



Newsletter May 2020

from the President

Chery McCallum



I hope this newsletter finds you all well, albeit in severe withdrawals from your friends at the bridge club. I am hoping, with the restrictions starting to move ever so slightly, that late July or August may see us back at the club, if we are very lucky. When we resume bridge sessions, everyone entering the club will be having their temperature taken. If a reading of more than 37.7 degrees is recorded, you will be asked to return home and remain away from the bridge club until your temperature is back to normal. Please, bear in mind that this will also be the middle of the 'Flu season and we don't want Members put into a position of contracting contagious chest infections. I know our Members will do their bit and not come to the club if they are unwell.

I hope as many of you as can are playing bridge online and have used the information that has been forwarded to you about BBO or of course StepBridge.

An email was recently sent to members about a message from the ABF regarding playing Bridge on-line. I have copied the information (see below) which was sent from the Australian Bridge Federation (ABF). I received a few responses but would love to hear from more Ballina bridge Club members. If you are interested or have questions regarding the proposal, please email the Club at bbclub@internode.on.net

Please look after yourselves and keep in touch with your friends and partners.

Chery



Following an agreement reached with BBO, the ABF is about to commence offering online bridge games. Initially they will be offered via clubs that express an interest in hosting games.

It is expected that Regional, State and maybe National games will also be available soon. Masterpoints will be awarded for online sessions of at least 12 boards.

In order for masterpoints to be processed or to play in Regional, State or National games, players need to register their BBO user name on the ABF Mailing List.

If you have received this email direct from the ABF you are already on this list, you can update your information by clicking here.

For security purposes, you will be asked if you wish to be emailed a link to complete the process.

If this email has been forwarded to you and you are not on the ABF mailing list then [sign up here](#) and make sure you enter your BBO username.

For further information please contact Peter Cox at 0413 676 326 or petercox@ozemail.com.au

Play Bridge with Bridge Base Online at www.bridgebase.com

ABF

support your Bridge club

BBO

Play with your Bridge Club friends • Earn masterpoints • It's easy to learn BBO



Play Committee Report - April 2020

I wondered if I'd have anything to report this month: perhaps a couple of updates, but of course most of the action is on-line.

Rank Promotions? It was unlikely we would have any this month, unless someone on the cusp to promotion had received some outstanding masterpoints or perhaps earned some on Stepbridge.

Our Teams Congress scheduled for Sunday June 14 has unfortunately had to be cancelled. On the subject of congresses, I asked in the last newsletter for feedback on our Pairs Congress. So far feedback has been minimal but we would like to hear of any gripes or suggestions, from both participants and also non-participants, which will inform the Play Committee's event review and forward planning. Please email me- marjorie.askew@gmail.com with your feedback (which can be confidential) on for example: the format (a 2-day Pairs), number of boards played, Imps or matchpoints scoring, cost (\$80pp), lunches: provided or byo.

State and National Events:

Looking at the Event calendars on the NSWBA and ABF websites it is 'doom and gloom' well into July. The Australian National Championships scheduled to be held in Adelaide in July have been cancelled. NSW is hosting the 2021 event in Orange (it will be interesting to see how a country venue goes) and Adelaide is to slot

back into the state roster in 2022. A decision is still pending regarding the Coffs Harbour Super Congress in August.

On-line Bridge

Last month we encouraged members to have a go with on-line bridge and I'm delighted to hear that many of you have incorporated this into your lockdown weekly routines. It may be a bit daunting at first, notably getting familiar with the technology, but once you have grasped the basics you can explore some of the 'fancy bits'. And more importantly once folk are 'mastering' the basics of on-line bridge they are then helping their bridge mates to get up-and-running.

Many seem to be on **Bridge Base Online** (BBO); playing casually on their own, or with a partner, or perhaps a robot; some book a table; others have formed informal groups of bridge mates to pre-plan partnerships or tables. Other features on BBO allow you to practise your bidding, watch a recording of a Tournament, use training tools to improve your declarer play (Bridge Master is great) and Indeed BBO is a whole 'new (bridge) world' to explore - whilst we have the time! And most of it is free!

On the other hand I'm told **Stepbridge**, which operates from South Australia has more of an Aussie feel. They offer daily tournaments at various times,

with masterpoints, as well as free social play. They have recently introduced separate Novice (<100 masterpoints) and Restricted (<300 masterpoints) events. For more information go to: <https://www.stepbridge.com.au/>

So plenty of options and 24/7 bridge: - play when you like and for how long you like; there's certainly lots of flexibility. I guess we are thankful that we are able to play online bridge although of course we all miss the social interaction of being at the Club.

