

Peninsula News and Views



Newsletter of the Peninsula Bridge Club

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A word from our President Maurice Loomes

I would like to thank so many of you, who have congratulated me and extended your best wishes on my appointment as President. It is very much appreciated. There has also been a substantial change in the Committee this year and I welcome them to their new tasks. I would like to assure you that we all will be working hard for the benefit of all members.

My personal philosophy starts with the belief that “bridge is a game we play for fun, not sheep stations”. That said, I recognise that there is quite a diversity in the Club- from the social player to those that want to represent the Club and play at congresses, from the seasoned player to all those newcomers, PBC has to accommodate all.

The best way to achieve this is to have a strong Club - financially and in terms of membership. Past Committees have left us with a sizeable bank balance, that we can build on to help in the eventual transition to a new premises.

Also as importantly, our playing numbers continue to grow - up another 75 or so to 550 in the past year. Our wonderful bridge education programme is critical in this - of about 300 bridge clubs in Australia, only six are accredited by the ABF for education, and PBC is one of these. This success provides us with a number of strengths:

- We can more easily maintain and enhance our new technology in the bridge room
- We have increased the number of playing sessions, thus providing our members with more opportunities to play
- Attendances at daytime sessions are strong every day, and this will facilitate the introduction of graded sections more often
- We presently have about 600 players per week at PBC- if we can get this towards 1,000, or 50,000 per year, PBC will be in a stronger position dealing with Council regarding new premises in due course.

Having said all that, I am conscious that there is more to life than bridge. PBC is a social environment and will remain a place for fun, social contact and more.

In closing, I should congratulate our new Club teams champions- Vivien Eldridge, Alan Davies, Cath Whiddon and Lyn Smith. And for those not at the AGM, I should highlight the further recognition of Colin Mingay and Joan Fawcett, both of whom were elevated to Gold Membership (after 25 years of bridge hardship at PBC). Congratulations to both.



Ask the Director—Frank, Fearless and Anonymous

Well you seem to know everything, who is on the 2015/2015 Committee? How can I complain if I don't know who to complain to? - Entitled and complacent

Dear Entitled etc, I feel your pain and to assist I have compiled a list of the new committee members and various office holders, they're looking forward to your emails.

The Committee office bearers: The big Kahuna: Maurice Loomes, Vice President: Vivien Eldridge, Secretary: tba and Treasurer: Alan Davies.

Committee members: Bill Fitzsimons, Susan Jensen, Trevor Laughton, Sarah Young, Peter Clarke, Di Agostino Cath Whiddon

Assistant treasurer: Di Agostino

Accounts: Lyn Hammill

House and office manager: Bill Fitzsimons

Masterpoint secretary: Alan Davies, Sarah Young (ass)

Bridge education: Cath Whiddon

Membership secretary: Susan Jensen

Catering: Rachael Loomes

Kitchen roster: Anita Kite (probably)

Technology maintenance: Ken Watson

Pianola: Vivien Eldridge

Library: Jen Ardill

Newsletter: Peter Clarke

Welfare: Mary Farrell

Charity days, Directors roster: Sue Riley

Session cards: Trevor Laughton

Website: IT Committee

Directors sub-committee: Chair Verl Lawrence

Tournament sub-committee: Chair Vivian Eldridge

IT sub-committee: Chair Ken Watson

Bridge education sub-committee: Chair Cath Whiddon

The art of balancing - www.cincybridge.com

The concept of balancing comes from duplicate bridge and in particular Match Point Pairs. Unlike Rubber Bridge where we allow opponents to 3 make a partial and hope the next hand gets us to game before they do, Match Point scoring requires we beat the rest of the pairs in our direction.

Balancing allows us more than one way to improve our score: we might make our contract, the opponents might go down in theirs, and we've shared some information useful on defence. Balancing happens specifically after 2 passes. The name comes from "Balance of Power". We balance because we infer we have a fit and strength to compete in our suit - the opponents stopped at the 1 or 2 level.

Balancing is a risk we take to raise the stakes of an auction to improve our score. At duplicate we rarely want the opponents to play at the 1-level, often we strain to reopen the auction so that they have to bid to the 3-level.

