Editorial: Welcome to December’s Bulletin and a big ‘thank you’ to the contributors of some excellent articles and features. The debate started by Brian Keable rages on with some interesting replies on ethics and general behaviour at the table. Alan Cooke gives some good advice on a few of these issues. As we seem to know so little of each other (apart from our bridge abilities!), Alan Oddie has written a personal profile. Would somebody else like to follow suit for the next issue? If so, please contact the editor and as always, please keep your thoughts and contributions coming in.

“If you can’t be a good loser - don’t play!”

Cartoon by Marco Alcalay
The December Quiz
... to get you thinking!

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4♠ by South
West leads ♣Q
♣ 10
♥ 98
♦ J
♣ QJ10987654

♠ AQ632
♥ K54
♦ 973
♣ A3

♠ 97
♥ QJ1073
♦ KQ10652
♣ Void

♠ KJ854
♥ A62
♦ A84
♣ K2

The Bidding

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After you open 1♠, West overcalls 4♣ and your partner finishes the auction with 4♠. West leads ♣Q and you play dummy’s ♣A. Tough luck when East ruffs it and returns the ♦K. How do you plan to make this contract? Clue: the solution does not lie in a squeeze play.

Answer on page 11

YOUR BULLETIN REPS

Please note that the following people will be handing out the latest Bulletins at your local club:

Clifton ...............Phil Titchner Leighton B. ...........David Gilling
PM Bridge ............Ann Pillinger Bedford .................Alan Cooke
Cranfield..........Erika Sharrock Milton Keynes.......David Gilling
Wardown .............Peter Scott

Please ask one of them if you have not received your copy.
Bedford Bridge Club originated in 1960 as the R.A.E. (Royal Aircraft Establishment) Bridge Club, which was formed by a number of lunch-time rubber bridge players who wanted to play more competitively. The club met in the Ministry of Agriculture canteen at the corner of Ashburnham Road and Bromham Road. Some of the founder and early members will be familiar names to most long-standing BBA members. Reg Wakeling, sadly no longer with us, became secretary in 1961 and Brad Illingworth, his regular partner, became chairman in 1963. Brad, as many will remember, was director at BBC for many years and a qualified national tournament director. The club subsequently changed its name to Bedford Bridge Club and moved to the Tavistock Centre, where it remained until moving to its present home at Brickhill Community Centre in Avon Drive.

In the early eighties the club decided to meet on Friday nights as well as the regular Tuesdays with the aim of encouraging beginners to feel welcome. There are now many clubs available for those who are just learning or have no ambition to play more competitively. Our aim is to continue to provide a venue for competitive bridge, but we welcome and encourage those who wish to take up the game more seriously to join us. A number of our members will make themselves available on Friday evenings, by arrangement, to partner individual newcomers for their first few games, or to help any established partnerships venturing into duplicate bridge, to try us out.
We meet on Tuesday and Friday evenings at 7.30 pm and usually play 26 boards, finishing by 10.40 pm. We have pre-dealt hands with computer scoring so that results are available with printed sheets of the hands at the end. There are usually twelve or so tables in play on Tuesdays but fewer on Fridays. Anyone wishing to play who does not have a partner may ring Pat Skelton on 01234 347824, who will try to find you a partner to match your level of experience, or a friendly more experienced player who is happy to help you for a few introductory sessions. If you already have a partner you can just turn up at around 7.15 pm. The first Tuesday in each month is usually a Teams-of-4 evening though, so it is better to check the website at www.bridgewebs.com/bedfordbrickhill Alternatively, ring Pat, (or one of the committee) and they will also try to find you someone to help guide you through your first session if you wish.

Our annual membership fee is currently £75, for which you have two nights per week of bridge (Xmas and New Year excluded) and there is no fee on the night except on a few special occasions - such as National Simultaneous Pairs events - which equates to less than 80p per night. Visitors are welcome for £3 per night on normal evenings. Tea and coffee with biscuits are available for 25p per cup. There is a car park and Avon Drive allows for safe parking on both sides, close to the club.

Chairman….. Alan Cooke Secretary .........................Sue Ford
Treasurer ......Peter Flippant Tournament Organiser ... Paul Habershon

“I warned you about opening light!”
It could only happen in America! On the evening of 29th September 1929, the well-to-do John and Myrtle Bennett of Kansas City invited their equally well-to-do friends Charles and Myrna Hofman over for a game of friendly low-stakes rubber bridge.

At the start, the Bennetts were well ahead, but as the evening wore on, the Hofmans had managed to catch up.

The layout shown is the best recollection of all surviving parties of the hand. John Bennett in the South seat opened 1♣, Charles Hofman as West overcalled 2♦, and Myrtle Bennett as North jumped to 4♠ which ended the auction. Mr. Hofman led the ♦A followed by the ♣J at trick 2.

