

Illawarra Bridge Association

Newsletter February/March 2024

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1 Editorial

Happy New Year everyone! We both hope you all had an enjoyable festive season.

We begin at the **Summer Festival of Bridge** in Canberra where Paul Lavings was a member of the winning 'Lorentz' team in the Australian National Senior Teams Championship - this involved 3 x 20 board matches per day for three days in qualifying, followed by a full day playoff semi-final with 6 x 16 board stanzas, followed by the playoff final with another 6 x 16 board stanzas – that's a lot of bridge, in fact it's 372 boards over 5 consecutive days! The team will now represent Australia at the World Bridge Games in Buenos Aires from 23 October to 5 November.

At our recent Management Committee Meeting on February 10th, we asked our publicity officer, Chris Yates, to see if there would be any media interest in this story. She was onto it right away and any of you playing in the session on Wednesday 14th February would have been aware of the photographer taking pictures in the club. Paul was also interviewed and the Mercury ran the story (in the sports section) on 16 Feb (<https://www.illawarramercury.com.au/story/8521001/illawarra-home-to-one-of-bridges-best-players-paul-lavings/> behind a paywall) with a lovely photo.



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We very much hope that WIN News or ABC Radio might run a feature over the coming days. Great work Chris Yates and a great advertisement for our club.

However, as is usual at this time each year, we start the Newsletter with a message from our wonderful Treasurer, Ngaire Meehan.

2 Important announcements

Membership fees - Ngairé has received some strange donations to various accounts and it is often difficult to trace a) who the money is from and b) what the money is for!!! Once again, here are the relevant details *for membership fees only* ... don't forget that membership fees have gone up this year, to \$30 for full membership and \$20 for concessions. Also please remember to put your details in the 'reference' box.

BSB	814 282
A/c Number	31204318
Name	Illawarra Bridge
Reference	(Name) (ABF number)

Please pay your 2024 membership fee as soon as possible. If a membership is not paid by March 31st that member will be automatically 'de-activated' and this becomes a financial burden to the club because we need to pay an additional \$15 per person to reinstate and reactivate a membership. The details here are those to be used for your **membership only**, *not your table fees!!!!*

3 Upcoming events

Of course, the biggest forthcoming event is the **Chris Diment Memorial Congress** on 15 and 16 June. Entries are now open on the [NSWBA website](#).

At the club the next event is the **Tuesday Teams Championship** (27 Feb, 4 Mar, 11 Mar). To enter please email all your team names and ABF numbers to cheryl.d.waters@gmail.com. Pairs looking for others to join them in a team can put their name on the list at the Figtree hall.

The **TRIPS/IBAND Teams** is being played on 1 and 8 March and is now closed but best wishes to all involved and a big thank you from IBAND to Rob Kinloch for being the Director for the event.

We have a very special teams event on Wednesday 6 March, the **Hi-Lo Teams**. In this event our very best available players are assigned as team captains with three other players. Over three eight (or nine) board matches, in each match a strong player in the team will play with another member but the pairs will not be the same for all three matches. This is a great way to play a Hi-Lo and also another chance to practice teams. Interested players should add their names to the list at the Figtree Hall or email Marie at pickering_marie@hotmail.com.

The **IBA Pairs Championship** is one of only two events for which we have a perpetual honour board. It is being played on Saturdays 2 and 9 March, with a Final on 16 March. No pre-entry required.

On the education front, Paul Lavings is presenting "improver" lessons on the four Mondays in March from 9.30am to 11.45am in the Figtree hall. The topic is The Basics of Declarer Play, and participants will play and discuss 8 hands each lesson, with something for all levels. \$15 per lesson or \$50 for the 4 lessons (cash on the day). Please register on the sheet at Figtree or Thirroul or email Helen Lavings at helenlavings@gmail.com.

Also, a reminder that our next set of Tuesday night lessons starts at 7pm on Tuesday 5 March. Details are on the [website](#). Please promote these lessons as widely as you can, and to people of all ages.

Finally in forthcoming events, a University of Wollongong Bridge Club has been established, but it has no future unless it can attract some students to learn and to play the game. The club will be promoting itself at O-week on 19, 20 and 21 February between 11am and 3pm. Please encourage any students you might know to check the club out.

4 Recent results

The statewide results for the **2023 Under 100 Master Points (UHMP) Championship** were released after our last newsletter. This event includes a handicapping process and has winners in four point-ranges.

Congratulations to Ron and Edith McNally who came fourth in the 25-49.99 MP Division and to Annette Lopez and Don Clark who finished second in the 0-9.99 Masterpoints Division.

IBA has been advised by the UHMP organiser that Don Clark has asked that his \$50 prize money be donated to IBA. He told the organiser “As a new player the club has been fantastic in supporting and helping me. I am happy to donate my prize to them.” Many thanks to Don for the donation and the kind words.

