



HBA Newsletter December 2011



Volume 2, Issue 1

Expansion of Teaching Courses

Teaching more people to play bridge is essential for the long term health of all the bridge clubs in the County. I am pleased that this autumn we have seen three more of our affiliated clubs introduce teaching courses (Watford and Bushey BC, and a combined course for Harpenden Duplicate BC and Harpenden Tuesday BC). Each course has been fully subscribed and Donald Reid, Chair of Watford, describes some of the lessons learnt from starting a new bridge course in an article inside this newsletter.

Welwyn GC BC and Hitchin BC have expanded their courses this year to provide more opportunities for people to learn to play. Hatfield Heath BC and Sobell BC continue with their courses.

I would like to see courses introduced in the Hemel Hempstead/ Berkhamsted and Broxbourne areas of the County so that anyone living in Hertfordshire isn't put off learning by the travelling distance to their nearest course.

The EBU have introduced some free teacher training courses for our affiliated

Inside this issue:

<i>Avoiding slow play</i>	2
<i>Fourth suit forcing</i>	4
<i>Club focus-Royston B C</i>	6
<i>Hand from our experts</i>	7
<i>Setting up a teaching course</i>	8
<i>Weak Jump Shifts</i>	10
<i>Problem from the Director</i>	12
<i>EBU News</i>	13
<i>Competition Calendar</i>	14
<i>Recent results</i>	14
<i>News from Clubs</i>	15
<i>Committee Matters</i>	16

clubs and so if you are interested in starting a teaching course at your club or helping to support existing teachers please do approach your club committee. We do need more teachers and more courses throughout the County allied to our affiliated clubs. Hopefully these new players will be the club membership for the future.

Bernard Eddleston

President



Why Do I Feel So Rushed? – A Director’s Guide to Avoiding Slow Play

A question I am often asked as Director is “Why do you have to rush us so much?” There should be plenty of time to play the boards and so it is usually a matter of being organised at the table. How do you manage to find thinking time without slowing down the whole evening?

The accepted rate of play for duplicate bridge is 8 boards per hour or 7½ minutes per board. We need to stick to this rate to complete our 24-board evening by around 10-30pm and clear up by 11-00pm. By adopting the following simple guidelines, 7½ minutes per board should be ample time to enjoy our bridge and have sufficient thinking time:

- **When arriving at a table at the start of the round, greet your opponents politely, check you have the correct opponents and tell them what system you are playing especially if it is unusual.** This only requires a phrase such as “Benji weak” or “5-card majors and strong no trump”, further explanations can be given when questions are asked in the auction. Similarly, if you

wish to inquire after your opponents’ bunion or their new car, please leave it until the boards are finished.

- **Remove your cards from the board, count them and sort your hand.** Do not fill in your score card with the opponents number, this can be done when the first board is scored – **the golden rule for filling in your scorecard is that you should never do paperwork while the table is waiting for you to do something else.**
 - **Once the auction is complete, if you are on lead, select your lead and place it face down on the table before you fill in your scorecard with the contract** – you can do your paperwork while dummy is being arranged and declarer is planning his play.
 - **Once play of the hand is complete, count and shuffle your cards and replace them in the board, then fill in your scorecard.** North should also complete the traveller or bridge-mate and show it to the rest of the table for East to check. Do not delay the next hand with examination of any hand or
-



discussion of what might have been. If there is time, this can be done once the round is completed but is better left to the end of the evening.

- **Finally, if you wish to collect refreshments or visit the toilets, do so when you are dummy or sitting out.** Rushing to do these things between rounds often catches people out as the director may call the end of the round just as you leave the room.

By following these guidelines you should find you have far more time

for the important business – the bidding and playing of the cards. As director, I regularly see tables sit down at the same time yet one table is playing trick 6 of the first board before the other table has pulled the cards from the board! 7½ minutes per board is not quick but if we waste 5 of these minutes chatting, doing paperwork and making coffee, then it becomes impossible even for the quickest players!

