



— Ballina Bridge Club —

Newsletter

May 2018

President's Report

HELLO AGAIN fellow members.

Very little exciting news to report this month. I had a pleasant time away cruising the Pacific in the company of a large number of club members. We all had a lot of fun and I feel I know a good number of members better than I did before. This reinforced for me that our club activity of regular bridge helps us make friends who become the basis of other social activity away from the club. I am sure this is not news to anyone who has been around the club for a while, it is just a great outcome of our club that seemed to me worth reiterating.

McDERMOTT DAY TEAMS EVENT

By the time you read this, I hope that two teams will have been selected to represent Ballina Bridge Club at the McDermott Day teams event in Lismore in May. This is a good day of friendly rivalry between clubs from around the district. Good luck to the Ballina teams.

LESSONS COMPLETED

The current session of lessons will have been completed by the time of publication. Thanks again to the teaching team and I look forward to seeing a new crop of players turning out to play.

AFTERNOON TEA CONTRIBUTIONS

It seems to be that on some days lately afternoon tea food contributions have been a bit hard to find. I think the same few people bear a significant load in bringing food regularly. While some others bring something sometimes, many rarely or almost never do bring something to eat.

If all regular playing members brought a contribution just a few times a year we would have a nice supply of surprises for afternoon tea. So, if you enjoy afternoon tea food apart from the biscuits that the Club buys, please do give some thought to bringing something once every month or so and that will be a great contribution.

— Chris McDowell, President

Ballina Bridge Club is at 13 North Creek Road, Ballina.
Contributions welcome; please email them **before CoB**
on the last Wednesday of each month to
the Editor, Michael Kuter: kuteredit@gmail.com

Play Committee Chair Report

Rank Promotions:

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING players who achieved Masterpoint rank promotions at the end of March:

Graduate: Peter Lamont, Ian Johnston, David McCormack;

Club: Angela Bettess, Val Toomey; Regional: Barry Daley;

*Regional: Helen Pearce.

First Some Updates:

1. GRADED PAIRS

Following the Monday Graded Pairs trial, 54 surveys were returned. There were diverse opinions (as well as many wider suggestions). A summary of the feedback is on page 6.

Moving forward, the Play Committee sees benefits in including 'some' graded sessions in the Club's programme. Which days may be best, and how often they are played... we'll see. As one member commented in their feedback: these offer 'a change of sameness'. And isn't variety the spice of life!

Remember the goal of dividing the field is so that players compete against others of more-similar Bridge ability. This, in turn, gives players of lower ranks greater opportunity to win Masterpoints.

Our next venture with grading will be the 'Fall into Winter' Pairs to be held on the third Wednesday of each month through May, June and July. You can read about this new event below (page 3). Also, on Thursday May 31 there will be a special novice section for the Australia-wide novice pairs.

I should also add, when we do hold a graded session, players eligible (by Masterpoints) for a 'lower' section may choose to play in a higher section if they wish to enjoy the challenge of competing against more-experienced players.

We've also had a 'peek' at what other Clubs do. Interestingly, both Surfers Paradise and Gold Coast Bridge Clubs hold three sessions per week of Graded Pairs; sometimes the Gold Coast club has a third novice session on a Saturday. Looking at some of the larger NSW clubs — only larger clubs (so including Ballina) have the table numbers to divide (i.e. grade) the field: Newcastle BC and Sydney Bridge Centre have no regular graded sessions, North Shore BC has 4 per week.

Play Committee Chair Report is continued on pages 2 and 3

Play Committee Chair Report (continued from page 1)

Our Congress fields are not large enough to consider grading, but we make sure we offer prizes across the field. I know we have players who enjoy the Graded Pairs Congress hosted by the Gold Coast BC, and I note Robert Eldridge's advice regarding Queensland Novice events (see page 5). Together with our Teaching Committee, we are considering a super-novice Congress for later in the year.

2. OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS – LUCKY SCORE WINNERS

Kallum Fidoe from Jetts (the fitness centre at Ballina Central) will join us before play on Saturday May 5 to undertake the lucky score draw for the February, March and April Championship rounds.

Jetts is providing short-term membership prizes every month for the pair with a score closest to the 'Lucky Score', as well as prizes for the eventual winners.

This may be just that opportunity (or prod!) for winners to explore what a gym can offer. Kallum will assure us that some physical exercise is good, whatever our age. If it's definitely not for you, please gift your prize to a friend or family member.