The Play Committee and the Technology Committee continue to explore if/how we can assist our members with on-line bridge. Ange has been offering tips and screenshots in the newsletter. Ange is also gathering members BBO usernames as a useful reference list for fellow members. Paul Smith is investigating a booking 'mechanism' to go on the Club website which will help players find others seeking an on-line game.

Following discussions within the Play Committee, Head Director Mark and I have agreed the current priority is to encourage more members to play on-line. So please try both BBO and Stepbridge; the latter if you want to play in a tournament (24 boards) with Aussies, including quite a few from Ballina - and please see the glowing endorsements from Judith Crafti

continued on page 3



Play Committee Report - April 2020

and Judy Forsyth on page 8.

For the time being, we have decided to keep the ABF/BBO offering on hold as members seem to be engaged with BBO-free-bridge and Stepbridge.

We have been working hard to understand our members' on-line Bridge needs and match these with Club resources. As Chair of Play, I believe I have an important role to fill in coordinating this and would like you to either call me to discuss, or email me directly (at: marjorie.askew@gmail.com) with suggestions and feedback regarding all Play matters; albeit this currently relates mostly to on-line bridge.

Nevertheless Mark is continuing to investigate directing on BBO; and attended a Zoom workshop this week. We are even wondering if this could be a longer term option, so perhaps an evening session in

the Club's schedule even when we are back to 'normal'. I would like to point out that: i) the ABF/BBO session cost is \$5 v Stepbridge \$2.50 although some of the income from the ABF/BBO will come to the Club and ii) becoming a BBO Director will require a substantial time commitment in training and then delivery; developing BBO computing skills rather than those regular directing 'chores' - the system doesn't let you bid or lead out of turn, or revoke.

Again I urge you to have a go on-line - and let us know how you go so we can better assess your needs going forward. You can [email me](#) and if you have things to share with other members please let Ange know for inclusion in the newsletter.

If any member is feeling 'left out' regarding on-line Bridge

please contact me. As lockdown restrictions ease it should be easier to make a house call to help anyone having difficulties getting on-line.

I hear members are offering help and mentoring with the technology as well as Bridge tips and teaching. This is a wonderful Club effort, encouraging others to come-on-board (a 'snowball' effect!) - and my thanks to all. Should we put together a list of helpers/mentors?

The President has referred to her idea of temperature checking on page 1. I can advise the Management Committee is being alert for ways we can instigate a safer playing environment. In my opinion, we need to follow NSW Government health guidelines closely when the Bridge Club re-opens for our members. Whether this will include taking temperatures remains to be seen.

Ballina Mah Jong Club News



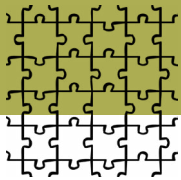
Photo: Lorna Simpson and Vanessa Reynolds last Christmas at the Ballina Bridge Club

You have probably heard on the grapevine that the Australasian Mahjong Festival 2020 has been cancelled. It has been a tough decision for us but finally it became apparent that we needed to give people time to apply for refunds on their flights, accommodations etc. Some of our players were coming from as far afield as New Zealand, Tasmania, Victoria and Queensland as well as distant parts of NSW and all are naturally disappointed but totally understanding.

We are very grateful to all the people in the Bridge Club and the Mahjong Club who have put in so much time and effort in preparation for the August event.

Let's hope we shall all be back doing the things we like before the year ends.

Vanessa Reynolds



Online Puzzles

by Mark Miller



Mark has provided links to two websites for members interested in puzzles. He would love to get some feedback from members as to whether there is any interest in such puzzles. Mark is keen on all sorts of puzzles and would be happy to share more in future magazines if there is an interest from readers. Maybe text Mark at 0498 675 285.

Online Word Puzzle

<https://chi.lexigame.com/>

Do you need something else to do while isolating at home? Here is an online puzzle that I have regularly done for several years. It is identical in nature to the word puzzles that you see in most newspapers. Our local paper 'Ballina Shire Advocate' has one. The object is to find as many words as you can using the provided nine letters. The rules are simple - all words must: be at least four letters long; must use the central letter; generally not be a foreign word; and must not just be a plural by adding only 'S'.

The problem with the newspaper versions is that they usually only allow a small amount of space for

you to write your words and I'm never sure whether an unusual word might be counted or not. Checking solutions via the next edition is also tedious.

The online version shown below is free to play and has no advertising. [Click here for the link](#)

There are several new puzzles every day of the year. I'll describe the Standard puzzle which is refreshed at 10am each day. You can play anonymously but it is better to register by creating a username. Mine is **MarkM**.

