

Peninsula News and Views



Newsletter of the Peninsula Bridge Club

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FROM THE PRESIDENT Maurice Lomes

We held the PBC Swiss Teams Congress on Sunday, 24 April; there was a great roll-up of prominent players, but the highlight for me was the wonderful performance of the Bertram team (Jocelyn, Chris Duggin, Michael and Margaret Draper), who ran fifth - hearty congratulations. Thanks to all the participating members, who provided a great array of food, and to the dealing efforts of Tim Mussared (before) and Carol Bennetts (after the event). It's the efforts of members like these that make the Club work.

This year is the 50th anniversary of Peninsula Bridge Club. The Committee has decided to celebrate this event on Saturday, 3 September. The day will include a session of bridge starting at 10am with a full lunch provided for all. It will be a fun filled day and I encourage everyone to attend. We would love to hear any notable stories or events that have happened over the years. You can send these to me, or share them with the gathering on the day.

There were four bridge players: Everyone, Someone, Anyone and No one. There were some simple tasks to do around the bridge club. Everyone thought sure that Someone was going to do it. Anyone could have done it but No one did it in the end. Someone was angry because it was Everyone's job. Everyone thought that Anyone could have done it, but No one realised that No one would do it in the end. In the end, Everyone was angry at Someone because No one did what Anyone could have done.

There has been a significant element of complaint around the Club lately about things done or not done- parking is terrible, we are out of milk, the room is too hot/cold and complaints about the directing. Members have to realise that this is a **voluntary** organisation and that a lot of work is done by a few for little reward, and for the benefit of all. Too many members walk into the club, play bridge and walk out, leaving their mess behind and making no contribution. Somebody has to make the place work, and that includes cleaning up the mess left behind.

The Club can do with less complaint, more consideration and more contribution from the members. At the very least, "leave no footprints". When you depart the club, leave it as you found it- tables re-organised and all rubbish and cups removed. That will help. And we can always use more volunteers to help with the various tasks around the place- please don't be shy in offering to help.



Ask the Director—Frank, Fearless and Anonymous

I was playing the other night when an excited player from a nearby table exclaimed "High Five" and high fived the other players at the table. Do you have any idea what was going on?—Puzzled

Dear Puzzled, you witnessed a rare phenomenon, where not only did a five win a trick but it was recognised and celebrated. I'd like to see more of this at the bridge table.

Dear Frank, what would you suggest I can do to improve my game? I've been playing for a few years and regularly come at the wrong end of the field, please help me—Desperate for Glory.

Dear DfG, getting better at bridge is like dieting, everyone wants a magic pill but alas there are no shortcuts. It's true some people have better "card sense" or an aspie type brain, but there are some simple things you can do to get better.

- Join Bridge Base Online, put money in your BBO account and play Instant Tournaments. They cost 25 cents for a round of 8 games and one of the features of the tournaments is that you always have the best or equal best hand. There is a double dummy facility that allows you to analyse your play and you get the opportunity to see how 14 other players did in comparison to yourself.
- Attend the clubs Bridge Education sessions.
- Sign up to Bridge-vid and Vu-bridge, 2 online resources.
- If you know someone who is a better player, ask them for a game of bridge, the 7pm Wednesday evening session ftw!

Bridge Education

Our Improver/Refresher Course for 2016 starts 18 May at Peninsula Bridge Club. The focus is on the defensive aspect of bridge.

The focus is on *Defence*.

The course consists of stand-alone, 2-hours lessons on Wednesdays - 18 & 25 May and 8, 15, 22 & 29 June, 9.30 – 11.30 am.

The lessons are in four parts & designed for players with varying levels of experience. It covers:

- Introduction to particular defensive concepts: Leads ("Rule of 11"), Attitude Signals, Discards.
- Introduction of guidelines for the play of the cards: "2nd Hand Low"/"3rd Hand High".
- Review of bidding concepts: Opening; responding; Declarer's PLAN; Evaluating your hand - Min/Med/Max.

Four hands set by experts, utilizing the concepts that have been taught will reinforce the lesson content.

Come to one lesson or all the lessons. Come with or without a Partner (WITH is better!).

All of us need a **PLAN**:

- *Pause to consider your objectives*
- *Look at your winners*
- *Analyze your alternatives*
- *Now put it all together*

We want to give you the chance to play and defend with confidence! Learn how to formulate a plan and how to execute it. Get ideas on how to improve your plan.

Build up your toolbox of techniques which will help you carry out your plan. Practise using the appropriate tools to carry out your plan.

I recommend pre-reading the Trumps Defence Book for our improving players. (I am bulk ordering for those members who request a copy)

Questions:

Please email Cath: cwhiddon@live.com or call: 9979 5752 or see me round the club.

Don't forget to check out "What's On This Month" on our website or Bridge Ed Noticeboard for all Bridge Education updates.

