



Surrey County Bridge Association

Newsletter # 56, Spring 2025

Introduction

Tim Warren

We held our Surrey Schools Cup once again in February, and you can read [June Middleton's heartening report](#) in this newsletter. Those who suffer regularly from this Intro will know I like to include a graph or two, giving a longer-term perspective on current events. I tried to do that this time, but the thing stubbornly refused to be shoehorned into a small enough space. So, it's now a [separate article](#), which you can find immediately after June's.

Suffice it to say here that June took charge of our junior bridge efforts in 2020. The first Cup after that attracted 84 pupils; this year, we had 138, with a further 20 at a separate event on an earlier day. June is standing down at our next AGM and I would like to pay tribute to her efforts over the last five years. Derek Thrumble has volunteered to take over, and I send him all my best wishes for future success.

Finally, don't forget our Mary Edwards (pairs) and Wanborough (teams) Cup competitions.

They'll be held at Wimbledon BC on May 11th and June 1st respectively. These are 36-board events which begin at 1pm and finish by 5.30.

They are the chance for the winning players in each club's pairs and teams events to represent that club. If your winners can't take part on the date, then you can go down the ranking list to find another pair. In the case of teams, a pair within a team can be substituted.

If you don't run a teams championship at your club, you can use a cross-IMPed pairs event to form a team.

It would be great to see every club in the county represented.

Introduction	1
Calendar	1
Voice from the Deep	2
Surrey Schools Cup	2
The SSC – a Longer-Term Perspective	3
English Bridge Development	4
Surrey Representative Events	6
Zia Mahmood at Richmond	7
Club News	8
L'Atout France	8
Well I Never Did!	9
Schools and Youngsters Bridge	9
Double Dummy #25	11
Double Dummy #24 – Solution	11
Charity Events	12
Congratulations	13
Seminars	14
And finally...	14

Calendar

May 11th	Mary Edwards Cup	Wimbledon
Jun 1st	Wanborough Cup	Wimbledon

Perhaps what follows is not strictly in keeping with the usual content of this column. I might have done better to direct my comments to the Competitions Secretary, to the Resident Statistician or to whichever member of the committee has cabinet responsibility for anomalies, eccentricities and general oddities.

It goes like this :-

On 2 December last, a Monday, we played the evening session at our club - as usual

We came bottom - as usual

We scored 35% - more or less as usual

It happened to be an evening of simultaneous competition and later, or the next morning, I checked, out of mild curiosity, to see how we had fared on the wider stage.

To my astonishment I found that Surrey-wide we were 30somethingth out of 170 or so with 55%!

More astonishing still, we were the leading pair from our club!

Must be a rare distinction to be both top and bottom in the same session.

But Andy Warhol was right - you only get 15 minutes of fame, for a little later another club contributed its results and we were relegated to only second-best from our club.

Worse, later still the results had expunged our club's results altogether so this that short-lived exploit was doomed to everlasting extinction. (Subsequently I discovered the causes of these curiosities but I don't reveal them here, partly to protect the guilty and the innocent, but mostly to avoid anti-climax).

Speaking of eccentricities and anomalies I recall a more conventional example (thinks : there must be a contradiction in there somewhere). We were playing at our club in France, bid comfortably to 3NT, went one down and were suitably miffed.

But not for long. There were about 11 or 12 tables and at every single one of them 3NT had been bid and had gone off. 50% all round.

Explanation : the partnership held two flat hands with no fit and 28 points consisting of 4 aces and 4 kings.

8 certain tricks; 5 certain losers.

Hey ho! Or in the context "C'est la vie !"

Surrey Schools Cup

June Middleton

The Surrey Schools' Cup competitions were held on 7th February 2025, brilliantly hosted by Epsom College. 138 children took part on the day and a further 20 minibridge players played the same hands in an event hosted by Tormead School a couple of weeks earlier. There were 25 teams in the three main competitions and 19 pairs in the minibridge at Epsom, packing the two rooms used to the rafters. A pair of adults stepped in to make up tables in the minibridge but were disqualified from winning!

