

Illawarra Bridge Association

Newsletter April 2024

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1 Editorial

It has been an exciting couple of months since the last newsletter for several different reasons. From exposure of our club in the local media on the one hand to medical emergencies on the other - a lot has been going on, you will find out more as you read on.

One overriding feature of our club is the wealth of talent on our current Management Committee and we are really lucky to have such a dedicated group who provide their time to work for the best outcomes for our members:

- Ngairé Meehan (Treasurer) and Maggie Havyatt (Secretary) have been working hard to complete the Club Membership for 2024. From chasing people up on the phone to collecting money and finalising registrations, they have worked together tirelessly behind the scenes. Many thanks Maggie and Ngairé.
- Chris Yates (Publicity Officer) has done a magnificent job of engaging with local media to promote the Club. Newspaper, television, and radio have been involved not only in articles about the club but also interviews with Paul Lavings. Please thank her and say 'well done' next time you see her.
- Many thanks are also due to Dave Havyatt who has done a tremendous amount of work covering for absent directors, dealing hands, being on the Tournament Committee, promoting and establishing youth bridge at the University, in addition to co-editing this esteemed organ, the Newsletter.

2 Important announcements

Emergency Evacuation As part of our lease agreement with Wollongong County Council, we need to practice our emergency evacuation procedures twice yearly. It is important that we all know these procedures so we can evacuate the building rapidly and safely in the case of an emergency (e.g. a fire in the kitchen or the Director's computer exploding). So please, next time you are at the club, have a quick look at the diagram on the entrance door or notice board to familiarise yourselves with the evacuation procedure. If present, Jeff Carberry will be the Chief Warden to oversee the evacuation, if he is not there, the Director of the current session assumes the role. We will perform an emergency evacuation at an upcoming session, so please be prepared.

Emergency Contact Details After the recent incident with one of our members, the Management Committee think it would be best if members could provide an emergency contact number, with name and relationship information. A form will be prepared and placed by the notice board. Complete the form and place it in the box provided. The information will be placed on a typed membership list and kept near the director's desk.

We stress that the information will be confidential and accessible only to the director of any playing session or the supervisor of a teaching session. The list will enable the Director to rapidly make the appropriate contact should a medical emergency arise.

3 Upcoming events

We start this section with a reminder about our own **Chris Diment Memorial Congress** which is coming up on the 15th and 16th June in. Entries this year are via MyABF, if you have not joined MyABF, there are instructions on how to do this on leaflets at the club, pick one up next time you're there and please ask for help if unsure of what to do. The Congress will be held at the Port Kembla Golf Club again.

Saturday 20th and Saturday 27th April: GNOT Qualifier 1 and GNOT Qualifier 2 (16 teams registered)

Thursday 2nd May 1pm at Figtree: Lesson 1 of 6, Beginners course with Fran Lyon. Normal supervised sessions continue Thursday mornings.

Saturday 4th May 1.30pm Mixed Pairs Championship 1 and State Qualifier during normal session.

Saturday 11th May 1.30pm Mixed Pairs Championship 2 and State Qualifier during normal session.

Tuesday 14th, Wednesday 15th and Thursday 16th May "Biggest morning tea" at these sessions at Figtree. Many thanks to Kaye Hart for planning these events.

Saturday 18th IBA birthday and State Mixed Pairs Championship

Wednesday 29th May **Australia Wide Novice pairs**, this has proven to be a great opportunity for all our novice players to pit themselves against fellow novice bridge players. There is no need to register, just show up on the day with your partner. A booklet is provided (straight after the event) with an analysis of all the hands. Normal sessions for all non-novice players on this day.

4 Recent results

Since the last newsletter, members contested the Club Pairs Championship. Qualifying was held over two weeks on 2 and 9 March, with the best five pairs (available to play) from North-South and East-West then playing in a five-table Howell on 16 March. Congratulations to the winners, Paul and Helen Lavings.

1st P.Lavings, H.Lavings

2nd M.Pickering, C.Githens

3rd R.Neild, R.England

The Tuesday afternoon session played their Tuesday Teams Championship on 27th February and 4th March.

1st J.Regan, I.Young, K.Hart, J.Carberry

2nd R.Neild, S.Brell, C.Waters, E.Gray, R.Kinloch, M.Pickering

3rd S.Bochan, O'Leary, D.Higgins, R.La Marra, S.Cutsforth

IBAND played the TRIPS Teams Championship on 1st & 8th March. TRIPS stands for Thirroul Railway Institute Preservation Society, which maintains the hall where our northern division (IBAND) plays.

1st J.Regan, B. Mathie, P.McPherson, M.Morphett

2nd C.Fergusson, J.Spira, M.Spira, N.Southall

3rd P.Gard, B.Overington, H.Voysey, P.Middleton

A special call out to Jack Regan, a member of both winning teams.