The program is very easy to use. Computers, ipads or mobile

phones are all suitable. The day's letters are on the left with the compulsory letter in the yellow box. You can type, click or tap your words and if accepted they will appear alphabetically in the middle panel, grouped by the initial letter. At the start of play you will be told how many common words are possible and you can see that so far I have found 19 and there are 10 more to be found. The panel on the right has a Scoreboard so you can see how you are going against other players who are completing the same puzzle. This is more useful when you start playing at the official start time. Then it turns into a race to get to the top. But for

Standard 10am Challenge 2am 10 Letters 6pm 7-by-many 2pm Your Puzzles Full screen

Daily Puzzle for Tuesday 21 April 2020

Select puzzle: Current

↓ [S] [D] [N] [T] [A] [E] [W]

Your Words (count = 19, hit rate = 95%)
10 common words still to be found (0 with all the letters)

Ante assent
Date dent
East
Neat nest **NEWSSTAND** newt
Sate sated sent stand
Tend
Want **WANTED** waste went west

☒ Define ☒ Drag ☐ Caps ☐ Counts ?

Shuffle X

Submit Clear Mix

Puzzle closes: in 22h 7m

Solution Sound Help

Player: MarkM Details Sign out

Scoreboard Rare x

Wds* player

21	Chang
21	anon
21	retro
21	anon
21	arrayan
21	anon
21	anon
20	groper
20	tubs
20	america
20	Louanne
20	anon
19	icywords
19	MarkM
19	anon
19	anon
19	anon
19	anon
18	CarolNZ
18	anon

* Rare words not scored

Scores updated seconds ago

players (220)

you 20 words

0 12 19 27

Good Better Best

Common words



by Mark Miller

continued from P4

a more relaxed pace you can play any of the puzzles at any time of the day.

There is always at least one 9-letter word and when you find it you get a yellow star against your name on the scoreboard. The word appears in your list in uppercase. If you find all of the common words then a red rosette will appear against your name.

Under the letters on the left are various buttons. Most of these are for the phone and ipad users but they can be used by computer users who only want to use the mouse for data entry. There is some electronic Help but you will easily work out what everything else does by experimenting.

There are actually two levels to

each puzzle. The creator of the site, Alan Walker, has classified each word as common or rare and at times his classification is questioned by players in a forum. Alan does update his list as he sees fit. There are some words that he classifies as common that are obscure or perhaps only common in other countries. This makes it very difficult to find all the common words. Any rare word will appear in your list in italics. The level of the puzzle is determined by whether there is a tick or a cross on the 'Rare' button at the top of the scoreboard. Clicking this button toggles between the two levels. Finding common words is my only goal.

The Challenge Puzzle refreshes at 2am. It is exactly the same structure as the Standard but often there are a lot more common

words to be found. The 10 Letters puzzle at 6pm is similar but you have 10 letters from which to choose.

The 7-by-many puzzle at 2pm is a good variation. All words must be of at least five letters and there are only seven letters from which to choose. A major difference is that you can use any letter multiple times. I often do this puzzle as well.

When you click on the solutions button, when available, any missing words will appear in your list in red. Really frustrating to see the very easy words that you just couldn't find when doing the puzzle.

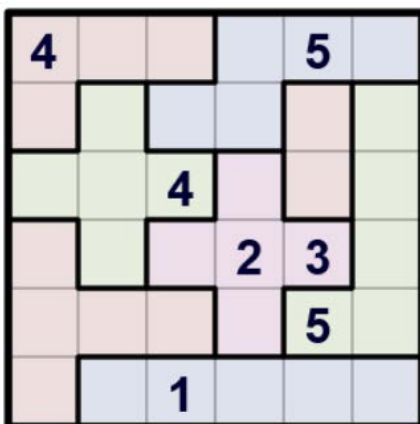
Give it a try - a great way to use up a bit of free time and keep the grey matter working.

There are 10 common words yet to be found in the above puzzle. Can you find some of them?

Suguru

<https://krazydad.com/tablet/suguru/>

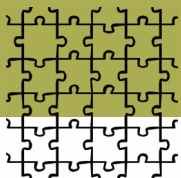
Bored with cleaning the house, gardening, exercising, eating and drinking then here is a great Japanese number puzzle to kill some time. It can easily be played online using either a computer, laptop, tablet or smart phone. Be warned - it is very addictive. Each puzzle might take 2 to 5 minutes to complete and does not have any of the complications of puzzles like Sudoku. The best site that I know of is by an American with the odd name of Jim Bumgardener. His alias, probably bestowed by his adoring children, is KrazyDad. This is a great site because it is free and also free of any advertising. He is not averse to a donation which is a fair thing if you get a lot of



enjoyment out of this puzzle or the many others that he has on offer. [Here is the link.](#)