We welcomed Heathside School, Walton on Thames, and Lancing Prep for the first time.

The Surrey Schools' Cup had eight teams and was won by the North London Alliance team made up of Angus and Wilf Marshall from Watford Grammar School, Dina Bennett from Henrietta Barnett School and Sam Akayan from Haberdashers. Dina has recently set up a thriving bridge club at her school and hopefully will be able to bring a team from her school next year. Close second, trailing by 5 IMPs, were the King's College School from Wimbledon, Maks Blicharz, Raffy & Seb Sinclair and Joseph Hedges.

Our second-tier tournament for the Salver had seven teams taking part, and was won by the Cardinal Newman A team of Tom Curtayne, Joshua Bundingan, Jake Piddlesdon & Michael Simpson. They had a large lead over the Westminster B team and the Haberdashers C team who tied for 2nd, 45 IMPs behind. Unfortunately, we only had one set of medals for the presentation ceremony but will get another set ordered so everyone can have one!

Our third-tier tournament for the Crystal, aimed at those who have only recently started bidding, had ten teams taking part and was won by the Westminster C team of Bruno Zheng, Jatanara Ansari, Mark Tabet and Max Xue with a 15 IMPS lead from Richard Challoner's 1st team of Szymon Kowaliw, Sam Wylie, Mircea Nagy & Kay Rusinsky.

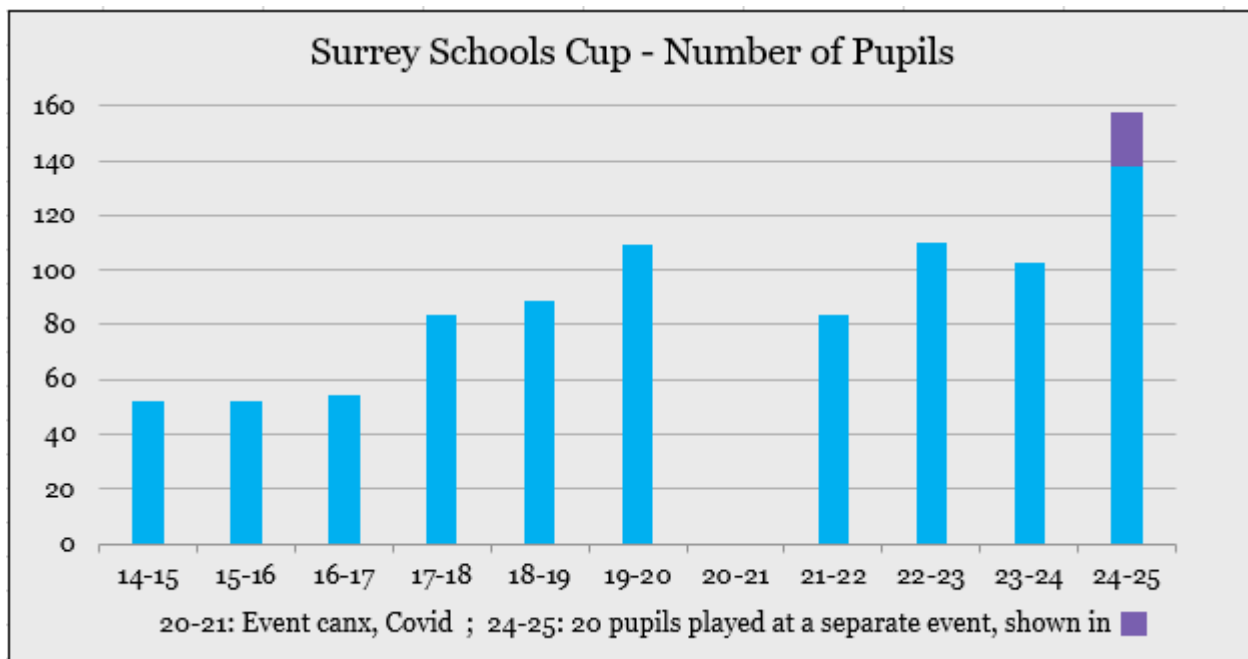
The minibridge competition for the David Garfit Clowes Trophy was won by Arthur and Zac from Boxgrove Primary, Edward Shevyrev & Joseph Ling from Westminster were second and Agnes & Felicity from Tormead were third.