Without a diamond continuation at trick 2, the contract can be made by getting the spades right, setting up the clubs by running them through East, who should hold the queen, (West led the jack) and using a diamond ruff as an entry to dummy. However, Mr. Bennett managed to go two off after incorrectly guessing the location of the ♠Q. Mrs. Bennett was less than pleased when, at the post-mortem, Mr. Bennett’s light opening was revealed and she accused him of being “a bum bridge player”. She firmly believed that if one is in the habit of opening light, one had better be able to play the spots off the cards. In her mind, both to open light and fail to make the final contract was an unforgivable crime. Later at trial, Myra Hofman testified that:
“He came right back at her. I don't remember the exact words. This kept up for several minutes. We tried to stop the argument by demanding the cards, but by this time the row had become so pronounced that Bennett, reaching across the table, grabbed Myrtle's arm and slapped her several times. We tried to intervene, but it was futile. While Mrs. Bennett repeated over and over in a strained sing-song tone "Nobody but a bum would hit a woman," her husband jumped up and shouted, "I'm going to spend the night at a hotel. And tomorrow I'm leaving town." His wife said to us: "I think you folks had better go." Of course, we started to go."

At this, John Bennett went off to the bedroom to pack but was soon confronted by his wife holding a gun. He locked himself in the bathroom and Myrtle fired two shots through the door but missed him. He left the bathroom via another door and after making his way down a hallway, was leaving the front door when Myrtle spotted him and fired two shots at him, killing him on the spot.

The police were summoned and Myrtle Bennett was charged with first degree murder for the shooting death of her husband. Amazingly and to general public outrage, she was acquitted at trial with an incredible defence that the gun had accidentally gone off four times! She then collected on her husband's $30,000 life insurance policy which in those years of depression was a tidy sum.

In his 1934 collection ‘While Rome Burns’, drama critic and essayist Alexander Woollcott made the following comment of Myrtle Bennett’s years spent after her acquittal:

“Myrtle Bennett has not allowed her bridge to grow rusty, even though she occasionally encounters an explicable difficulty in finding a partner. Recently she took on one unacquainted with her history. Having made an impulsive bid, he put his hand down with some diffidence. "Partner," he said, "I'm afraid you'll want to shoot me for this." Mrs. Bennett, says my informant, had the good taste to faint.”
I’ve played in the Ranked Masters Pairs for several years with Iain Roberts, but he couldn’t play this year (being married to a non bridge-player is a cross that many of us have to bear), so having finally caught him up in the EBU rankings, I played in the Grand Masters this year with Ron Davis.

There were 34 pairs, and scoring was by the Butler method where your result on a board is IMPed against the average of all the scores for that hand. It’s therefore akin to teams, with a premium on making your contract rather than on overtricks. It’s also important to bid your games and slams.

Ron and I led the event from start to finish; these are two difficult play hands that helped us on our way.

Game All, Dealer North.

Ron’s jump to $4\heartsuit$ is on the aggressive side, because he does not have too much to spare for his vulnerable two-level overcall, but as little as AQxx in hearts and xxx in diamonds opposite will give a fair play for game, and at Butler scoring vulnerable games are not to be missed.
The spade lead went to the ace, East cashed a top club (getting a count signal from his partner) and switched passively back to spades. Ron came to hand with a diamond and played a heart to the queen, dropping the 10 on his right. He then played a second diamond and after all followed to that, the bidding and play to date virtually marked East with 5-1-2-5 distribution.

Ron now played the king of hearts which was a slight error. If West had won this and returned a spade, it could be ruffed in dummy, the jack of hearts cashed, then back to hand with a diamond to draw the last trump. Alternatively, if West had won the ace of hearts and played a club, that would be ruffed in hand with the 9 and trumps drawn with the aid of the marked finesse of the 7. But West could have won the ace and returned either the jack of diamonds or the five of hearts; in either case declarer does not quite have the entries to unscramble his tricks. In practice, West ducked the ace of hearts, but then the run of the diamonds finished her off. No other pair bid and made 4♥ on this hand. And the slight error of the king of hearts? Leading the 6 from hand planning to run it if not covered leaves West without resource.

Game All, Dealer North.

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<td>splinter, agreeing spades</td>
<td>have you got the queen of trumps?</td>
<td>yes, and I hope you can work out what this means</td>
<td>if you’re bidding like this without the king of hearts or the king of clubs, I’m looking for a new partner.</td>
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I felt I had an awkward choice over 5♦. Technically my 6♦ bid showed the king of diamonds plus the queen of trumps, but I’d be unlikely to splinter with a singleton king. I hoped 6♦ would convey the diamond void plus some extras, since that might be all partner needed for a grand slam if he was missing the ace of diamonds.