With thanks to Gary Conrad and Alan Hudson

Bridge Players Cartoon Calendar for 2012

Hitchin Bridge Club (reg charity) have produced a bridge players cartoon calendar for 2012 to raise money to build a new Community Centre in Hitchin. The current centre where they play is threatened with demolition. The calendar contains 12 original cartoons and is priced at £6 plus P&P. Special offer for clubs get 12 for the price of 10. Contact Robert Girvan tel 01462 433750, email r.girvan@ntlworld.com



I think it says "two no trumps"

Another cartoon on page 12



Fourth Suit Forcing

John was in a quandary. He knew he should bid game but he couldn't decide which one. 3NT, 4♥, 4♠ and even 5♦ were all possibilities but what was best? He was about to gamble on 3NT when something stirred at the back of his mind - fourth suit forcing. "Yes", he thought, "that's the answer. I can find out more about Janet's hand by bidding the fourth suit". Here was the full deal:

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

Bidding

W	N	E	S
1♥	P	1♠	P
2♦	P	3♣*	P
3♠	P	4♠	P
P	P		

* FSF

Janet was delighted to be able to show secondary spade support and the excellent 4♠ con-

tract was reached. John was even happier when he wrapped up ten tricks and soon after noted from the traveller that several pairs had failed in 3NT and 4♥.

Fourth suit forcing is an artificial bid of the fourth suit to enquire more information about partner's hand. It does not promise any length in the suit and indeed with good honours in the fourth suit it is usually appropriate to bid no-trumps. There is a common misconception that fourth suit forcing is only used to ask partner for a stop in that suit for the purpose of bidding no-trumps. Whilst this is often a consideration, it is not the sole reason for employing fourth suit forcing. It can be used to simply get a better description of partner's hand or as a means of establishing a game-forcing auction.

There are different views as to how forcing a bid of the fourth suit should be, but a straightforward approach is to treat a fourth suit bid as forcing for one round at the two-level and forcing to game at the three-level. It should only be employed when there is no better alternative bid available i.e. if it is more appropriate to support partner, repeat your own suit or bid no-trumps then do so.



John was feeling rather chuffed on reaching his successful 4♠. The next board got underway and John was confident that this time he knew exactly where he was going. Janet had opened the bidding and John was looking at an impressive collection with an excellent six-card heart suit. It was a shame that they had recently agreed to play weak jump shifts in the majors (see article on page 10) because John really wanted to get his hand across with a strong jump to 2♥ but couldn't do so in their system. Nevertheless, John thought "we are headed for 4♥ at least here and I have a feeling that the slam might be on" Here was the deal

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

John was about to work out his next move when the hand passed out in 3♥. He had a sinking feeling that he had done something badly wrong, since Janet didn't usually pass his forcing bids! Sure enough, he wrapped up an easy 12 tricks

Bidding

W	N	E	S
1♦	P	1♥	P
1♠	P	3♥	P
P!!!	P		

and soon saw that he had scored a bottom on the board as everyone else had reached either game or the slam. Janet drew a deep breath and explained that John should have employed fourth suit forcing before repeating his hearts to establish a game-forcing auction. A hand that uses fourth suit forcing and then bids again is forcing to game. In this way you can differentiate between a hand that wants to INVITE game with a six-card suit (as John had unwittingly shown) and one that wants to FORCE to game. John hadn't been familiar with this useful device, but after his latest embarrassment he would certainly remember it in future! This is how the bidding could have gone

Bidding-FSF

W	N	E	S
1♦	P	1♥	P
1♠	P	2♣*	P
2NT	P	3♥	P
4♥	P	4♠	P
5♣	P	6♥	P
P	P	*FSF	



Club Focus- Royston B C

Royston - is that in Hertfordshire I hear you ask? Well it's almost in Cambridgeshire, quite near to Essex and probably seen as the back of beyond by those in the south of the county.

Despite this we have a thriving Bridge Club which serves the rural areas around us. The Club started in the early 80's, many members joining from the waning Johnson Matthey Bridge section. We played in the Town Hall for many years with 4 - 6 tables attending. We struggled during this period, new members being sadly negated by people moving on or passing away. The main source of new players for a long time had been the evening classes run by North Herts DC, but these ceased due to financial pressures.