(Our regular day time Wednesday Supervised Session continues 1st Wednesday in May, June & July.)

Cath Whiddon
Director of Bridge Education at Peninsula Bridge Club & ABF Accredited Teacher

Tips for improvers by L'Orange Mago

You've mastered the basics but you're lingering around the bottom of the leader board. What to do to improve as there is so much to learn in bridge that it can become quite overwhelming. With this in mind I'm going to suggest a strategy that I guarantee will improve your results or my name isn't L'Orange Magoo.

The first lead is very difficult. You only have your hand and the information gleaned from the bidding to assist you. Whereas after the first lead you have 2 hands available for your decision making process.

There's lots of rules about leads, in fact entire books have been written on the subject. For example, in NT most people lead 4th best from their longest suit, or lead a suit their partner called, or my favourite, a lead from a sequence, ie AK, or QJ10 etc However when you don't have an obvious option I'm urging you to consider a passive lead.

What is a passive lead?

A passive lead is leading from a suit without an honour.

What is an aggressive lead?

Examples of an aggressive leads are leading an Ace from a doubleton, leading away from an honour or leading a singleton honour.

Occasionally an aggressive lead yields brilliant results but bridge is a game of percentages, for every time an aggressive lead gets the result you're after, many more times it gives declarer tricks they don't deserve

So there you have it and it seems pretty simple doesn't it? My favourite passive lead is from a 3 card collection of rubbish, such as from 972.

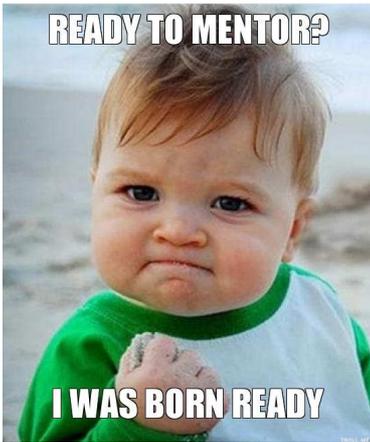
While I was putting this piece together I sent off an email to Peter Hollands and got this response from his wife:

An interesting topic to talk about with so many different variables involved. Personally I would consider this as more of an advanced topic because it does involve quite a bit of comprehension about how the play is going to go and the information that has been exposed in the auction.

For improving players I think leads are often a tricky thing because they don't really know why they are making the leads they are. I think that one thing that might clear the fog for them is having a list of possible leads and then I guess what they are hoping to achieve with each of them. I also like encouraging them to try to interpret their partners lead after it has been made. I have attached our notes from Defence Week 1 day 2 which I think might help. The descriptions on page 2 are a little vague because we discussed them in the videos but it might help.

Eeeek...even passive leads get complicated. Signing up to the Peter Hollands bridge site is one way you can improve your leads. Pete, a young Australian international runs bridge-vid, it's worth a look.

<https://bridgevid.com/>



PBC Committee is looking for Mentors

PBC has many very experienced members, PBC also has many new players who would benefit from playing with an experienced player.

Experience means many things, sometimes it's bridge ability, other times it's connections to social groups within the club.

The club is looking for experienced players who are willing to mentor new PBC members. Wednesday evening which starts at 7pm will be promoted as a Mentor and Mentee evening, it's friendly, low key and already has a number of new players in attendance.

A Mentor is not there to teach bridge. The Bridge Education Team already does a fantastic job. A Mentor must play the system that a newer player understands, which means no multi 2s, no odd/even discards, no Roman Keycard etc.

The Mentor is there to gently guide, give advice, to be a friend. Patience and tolerance and a love of the game are the hallmarks of a great Mentor—are you that person? Mentors will be asked to commit to one game initially and if both parties enjoy the experience, then aim for one game a month. To support this initiative the Mentor will be given a free session card.

If being a Mentor is of interest to you please send an email to Peter Clarke at tiliqua@optusnet.com.au

My father had five daughters. This was a misfortune from which he never fully recovered. He had spent his formative years in Egypt and Italy in World War 2 and was unequivocally, riotously sexist. He taught us all how to play bridge and cricket and how to present arms but otherwise paid us no attention at all apart from occasional camping trips where he would cook army-style bully beef hash which we thought was delicious.

Bridge was a common pastime in South Africa in those days and my father taught us the Charles Goren method – 13 points to open; 5 card majors; 15-17 INT; second hand plays low; cover an honour with an honour; fourth highest of your longest and strongest suit; Gerber is great; 1 point for a doubleton, 2 for a singleton and 3 for a void; don't trump your father's aces (just kidding!). You know what I mean. All those rules I have since learned how to break.

On holidays at my uncle's beach cottage which had 30 beds and overflowed with the extended family, the uncles and aunts all played bridge and most of the kids had learned to play. So when it rained we played bridge and darts but sadly there was a 'Men Only' sign on the snooker room door. When my father and my uncle played bridge against their wives it was a good spectator sport – sort of like Dennis Lillee and Jeff Thomson bowling at bunnies. South Africa didn't get TV until 1976 so we were more easily entertained than the modern child.