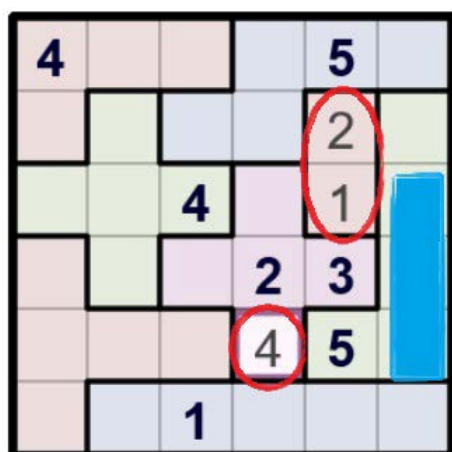
A square, here 6 x 6, is divided up into irregular sections called 'Cages'. Each cage is denoted by a thick black border and different shading. The goal is to fill the squares, called cells, within each cage with different digits from 1 to the size of the cage. So a 2-square cage must have the digits 1 and 2; a 3-square cage 1, 2, and 3 etc. The only other rule is that adjacent numbers, horizontally, vertically and diagonally cannot be the same. There is an initial

continued on P6



starting point and only one solution. NOTE: unlike Sudoku, the same number can appear several times in any row or column but not within any cage.

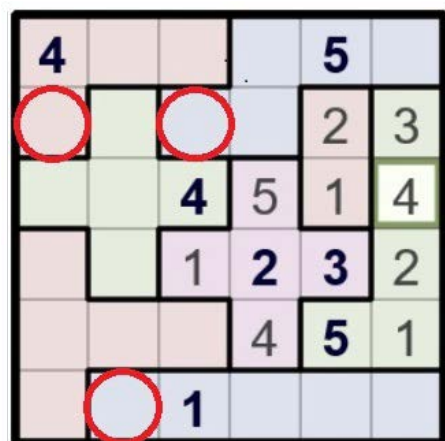
No guesswork is required. You are supposed to use the two rules and logic to progressively work towards the solution. This will take some time at first but rapid improvement will occur once you get used to the line of thinking required. There may be multiple paths to the solution.



Often a good starting point is the smaller cages. There is a cage of size 2 in the above puzzle and because of the presence of the '2' in an adjacent cage the required digits can only be entered in one way to get to the next step. Also, in the central cross-shaped cage, the digit '4' cannot go in the top or left handcells so must be at the bottom.

Now with that bottom square filled in the cross-shaped cage, the '1' can only go on the left and so the final cell in that cage must be filled with '5'.

Also the cage on the right needs a '3' and this cannot be placed in any of the shaded cells because of the adjacency rule, so must be placed at the top. Then the '1' in this same cage can only be placed at the bottom. The remaining digits '2' and '4' can only be filled one way.

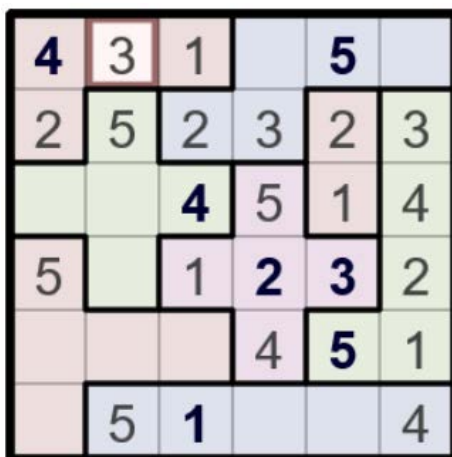


Now the '2' in the top right cage can only go on the far left. The cell to its right cannot be 1, 2, 4 or 5 so by elimination must be 3. That '2' that was just placed forces the location of the '2' in the top left cage and the remaining digits of 1 and 3 for that cage can only be entered in one way. Also the '5' in the bottom right block can only go on the left and this means that the 4 can only go on the right. That '5' that was just placed now results in the placement of two more '5's.

From here the full solution is easily reached using similar logic.

This example is introductory and slightly more advanced thinking is required to solve some other puzzles but that is one of the attractions - discovering these new solving techniques.

If you make a mistake by entering an incorrect digit then it will appear in red. Of course this is a poor way of finding the solution - you are supposed to use logic not trial-and-error. You can turn off the 'Auto check answers' feature in Settings.

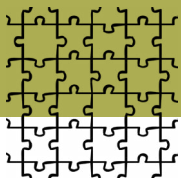


All of KrazyDad's puzzles are grouped in Volumes and within each volume a sequence of Books and then each book has a number of Puzzles. The above puzzle is Volume 1, Book 1, Puzzle 1 or 1-1-1 for short. The puzzles get progressively harder as you move through the Books and Volumes but you will have mastered the required skills via the earlier puzzles.



