



Surrey County Bridge Association

Newsletter # 57, Summer 2025

Introduction

Tim Warren

From Tim Warren, outgoing chairman

My 5-year term as Chair of Surrey came to an end at our AGM earlier this month. It's a privilege to have been in this role, and I thank the very many people who have helped me. I also thank those who have contacted me about Surrey bridge, whether with brickbats or bouquets or anything else – it's the interaction with our members that's been the best part. I'm delighted that Richard Banbury was elected to take over from me, and I wish him all the very best.

From Richard Banbury, incoming chairman

Many thanks to Tim for all his hard work during all the turbulence caused by COVID and the changes it has brought to the game. The county's success with schools bridge is a great achievement.

As a brief introduction about myself, I have been playing bridge for 40 years – and to take Richard Ackland's (RA) point (see below) I have never attended a bridge lesson (which probably explains a few things about my playing style!). Previously I have been Chairman for Hertfordshire Bridge Assoc, and worked for EBED (a charitable organisation set up by the EBU). Now I am the full-time manager for Richmond Bridge Club, as well as a teacher and national director.

We tend to think of the bridge world as slow to change, but who would have contemplated the rise of the online game even 5 years ago. These days Youtube is full of bridge videos and new players can now use ChatGPT and other Artificial Intelligence sources online to answer their questions. These changes mean new opportunities.

The EBU has a target to grow the playing membership by 5% (should that sound so daunting?!). RA's letter (see below) highlights some key issues about teaching and bringing new people into the game. The SCBA's role is to encourage improvements in those areas so as to support the EBU's goals.

- Teaching should be an enabler (not a barrier to be crossed), to allow new players to take part in a relaxed game for their own enjoyment. Regular practice then builds the confidence to learn more. Developing new bidding/play skills can all come later.

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- RA mentioned he would have no hesitation in introducing a novice player into a club – and while there may be some practicalities around that, I think the bigger point is how many of us have actually invited someone to come along – to introduce a new person to the game - and then continued to help them as they get started. This is one thing which we (ie you !) can each do (surely we must all know one person) to make a big difference to the game's future. Those word of mouth recommendations are by the far the best way for us to support the growth of our clubs – so let's spread the word.

Please do feel free to contact me (chairman.scba@bridgewebs.com) to discuss what the SCBA should now be doing and or how you would like to help us.and remember to enjoy your bridge !

Calendar

Sep 20th	Green Point Multiple Teams	Oxted School
Sep 21st	Green Point Swiss Pairs	Richmond

Don't forget to put in your entries for the Lady Rose Cup and various Surrey Leagues.

SURREY COUNTY BRIDGE ASSOCIATION GREEN POINT WEEKEND

SATURDAY 20th SEPTEMBER – MULTIPLE TEAMS

11.a.m. 48 Boards

Old Hall, Oxted School, 27 Bluehouse Lane,
Oxted RH8 0AB

Entry Fee £20/player – payment by bank transfer on entry to Surrey CBA

SUNDAY 21st SEPTEMBER – SWISS PAIRS

11.a.m. 48 Boards

Richmond Bridge Club, Cambridge Park, East Twickenham,
TW1 2PG

Entry Fee £25/player – payment by bank transfer on entry to Surrey CBA

Further information and entry forms on the Surrey website

<https://www.bridgewebs.com/surrey/>

The Lady Rose Qualifier

The “Lady Rose” is a competition for teams of 4 players, with matches mostly played online. So none of the inconvenience of travelling across the county !

There is a qualifying event aimed at players with an average NGS of 10 or below (and no one with an NGS of a Queen and above). Everyone in the Qualifier has a great chance to win and ultimately take part in the Lady Rose itself. If you haven't focused on this event before, why not give it a go – just contact William Clennell (ladyroseorganiser.scba@bridgewebs.com)

All Square at Swiss

Dominic Cooke

Playing the penultimate match of the Easter Festival's Swiss Pairs, you pick up an uninspiring collection as West, all green: JT54♠ KT875♥ 82♦ T6♣. Passing as dealer, the auction starts with a 2♣ open, a 2♠ overcall by partner, and an “undiscussed” double by South. You make a restrained raise to 3♠; North bids 5♣ and is raised to 6 by his partner. Your brow furrows as you count out tricks. Two losers in each red suit... those confident club bids suggest a singleton with partner... surely only one spade loser... that comes to a penalty of 500 or 800 against their 920. It's speculative, but you take the sacrifice and put your hand down as dummy in 6♠X.