We survived, however, and in the early 2000's numbers increased to the point where, in 2005, we had to find new premises to accommodate the growing membership. We in fact joined the Brownies, or more correctly, we used their HQ as our venue. We failed, however, to persuade them to introduce a Bridge badge! Numbers continued to rise and we moved again in 2009 to our



current premises, Market Hill Rooms, in Royston.

We now have 10 -12 tables attending on a regular basis, a Duplimate machine to prepare boards, great catering facilities, (we think we hold the best Bridge Christmas party in the area), and space to store equipment. We play once a week, (Thursday 7.30 pm) but strive to improve the club, to ensure we continue to attract members and encourage players to enter county competitions. We see ourselves as being a friendly club, but one that is competitive and progressive. Those prepared to venture "up north" are assured of a warm welcome.

Full details about the club can be found on our website, <http://www.bridgewebs.com/roystonherts/>



Hand from the experts

Derek and Celia Oram one of the leading pairs in County were playing in the Great Northern Swiss Pairs in October this year. They were lying 5th with the twelfth and final round about to start and Derek takes up the story.” You are hoping for a fair wind behind you in this last match. Sitting west, holding an unpromising flat 5 count, the first hand (both vulnerable) just got better and better...

The bidding just shows the importance of partnership agreements.

- You find the best lead of the 10♣ round to declarers ace.
- The J♦ is finessed followed by a diamond to the Q♦
- A heart is played to the J♥ and your Q♥
- You exit with a club to partner who cashes the K♣ and J♣
- Partner then cashes the A♠ and K♠
- Partner plays the thirteenth club to declarer’s 7♥ overruffed by your 8♥ for your 6th defensive trick
- Still not satisfied, you play the K♦ which partner alertly ruffs with the 9♥ promoting your 10♥ for the 7th defensive trick.”

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

Bidding

	W	N	E	S
Derek			Celia	
			1♦*	1♥
P	2♦**	P	4♥	
P	P	P		

* Precision 11-15 points with at least 2 diamonds

** Probably meant as natural or forward going but taken as at least an invitational raise in hearts. It is surprising how many partnerships don't have a clear agreement on the meaning of a bid of the opponents 'prepared' suit

+ 400 was a complete top and contributed to a 19-1 victory and an overall third place. Well done to Celia and Derek and remember do sort out your partnership agreement for responding to a 'prepared' bid by the opposition.



Setting up a teaching course at your club—some good advice

“Attendance is flat and members aren’t getting any younger - we’ve got to start beginners’ classes”, said the Competitions Secretary, Chris Cook, to our startled Committee last March. Alright, we said, but where do we find them?



We agonised over investing £1300 in local advertising and paid leaflet drops, but this seemed highly risky. But then someone said: “Ask Barbara Kime at Welwyn Garden City B C she’s built up a highly successful teaching programme over ten years”. Barbara’s advice was very clear: forget paid advertising and costly leaflet drops, and concentrate on word of mouth, contacts with local organisations, and putting up posters.

We added a twist of our own and announced that we would donate any profits to the local Peace Hospice in Watford in order to add a “feel good” factor to our sales pitch. We printed our flyers on a home PC under the headline: “Learn bridge for the Peace Hospice” and asked our members and friends from other clubs to pass them round. Club member David Mail and myself distributed 2000 flyers

to Watford homes at no cost except for shoe leather, paper and ink.

But with six weeks to go to the first lesson in September, we had just one taker. In despair, we decided to try generating free publicity in the local media. So we sent out press releases stressing the link with the Hospice, and wrote a dubious article implying that our Club was really a dating agency !

Four weeks later, we were swamped. Sixty people had contacted us.

However, subsequent analysis suggests that this wasn’t all down to the power of the press. Barbara Kime has told us since that there’s always a late rush. It certainly stimulated others to



Table:- Sources of information about the lessons

Principal source of information	Number of contacts
Personal contact	20
Leaflet drop	14
Publicity in local media	8
Searched online for our website	5
Contact with local organisations	3
No source given	10

look for our website, which was another useful source of information (see table). And all this coverage in the media coincided with an increase in membership enquiries to the Club.