3. BASIC SYSTEM CARD

We have developed a basic System Card which may be useful for newer players and/or if you find you are playing with a new partner. You'll find laminated copies in the Play Resources. The system is Standard America with strong (15–17) 1NT and fits with our teaching practices.

Thanks to Bob Hart for his efforts here, and to Anne Jackson for her input on behalf of our Teachers.

4. NSW DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

The NSWBA has established a new Disciplinary Committee with a member from each region. Janet Brown has agreed to take on the role as our region's representative. Janet is well respected in our region, and beyond, and has the bridge knowledge and experience to fulfil

this role. She tells me it is fairly 'full-on' as the Committee gets established — so next time you talk to Janet she may give you a clue as to what's involved. I've always thought as a club/region we've been fortunate not to have any (major) 'Disciplinary' issues — although I hope I am not tempting Fate by saying that...

April Events:

COUNTRY TEAMS CLUB

QUALIFYING SUNDAY APRIL 22:

Eleven teams competed in a complete round robin format, albeit with a whist movement, as deemed best for an odd number of teams. Well done to everyone who participated, and thanks to Mark Miller for directing the day — as well as playing. The top five placed teams were:

1. Paul Smith, Winston Guymer,
Liz Jeffery, Howard Jeffery
2. Eric Hurley, Gary Lynn,
Marjorie Askew, Bill Powell
3. Graham Carson, Jim Roche, Ian Pick,
Chris Fraser
4. Anne Jackson, Carol Hocking,
Mark Miller, Lorraine Miller
5. Ellen Watson, Jean Lowe,
Judith Crafti, Charlotte Harrison.

These five teams now progress to the Regional Final, although this looks unlikely to be held, as other clubs in our region do not appear to be holding qualifying events. In which case, our teams will go direct to the Zonal Final to be held in Coffs Harbour on June 30 — July 1. The top two teams from the Zonal Final then go on to the State Teams Final to be held in Sydney in December.

Easter Monday Pairs & Anzac Day Pairs:

Both these public holiday events were very well supported — indeed, on Easter Monday we had 26½ tables and three sections.

On Anzac Day our tables were adorned with sprigs of rosemary (for remembrance). Thanks to Beth Martin and Phill Robbins for these, for setting up

the room, and also for providing some 'Anzacky' treats.

Bev Peart-Kuter sang a lovely rendering of the Anzac Ode, a poignant reminder of the meaning of the day... then Bridge got under way.

STOP PRESS: Just checked the results for the Yamba Swiss Pairs. Congratulations to Helen and Peter Tootell, Overall Winners, with Liz and Howard Jeffery 3rd. Also Gail and Ian Pick 2nd in B Grade. A huge contingent from Ballina supported the event — well done to all.

Coming up:

Two Additions to the Programme:

1. BRIDGE FOR BRAINS CHALLENGE MAY 1-7:

Our Club is supporting this initiative throughout the week. The Challenge raises funds to support Alzheimer's research whilst promoting the benefits of playing Bridge. An email was sent to all members with a brief outline of the event. Posters and more information on page 3 of this newsletter, and at the Club.

2. 'FALL INTO WINTER' PAIRS MAY 16, JUNE 20 & JULY 18:

This event will run over three weeks on the third Wednesday — just turn up on the day. You don't need to play in all three rounds — 1, 2 or all 3 is fine. However, this will be run as an eclectic event, with best two out of three scores counting for overall placings.

N.B. Overall placings afford extra Masterpoints, with 'normal' Masterpoints per each session. There will be two sections — so a Graded event: **Section A:** All players to have <300 Masterpoints as at 30 April 2018.

Section B: Open.

Players with <300 Masterpoints may choose which section they wish to play in, so hopefully there will be time for some to juggle their partners, depending on the section in which they prefer to play.

Continued next page ➤

Play Committee report (contd)

There may well be different numbers and hence movements per the two sections, offering extra challenges to the Directors and meaning we will all have to 'keep the noise level down'!

AUSTRALIA-WIDE NOVICE PAIRS

THURSDAY MAY 31:

This is a great opportunity for players with < 50 Masterpoints (as at March 31) to take part in a nationwide event. Table fee is the normal \$5 plus \$5 extra for which you receive: souvenir booklets with recommendations for bidding and play, discount vouchers for bridge books and magazines + there are overall prizes and special spot prizes. Please nominate by Thursday May 24 – but pay on the day.

