

The Illawarra Bridge Association Inc.

Newsletter February/March 2023

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1 Editorial

Happy New Year everyone! Dave Havyatt has joined the editorial team and we both hope you all had an enjoyable festive season. After Covid late last year, our numbers on Wednesdays and Saturdays are returning to the numbers we had beforehand. We had 16 tables on Saturday 4th February, and 14 teams contesting the Country Teams Qualifying event on consecutive Wednesdays (1st and 8th February). In this issue we have a special treat...last year we called for contributions from members of the Club which told a personal story about their involvement with Bridge. We received enough essays to provide you with one story per edition of the Newsletter for the foreseeable future. In this issue we start with the winning story from Maggie Havyatt, we hope you enjoy it....

2 Important Announcements

Membership fees - our wonderful treasurer Ngaire Meehan has requested that you pay your 2023 membership fee as soon as possible. This is due to the fact that after March 31st you will be automatically 'de-activated' by the Australian Bridge Federation (ABF) if not a financial member of the club. This then becomes a financial burden to the club because we need to pay an additional \$15 per person to reactivate if you wish to continue playing.

BSB	814 282
A/c Number	31204318
A/C Name	Illawarra Bridge Association Inc
Description	Annual Dues
Reference	(Name) (ABF number)

The details here are those to be used for your **membership only**, not your table fees!!!!

3 UPCOMING EVENTS

Given the issues we have with the calendar (events and dates not matching), it is important to know what is coming up at the club and the Tournament Committee has provided the following dates for March.

Wednesday morning 1st March – The first **High – Low** event for the year. Please phone Jill on 0414 900 239 if you'd like to participate and haven't already signed up on the list at the Clubrooms. This is a great opportunity for Beginners and Novice (<100MP) players to have a session with a more experienced partner.

Saturday 4th March – 2023 IBA Pairs Championship, round 1 (red point event)

Monday 6th March – IBA RealBridge online session 1

Wednesday 8th March – IBAND red point event 1

Saturday 11th March – 2023 IBA Pairs Championship, round 2 (red point event) (top 5 NS + top 5 EW qualify for Final)

Monday 13th March – IBA RealBridge online session 2

Wednesday 15th March – IBAND red point event 2, NWP #6

Saturday 18th March – 2023 IBA Pairs Championship Final (plus normal Saturday session for non-qualifiers)

Monday 20th March – IBA RealBridge online session 3

Wednesday 22nd March – Karhof Trophy, round 1 (red point event)

Saturday 25th March – Regular Saturday session at the clubrooms

Monday 27th March - IBA RealBridge online session 4

Wednesday 29th March – Karhof Trophy, round 2

Thursday evening sessions to run as normal, numbers permitting.

Further information on any of these events can be found by checking out the IBA website – illawarra.bridgeaustralia.org, by contacting a Committee member or by checking out the NSWBA online calendar.

4 Recent Results

The **2022 NSW Country Teams Zonal Final** for NSW Southern Zone was held at Nowra on Sunday October 23rd. Four teams played off for the prize of a place in the Final of the event: two strong teams from Mollymook, the Bayliss team from Southern Highlands, who won the regional qualifying event in Bowral and our IBA team that finished 2nd in Bowral (Phil Barker, Jill Macrae, Malcolm Kerr, Carol Kerr, B Rewers). We were leading going in to the last of the 6 stanzas but were pipped by the Bayliss team by 2.5 VPs. This was no disgrace as the Bayliss team finished 2nd in the Country Teams Final held at the NSWBA over 9th-11th December.

The **2022 NSW State Novice and Restricted Teams Championships** were held at our clubrooms on the weekend of 12th/13th November 2022. With 13 Restricted and 5 Novice teams it was a keenly contested event. The Novice Championship was won by the Havyatt team who finished 7th overall, but good performances by the Cusack team (11th overall) and the Rijdsdijk team (13th overall) saw them finish above several higher ranked Restricted teams. In the Restricted Championships the highest ranked Illawarra team was the Cunningham team who finished 6th, although Jill and Phil finished 3rd, playing with Frank Hardiman and Ken Hubbell, a pair from Sydney.

Our **IBA Christmas Teams** event was the usual hotly contested competition and held on Saturdays 10th and 17th December with 14 teams taking part. After the dust had settled the Hurley team (Steve, Liz, Steve Szatmary and Phil Barker) finished on top with 87 VPs, in front of the Lavings team (Paul, Helen, Jeff, Kaye and Rob) with 82 VPs and the Kingston team (Judy, Dave G, Moira, Rodd and Grant) with 78 VPs.

The **Christmas Hampers** were also drawn on the 2nd week of this event. The lucky winners were Tony Wright and Val Hodsdon, with many thanks to Chris Yates for curating the prizes.