Two club championships have already been contested this year. The first to be completed was the **66 Club** played on Sunday 4 February. The place getters were:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 1 st | I. Lisle, V. Lisle |
| 2 nd | S. Szatmary, G. Cowen |
| 3 rd | J. Carberry, K. Hart |

The **Country Teams Qualifying** on Wednesday 31 January and 7 February was played in conjunction with the **Wednesday Teams Championship**. The proposed final between the top two teams was cancelled by agreement. The winners of the Wednesday teams championship are H. Lavings, P. Lavings, J. Carberry, K. Hart, and R. Kinloch.

The top half of the field qualify for the Country Teams Regional Final (place and date yet to be determined). As the fourth placed team consists of club members who don't qualify for country teams, those placed 1st to 3rd and 5th to 8th will qualify. Our top eight therefore are:

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 1 st | H. Lavings, P. Lavings, J. Carberry, K. Hart, R. Kinloch |
| 2 nd | R. Neild, R. England, C. Bale, K. McIvor |
| 3 rd | A. Smith, C. Waters, M. Pickering, C. Ashcroft |
| 4 th | V. Lisle, I. Lisle, G. McNee, R. McNee |
| 5 th | L. Hurley, S. Hurley, B. Fotheringham, M. Bunder, T. Wright |
| 6 th | K. Snowden, V. Hodsdon, D. Gallagher, J. Kingston, P. Snowden |
| 7 th | J. Cowling, S. Vogl, D. Havyatt, M. Havyatt |
| 8 th | S. Cutsforth, R. LaMarra, M. Cunningham, S. Brell, S. Bochan |

Finally, the results of another important event conducted recently, the **Christmas Hamper Raffle 2023**. Thank you to all the members of the Illawarra Bridge Club who purchased raffle tickets in the Christmas Hamper Raffle last year.



Christmas at Figtree

Two tickets were drawn by our Life Member, Ken McIvor at the Bridge Club Christmas Party on Saturday 2nd December 2023. The winners were **Liz Cusack** and **Phil Barker**.

Congratulations to both our happy winners. Both Liz and Phil have commented on how they enjoyed eating, drinking and sharing the goodies. Once again thank you Illawarra Bridge players. Thanks to Chris Yates for again organising this raffle.

5 News from the North



Christmas bridge at IBAND

A scrumptious Christmas lunch was provided by the members and enjoyed by all. Lunch was followed by 'mix and match' bridge for the afternoon. Here, losers move on, change partners, winners stay and change partners, this was a great fun format.

The winner: Alex Tavan

Equal second: Lorraine Jones & Jeff Carberry

Deuce & Jack prize balls were flying around the room all afternoon.

Deuce prize winner: Marie Pickering

Jack prize winner: Peter Gard

George Cole founded IBAND in 2006, with a great deal of support from Chris Diment and John Spira. When George died in 2010, IBAND introduced a trophy in his memory. This trophy has been given as an encouragement award every year and presented at the Christmas Party. It hasn't been awarded since 2019, before Covid, and this year there were 3 worthy recipients:



Mohan Chinnappan



Shauna Wilkinson & John Cheser

Happy Bridging,
Barb

6 Director's corner – Psychic bidding

As a result of several recent occasions when psychic bids have been used in sessions at our club, the Tournament Committee has requested we provide a short explanation of what they are and what to do when you encounter one.

The Laws define a psychic call as "a deliberate and gross misstatement of honour strength and/or of suit length." A pass or double can be a psychic call. Psychic calls aren't themselves prohibited, just so long as they leave your partner as baffled as your opponents. An example is an opening bid in one of a suit with just eight points, as is an overcall at the 2 level without two honours.

However, repeated deviations may lead to implicit understandings which then form part of the partnership's methods and must be disclosed in accordance with the regulations governing disclosure of system. If the Director judges there is undisclosed knowledge that has damaged the opponents they shall adjust the score and may assess a procedural penalty.

As with all other possible infractions, opponents who think a psychic bid has resulted in undisclosed knowledge should call the Director. To enforce the Law, the Directors keep a record of partnerships where they have been called to the table for a psychic action (Jeff Carberry's little black book). When called the Director will either enter the call in the record of psychic actions or, based on the records, determine that the partnership has an implicit agreement. In the latter case the Director may adjust the score and may assess a procedural penalty in accordance with the Law.

If you feel you have been disadvantaged by a psychic bid ***the Director should be called at the conclusion of play on the hand when a psychic bid has been made.*** If you would like to know more then read Law 40; you can use the Director's copy of the Laws at the club or [read them online](#) at the World Bridge Federation website.