My thanks to Tracy and Fran from Epsom College for all their help in making this event happen, to Derek Thrumble who will be taking over for next year's event, David Woodall and Helen Bickerstaff for running the minibridge at Epsom and Douglas Wright for running the minibridge at Tormead, Tim Warren, the Surrey Chair for his assistance on the day and presenting the prizes, Rachel Sumeray and Joan Bennett for all their assistance on the day. The biggest thank you goes to Richard Banbury for running three teams' events simultaneously with the minibridge competition and having to manually produce the minibridge results combining the two tournaments.

Our Schools Cup – A Longer-Term Perspective [Tim Warren](#)

Following on from June Middleton's report just above, I'd like to take a longer-term look at our Surrey Schools Cup.

Here's how attendance has evolved in the last ten years:

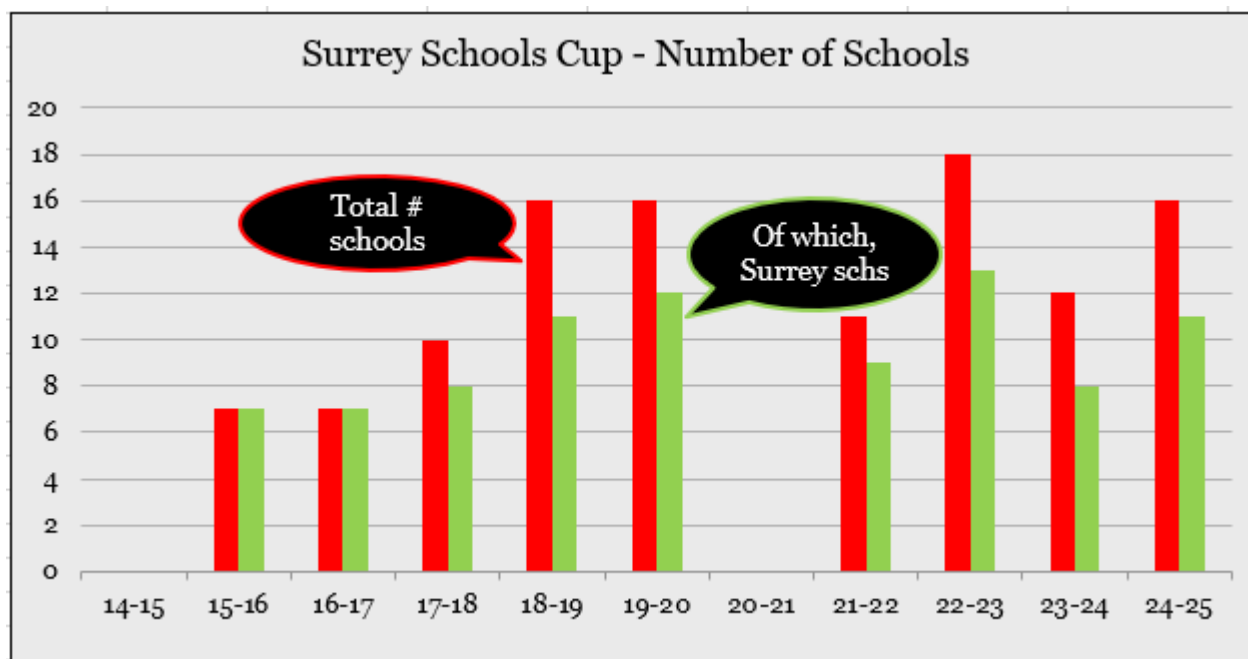


Covid, which hit just as June took on our junior bridge efforts, had a dramatic effect on schools' bridge; some school clubs closed altogether, and haven't reopened. But look at the surge in overall numbers since then.

