



Annual General Meeting and Management Committee

The Annual General Meeting of the Association was held on 22 November 2025. The Executives are all returning:

- President Marie Pickering
- Vice President Grant Cowen
- Club Secretary Kaye Hart
- Treasurer Carolyn Githens

They are joined on the Management Committee by Don Clark, Julie Cowling, Dave Gallagher, Catherine Gregory, Dave Havyatt, Ngaire Meehan, Cheryl Waters, and Christine Yates.

The Management Committee had its first meeting on December 6th.

At the Management Committee, Marie relayed a comment from a member after the AGM that the Annual Report was very comprehensive and showed how active the association is. A copy of the Annual Report is available on the website here.

<https://illawarra.bridgeaustralia.org/documents/final%20Annual%20Report%202025-edit.pdf>

The Committee suspended proceedings to reconvene as the Ethics and Disciplinary Committee, as provided by the IBA Disciplinary and Ethics Regulations (which are part of our Tournament Regulations here

<https://illawarra.bridgeaustralia.org/documents/Tournament%20Committee%20Rules%20and%20Regulations%20Dec%202018.pdf>).

The Illawarra Bridge Association prides itself on developing and maintaining a friendly yet competitive atmosphere in which all its members, at all levels of experience and ability, can enjoy their chosen recreation. Unfortunately, over recent months, there have been three occasions where complaints have been received about member behaviour at the table. One of these was resolved through apology, another has resulted in a formal warning, and the third has resulted in a four-week suspension.

Members are reminded that, aside from our Regulations, behaviour at the table is covered in the Laws of Duplicate Bridge, Law 74, which covers Conduct and Etiquette. In particular, Law 74A2 states:

A player should carefully avoid any remark or extraneous action that might cause annoyance or embarrassment to another player or might interfere with the enjoyment of the game.

This includes unsolicited advice/criticism, gloating, and rudeness or unpleasantness toward your partner, your opponents, or the Director. Directors can address this kind of conduct immediately. Law 90 provides broad latitude to impose procedural penalties in adjusted scores for any offence that inconveniences other contestants.

The meeting appointed the Tournament Committee (Stuart Cutsforth, Chair; Renata Le Marra, Secretary; Jeff Carberry; Dave Havyatt; and Rob Kinloch; Liz Cusack, non-voting minutes Secretary).

Other appointments made included:

Building Managers	Lynne Soldi and Don Clark
Web Manager	Cheryl Waters
Masterpoints Secretary	Malcolm Kerr
Assistant Secretary	Lorna O'Leary
Partner Organiser	Julie Cowling
Pianola Contact	Carolyn Githens
Assistant Treasurer	Ngaire Meehan
Publicity Officer	Chris Yates

The Vice-President provided a short report on the Club Presidents' Day held at our club in October. He noted that it was a very valuable meeting and that the presenter, Bridge NSW Clubs and Community Committee Chair Glenda Parmenter, provided a great deal of helpful information. He also noted comments from other clubs that struggle to find enough members willing to step up to perform essential club functions. It reminded him how well IBA is served by its volunteers.



Glenda Parmenter and local club representatives at the Club Presidents' Day

In response to members' suggestions, the Committee noted that IBA will need to apply to Wollongong City Council for renewal of its lease in 2026. It has been resolved that any possible refurbishment of the hall will be considered only once our lease has been renewed.

The Committee also noted that despite repeated requests to Council, the middle ladies' toilet is still flowing water. This is the Council's responsibility.

The Committee resolved to write to the ABF (copying Bridge NSW) to register our concern about the cancellation of the popular Nationwide Pairs events next year.

The President commended to the Committee all the resources on the Bridge NSW website and drew particular attention to the teaching resources. She noted that, with the aid of these resources, a member of Berry Bridge Club with no prior experience recently successfully ran the club's first-ever beginners' class. (This was featured in the October issue of *Bridging NSW*).