Under each puzzle are some icons that let you move sequentially between

continued on P7



Online Puzzles

continued from P6

by Mark Miller

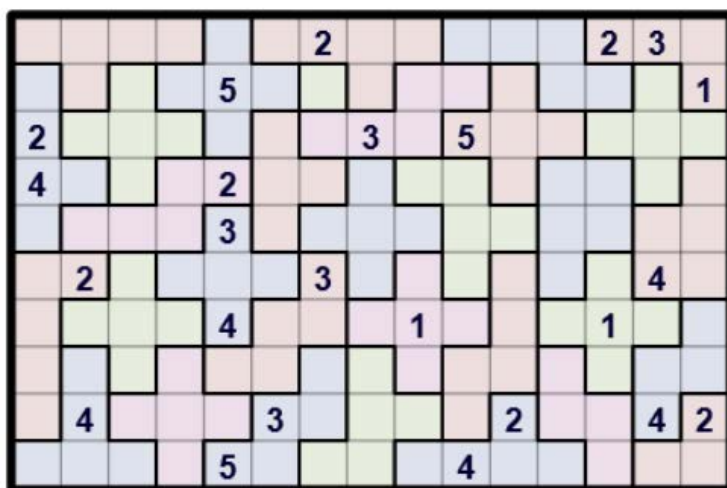


puzzles or by clicking on the Book icon to jump to any puzzle or even change the overall size of the puzzle for an extra challenge. Help, Undo and Settings icons are self explanatory. You will never run out of puzzles! A 15x10 puzzle will keep you busy for a while. See sample below.

To complete each puzzle on a computer you just mouse click the cell where you want to enter a number and then use the keyboard to do so. Alternatively you can click the required larger number from the array to the right of the puzzle. Those using touch screens will of course just tap the required cell and then tap the required number. The smaller numbers can be used if you want to specify a reduced list of candidate values that are possible for a particular cell. I have not needed them so far but perhaps I haven't progressed to the harder puzzles yet.

By the way, you can also eat and drink while doing these puzzles! Under Help you can also generate a printable version of the puzzle. A takeaway version if you like. Have fun.

Suguru by krazydad



Suguru, 15x10 Extra-Large, 1-1-1

©2016 krazydad.com



Message from Lorraine Bryant - if you need to contact Lorraine, please use her mobile number 0499 333 850

A special message from Jenny Hurley for Marj Hill

What an amazing cook and person is Marj Hill! How about this? Marj cooked Butter Chicken, then drove from Lismore to Ballina to deliver it to the Hurleys for their dinner - and I am sure social distancing was adhered to as well. What a wonderful woman is Marj! (Unfortunately no photo of the Butter Chicken available - but perhaps, if you contact Marj, you may be able to get her recipe.)



Thanks to our sponsors:

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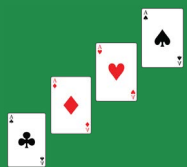
Harvey Norman

Jetts

Somerville, Laundry, Lomax

**Harvey
Norman**

jetts
workout on your terms.

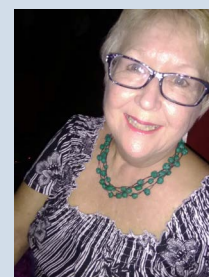


StepBridge

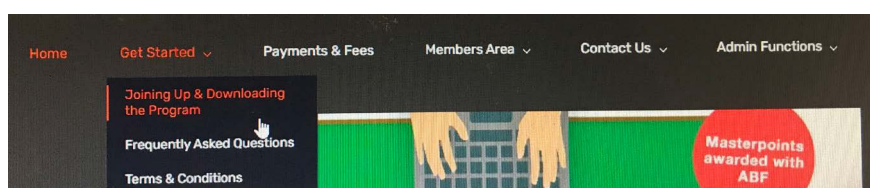
'the Australian Internet Bridge Club'

Find StepBridge at
stepbridge.com.au

"It is a club you join and you play sessions just as if you were going to the club. 24 boards usually a three board movement playing against people all over Australia. Sometimes matchpoints, sometimes IMPs. They have 4 sessions a day and have now introduced some novice and restricted sessions. I really enjoy the format and the structure. There are directors but of course with the software you can't revoke or lead out of turn or make insufficient bids. The software is easy to use. The cost is \$5 membership and then you buy sessions. The more you buy the cheaper it is. I bought 50 tournaments and it cost \$2.50 per game. People are polite and you are guided to their system card section which is easily attached to your name so opposition can click on your name and read your card. You get 6 minutes a board which is ample because you don't have to sort/count your cards. It took me a couple of games to get comfortable playing on-line but now I love it. To get started you go to the Stepbridge Australia website and fill in a very brief registration form. They then send you an email explaining how to download the program (easy) and then tips and a number to call for more help if necessary. I love it. Also you can go without a partner and they will match you up. Within 10 minutes of every session you are emailed a hand record showing every hand and it shows the bidding at your table as well. All sessions give green masterpoints and there are some red point sessions per month also."