Canberra and the **2023 Summer Festival of Bridge** came around pretty quickly, and a number of our members enjoyed the trip, the bridge and the social aspects of the event. It was great for the IBA members to get together for an enjoyable evening and meal. Our thanks to Ngaire for organising this occasion.

Notable results included -

- Massive congratulations to Paul Lavings, his team won the National Seniors Teams Championship after 6 continuous days of intense competition. For his troubles, Paul now gets a trip to Morocco for the World Championships later in the year.
- Maggie and Dave Havyatt won the Novice Swiss Pairs competition.

The **66 Club** was contested on 5th February, with Moira Cunningham and Helen Lavings coming in first. Second place was taken out by Steve Szatmary and Phil Barker, with Carol and Malcolm Kerr coming in third.

Country Teams Qualifying was held over two Wednesdays (1st and 8th February). The Neild team of Ruth Neild, Rilla England, Colin Bale and Ken McIvor were victorious. Other places in order were:

- 2nd P.Lavings, H.Lavings, J.Carberry, K.Hart, R.Kinloch, S.Brell
- 3rd S.Hurley, L.Hurley, G.Cowen, S.Szatmary
- 4th B.Fotheringham, M.Bunder, R.La Marra, S.Cutsforth, T.Wright, P.Barker
- 5th C.Ashcroft, A.Smith, M.Pickering, C.Githens

5 New online RealBridge session

The club has a number of members who have not yet returned to face-to-face bridge and we know several of these members are playing regularly on-line. As we have suspended the Monday evening face-to-face session, the committee would like to offer our own virtual game instead (rather than the Gardenvale, Victoria, event!!).

A trial for one month of an online bridge session on the RealBridge platform will commence on Monday night 6th March at 7pm. For the first session, you will need to register with Jill MacRae on jill.macrae54@bigpond.com with your name and your partner's name if you want to play. This will help with the set up and allow the game to start on time. Once Jill has the numbers for the evening, she will send you the link by email and anticipates that the link will be on the website too.

A minimum of 5 tables is optimum for an enjoyable game – should we get more than the minimum, with good prospects for the following weeks, we should be able to sign in directly via the link on the website. The cost of \$5 will be debited to your table fee account, so please check that you have credit. If you are prepared to be a standby pair that would help the director immeasurably.

Please log in by 6.45pm and check sound and video.

If you have not played on RealBridge give Jill a call and she will send some information.

There will be a **NEW** link for each session which can be accessed via the **IBA website** under "Coming Events" on the Home Page, on the day of each session.

Please check your microphone and camera on your computer before the session, via the RealBridge website. If it is your first time on RealBridge please log in early, Jill will be there at 6.15pm.

The link to the session will take you straight to the BRIDGE LOBBY on RealBridge. Here you will need your ABF number to log in with your full name.

The session will start at 7pm but you can come to the tables from 6.15pm when Jill will open the doors, virtually speaking! You can then just select a seat to sit in with a click of the mouse. Please fill the seats from table 1.

We hope you find it as much fun seeing and talking to people as we have in the past.

Phone or text Jill on 0414 900 239 if you have problems on the day.

See you from 6.15pm on Monday 6th March.

6 Jottings from the Committee Meeting February 11th

Spare Player

There is a folder on the table beside the fridge for players, who are available to be a spare for a Wednesday or a Saturday, to put their name in. As a spare you show up on the day and if you play you are not charged for playing on that day. If you don't play, \$5 will be credited to your table fee account. To be credited for this, spare players are asked to notify Ngaire so she can do the accounting.

Calendar

Most bridge events are in our white bridge calendar, but variations and additions do occur. All updates and additions are on our website and are also displayed on our TV screen during our regular sessions.

Congresses

Our annual Chris Diment Congress is on the Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th of June at Port Kembla Golf Club. Jeff will be our director and Marie the convenor. Looking forward to seeing lots of our members participating in this congress.

The Novice and Restricted Teams state event which Erica convened at our Figtree premises in Nov last year is to be held this year at Central Coast Bridge Club in Long Jetty on the 11th and 12th of Nov. We are hoping to send lots of our players there. This event will then be held at IBA in Nov 2024.

Table Fees

Please check your table fees balance each month and deposit funds as required. If you would like to check when you have played, go to the result section on our web site, put your name in and it will do a search for you, or ask one of the Management Committee to show you.

7 Stories about Bridge #1 - Maggie Havyatt

This story was submitted by Maggie for the 'stories competition' at the Anniversary party. This was the winning story – others will be published in forthcoming issues.

This is a true story told to me by a friend at our old bridge club. I will just refer to her as Annie.

Annie loved her bridge and played sessions at a few different venues around Sydney, including a morning session at Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club. It was a typical morning bridge session with a slightly mature aged crowd.

On this particular occasion, the Leagues Club was also hosting a business conference in the auditorium across the corridor from the bridge room. As luck would have it, both the bridge session and the conference stopped for a break at the same time.

