

Dear members,

As I write this blog the redecoration work is in full swing and pretty much on schedule with the carpet due to be fitted on Tuesday 16th July. We know a few of you haven't been able to get upstairs to play and are keen to return as soon as we can play downstairs. We will do everything to make this possible for the evening of Wednesday 17th. A note will go out as soon as we have set up downstairs to play.

Just another reminder that the AGM has been rescheduled for Wednesday August 7th, I hope to see you all there.

In the second week of September bridge clubs with the help of the EBU are launching "Bridge, it's a big deal". It's designed to get more people playing, either returning or learning how to play through other ways to play rather than the usual duplicate at the club. Getting bridge more visible and mainstream is very difficult considering bridge has huge benefits for "brain training". I've always believed you shouldn't have to wait until you retire before learning but realize it's almost impossible to find people who want to learn and commit the time earlier in life. We hope to educate more people to play in the autumn so keep telling your friends and neighbours what a fascinating game it is!

HBC is kicking this festival off on Sunday 8th September by taking part in the National handicapped pairs. The event will start at 11am and there will be break at around 130pm for a lovely supplied lunch. Because you have all been reading my blogs over the previous months minimal explanation of the concept of "National" (playing against other pairs from clubs across the country) "Handicapped" (score adjusted depending to your NGS) "Pairs" (MP pairs scoring, not teams!) is needed. A way to sign up and pay will be available soon. Money raised goes to Cancer Research UK. Details about "Bridge, it's a big deal" is on the website and will be updated as more things get arranged.

While I have been away from the club over the last few weeks I haven't had as many complaints as usual, thank you for the peace and quiet. It gives me chance to reflect on the complaints I do get. A lot of complaints that do come my way often relate to bidding misunderstandings that can be accusations of psyching or even cheating. Psyches (or psychic bids) are a legitimate part of bridge bidding but are usually only used at higher levels, after all it's hard enough learning what all the bids and conventions mean without working out how to bluff the opposition without confusing partner also. The definition of a psyche is "a bid that bears little resemblance to the logical choice for the hand either in a natural sense or as a conventional or systematic partnership agreement" At the club you are unlikely to come across a psyche. For example: If the opposition open 3nt (a gambling 3nt is a long solid minor suit with nothing else, only requiring a stop in the other 3 suits from partner to succeed..... And a way to get to the long minor), but they turn up with 19 hcp and a long running minor then partner isn't likely to have stops in the other suits and the safest place to play is the long minor in the eyes of the partner. This is a mis bid or a misunderstanding and all-sorts of chaos can ensue and nobody can be sure who has got a good or bad score! **CALL THE DIRECTOR, DON'T HAVE YOUR OWN ARGUMENT OVER IT!**

A genuine psyche is usually made when your partner is unlikely to get carried away by your opening bid (i.e. you open 3rd in hand after your partner and RHO pass). If you have only 2hcp and your partner has 11hcp max for his pass you know the opposition have 27+ hcp and a certain game bonus but can they find it?? This can be a dangerous strategy of course. Making a psyche bid isn't illegal but 'fielding' a psyche is! You cannot have an understanding with your partner that you keep hidden from the opposition. Fielding a psyche means you bid in a different way from the hand your partner "has shown" due to him having form for grossly over or under estimating his hand!

I will leave it there as more that 50% of you will now have switched off but if you are intrigued to learn more, whether you want to learn more about psyching or read about disasters that can happen I have put a link to an article about psyches.

https://www.bridgehands.com/P/psychic_bid.htm

This is in no way a lesson on how/when to psyche, simply a education on what to do when someone has made a mistake like a misbid. Lets say 95% of players have never thought of doing such things then why would someone who feels they have been wronged by a misbid think have been psyched against, especially when 95% of players make the odd misbid? (not me of course 😊)

Apologies if it takes me a while to get back into the swing of things I will try to concentrate on bridge now I'm back.

Lastly, leading a trump when you have length in the oppositions side suits is often a winning tactic as they are likely to want to cross ruff (beware of ruining you partners trump suit however).

Thanks for reading
Rob