She also advised that Bridge NSW is conducting a series of webinars on the third Tuesday of each month in 2026 (including one on Thursday, December 11th). These address various aspects of club operation. Entry to all these webinars will be via MyABF. The planned schedule is:

December 11th	Supporting club beginner lessons in 2026 (for Committees and Teachers)
February 17th	How to recruit and develop club directors (for Directors and Committees)
March 17th	How to run and masterpoint a multisession event (for Directors and MP Secretaries)
April 21st	How to get the most out of MyABF (for Committees)
May 19th	Common problems with using Bridgemates (for Directors)
June 16th	How to raise the profile of your club (for Committees)
July 21st	How to encourage and support club players to venture into congresses and events for Committees and Teachers)
August 18th	How to provide a variety of Bridge sessions (for Committees and Directors)
September 15th	How to select and run a Bridge movement and manage last-minute problems (for Directors)
October 20th	How to organise and run Bridge beginner lessons. A reminder for 2027 (for Committees and Teachers)
November 17th	Using club constitutions and regulations for a harmonious club (for Committees)
December 15th	Using a scoring program. Your questions answered (for Directors)

From the Editor

This month's bumper Christmas issue has the regular news items and columns from Paul Lavings and Rilla's Members' Corner. Members are reminded that Grant Cowen will review bidding for hands you submit to him. Director's Corner returns; this time, we look at Laws 65 and 66 on the arrangement and inspection of tricks.

Because some members of the club have told me they don't know how to teach bridge to their families, I've written a piece on playing cards this Christmas. Unfortunately, this is very much gratuitous advice, as I have only successfully taught my children to play Five Hundred, and my grandchildren are not yet playing cards with an ordinary deck.

I'm sure members would be interested in any success stories. Despite impressions to the contrary, there is still a great deal of interest in playing 'real' games (i.e. without a computer) among young people. It is just that they increasingly use bespoke equipment rather than the broad application of 52 pieces of card.

Results

Major Events and Congresses

There have been some fabulous results for IBA members in the last two months. Leading the list is the **ABF Knockout Teams**, where Paula Corbett, Don Clark, Annette Lopez, Julie Rollinson and Cath Gregory came in 1st in the Under 50MP. Played as a round robin, the IBA team earned 130.78 VPs, beating 2nd-place Yarra Valley by 13 VPs. The team never lost the lead after round 2 and maintained their excellent form into round 10. In the under 300MP section, Shahla Vogl, Phil Barker, Jill MacRae, Julie Cowling and Dave Hayvatt lost their semi-final in a close match with Canberra. Another commendable result.

In the **Australia-wide Restricted Pairs** played on October 22nd at our club, Jacquie Collins and Lorna O'Leary finished in eighth place across the nation (out of somewhere over 1100 pairs).

In the **Under 100 Master Points** run by Bridge NSW, the pair of Graham Jones and Catherine Power finished 7th overall, while our best finishers in the handicapped results were:

Under 10 MP	20 th	Helen Fahy and John Chesher
10-25 MPs	7 th	Chris Fergusson and Tom Malcher
25-50 MPs	6 th	Phillip and Leanne Sellick
50-100 MPs	5 th	Graham Jones and Catherine Power
	8 th	Paula Corbett and Lorna O'Leary

The **State Novice and Restricted Teams** were contested at Central Coast Bridge Club on 22 and 23 November. The team of Paula Corbett, Don Clark, Bevan Clouston and Cath Gregory won the Novice category (and finished second overall). The team justifiably brought their medals to Thursday night bridge.



Earlier in the month, the team of Paul and Helen Lavings, Jeff Carberry and Vicky Lisle won the teams event at the **Mudgee Congress**, while Paul and Helen won the pairs. The team of Steve and Liz Hurley, and Ian and Vicky Lisle, won the teams event at the **Southern Highlands Congress**.



Club Events

The Swiss Pairs was played on 15 and 22 November. The placings were:

- 1st Steve Szatmary and Grant Cowen P
- 2nd Paul and Helen Lavings
- 3rd Liz Hurley and Stephen Hurley

Congratulations to all these members.

Upcoming Events

IABAND's Christmas party and year-end is on December 12th; Figtree party on December 20th. Tuesday night party is on the 16th. Xmas Pairs are on at IBA on Wednesdays, 10 and 17 December.

