



NEWCASTLE BRIDGE NEWSLETTER



Christmas - Issue 1 - December 2018

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From the President

Hi Everyone,
2018 saw our club reach its **50th year**.
89 members and partners enjoyed a celebratory lunch at the United Sports Club at Adamstown followed by a Trivia Quiz. We were honoured to have six of our foundation members in attendance.



Pictured:

Catherine Wileman, Ian Walker, Patsy Morris, Roy Hardy, Joan Hewson, and Judy Macansh.

I hope you enjoy our newest venture – this occasional Newsletter. It is a project taken on by some committee members and they would appreciate articles about playing Bridge, bridge member experiences or any submissions of interest to our members. Please send them to carey48@bigpond.com

As Christmas and New Year are fast approaching, I would like to wish all of you and your families the very best for the festive season.

Jeff Biddlecombe

Congratulations

2018 Pair Champions

Paul McGrath, Wayne Smith

2018 Club Teams Champions

Ken Wilks, Rosalie Broughton, Chris Dibley, Michael Seldon

2018 Mixed Pairs Champions

Margaret Geddes, Michael Simes

2018 GNOT Regional Finals

1st Chris Dibley, Julie Gleeson, Michael Simes, Paul McGrath
3rd Phil and Cath Hocking, Jeff Conroy, Jill Blenkley

2018 Graded Pairs Competition

A Grade

1st Rosalie Broughton, Michael Simes
2nd Paul McGrath, Wayne Smith
3rd Ian Walker, Bernie Adcock

B Grade:

1st Jeff Conroy, Jill Blenkley
2nd Brigitta Kuegler, Gai Brouwer
Julie Fraser-Easton, Kerrie Norris

C Grade:

1st Jack and Jenny Fowler
2nd Grant Gamage, Graham Woods
3rd Livio Faidiga, Peter Stanmore

Did You Know...?

- At the moment we have 357 members
- The newest member joined on 29 August 2018
- We have 21 Life Members in two categories – by recognition/by donation
- You can find out about our life members and the history of the club on the website <http://newcastlebridge.org/documents/club-history/>
- Prior to purchase our club building was originally a Church hall used by the Plymouth Brethren
- Our energy costs are about 40% below what they would have been had we not invested in solar panels and LED lighting”.
- Newcastle Bridge Club is now on Facebook



Key Dates

Week commencing December 3: Christmas party week. All table fees waived and Christmas cake and wine will be provided by the Club - each session to organize and provide their party fare.

December 9: Central Coast Bridge Club Summer Teams.

9-20 January 2019: Canberra Summer Festival of Bridge

11 February: The next course of bridge lessons for beginners commences. Lessons will be held on Monday morning 9:30 -11:30 am and Wednesday night 7–9 pm. Lessons cost \$10 each. A booklet of course notes can be purchased for \$15.

Tech Talk-Bridge Exercises



This little app is available only on Apple devices and requires iOS 8.0 or later.

It is compatible with iPhone, iPad and iPod touch. Being a cheap-skate, I down-loaded the free 'Bridge Exercises lite' –which comes with slightly annoying advertisements – slightly? Because they are over before you register how annoying they are.

You can pay \$10.99 for the advertisement - free version. The app is not an online game and does not need an internet connection once downloaded. It is a simple little programme only viewable in Landscape orientation. Bridge Exercises Lite offers thousands of declarer play exercises for players to practice bridge.

Ok –why this one? Well, there is one GREAT feature which makes it one of my favourites. Tell you about that in a sec.

This app is all about practising the **play of the cards**. The bidding is already done for you and you know at the outset of each hand what the contract is. *(Cont. over)*

Member Profile - Fay Larkin



Fay is a diminutive figure with twinkling eyes, a ready smile and a reserved manner. Lurking inside however, (among many other lovely qualities) is a clever bridge player who ranks 14th in Top 50 Players of All Time for Newcastle Bridge Club, with 35 years of play to her credit.

Born in Newcastle, Fay went to the Sacred Heart Primary School then attended St Mary's at Maitland as a boarder. She has four children – a son and 3 daughters- who have blessed her with 11 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren.

Over time, Fay worked in a Finance Company for a few years and then as a cosmetician at Winn's – an iconic Hunter Street department store (1879-1980).