Before reading on, put your thumbs over the E-W cards and decide how you would play this on the jack of clubs lead.

One line is to set up dummy’s hearts. You win the club, cash the ace of hearts, cross to dummy with the 10 of trumps, ditch the queen of hearts on the king of clubs and ruff a heart high. You succeed if either hearts are 3-2 or, if they are 4-1, when trumps are also 2-2. I make that about an 80% line. But somehow the possibility of setting up the weak hand is not easy to spot and Ron played to ruff out the king of diamonds. That will succeed if it is guarded no more than three times. I make that about 55% and as you can see is a winning line too, but ...

... Ron made the slight mistake of not cashing the ace of diamonds first. So, by the time he’d ruffed three diamonds in dummy and got back to hand with the ace of hearts, a club ruff and a heart ruff (after pitching the queen on the king of clubs), he was in hand and down to this 5-card ending:

The king of diamonds had not appeared, so he had to decide whether spades were 2-2 (in which case he could just ruff the queen of diamonds) or whether the trumps were 3-1 and diamonds breaking, in which case he could just draw trumps. The former is slightly better odds, but as you can see would have failed on the actual hand. But perhaps because he had started out to set up the diamonds, Ron drew trumps; the gods smiled, and we chalked up 2210.

So, did you choose the superior line of setting up dummy? If so, you’ve misplayed it too. After the club lead, you
should cash four side-suit winners ending in hand, and then cross-ruff for nine trump tricks. Apart from some very unlikely breaks, you only fail if East started with fewer than three diamonds – about a 90% shot.

Perhaps because of all those honours South holds in the red suits, that line is somehow easy to miss. If instead South’s red suits had been Ax and Axxxxx respectively, I think it would be much easier to spot.

Caption Competition

Can you think of a good caption for this cartoon? If so, please let the editor know. A small prize will be awarded to the winning entry. Ed

Cartoon by Marco Alcalay

Solution to the December Quiz on page 3

To make this contract you must first make the obvious play of pitching the king of clubs on your ace at trick 1 after East has ruffed it! Now draw the remaining two trumps in one round and cash the ace and king of hearts. Next, you exit with your last club giving the lead to West, who only has clubs left. On his club return you throw a heart from dummy and a diamond from hand (do not ruff). On his next club, ruff in dummy and throw your last diamond from hand, making ten tricks and bringing home your contract! This is a rare example of a double ruff-and-discard. Ed
Val Jarrett makes some excellent points in her letter. I certainly agree that bridge should be an enjoyable pastime and that stronger players should be tolerant of their less experienced brethren. We need to encourage beginners, so lest I am accused of doing otherwise, I would mention that this article is aimed at the regular club player and was written before Val’s letter appeared.

The game of bridge has a comprehensive set of rules, rather grandly called laws, set out in a book where every eventuality is covered. Very few people can be expected to know all the laws in detail but it’s surprising just how many good players are unaware how the laws treat some of the more common infractions. Here are some examples and comments, in no particular order.

1) If declarer leads from the wrong hand, EITHER defender may accept the lead.

2) Dummy may not call attention to an irregularity during play but may do so when play has ended. For example, once declarer has led or called for a card from the wrong hand, dummy should NOT draw attention to this fact (although in practice everybody does!). Towards the end of the hand, dummy may not say “Dummy is good” even if it is, as declarer might still misplay the remaining cards. Dummy may not point out that a revoke has occurred until the hand has ended.

3) Contrary to popular belief, a revoke is not established when the LHO has played to the next trick, but only when the offending side has played to the next trick. The laws now allow partner to enquire “having none?” so nobody should ever revoke ever again. If they do, it is their partner’s fault!

4) If someone makes an insufficient bid, it may be accepted at the option of the offender’s LHO.

5) If someone accidentally drops a card face up, it cannot just be replaced in their hand as, depending on the circumstances, it may be
a penalty card. Saying that you allow other people like Tom aged 102 to take back their dropped cards is not a valid argument.

6) If someone makes an UNINTENDED call by pulling out the wrong bid from the box, it may be corrected even if their LHO has bid (but not if their partner has bid).

7) If declarer makes a claim which is disputed by the defence, declarer is not allowed to play on. Play must stop immediately and the director called to adjudicate. Incidentally, when making a claim, it is advisable to have the lead in your hand (or dummy) and make some statement regarding trumps.

8) Usually a played card cannot be changed. For example, if declarer leads a small card from dummy and then plays the ace from hand without noticing RHO has already ruffed, they are not allowed to substitute another card. A similar situation could arise if a defender mishears which card has been called for from dummy.

9) If a penalty card situation arises, the director should be called immediately. This is particularly important if declarer is an inexperienced player who may not know that lead penalties could apply.