Bridge at Figtree will continue throughout summer. Sessions on 24 and 31 December depend on a poll of members' interest. IBAND restarts on 14 and 16 January; TAMS restarts on 22 January; and Tuesday supervised restarts on 27 January.

Our first event next year will be the 66 Club. This year, we are playing this on an ordinary Saturday session (31 January) as a split-field day (66 Club forms the top field). Because it wasn't played in 2025, any pair making 66% in any session in 2024 or 2025 will be eligible. See the club noticeboard for a list of qualified pairs.

Our Swiss Pairs Congress is on Sunday, 15 February. Time to get your entries in and also to invite your friends from other clubs to join us.

Entry by MyABF <https://www.myabf.com.au/events/congress/view/3372>

Melbourne Cup

We take our bridge seriously at IBA, but we still have a lot of fun. This year's Melbourne Cup celebrations maintained our strong traditions. Barb Overington ran our sweepstakes again, Rob and Jeff kept the bridge going, most dressed up, and everybody had a fabulous time!



For more Cup photos, visit <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/v5if2jsh5t1ejf3zbguo3/AFWrH0a-uaQizC-kZYIVu-k?rlkey=w7ilq6rxt26nrlw9bl93fkc0m&dl=0>

Promotions

Congratulations to the following members on their recent promotions

Oct 2025

Grade	Name
National	Conny Szency
State	Sue Southern
	Michael Turner
Bronze Regional	Martyn Hopkins
Regional	Terry Carberry
Silver Local	Don Clark
Local	John Rankin
Graduate	Barry Smith
	Carl Matchett
	Kumar Kulatunga
	Kathy Kulatunga
	Sauna Wilkinson

Nov 2025

Grade	Name
Bronze National	Carol Jeffs
National	Dave Havyatt
State	Shahla Vogl
Silver Local	Paula Corbett
	John Kilgower
Bronze Local	Yvonne Harbinson
	Tom Malcher
	Shona Kahler
Local	Cath Gregory
Local	John Gould
Local	Eileen Pietrini
Graduate	Roy Koschny

When to Cover Honours

By Paul Lavings

One of the most vexing problems for intermediate to advanced players is when to cover honours. When the jack is led from dummy, should you cover with the king?

<i>Dummy</i>	
J76	<i>You</i>
	K32

The answer is yes, you should. You are hoping to promote an honour in your partner's hand. Consider these distributions:

<i>Dummy</i>	
J76	
<i>Partner</i>	<i>You</i>
1054	K32
<i>Declarer</i>	
AQ98	

(From now on, we will drop the labelling)

J76	
Q98	K32
A1054	

Those familiar with Errol Flynn, the famous Australian actor, may recall the battle scenes from "The Charge of the Light Brigade" and "They Died with Their Boots On" (about General Custer). Seconds from departing this life, a soldier gathers all his remaining strength, aims his gun, and takes one of the enemy with him to the afterlife, his existence now justified. This is how the king feels in the two suit combinations above. If the defender ducks, the king falls for naught two rounds later, but covering with the king creates an extra trick for your side.

I vividly remember coming back to the table in a teams match, where opponents had made three tricks in this suit to score up 3NT:

	KJ765	
A4		Q932
	108	

The ten was led by declarer, low, low, queen, and declarer returned to hand to play up to dummy again. When my ace popped, taking no enemy soldier with it, declarer had three tricks in the suit. My learned teammate, Max Hitter, asked, "When the ten was led, was the ace played on it?" Indeed, had I played my ace on the ten, it would have been our side to take three tricks in the suit. An invaluable lesson.

Look how important it is to get value for your honour in these combinations:

	10	
85432		K6
	AQJ97	
	108	
9752		Q6
	AKJ43	
	106	
Q95		K4
	AJ8732	

In each case, if you cover the ten with your honour, your side gains an extra trick.

In the example at the start, where you sit over Jxx with Kxx, there are two situations where you might not cover. If declarer has six cards in the suit, you wouldn't cover for fear of crashing partner's queen or ace. Partner has nothing to promote.