So, what's behind the increase?

(cont.)

While the sterling efforts of key people around the county have led to new bridge clubs at some schools, that doesn't appear to be the main cause. We opened the Cup to those outside the county in 2018, but since then the total number of schools coming along has been roughly steady, with Surrey schools making up about two-thirds:



I asked several teachers at our event what they thought the reason was. Everyone I spoke to had a definite sense that bridge was proving more popular among their kids. One even said "in some ways bridge is more cool, or at least less uncool, than it used to be". Who'd have thought that?

The charity arm of English bridge, EBED, has a specific aim of fostering bridge among those in full-time education. It's recently appointed a new Chief Executive, Richard Croot, and in January we were very pleased to welcome him to tell the chairs of Surrey BCs about EBED's future direction (see the next article). Surrey has been actively committed to supporting the national direction for many years now, and we look forward to working together.

English Bridge Development and Education

[Richard Croot](#)

Richard gave a good talk at the Surrey Chairs' Consultation, with some interesting ideas for youngsters to play online – see Thursday Afternoon Bridge Club and The Generation Game below. Here are some key points of his talk.

Youth Bridge

Thursday Afternoon Bridge Club

RealBridge 4:15pm – 6:15pm Drop in/out anytime

Any young people who would like to learn bridge, or those who can already play, can attend. The parents should contact me richard.croot@ebedcio.org.uk

The Generation Game

RealBridge every month 6:30pm - 7:30pm on Sundays

Young people can play bridge with their family members. It is an informal using practice tables with no movement. There are teachers on hand to help a complete beginner. Parents should **contact Joan Bennett:** joan@ebedcio.org.uk



Our Camps in 2025

Spring: 5-6 April, the Pioneer Centre, Cleobury Mortimer

Summer: 29-31 August, the Kings Park Centre, Northampton

Autumn: 31 October – 2 November, Juniper Hall, Dorking

Parents and grandparents can attend the camps with their younger family members and take part in all the tuition and competitions: duplicate sessions and speedballs. Other activities such as ultimate Frisbee, rounders and football also take place at these camps. The tuition covers all levels from complete beginners through to the England U16 and U21 squads. EBED (and county associations) can provide bursaries where cost is an issue. **Contact Lisa Miller: lisa@ebu.co.uk for more information.**

Other youth activity

National Junior Pairs Championships, Oxford 12 April U26, U21, U19, U16, U14

The Hertfordshire Schools Cup (November)

The Schools League

The Grand Prix over 6 rounds (three face-to-face at the camps and three on RealBridge). Round 2 on January 12 had a record attendance of 9 and a half tables.

Club Teacher Training Courses

The teacher training courses have been streamlined so that there is now only one day face-to-face. The EBU will pay for a delegate to attend a course from an affiliated club every two years.

Horsham

Part 1: To be completed on the Teaching Hub at the delegate's own pace.

Part 2: 26th April online 9:30am half-day

Part 3: 27th April 9:30am 22a East Street, Horsham face-to-face delivered by Douglas Wright

Part 4: Club Teacher Progression online is to be completed about one month after the course.

For more information visit <https://www.ebedcio.org.uk/club-teacher-training> or contact Clive Turner: clive@ebedcio.org.uk

Club Director's Courses

There are currently no Club Director's Courses in the Surrey area. However, interest can be registered on the EBED website: <https://www.ebedcio.org.uk/td-course-calendar>

For more information, contact Clive Turner: clive@ebedcio.org.uk

Surrey Representative Events

[Graham Osbourne](#)

There are four EBU events in which you can represent Surrey. For two of these, the Pachabo Cup and the Corwen Trophy, selection is automatic based on your team winning the Lady Rose Cup (Pachabo) or your pair finishing in the top five of the County Pairs (Corwen). If the winning team of the Lady Rose is not available the runners up will be asked and similarly pairs outside the top five of the County Pairs will be invited should any of the automatically qualified pairs be unavailable.