10) Adhering to the laws of bridge is part of the game and choosing which laws you ignore and which you don’t is a dangerous practice. Where do you draw the line? Since very few players know exactly what the law is in any given situation, it is essential to call the director immediately something goes wrong. This is not unfriendly. Every game or sport needs an arbiter and bridge is no different. Imagine (if you can) a Premier League soccer match with no referee!

11) As a club director, it is advisable to take the law book with you and read out the relevant sentence or section from the book, as people are more convinced with a black and white explanation. You are also more likely to get the ruling right!

12) In my opinion all tournament players and most club players would benefit from buying themselves a copy of the official law book from the EBU and browsing through it occasionally. Alternatively, a more user friendly and cheaper version ‘Duplicate Bridge Rules Simplified’ is available from Mr Bridge.
The Big Debate:

Responses to Val Jarrett’s letter in August’s Bulletin

From Lorraine Curry - Chairman of Leighton Buzzard Bridge Club

It was with despair that I read the letter in the penultimate issue of the Bulletin but I was much cheered by the reply in the last issue from Val Jarrett. Well said Val!

I started playing bridge just 4 years ago and, whilst many have been extremely generous with their help and patience, I have been amazed at the way a few people are prepared to speak to, and treat, others who they either partner or find themselves competing against. It seems to me that normal everyday courtesy goes out of the window when some players sit themselves down at a bridge table. They become impatient and rude, and speak to others, both their partners and opponents, in a manner that they would consider quite unacceptable in any other walk of life. The ‘Best Behaviour at Bridge rules’ do mention convention cards, but only as one point in eight - the other 7 bullet points relate to behaviour towards other people but these seem to be frequently ignored and in my experience, where this occurs, usually by the better players. A pity that rules relating to the treatment of others takes a back seat to the rules about equipment.

When one decides to try to learn the game of bridge, the main consideration is mastering the basic rules of the game, the bidding and playing systems. That is daunting enough in its own right, particularly when then confronted across the table by those who have been playing for decades. But to then be expected to know and understand every single rule and piece of etiquette immediately, it seems to me, is quite unreasonable. Did it not take time for these things to develop? Did those experienced players know everything the instant they started playing many years ago? Maybe they were
fortunate enough to be born with all the skill and knowledge at their fingertips! The majority of us, I suspect, learn over a very long period.

I have heard people claim that football, rugby and cricket players all have to play by the rules. Yes, that is true of the highly paid professionals but just look in the parks at the weekend when a group of amateurs are having a kick about with a couple of jerseys as goal posts or who are using a tennis ball to play cricket. They use the rules that are essential to the game but enjoy the activity for what it is – a game. So what if the newbie in a club doesn’t know how to fill in a convention card properly – or even what it means – don’t those experienced players have enough of an advantage over the less experienced that they need to intimidate them with complaints of unintended misconduct?

I am aware, at the main club where I play, that we have great difficulty in retaining new players. I have asked several of them why they have given up and the answer is universal. They are intimidated and made to feel unwelcome and inferior by those insisting on the full set of rules and etiquette being adhered to, with no regard for experience; and by the calling of the director for misdemeanours that they had no clue were, in fact, misdemeanours. I know of one new couple who were close to tears after being on the receiving end of such treatment on several occasions in one evening. What sort of game are we playing when we can do this to people? There is an advert going round at the moment that says ‘it isn’t big to make others feel small’! But unfortunately that appears to be what some people actually enjoy.

If those experienced players cannot bring themselves to allow small infringements of the rules in certain circumstances, then there will be no new people coming into the game and it will die a death. Most people do not ‘break the rules’ deliberately; they just don’t know all of them. Maybe those players who do understand all of the rules could assist those of us who don’t by explaining in a non-aggressive way at the end of the hand what the proper etiquette should have been. That way we shall all learn and enjoy a game we should like to see prosper, not die. L.C.
From David Gilling - Chairman of the Bedfordshire Bridge Association:

There has been an interesting and useful exchange of views between two members in recent Bulletins about the rules of bridge and our observation of them.

We would all be united in saying that bridge is a great game which offers us so many opportunities to compete and develop our skills. We would probably accept that our 400 membership in Bedfordshire forms a broad church; to misquote a defunct newspaper: “All bridge life is there”.

All great games have a structure of rules and I can see no conflict whatever between adherence to the rules and personal enjoyment. In fact I believe that enjoyment largely depends on our knowledge of all aspects of the game, starting with a convention/system card which we should have available at all sessions, whether club, county or national.

Games without rules are pointless. I am convinced that an understanding of the rules helps us in our aim to become better players and surely that is what we all want.