Alas! Astute readers will have noticed that you were counting up the penalty for 4♠, a calculation relevant a few hands ago but not here. You are going for at least 1100. As the play progresses, you realise that your partner, the notorious SCBA Competitions Secretary, had nudged your opponents into an inferior slam by overcalling on 87652♠ 943♥ K543♦ 5♣. With 7 clubs in North and both your kings onside, 6NT is laydown and both grand slams are making. You have turned your partner's top of -940 into an ignominious bottom of -1700.

But there is more to come. You pick up 98542♠ 6♥ KT85♦ QJT♣, and starting with an open from North your uninterrupted opponents bid 1♥ - 1♠ - 4♠ - 4NT - 5♣ (1 or 4 key cards) - 6♠. How enticing! Your opponents have bid to slam on a 4-4 fit, unsuspecting of a truly dire split. No need to alert them to the crisis with a double. You pick out the club queen, and see a strange dummy come down. J5♠ AKJT854♥ Q32♦ 8♣ presents itself as North shamefacedly explains that he had overbid in spades instead of hearts by mistake. South with AKQ76♠ Q9♥ 985♦ A42♣ discovers the trump break on the second round, and is completely cut off from dummy – she can make only 5 spades, 1 heart and the ace of clubs for off 5 and -250. One top out, one top in.

The moral of the story? First – learn to stay awake after lunch! But more optimistically, remember that in a Swiss event you will be matched with opponents on roughly the same score as you – and that means no matter how ridiculous your mistakes, you can always hope to receive the same in return.

The May edition of the EBU magazine makes for depressing reading.

On page 5 we are told that we cannot expect to join a bridge club unless we have first taken a course of lessons.

Worse: on page 20 we are told that these lessons must come from a professional teacher and we must pay for them.

If this reflects the prevailing attitude of clubs and club members then it's small wonder that numbers are diminishing.

This sort of thing is anathema to those who've never had a lesson in their life, who picked up bridge casually along the way, perhaps at university, whilst doing National Service, as a lunchtime relaxation at work or from old uncle Joe one long-gone Xmas round the kitchen table

Why can't we play too!?

Why must we undergo these initiation rituals?

And which are these clubs who are so unwelcoming as to prohibit membership to those who don't measure up to their notions of competence? They may be establishments where bridge is played. They certainly aren't "clubs".

For a club is surely an organisation where like-minded people go to indulge in a mutually enjoyable activity/interest. It's not something which necessarily strives perpetually for excellence.

And who are these mean-minded members who find it insufferable to play with players of an inferior standard? They were all novices once. Why is it a "perennial challenge" to join a bridge club? If it is daunting then it can only be the established members who make it so. Why? Whatever happened to common courtesy and good manners? These intolerant members should remember at the very least that in the course of an evening's bridge they have to play only one round against the incompetent newcomers. Is that really too much to bear?

Against all that I can report that I have 4 local bridge clubs readily available to me and I go to all of them (but not ALL of them EVERY week!). At none of them have I encountered any unwelcoming attitudes and I'd have no hesitation in introducing a novice to any of them, lessons or no lessons. Why isn't that universal?

Let's all remind ourselves that bridge is a game, a pastime, something we do to enjoy ourselves midst convivial company.

I've no problem with teachers making a living from tuition nor with those who are anxious to understand the game better and to improve their own standard. That's all very commendable and to be encouraged. But not to the exclusion of the rest of us, who just want a bit of social enjoyment a couple of times a week.

We play bridge for fun don't we? After all, "it's only a game"

*This is the response from the editor of English Bridge (slightly changed for context).
Published with her consent.*

Thank you for your email.

I think you are reading the articles without context. I think it's very difficult to join a bridge club if you don't know how to play. Of course it doesn't exclude 'lessons' from old Uncle Joe, friends in the services, university bridge club etc - all are effectively 'lessons'.