Club members have also done well at the Tasmanian Festival of Bridge (a gold point event). Ian and Vicky Lisle (now home club members) won the Roger Penny Senior Swiss Pairs, and Anka and Peter Saundry (non-home club members) were second in the Restricted Swiss Pairs. Our directors work hard to give us as many opportunities as possible to advance our bridge standings at our ordinary club sessions. **Nationwide Pairs sessions** are one example. These are available to clubs once every two weeks, and IBA is almost always registered. IBA players regularly feature at the top of these lists, and the percentage will change because they are scored against all competitors. In one recent event, a club pair who won no green points locally earned 0.3 red masterpoints in the NWP. The events are played on either Wednesday morning or Saturday afternoon to maximise accessibility.

In NWP 1 (6th Jan) Ruth Neild and Stephen Brell came 6th, in NWP 2 (21st Jan) Paul and Helen Lavings came 5th, in NWP 3 (3rd Feb), Steve Szatmary and Grant Cowen came 2nd with Andrew Smith and Cathy Ashcroft coming 9th, in NWP 4 (17 February), Malcolm and Carol Kerr came 7th, with Roger and Glenda McNee coming 9th out of 375 competing pairs, in NWP 5 (28 February), Glenda and Roger McNees were 4th (out of 371), and in NWP 6 (13th March), Marie Pickering and Carolyn Githens came 4th while Steve Szatmary and Grant Cowen came 7th (out of 442), in NWP 7 (6th April) Rob Kinloch and Jeff Carberry came 2nd with Malcolm and Carol coming in 5th (out of 453).

5 News from the North....IBAND from Barb

The TRIPS Teams event was held on 1st & 8th March (see results above): a different format from our normal sessions, but thoroughly enjoyed by all players. Many thanks to Rob and Dave for organising and running this event.

The Easter sessions were great, lots of eggs and hot cross buns were enjoyed by all.

Unfortunately, the IBAND computer died the day before Good Friday. I didn't want to bother anyone over Easter, but thought better to return it on Easter Saturday, just in case it was still in warranty, and something could be sorted out after Easter. Rob gave me the admin computer to be going on with, but sadly this computer had not been updated with the latest software. As a result, I had to hand-score the boards on both Wednesday and Friday the week after Easter!! I hadn't hand-scored a bridge session since 1998 when I lived in Thailand. Although it was a bit of a challenge I did it because people like to know how they went after the session. I'll re-score the sessions when I get a working computer.

The Admin computer has been returned to Figtree, and hopefully it can be updated for use at IBAND over the coming weeks. A new Wi-Fi has been purchased for IBAND.

Finally, many thanks to Ngairé for the table fee updates, much appreciated by all at IBAND.

6 Obituary – Joyce Hoyle

Joyce Hoyle was passionate about her bridge. She came to a new country in her 60's to make a life, having been displaced from her home in Zimbabwe. She came here with very little in the way of belongings due to the political climate in Zimbabwe at the time.

She learned Bridge from Ron Klinger when she arrived in Sydney and memorized every word. I remember borrowing her tattered volumes in order to align our bidding patterns and finding whole chapters missing, lost forever. She was Ron's true acolyte and taught many of her partners at both IBA and Kiama clubs, instilling his ways.

Joyce was an inaugural member of the newly formed IBA in 1995. She came to us from Zimbabwe following a short stay in Sydney. She played as often as she could, 3-4 sessions a week at Figtree with a trip to play at Kiama when she could. She was always seen at the table in IBAND sessions once bridge started there. She played twice a week there whenever she had a partner. Failing health did not deter her and she played right up until the 2023 Christmas party.

Sadly, more of her partners have left before her but those few of us who played under her strict rule benefitted from her time as a young woman teaching Latin in a privileged boys' school to youngsters who would rather be on Safari.

Joyce was an adventurer and explorer. She lived her life in three parts of three counties. She told stories of wilderness adventures in Africa, and she continued exploring when she came to Australia, pitching her one-man tent in many of our national parks, well into her 70's, maybe longer.

Her adventuring spirit extended to Bridge where she embarked regularly on conventions to extend her system, insisting partners also accept the challenge.

She will be remembered as a feisty, determined Lady from a different age who knew how to live the best life, an active body, active mind and a soul expanding to fit.

Vale Joyce.

7 Director's corner Dave Havyatt

Scoring

I was recently asked at a supervised play session to explain bridge scoring. Having covered hand scores and matchpoint scores over two sessions, I thought I might write it up for the newsletter. Unfortunately, my 'simple' explanation ran to ten pages of rather turgid prose, a few tables, a graph, and two equations (!) - though it also extended to International Match Point scoring. So, instead, I'm going to mention only a few things. The long version is now in the documents section of the website. The first is to recognise that the game we play is contract bridge, which comes in two varieties: Rubber Bridge and Duplicate Bridge. Unlike many card games, we can pinpoint the creation of Contract Bridge exactly to the night of 31 October/1 November 1925 on board the SS Finland.