Now - and this is of fundamental importance - whatever happens at the table should be carried out in the spirit of BB@B - Best Behaviour at Bridge. Director calls should be made in a courteous manner and we need to be sensitive to the problems of the less experienced. We all know that it is possible to appear aggressive and that some of us may get a bit flustered in the heat of the moment.

We have a responsibility to help newcomers to the game and newcomers have the duty to acquaint themselves with the laws. Our members have opened up a valuable discussion from which I have no doubt we all have something to learn. D.G.
From Roger Gregory:

Well said Val Jarrett [August 2012 Edition of the BBA Bulletin]. Brian Keable’s article [April 2012 Edition], whilst clearly right in principle, expresses precisely the kind of view from the select band of “more accomplished” players, as they look down upon us ‘less accomplished’ masses, which encapsulates the divide that separates us so vividly.

Come on now Brian. I fully accept that you are as entitled to your views and to the expressing of them, as are the rest of us. But, at the end of the day, bridge remains for most of us, just a hobby to which we aspire frequently to enjoy but rarely to master. If you really care about the present and future well-being of this wonderful game, then please think more about the needs of the ordinary people and less about the rules for the rules’ sake.

Yes of course there must be rules of play and of etiquette and, yes of course, we must all do our [often modest] best to understand them and obey them. In your letter, you call for all players in affiliated clubs to “adhere to the prevailing EBU standards for behaviour and etiquette ...”. Again, yes of course; but only this very week at Wilstead, I witnessed at first hand a “more accomplished” pair, who no doubt understand fully when to alert and when to announce and they certainly had their convention cards displayed proudly on the table in front of them. However, very sadly, their behaviour at the table, as opposed to their adherence to the etiquette, gave not the slightest hint of any grasp of the need for common courtesy either towards each other or especially towards their very embarrassed “less accomplished” opponents. Can there really be any doubt about whether good etiquette or bad behaviour has the greater impact upon the future well-being of the game?

Is it any wonder that most people emerging from the excellent (including yours) training courses, find it so difficult to make and sustain the transition to playing in affiliated clubs and soon either give up completely or join the non-affiliated clubs where the atmosphere and [what a sad indictment of ‘affiliation’ this is] often the behaviour at the table is so much more relaxed and pleasant. Again, well said Val .. now let’s hear from the BBA on this so important topic, please. R.G.
From Derek Marsh - BBA Competitions Secretary

I read with interest the letter from Brian Keable and the response from Val Jarrett.

While Brian’s letter may have seemed critical of players that do not follow the rules on alerts, announcements and stops, I feel he is right in that we have been a little lax in helping those who do not understand these rules and the reason for the rules.

I do not believe that adhering to procedural behaviours stops enjoyment of the game. Val asks whether convention cards and procedures are important. I would like to put my view with three scenarios.

Jan and I are in ‘Anyold Town’ for the day and decide to visit ‘Anyold Bridge Club’. We move to a table that has players we have not met before. We exchange greetings and a brief chat, then get down to the first hand having missed the chance to ask what system they play. Right hand opponent opens 1♣ which is not alerted. I have an opening hand with ace & king to five clubs, Axx of diamonds and Qx in both majors. If the club bid is natural, then I will pass. If it was not, I will double to show an opening hand knowing I have a retreat to 2♣. If it was a strong club opening I will double for lead direction.

Scenario 1
I cannot ask if the club bid is natural as it would suggest I have a club holding. So I glance at the convention card on the table, see the system the other pair are playing, and act accordingly.

Scenario 2
They do not have a card so I have to ask which system they are playing, and in doing so I have shown a possible interest in clubs. Their ♣ is phoney, I double and partner is subconsciously aware that I have an opening hand with club values! This information helps us find a beneficial contract.

Scenario 3
They do not have a convention card so I have to ask which system they are playing, and I have again shown a possible interest in clubs.
The 1♣ is natural, I pass and left hand opponent ends up in four of a major. Partner who holds Jxxx of the trump suit sub-consciously decides to lead the jack of clubs from J10x. Qxxxx of clubs goes down in dummy and declarer has to ruff. Partner holds the third round of trumps and leads a second club removing declarer’s last trump. The ♦A entry ensures the contract goes off.

In scenarios 2 & 3, as we leave the table our opponents are indignant and both agree that we have cheated and hope they will not see us at the club again. The enjoyment of their evening has been spoilt and so has ours because we feel as bad about the outcome as they do.

The answer to this problem is simple. We all wear a sticker saying which system we play and we have a new style bidding box with different cards marked Phoney Club, Natural Club, Strong Club, Take-Out Double, Penalty Double etc.

