

Peninsula News and Views



Newsletter of the Peninsula Bridge Club

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President's update

The Club's financial year has just concluded and I am pleased to advise that the Club generated a small surplus. Our playing numbers have fallen slightly but our member numbers remain steady in the face of increasing competition, in particular from the golf clubs on the peninsula.

Two of our members, Dorothy McMurray and Agnes Cootes, recently celebrated their ninetieth birthdays. Congratulations to them.

Our annual charity day raised slightly more than \$3,000. Overall our members have raised more than \$7,000 for our preferred charities over the last year. My thanks go to our members for their continuing generosity.

In August we ran our first ever Swiss pairs congress. Forty pairs competed including some well known players. We will be running the event again next year and hope to get an even bigger participation.

Several members competed at the recent Coffs Harbour gold congress. Notably Lyn Baker, Vivien Eldridge, Margaret Rogers and John Rogers finished fourth in the restricted teams. Well done!

A number of our members will be competing in various metropolitan finals over the next few months. Here's wishing them well

Happy bridging Alan Davies



Agnes Cootes celebrated her 90th birthday with cake, flowers and fun at the bridge

Bridge Education Program—Cath Whiddon

We are currently running a monthly workshop in the supervised sessions (Monday 7-9pm, Tuesday 2.15- 4.30pm and Friday 9.30 – 11.30am) to introduce different basic conventions. Last month we looked at Simple Stayman. This month we are exploring Weak 2s and Pre-empt. In October we will workshop the Strong 2 ♣ opening & slam bidding and November we will do more work on Doubles.

We also provide special practise hands, upon request, at selected supervised sessions – 4 or 5 players can “Book-a-Table” to practise their partnership agreement re bidding, play and defence on selected topics of the table's choice. So far we have had requests for practise hands on No Trumps, Doubles, Weak 2s and Pre-empt – this service is available to all members, you just need to contact Cath a week in advance so she has the hands and notes set up for you.

In response to several members' requests, we have introduced an advanced mini workshop 1 Saturday per month to explore some conventions in more detail. In July we looked at bidding over the opponents' 1NT opening, using DONT. In August we added Garbage Stayman to our system and how to handle interference when you open 1NT. In September we will consider the Unusual 2NT and Michaels Cue bid. As these workshops were very well received, with over 30 members attending – we ask you to pre-register on the sign-up sheet on the Bridge Education Noticeboard, or send Cath an email (cwhiddon@live.com).

Cath has an email contact list you can join if you want to receive a monthly update on upcoming bridge education sessions and/or notes.

An anonymous member mysteriously known as Dear Leader asks the Editor: why is the 9♦ called the Curse of Scotland?

Dear, Dear Leader, funny you should ask this question as I happen to have the answer: the shape of the nine Diamonds is thought to correlate to the Christian Cross, with the curse referring to corruption of the faith..

Please feel free to contact the Editor if you have any questions, bridge questions preferred.

Different strokes for different folks

I was reading this interesting piece from Greg Quittner and realized that I'd played this exact hand and got to 6NT without any problems at all, — all because I use a different and dare I say, superior system — Blue Club Lite.

Here is Greg's piece:

♠ A2
♥ K6
♦ 1075
♣ AJ10982

♠ J10973
♥ J7
♦ J943
♣ Q5

♠ KQ
♥ AQ52
♦ KQ2
♣ K764

♠ 8654
♥ 109843
♦ A86
♣ 3

DEALER S N/S VULNERABLE

South	West	North	East
1♣	P	1♦!!	P
2NT	P	6NT	All Pass

THE BIDDING

North has a very difficult problem deciding what to respond. He is far too strong for a limit raise of 3C which shows 10-12 and is non - forcing. A response of 3NT takes the hand right away from South and prevents any further communication.

So why should North respond 1D on a 3 card suit? Because it allows South to describe his hand further at a low level. When South jumps to 2NT North has no hesitation bidding 6NT.

How does Blue Club Lite deal with the same hand?