Judith Crafti



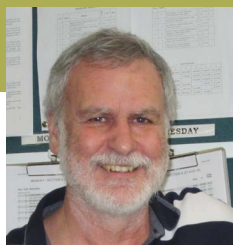
Judith Crafti and Judy Forsyth are two members who are enjoying StepBridge. To join, head to the website and select 'Get Started' then, in the dropdown, 'Starting up and Downloading the Program'. Complete a form and your username will be sent to you by email.

"Many, many of us are playing on StepBridge.

- > It is a SA based non profit organisation.
- > All members are polite and happily discuss anything.
- > If you decide to try, join up and they offer you 5 free games.
- > Then you can decide whether to keep playing.
- > After the free games, fees are between \$3 & \$2.25, depending on package purchased.
- > Directors run sessions.
- > While any online platform takes a bit to get used to, this is an excellent club.
- > They award MPs.
- > We all enjoy "meeting" up with someone we know.
- > There can be up to 6 sessions per day per week days, bit less on weekends.
- > Run Open, Restricted, under 300MPs & Novice, under 100MPs.
- > Highly recommended. I am happy to answer any questions or assist any players with information."



Judy Forsyth



Breaking the Rule

by Paul Smith



If the Queen is missing then the adage that many people know is "Eight ever, nine never". That is, if you have an eight card fit always (ever) take the finesse. If you have a nine-card fit then never take the finesse. It is said that great writers know when to break the rules of grammar. To be a good bridge player you need to know when to break the adages.

Helen Tootell, sitting West, recently "pushed the boat" out on this on-line hand and found herself in 5♣.

The 4♣ bid was aggressive but not-vulnerable vs vulnerable opponents figured to be good value - particularly at IMPs scoring. It just so happened that her partner had not bid when he held the best hand at the table!

The opponents took the first two Spade tricks and then led a third round which Helen ruffed in her own hand. North's bid of 4H made it likely that the Heart finesse was going to work. The top two Diamonds in dummy would provide a way to get rid of her third Heart.

West		W N E S				East	
♠ J10			1♠	P	2♠	♠ 952	
♥ J52		4♣	4♥	5♣	P	♥ AQ3	
♦ 8		P	P			♦ AK743	
♣ KJ87542						♣ A6	

The only problem suit was trumps. A nine-card fit missing the Queen. The adage would suggest not taking the finesse (nine-never) but rather playing the Ace and then the King and expecting the opponents to follow to both rounds. However, an experienced declarer knows that particular part of the adage is actually not very strong advice, more slight guidance.

Helen had 23 high card points to play with, leaving 17 for the opponents. If South's bid of 2♠ was to be believed (6-9) then North had 11 points at best. Even giving South some leeway the North hand does not have a lot in the way of high card points to justify the second bid at the four level. The sensible conclusion is that North has both 5 Spades and 5 Hearts to bid so freely. If that is the case then the odds must be that the Club suit is much less likely to break evenly.

Accordingly, Helen tossed the familiar adage over her shoulder and played a Club to the Ace in dummy which both opponents followed. Backing her judgement, Helen played to the Jack in her hand and North showed out. The ♣K drew the Queen from South.

A small Heart to the Queen was successful as expected. The Ace of Hearts and AK of Diamonds left Helen with only trumps. Contract making.

North		W N E S			
♠ AQ863			1♠	P	2♠
♥ K10976		4♣	4♥	5♣	P
♦ 106		P	P		
♣ 10					

West		East	
♠ J10		♠ 952	
♥ J52		♥ AQ3	
♦ 8		♦ AK743	
♣ KJ87542		♣ A6	

South	
♠ K74	
♥ 84	
♦ QJ952	
♣ Q93	

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

Want to contribute to our newsletter?

Any suggestions?

Contact Ange Bettess

Mobile 0401 955 432

Email angela.bettess@me.com

Member profile - Julie Pigdon

Club Master

Julie is one of the newer, and up and coming, players in our Club. Once Bridge returns to the new normal I'm sure everyone will take the opportunity to ask Julie any questions that you have about her profile. Stay safe.

by Rob Eldridge

You are a relatively new member of the Club. What do you like most about the Club?