Balancing and Direct competitive bidding are NOT the same thing. Balancing requires much more judgment and awareness of the inferences from the auction. Balancing bids take on very different (weaker) ranges than their DIRECT counterparts. A direct TOD is 10+ HCP with 3 suits supported.

A Balancing double might be made with 7 HCP and 3 suits supported. A Direct Overcall might be 8-16 HCP with a 5 card suit. A balancing overcall might be 7-14 HCP with a 4 – card suit. A direct 1NT overcall is usually 15-18 while a balancing 1NT might be 11-14 or 16 and might not promise a stopper!

Yes, there is much to explore about balancing. Balancing position actions compete. Balancer bids combined values. Defer to partner unless you have surprising useful SHAPE for your previous bidding.

Why is balancing important? If you are disciplined about balancing and you reopen the bidding when the auction and your hand suggest you have values and a potential fit in one of 2 or 3 suits, then you no longer have to force a poor take-out double or overcall on unsuitable hands. That's right, good discipline in intervening means relying on balancing skills. Good discipline means better communication



Complete Book on Balancing in Contract Bridge (Paperback)

Mike Lawrence

Published by BARON BARCLAY
BRIDGE SUPPLIES, UK 2013

ISBN 10: 093946070X /
ISBN 13: 9780939460700

New and changed events for 2016.

Our first major event of the year will be an **Invitation Teams day** on Thursday 28th January at 10am. The idea is to invite players who would not normally play at Peninsula to join you in a team at members rates and show off our great facilities and friendly members. If you don't know anyone from other clubs then you can just play with your usual pals.

There will be three NEW competitions running for the 9 months from March to November. Masterpoints are as at the 1st January 2016. The best 8 scores will be counted.

1. A new under 150 masterpoint competition (**Rosemary's Row Race**) held on the **second Monday** of each month. The pair with the highest cumulative percentage will win. 2 substitutes are permitted.
2. A new under 15 masterpoint competition (**Novice Comp**) will be held on the **first Wednesday** of each month. The player with the highest cumulative percentage will be the winner. This means you can play with the same partner or with a different partner each time.
3. A new under 50 masterpoint competition (**Under 50 Comp**) will be held on the **first Friday** of each month. The player with the highest cumulative percentage will be the winner. This means you can play with the same partner or with a different partner each time.

We will be introducing an **Under 100 Masterpoint Club Pairs Championship** on three **Saturdays** in September. This will be a prestige event with an Honour board and a chance to get your name in gold paint!

The **Padman Trophy** competition will be run on the **FIRST Tuesday** of each month (not the second) except for November because of the Melbourne Cup.

The **Club Teams Championship** will be run over **3 Thursdays in November** to avoid clashes with the ABF Spring Nationals. As a consequence of this change the **Stebbins Trophy** competition will be held over **4 MONDAYS** in October.

Coming up with new and exciting bridge events is the task of the Tournament sub-committee which reports to the PBC Committee. This Committee is made up of the following members Vivien Edridge [CHAIR] Alan Davies, Sarah Young and Vickie Busted. If you have an idea you think is worthy of implementation, please don't keep it a secret

Rachael and Maurice Loomes en vacance

Now repeat after me, Clubs are TREFLES, Diamonds are CARREAUX, Hearts are COUER (I know that one because I have been to Sacre Couer in Paris- thank heavens for small mercies!). Spades are PIQUES and No Trumps are SANS ATOUT. Let's do that again... I think not, that's what cheat sheets are for.

Such is the game of Bridge in a strange land and in a foreign language!! And that is just the start of it. Somebody over there decided to also fiddle with the deck of cards. Surely AKQJ is universal? It seems so except in France. Here, it is 1 (yes 1, as in one!) RDV! The French have a historic hangup with keeping English words out of the French vocabulary, and so they opt for "ordinateur" for computer, "guichet automatique" for ATM. In cards, they come undone as the words for king and queen both begin with R (Roi and Reine) so queen becomes Dam (D). I don't have a clue how a Jack becomes a Valet(V). Now, my cheat sheet runs to a page.