South	West	North	East
1♣	P	2♣	P
2NT	P	4NT	P
5♣	P	6♣	P

For my money this sequence is a more elegant solution to bidding slam. South's 1♣ shows 15+ pts, not necessarily clubs. North's 2♣ response is game forcing and shows 5 controls, (Ace = 2 controls and a King = 1 control).

An advantage of Blue Club Lite is that after North's first bid South knows that North has 2 Aces and 1 King. The only barrier between South and slam is a suit to run. South's next bid is 2 NT indicating a balanced hand with no 5 card suit.

North with a 6 card club suit and obvious slam potential, makes sure that 3NT (a non forcing bid) is bypassed and bids a Roman Blackwood 4NT, keeping the option of a grand slam open. The response of 5C shows 1 or 4 aces, so grand slam isn't on.

North now in the box seat bids 6♣ indicating a solid suit, which is safe because of South's second bid that denied a 5 card suit. South now corrects to 6 NT without any risk because only one Ace is missing.

With Blue Club Lite there was no difficult decision to make, both partners were empowered and in control, a typical no brainer, for an excellent system.

And now how did the play go?

When the clubs break 2-1 South simply has to give up the A♦ for 12 tricks .

When to think, when not to think

When you play bridge there's a lot of thinking required. It's quite easy to lose track of what you have to do and one way to lighten the load is to do things automatically. Save your brain for more important things.

Without any clues , a finesse is a 50/50 proposition Rather than agonise whether to play for the drop or to finesse, why not go automatic. When looking for a Queen, with 8 cards in a suit play the finesse, with 9 or more, play for the drop , hence the bridge truism, with 8 ever, with 9 never . However when trying to find a King, always finesse unless you have 11 cards.

When holding a suit combination headed by the AKQT and looking for a Jack, it's best to finesse when holding 6 or fewer

EXCEPTIONS

If taking the finesse blocks the suit.

If playing for the drop fails and the dangerous opponent will get the lead.

If taking the finesse fails and will allow the opponents to ruff a winner.

Greg Quittner, a well known local bridge expert and renowned teacher has kindly allowed Peninsula News to publish some of his online lessons

A SWITCH IN TIME SAVES 9!

Dealer W—all vulnerable

♠ K6
 ♥ Q42
 ♦ AQ107643
 ♣ 8
 ♠ AQJ73
 ♥ A5
 ♦ 92
 ♣ QJ104
 ♠ 10542
 ♥ 8763
 ♦ KJ
 ♣ AK9

West	North	East	South
1♠	2♦	P	2♠
P	3NT	all pass	

The bidding

South's 2♠ shows diamond support and invites North to bid 3NT if he has a spade stopper. North considers K6 good enough to jump to 3NT with 7 diamond tricks guaranteed

The play

West wins the A♠ and pauses for thought. He can see that North has at least 6 diamond tricks, a spade trick (thanks to partner's 9♠ he knows North has the K♠) and 2 club tricks. The only hope lies in the heart suit. He switches to the A♥ and the defense take four hearts and the A♠ for down 1. Had West continued spades North would have made 10 tricks.

POSTSCRIPT :

The size of the card which partner leads can often indicate whether he likes the suit or not. East trusted West by leading a heart to maintain partnership harmony! South prayed that North had a heart stopper as well as a spade stopper!

Greg Quittner is running a week of bridge Nov 24 to Nov 29 in the Blue Mountains at the Redleaf Resort for only \$869 per person twin share. Included are 5 nights accommodation, 5 dinners, 5 breakfasts and all bridge sessions. There are also 3 red point sessions and prizes. For all the details contact: 9975-2708 or gregquittner@hotmail.com.

Patterns make counting easier

All bridge suit distributions (and hands) have a pattern, which is simply the number 13 divided into four groups.

I can't overemphasize the importance of memorizing the most common patterns. This may sound like a difficult task, but it isn't. There are only 16 patterns in which the longest suit is four, five, or six cards (see Figure 1).