It's a very welcoming and friendly club. I love the diversity of people and the fact that you can make mistakes and not feel too bad about it. As a new player you need that support. In the words of The Castle, it's the vibe.

What led you to take up Bridge?

I have always liked puzzles and card games and bridge is the love child of these two. So once I semi-retired it was a natural choice.

Where were you born, and what is your fondest memory of you early years?

I was born on a dairy farm in country Victoria then moved to Melbourne when I was about 2. My earliest memory is riding my tricycle down the street without my pants on. Lucky for everyone I don't do this anymore.

I remember - black and white TV on a small screen; noisy tin rubbish bins; pint-size, cream-topped glass-bottled milk delivery; the homemade gollywog dolls my grandmother used to knit for my sister and I; home-made shortbread (none of this scotch finger nonsense); Ella Fitzgerald 33's and my father eating ox tongue for breakfast. My mother used to dress my sister and I (who



are 1 year apart) in the same outfit but different colours. I used to hate that. I still love Ella though.

What family do you have?

I am one of four children and have 2 kids, Sophie and Max, 29 and 27 respectively. My mum Joan is 86. My new granddaughter Edith is 3 months old. She is perfect in every way.

What was your first job?

My first job was being a 'Hungry Jacks' hostess for the brand new restaurant in Taringa Brisbane. It was my job to show people to their places and make them feel at home, which in my case was a derelict student house, crammed with 5 students and millions of cockroaches. They pulled it down after we moved out.

What was your occupation?

I was in HR for many years. My last job was in training- leadership development, team building etc.

What are you most proud of in your life?

Sounds cliché I know but my kids have more integrity and gumption than most people I know. We have a lot of fun when we get together. I also have great friends who I have known for more than 40 years. That's special.

Describe your philosophy on life.

Be kind. Be true. Be brave. Don't worry about what other people think. Took me a long time to realise this though.

What led you to Ballina/Northern Rivers?

I bought a little cottage in Lismore to do up and sell, which I have done.

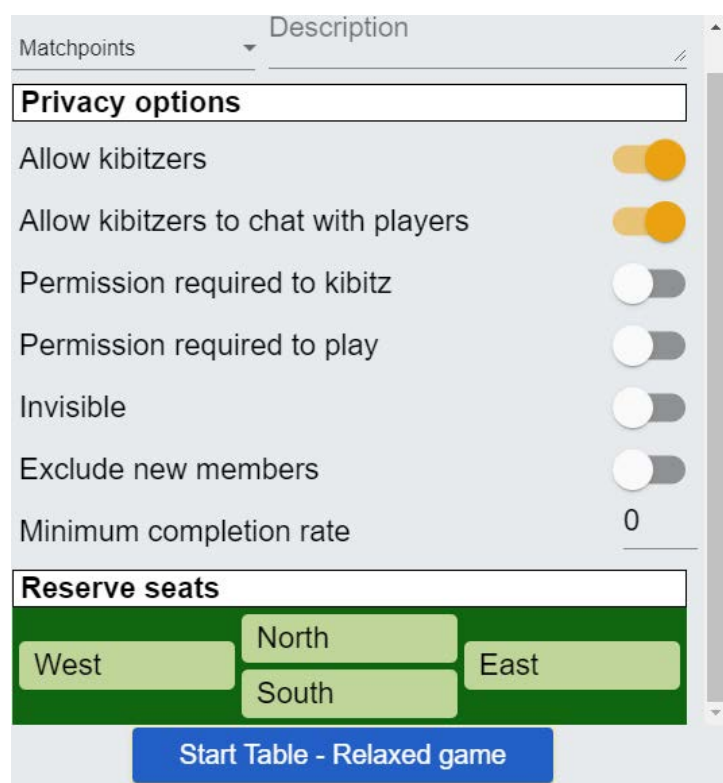
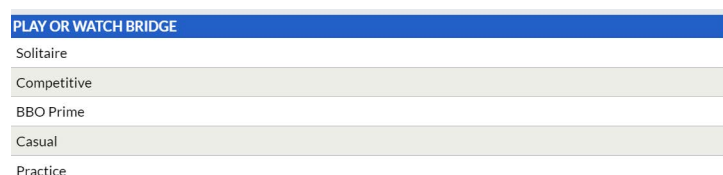
Anyone looking for an amazing investment opportunity in Lismore?

If you were granted one wish, what would it be?

Well, it would be to be able to grant as many wishes as I want for the rest of my life of course!

But if not that, then I have always wanted to be able to fly. Such a feeling of freedom!

