

# BRIDGE IN THE CITY INCORPORATED NEWSLETTER

## SEPTEMBER 2023

[www.bridgeinthecity.net.au](http://www.bridgeinthecity.net.au)

### Committee News

Leonie Shearing has stepped aside from the position of club secretary, and has been replaced by Nola Stone. We are very grateful to Leonie for putting into place a set of procedures and protocols that we shall now use moving forward.

The Christmas party will be held at the Warradale Hotel on December 17<sup>th</sup>, bookings to open in October.

The AGM, followed by lunch and then bridge, will be held on February 18<sup>th</sup> next year.

### Basic Rules of Etiquette

1. Be nice, smile. No matter how well Or poorly you play you are an Ambassador for the game. Your actions can drive people away, or make them love it.
2. Don't gloat. No matter how well you have done, don't say anything until your opponents have left the table.
3. Don't give lessons at the table. If your opponents or partner want to know, they will ask.
4. Don't tell your opponents how lucky they have been. Instead, be gracious in your defeats. Nobody likes a sore loser.
5. Don't get offended when the opponents call the Director. It's part of the game, calling the Director is in no way an assault on your integrity.
6. Keep your voice and play at a consistent level.
7. When on lead: Lead face down, giving partner the chance to ask questions about the auction, then turn it over, and only then write it in your personal scoresheet.
8. Putting down dummy. Table your cards, and then write the contract in your personal scoresheet.
9. Don't discuss hands until the round is over.
10. Don't give rulings at the table. Even if you are sure, let the director do it.

*The above was taken from the Sydney Bridge Centre website, and contains messages for all of us.*

## A Hand from last Friday

Board : 1	S♠ 853	Dir: N	<b>Makeable Contracts</b>					
	H♥ AQ7652	Vul: None	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
	D♦ JT53		N	-	5	4	3	-
	C♣		S	-	5	4	4	-
S♠ Q72		S♠ 64	E	2	-	-	-	3
H♥ KJ		H♥ 984	W	2	-	-	-	3
D♦ AQ8		D♦ 2						
C♣ JT973		C♣ AK86542						
	S♠ AKJT9							
7	H♥ T3							
13	7	D♦ K9764						
13	C♣ Q							

North South have two eight card major fits, and a nine card diamond fit, so it's no surprise that they can make ten tricks in a major and eleven tricks in diamonds, while East West, with their twelve card fit, can be held to eight tricks in clubs.

What is a surprise is that East West can also make 3NT!

## Opening Leads

Fourth best of longest and strongest is the most over-used action in the game of bridge. It's OK when used against a comparatively low level No Trumps, but should be used much less frequently against other contracts.

When leading against No Trumps you are often prepared to concede a trick to establish your long suit, against a suit contract what you have conceded won't usually be returned to you. Some rules:

- Unless you have a solid sequence to lead from, a comparatively passive lead will often work out much better for you.
- Listen to the bidding. If they have avoided No Trumps because of a weakness in a particular side suit then that is probably what you should be leading.
- Don't underlead Aces against suit contracts. Ever. Your Aces should be used to go on opposition honour cards. (I said this during a recent Friday pre-game lecture, and the following Monday Warren Ward, poor chap, found himself on lead against a suit contract, and he had all four Aces!)
- Count the points. It may well be that your partner is marked with hardly any points at all, so passive leads are the go.
- Don't discount trump leads. They usually give nothing away and can restrict the number of ruffing tricks available.
- Against slams, unless you have a singleton, can establish a trick, or suspect that you can cash two tricks in a suit, lead the safest card possible. You can't expect much from partner.

## Hands from the Past

The biggest hand I ever saw in a club event was the following which was dealt at the table in a practice match for the 1980 Women's Interstate Team.

Dealer: West	♠ -		
E-W Vul	♥AQ109876		
	♦ -		
	♣ KJ10874		
♠ -		♠ -	
♥ -		♥ KJ5432	
♦ AKQJ1098765432		♦ -	
♣ -		♣ AQ96532	
	♠ AKQJ1098765432		
	♥ -		
	♦ -		
	♣ -		

West, hoping to get to 7♦ redoubled, opened the bidding with 2♣. North overcalled 2♥, and East bid 3♣. South, knowing that the opponents were in a forcing auction, and having similar ambitions to West, PASSED!

West stuck to his game plan by bidding only 6♦ (7♦ would have been too obvious), passed around to South who came to light with 7♠, passed out.

Mind you, these elusive tactics don't always work. The story is recorded of a player who opened 2♣ with a 13 card suit and his partner's response showed such a strong hand that a late conversion to 7NT was a real threat. In order to get the maximum score (he was playing rubber bridge) opener asked for Aces, Kings, and then Queens before finally getting a response that he could drop.