The second situation is where there is no entry back to dummy, so you hope partner has the queen:

J76
 Q5 K32
 A10984

An important principle in bridge is – **cover the second of touching honours**. Look at these cases:

J1082
 Q95 K73
 A64

QJ95
 1082 K731
 A64

J10832
 Q95 K7
 A64

In the first case, if the jack is covered, then the defence makes only one trick in the suit. If West ducks the jack, the defence will make two tricks in the suit if declarer plays the suit again. By ducking on the first round, you correct the timing, and your side takes an extra trick.

In the second case, the defence makes no tricks if the king covers the first honour from the QJ pair. Declarer next finesses partner's ten and takes all four tricks in the suit. If West doesn't cover, the defence will make a trick if declarer plays the suit again.

In the third case, the defence has no chance if the jack is covered, even with a doubleton honour. If West ducks the jack, declarer has

to guess whether to lead the 10 or low on the next round of the suit.

So, what do you do when you hold Qx or Qxx of trumps, with Axx or Axxx in dummy, and declarer pokes the jack at you? (You are now West). You should duck. Surely declarer has the ten, and the jack is the first of touching honours. The suit could well be:

A654
 Q7 832
 KJ109

Playing in tempo is half the battle, and by familiarising yourself with the basic principles, you become a much tougher opponent, a better player, and a better partner.

Playing in tempo is an important skill. In this case, variation in tempo – hesitating before playing a card – is giving opponents information that is authorised for them.

Law 79D1 specifies that it is desirable for players to maintain a steady tempo and unvarying manner. It is not an offence as such. It can create an infraction if the variation works to the advantage of your side.

Law 79D2 specifically prohibits attempting to mislead opponents by 'the haste or hesitancy of a call or play.'

Playing with a steady tempo is an important skill.

Summer Festival of Bridge

Are you heading to Canberra for the SFOB? A good number of IBA members are already registered for this gold masterpoint event in Canberra.

It's not too late to join. This is a particularly good congress for Novice and Restricted Pairs.

Rilla's Member Corner

This month, we hear from Don Clark (or Donnie when he's playing with Ivan) and Rilla herself.

Don Clark

Ivan Young kept telling me I should learn to play bridge. I took Ivan's advice and did Paul Marston's online lessons in March/April 2023. We still play together on Monday evenings, it's always fun.

I started supervised play on a Tuesday evening, and the first piece of advice I received was... **don't lead away from an ace or a king!** Supervised play was great, but it also left me with plenty of questions about the game. I ventured into the real world of Saturday bridge with Annette Lopez. Our opponents were tolerant and helpful, which made the bridge experience enjoyable.

The learning experience is continuing for me. I read and attend the occasional workshop to help my understanding. Now, I'm helping with supervised play on Thursday mornings, and I preface my comment with the statement 'this is a novice view or what you could bid or play'.

Best memories:

Responding 1NT to my partner's overcall, which became the contract, doubled! I made 1 trick against Helen & Paul...unforgettable! My partner was spoken to by a director for laughing too loudly! *(Please see the note about Law 74, though I'm sure this wasn't partner's intent. Editor)*

Biggest misunderstanding:

The 4th seat opening using the Rule of 15 (HCP + number of Spades). I thought I had to open Spades rather than my best suit.

Rilla England

My earliest memories of bridge were about sleeping in other people's beds on a Saturday night while my parents played bridge, and then being woken in the middle of the night to be taken home to my own bed. My father honed his bridge skills while serving in the Air Force in England during WW II, whilst my mother's skills were such that she would only play as his partner, not wanting to make someone else suffer! My father's favourite bridge sayings were 'a fast game's a good game' and 'there are people sleeping under the Sydney Harbour Bridge with only the Sydney Morning Herald as bedclothes because they did not draw trumps!'

I played a lot of Five Hundred and Solo at University, then work (teaching) took over. It wasn't until a group of young mums got together to alleviate the tedium of child rearing that we decided to teach ourselves bridge, no mean feat when you live in the country, and not a bridge club within cooe! My first competitive bridge happened via the SMH, which ran a rubber bridge competition (the details of which have vanished in the mists of time!)