However, if you are a complete novice and deciding to take up the game you would probably be put off if you arrived at a bridge club session and announced you'd like to learn through playing in the weekly duplicate. What a baptism of fire if you had never played. If you are very lucky the club may offer free lessons, but in most cases you will have to find a teacher. And there's the rub. It is disappointingly difficult to find teachers. If they were better paid we might encourage more teachers. Fewer and fewer players seem to be learning through the wonderful ways you suggest – when young and when we were used to learning and used to making mistakes as part of the journey. Of course we are always delighted to hear that some players are still learning that way.

Are you by any chance a volunteer or paid teacher? If so, your area is very, very lucky to have you. If not, it would be interesting to know why not.

Bridge needs an army of volunteers from board level down to keep the game going. Not many people would expect to learn a new hobby for free - so payment might encourage more bridge teachers - Mary Sharp thinks paying them a market rate is the way forward. As a teacher too, I happen to wholeheartedly agree.

As for unwelcoming clubs . . . I think our club is friendly, but for those that lack confidence, all bridge clubs feel unwelcoming. In fact the whole spirit of competition is uncomfortable for some. We play the game for fun, but chat is left until after playing the hands, not before and throughout the hands. That kind of thing makes some novices feel that it's incredibly serious - it's not, but you often need a certain level of competence and enjoyment of the game itself before you can realise that. I also know that coming bottom week after week is not an encouraging way to fall into the game.

Club News

Farnham

In an effort to return to some F2F bridge, **Farnham Bridge Club (FBC)** will be holding 3 Duplicate Pairs Bridge Sessions this summer. These events, all Wednesdays with a start time of 7:05pm, will be held at The Bourne Club, 12 Frensham Road, Farnham, GU9 8HB. Facilities include free parking and an open bar.

The first face-to-face took place in conjunction with our Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 25 June.

SIGN UP NOW for the following 2 F2F sessions through the link on the club website:
https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwx/bw.cgi?club=farnham&pid=display_home

- Wednesday July 16th, 7pm for a 7:15pm start.
- Wednesday August 20th, 7pm for a 7:15pm start.

Visitors are welcome but please email the club secretary ([Email FBC secretary, Mary \(farnhambc@gmail.com\)](mailto:farnhambc@gmail.com)) if you have never played with FBC. The cost of playing on the

following 2 sessions is £4 per person. The money will be collected from your RB account. No cash will be accepted on the night.

The venue will only hold 9 tables and entry will be on a first come first play basis.

Note: There will be NO FBC RealBridge sessions on the above dates.

We hope that there is enough interest to be able to continue these F2F sessions on a monthly basis.

Richmond

Richmond's bridge teacher (Margaret Page) on a break away from the bridge table with some of her students trying out croquet



Surrey Clubs doing well

3 Surrey Clubs are in the top 50 EBU clubs – Richmond, Wimbledon and Caterham.

<https://www.ebu.co.uk/article/top-50-clubs-players-202425>

[Top 50 clubs by players 2024/25 | English Bridge Union](#)

We're pleased to announce the top clubs by number of player sessions for the year (2024/25). This is for sessions played up to the end of March.

www.ebu.co.uk

Double Dummy Puzzle #25 - Solution

John Manches

	♠ K Q 7 6 5	
	♥ A 3 2	
	♦ 9 7 5 3 2	
	♣ –	
♠ J 10		♠ –
♥ J 9 8 7 5 4		♥ 6
♦ K 4		♦ A Q J 10 8 6
♣ 9 6 4	♠ A 9 8 4 3 2	♣ A K Q J 10 7
	♥ K Q 10	
	♦ –	
	♣ 8 5 3 2	
7♠X by South		
Lead = ♦ K		

The bidding, for those who like to see how NS actually got there, was

East	South	West	North
2D	2S	P	4S
5C	5S	6C	6S
7C	X	P	7S
X end			

♦ K lead is ruffed in hand. A spade to K reveals the 2-0 trump split and puts paid to a simple cross ruff.

T3-5 : 3 rounds of hearts finishing in dummy.

