



### Freedom Special

Spotted in the Sunday Times cryptic crossword:

**Bid from any, hearts, spades or clubs (5)**

Answer at the end to give you a bit of thinking time (sadly this was the very final clue that the editor managed to solve....)

---

### Face to Face Bridge in Somerset

Much happening in the county with many clubs re-opening or planning on re-opening.

**Taunton Deane** recommenced on July 26<sup>th</sup>  
Read about what happened [here](#)

**Ilminster** followed suit on August 10<sup>th</sup>  
Read about what happened [here](#)

**Wilton** restarted on August 3rd

**Fivehead** restarted on August 12th

**Clevedon and Portishead** will recommence on September 1st

**Winscombe** will recommence on September 2nd

**Crewkerne** will recommence on September 6th

**Kingston Seymour** will recommence on September 7th

**Castle Cary** will recommence on September 9th

**Coxley** will recommence on September 27<sup>th</sup>

**Minehead** will recommence on October 7th

Please let us know of any changes to the above and we welcome reports and advice regarding re-opening that we can share across the county.

---

## **Richard Banbury Seminars**

Following the success of the initial seminars last month, a new set will commence in October.

“Cage-Fighting” will cover:

The uncontested auction

- |                                      |            |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| 1. Overcalling effectively           | October 5  |
| 2. Pre-empting robustly              | October 12 |
| 3. Fighting back against (1) and (2) | October 19 |

The Contested Auction

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| 4. Hand evaluation                          | November 2  |
| 5. Maximising the potential of strong hands | November 9  |
| 6. Responder's Rebid                        | November 16 |

The format will be a ZOOM call followed by a Realbridge session commencing at 10am and running until midday.

Cost is £50 for the six seminars and further details and registration form can be found on the Somerset CBA website [here](#)

---



Welcome Back

# West of England Congress

Friday to Sunday 8th - 10th October  
Includes two Green Pointed events  
Winter Gardens, Weston-super-Mare

[www.bridgewebs.com/somerset](http://www.bridgewebs.com/somerset)  
Email [woe2021@icloud.com](mailto:woe2021@icloud.com)

The ever popular WoE Congress guarantees a fun and rewarding bridge experience. As a way of rounding off the Summer it is heartily recommended!

Registrations are open for Mens, Ladies and Mixed Pairs on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> October in the afternoon 1.45pm start

Championship Pairs Friday 8<sup>th</sup> October in the evening 7pm start.

Green point Swiss Pairs Saturday noon.

Green point Swiss Teams Sunday 11.45am.

Full details and entry forms [here](#)

For those wishing to participate but lacking a partner or team- mates please contact Tony at [scbachair@icloud.com](mailto:scbachair@icloud.com)

Please include the events that interest you, your NGS level and any non-negotiable requirements (if any).

---

## **Learning in Lockdown**

I remember my last night of face to face bridge at Taunton Deane bridge club (known locally as Staplegrove). On 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020. We came 9<sup>th</sup> out of 10! The virus was out there and we all realised this would be our last evening but we didn't know for how long.

I am lucky that lock-down proved to be extremely fruitful for me. Not boring, I certainly haven't been lonely, I don't live alone and I have a dog. Apart from playing bridge you cannot really be lonely if you own a dog, I defy anyone to tell me different.

I had begun learning to play in 2017. I approached the game very much as "seriously ... how hard can this be?" I was provided with copious notes by my tutor, to none of which I paid much attention. I thought that I only needed to skim through this stuff - I would pick it up as I went along... surely?

I don't know when I realised this approach really wasn't going to work.

Eventually my lunch breaks were spent sitting in my car scouring my notes, desperately trying to work out how the hell I knew what my second bid could be without reversing. I read and re-read Ron Klinger. Andrew Robson was too much for me, but strangely Durham University Bridge club and Cardiff tutors were my saviours - they had great resources for beginners. I had begun to take

this seriously, was feeling very challenged by it and still didn't really know how to play. I soldiered on.

I was told that when you learn something new and adopt new concepts your results go down (ain't that the truth - Ed). This makes perfect sense, learning, absorbing and utilising additional strategies takes up brain energy, eventually it's absorbed and brain space freed up. Learning and playing bridge is taxing:- bidding, playing, defending are all difficult and it takes take considerable time to become unconsciously competent. For me it took a long time to learn and a lot of hard work. I'm not there yet.

We exist in a very intense, win or lose culture, win = good and lose = bad. It is very difficult to cast off those very ingrained norms and declare "I'm in it, because I love it." To claim I don't care if I win today or not, is a lie, because you do. In bridge however you have to lose, **A LOT**, especially as a beginner. My partner and I would trudge along religiously to our local club every week for a routine slaughtering but each week we learned something. We were sufficiently humble to learn from the opps who became increasingly supportive (well after the first couple of weeks when I'm sure they thought they were on candid camera). One man used to finish the game by rubbing his hands together looking at us both and saying "now for the tip of the week." I used to go home and write down what he told us. Bit by bit the logic sank in.