7 Changes to the Laws of Bridge

The World Bridge Federation revised the Laws with effect from 1 January 2024.

There were two changes, an amendment to Law 73 (Communication, Behaviour, Tempo and Deception) and a new Law 89 (Prohibited Behaviour and Reprehensible Conduct). These amendments are being implemented in an effort to promote fair and consistent play across all WBF-sanctioned bridge events (which by extension means all events in Australia).

The changes to Law 73 are minor. The primary requirement (Law 73A1) remains unchanged:

Communication between partners during the auction and play shall be effected only by means of calls and plays, except as specifically authorised by these Laws.

In Law 73A2 the word 'should' has been replaced with 'shall' so it now reads:

Calls and plays shall be made without emphasis, mannerism or inflection, and without intentional hesitation or haste.

The main change has been to do with the enforcement of the Law. Rather than stating that partners shall not communicate by means such as the way calls or plays are made and other examples.

Law 73B now simply states:

Players must not communicate, nor attempt to communicate, via means other than those described in Law 73A.

These changes have evidently led to an increase in Director calls in congresses in relation to tempo though the Law has not changed on this.

The Law (73D) reads:

1. It is desirable for players to maintain steady tempo and unvarying manner. Players should be particularly careful when variations may work to the benefit of their side. Otherwise, unintentionally to vary the tempo or manner in which a call or play is made is not an infraction. Inferences from such variations are authorized only to the opponents, who may act upon the information at their own risk.

2. A player may not attempt to mislead an opponent by means of a question, remark or gesture; by the haste or hesitancy of a call or play (for example hesitating before playing a singleton); by the manner in which a call or play is made; or by any purposeful deviation from correct procedure (see also Law 73E2).

The example given is an interesting one. While it refers to hesitating before playing a singleton, that does not mean the singleton has to be played immediately. It has to be played at the same speed as any other card would be. Similarly, playing from a longer suit quickly to fox opponents into thinking you have a singleton is an attempt to mislead the opponent.

Obviously, any other communication during the auction or play is prohibited. We all know we shouldn't say to partner "oh well, you'll have to play the hand" before putting the partnership into game or slam. Similarly furrowed brows, wincing, and other gestures are not allowed.

The most common transgression, however, arises in relation to bids that are alerted. When alerting a bid, you must not provide an explanation of the bid unless asked for one by the opponent whose turn it is to call. Similarly, you must not remind partner that a bid should be alerted.

Law 73E (Deception) allows, under some circumstances, where an innocent player has drawn a false conclusion from a prohibited communication that the Director may award an adjusted score. As always if you think there has been an infraction, call the Director.

The new Law 89 is in some ways an extension of Law 73 as the conduct prohibited is seeking or using illicit information about the boards in play or attempting to convey by prohibited means information to partner about a board in play. The latter, of course, is referencing more elaborate means of communication than hesitation and fairly natural mannerisms. It is addressed at systems of communication (e.g. if I place my 1NT bid with my right hand I have 15-16 points, if I use my left hand, I have 17-18).

The Law does, however, also refer to the use of statistical analysis to determine wrongdoing. This was extensively used by the ABF during COVID where several cases of prohibited communication were identified by players using BBO.

The relationship between the two changes is that Law 73C refers to the need for a player to carefully avoid making use of any incidental information arising from 'a remark, question, explanation, gesture, mannerism, inflection, haste or hesitation, or an unexpected alert or failure to alert.' The new Law 89 applies to unauthorised information that is not incidental, that is, it is deliberate.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to all who helped us put this Newsletter together.

Happy Bridging everybody.

Phil B and Dave H

The Basics of Declarer Play

Four lessons with Paul Lavings

Paul Lavings will be giving four lessons on the basics of declarer play on Mondays in March at the IBA Hall in Figtree. Participants play and discuss four hands in each lesson.

Dates: Mondays 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th March

Time: 9.30am to 11.45am.

\$15 per lesson or \$50 for all four lessons. Pay cash on the day.

Registration is Essential -- Please register on sheet at Figtree or Thirroul or email Helen Lavings at helenlavings@gmail.com.

Introduction to Bridge Course

Learn to play and enjoy this global game

If you know anyone who is looking for a new activity or diversion, no matter how young they may be, suggest to them they might try bridge. No experience playing cards is necessary, these lessons start at the very beginning.

Dates: Six Tuesdays starting 5th March (skipping Anzac Day)

Time: 7pm.

\$80 fee includes six lessons, book *An Introduction to Bridge* by Paul Marston, annual membership to IBA and three weeks table fees for supervised play sessions (usually \$5 each).

For further information visit (<https://illawarra.bridgeaustralia.org/lessons.asp>) or ring Marie Pickering at 0422375712 or email her at pickering_marie@hotmail.com.