At my first job in Cape Town I met Michal (Miss Teenage Israel 1969) and her new, and as it turned out, temporary, husband, and Raoul from Mozambique who could jump over an armchair in one bound (feet together) and was my boyfriend until Eva from Sweden, who had straight hair and tube tops, arrived in the office. We all played bridge with the Cape Town Israelis who were ruthless and confident and I learnt a lot. They played non-stop for 36 hours over Rosh Hashanah one year and I wished I could join them but I wasn't Jewish enough!

Two years later, during our nine month immigration gestation living in a hovel in central Johannesburg, dodging the Military Police, we spent many evenings at Dave's brother Russell's new home high above the pretty twinkling lights of Soweto, which hid smouldering rebellion. Dave's pal Steve and I tried to teach the brothers to play bridge but there was too much wine and beer and no matter how often we told them about Stayman and Gerber by the next evening they had forgotten. However we had a lot of fun every night while Russell's pregnant wife worked night shift at the hospital. Their two and a half year old daughter thoroughly enjoyed her nights with us but we didn't ever put her to bed. I feel guilty to this day.

Bridge faded into the background when we finally got out of South Africa and built new lives in Australia. But it found me again many years later in the strangest fashion - at a ritual goat slaughter on Bilgola Plateau. We were at a party to mark the death of our friend Bulie's Xhosa grandma. This involved the killing of a goat in their double garage, and then the cooking and consuming of every scrap of this beast. I met Kari while enjoying goat curry on the deck and the topic of bridge came up. She invited me to play bridge at Peninsula. I had never heard of duplicate bridge and on my first few games I was so nervous my cards would shake in my hand. But I soon became addicted.

My life has not been the same since. I now play bridge with good partners and team mates. And I don't have to remind them of the conventions every night while a city burns in the background.

Vivien Eldridge

Ed—Wow, what a fantastic story. First published by Trumps, I made the decision that it was too good not to be presented to our PBC members. I hope you enjoyed it as much as I do.



This month your intrepid editor interviews Vivien Eldridge, perennial PBC Committee member, current Vice President, member of the tournament sub-committee and the IT sub-committee, proud member of the I lean when I drink club

When did you learn bridge? My father taught me and my 4 sisters to play bridge. I think I was about 11 years old. He was very stern and had all sorts of axioms – like second player plays low, lead 4th highest of your longest and strongest etc. etc.

What system do you play? Standard American with bells and whistles. The bells and whistles sometimes fall off!

What characteristics make for a good partner? A partnership needs a good deal of mutual respect and understanding and forgiveness. Bridge is intense and competitive but you can still try and have fun.

How often do you play a week? About 3 times a week

Do you have any tricks for maintaining your concentration? Not really. (Ed—thanks for the heads up).

Do you have any suggestions for other players? I count the cards twice if I am excited or upset by the previous board.

If you could change anything about bridge, what would it be? It is too addictive! (Ed—It's not often that boredom is the solution to any problem).

Have you made many friends through playing bridge? Bridge is a great way to meet people and I have made lots of friends. I see familiar faces all over the Northern Beaches.

Do you have a favourite convention? Minorwood is a good convention and often allows us to find minor slams which other pairs miss.

What criteria do you use for a penalty double? I close my eyes and hope for the best. I am hopeless at penalty doubles and need a doubling counsellor!

Is squeeze play part of your repertoire? I have read about squeezes and know the principles but actually doing it at the table is another story.

Do you have a favourite bridge book? I prefer novels but I liked the two recent books by Bird and Anthias – Winning No-Trump Leads and Winning Suit Contract Leads where they analysed thousands of hands using computer software and came up with some interesting results.

What advice would you give a new player? Find a good partner or two and do whatever you can to keep them happy.

Is Peninsula is good club, if so, why? I love Peninsula. It is my second home. It is run by volunteers for very little reward and it would be nice if a few more of the 500+ members did a bit to support the club and did less complaining.

Minorwood

This convention is used when a known minor suit will be trumps. If the opponents have not bid (no competition), 4C is Minorwood for clubs and 4D is Minorwood for diamonds.

After 4C or 4D, use the 1430 format; the cheapest response shows 1 or 4 keycards, the second cheapest bid shows 3 or 0 keycards, the third cheapest bid shows two keycards without the trump Q, and the fourth cheapest bid shows two keycards with the trump Q.

How does requestor now ask for kings?

By bidding the cheapest suit that is **NOT** 4NT (to play) or 5 of the trump suit (to play).

So, if the bidding goes

1C-4C (Minorwood)

4S (2 keycards w/o the trump Q)

Requestor bids 5D to ask for kings, and 4NT or 5C to play there.

Thanks to <https://bridgetips.wordpress.com/>

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