I believe that the behavioural procedures are there to enable people to enjoy a great game - not to spoil it. I also think the educating of players on the procedures should be undertaken at club level and not at the table. Having the director explain one procedure a night after announcements may be a good approach, because contrary to popular opinion some Bridge players do listen to announcements. D.M.
I first took up bridge at grammar school (remember those?) where two of my teachers were very keen players and happily ran bridge lessons for the pupils. In those far-off days playing cards in schools was usually frowned upon, if not worse, so I was very fortunate to get a half-decent education in more ways than one. Then on to university, where I spent far too much time playing bridge, mostly with Alan Woo. We continued our partnership until I was about 25, when I was married (for the first time). Combining a career (I’m an actuary by profession), married life and bridge were incompatible, so one of them had to go.

So, I played hardly any bridge from then until I retired in 2000. With a bit more time on my hands I took up bridge again, but did not have a partner, so I went along to the Milton Keynes club, where I met Ron Davis, with whom I have been playing ever since. In my other ‘spare’ time I became a magistrate on the Milton Keynes bench and helped my (second) wife, Rachel, with her horses. She was a very keen eventer, but a few years ago decided that she was too old to carry on charging at large and solid cross-country fences, so she gave that up. Rachel decided that she’d set up and run a children’s charity. She asked me if I’d be the secretary on a temporary basis until she found someone to do it permanently. That was just over four years ago. Guess what ...

So, now I spend more and more time on our charity, Ride High. The aim is to improve the lot of disadvantaged kids from Milton Keynes. The children are all referred to us by childcare professionals and come once a week. The hook we get them on is teaching them to ride and look after horses. But the real aim is to improve their social, academic and life skills through a range of mainly equine-based clubroom activities. I’m pleased to say we’ve had a fair degree of success and now cater for around 80 children per week. You can read more about us at www.ridehigh.org
Apart from bridge, my other main hobbies are gardening (I have an acre to tend) and travel. Since retiring (and before *Ride High*), Rachel and I took ourselves off on a prolonged overseas holiday every year for about six to eight weeks. This used to coincide with the end of the eventing season in about mid-October, but since Rachel gave up competitive riding, it’s been more of a moveable feast. Then *Ride High* came along and the long holidays dropped by the wayside …

… until this year. When you read this, we will have just returned from a trip to Japan.

________________________________________

Are there any volunteers for another personal bridge profile to go in the next issue? If so, please contact the editor

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**Wedding Bells**

On the happy event of David Dickson’s and Gina Dunn’s recent wedding, David informs us:-

We travelled to Scotland in late July and Gina's immediate family all made the journey North which meant that my dear old (92 years young) mum was able to attend. We were married in Motherwell on the 27th of July and had a celebratory dinner at the Cartland Bridge Hotel in Lanark. This gave all the southerners an opportunity to enjoy some Scottish delicacies such as cullen skink and haggis. On the way back South we spent a few days in the Lake District.

We met at Bedford Bridge Club 12 years ago and first went out together on 29th September 2000 (Gina's birthday). D.D.
This year I have been privileged to attend two world championships – the World Juniors in Taicang (30 miles NW of Shanghai) and the World Mind Sports in Lille – as coach to England sides: one Junior and one Open. Both of these presented different challenges, so I thought I would give an insight into how an international team functions.

An age-group coach has to cope with a continually evolving side as players become too old and need to be replaced by a new generation. Indeed, our side in China only had two of the players from the side that qualified through the previous year’s Europeans in Bulgaria. China also presents a number of special difficulties. The weather was stifling (over 35 degrees for two weeks) and humid. There was also the change of diet, the time difference and the language barrier to overcome. These things combine to throw a team askew.

The championships themselves are a tightly run ship. The same directing crew tends to do all the major events and they are very well drilled. The IT systems have been vastly improved with some fantastic innovations. Every player, captain and coach has a bar-coded picture ID that when swiped underneath a scanner, automatically prints out a complete team match scorecard. There is also an internal event emailing system used for communication. Butlers are mailed out within minutes of the final deal and the system is used to communicate official instructions such as appeals times and locations. Match line-ups are done blind via computer and everything is timed so that late team submissions are fined automatically. Additionally, all the tables’ scores are linked automatically so live result updates can be obtained via the web or in the Vugraph theatre as each deal is played.

With a team of six players, the captain and coach have to decide how best to make use of their resources. Often this means one or two of the pairs monopolising the playing time. This can be very difficult.
for the supporting players whose opportunities are limited, but are desperate to play. Winning championships is a managed combination of ruthlessness and compassion – a captain can’t play a pair just to ‘give them a game’. The coach will have copies of all the opponent system files to look out for methods that need specialist defences or general things to be aware of. He will also watch opponents in advance to gauge their level of technical expertise and playing style – aggressive or passive. This can affect the selection of pairs to line up in a match.