Some of our success may also have been due to past lack of activity. So we may find that the well is not quite so full in future years. But we have accumulated a large backlog of contacts on which to draw in the meantime.

If you are thinking of starting lessons in your Club, you also need to consider the target age group. We decided to focus on the retired and part time employed and so offered daytime classes, which seems to have been the correct choice, but maybe we should have started in October to avoid holidays.

Finally, it's not enough to offer les-

sons- beginners soon start asking for opportunities to play, so you need to provide supervised play sessions, and with such large numbers, helpers for both the lessons and the supervised play. Our members responded generously to requests for help to supervise play including David Mail, Clare Hartman and Celia Oram

Overall, we are very pleased with the whole project. We've got a really keen class of 22 beginners led by their EBU professional teacher, Paul Wilson, the publicity has directly benefitted the Club and the Hospice will be receiving a cheque for £500.

Donald Reid-Chair Watford and Bushey BC. tel: 01923 227969

Lessons to learn

- Success with recruiting students depends primarily on personal contacts with people and local organisations such as bowls or golf clubs
- Leaflet drops are helpful, but are hard work for members on a large scale
- Linking with a local charity can add to the appeal of your promotional material
- Generating free publicity is highly desirable and may have direct benefits for your club

bid then the auction may not end with the weak jump shift. The general approach for rebids by opener are as follows:-

- 2NT is forcing generally a game try and shows a 2 card support for the suit of responder. Responder bids 3 of the suit with minimum values.
- A rebid at the 3 level by opener of the suit bid by responder is also considered as a continuation of the pre-emptive bidding sequence.
- Any new suit or a rebid of the suit of the first suit bid by the opener is considered natural and non forcing with

a very distributional hand.

- Any game bid is to play and is a sign off.

So what is the defence to a weak jump shift.

You should probably treat it as a weak two opening.

- Assuming Partner hasn't bid. Double is take out, 2NT is 17-20 balanced or similar.
- Bids are natural and non forcing – paying heed to the vulnerability and suit quality.
- If partner has bid with a double. Double would be take out. 2NT Lebensohl (but that is for agreement). Bids natural and constructive.
- If partner has bid with a suit. Double is responsive. Unassuming cue bids. Bids natural and forcing (should have some tolerance for partners suit). 2NT natural.



Congratulations to Helen Robinson and Roy Young winners of the Mixed Pairs championship held on 11th November



Competition Calendar 2012

Sun 8 Jan	Humble Cup 1st quali-final	1.00pm Bridge Centre, Welwyn
Sun 15 Jan	County Match v Cambs & Hunts	2.00pm Away
Fri 20 Jan	Cadet Pairs Final	7.30pm Bridge Centre, Welwyn
Sun 29 Jan	Championship Pairs semi-final	1.00pm Bridge Centre, Welwyn
Sun 5 Feb	County Match v Camb Univ	2.00pm Away
Sun 12 Feb	Cadet and Intermediate Champ	1.00pm Bridge Centre, Welwyn
Sun 19 Feb	Swiss pairs	1.30 Hemel Hempstead BC
Tue 21 Feb	HBA Simultaneous Pairs	Berkhamsted, Harpenden Tuesday, Leverstock Green, New Hertford, Sobell, Stevenage, Watford Bridge Clubs
Sun 26 Feb	Humble Cup 2nd qual-final	1.00pm Bridge Centre, Welwyn
Fri 16 Mar	Marjorie Lukyn Charity Final	7.30pm Bridge Centre, Welwyn
Sun 25 Mar	Portland Pairs-EBU	1.00pm Bridge Centre, Welwyn
Sun 1 Apr	Desmond Flockhart teams of 8	1.00pm Bridge Centre, Welwyn
Tue 17 Apr	Seniors Pairs (inc buffet lunch)	11.00am Bridge Centre, Welwyn
Fri 27 Apr	Cadet Teams	7.30pm Bridge Centre, Welwyn
Sun 29 Apr	Championship Pairs Final	1.00pm bridge Centre, Welwyn
Sun 20 May	AGM followed by Mixed Teams	3.00pm Bridge Centre, Welwyn
Sun 10 Jun	Wereik Trophy	1.00pm Welwyn G C B C
Sat 21 Jul	Green Pointed Swiss Pairs	1.00pm Wodson Park, Ware
Sun 22 Jul	Green Pointed Swiss Teams	12.00 Wodson Park, Ware

