

Management Committee

The Management Committee (MC) met on Saturday 8 August. IBA occupies the Figtree Hall under a licence from Wollongong City Council which expires this year. They have invited the club to a Community Facilities Licensee Information Session at the end of this month. This will kick-off our licence renewal project. The MC has established a sub-committee of the President, Vice-President and Secretary, with additional members to be co-opted by the President.

The club has received a photo album from Tony Wright's widow, Rosemary. One photo has a physical representation of the IBA logo, except that the natural arc of a ribbon is to droop. The editor is interested in the history of the club logo and would appreciate any information.



The whole album has been scanned as pages, not as individual photos, as shown above. Members' assistance is sought in providing names for people in the pictures, which can be accessed [here](#). Let the editor know the picture number and any details you can provide.

The MC has added player development as a permanent agenda item. We noted that the lessons currently being run by Fran Lyon and Jenny Muscio have twelve keen participants. It noted the success of both the Steve Geddes lessons and Ian Lisle's recent partnership workshops. The MC is exploring further workshop options.

The President reported on a recent Bridge NSW webinar on supporting and encouraging players to try congresses and tournaments. A recording of that webinar will appear [here](#) over the next few days. One initiative discussed was the 'starter congress' at Peninsula Bridge Club on Sunday 9 August. This has attracted a good local field, and it was suggested that IBA should host one. It was noted that Kiama used to run a Novice Congress and that maybe we should help organise an event to be held at Kiama. Discussion will continue.

The MC received the Congress Convenor's report for the Chris Diment congress and noted the very positive support in the surveys and in one direct email. A particular point was made about the excellent work of the caddies who were drawn from our supervised play sessions. It is another way to get exposure to congresses.

Cath Gregory has very kindly offered to take on the role of publicity officer, an offer that the MC was very pleased to accept.

From the Editor

This issue must start with a clarification. In *Getting the Gong*, Peter Gill wrote 'Chris was the humble, softly spoken Tournament Director from Wollongong who died too young after being a lifelong smoker.' It is possible from this phrase to incorrectly conclude that Chris died of a condition associated with smoking such as lung cancer; the cause of his death was a brain tumour.

Almost all sessions at Figtree continue to grow in participation rates. The table below shows the average number of pairs at sessions in April, May and June at Figtree. Almost 50% increases in both Supervised Play sessions reflect the great work being done by Marie, Jill and Fran in lessons and development. Tuesday afternoon has shown an almost 25% improvement, and Andrew is now regularly playing Web Mitchell movements as he has more than nine tables. Next issue we will include IBAND and IBARB sessions.

	2025	2026
Tues Afternoon	19.0	23.0
Tues Night (SUP)	8.8	12.5
Wed Morning	22.8	24.1
Thur Morning (Sup)	12.9	18.2
Thur Night	8.5	8.2
Sat Afternoon	27.2	27.8

The new Monday Afternoon session is growing steadily, with three, five, and five-and-a-half tables in the first three weeks. It is developing as a place for relaxed play – somewhere between supervised play and the more focused Wednesday morning and Saturday afternoon. Some players have noted that this is where Tuesday afternoon started. However, that session is now looking more like Wednesday or Saturday.

The July issue of [Bridging NSW](#) contained an article on our Chris Diment congress, while the August issue of the [ABF Newsletter](#) included the full column written by Peter Gill on the Congress that we ran in our June Newsletter. Putting those two together raises the question of whether newsletters are better with a name rather than just a functional description. The first few issues of the Bridge NSW newsletter were labelled [Title Goes Here], and a naming competition was held – the early issues also included a strapline 'Connecting the NSW Bridge Community.' If you think a title is appropriate, let me know; if you have a suggestion, even better.