The late Harold S. Vanderbilt, the originator of modern-day Contract Bridge (he devised the varying vulnerability, the slam bonus, and the penalty scale for doubled contracts) was also the richest man in America during the 1920's.

He particularly enjoyed high stakes rubber bridge, and on one occasion he opened a game force on his strong 0-5-4-4 shape, partner gave a positive response, and the next player bid 7♠, Vanderbilt's void.

Vanderbilt bid 7NT (possibly only he could afford to do so), and, as the danger hand was not on lead, the contract made with the help of some marked finesses.

Talking of big hands reminds me of the cards picked up by my team-mate Robert Grynberg during the 1971 Interstate Championships. Robert, as dealer, picked up

♠ -  
♥AKQJ864  
♦AK10942  
♣ -

Having no obvious way of bidding such a hand scientifically he opened 7♥, everybody passed, West led one of his two Aces but it was to no avail - dummy had three diamonds and the suit divided evenly.

I was sitting out that match so when told of Robert's opening call I decided to watch my other team-mates to see what they would do on the hand (security was lax in those days). At this table the big hand was held by a ponderous fellow who, playing against Denis Howard and Roelof Smilde, opened a Precision 1♣, showing 16+ points, any shape.

Their auction was:

S	W	N	E
1♣	1♠	pass	2♠
3♥	3♠	pass	pass
4♦	pass	4♥	pass
pass	4♠	X	all pass

At the end of the auction Denis Howard announced that he wished to reserve his rights after the several long hesitations by South during the auction. When that player showed out of spades, then clubs, Denis quickly withdrew his objections.

4♠ incidentally, is an excellent contract that is only ruined by the bad breaks, and eventually failed by two tricks.

## Why Do We Have to Skip?

If there is an odd number of tables the simple movement of boards back one table, East-West up one table functions admirably. If the number of tables is even then just after the half way point East-West would get the same boards again.

The solutions usually applied (there are others) are either for East-West to skip a table at or near the halfway point, or else have what is termed a Share Relay, where two tables share boards, while half the section away there is a relay table.

## Fourth Suit Forcing

Everybody should play fourth suit forcing – it makes bidding so much easier.

How does it work?

You use the bid when your partnership has the values for game, however aren't sure what the final contract should be, e.g.

1♥ P 1♠

2♣ P 2♦ (fourth suit forcing)

In this sequence, opener has the opportunity to

- (1) rebid 3♣, showing a 5-5 shape
- (2) rebid 2♥, showing a 6 card heart suit
- (3) rebid 2♠, showing three card support for partner
- (4) rebid 2NT, or even 3NT, showing a diamond stopper.

Importantly, in an auction such as

1♥ P 1♠

2♣ P 2♠

Responder's rebid now shows a good suit, with at most 10 high card points – with any more responder would have bid found another call.

All this is so much better than responder making a unilateral decision at the second round of the auction.

You can also use fourth suit forcing to tell partner that you have game values, before supporting one of his suits below game level. This suggests that partner look for slam with extra values, e.g.

1♥ P 1♠

2♣ P 2♦ (4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing)

2NT P 3♣ - forcing, showing a mild slam interest.

Note 1: fourth suit forcing shouldn't apply at the one level- after 1C – 1D – 1H 1S is natural.

**Bridge in the City GRADED PAIRS CONGRESS**

**Sunday november 19<sup>th</sup>**

**10:00 a.m. Start**

Note 2: With a five-five shape and game values, where partner has bid the other two suits in an auction of the form

1♦ P 1♠  
2♣ P ?

you should bid the fourth suit twice, as follows

1♦ P 1♠  
2♣ P 2♥  
3♦ P 3♥

Finally, there will be instances where you want to bid your second suit as responder, but don't have the values. This is usually not a bad thing, since your two hands would seem to be incompatible, so an early signoff, or a bid of 2NT, could well be for the best.

## August Competition Winners

### FRIDAY AUGUST PAIRS

- 1st Margaret Dawson & Jackie Watkins
- 2nd Moira Smith & Graham Stucley
- 3rd Jinny Fuss & Jackie Ward

### FRIDAY B GRADE AUGUST PAIRS

- 1st Ken Stone & Peter Tuck
- 2nd Judy Larsen & Brenda McCarthy
- 3rd Judith Harris & Molly Johnson

### MONDAY AUGUST PAIRS

- 1st Pam Bowman & Darrell Mitton
- 2nd John Neuling & Trevor Parr
- 3rd Anne Connelly & Margaret Dawson

## Prepayment Scheme

Bridge in the City has its own prepayment scheme, allowing players to pay for several sessions at once.