When we moved to Sydney, I eventually found a bridge club, Grand Slam at Spit Junction, run by John McIlraith. Here I met some people who had just finished beginners' lessons. These ladies have become wonderful friends and bridge partners over the last four decades. We also played at Trumps, with Derrick Browne offering improver play sessions.

We enjoyed playing at Canberra, which fortunately was in the school holidays, and after the night sessions were over, we would adjourn to watch the night sessions of the Australian Open Tennis.

I also have great memories of Gold Coast Congresses, particularly of sharing a taxi with Sartaj Hans from Brisbane to the Gold Coast after our flight was diverted to Brisbane due to weather at Coolangatta.

Is there someone at the club whose story you think is particularly interesting? Ask them to provide a story to Rilla, or suggest to Rilla that she approach them.

At two members per issue, we can run this column for over twenty years!

Gold Coast 2026

This year, there is no Gold Coast Congress. News from the north is that the Queensland Bridge Association (QBA) is looking to re-establish the congress in 2027, but possibly at a different time.

Meanwhile, just as in 2021 with Covid, to fill the gap in the calendar and their budget, the QBA has organised an online event. This is a gold masterpoint event offering matchpoint Swiss pairs and cross-IMP Swiss pairs on Saturday and Sunday, 6-7 February.

Entry via MyABF

<https://www.myabf.com.au/events/congress/view/3004> .

Mudgee Congress

By Dave Havyatt

The Mudgee Congress on the weekend of 8 & 9 November is the largest club congress played so far this year (and will likely finish that way), with 43 tables of pairs and 40 teams. Congress Organiser Marelle Irvine is a former member of IBA.



There is no one reason for the success of this congress. It helps that Mudgee is accessible from Sydney for a weekend and has a reputation as a tourist town. But this would be nothing without the incredible efforts the club puts into running their event, led by former IBA member Marelle Irvine.

They have a tremendous venue, albeit just a huge tin shed, at the Australian Rural Education Centre. Despite its name, the [AREC](#) is a self-funded, not-for-profit organisation best known for organising the Mudgee Small Farm Field Days event.

It grew out of a need to service the many 'small farmers' (or hobby farmers) who started descending on the town in the 1970s. The venue could easily accommodate 50 tables, though there is a larger hall at the same site.



This shed comes equipped with a kitchen and a cool room. The local Guide Dogs Australia group comes and prepares lunch in return for a good donation. They packed a salad into individual bowls, put four in a bag, then carried them out to tables at lunchtime.



They even have a wine bar at lunch. Limit of one per player.



An array of goodies was prepared by club members to have with a cup of tea or coffee.

There seemed to be an endless supply coming to replenish the plates.



Given its size, the Congress requires a Director and an Assistant Director. Both of these came from IBA, Ian Lisle and me. We also provided the winners in the Open Pairs (Helen and Paul Lavings) and the Open Teams (Jeff Carberry, Helen and Paul Lavings and Vicky Lile).



Kaye Hart played with another former IBA member (Peter Lloyd). Aileen O'Brien and Conny Szency also played in the event.

From a directing point of view, the Congress presented some challenges. The organiser asked us to play the event in four sections, but hadn't advertised it as such. This prompted the State Masterpoints Secretary to raise some questions. We also had a scoring problem introduced when we made a late change to accommodate two pairs who didn't want to move tables during the Swiss pairs.

Director's Corner

Law 65, Arrangement of Tricks, and Law 66, Inspection of Tricks, each have four parts. They are all important.

We all know the four parts of Law 65 without knowing that's what it is. The first part is that cards are turned face down once four cards have been played to a trick. No card should be turned face down till all four cards are played, and all should be turned face down once the fourth card is played.

We keep track of tricks won or lost by the way the card is placed on the table. A player may draw attention to a card pointed incorrectly – though this right expires once the player's side leads or plays to the following trick. (If done later, it might consist of extraneous information. Any concerns should be addressed to the Director.)

