end of the session, when the results were produced, the players were categorised into 3 standards A, B and C. So players who were down the leader board were heard to say "we did great, partner, we were top in C".....not a bad idea?

I thoroughly enjoyed my visit and the people in the club...so much so that I intend to return in January!

**Dave Johnston,**  
Clifton Bridge Club, Lytham St Annes



## Tree Planting

On 27 November, on behalf of the EBU, I was invited to take part in some tree planting near Bedford. This initiative was set up by our paper recycling company *Paper Planet* to represent our successful year in recycling paper at EBU HQ. The company has pledged to plant a tree for every 50 bags of waste paper that is recycled by their customers and this tree planting took place at the Forest of Marston Vale, near Bedford.

The Forest of Marston Vale is an evolving community forest in Marston Vale, which runs south west towards the M1 motorway from the towns of Bedford and Kempston. It is operated by a registered charity called the Marston Vale Trust.

The vale is traditionally a brick making area, but the brick making industry has been running down since the 1970s. It has left a large amount of spoiled countryside containing several large empty pits, some of which have now been converted into lakes. The Forest of Marston Vale is one of twelve community forest projects in the United Kingdom. The total

area covered is 61 square miles (158 km<sup>2</sup>), but most of this land is in private ownership. Since 1990, they have planted around 1 million trees and by 2030 they will have planted 5 million more, working with local communities, government and businesses, to create new woods and other wild places for everyone to enjoy.

On the 27th over 100 *Paper Planet* customers came along to help the charity, by planting trees in one of the many new forest areas. November is a very good time to plant trees, as the cold forces them to grow and develop their roots. Like everyone else, I was provided with a shovel and some trees and asked to plant as many trees as I could! The ground was very icy, plus it was very clammy and clay based, so it did prove very difficult to plant these trees. However, together with a co-worker, we did manage to plant 29 trees on behalf of the EBU.

We can feel justifiably proud that there are charities trying to help the UK's environment with initiatives of this kind.

### Matt Betts



## Ada Hampton - Obituary

(1908 - 2008)

Ada played bridge from her early twenties, being inspired by her parents who were keen players. Right up until her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, she played five times a week in a number of bridge clubs and was an extremely sound player – evidenced by her recent victory in the local bridge club pairs competition.

Ada was born in Redditch, Worcestershire and – apart from 2 years training in London – she lived near her home town for all of her 100 years.

To celebrate her life, Ridgeway bridge club has presented a cup – The Ada Hampton Trophy – to be contested annually as a team-of-four event at the club. We hope that this will be a fitting reminder of Ada.

Rhona Panton, a member from Droitwich bridge club, composed a poem to celebrate Ada's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, which sums up Ada perfectly:

*We hope we'll be as bright as you  
As quick to bid and play like you  
And fingers crossed we'll still be able  
To welcome everyone to our table  
As you do, ever smiling and kind  
The EBU must have you in mind  
In writing their rules of table behaviour  
They must have thought of darling Ada.*

*We're sorry we're so slow for you  
And hold you up – we know we do  
Forgive us this – it's quite a test  
When competing with the County best  
But on your birthday we'll tell you this  
You're our role model and here's our wish  
That we'll be nicer, brighter, bolder  
When – just like you – we're a little bit older.*

Ian Thompson

## Calling The Director

I feel it is necessary to revisit a subject that disappointingly keeps rearing its ugly head. Consider these scenarios:

1) You make an insufficient bid. Your opponents say: 'You must make it good'. *They are wrong!*

2) Your partner hesitates. Your opponent says to you: 'You must not bid after your partner's hesitation'. *Your opponent is wrong!*

3) You take a stop card from the box and put it away again. Your opponent says: 'You must make a stop bid.' *Your opponent is wrong!*

In each case they are not only wrong: they may well be driving inexperienced players away from the game by intimidating them. In each case, not only are they technically wrong\*, but far more importantly, *it is not up to them to interpret the laws at the table.* If there is a problem, it is the role of the director to sort it out, not a fellow player who cannot possibly be regarded as an unbiased source. You should work on the basis that *no player ever has the right to tell another player at the table what he/she must or cannot do.* There is bound to be a conflict of interest.