Promotions

Congratulations to the following members on their recent promotions

June 2025

Grade	Name
Bronze State	David Higgins
State	Ron McNally Edith McNally
Silver Local	Manuel Lopes
Bronze Local	Annette Lopez Chris Fergusson
Graduate	Peter Gibson Ted Cheal Suzan Brooker

July 2026

Grade	Name
Regional	Alex Tavan
Silver Local	Tom Malcher Neil Grant Denise Aubourg
Club	Barry Smith Ernst Nowotny
Graduate	Tess Carroll

Results

Major Events and Congresses

In this column, we record major achievements by club members in the broader bridge community, as well as club events. As noted in the last newsletter, Paul Lavings was a member of the Australian Seniors Team for the **Asian Cup**. The team won the Trophy in an exciting final that was decided on the last hand. I did quiz Paul with the intent of writing it up myself, but I can't match the work of his teammate Peter Gill in the [August ABF Newsletter](#) (page 7ff).

IBA participated in the **Statewide Pairs** on 5 August. At the club, our NS and EW winners were Paul and Helen Lavings (70.88%) and Liz and Steve Hurley (64.31%). In the Statewide results, Liz and Steve did best at IBA, coming in at 21st with 65.8%, while Paul and Helen came in 37th with 63.1%. All our finishers in the top 200 were

Liz & Stephen Hurley	21 st	65.8%
Paul & Helen Lavings	37 th	63.1%
Steve Szatmary & Grant Cowen	41 st	62.7%
Roger & Glenda McNee	84 th	59.3%
Ruth Neild & Rilla England	89 th	59.0%
Maggie & Dave Havyatt	198 th	55.0%

Roger and Glenda feature in Rilla's Members Corner in this issue. In light of one comment in their story, it is interesting that four of the six pairs here are married couples.

The **State Teams Qualifier** was played on Wednesdays 22 and 29 July. This is a new format event where the Regional and State Finals will be played in three divisions. Our best placed teams in these divisions were:

Open

1st Steve Szatmary, Grant Cowen, Liz and Stephen Hurley

2nd Glenda and Roger McNee, Paul and Helen Lavings

Under Grand Master

1st Cathy Ashcroft, Marie Pickering, Andrew Smith and Carolyn Githens

2nd Stephen Brell, Ruth Neild, Dave Gallagher and Rilla England

3rd Jan Greenlees, Steve Dynan, Lily Gulati and Sue Kennedy

Under National Master

1st Yvonne Harbinson, Marion Lerman, Ngaire Meehan and Jenny Muscio

In the **ABF Club Teams Knockout**, our Under 300 MP team (S Vogl, P Barker, J Macrae, J Cowling) had a tough first session, finishing 3-0-3 and coming in equal sixth. Our Under 100 MP team (J Johnson, P Corbett, J Rollinson, C Power) had a similar outcome, substituting one draw for a loss to be 3-1-2 and coming fifth. A further session of five qualifying rounds for each category will be played on Tuesday 18 August, followed by Quarter-Finals in September.

Kaye Hart and Jeff Carberry finished fourth at the **Commercial Club Albury Congress** in late June.

Club Events

The **Past Presidents Cup and Shield** was contested on Wednesdays 24 June and 1 July. This year we have returned to a format where the first week is a qualifier and the second week is one field for the Cup and one for the Shield. Any pair can play in the Shield event for the second week. Our Supplementary Regulations failed to identify the conditions for the award of the Shield (was it outright over the two weeks, was it the best performance in the one-week Shield, or was it the best performance in the one-week Shield by a pair who played both weeks). Accordingly, we are listing three Shield winners!

Past Presidents Cup

Bill Fotheringham and Martin Bunder

Past Presidents Shield (joint winners)

Cathy Ashcroft and Andrew Smith

Liz and Steve Hurley

Kay Snowden and Peter Graham

The **Karhof Trophy** was contested on Saturdays 25 July and 1 August. This is played as a two-week Web Mitchell with the NS pairs remaining at their original tables, and EW seated as a continuation of the previous match. Pairs are not required to play both weeks, but the Trophy is awarded on outright scores over both weeks.