A young woman who was attending the conference quickly took the opportunity to question Annie about what she and her companions were doing. The young woman explained that she could see a lot of older people sitting around tables, and she noticed that every now and then, half of them got up and moved to another table.

Annie was only too pleased to explain that they were playing a card game called Bridge, and that you changed tables after three games to play against the next team.

On hearing this the young woman breathed a great sigh of relief and said "Thank goodness for that. I thought I was watching speed dating for seniors".

8 Director's Corner – ALERTING and ANNOUNCING

Club bridge players don't need to know a lot about the Laws of bridge to play successfully. Once you know the hierarchy of bids and the order of play, all you need to do is call the Director for any (and every) infraction.

Alerting is a little more complicated, and many of us have only learnt it from what we've been told around a bridge table. Thankfully IBA has many experienced and helpful players to guide us. But too many months of playing different varieties of online bridge have perhaps left us all a little rusty.

Some straightforward rules function as guidance. The primary rule is that you need to alert any bid that conveys a meaning other than a willingness to play in the denomination named or high-card strength or length (three cards or more) there.

But let's start simply, with the bids that need **announcing** i.e. where responder must make a prescribed statement *before* opponent's bid

- *After a 1♣ opening:*
- For Natural-type systems, the appropriate minimum length of the club suit (i.e. "1+", "2+", "3+", "4+") should be announced.
- For Strong Club systems, the word "Strong" together with the minimum HCP holding (i.e. "16+") should be announced.
- For other system options (e.g. a Polish 1♣, which has multiple meanings) – the word "unusual" should be used.
- *After a natural 1NT opening:* The appropriate HCP range (e.g., "12-14" or "15-17" etc.) should be announced. No other information should be included in the announcement e.g. you **must not** specify whether it may contain a five-card major as part of the announcement after partner opens 1NT.

Let's move on to bids that **do** require **alerting** where the bidder's partner must use the 'Alert' card. (Technically responder is required to say "Alert" and to place the Alert card across the bid being alerted.)

By definition, there are two cases in which otherwise natural calls must be alerted.

- The first is if the call is either forcing or non-forcing in a way that opponents are unlikely to expect (e.g. Jacoby 2NT, 'splinter', '4th suit forcing', 'new minor forcing' etc)
- The second is natural calls whose meaning is affected by other agreements, which the opponents are unlikely to expect (Bergen raises are a good example)

There are several common examples (which we see at the club every session) where bids that **must be alerted**, are often not

- Responses to a Stayman 2♣. While the 2♣ bid itself is self-alerting (see below), the responses are all conventional and *must be alerted*.
- Transfers in response to NT. The transfer bid is alertable; the response is only alertable if it conveys any meaning relating to hand strength or length in partner's shown suit (e.g. 'super accept' bids)
- Multi 2 bids. Any bid with a multiple meaning is alertable. The responses specified in your system, including correctable bids, are alertable.

On top of these basics, there are 5 types of bid that are '**self-alerting**', meaning that they do not require responder to either announce or alert! These are:

- Doubles
- Redoubles

- Cue bids of an opponent's denomination/suit (Michael's cue bid, cue-raise)
- Any calls at the four-level or higher, except opening bids in your system
- Any 2♣ response to a 1NT opening bid in an uncontested auction.
- Finally, don't forget your rights as a defender.....

At the end of the auction, the declaring side should draw attention to any unusual features in the bidding, especially any unusual unalerted calls. Defenders must not draw attention to their own calls. Remember that the opening leader can request an explanation of the bidding before leading, or his partner may enquire after the opening lead has been made face down.

Finally, a note about explanations.

- Partner must offer no other information except the 'Alert' unless asked by an opponent on that opponent's turn to call.
- A full explanation of the call must be given; this includes any partnership agreement, whether the agreement is explicit or based on partnership experience, and explanations may well include distributions and point ranges specifically excluded by a call, as well as those shown directly.
- If a player has alerted a bid but can't remember its specific meaning, the Director should be called who will take partner from the table so that the bidder can explain the bid.

It is good practice to only ask for an explanation of the bid, not whether it is strong or weak, Equally the response needs to be more than "strong".

Don't forget, asking for an explanation of a bid during the contract affords your opponents some extra information (though the Law on unauthorised information still applies). Only ask for an explanation if the explanation is likely to change your bid (as may be the case with a multi 2 bid against you).

If you want to understand the bidding for your defence, ask at the conclusion of the auction - if on lead, before you do so, or if not on lead, you may inquire after your partner has selected their lead but before it has been turned face up.

The Australian Bridge Federation Alerting Regulations can be found online at (<https://abfevents.com.au/events/tournregs/ABFAlertRegs2017.pdf>)

9 Acknowledgements

Thanks to all who helped us put this Newsletter together: Jill, Chris Yates, Marie and the rest.

Happy Bridging everybody.

Phil B and Dave H