

Pinner Bridge Club – Mentor Scheme

FAQs - Frequently Asked Questions

Why are we introducing a mentor scheme?

We are keen to increase attendance at our Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday club duplicate sessions. The mentor scheme gives players who are considering playing at any of these sessions the opportunity to try out a session with an experienced partner. The procedures and tactics involved in competitive duplicate pairs can be a little daunting to the uninitiated, so a mentor can help by guiding a novice through a trial session.

Who is the scheme intended for?

Primarily it's for Gentle Duplicate players who are considering trying out playing on Thursday but are perhaps a little nervous about taking such a bold step without someone more experienced to guide them along.

Additionally, we hope that there may be players previously unknown to the club who have played competitive duplicate in the past, or have played computer or online bridge but would like a helping hand to get in to playing competitive bridge on any of our normal pairs nights. In this instance, arranging to play with a mentor may help to give them their first steps.

How does it work?

Playing with a mentor needs to be arranged in advance, this is to ensure that we have one of our volunteer mentors available. If you are thinking of playing and would like to partner with a mentor please contact Mark Humphris, by email, text message or phone. Mark will discuss your requirements and hopefully find a suitable mentor for you. Alternatively, if you are a regular Tuesday player you may prefer to talk to Steve Pyle who is one of our volunteer mentors.

What is the difference between the host system and the mentor system?

We continue to operate a host system, and strive to have hosts available for all our sessions, although sometimes we are short of volunteers. Providing there is a host available any player can turn up at any session and be guaranteed to find a partner.

However, by pre-arranging to play with a mentor you will be guaranteed to be guided by a partner who is committed to help others take their first steps in the competitive pairs game. They will be keen to help you understand the processes, procedures and tactics that are part of the game and will try to give you a welcoming, friendly and relaxed introduction.

I normally play with a regular partner, but they are not available this week, can I ask to play with a mentor?

We would prefer not to use the mentor scheme in this way, if you are a regular player looking for a partner then you should aim to turn up and play with the host. Or you could even volunteer to be the host that evening.

Remember, the purpose of the mentor scheme is to help those taking their first steps in duplicate pairs with a supportive and experienced partner to help demystify duplicate pairs bridge.

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My partner and I are keen to play duplicate bridge – do we need to play with a mentor first?

Absolutely not, if you want to try other sessions with your partner then go for it!. You are welcome to try any of sessions with your partner. For most players who are playing Gentle Duplicate it will be most appropriate to progress to Thursday evenings which is our intermediate standard session, where you will receive a warm welcome at a session where we will play no more than 24 boards.

I want to try out playing on Tuesday evening Gentle Duplicate Sessions, can I arrange to play with a mentor?

There is no need for mentors at Tuesday Gentle Duplicate sessions as these sessions are designed for those that are taking their first steps after bridge lessons. Partners can always be arranged on the evening so please come along there's nothing to fear. Contact Tony Staw for more details.

Who are the mentors?

We have several current committee members, of varying bridge ability, who are keen to help others take their first steps in competitive bridge.

Are the mentors bridge experts or qualified bridge teachers?

Our mentors are not bridge teachers, but a couple of our volunteers are amongst the club's better players, whilst others are of average ability. What unites us is a willingness to help others to share our love of the game, and boost attendances by recruiting new players.

How do I arrange to play with a mentor?

Contact Mark Humphris as follows:

Email: mark.humphris@ntlworld.com

Text or phone (after 5pm) : 07799581686

How will I receive guidance or feedback?

During the hand, for bidding and play, you will be expected to play unassisted. After the hand is complete we prefer to discourage pairs from lengthy discussions of bidding and play, as this is distracting to others, leads to delays and is often just discourteous to you opponents. So it will be better if learning points about play and bidding are left to afterwards.

However, our mentors will attempt to help provide friendly and constructive guidance about procedures such as alerting and announcing and general bridge procedures and etiquette as and when situations arise wherever this is possible.

Once I have played with a mentor what are the next steps?

Hopefully you will have a bit more confidence to play again, perhaps this time with the host. But equally the mentor might be able to suggest other players who might be willing to partner you at future sessions.