T6 : ♠ Q is led from dummy and East is skewered. If he discards a diamond, South plays low and cross ruffing enables him to set up the long diamond in North's hand for his 13th trick. If East discards a Club, South overtakes with ♠ A and sets up a long club in his own hand for the last trick.

The winner drawn out of the hat was Alan Brown, to whom I also owe thanks for the many hands he has sent me for consideration. He wins free entry to one of our Surrey competitions for himself and partner of choice.

Learn & Play Bridge

Please invite your relatives, friends and neighbours to a FREE **Taster Session**

Why Play Bridge? What makes Bridge brilliant?

The **video** aims to highlight the many reasons why bridge is a mind-sport worth learning and playing.

Please click on **Taster Session** to attend a free Taster Session.

Suitable for all levels, from complete Beginners and for anyone who would like to Learn and Improve

Double Dummy #26

John Manches

Many thanks to all who submitted answers to DD No 25. Everyone had it right, with some interesting comments alongside. Entry-shifting squeeze, Overtake-or-not trump squeeze, or my own more colourful version not printable in a Bridge Newsletter. Well done to Alan Brown who was the winning name drawn out of the hat.

Not too difficult a puzzle this month. 10 tricks needed and 10 tricks there off the top. Only it becomes a trifle harder when you actually try to take them.

Again, a theme some have doubtless seen before. A nice challenge for those who haven't.

♠AKQ	
♥632	
♦A4	
♣76542	
♠8	♠109432
♥9754	♥8
♦J96	♦K108753
♣AKJ98	♣3
♠J765	
♥AKQJ10	
♦Q2	
♣Q10	

South to make 4H

Lead ♣A, followed by K and then J

Entries to johnmanches74@gmail.com. By July 27th please. As usual, the winner will be drawn from all those with a clear, full, correct-first-time solution. The prize, which is open to all Surrey members, will be free entry to one of our county competitions for the winner and partner of choice.

Club Director Training - Richmond

On behalf of EBED, Richard Banbury will be running a club director training course in the autumn. Your club may be entitled to send some along with a free place – so please check with EBED (or with Richard). Each day should be booked separately. Even if you have no desire to be a TD, it can be a great help for you as a player to understand the laws better for when something goes wrong at the table.

Sept 14th – The essentials of setting up and running a duplicate

Sept 28th – Book Rulings (eg revokes and penalty cards)

Oct 5th – More Book Rulings (insufficient bids) & Judgment Rulings (hesitations and dodgy explanations)

Oct 26th – The Assessment Day (how much did you remember !)

See: <https://www.ebedcio.org.uk/td-training> for more information

Bookings can be made online via MyEBU

Congratulations

Surrey

SCBA AGM pairs Malcolm Bricknell & Peter Hardyment



Lady Rose Cup

Hinden

Frances Hinden, Graham Osborne, Richard Fedrick, Andrew Southwell, Barry Myers.

They defeated Norman in the Final, with the losing semi-finalists being Irwin and Glanville.

Lady Rose Plate

Dagnall

John Dagnall, Andrew Bannock, Marion Hart, Ken Wilshire.

They defeated Team Cogliatti in the Final

Surrey League Division 1 Norman

David Norman, David Dawson, Charles Chisnall, Bob James, Ian Swanson

Wanborough Cup



Mayfield

Richard Fedrick & Andrew Southwell
David Dawson & David Norman

Mary Edwards



Bletchingley

Rosemarie Thompson & David Elvin

Victor Ludorum 2024-2025

Congratulations: to Richard Fedrick for winning the Victor Ludorum 2024/25. This is a prestigious award to recognise sustained performance over a range of Surrey events during the competition year. Although the season is not yet complete Richard's score is such that he cannot now be beaten. You can find the current ranking here: https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwor/bw.cgi?club=surrey&pid=docs_Latest%20Victor%20Ludorum.htm

In the wider world:

Lambourne Jersey Festival Winners 2025



The Swiss Pairs was won by Steve Bourton & Julia Brough, finishing with a score of 168 VPs, ahead of Barnet Shenkin & Cameron McLatchie with 163 VPs. Steve and Julia also went on to win the Championship Pairs and the Senior Pairs - quite an achievement!