Payments can be made either to the Director on duty, or else online into the following Bridge in the City bank account. BSB 805-050, account number 102-790-715

Contributors receive an email giving their balance every time they play, as well as providing a link to their online transaction summary

Note: When making an online deposit, please make sure that you identify yourself.

**StateWide PairS**  
**Monday September 25<sup>th</sup>**  
**Booklets for all players**

## Bridge in the 60's

Many things were different when I first joined the SABA in 1966, at that time the only bridge club in South Australia. The clubrooms were on the second floor of a building in Currie street, table fees were five shillings (decimal currency was about to be introduced), and the major sessions were Wednesday afternoons, Thursday evenings, and Saturday nights.

Wednesday afternoons was restricted to women players and the late Wally Roll, who usually dozed off at some stage during every session. The Teams and Pairs Championships started in February and continued, on alternate weeks, until November. Woe betide the player whose partner became ill - she had to wait until the following February before she could form another partnership. Cecile Miles and Margaret Choate dominated Wednesday afternoons, with their style of bidding (and usually making) 3NT whenever they had a majority of the points.

One of the characters of that era was Paul Bruckner, who played rubber bridge with Keith McNeil. Paul was noted for his furious arguments with Keith, and on one occasion sat facing away from the table, throwing his cards over his shoulder. Another time he open led a suit against a contract of 3NT. When Keith won a trick, rather than return Paul's suit he returned a second suit (either return beats the contract). This action so enraged Paul that, when he then won a trick, he returned a third suit, allowing a surprised declarer to make his contract.

Paul was a very agreeable fellow away from the table, however his attitude towards life was shown one day at the Victoria Park Races, when he told me he would rather lose money betting on an honest horse than win money on a dishonest one.

All other daytime sessions were for rubber bridge, some tables having the rule that you needed 13 points to open (pre-empts were banned).

On weeknights, apart from the occasional Monday night duplicate, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursday evenings were reserved for teams play, (the Summer Handicap and the Advertiser Shield). More than 30 teams competed, and matches could be played on any of the three available nights - the team captains always had to agree beforehand to a mutually acceptable session. The Advertiser Shield was the major event in the club calendar, with extensive legal advice required one year after the Grand Final resulted in a tie.

The major evening session was on Saturdays, where there were often more than 20 tables. Men were required to wear a coat and tie, (dinner jackets in the 1930's). This session was dominated by Max & Margaret Choate, and Gus and Gustie Gilbert.

It is easy to forget that we didn't have computer scoring those days. Instead, someone would take the scoresheets home and bring the results in a week or so later.

The Association was not very successful in those days - the membership was much smaller than at present, whilst the total number of tables in a week would have been less than 100. Further, the Association was paying a heavy rent for its mid-city location, so usually lost money each year. They were only rescued from eventual oblivion when Bob Robertson, as President in 1971, initiated the search for their own premises. The move to Unley created a major shift in the membership, losing several of the players who came by bus, but gaining many more who had their own transport.

The bidding systems and conventions in use were very limited - almost everybody played Acol or Goren, with strong twos, the very few pairs playing Schenken being the exception. You can imagine the reaction from the club players when a youth pair started playing Roman club, which featured second suit (canape) openings with relay responses!

The bidding systems in other states were much the same, apart from NSW, where competitors invariably played Standard American (and still do).

All doubles of overcalls and pre-empts were for penalties, which may seem primitive, however the negative double was only just beginning to appear in the United States. (I was once carpeted by the State Team Captain for overcalling 2 clubs vulnerable with only 13 points and a fair five card suit - he was worried that I might repeat this action at the ANC and suffer a heavy penalty).

The following year my partner and I played optional doubles at the ANC, where the double showed overall strength rather a holding in the opponent's suit. One opponent was determined to test our new convention and made six pre-emptive calls during one session - he was heavily punished five times, but continued to crow about his success on the sixth. Needless, the match was a very easy victory for SA.

The conservative approach of the Association was shown by the fact that, for the Open & Women's State Trials in the early 1960's, the boards were pre-dealt and hands where a light pre-empt might have been profitable were intentionally excluded.

With this background it now seems incredible that, at the 1967 ANC in Melbourne (for which we received the princely subsidy of \$20 per player), our Open Team (Kevin Rook, Max & Margaret Choate, Paul Bruckner, Lex Cooke and myself) came second, whilst our Women's Team (Babs Harley, Cecile Miles, Nora Rollison, Mary MacLean, Mary Bowden and Mary Grace) came first!

In closing, it should be noted that the Australian Team selected at the 1967 ANC subsequently achieved Australia's best ever international result, finishing fifth in the 1968 Olympiad at Deauville.