1st Stephen and Liz Hurley

2nd Sue Bochan and Rob Kinloch

3rd Paul and Helen Lavings

Tuesday Afternoon played their Pairs Championship on 21 and 28 July. Congratulations to:

- 1st Sue Bochan and Steve Brell
- 2nd Ruth Neild and Melissa Ardern
- 3rd Shahla Vogl and David Higgins

Upcoming Events

The club **Pairs Championship** will be held on 22 and 29 August. Entry through MyABF is necessary for seeding of the field. This will be played as two weeks of one-winner events. Week one will be a Web Mitchell. Depending on numbers, week two will either be a continuation of the Web Mitchell or (preferably) two Howells (of the NS and EW fields from the first week). Substitutions are allowed, and pairs can play in either week without having to play both weeks. Still, registration through MyABF is essential for week one.

The club's **State Pairs Qualifier** is being played on 19 and 26 August. These will be two weeks of ordinary duplicate pairs but attracting red points at State Championship level. There is no requirement to play both weeks. Pairs will be ranked in the three competition divisions (Open, Under Grand, Under National) on outright scores, but no extra masterpoints are awarded for the outright.

The **Australia Wide Open Pairs** will be played at IBA on Tuesday 25 August. Please take a special note of this and come on Tuesday if you don't normally do so!

The Wednesday Pairs Championship will be played on 16 and 23 September.

On 26 and 27 September the Regional Finals of the State Pairs and Teams will be played at the Figtree Hall. Direct entry is possible to these events. However, to accommodate players who would like an ordinary Saturday session of duplicate pairs, the Railway Institute hall at Thirroul has been booked, and a session will be available there.

Fancy a bridge cruise?

[Helane K Tours](#) has been running bridge cruises from Sydney for many years. Next year, she is running four bridge cruises, all Sydney-Sydney, aboard the Celebrity Edge. Two of next year's cruises will have IBA members as Directors.

The New Zealand Cruise from 18 February to 2 March will have Ian Lisle on board. You will not only have the opportunity to play some bridge but also benefit from workshops run by Ian. The Barrier Reef Cruise from 2 to 13 March will have Dave Havyatt as Director. Any workshops by Dave won't be as good as Ian's, but he has plans to make the bridge a little more exciting.

Details of both cruises are available on noticeboards at the club, or you can ask Ian or Dave, or visit Helane's website. Bridge is not scheduled during port visits or to conflict with the major shipboard entertainment.

Rilla's Member Corner

Bridge Beginnings

By Roger and Glenda McNee

Glenda and I have been playing cards pretty much all our lives. We were both forced into 500 at a very early age by our mothers, so they did not have to play. Seems like a common story.

We both played 500 in our years at university. Mostly after the pub shut till the very early hours of the morning. (or in my case till the beer ran out). Different group of friends initially but they gradually merged.

Then life got in the road and other activities took over but cards in some shape or form were still in the background. Holidays often were associated with a game of euchre, Uno, 500, crib or Rickety-Kate. We played them all at some stage but never bridge.

After I quit work, I was looking for something to do and one of us suggested bridge. Now we had heard of the game but had never really played so we thought why not?

We managed to find a club giving lessons called Finnesse based out of Lugarno. So off I went to my eight-week beginners lessons. I think of the 10-12 who turned up I am the only one left. I started playing in supervised play while Glenda went along for her set of lessons. It was at this stage we were warned by a number of people that perhaps we should look for a bridge partner other than our spouse. But we decided to give it a go as that seemed a bit silly as we were doing it so we could do something together. That seems to have worked out for usmostly.

We were very lucky with the bloke who taught us as he encouraged us a lot and within 12 months we were playing in the Summer Nats in Canberra. Restricted of course, but that introduced us to tournaments. We loved it and have played in that tournament several times now. Not to mention other tournaments particularly the country ones. We have also met people from all over and keep seeing them at bridge tournaments now.

That last bit is probably one of the best things about bridge. New friends, new faces and sometimes rekindling of old friendships. We met a bloke from our Uni days again not long after we started playing bridge, and we formed a team with him for many tournaments. He said to me what a shame it was that we wasted all those nights playing 500 and not bridge! But at least we got there in the end.

Would you like to tell us your story? How did you come to bridge, and how did you end up in Wollongong? Then drop us a line.

Is there someone's story you really want to know? Let Rilla or the editor know, and we will try to include them.