Recent Results

County Events

Mixed Pairs -11th Nov

1st Roy Young & Helen Robinson

2nd Stan & Tara Harding (Fritch)

3rd Paul & Fiona Littlewood

GP Swiss teams- 25th Sept

3rd Anne Flockhart, Michael Hancock, Celia & Derek Oram



Recent results (Cont)

Club Winners Cup - 28th Oct

1st Bernard Eddleston & Tony Slater (Hitchin BC)

2nd John Mathews & Peter Ellinger (St Albans BC)

3rd David Tookey & Rodger White (Harpenden Duplicate BC)

Seniors Teams 6th Sept

1st Gila Tiplady, John Marmery, Barbara McKinnon, Howard Morgan

2nd Mike Minting, Nigel Walsh, Alan Hudson, Peter Lewy

3rd Susie Bond, Pat Henry, Pat Hoggar, John Jackson

News from the Clubs

Hatfield Heath B C

Hatfield Heath Bridge Club held their 30th Annual Swiss Teams, the Heath Cup, on the 16th October. It was a very friendly and successful event. There were 20 teams competing and it was a very closely fought event with the team of Jill Mumford, John Eyre, Mike Robson and Bill Thurl beating Michael Shine, Roy Young, Eddie Cirket and Alan Deeley on a split tie with only two points separating the next five teams. Please put next year's date in (October 14th) your diary and we look forward to seeing you then.

St Albans BC

For many years St Albans has held a multiple teams competition on the 2nd Monday of every month. Two years ago one of the best teams in the County asked if it could take part. It was welcomed without any misgivings and now there is a flourishing competition each month when teams of a wide range of abilities from Cadets to Grand Masters compete enthusiastically. This has attracted a growing number of excellent teams. There is no shortage of space so further teams of all standards would be welcome. We can almost certainly guarantee that you may not be the best nor the worst but that you will have a truly rewarding mixed ability experience.





Executive Committee Decisions



Visit the County
website at
www.hertsbridge.co.uk
for all the latest
news

The last two meetings of the Executive Committee have reviewed how the County might make savings in overall expenditure without impacting on our service. These savings could then be passed on to the overall membership.

The committee has decided to no longer engrave all our trophies but maintain an 'Honours Board' which will be on the website and held by the County secretary. The committee has also decided from April 2012 to no longer pay travelling expenses for County selected teams

The above savings will allow the County to reduce its P2P levy on members from 8p to 6p per session from April 2012. This saving will offset the proposed 2p increase in the EBU P2P levy due to come into effect from the same date. There will therefore be no change in the overall P2P levy for Hertfordshire Clubs next year.

Full details of all decisions are on the website.

HBA Committee 2011-2012

Position	Name	Email address
President	Bernard Eddleston	bernard.eddleston@ntlworld.com
Secretary	Robert Teesdale	teesdale@nildram.co.uk
Treasurer	Bill Blackman	bill85@hotmail.co.uk
Membership Sec	Gary Conrad	garykconrad@btinternet.com
Tournament Sec	Mike Minting	mike.minting@sky.com
Tournament Dir	Gerald Everitt	gerald.everitt@tiscali.co.uk
Selection Chair	Roger Edmonds	roger.edmonds@tiscali.co.uk
Conduct Cmtte Ch	Stan Harding	tarastan@btopenworld.com
County Rep Clubs	Margaret Eddleston	margaret.eddleston@ntlworld.com
Committee member	Julie Snell	julie@thesnells.com
Committee member	Edie Cirket	E.cirket@talktalk.net
Committee member	Peter Grice	pg1003@cam.ac.uk