In the event, England were erratic. We limped into the quarter-finals, where the winners of the round-robin, Poland, exercised their right to choose opponents and selected us as they had maximum carry-over from an emphatic earlier win. However, this was the prelude to a dramatic turnaround where England comprehensively won the first 14-deal stanza to lead by 47 IMPs. This lead slowly dripped away over the next two sets, before the floodgates opened and we bowed out comfortably, rueing the fact that if the match had been the same length as in Philadelphia, we would have gone through. Poland went on to wipe the floor with the French and USA to deservedly retain their title.

The World Mind Games in Lille was the first time I had worked with the England Open side. This team contained players more familiar to most of the readership as it included Tony Forrester and Andrew Robson. As coach, most of my role was similar to Taicang insofar as prepping the players before each match with what they could expect – opposition system details, styles of play, supplying with bananas and water, and anything else they might need to watch out for. It is important to make sure every little detail is accounted for, including trying to get Robson to his table on time without him being distracted by Zia coming to tell him another story! I still had to do a lot of opposition scouting on the few players we didn’t know. It is important to know who has turned up on a tourist visa and who is actually there on business!

There was one big difference. As a junior coach, there is a lot of technical instruction on-the-job as situations arise. There is no chance of myself informing one of these players that there are things they
need to work on or pointing out their errors – they recognise their own. In fact that was the most enlightening thing. Post-mortems over dinner were packed full of insights and views that made for fascinating discussion. The further one goes up the bridge food chain, the way the players think about and process the game changes dramatically. At the very top echelons, the incredibly subtle nuances they pick up on would be completely missed by those only a few ranks below.

Unfortunately, this turned out to be a disappointing event for us. Despite what looked to be a favourable draw in Group A, things started poorly and tailed off. Coming into the last day, with only four teams to go through, a miracle was needed and the match against the Danes proved it wasn’t going to happen. Forrester had a nearly impossible lead problem against one Danish slam. Try his problem. As South, you hold ♠10653 ♥K2 ♦642♣AQ75 and hear the auction shown on the right:

Forrester opted to try to cash the ace he could see in his own hand as there was a good chance an opponent would be void in diamonds. When that was ruffed, the now established club king provided a discard for declarer’s diamond loser.

When that was followed up by a grand slam needing the queen of trumps to drop doubleton missing five cards rolling in against us, it was time to book the Eurostar home.

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<th>S</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>E</th>
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<td>Pass</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>3♦</td>
<td>4♥</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>5♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>6♥</td>
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**The Full Deal**

| ♠ 97  | ♦ J  |
| ♠ AKQJ53  | ♠ J932  |
| ♠ AK8  | ♠ QJ42 |
| ♥ 108  | ♥ AQ976543 |
| ♦ 1098  | ♦ 7 |
| ♣ 10864  | ♣ Void |
| ♠ 10653  | ♠ 10653 |
| ♥ K2  | ♥ K2 |
| ♦ 642  | ♦ 642 |
| ♣ AQ75  | ♣ AQ75 |

**The 2013 Charity Pairs**

Please note that the date of this event has been changed from that shown on page 21 of the August Bulletin. The new date will be 21st April, starting at 1.00 pm at Wilstead.
Hand 1.

Take a look at the deal on the right. You are South in 3NT. How will you play the hand if:

a) No opposition bidding and West leads ♥7  
b) No opposition bidding and West leads ♠A and then switches to ♥7.  
c) West opens 1♣ and leads ♥7.

Your opponents are competent players using standard leads and carding methods. They will also give best defence. Think about what inferences you can draw from the opening lead before turning to page 27 to find your best lines of play.

Hand 2.

Here’s another deal on the right for you to ponder over.

The contract is 4♠ by South after West had opened 1♥ and East had raised to 2♥. West leads the ♥A, ♥K, and ♥2 to East’s ♥9, ♥5 and ♥Q. You ruff the 3rd heart and draw trumps, East having started with ♠J53. How will you play the hand and why?

Turn to page 27 For the answers
Brian (Brin) Taylor

It is with deep regret that I record the passing of Brian Taylor on 29th September aged 73 after a prolonged illness. Brin, as he was generally known by his friends and fellow bridge players, married Barbara in his early 20s whilst he was still an engineering apprentice at Vauxhall, where he continued working until his late 40s. He completed his working life at Castrol as a lubricants consultant.

He was first attracted to bridge in the late 70s. He and I were part of a social group of Round Tablers and golfing buddies, two of whom asked if we would like to join them for regular rubber bridge. Neither of us had any inkling of what was involved and in hindsight, our ‘tutors’ taught us a very strange system which bears no comparison with the modern game. Nevertheless, we both got hooked and looked to broaden our experience and joined Ampthill Bridge Club.