It is easy to set up a table with 3 other of your Bridge friends. Firstly, you do need to know the usernames of your friends. At the interface, you will see some tabs on the right hand side - one of them is 'People'. If you select the People tab, any of your friends who are online will be listed. You can see that you have friends online if the People tab has a number on it, showing how many of your friends are online. To add a friend's username to your personal list, look at the bottom of the right column and there is an option to 'add friend' - type in your friend's username and your friend is added to your list. Setting up your friends list makes it easier to set up your table.



My Table					
Board	Result	We	They	We	They
6	3NTW+1		630	90%	10%
6	4♠E+1		650	50%	50%
6	4♠E+1		650	50%	50%
6	3NTE+2		660	20%	80%

To set up the table, select 'casual' in the left hand options - a new page opens and look for the heading 'find your own game'. Select 'start a table'. The next page allows you to choose Matchpoints (click on the dropdown arrow next to IMPs) if you want - the default is IMPs - I prefer Matchpoints. There are also Privacy Options to choose and you can have kibitzers (spectators) viewing your game or being allowed to chat to the table - this all depends on your personal choice. The important part is typing in the usernames of your friends at the table. Make sure you click 'OK' or the name will not be entered. This process reserves the seats at your table for your friends and you are the host of the table. Select to start a relaxed game and requests will be sent to your friends once they are logged on to BBO. Your friends accept the offer and the game begins.

An interesting and informative aspect of playing BBO is the ability for you to view the contracts and results at other tables. Once the game has begun, select the 'History' tab on the right hand side. The menu at the top shows 'My table' and 'Other Tables'. 'My table' shows a list of the rounds played with results either in IMPs or MPs (depending on the selection at the beginning of setting up the table). To view the results of other tables for a particular hand, select the hand by clicking on it and then view 'other tables'. Also, when you and your partner have the contract, both hands can be seen which makes it great for dummy to follow the play.

Chatting is possible at the bottom of the screen on the left side. There is an arrow for you to select to send the message. Mostly you want it set to 'table' and the chat will go to the table. If you send the message, your name will not appear to you - but is appearing to the others at the table.

Hope this is all helpful for you. There are numerous advantages of setting up your own table but mostly it is the knowledge you are playing with friends.

If you need basic join-up information, look at the [April newsletter](#) on Page 10 or search for 'learn BBO' (or something similar) because there are YouTube videos to teach you. Also please note - your view of the BBO layout will differ with different devices but the play is the same.

Below are some more tips and comments from BBO users.

Ange Bettess

"Occasionally a player can be logged out by some gremlin in the system. If you choose the Invisible option when setting up, then the table is invisible to other users so that the person logged out from the game can log off from their session then log back on and re-join the table without it being grabbed by another stray player looking for a table."

Howard Jeffery

"Many of you will be far more tech savvy than me and I have only just started playing bridge on BBO, although I have previously enjoyed watching international bridge events, but here's my 4 tips:

1. Gather a 4 and one of the four is nominated to log in to BBO (say 15 mins prior to the agreed time) and book a table – see Ange's Help on page 11.

2. When asked to select a Deal Source my preference is NOT to select random deals. Instead click on either i) randomly selected Vugraph deals or ii) a specific Vugraph match from archives. If the latter you can then play in a World Championship Final! Then opt for IMPs scoring ie a Teams Match. As you finish each board your score will be compared with scores of players who have previously played these boards. Then you will see your IMPs score on the board at the RHS and you can also see what happened at other tables (contract, declarer, score) by clicking on 'Other Table'. Of course you can quietly berate your 'team-mates' if they have come back with poor scores!!

3. For some social interaction whilst playing I like to have Skype or Zoom running on my computer in parallel. Then you can do 'real chat' amongst the players rather than in the chat box. And you can see your fellow players, unless of course you're in your pyjamas and then you switch video off but still have audio. You can enjoy a glass of wine or a cuppa together midway so pretending its 'real' i.e. face-to-face bridge.

4. Adverts can be annoying and distracting. If I'm using Firefox as a my browser and I open a 'Private Window' it seems to block ads. Bill tells me Cliqz is also a good blocking browser.

And Further:

On Point 1 above: This is great too if you are helping folk new to BBO. As long as they can organise a log in when they go in they will go direct to your Table; so not get lost on the way! However make sure you are there first so that the Table is available when the others log in.

On Point 2 above: You can even look at a double dummy analysis: click on GIB* for the board just finished at bottom right of screen; but not recommended until you are up to speed with the basics.

On Point 3 above: Many of us chat to family or friends on Skype or alternatively Whats App or Face Time or ?? – this is what you need here.

*GIB: Ginsberg's Intelligent Bridgeplayer – another 'fancy bit': a bit like Bridge Solver which you could utilise on our Club's bridge results."

Marjorie Askew