There will, of course, be 'normal' Thursday bridge for those not playing in the Novice Pairs event.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY TEAMS MONDAY

JUNE 11:

Players can nominate in teams, or as pairs (or even as individuals) and then be allocated to a team. Players from other local clubs have been invited to join us. 'Tis a day of bridge for all bridge abilities with prizes across the field – so think about giving-it-a-go! Please nominate, and pay, by Wednesday June 6. Event Organiser is Liz Jeffery.

Good Luck to our four pairs who are heading to Sydney to compete in the NSW State Mixed Pairs on May 26/27: Carolyn Hart and Bob Hart, Carol Hocking and Paul Smith, Anne Riley and Gary Lynn, Marjorie Askew and Bill Powell.

The next meeting of the Play Committee is on Saturday June 16.

— Marjorie Askew, Chair,
Play Committee



Partner Coordinator

DURING MAUREEN BAKER'S absence in May, Sharon Carver (0419 037 505) will be the Partner Coordinator.



**BRIDGE FOR
BRAIN RESEARCH
CHALLENGE**



NeuRA

Discover. Conquer. Cure.

Play a hand in changing lives

Nationwide ♠ May 1 – 7, 2018

**Ballina Bridge Club is supporting
this event throughout the week**

On **Monday May 7** our pm session will play the **Bridge for Brain Challenge Hands**. At the end of the session all players will receive a

Commentary on the hands and our scores will be submitted for comparison Australia wide, with red points then awarded for the top half of the field. During the tea-break we will undertake the week's raffle draw – all small prizes on the 'Bridge for Brain' theme.

There will be a **Donations Box** on the entry table – for gold coins or small notes. Whenever you make a donation please write your name on a raffle ticket and place it in the red 'pot'. There are also Donations Envelopes if you would like to make a larger donation and/or become a donor.



NeuRA

Discover. Conquer. Cure.



**BRIDGE FOR
BRAIN RESEARCH
CHALLENGE**

NeuRA (Neuroscience Research Australia) is an independent, not-for-profit research institute based in Sydney. As a leader in brain and nervous system research their goal is to **prevent, treat and cure brain and nervous system diseases, disorders and injuries** through medical research.

The **Bridge for Brain Research Challenge** promotes the benefits of playing bridge whilst helping raise crucial funds to support this research.

What's new in brain and mind research at NeuRA?

NeuRA researchers are calling upon Bridge Players to use their brain in the name of medical research. The Challenge has raised almost half a million dollars since 2004. With this contribution from bridge players to Alzheimer's research, NeuRA has:

- ◆ Identified a small part at the back of the brain which degenerates only in people with Alzheimer's disease
- ◆ Developed a guide to genetic testing for dementia and identified some genes that are modified by factors such as diet and strenuous mental activity
- ◆ Identified changes in growth factors and inflammation occurring in the brains of patients suffering from Alzheimer's.

For more information on the **Bridge for Brain Research Challenge** and NeuRA go to:

<https://foundation.neura.edu.au/bridge>

www.neura.edu.au

Bridge on the High Seas

— By Howard Jeffery

THIRTY BRIDGE PLAYERS and partners left Ballina in early April for an 11-night trip on the mammoth ship *Voyager of the Seas*.



On occasion, passengers on the Voyager of the Seas joined members of the Ballina Bridge Club seen here enjoying their bridge.

We picked up another 12 passengers who had come from Sydney, Canberra and Darwin and were on board in time for a late lunch. We departed after dark; with a clear night, the city views were spectacular.

Each sea day we played bridge from roughly 9 through till 1, just in time to pack up and head to the Dining Room for lunch. Our table numbers varied from eight to nine, with three guests joining us at various stages. After a few minor re-arrangements, the table layout was very good.

On each day the Handicap winning pair each received a small book on topics such as *Opening Leads*, *Squeeze Plays* etc. A morning tea was served which could never be consumed and rivalled Ballina's best Monday afternoon teas.

We had been scheduled to stop at Fiji but an impending cyclone meant we were diverted to Port Vila and a

small New Caledonian island, Maré Island. Missing out on Fiji was unfortunate as a *lovo* (food cooked under ground in baskets on heated stones, the same as the NZ *Hāngi*) was

tourists. It was hard to find even a coffee, and only one shop was open in Nouméa, the capital of New Caledonia.

At Port Vila, we were welcomed by a vibrant and colourful band at the wharf. We chose various options including trips to beautiful waterfalls, sandy islands and cultural shows. It was a pleasant day and a place to collect any duty-free goods.