I don't remember the first time we played online, certainly not long after the first lock-down. I have always been comfortable with the internet - right place, right time I guess. If asked to find something out, no matter how obscure I will find it. I wanted a group that wasn't overly intimidating (not easy to find in the bridge world despite what they claim!). Scrolling through BBO I came across a group that played on the days and times that suited my partner and I. We contacted the club manager; he asked me a few questions and stressed that he didn't tolerate bad manners which was music to my ears having come up against the very opposite far too many times. We played (and continue to play) three times per week.

My partner and I have been extremely lucky to meet some fantastic people online who also happen to play bridge. We've played on BBO and occasionally RealBridge. We now also play regularly in a county tournament designed for the NGS under 9's. The downside is that these clubs are Kent based, which doesn't matter when online but sadly should they return to face to face entirely then we will have to take some time adjusting.

As well as running bridge sessions the club manager also teaches and his was the first of quite a few ZOOM teaching session we undertook. His course in competitive bidding was corner turning for us both. Exeter Bridge Club was also cognizant of the need to keep their less developed players engaged and ran two very useful courses in bidding and play which I successfully gate crashed . I think training courses generally, not just bridge, are most successful when the timing is right and the level of expertise pitched optimally (I know what I mean by that), which brings me onto Richard Banbury's course. Eighteen months ago this course could have been taught in the Silbo Gomero language for all I could have learnt, but, today ... I get it! I can follow it ....it makes sense and I can and have learned so much. I make many mistakes but now when they're explained I get an "oh yes" moment.

I am not a visual or spatial person, I am not someone that easily pre plans or engages in forward thinking. I'm very much a "think on my feet" kind of person and I think learning/playing bridge truly reveals your individual learning styles. My inability to plan/forward think probably means I will never be a particularly spectacular player. I do however possess an ability to strategise whilst under pressure which means for me I really enjoy the challenge and occasionally have risen to it.

We are due to enter a very grown up competition, I don't really expect much except an enjoyable afternoon meeting up with old friends on RealBridge and just seeing if we have improved, if only a teensy weensy bit. I want the opps mopping their brows declaring "you two were always a pushover!" . I want to finish by making mention of somebody who we lost during lock-down, **Mike Leach**, the most intelligent, gentlest and warm humoured person you could hope to meet. I was so lucky to have met and laughed with him. I can forgive him now for successfully doubling me and having the grace to apologise afterwards. Move softly and purposely my friend.

Thank you to **Sheree Pavvey** for this lovely piece.

---

## When you see the car crash coming.....

North	♠ QJ5 ♥ AKQJ10752 ♦ K ♣ 10
South	♠ K3 ♥ - ♦ AJ975 ♣ KQ7542

This was a hand spotted on BBO Vugraph played in the Polish Premier league. The following makes no allowances for a Polish Club system of which I am clueless.

South opened a diamond (possibly a canapé bid but one which immediately disguises the hand to my mind) and North responded one heart, East then overcalling a spade on not a lot. South opted to jump to Three Clubs which could be thought to be a bit punchy and North bid Three Spades which could be a general fourth suit force, showing a spade stop or asking for a spade stop depending on agreements – some sort of accidental impact looked possible. South bid 3NT which I would assume showed a spade stop and North bid Four Diamonds. By this time the bidding had risen quite high with no indication of the powerhouse Heart suit. The light at the end of the tunnel now looked like headlights approaching at some velocity.

The next bid was Four Spades by South – second round control (or could it be interpreted as ace showing agreeing diamonds?) but putting Four Hearts out of contention as the final contract. North now tried to put the brakes on with Five Hearts which could well have been another cue bid as far as South was concerned and a tail end skid into Six Clubs resulted. I can only assume that North mentally unbuckled their seat belt and walked away from the wreckage leaving their unlucky partner trapped....

The defence managed to find their two aces and that was 13 imps away – the other table had a fairly convoluted sequence too but settled comfortably in Four Hearts.

Funny old game.

---

### **And Finally.....**

The answer to the crossword clue was IRONS

The centre (heart) of the first three words B(I)d, f(ro)m, a(n)y, spells IRON, spades contributes the **S** and the meaning is as in golf **clubs**.

---

Comments, queries and articles/anecdotes for inclusion in the next Newsletter are always welcome.

Please contact [paul.burgess738@gmail.com](mailto:paul.burgess738@gmail.com)