Every deal consists of four suits, each distributed according to a pattern. Knowing the common patterns makes counting out a hand much easier. Unless you're a beginner, you know how essential counting is to accurate declarer play and defence.

Here's an example how knowing the patterns helps:
 You are declarer and have five spades. Dummy has three spades.
 You play two rounds of spades and right-hand opponent shows out on the second round.
 Quick! How many spades does left-hand opponent have left?

If you have to stop and do the arithmetic ($13 - 5 - 3 - 1 = 4 - 2 = 2$) every time you count out a suit, you'll waste an enormous amount of time and energy. But if you know that one of the common patterns is 5 4 3 1, you already know that left-hand opponent started with four spades and has played two of them.

There are 39 patterns in all, including the extremely distributional ones. The most common pattern is 4 4 3 2, which occurs about 20 percent of the time. Thus, one-fifth of all of the bridge hands and suit distributions you will ever see will have two four-card suits, one three-card suit and a doubleton.

After you memorize the 16 common patterns shown above, I recommend that you write out and memorize the seven-card patterns. Eight-card and longer patterns occur so infrequently that you can figure them out at the table.

Barry Rogoff is an American Contract Bridge League Silver Life Master who has played duplicate bridge for more than 20 years. Rogoff can be reached at brogoff@rogoff-darrow.net.

4 cards	5 cards	6 cards
4 3 3 3	5 3 3 2	6 3 2 2
4 4 3 2	5 4 2 2	6 3 3 1
4 4 4 1	5 4 3 1	6 4 2 1
	5 4 4 0	6 4 3 0
	5 5 2 1	6 5 1 1
	5 5 3 0	6 5 2 0
		6 6 1 0

Figure 1



Ron Smith, a taciturn player, not known for spontaneous outbursts of frivolity, reluctantly faces a light hearted interview from the editor.

Who taught you to play bridge? Bill Zorn

What system do you play? Standard multi twos

How often do you play a week? 2 or 3 times

What is a favourite contract you would like to tell us about? Making 6H when the defender had the best trump and 4 diamonds on which my losers went (sic)

What's the most expensive bid you've ever made? 2200 off

Do you have any tricks for maintaining your concentration? Don't participate in idle gossip. (This answer surprised the interviewer)

What characteristics make for a good partner? Sticking to the agreed system

Do you find it hard to find a regular partner? No

Have you made many friends through playing bridge? Quite a few

No really Ron, have you made any friends through playing bridge? Quite a few

Who is your favourite Director? Matt McManus

What advice would you give a new player? Count your losers

Quick review of openings — Cath Whiddon

With a balanced hand and –

- 12 to 14 points, open one-of-a-suit intending to rebid NT at the cheapest available level.
- With 15 to 17 HCP, open 1NT.
- With 18 or 19 HCP, open one-of-a-suit intending to jump to 2NT at the next opportunity.
- With 20 or 21 HCP, open 2NT.
- With 22 HCP, open 2♣.

Below is a summary of what the club workshopped in September:

If the partnership agrees to use weak two-bids:

- An opening bid of 2♦/2♥/2♠ shows a good six-card suit—usually three of the top five honors — and 5 to 10 high-card points.
- 2♣ is reserved for strong hands.
- Avoid opening a weak two-bid when you have a side four-card major suit or a void.

Keep in mind the vulnerability and your position at the table:

Be more cautious when you are vulnerable.

In first or second position, stick closely to the guideline and have what partner expects.

In third position, you can exercise your judgment, occasionally opening on a weak suit or even a good 5-card suit.

You rarely open a weak two-bid in fourth position. If you do, it shows - a maximum weak two-bid — a hand where you expect to make your contract.

After a weak two-bid:

- * The partnership usually plays a jump to game by responder is not forcing. It's a sign-off and opener is expected to pass.
- * A raise is non-forcing and it's not invitational. Opener is expected to pass, since responder is the captain. Responder could have either a strong hand or a weak hand when raising opener's suit. The opponents should be guessing what to do, not opener!
- * A response of 2NT is forcing, as is a new suit.

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