If there is a problem, you should gently and politely inform your opponents that

you wish to call the director and then call him in a restrained and calm manner. The director is there to help and ensure fairness according to the Laws when something goes wrong. There should be no stigma attached to having the director called to the table.

Another similar scenario is the following:

4) You make a poor bid but luckily get a top. Your opponent says: 'You must not bid like that.' *Your opponent is wrong!*

If I called the director every time I thought an opponent had made a bad bid, the director could set up permanent residence at my table. Too many players have their own ideas of what constitutes good and bad bridge, and then in their own minds this seems to become part of the laws. Wrong. It is not the job of the director to impose your idea, or his own idea, of good bridge. For example, West opens 3♠. North bids 4♥. East and South pass. West tries again with 4♠. Yes it is bad bridge: West should probably have opened 4♠ in the first place. However, in the absence of any unauthorised information from East, West is free to bid as he pleases.

\*In all of these situations, there are other options which the Director can explain to you.

Andrew Kambites

## Dummy Can't Revoke?

Near the end of the evening, we reached table 1 where the bidding finished with the director bidding two spades. His partner, an excellent player and a bridge teacher, laid down dummy, and apologised for having no spades.

North played ten tricks and won six of them. It was a moot point whether he would have won two of the three remaining tricks. He then realised that dummy had only two cards left. A search revealed that the missing card was still in the board, hidden by the curtain card. It was the two of spades.

Clearly, this should have been played when declarer first led a trump, and he had therefore revoked, and should have been fined a trick, but he ruled that the board was unplayable and he should take an average minus.

I am the club's chief scorer, but try as I might I couldn't legitimately penalise (sorry, 2007 Laws – rectify) him any further.

**Anonymous**

*John Pain commented as follows:*

"There is a popular misconception that 'dummy can't revoke'. Well, dummy **can** revoke. What the law actually says is (Law 64B3) 'There is no rectification for an established revoke if the revoke was made in failing to play any card faced on the table or belonging to a hand faced on the table, including a card from dummy's hand'.

In other words, at first sight, there is no penalty for this. However careful reading of Law 64C reveals that 'when after any established revoke, including those not subject to rectification, the Director deems that the non-offending side is insufficiently compensated by this Law for the damage caused, he shall assign an adjusted score'.

So what should the TD have done? He confirms there was a revoke and that there is no direct penalty. He then looks to see whether declarer has gained a trick which he would not otherwise have made. The newly discovered trump may now

make a trick it would not have done and that should be taken away, but if there is no material advantage then there is no adjusted score. To give average minus is wrong."

## Bridge Tails



**Dickens chooses his next lead carefully...**

PS the winner of our Christmas edition caption competition will be announced next issue.

## Forthcoming EBU Events

**National Women's & Men's Pairs: 24 - 25 January, Hinckley**

**Spring Congress: 27 February - 1 March, Harrogate**

**Ranked Masters Pairs: 7 - 8 March, Hinckley**

**Portland Pairs: 29 March**

**Baker Tilly Easter Festival: 10 - 13 April, London**

**Baker Tilly Easter Festival: 10 - 12 April, Buxton**

For more information, please email [comps@ebu.co.uk](mailto:comps@ebu.co.uk) or see the **EBU website**.



### Focal Point

If you're viewing Club Focus on-line, please note that all web addresses are clickable.

## Contact us

We hope you have enjoyed reading this issue of Club Focus. Are you interested in writing for the next newsletter? Have you started learning bridge? Have you got any funny stories about bridge? Does your club have any interesting ideas or solutions to common problems which other clubs might benefit from? Would you like to publicise any special events open to non-members and members? Do you have a special pet who likes to play cards? Please let us know!

If you would like to contact us or send us your articles, feedback or comments, please email: [clubfocus@ebu.co.uk](mailto:clubfocus@ebu.co.uk) or post to: **Club Focus, English Bridge Union, Broadfields, Aylesbury, HP19 8AZ**. Deadline for submissions is 10 February 2009.

### Harrogate Spring Congress

This is one of the most popular congresses run by the EBU and is well worth a go. This year the congress will be held on 27 February until 1 March 2009 at the Cairn Hotel, Harrogate.

For more information, please email [comps@ebu.co.uk](mailto:comps@ebu.co.uk) or see the **EBU website**.



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