For the other two events the Tollemache, which is played between all the counties of England and Wales, and the Metropolitan Cup, played between the Home Counties, selection is made by a committee of three or four experienced Surrey players. For the Tollemache players selected will normally be experienced Tournament players and the committee will consider pairs performance in EBU national events as well as the premier Surrey events and recent performance in the Tollemache if they have been selected in recent years.

The Metropolitan Cup is a one-day online event, usually now held in the autumn. It offers players of a range of experience the chance to represent the county, as it's played in three divisions: the A division is broadly aimed at NGS Ace, the B division at NGS K and Q, and the C division NGS J and Ten. The selectors encourage experienced club players to put their names forward, preferably as pairs, for consideration. The Metropolitan Cup is a great way to test your skills against players from other counties, even if you normally only play at your local club. And you have the chance to go on to the national final should you win your division.

[Graham Osborne](#)

Match Secretary

Richmond Bridge Club & Academy, Cambridge Park TW1 2PG
www.richmondbridgeclub.com




Zia Mahmood

Celebrating the fun and excitement of bridge

Exclusive hands prepared by Zia
Interactive duplicate play
Ploughman's Lunch
"Bridge A Love Story" book signing
Prize draw - win a free game with Zia
Other exciting prizes to be announced

Saturday 5 April 2025, 11.00

Register online
Members £50, Non-members £60



This is a rare and exciting opportunity for players to spend a day with Zia Mahmood, one of the world's most renowned bridge players. With only about 30 places left, we're encouraging players to book soon to avoid missing out.

Exciting update: Every ticket now includes automatic entry into a raffle for the chance to play in person with Zia at a future duplicate session at Richmond Bridge Club. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for bridge enthusiasts to partner with or play against a legend of the game.

Event Highlights:

- **Exclusive hands prepared by Zia**, featuring expert analysis, discussion, & hand write-ups.
- **A staged duplicate format (12 to 16 boards, format confirmed on the day)** to ensure interactive learning and engagement.
- **A book signing session** for *Bridge, A Love Story*.
- **A ploughman's lunch included** in the ticket price.
- **Additional exciting prizes**
 - An online game with Sally Brock
 - An online game with Ollie Burgess
 - A meal at Ottolenghi Richmond
 - Pair of tickets to Christmas at Kew
 - Free entry to a Cafe Bridge event

How to Book:

- **Date:** Saturday, 5th April
- **Location:** Richmond Bridge Club
- **Cost:** £50 (Members) / £60 (Non-Members)
- **Bookings:** https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwoq/bw.cgi?club=richmond&pid=display_page155

Yateley and Hawley

YHBC and CBC have a joint session on BBO each Thursday at 7.30pm. With numbers declining but still a cohort of players who wish to play online, we have decided to open our sessions to all UK players. Appreciate some will only play F2F and some only on RB but if you would be able to advertise that our sessions are now open and all players welcome, it would be much appreciated.

We also have a Swiss Pairs event F2F on BH Monday 5th May at 1pm (details [HERE](#)) and all players from your club would be welcome 😊

If we can help promote any of your events, please let us know 😊

Many Thanks,
Ian Lewis, YHBC and CBC

L'Atout France

[Douglas Wright](#)

Would you like to join Douglas douglaswright@3countiesbridge.com and his players and have a wonderful week in France, enjoying French food and hospitality, as well as playing bridge?

L'Atout de France

I visited L'Atout de France, and met Sjoerd, Els, Annabelle, Floortje, Kia and Bobby.

It is wonderful for a bridge holiday in rural, rustic, and genuine France.

I would like to take group of 12 players, **31 May to 7 June 2025**, so if you like your bridge and enjoy French food and wine, please let's have a chat. Douglas 07801 989630.

Also planning **Cafe Bridge in Loche 6 June 2025**.

<https://latoutdefrance.com/>

It happened in a BBO session in the middle of January this year. And we hadn't asked for any special distributions or anything, so I have to believe that this once in a lifetime deal we had was genuine. I've certainly never seen its like in 65 years of playing bridge.