The third part requires the cards to be placed in an orderly, overlapping row, with each card oriented to show the side that won the trick, to permit review at completion. And, most importantly, the fourth part states, 'A player should not disturb the order of his played cards until agreement has been reached on the number of tricks won.' Failure to do so jeopardises that player's rights to claim ownership of doubtful tricks or establish whether there has been a revoke.

Law 66 places very strict limits on when cards from completed tricks that have been turned over can be faced.

So long as their side has not led or played to the next trick, declarer or either defender may, until they have turned their own card face down, require that all cards just played to the trick be faced. Similarly, so long as their side has not led or played to the next trick, declarer or either defender may inspect, but not expose, their own last card.

Thereafter, until play ceases, the cards of acquitted tricks may not be inspected (except at the Director's specific instruction). After play ceases, the played and unplayed cards may be inspected to settle claims of a revoke or the number of tricks, but no player should handle cards other than their own.

If you are going to inspect played cards, make sure you do not disturb their order OR their orientation. But note, if the Director can no longer ascertain the facts and only one side has mixed its cards, the Director shall rule in favour of the other side. It is always preferable to call the Director before inspecting cards.

Note that at no time does dummy have any rights under this Law, not even to inspect their own card to the last trick and certainly not to expose it. This is probably the single most common infraction, where dummy faces their card in trying to advise declarer in which hand the last trick was won.

In the next issue, we'll review dummy's rights.

The Bridge World Magazine

Thanks to a suggestion from Paul Lavings, your editor is a member of the International Bridge Publishers' Association. This month's bulletin, edited by Bard Coles, reports that Jeff Rubens has announced that the December issue of *The Bridge World* will be his last as editor.

Brad says that 'it is not yet clear whether *The Bridge World* will continue, or move online, or call it a day.' I'm with Brad for having a fondness for holding a paper version of a publication.

Bridge World is the oldest bridge magazine in the world still in publication. It was founded in 1929 by Ely Culbertson, the person most responsible for contract bridge's worldwide popularity in the 1930s. As far as I can tell, in almost a century of publication, this magazine has had just five editors.

Editor	Years
Ely Culbertson	1929-1943
Albert Morehead	1943-1946
Alphonse "Sonny" Moyses	1946-1966*
Edgar Kaplan	1967-1997
Jeff Rubens	1997-2025

* It is unclear to me whether there were other editors in this period

A complete index of articles from *Bridge World* can be found here <https://www.bridgeworld.com/pages/backissues/indexbyissue.html>. I hunted down a copy of 'How to Play Bridge with Your Wife' by Robert N. Blum in the November 1956 issue (not hard, really, as Paul Lavings has an extensive collection of back issues). I thought the article might be helpful for those of us who play with our spouse.

Unfortunately, the article is a little dated and includes some stereotypes from a bygone era. Here is just a small sample:

To the average man, the opportunities presented during a bridge game to exercise the traditional perquisites of the dominating male defy the qualities of a St. Anthony to resist.

When the wife of your bosom fails to observe your careful echo, ignores your obvious singleton, or carelessly makes the lead that permits an opponent to toss off the sure loser and make his [sic] contract, it is all too easy to forget how she prepares your meals with loving hands, raises your children and hangs up your clothes. The scathing remark and pitiless castigation rise all too readily to the unwary tongue.

The sentiment to avoid 'scathing remarks and pitiless castigation', of course, really applies to all partnerships!

Members might, however, enjoy the bidding and play problems (for both declarer and defender) on their website: <https://www.bridgeworld.com/pages/learn/learningcentermainpage.html>.

Playing Cards with Family this Christmas

Bridge today is virtually synonymous with the duplicate bridge played at clubs associated with the Australian Bridge Federation and a smattering of unaffiliated groupings. This was not always the case. Bridge, then auction bridge, and later contract bridge were popular social games, including at charity events.

As an example, *The Argus* of Melbourne had a short item on 15 March 1910 about a charity ball to raise funds for the forthcoming Women's Hospital that noted 'Di Gilio's band supplied excellent music, and bridge tables were provided for those who preferred cards to dancing.' The item at the right appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald on September 30th 1930.