In the late 1960s and early 70s, my parents (like many others) changed their card nights with another couple from the game of Solo Whist to Rubber Bridge, which was on the back of the popularising of Bridge by Charles Goren. It is from Rubber Bridge that the concepts of a game bid and vulnerability are derived. The elements of the score for making an undoubled contract are simply trick scores i.e. 20 for each trick (over 6 tricks) bid and made in a minor, 30 in a major, and 40 for the first and 30 for all subsequent in no trumps. Overtrick scores are at the same rate as trick scores but are greatly increased if doubled and the bonuses for making the contract are 50 for a part score, 300 for game not vulnerable and 500 for game when vulnerable. There are also bonuses if a slam is made (once again, higher if vulnerable). The full details and the heritage of Rubber Bridge are in the longer article.

In Duplicate Bridge, we convert these scores into matchpoints. The process is very easy to describe. A pair receives two matchpoints for each other pair they beat and one point for each pair they drew with. The maximum number of matchpoints for a board (called the "top") is $2*(n-1)$, where n is the number of tables that played the board—the scores for NS and EW on a board sum to the top. The results for each pair presented on Pianola or the website show the MPs scored and the percentage obtained (the score divided by the top). Only Pianola also reports the "top" in this report (see the examples below).

Board ▲	Versus	Bid	By	Making	Score	Bidding	Card play	MPs	Top MPs	Percentage
1	Christine Yates & Aileen O'Brien	2♥	N	10	+170	Good bid	+1	19	22	86% ★★★★★

Board No	vs Pr	Contract	Lead	Result	Score	Matchpoints	%
Board 1	S: CHRISTINE YATES / Aileen O'Brien	2♥	N	4D	10	170	86%

There is much more to say about scoring, especially when you include IMPs scoring. But you'll have to read the longer piece for that.

8 Youth Bridge

Following the success of having the Chris Diment Congress 2023 adopted by the youth members from Sydney, there were ongoing conversations about how to get youth bridge underway in the Illawarra. The people involved agreed that the University of Wollongong was the place to concentrate efforts. The Sydney contingent shared with us the approach taken at UNSW, where young people played hands at a table during orientation week (O-Week).

A chance encounter resulted in a discussion with the Table-Top Society (TTS). The TTS plays all sorts of games – basically, anything you can play on a table-top – from *Uno* to role-playing games like *Dungeons and Dragons*. The latest favourite is *Blood on the Clocktower*, described as a “social bluffing” or “social deduction” game.

The TTS were very encouraging but couldn't host a bridge table at Orientation Week, and the university organisation that runs all these activities, Pulse, charges outsiders \$270 to participate in O-Week. So, we started a UOW Bridge Club in late 2023. Apart from the convenor of the meeting, ten people with no interest in Bridge came to the Inaugural General Meeting to be the requisite number to start a UOW club.

The inaugural club President then ran a stall for three days of O Week, complete with a bridge table and tablecloth. We had no young people able to sit and play Bridge, but over the three days, we spoke to many people about Bridge. On each of the second two days we managed to get tables of four three times to play MinibrIDGE. We repeated the same exercise on Clubs Day (in week two of the semester), during which WIN News interviewed us.

A set of six lessons was conducted starting in the first week of the semester. A group of five attended most of the lessons. Two others came to these lessons and are also attending Tuesday night lessons at IBA, but they aren't youth players, though one is a student. Seven more attended at least one lesson, some of which will be back if we run another set of lessons.

At the last of these lessons, an Extraordinary General Meeting was held, and now the four executive positions are held by young students who have attended the lessons. They are now in charge of determining where the club goes next. They have, however, decided to continue playing Bridge on Wednesdays at 5 pm in the Exhibition Space on level 1 of Building 11 and that staff can join the club, but they are not the primary audience.

The experience thus far has identified some important issues. First, many students know Bridge because their grandmother plays (I don't think a single student said their grandfather). To these students, the response was, “Why should your gran have all the fun?”. But more seriously, why aren't we teaching our children and grandchildren to play Bridge?

MinibrIDGE can be a solution. MinibrIDGE is an adaptation of the game where, after the deal, each player, starting from the dealer, announces their high card points. The side with the highest card points becomes the declaring side (if equal, redeal), and the member of the declaring side with the most HCP becomes the declarer (or, if equal, the one who announced first).

Once the declarer is determined, the dummy goes down, and the declarer announces the contract. The new players get to card play quicker than if you have to learn bidding systems.

The English Bridge Union supports MinibrIDGE; resources are available here: <https://www.ebu.co.uk/information-resources/minibrIDGE>. The easiest resource is their document *About MinibrIDGE*, available here: <https://www.ebu.co.uk/documents/education-and-teaching/schools/Introduction-to-MinibrIDGE.pdf>. MinibrIDGE can be played for free on BBO, and clubs can run it on RealBridge.

In her President's address at last year's AGM, Jill MacRae encouraged each of us to be “a pillar of the game.” Giving as many people as possible, especially younger people, the opportunity to play Bridge is a great way to be a pillar.

9 Acknowledgements

Thanks to all who helped us put this Newsletter together.

Happy Bridging everybody.

Phil B and Dave H