Yes, North-South did bid the slam once the gentle-but-disbelieving North decided that her partner wasn't psyching. We couple our BBO sessions with a Zoom meeting so we can all talk and see one another. North's comments and expressions were certainly worth seeing and hearing!

<p>East – Pass</p> <p>South – 1S</p> <p>West – Pass</p> <p>North faints!</p>	
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Schools and Youngsters Bridge

<https://www.ebedcio.org.uk/>

Spring Bridge Camp 2025



For all young people ages 9-19 (Parents also welcome)

5th and 6th April 2025

Venue: Pioneer Centre, Kidderminster. DY14 8JG

Bridge lessons and workshops. Bridge games for all levels. Outdoor activities, Group fun and competitive sessions. Beginner to advanced lessons.

All tuition, accommodation and meals included. For more information and how to book see the [Spring Camp page](#)



For Bridge and MiniBridge, join our weekly drop in session. Just sign up

1. The student completes a [form to join our mailing list](#) (unsubscribe any time) Bridge online under 18s only
 2. Parental consent collected
 3. No adults allowed (apart from our helpful directors)
 4. Link sent out weekly to join either miniBridge or Bridge
 5. Thursdays 4:15pm - 6:15pm (drop-in any time). There is no need to play every week.
- [Read more](#)

▲ [Rekindling Bridge in Schools and Sixth Form Colleges](#)

You can help us rekindle interest in Schools & College bridge. Prior to the pandemic we provided teachers and supervisors to support the establishment of bridge sessions in schools and colleges across the counties; the events of the past few years meant these sessions went into decline.

We would like to provide Taster Sessions in schools and colleges with the aim of starting a Bridge Club

How you can help (1): if you have a contact in a school/college and/or a son or daughter, or grandson or granddaughter in a school, and would like to help identify which schools / colleges would like to have a Taster Session, then please RSVP as soon as possible to [Douglas Wright](#)

We hope to identify 5 or more schools /colleges, so that we can run Tasters Sessions in May/June/July.

How you can help (2): We would also like to run a course for all interested bridge players on "How to Teach Bridge in Schools /Colleges". That could be you! No previous experience required. Once again contact [Douglas Wright](#) with your interest, no matter how tentative

We would also like to identify any school / college teacher, who would like to be involved.

We hope to identify the schools / colleges soon, and run the 'How to teach Bridge in Schools / Colleges" courses in August, so time is of the essence!

I do hope you will consider giving us some help here. If you have any questions, please do email [Douglas Wright](#), or you can call him on 07801 989630

A diversion this time into the realms of Double Dummy problems that involve distributions one never normally expects to come across – the type of hand you only expect to see in bridge stories. Imagine you were East on the hand shown. Your eyes bulge at the prospects of an easy Slam, possibly even a Grand Slam in one of the minors, but your opponents' irritating interventions spoil all your fun with the temerity of bidding their own Grand Slam against you. Which, on a combined total of only 18 points, is a positive insult. Certainly, one worthy of a massively satisfying punishment.

	♠ K Q 7 6 5	
	♥ A 3 2	
	♦ 9 7 5 3 2	
	♣ –	
♠ J 10		♠ –
♥ J 9 8 7 5 4		♥ 6
♦ K 4		♦ A Q J 10 8 6
♣ 9 6 4	♠ A 9 8 4 3 2	♣ A K Q J 10 7
	♥ K Q 10	
	♦ –	
	♣ 8 5 3 2	
7♠X by South		
Lead = ♦K		

The bidding, for those who like to see how NS actually got there, was

East	South	West	North
2D	2S	P	4S
5C	5S	6C	6S
7C	X	P	7S
X	end		

This hand actually happened many years ago. I'd rate it as tricky. It would have been a simple cross ruff without the 2-0 trump split, but then it wouldn't be worth offering as a DD puzzle. But make it declarer did. All you have to do is tell me how (johnmanches74@gmail.com). By April 20th please.