Ranked Masters Pairs Results 2025



Club Champion Events

Surrey run two end of season events for club champions – the Mary Edwards Cup for pairs, and the Wanborough Cup for Teams.

Since the pandemic these events have been poorly attended dropping from 11 or 12 tables to 7.

I am interested to find out why clubs don't send their champions to these events anymore?

The Wanborough Cup has been won by the same team – Mayfield – for the past 5 years. Do we ask Mayfield not to enter, or ask them to enter a team with a maximum NGS of King?

Would it help to bring these events into the main part of the competition year and nearer to the clubs' own championship events?

Or have they outlived their appeal and should be scrapped?

Any comments from clubs would be appreciated.

Thank you

Shirley Pritchard

Competitions Secretary

competitionsecretary.scba@bridgewebs.com

Directors Corner - Announcing

Richard Banbury

In my teaching role I often get asked questions about alerting and announcing – eg which player does what, and which bids need to be alerted or announced. For this bulletin I will just look at “Announcing”.

Alerting and Announcing requirements are governed by the English Bridge Union’s regulations – ie not be the Laws of Duplicate Bridge. This means that these requirements are specific to England and may well be different in other countries. The details can be found in the “Blue Book” on the EBU website.

The person who alerts/announces is always your partner – never self alert/announce your own bids (unless required when playing online)

Announcing only applies on the first round of the bidding (starting with the first bid (ie not a pass) and the next three calls)

Never announce an overcall (eg do not tell the table your partner’s jump overcall is weak!)

Some common examples of things to be announced (not a full list)

- If an opening 1C or 1D bid could be shorter than a 3 card suit, announce “could be as short as xx” (so no need to announce “better minor” if it is always at least a 3 card suit).
- For an opening 1NT, announce the range eg “12-14” and if relevant add eg “may contain a [low] singleton”. If your partner regularly opens 1NT with 11 HCP then make that clear in the announcement.
- Opening a natural suit at the 2-level, announce as appropriate “weak” “intermediate” “strong/forcing” or “strong/non-forcing”. Conventional 2-level openings are alerted.
- No need to announce the range of an opening natural 2NT
- In response to 1NT/2NT announce 2C/3C as “Stayman” (there is no requirement to announce whether it actually promises an interest in the majors or not)
- Announce the suit shown by any transfer responses to an opening 1NT/2NT
- Announce any natural suit responses to 1NT/2NT (incl jumps below the level of game) eg “forcing” or “non-forcing”

Young Bridge Mania

By every measure the number of young people playing bridge is rising. Young people are enjoying the FUN, NEW FRIENDS and CHALLENGE of bridge.

NUMBERS AT FACE TO FACE EVENTS ARE ON THE UP

All you need is 4 youngsters and douglaswright@3countiesbridge.com will come and give the youngsters a Free Taster session of playing cards and Minibridge.

Another School Taster Session for 120 pupils is on 17 July at Boxgrove Primary in Guildford.

We are planning Free Taster Session at an Open Day at Richmond Bridge Club on a Saturday during the Summer holidays. Details will be published on Surrey, Richmond and 3 Counties websites.

At the Surrey Schools Cup in February 150 young players participated. We are expecting 200 on 6 February 2026.

There are Spring, Summer and Autumn Youth Camps. The **Autumn Youth Camp is 31 October - 2 November 2025** at Juniper Hall, Dorking Surrey RH5 6DA. All levels welcome including new players, and parents and grandparents can come too. See attached Flyer.

Junior sessions are held at Young Chelsea, Oxford and Cheltenham Clubs and many clubs who have their own premises are considering running junior sessions. More clubs welcome?

ONLINE EVENTS ARE THRIVING

The Generation Game held monthly on Sundays attracts 11 tables joan@ebedcio.org.uk

Thursday afternoon RealBridge sessions are held weekly Richard.croot@ebedcio.org.uk

A Schools League is thriving and there will be another Inter Schools Competition in March 2026.

Read [EBEDs Youth Events](#)

A WAVE OF SUCCESS STORIES

Passionate individuals are driving bridge's resurgence among young players:

Douglas Wright and team have successfully launched several bridge clubs in Sussex and Surrey schools: Tormead, Boxgrove Primary, Fishbourne, St Philips in Arundel, Lancing, Cardinal Newman, Priory etc They are planning more, also in London, Kent and Hampshire.