Fay also belonged to the Victoria League – a friendship League which first met in rooms on Hunter Street, Newcastle in 1922. A fellow member invited a dozen ladies to come and learn Bridge at her house and Fay went along. Her first time at NBC was an invitation night where she realized she had a lot of work to do to improve on those early lessons. "I really enjoyed it. If you're interested definitely go for it – it gets your mind working and you make nice friends. Once you start you won't be able to stop. I used to belong to what we called 'the pink ladies'. We used to do things around the club to help out - collecting the money, reading out results." Fay has seen lots of changes at the Club over the years. "We're getting more competitive. But the biggest change is the advent of the computer and Bridgemates. In the early days the scoring was all done by hand. I used to take the scoring sheets home and it would take me half a day to do it because everything had to balance. The results would not be available for a week. The challenge is competing against the better players – but you can learn from them by seeing what you should have done."

What makes a successful bridge partnership?



Find out more

<https://www.larryco.com/bridge-learning-center/detail/618>

<https://www.dummies.com/games/card-games/bridge/10-ways-better-bridge-partner/>

<https://www.gatesnotes.com/About-Bill-Gates/What-Makes-for-a-Good-Bridge-Partner>

An enduring friendship is behind the successful bridge partnership which Ronnie Antill and Margaret Somers have shared for at least 20 years. "We trust and respect one another. If we make mistakes – so what! It's not the end of the earth. We learn from them, talk about them but don't dwell on them. I know that Marg doesn't blame me or get cranky and I don't do that to her. Our friendship is worth a lot more than a win at Bridge. The more mistakes you make the more you learn and then you can change your approach. We might change our game and try new things. We're both bits of gamblers and we tolerate that in each other. If it seems like a strange call, we would trust that call. A sense of humour is important – we do a lot of laughing."

Cont....You have to try and **make that contract**. The hand can be replayed as many times as you like. BUT when you finally realize that you can't make the contract then you can watch the **correct play** by pressing the **solution** button. How good is that! It is a great little learning tool for improving your declarer play. PS Anyone who has a favourite Android app for Bridge practice, please send us a review

BOARD 13						
BD: 13	♠ Q62		Dir: N			
	♥ AKJ3		Vul: All			
	♦ K98					
	♣ A97					
♠ JT97			♠ 853			
♥ Q			♥ T987			
♦ 754			♦ AQJ3			
♣ T8543			♣ 62			
	♠ AK4					
	♥ 6542					
	♦ T62					
	♣ KQJ					
			N			
	♣	♦	♥	♠	T	
N	1	2	4	3	4	17
S	1	2	4	2	4	3 7
E	-	-	-	-	-	13
W	-	-	-	-	-	



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Winning Pairs (match point) Tactics - Chris Dibley

1. Scoring at Match Points

In **Match Point Pairs** (using double match point scoring), players get the total of **2 points for every score (other pair sitting in their direction) their score beats, and 1 point for every score (other pair sitting in their direction) their score ties.**

This score is shown on the **Bridgemates** as a **percentage** e.g. if played 11 times, then a **maximum** (beating the 10 other pairs) would score (10x2) 20/20 or 100% on that board. (A pair's **final percentage** for the session is **the average of all the percentages** for the boards they played).

Keep in mind the **percentage displayed after a score is entered is an indication only until the final round**. (Hence every board on the **first round** always shows 50% as you have not beaten or lost to any other pair).

Below is a **real score sheet from board 13 Friday 2nd November morning session** (sorted) which shows the contract, the number of tricks taken, the score and finally the matchpoints earned.

Contract by	Tricks	NS	EW	NS	EW
3NT N	11	660		19	1
3NT S	11	660		19	1
3NT N	10	630		14	6
3NT N	10	630		14	6
3NT N	10	630		14	6
4♥ N	10	620		8	12
4♥ N	10	620		8	12
4♥ N	10	620		8	12
3NT N	9	600		3	17
3NT N	9	600		3	17
6♥ N	10		200	0	20

☞ Two NS pairs played in 3NT and made **11 tricks** and got an equal top of **19/20** (beat 9, tied once) or **95%** and their EW opponents 1/20 or 5% on this board.

☞ Two NS pairs in 3NT made **10 tricks**, beat 6 other pairs and tied twice (6x2 + 2x1) for **14/20** or **70%** and their EW opponents got 6/20 or 30%.

☞ The 3 pairs who played in 4♥ only beat 3 other pairs and tied twice for **8/20** or just **40%**.