Being dummy

by Julie Carbonara and John Rankin

In Bridge the Declarer must take control
And play the contract as it unfolds.
But spare a thought for your Partner, who
Must sit and watch the whole game through.
For Dummy, it's thought, is out of the frame;
No worries or stress while playing the game.
It's not quite so simple: I'll tell you why.
The rules are quite clear – you must comply.

As Dummy you lay down the cards in your hand
On the table face up, you understand.
The trump suit goes down on your right hand
side
Other suits are then placed to the left beside.
If the contract's No Trumps, as it can be for fun
The order is optional, but it's quite often done
Spades sit on the right, and then hearts are next,
Then clubs, then diamonds towards your left.

But don't just stack them any old way -
Make it clear for Declarer so they can play.
The top of each suit is closest to you
Then down the order the whole way through.
All clearly visible; but leave enough space
For all cards as they're turned to be neatly
placed.
The direction they face is critical, you see -
When counting the tricks, we need to agree.

So your cards are down, and your Partner thanks
you.
From here on in, you have little to do.
You simply obey the instructions you're given -
Taking initiative will not be forgiven.
Wait for Declarer and don't jump the gun
Though the card to be played is an obvious one.
If Declarer needs some time to decide
Allow them the time their choice to provide.

The only time Dummy can touch a card
Is when instructed by Partner; but restraint can
be hard.

You can't even tidy the stacks during play
Or move cards around in any way.
It could be seen as giving a clue
To your Partner as to what they should do.
Putting your fingers or hand on the table
For any purpose: Dummy's not able.

When Partner plays theirs, or asks for your card
To be played on the trick it can sometimes be
hard
To control your expression or sounds you might
make
Like sighing or grunting – don't make that
mistake.
Raising your eyebrows, shaking your head?
Negativity's not to be shown and/or said.
In keeping your Partnership suitably blessed
Your thoughts should be silent, as "Dummy"
suggests.

There is an exception of course to the rules,
In order to stop Partner seeming a fool.
If they fail to follow a suit that's been led
You can check they're not showing a muddled
head
By asking the question "no diamonds?" or such
Thus ensuring that they are focused enough.
When raising this issue to ensure no revoke
You can't be admonished for the words that you
spoke.

So may I suggest that when sat at a table
At home or with friends, whenever you're able,
If tempers are short or the air could be cut
Just imagine you're Dummy and keep your
mouth shut.

Should the tension keep rising stay out the way -
It may well be wise to have nothing to say.
When asked why you're silent or just saying a
smidge,
Tell your family and friends you are practicing
Bridge.

A hand at the club

By Grant Cowen

This issue's hand comes from Nationwide Pairs on Saturday 8 August. The hand was played 15 times. South was declarer 14 times, 11 in a diamond part-score, three times in 1 No Trump, while EW were in a heart part-score once.

Bd: 7 ♠ K Q 5 2
 Dir.: S ♥ 8 3
 Vul: All ♦ 10 8 7 5
 ♣ J 10 5

♠ 7 6 4 3 ♠ A 10
 ♥ A K Q 4 ♥ 10 9 5 2
 ♦ 3 2 ♦ Q 4
 ♣ 7 3 2 ♣ K Q 9 6 4

 ♠ J 9 8
 ♥ J 7 6
 ♦ A K J 9 6
 ♣ A 8

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		
N	-	3	-	1	-	6	
S	-	3	-	1	-	9	11
E	3	-	3	-	-	14	
W	3	-	3	-	-		

Both sides have 20 HCP. The bidding will start with South opening 1♦ and West passes. North, with a four-card major, should bid 1♠, suppressing the Diamond fit at this stage and looking for a fit in Spades.

Now the critical bid. If E chooses to make a Takeout Double here, it brings in the other two suits, both Hearts & Clubs, as possible strains to play.

If NS are playing Support Doubles[†], South would Redouble to show a 3-card Spade holding. If not, with their balanced hand, they may bid 1NT or possibly repeat the diamonds to show a 5+ card suit.

West with a quality Heart suit is happy to compete to two level with 2♥, noting vulnerability and that both N & S are Bidding.