For the record, 'The Knave' writing in the *Sunday Times* of Sydney on 11 September 1904 recommended that 'readers should try Auction Bridge as a change from the ordinary game.' Four years later, the *Saturday Observer* (Brisbane) observed that 'Auction bridge has arrived! For the past two years, auction bridge has been played at first one London club and then another, gradually ousting its forerunner, bridge, and pushing it back into the past even more quickly than bridge ousted whist. It has received now the stamp and approval of a joint committee of the Portland and Bath Clubs, its rules have been amended and established, and it will take its place in the ranks of recognised card games.' (21 Nov 1908).

Learning bridge was an important social skill, and was included in the curriculum of some fashionable ladies' schools.

BRIDGE PARTIES.

Ousting the Afternoon Cabaret.

POPULAR MEANS OF RAISING MONEY.

At three cafes in the city yesterday more than 1000 women were engaged in playing bridge, all as a means of raising money for charities.

The fashion in the forms of entertainment to raise money for these purposes has undergone a great change.

Two years ago charity organisers concentrated on cabarets and dances. The cabaret was especially popular as an afternoon event. As an instance of this more than one hundred cabarets were held at city cafes during 1928. The money raised by this means must have reached an enormous total.

Then gradually the attraction of the cabaret began to wane. Last year saw fewer, and this season there have been only one or two. Organisers have realised the immense attraction of bridge, and card tables have taken the place of the afternoon cabaret.

Bridge had a tremendous craze in London some years ago as a popular pastime, but it is doubtful whether its followers realised its possibilities for money making. It has always had a large following in Australia, too, but this year it has become the popular means of raising money, and the number of card parties held this season already must have run into four figures.

Yesterday provided a telling instance of the attraction of bridge. In addition to the thousand players at the cafes already mentioned, there were several small parties in the city, and others in the suburbs.

Charity organisers report that bridge parties have been the most successful medium to date for attracting the suburban matron. Play finishes in time for women who have domestic ties to be at their homes in time for dinner. This type of woman, too, is not always fond of dancing, and therefore bridge has been the means of securing the patronage of those who were not attracted to the cabaret where dancing formed the chief means of entertainment. Another reason, too, for the popularity of afternoon bridge parties is the fact that the tickets are cheaper, and leave a bigger margin of profit for the organisation which will benefit from the proceeds of the entertainment.

In the days before radio and television, games with a standard pack of playing cards were commonly played. Today, this is not so much the case.

Games with special-purpose decks are played instead. *Uno* is a commercial adaptation of *Crazy Eights*, which itself is very similar to the game *Switch* that I played as a child. Playing games with ordinary packs of cards familiarises children with this most versatile of aides.

A set of rules for *Switch* follows this article. Because the cards with extra functions are just ordinary cards, this can be easily adapted to reduce (or increase) the special card functions.

Progress to bridge requires learning about tricks and trumps. Bevan Clouston recommends playing knockout whist. This is a straightforward trick-taking card game for two to seven players. A simple explanation also follows this article.

In his book *Bridge Basics*, Ron Klinger has a chapter titled *From Whist to Bridge*. This isn't included as a history lesson, but as a way of slowly introducing the complexities of the game. These build up till they reach a version that looks like Minibridge.

(see <https://www.ebu.co.uk/information-resources/minibridge> for complete information on Minibridge)

In Minibridge, each player specifies the number of HCP in their hand, and the partnership with the most HCP becomes the declaring side; the member of the declaring side with the most HCP becomes declarer. Dummy goes on the table before declarer nominates the contract.

A Klinger variation is to require the contract to be at the following levels.

Total HCP	Number of tricks
20-22	7 in NT or 8 in a suit
23-25	8 in NT or 9 in a suit
26-32	9 in NT or 10 in a major suit or 11 in a minor suit
33-36	12 or more
37-40	All 13 tricks

Klinger calls this game *Contract Whist*; however, the name is also used for the game known as *Oh hell!* (or locally as *Up and Down the River*). This game can be played with three to six players and, in its popular form, changes the number of cards dealt each round.