The two islands we visited are small, each with populations less than 12,000. Nonetheless, they set up a large number of stalls and local music offerings.

Lifou Island has a wonderful snorkeling area within walking distance of the pier. The locals limit the number of snorkelers in order to maintain the reef. How advanced is that?

As always, the trip was over too soon. After arriving back in Sydney we put our bags in a bus and went to La Perouse on the edge of Botany Bay for a relaxing lunch before the trip back to the airport and home.



Despite the rain, the Port Vila band turned out to welcome passengers on the Voyager of the Seas.



The latest class of learners clustered around the cake they have all earned after completing the Ballina Bridge Club introduction to Bridge course, March–April 2018. Teacher Anne Jackson reports: 24 students enrolled in our beginner lessons in March. On graduation day we had 19, with 5 students unavailable on the day. It is planned to give these students a few more tips in August this year. In the meantime, many of them will be playing with the Social Group on Mondays and will be joining the Supervised Play group on Fridays.

Novice Eyes

— By Chris and Shelley Farr
(QBA Novice Coordinators).

THE QBA SUNNYBANK NOVICE PAIRS is on Sunday, 6 May. This is the State event for the year, with QBA prizes to the winners and names on the Shield. There are also Category prizes for three levels. The entry fee is \$25 per player; BYO lunch. The usual refreshments will be available too.

We have been advised the table limit is 30 tables; currently there are 26 tables entered. Entries have been strong for this event, and it is not too late to be part of this very special day of Bridge at Sunnybank.

Restricted Events

Brisbane Bridge Centre Graded Pairs

Sunday 27 May. Recommended for all Novices; competition will be strong; Category C will likely have pairs with > 100 Masterpoints. Pay \$30 by 23 May, or \$35 after that date. BYO lunch.

Details and entry forms for all the above events are on the QBA website www.qldbridge.com.au/events/comingEvents.php.

Surfers Paradise Novice Pairs

What a lovely meal and dessert the club provided. It was so uplifting to have this beautiful lunch ready for the break. Although it did not stop the mistakes, in the end there was

less than 2% between 1st and 5th.

With three of the four prizes presented to local pairs, it was celebration time for Surfers and a very happy President seeing her players do so well.

Congratulations to the winners, Diane Venter and Moyra Galton. In second place was well-known and equally well-loved pair John Wilson and Geoff Willson. In third place, from Balina and Coffs Harbour, Margaret Faulks and Robert Eldridge.

[Thanks to Robert Eldridge for sending this to the Newsletter, and congratulations to Robert and Margaret Faulks on their success. — Ed.]



Feedback on Graded Pairs survey

54 surveys were returned.

What did you *like* about playing in a Graded session?

- Gives the lower players a chance to win points (5)
- Playing against others of similar ability (5)
- Less experienced players don't have to compete against top players; feel less threatened; more even field (4)
- No difference (4)
- Nothing (3)
- Liked it/OK (3)
- A change of 'sameness'.

What did you *dislike* about playing in a Graded session?

- Grading difficulties: pairs mixed, so how graded? On total Masterpoints of pair? Or on player with lowest Masterpoints? Or player with lowest Masterpoints (5)
- Nothing (5)
- No difference (5)
- Everything/Couldn't see the point/Not required/Forget it! (4)
- Newer players with mentors had to play in top session (3)
- Don't play whole room (2)
- Prefer to play everyone and so new players get the chance to play more experienced ones
- Lack of space on Western side meant we had to play in higher section.

Which Club Sessions best suited to a Graded Session?

Monday: 24 ; Wednesday: 12; Thursday: 4; Saturday: 3; None: 4; Don't Know: 3

How often should we play a Graded Session?

Weekly: 9; Monthly: 17; three or four times pa: 4; Never: 5; Don't Know: 3

Other Feedback:

- Monday afternoons – go back to as before – the 'original intention'; for new players and simple system; discourage two experienced players to play together (6)
- Explore other ways of dividing the field (3)
- Choose which side of the field you play on
- Ballina caters well for all skill levels except the 100–200 point range; i.e. players who can no longer play on Thursdays
- Monday not best for trial
- A no-points Monday would encourage mentoring
- Not on Mondays!
- Give the lower players the option of which section
- 7 minutes a board is too long
- Have a restricted session when needed; make it more restricted (2)
- Prefer Monday mixed, Thursday graded
- I just like playing bridge
- Suggest a session where players move E/W to N/S so that play with all members
- Are morning or night sessions possible?
- Thank you for your efforts/time; doing a good job (4)



A better place

A POSITIVE OUTCOME for all Bridge events relies on us, the participants. We are all ambassadors for the game we love, and it is in our interest to care for the feelings of our opponents by being sensitive to their losses and wins. Play fair, play hard, lift your opponents — win or lose.