Not wanting to sell out to a possible 8-card Heart fit, North should now compete to 3♦, hoping to win the part-score battle. East should pass (minimum and useless ♦Q), and South will pass as well.

Back to West. If the opposition are playing Support Doubles, he knows his partner has only two Spades. If East held 5-4 in Hearts and Clubs, they wouldn't have overcalled with an at-best Jack-high heart suit. Overcalls should be sound. However, even if East has only four Hearts, they must have a five-card Club suit. The knowledge of secondary fit is an asset and a motivator to bid on.

We all know defence is hard, and defending against 3♥ here is no exception. After the expected diamond lead, South may choose to return the Ace, then another Club, hoping for a ruff if partner has a Heart entry. This gifts West the 9th trick.

Even on correct defence with a spade switch, the contract can make, but West needs to lead to the second club trick from hand and play the nine from East unless North plays the ten. Nevertheless, going off 1 trick is ONLY -100 compared to the 110 available by making 3D. The one pair that bid 3♥ made nine tricks for a top of 26 matchpoints out of a possible 26.

In club duplicate, it isn't all about bidding games or slams. There are often more matchpoints available in the argy-bargy battle of the minnow part-score.

[†] The Support Double was invented by Eric Rodwell in 1974. It is a useful way of announcing three-card support for responder's suit.

Calling the Director

By Dave Havyatt

At recent club sessions there have been a few calls for the Director for hesitation. In these circumstances, it's common to hear the player who has bid out of 'tempo' say, 'aren't I allowed to think?'

What the Director does in this circumstance isn't always highly visible to players, as the decision-making happens away from the table. We thought it was timely to review the Laws here.

Two Laws are relevant here. The first is Law 73 (Communication, Tempo and Deception). While 73D1 states that it is 'desirable for players to maintain steady tempo and unvarying manner', 73C1 is more explicit, stating:

When a player has available to him incidental unauthorized information from his partner, such as from a remark, question, explanation, gesture, mannerism, inflection, haste or hesitation, or an unexpected alert or failure to alert, he must carefully avoid taking advantage of it [see Law 16B1(a)].

And 16B1(a) states:

A player may not choose a call or play that is demonstrably suggested over another by unauthorized information if the other call or play is a logical alternative.

Where a 'logical alternative' is described as:

an action that a significant proportion of the class of players in question, using the methods of the partnership, would seriously consider, and some might select.

Players are right; you are allowed to think. However, your partner cannot use information from the fact of the pause. If they do so, two possible consequences can follow: the Director awarding an adjusted score, or a procedural penalty against the person who used the unauthorised information. I haven't seen an example of the latter, but it is possible.

To illustrate the Law and what the Director must do, we use an example from a ruling at the Autumn Nationals (Under Grand Butler Pairs, Match 1). Match 1, Board 5 in the Under Grand Butler Swiss Pairs, all vulnerable, Dealer North.

The Director was called to the table at the end of this auction.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♥	2♥ (1)	Pass
2♠	3♦	3♠	Pass (2)
Pass	4♦	All Pass	

(1) Michael's Cue Bid showing 5 Spades and 5 of a minor.

(2) Agreed that South hesitated before passing.

The Law says the Director should be called at the end of play. Still, it is best if the Director is called immediately so that (a) the question of hesitation can be determined and (b) the bidding can be recorded. The Director should request an explanation of any bids that might have systemic meanings by taking players away from the table. However, the Director can't do anything until the end of play.

At the end of play, the Director is called, and whether there was hesitation is established (i.e., Law 73C1 is met). They instruct play to continue on the next board while the Director decides.

The Director's next question is whether there was a logical alternative (called LA by Directors) to North's bid of 4♦ after partner's and RHO's passes. If there are logical alternatives, the Director's next task is to establish whether the bid made was demonstrably suggested by the unauthorised information (the hesitation).

Sometimes the Director can establish for themselves that there is no logical alternative, or that the action taken wasn't demonstrably suggested by the hesitation. When that is not the case, the Director conducts a poll of other players.

To meet the requirements of Law 16, the poll should be taken of players similar in ability to the players involved in the auction.