A variant more suited to learning how to play tricks leading to bridge involves simply dealing each player 13 cards from a standard deck. Either use another deck or the last card to choose a trump suit. Each player then specifies how many tricks they will take, starting at dealer's left. At the dealer's turn, they cannot specify a number so that the total equals 13 (someone has to be wrong). The player to dealer's left has the first lead.

There are options on how to score. My family scores two points for making the specified number and one point off for each trick off (either way) if you don't. Bevan favours ten points (I think) for making the specified number, otherwise one point per trick you take. The latter creates an incentive for trick-taking once you know you've missed.

Card games for the family – Switch

You don't really need a special deck of cards to play *Uno*. Here is one set of rules for the game *Switch* (taken from the website of the Alzheimer Society of Canada)¹. Playing switch with an ordinary 52-card deck allows you to add or delete rules about the special cards, and familiarises the standard deck.

Set-Up

The dealer shuffles the deck and deals seven cards to each player. The remaining cards are put in the middle of the play area as a draw pile. The top card is flipped to start a discard pile. The youngest player can go first.

Play

Starting with the youngest player and then moving to the left, a player can play a card from their hand, matching the card in the discard pile by suit or rank. A player can play multiple cards from their hand if they match the card's rank. For example, if there is a 4 of Clubs on the top of the discard pile, the player could play one other club card, or they could play the 4 of Diamonds and the 4 of Hearts in their hand.

If a player cannot play a card to the discard pile, they must draw one card from the deck and end their turn.

Some of the cards in this game have special abilities, too.

- Aces are wild, and they can be played at any time. The player who puts the ace into play also chooses the suit that the next player must match.
- When a player puts a 2 into the discard pile, the next player must draw two cards before taking their turn. If the next player also plays a 2, the third player in line must draw four cards, and so on. The penalty also increases if one player plays more than one 2 on their turn.
- When a player discards a 7, the player can also discard all cards of that suit.
- When a player discards an 8, the next player loses their turn.
- When a player discards a 10, the direction of play reverses.
- When a player discards a black Jack, the next player must draw five cards. This penalty can be stacked with the second black jack to make a 10-card draw.
- A red Jack can be used to cancel the penalty from a black Jack.
- When a black Queen is played, the player switches their entire hand with the opponent to their left.

The first player to get rid of all of their cards is the winner!

¹ <https://alzda.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/4-August-Card-Game.pdf>

Card games for the family – Knock-out whist²

Knock-out whist is a member of the whist family known by a variety of names including *trumps* in Britain, *reduction whist*, *diminishing whist* (from the way one fewer card is dealt each hand) and *rat*. It is a basic trick-taking game and is a good way to teach the concept of tricks to children.

Overview and equipment

The game may be played by two to seven players. The aim is to be the last player left in at the end of the game, with the object in each *hand* being to win a majority of tricks. A standard 52-card pack is used. The cards in each suit rank from highest to lowest: A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2.

The Deal and Trumps

For the first hand, the dealer deals seven cards to each player and one card is turned up to indicate that its suit is the trump suit for the first round.

In subsequent hands, the deal rotates to the left, and one fewer card is dealt in each hand until the final hand, which consists of one card each. The player who took the most tricks selects trumps in the next hand. If two or more players tie for the highest number of tricks taken, they cut cards to decide who calls trumps.

Play

Eldest hand (the player to the dealer's left) leads to the first trick; any card may be led. The other players, in clockwise order, each play a card to the trick and must follow suit by playing a card of the suit that was led, if able.

A player with no cards of the suit led may play any card, either discarding or trumping. The trick is won by the highest card of the suit led, unless a trump is played, in which case the highest trump wins.

The winner of the trick leads to the next trick. Some rules disallow leading trumps before the trump suit has been 'broken' by a trump being played to the lead of another suit (though of course leading trumps is always permissible if a player holds nothing else).

Knockout

At the end of each hand, any player who took no tricks is knocked out (hence the name) and takes no further part in the game.

The game is won at any stage when a player takes all the tricks in a round, as all the remainder are knocked out, and after that, there would only be one player remaining.

² From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knock-out_whist)