

Newsletter

Autumn 2018



MAJOR INITIATIVE AT THE CLUB

We all know that the club has lost a number of members – and the reasons are very sad indeed. Three members (Jim, Jackie and Jennie) and weekly attendees moved away and we wish them every success in their new home. Table numbers are down significantly but the loyal support of remaining members ensures that the club continues to offer really enjoyable evenings of the game we love. However, we must do more to try and attract new members. We are not alone in Worcestershire in facing declining numbers of duplicate bridge players and I have pressed the County to be alert to the issues and they are embarking on much closer liaison with clubs to try to come up with solutions. I have had several meetings already with County and more are planned. However, it is simply not good enough for us to sit back and expect others to solve our problem; we ourselves must implement ideas and fresh thinking, but be entitled to look to the County for support if we need it. They have pledged that they will.

One of the main recruiting drivers for new members is teaching: notably those totally new to the game but also those who wish to take up bridge again, are “rusty” and having been away from the game for a long time do not feel confident about coming along to a club. Teaching those totally new to the game can be a long (and sometimes) slow process for both teacher and student with the EBU course lasting several months. Drop-out rate can be relatively high but some clubs have tried a totally new approach. **LEARN TO PLAY BRIDGE IN A WEEK-END.** This seems to be successful in teaching the BASICS of the game – at the end of the week-end students will be able to understand the fundamentals and be able to play using natural bidding and no systems. You cannot expect more in a week-end but thereafter supervised play in a separate area on club nights and (possibly) a further week-end can teach the next steps and at a very early stage introduce new players to a club environment so it never becomes intimidating. Students on the week-end course will automatically become members of the club but pay normal table money at supervised play sessions.

Your Committee will shortly be discussing how we could hold a week-end course for beginners to take place in late February or early March 2019. There is a lot to consider: course content, cost, teaching resources, venue, advertising and much, much more. However, what is clear is that **WE SHALL NEED VOLUNTEERS TO ASSIST AT BOTH THE WEEK-END AND SUBSEQUENT SUPERVISED PLAY SESSIONS AT THE CLUB.** Volunteers must of course all “teach” the same thing but this should not be a problem – the course material will be available - and I emphasise the course will be the basics of the game and natural bidding. Volunteers will not need to come the entire week-end unless they wish to – a few hours will be of help, but we must ensure we have enough to cover the number of tables of students! I will write more on this when – and IF – we get an idea of potential numbers. It ought to be possible to pay volunteers for their help, but again the Committee will need to discuss the financial aspects when we have a lot more information. I have already approached various publications re advertising rates, and I have to say have found them extremely helpful. Indeed, our local village magazine “5 Alive” that is distributed in Fladbury, Charlton, Lower Moor, Cropthorne and Wyre Piddle have already published for FREE an advert in their October magazine (out yesterday and already one person registering their interest!). Support from the County is lined up and I am having another meeting with them later this week.

So – I will keep the club updated as more information is available. Meanwhile **IF YOU ARE POTENTIALLY WILLING TO HELP, PLEASE LET ME KNOW NOW – no obligation!**

This initiative is quite a challenge for us as a small club, so I hope it comes to fruition and is a success. Time will tell whether there is a demand for such a course and / or whether it does result in more members. Please make our intentions known to all your local friends or acquaintances, especially those who have never played. This is an exciting opportunity for them as well as us!! If anyone shows interest

Thank you for your support

then ask them to phone or email me as soon as possible. I have no idea at the moment how things will pan out – there may be little or no interest, or a lot! Maybe a week-end course for those who wish to return to the game would be easier in some ways but we cannot offer all types of courses at the same time, so it is to those who are totally new where I think our focus should be for the moment. Please support this initiative – it is OUR club and we can all help in some way.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

14 NOVEMBER	CHILDREN IN NEED SIM PAIRS
28 NOVEMBER	AGM – 6.45pm start
12 DECEMBER	CHRISTMAS PARTY – 6.45pm – further details to follow
14 DECEMBER	FESTIVE MEAL – contact Jan Garratt for further information
13 FEBRUARY	MICHAEL FAREY TROPHY

DID YOU KNOW ?

DUMMY / DECLARER

Dummy is aptly named. Dummy must say nothing during play. Dummy must **not** point to a card, **nor** must Dummy float his hand over a card(s), **nor** must Dummy put his hands on the table near the cards. All dummy can do is play the card specified by Declarer. Declarer must specify BOTH rank and suit. If rank is not specified Dummy MUST play the lowest card in the suit. He cannot ask Declarer which card – that is the same as Dummy saying “do you mean the highest or lowest?” Declarer can say “run the Clubs from the top” and dummy can then play highest, 2nd highest etc but far better is for declarer to specify each card, every time. That way there is no possible confusion or contention. Dummy can give factual information to a Director when asked, but not to other players. Dummy cannot call for the director unless another player has noticed an irregularity; nor draw attention to a possible irregularity during play although he can ask **declarer** when he has failed to follow suit whether he has a card of the suit led. After play has concluded Dummy can draw attention to any irregularity. **A good dummy keeps his hands BELOW the table until asked to play a card by declarer.**

CLAIMS

Making a claim of the remaining tricks is encouraged as it speeds up the game. It is quite senseless and a waste of time to play out the cards when only winners are left. HOWEVER, you MUST specify how you are going to make the tricks IMMEDIATELY AT THE TIME OF MAKING A CLAIM. You must not spread your hand and say “the rest are mine”. If you do the opponents have every right to call the director. The rest MIGHT be yours if you play the cards in a certain way (eg after drawing trumps) but if you do not say that at the time of making a claim, the director will likely rule against you. **The director can decide any reasonable line of play – not the perfect line of play** – including you forgetting to draw the remaining trump(s). The fact that you will argue it would be silly not to draw trumps will not matter. Also, please note that once a claim has been made ALL PLAY STOPS. It is wrong for the players to say “play it out”. Play has ceased and if declarer has not specified IMMEDIATELY how he is going to play the hand then call the director!

HESITATION

If you hesitate before making up your mind and then you pass; you place your partner in a very difficult position. It is not justification within the Laws to say that your partner always thinks for a long time. The rules say the director should take the hesitation as inference you had values and your partner is NOT allowed to take your hesitation into account when making his bid. If he then still bids, he has to be able to justify his bid SOLELY on the basis of his own hand. An example might help. You are E and hold: ♠ K J 10 8 5 4 ♥ x x ♦ A x x ♣ Q x Bidding goes N: 1H ; E(you) 1S ; S: 3H ; W (your partner) now hesitates and slowly passes. N passes and you bid 3S. Director! The Director must now let contract be played as 3S but if NS find themselves disadvantaged will rule that the 3S bid was influenced by the hesitation and adjust the score on the basis that the contract was played as 3H by NS. After the W hesitation E should have passed 3H as the 3S bid cannot be justified on his own hand. Please note that you can hesitate and think, provided you then make a bid! Hesitation (or Break in Tempo as it is often called nowadays), its consequences and obligations, is explained in detail on the web site.

OPENING LEAD OUT OF TURN

Again – this crops up too often and principally because the person making the lead does not place the card face down and ask “Any Questions?” If players did this and waited a second or so before turning over the lead card possibly one of the other three players MIGHT just notice – and as a friendly club I sincerely hope that opponents would say something as well as your partner! May I remind you all that you should NOT put away the bidding cards until the opening lead has been turned over (faced).

Thank you for your support – if you have a new or changed email address please let me know