I think I have got it. Couer and Piques are majors, Trefles and Carreaux are minors, Sans Atout is No trumps. 1RDV are the honours. I am exhausted and we haven't even found the bridge club.

We find that during summer, the Gargas Bridge Club is actually located in Apt (~ 20km away)-typically French, but suiting us as we are nearby. The room is finally located, and, with some trepidation, we enter the fray. I suddenly break out into a sweat as I fear that we will bid a two diamond multi- how will I ever explain all the meanings? I dive for the dictionary and look up 20 high card points-"vingt haute cartes pointees"- my cheat sheet is well into the second page.

There seems to be lots of bustle and little organisation.

Finally we gain some attention as visitors and are introduced to the processes- pay your money and take a ball from the jar that determines where you sit. We pray for EW as scoring seems a daunting task. Alas, we are doomed to 1NS. I suggest to my partner that we pay again and draw another ball, but she doesn't think that a good idea. I traipse to table one.

There are 8 tables, so we have a skip. Average age is probably about 75 years and there is a heavy male factor-although as the day progresses, I am not sure this is a positive. There are virtually no English speakers (except for the interesting Australian born local and her English actor friend).

So to the game. Bidding boxes, but the suits go down rather than across and, of course, we have to contend with SA rather than NT. The competition is part of a nationwide event with pre-determined boards. I got the impression that all competitions are nationwides. It looks like the club is sent travel sheets with the hands incorporated; these are distributed around the room and each table deals the four hands that they will not be playing. This is facilitated by the members at the end of the previous competition reorganising the cards back into their suits in ascending order.

Needless to say, there was an element of mayhem, utter disorganisation and loud noise before we got near to playing a game of cards. Some considerable time later, the president stands up to announce the commencement of play and completes her little tirade with "fermer la bouche!!"

It must be something important as she often rose to her feet to repeat the phrase, it certainly got the players' attention.

We found the French to be very good and consistent players, but the only rules were of the Rafferty's variety. In the course of the day, the director (also known as the President) was called just once. This was nothing to do with the cards, but rather a raging, blathering man - it seems his partner trumped his Ace (oops, 1); it took ten minutes to calm him down. The trick was a cigarette out the back, where he was joined by half the field! Finally, we all got going again.

Not realising all this, we had our own little rules drama a short time later- a bid out of turn by my RHO. My partner and I looked at each other across the table for an age, before I gathered the courage to point out the problem. No problem, put the bid back in the box and on with the game with a bid from my LHS. I let out a sigh of relief.

Bear in mind that we were not in Paris but a backwater of rural France. The room abounded with characters... from the domineering President to the plethora of the soap-shy, the nicotine addicted (these two groups were not mutually exclusive!) to the notable individuals. We had the aforementioned rager, another man who needed two chairs (but was nonetheless necessarily nimble, having drawn 4EW), and the pair of very old biddies who took great pleasure in handing us our heads.

The best part of the day was undoubtedly scoring each hand. We found this not too difficult with the help of our cheat sheets, but we had not expected the prolonged post-mortems after each hand. The travellers not only showed others' result but also set out the four hands and what each side could make. This system does not make for fast bridge as the recriminations flowed, along, I suspect with a measure of abuse. It was here that I learnt a new bit of French, as "merde" seemed to be the word of the day.

28 boards took an extraordinarily long time (a lot of it in post-mortems and ciggy breaks), but at the end of it, we had had fun. We had met some very hospitable people, who were also excellent bridge players. We had learnt another way of doing things. We were done, but before heading out the door there was one further task... reorganise each board of cards back into the suits in preparation for the next day's play. And so the cycle goes.

Thanks to the Gargas Bridge Club for a wonderful day.





Once a quarter the newsletter applies the blow torch to a Peninsula player and in this issue the editor learns why you don't play with fire.

Peter Clarke aka Beagle has been on the PBC Committee for the past year, is a member of the IT and Directors sub-committees and edits this quarterly newsletter.