The Director shows the polled players only the hand whose bid we are investigating, in this case North, which was:

♠ A K
♥ Q J 9 7 5 4
♦ K J 8 6 4
♣ void

The Director then steps through the bidding with a player being polled. I had three questions to ask after showing them the hand and explaining vulnerability and dealer (in this case, that this hand was dealer).

Q1. After you open 1♥, Left Hand Opponent (LHO) bids 2♥ (Michael's), partner passes, and RHO bids 2♠, what do you call?

Q2. You bid 3♦, LHO bids 3S and both partner and RHO pass, what do you call?

Q3. If partner had hesitated before passing, what do you think they could consider doing other than passing?

We need to talk about the whole sequence of bids because that is the authorised information. We also need to be sure that the player being polled understands the partnership's system.

In this case, in response to question 2, four people said 4♦ and three said pass. We have established that North had a logical alternative. When asked question 3, three people suggested that South might have been considering doubling. One said they might have been considering 3NT while another suggested a raise in either Hearts or Diamonds.

The Directors (three of us) concluded that the bid of 4♦ had been 'demonstrably suggested' by the unauthorised information, i.e. the hesitation. We awarded an adjusted score of 3♠ by E making nine tricks instead of the 4♦ making 11 by N.

You may think before you call, but when you break tempo (hesitate), you provide unauthorised information to your partner. You can still pass, but you are more likely to restrict your partner's options.

If your partner has hesitated, you may not choose between alternative calls anything demonstrably suggested by the hesitation.

More on dummy

The same congress had an interesting ruling regarding dummy that illustrates one point from the poem.

In the middle of play on a suit contract with S declarer, West led a small heart when East had won the preceding trick. The King being

the only heart in dummy, North picked up the card and placed it on the table as played. East played the Ace, and then declarer called the Director for the lead out of turn. As the Director was called, East said, 'It doesn't matter, I was always going to lead my Ace of hearts'.

When a defender leads when it is the other defender's turn to lead, the declarer can accept the lead by playing a card from the next hand in rotation. However, a card is played from dummy only once the declarer has specified the card to be played.

As a consequence, we have a series of infractions. We first have the lead out of turn, then we have a card not being played from dummy, then we have the ♥A being faced.

The Director asked declarer if they wished to accept the lead out of turn, which they declined. The tabled ♥A was then designated a major penalty card, as was the card incorrectly led by West. Because a penalty card was in front of West, declarer had the right to require or refuse the lead of that suit. South prohibited the heart lead, and West's penalty card was returned to their hand.

From there on, South could discard the ♥K before the suit was played. On the first heart lead, they trumped in dummy, but East now had to play the Ace, as it was still on the table.

An unusual circumstance to be sure, but a good reminder that a card from dummy is only played once it has been called for by declarer. As next player in rotation, be aware of possible ramifications if you play before dummy's card has been properly played

Postmortems

One way to speed up play is to restrict postmortems after a board is played. They aren't usually much use either.

Bridge is first and foremost a game of concentration. No amount of bidding skill or card playing skill is much use if you forget what your partner's bid means (or your opponent's) or what cards have been played.

One of the biggest disruptions to concentration is thinking about the previous board. By all means, ask one quick clarification question before you move on, but don't dissect it in detail.

A very senior player reminded me of this at a side event at the ANC. After playing a match in which the last board contained a biddable slam (which we missed), I asked them in the coffee queue, 'Which direction did you play in the last match?' (see note)

I thought I heard them reply 'I don't remember'. This seemed so unlikely that I asked again and got the same reply.

But this time they followed it up with 'I never discuss a hand after I have played it at a congress. I made that mistake once thirty years ago and played terribly for the rest of the day.'

'After all,' they added, 'a batter doesn't walk to the other end of the crease to dissect their last shot with partner – be it good or bad.'

Note: [The hand in question was Board 24 in Match 3 of the Welcome Pairs.](#) It is almost impossible for W not to make 12 tricks in spades; however, the partnership has only 25 HCPs. The player I asked sat EW, but they didn't bid it either.