About the above hand: North opened a strong 1NT (15-18 HCP) and South had a super-flat **3433** hand (4♥) and 9 HCP. The **match point players saw no ruffing values in their flat hand** and instead of using Stayman, just bid 3NT betting on making the same number of tricks as 4♥ even if partner had a 4 card ♥ suit. Making 10 tricks in NT got 70%, making 10 tricks in ♥ only got 40%.

Improving Players' Lesson:

In pairs, two flat hands (no ruffing value) usually score higher match points in NT contracts.

Advancing Players' Lesson:

In pairs, if you end in 3NT and see most others safely making 10 tricks in 4 of a Major, play to make 10 tricks in NT even if it risks the contract. Gamble a low percentage for a high one!

My Bridge Brain - the Human Compost Bin or What I Learned about Overcalling

I like to think that my Bridge knowledge accumulates in much the same way as my compost does. I fill it to the brim with bridge learning, wait for it to bed down and hopefully create space for more.

In 2006 I filled my brain with two sets of beginner Bridge lessons. (Yes I needed two!) Then over the ensuing years I could only fit in more bridge after the previous learning had settled.

So let me tell you of one valuable brain 'compost' addition. It happened on a Bridge holiday in 2013 when I was playing with my bridge teachers in a hotel lounge in Dubai (ok I know that wasn't necessary – just setting the scene!)

The bidding went something like this: Opener 1C – responder 1S then I overcalled 2 hearts.

Well! All hell broke loose!!! The other players at my table acted like I'd just committed a heinous crime – drinks froze mid-air, eyes glared, nostrils flamed, and indignation flowed.

"You can't interrupt a forcing auction!" they all chorused.

"What?" said I. "What does that mean? I've got 10 points and 5 hearts, why can't I overcall?" I stuttered.

More raised eyebrows, sighs and harrumphs.

Actually, we're all really good mates and after I'd calmed down they explained and I was given a valuable lesson. It's one I've used since then each bidding session. It may not suit you but for what it's worth here it is.

My understanding is that a forcing auction, in natural play systems is one where neither declarer nor responder by their bids, has yet defined the upper limit of their point range.

For example Declarer bids 1C (13+ points) – responder bids 1S (6 + points): Responder has changed suit and Declarer must continue the bidding. Neither has defined the upper limit of their point holding.

Another example of a forcing auction: 1D – 1 H, 1S – 2 C. Here Declarer has 13+ points and responder has 10+ points – neither has limited their point holding at this stage.

These below are not forcing auctions because they end in limited bids. For example:

1C – 1NT: responder has defined his point range as 6-9 or 1C – 2C: responder has indicated minimum points of 6-9

So my friends' advice to me was **"don't over-call immediately but wait until you can deduce, by the bidding, if the majority of the points lie with the opposition. If they do then what is the point of interrupting with a miserly 10 points? Use whatever points you have to defend. "**

If the auction shows a minimum point holding by Declarer/Responder then I could overcall to see if my partner and I had the possibility of a part contract.

Of course, vulnerability, distribution, partnership agreements et al will all have a bearing on your decision.

Notwithstanding all of the above, if I had a ripper of a suit – say AKQxxx and shortages and favourable vulnerability I'd probably be overcalling with great enthusiasm from the get-go...

Five years have passed since that day and so I sought a second opinion from Ken Wilks. Here is his reply:

Yes I guess in some aspects it makes sense not to bid until you know more info. However if you don't bid at the first opportunity, by the time it comes round again you may not be able to get the bid in. Also, by bidding immediately, you make it easier for partner if they are on lead.

Take your example of 1C-1S: If you don't call at the 1st chance when it comes round to you next time the bidding could well have reached 2S. Now what do you do - are you going to risk bidding at the 3 level?

As you know I play Precision and the 1C open = 16+ hcp. People interfere immediately without knowing if my partner has a positive response (8+ hcp)

And I have seen them interfere after 1C - 1D (less than 8 hcp) but the strength of the 1C is still undefined.

And even after 1C- positive response (8+ hcp) I have seen interference.

So I think these days the trend is to get a bid in as early as possible.

You also need to consider the quality of your suit and the vulnerability. If you are not vul and they are it is very seldom they will X for penalties at the 2 level because if they have a vul game on they need to defeat your 2 level bid by 4 tricks to make up for the vul game...

So, what is *your* approach to overcalling? Something to discuss with partner next time you meet?