Subsequently Barbara, who played golf, took up bridge and Maureen, already a bridge enthusiast, took up golf and we all progressed together in our chosen pastimes. To increase the involvement in bridge, we joined Bedford Bridge Club in the mid-80s, playing there to the present day. We participated in the Bedfordshire League under the team name of ‘Double Shuffle’ for many years and Barbara and Brin were regular attendees at County events. They also represented the County on numerous occasions. Brin also joined the County Committee in 2007 where his primary duty was the preparation of the Bulletin, a task he undertook diligently before handing over to our present editor.

Outside golf and bridge, Brin was an avid crossword enthusiast, particularly those with plenty of anagrams. He was also keen on maximising the benefit of his computer with many of us turning to him for help or replicating some of his innovations. This may have partly explained his knowledge of a number of obscure subjects which amazed me from time to time despite freely admitting he was not a book worm.

He was, in summary, a great friend, a solid and respected citizen and our condolences go to Barbara, their children David, Lynn and Stephen and six grandchildren. He will be missed.

Brian Stairs
Answers to ‘Placing your Opponents’ Cards on Page 25

Hand 1.
If you are thinking of making a second club trick, your chances are slim indeed as, missing the ♣9, you will need to find East with ♣KQ - long odds! Your better hope of making your ninth trick is in setting up a spade trick, but how to go about it? If West held ♣AK, he would very likely have led the ace.

a) In the absence of the ♠A lead, it looks like the top spade honours (AK) are split, but what about the jack? There is a 50% chance that West holds the jack, so lead a spade from the South hand and finesse the ♠10, forcing East’s top honour if West holds the jack. When regaining the lead, lead a second spade towards the queen, placing West with the other top spade honour.

b) West would not lead an unsupported ace against a suit contract without the king, so you should assume he also holds the king and lead towards the ♠Q when gaining the lead.

c) Count the points! You hold 17 hcp and North holds 10 hcp for a total of 27 hcp. West opened the bidding and should therefore hold a minimum of 11 hcp, leaving East with a maximum of 2 hcp and so East cannot hold either the ace or king of spades. Therefore, lead twice towards the ♠Q to make the queen for your ninth trick.

Hand 2.
You have nine top tricks and must make one diamond trick to make your contract, but how do you play the diamonds? Once again, count the points (always a good idea!). You have 23 hcp between your two hands, leaving 17 hcp with your opponents. West has opened the bidding showing a minimum of 11 hcp which means East can only have a maximum of 6 hcp. He has already shown the ♥Q and ♠J leaving him with a possible 3 more hcp. So, he cannot hold the ♦A but could possibly hold the ♦Q. Your only chance is to lead a diamond from dummy and finesse the jack, as playing the king is doomed to failure. Ed
# Recent Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date and Event</th>
<th>Winners and high achievers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13th September</td>
<td><strong>Winners:</strong> Ron Davis &amp; Alan Oddie with 66.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opening Pairs</td>
<td>Wilstead</td>
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<td>15th/16th September</td>
<td><strong>3rd Place:</strong> Alan Shillitoe &amp; Daniel McIntosh with 59.3%</td>
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<td>Bedford Congress</td>
<td><strong>2nd Place:</strong> Iain Roberts &amp; Alan Oddie, Ron Davis &amp; Daniel McIntosh with 97 VPs</td>
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<td>Championship Pairs</td>
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<td>GP Swiss Teams</td>
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<td>21st - 30th September</td>
<td><strong>3rd Place:</strong> Alan Cooke &amp; Maris Sheppard’s team with +57 IMPS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guernsey Congress</td>
<td><strong>Men’s Pairs</strong> Winners: Alan Cooke &amp; John Gardner (from Dorset) with 65.5%</td>
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<td>Pivot Teams</td>
<td><strong>Seniors’ Teams</strong> 2nd Place Alan Cooke &amp; Maris Sheppard Maureen &amp; Brian Stairs with +91 IMPS</td>
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<td><strong>Mixed Pairs</strong> 2nd Place Alan Cooke &amp; Maris Sheppard with 63.4%</td>
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<td>8th October</td>
<td><strong>6th Ron Davis &amp; Jackie Davies 66.8%</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>National EBU Sim. Pairs</td>
<td><strong>9th Bob Brown &amp; Brian Keable 66%</strong></td>
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<td>18th October</td>
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<tr>
<td>BBA Men’s Pairs</td>
<td><strong>1st:</strong> Alan Cooke &amp; Brian Keable - 63.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>BBA Ladies’ Pairs</td>
<td><strong>1st:</strong> Sue Ford &amp; Louise Smith - 57.5%</td>
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**Regis League Team**

In the August Bulletin the Regis team was shown as including Larry Redmond instead of his wife Jane - sorry Jane!