As usual, the winner will be drawn from all those with a clear, full, correct-first-time solution. The prize, which is open to all Surrey members, will be free entry to one of our county competitions for the winner and partner of choice.

	♠ K2	
	♥ A9	
	♦ AK8764	
	♣ 854	
♠ Q109		♠ 863
♥ K8		♥ J1076432
♦ Q9		♦ 103
♣ KJ9762	♠ AJ754	♣ 3
	♥ Q5	
	♦ J52	
	♣ AQ10	

South to make 7♦. Lead ♦9

SOLUTION

The puzzle might look simple at first sight. 6 diamond tricks, 4 spade tricks (ruffing one to establish the suit), 2 outside aces and the two queens poised for a club heart-squeeze on West.

Only it doesn't quite work out that way, as West is discarding after South when you run North's trumps. After a while (or perhaps immediately for some) you stop being blinded by South's QC and realise it is North's 8C that is the threat card when you run South's Spades.

- T1 Win with J
- T2 AD
- T3-5 KS, AS and a spade ruff establish South's Spades.
- T6-8 Run North's trumps, discarding Q10 of Clubs on the the last two trumps
- T9 AC
- T10-11 Two spade tricks force West either to discard his last club (when North's 8C provides the 13th trick) or to uncover his KH (when AH drops the K giving QH for T13).

Charity Events

Golf Bridge

Charity Bridge and Golf event at Hampton Court Palace Golf Club on Wednesday 9th July 2025

9 holes Golf/ 16 Boards Duplicate Bridge Ladies, Gents and Mixed pairs - golf handicaps required Tee times from 3 pm Buggies available Cost £58 a head (which includes a meal) - payment mid June Register in pairs with bb@thebeaumonts.net

Cafe Bridge

The 2025 events listed below are now open for booking.

Early in the New Year I will be reviewing the organisation of Café Bridge events. If you care about the future of Café Bridge please let me know and I'll involve you in the consultation process.

michael@cafebridge.org

2025 Café Bridge events...

Guildford - Tuesday 1st April www.brianbridge.net/guila2025

Congratulations

Surrey

County Pairs Cup
County Pairs Plate

Andrew Bannock & John Dagnall
Barbara Stoker & Bob Hampson



(l-r) Tim presenting Cup to Andrew & John



Winners of Plate: Barbara & Bob

Teams of Eight

Mayfield Red Team
Richard Fedrick & Andrew Southwell, David Norman & David Dawson,
Arun Suri & Peter Lee, Richard Granville & Graham Sadie

Dorin Salver

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Overall winners

Adrian Filkins and Julie Kamieniecka
Judith Biles and Mark Stead
Julie Kennedy and Richard Sheridan
Renate Lane and Richard Arnatt
Judith Biles and Mark Stead

Bookham
Settle
Woking
Bookham
Settle

Mixed Pairs

David Wing and Cathy Barley



Victor Ludorum (2023-2024) Tony Cherrett

In the wider world:

Surrey came second in the Tollemache this year. Congratulations to the team:

William Clennell & Dominic Cooke
Ian Swanson & Peter Lee
Richard Fedrick & Andrew Southwell
David Norman & David Dawson
Frances Hinden & Graham Osborne

Seminars

Improve your Bridge during the Summer with 3 Counties Bridge

Improver Seminars Summer 2025

Improver Seminars Thursdays 7pm with Douglas Wright

[Please click here for more details and to book](#)

24 Apr Defence signals + Discards
01 May Blackwood
08 May Cue Bidding
15 May Trump Promotion
22 May Count Signals

03 Jul Splinter Bids
10 Jul Landy - Defence to 1NT
17 Jul Bidding 4 4 4 1 Hands
24 Jul Unassuming Cue Bids

https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwor/bw.cgi?club=3counties&pid=display_page124

And finally.....

The next newsletter will come out towards the end of June. So, please send me any club news, personal stories and photographs for the next edition. Is your club having a charity event you would like to tell people about? Let me know. Are you planning any club celebrations? Send me pictures.

[Julia Brough](#)

Editor