We cannot all progress at the same pace, and in some cases we find ourselves falling behind, but this does not mean our enjoyment of the game should be diminished. Often just a genuine greeting is all it takes. The only thing that will make the difference is ourselves.

It is great to see so many of you stepping up and inventing novel ideas to take to the table. As said yet again, this time by Director Chris Snook, there are no secrets in Bridge, so always keep your opponents informed by alerting bids that carry special information or are artificial. Pre-alert any unexpected systems or conventions and enjoy your experiments and the fruits of hard work.

The Encourage

Always keep a focus on partner's leads and discards. If you play high, your first discard could be a high card in the suit you want led. Now a high card would be only a six or more, but could even be a five. If you do not have the means to show this encourage, then you could show partner a suit you don't want led. Discard a low card from that suit on your first discard. Now there are only three suits left.

Partner knows not to lead the suit your opponents are leading, so now we are down to two suits left. Partner can use their hand and what can be seen in dummy to make an educated choice from these two remaining suits. They will be right most of the time.

Enjoy your Bridge.



Double Dummy

— By Paul Smith

No, IT DOES NOT mean 'twice as stupid'. When you pick up your hand record at the end of a session, you will see on the right-hand side of each deal are two panels with a scattering of numbers in them. These are the 'double dummy' results

The double dummy result is the number of tricks the declarer will win when all four players can see all 52 cards, and each player always plays to their best advantage. The result is not the 'sensible' result, or what you 'should' make. Rather it is what would happen if you looked at all four hands to choose the card you play at each trick – both declarer and defenders.

For example (21/4/18 Brd 12)

♠ K 8 5 3 2		
♥ A 3		
♦ A Q T 2		
♣ K J		
♠ 7 6 4		♠ A T
♥ Q T 7 4 2		♥ 8 6 5
♦ J 8 6		♦ K 7 5
♣ 5 3		♣ A Q T 7 4
♠ Q J 9		
♥ K J 9		
♦ 9 4 3		
♣ 9 8 6 2		

The top panel tells you what NS can make 'double dummy'. The second row, 'N, 2, 1' says that if the contract is No Trump, and if North is the declarer a contract of 2NT will be successful. But, if South is the declarer, then only 1NT will be successful.

The second row tells you that either North or South can make 3♠ playing double dummy. Playing in Hearts, neither North nor South can make a contract. In Diamonds, North can make 3♦ but South only 2♦.

Finally, in Clubs, only North can make a 1♣ contract. The lower panel gives the same information, but from the East/West perspective. The only contract that makes playing double dummy with East or West as declarer is 1♥.

	N	S
N	2	1
♠	3	3
♥		
♦	3	2
♣	1	

	E	W
N		
♠		
♥	1	1
♦		
♣		

Notice how North can generally get one more trick than South, but not when playing in Spades. Have a look at all four hands. It is a fruitful exercise to work out why this is the case.

The key is the Club suit. West can lead a Club through the KJ to partners AQ. If North is the declarer then East loses a trick if they lead a Club and they cannot get partner on lead to send a Club to them. Once a Club is led, there is a race between defenders and declarer to see who can get their tricks first. But notice that if South is declarer in Spades, then leading a Club makes no difference as declarer will always lose two tricks in the Club suit eventually.

But why would West lead a Club? Surely the 'correct' lead is 'fourth best from your longest and strongest'? Not when you can see all four hands! Double dummy has nothing to do with 'correct' or 'sensible' or 'normal'.

If you look at the same hand on the Ballina Bridge Club website, you will see a slightly different display.

double dummy analysis

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	7	9	5	9	8
S	6	8	5	9	7
E	5	4	7	4	4
W	5	4	7	4	4

This is telling you how many tricks can be made, rather than what contract will be successful. North can make eight tricks playing in No Trumps, in other words they can make 2NT – just the same as the hand record told us.

This display gives us a little more information. If, for example, East was playing in Clubs, they could expect to make five tricks. This is useful to know if you were contemplating a sacrifice.

Maybe East was wondering what would happen if they happened to 'buy' the contract in 2♣. The answer is that if played double dummy, they would make five tricks and go three off.