Who taught you to play bridge? A couple of friends at uni

What system do you play? A simplified version of Fantunes, although I'm planning to have a go at 2 over 1 which is essentially Standard on steroids

How often do you play a week? 3-4 times a week and online as required

Do you have any tricks for maintaining your concentration? I have tried hypnotism—as I'm not the best player at PBC I'd say it is still a work in progress

If you could change anything about bridge, what would it be? I'd make 5 of a minor worth more than 3NT. There's nothing more frustrating than bringing home a difficult 5 ♣ or 5 ♦ to discover that the 3NT crowd had an easier contract and got a better score, only having to win 9 tricks. That's just wrong.

What characteristics make for a good partner? Similar ability to myself and politeness. A post mortem is fine but it redefines the word dull to have someone focus on a mistake that I am already aware of and am massively depressed about.

Have you made many friends through playing bridge? More than I thought I would but probably less than I think I have...lol

Do you have a favourite convention? I like Roman Blackwood, even though experts prefer Roman Keycard

What criteria do you use for a penalty double? I double on principle when I don't believe the opposition have the points to get the contract, even though I might not have the guaranteed cards to put the contract down. This of course has caused much grief to my partner. The better penalty double, in terms of partnership grief, is when you are staring at certain winners—gutless but reliable.

Is squeeze play part of your repertoire? Yes, but it's a bit hit and miss. I need to better understand when to play for a squeeze as opposed to an endplay.

What separates a good club player from a State or International player? Thank you for asking this question because I've been thinking about it a lot lately. The really good players can work out and remember the distribution of a hand through the bidding and the subsequent play. This means they often know which card to keep when discarding or when to play for the drop or when to make the killer suit switch. This gives them a real edge over players who don't "map" out the hands.

Do you have a favourite bridge book? I love bridge books and have well over 50 in my library. I think everyone should read the Rodwell Files by Eric Rodwell. PBC has an extensive library, Jen Ardill is the "Liberian" - make use of her services.

Who is your favourite Director? Verl, without a doubt. As a new Director, I've found Verl to be incredibly helpful and supportive, she knows all the arcane regulations and is a wiz at running the computer software.

What advice would you give a new player? Practise, read, join vu-bridge and bridge-vid which you will find on the net. Spend money on these 2 resources, knowing that they will improve your bridge while you're supporting people making a living from this great game

Is Peninsula is good club, if so, why? If you've only played at PBC you probably don't realize how good this club is. Many suburban clubs require you to pack up after each session. Table money of \$5 is ridiculously cheap compared to other clubs where the norm is \$10 for members. The club is run by the members for the members—I really like that

Any other thoughts? Too many people would rather win than make friends. We're playing at a suburban club, not the Australian championships. Many, many times I have seen new players penalised for making beginner's mistakes, by experienced players who really should be cutting them some slack. We should be more inclusive and less competitive.

Wolff ftw or Death to DONT L'Orange Magoo

DONT or Disrupt Opponents No Trump is a convention that I regard with contempt and disdain and should be better known as Disastrous Outcomes Never Try. DONT is like a neuro surgeon using a jackhammer to prize open your skull—a procedure with massive potential for collateral damage, but seemed like a good idea at the time.

Being negative is not the L'Orange way and in the spirit of humble enlightenment I give you Wolff — a US professional, here is his website <http://aces.bridgeblogging.com>

Bobby Wolff has been a long time champion of simple, direct systems'

"Against expert competition, simple is best. Even something like Landy (2♣ shows the majors, all else is natural) is fine. Unusual systems typically have only one benefit: surprise. Here are Wolff's responses to 1NT:

Dbl = penalty

2♣ = minors

2♦ = majors

2♥ = natural 2

2♠ = natural 2

2NT = major-minor two-suiter

Peninsula Bridge Club Cnr Jacksons Road & Pittwater Road Warriewood NSW 2102

Tel: 02 9970 6527

Web: www.peninsulabridgeclub.org.au E-mail: bridgeinc@optusnet.com.au

Peninsula Bridge Club Facebook Group

Newsletter Editor: Peter Clarke tiquia@optusnet.com.au