Others who wish to give young players a life long skill have started clubs in Epsom College and specifically want to help students in Sixth Form Colleges and Universities.

THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT

If you've ever considered getting involved, now is the time. Read [EBED can help your school start a Bridge Club](#)

Club Teacher Training courses and a "How to teach Bridge in Schools" course is planned for Friday 31 October. [Register for course](#).

If you know of any young people that would like to learn, schools who would like to start a bridge club, players and school teachers who would like to teach bridge get in touch with either richard.croot@ebedcio.org.uk or douglaswright@3countiesbridge.com

Old Playing Cards

Douglas Wright is asking local clubs for your old cards when you replace your playing cards with new ones to give to youngsters in schools, as part of a Bridge Taster Session?

He is happy to collect.

There will be a Taster Session in Boxgrove Primary (120 pupils) on 17 July, and further Taster Sessions in September.

Please contact him on:

www.3countiesbridge.com

01428717869 or 07801989630

Zia at Richmond

At the start of April Richmond Bridge Club hosted the famous international player Zia Mahmood. 52 players took part in an all day event enjoying 16 interesting boards from Zia's past along with a book signing event and a buffet lunch. For a short write up of the event and one of the boards please click through to the EBU magazine [HERE](#)

Getting the experts in to learn from their brilliance can be a great way to improve your bridge. Richmond Bridge Club recently hosted Zia Mahmood who is wonderfully entertaining and equally instructive.

There were 14 tables of club members and visitors. Zia had selected 16 boards, many from his playing career. Eight pairs got to play against Zia, and four individuals, drawn at random, got to partner him for four boards. (The advice the players were given as they arrived was 'Sit E/W if you want to play against Zia; sit N/S if you want a chance to play with him!')

Zia talked through the boards after they were played, and entertained us with stories from his life in bridge. Some of the deals were educational, requiring classic thought and planning, and some were more exotic.

Here is a deal from the former category:

Love All. Dealer South			
♠	9 7 5 3	♠	2
♥	Q J 6 3	♥	9 5
♦	K Q 2	♦	J 10 8 7 4
♣	A K	♣	J 10 8 7 5
♠	A Q J 10 6	♠	2
♥	K 10 7 4	♥	9 5
♦	9 3	♦	J 10 8 7 4
♣	9 3	♣	J 10 8 7 5
♠	K 8 4	♠	2
♥	A 8 2	♥	9 5
♦	A 6 5	♦	J 10 8 7 4
♣	Q 6 4 2	♣	J 10 8 7 5

You are sitting South. If you open a 12-14 no trump, West will come in with a Landy 2♣, showing the majors. Playing a strong no trump you would open 1♣ and West would overcall 1♠. Either way you get to play in 3NT. West leads the ♠Q.

You win trick one with the ♠K and count your winners. There are eight tricks on top, so it seems that you will need the heart finesse for your ninth. *When you have a plan, see if you can think of a better one!* The bidding has made it unlikely that the heart finesse will succeed, but what about cashing three tricks in each minor, discovering West's initial 5-4-2-2 distribution, and then exiting with a spade? West is welcome to four spade tricks, but then has to lead away from the ♥K. Contract made! Give it a go by clicking in the centre of the hand diagram.

Every club should think about inviting an expert in now and again. This one was hosted on a Saturday, with lunch in the middle to keep the energy levels up! It was great fun and congratulations to the organisation team led by Jonathan Hird and Titch Glenday. □

Charity Events

29th July 2025
(Tue)

[Kingston-upon-Thames Café Bridge](#) fundraising for Learn English at Home and First Aid Nursing Yeomanry

13th August 2025
(Weds)

[Molesey Summer Café Bridge](#) fundraising for Momentum Childrens Charity

And finally.....

The next newsletter will come out towards the end of September. So, please send me any club news, personal stories and photographs for the next edition. Is your club having a charity event you would like to tell people about? Let me know. Are you planning any club celebrations? Send me pictures.

[Julia Brough](#)

Editor