



From the Chair: Beginner lessons help

Hi everyone,

As many of you know, **beginner lessons** are vital for attracting new players to the game and sustaining clubs. Not every club can offer lessons however, and the reasons vary. We want to help clubs overcome these hurdles, where we can.

Our Education Committee is holding a **webinar on Tuesday 9 December** for clubs who need support in offering lessons. Other services include a [web page promoting lessons](#) across the state, and a new web page offering [promotion templates](#) and a customisation service for your club. To find out more, [register for the webinar](#) or read [the article we published recently](#).

When beginners have completed their courses, many are hesitant about playing at club level, which is understandable. That's why Bridge NSW is currently trialling weekly **Online Supervised Play sessions**. The online sessions are for clubs to bring along their beginners, so the beginners can advance their skills to a level where they are comfortable playing at their local club. So far, clubs like Coogee, Mollymook and Newcastle have participated, and each Sunday session is averaging around 8-9 tables. The **last Sunday** of the trial is 7 December at 4pm. Given the trial's success, we intend to offer these sessions regularly in 2026.

The Spring seasons of **Online Pairs League** (OPL) and **Online Teams League** (OTL) wrap up the first week of December. Keep an eye out for the winners, which we will announce on our website and Facebook page shortly after they finish. Also, **State Youth Championships** are taking place on 6-7 December. Best of luck to all of our young players participating. And the same to anyone attending the **Summer Festival of Bridge** in Canberra from 15-25 January, a great opportunity to indulge in bridge over the holidays.

From all of us at Bridge NSW, we wish you a joyful and safe festive season. We look forward to seeing you back at the tables in 2026 for more fun and competitive bridge.

Happy reading.

Catherine Chaffey
Chair of Bridge NSW

People of Bridge

Profile: Meet David Wiltshire, 3x Sydney Spring Nationals champion



Q: Three consecutive wins in Open Teams at Sydney Spring Nationals. Did you ever think you'd win three in a row? Not really. You spend most of your time losing bridge events because there are so many entrants and only one winner. Three in a row is pretty lucky.

Q: There's more than luck involved, right? I always go into an event thinking I can win it. By the time I get to the final, I am confident. If I wasn't confident, then it would be a self-fulfilling prophecy and I'd definitely lose.

Q: Is one win more memorable than the others? The first was the most memorable because I hadn't actually won the Spring Nationals before. It was also my biggest national win at the time.

Q: You must have had some good team mates as well? In all three wins my team members have been fantastic and played really well. I couldn't do it without them, especially this year's win.

Q: Is there a particular ritual or warm up that you have for big congresses? I have routines to get into a mindset that works for me. It's about getting into a calm and focused mode to play at my best. I go to a quiet space before the congress and make sure I have everything prepared and know what's going to happen throughout the congress. I find the walk to venue calming, and it gets the blood flowing, which helps the brain as well.

Q: Any tips for congress play? Be realistic about losing. Even when I think I am a good chance to win, I often end up losing. You're going to a congress for the fun of playing, the competition, and to experience quality bridge. That's what people should aim to get out of it. If you enjoy it, you're going to get better by playing against good players.

Q: When did you start playing bridge? When I was 20 years old at university. I was taught by Nic Croft. He gave me a really good head start. I started playing in breaks between classes.

Q: How have you lifted your bridge game over the years? The first two of my Spring Nationals wins were with Sophie Ashton. We've been playing together for around six years. Understanding what your partner's bids mean, and what types of hands they have for certain actions, and what they can't have is something you can't learn on

your own or read in a book. All of the top players are willing to help each other out, too. If you have questions, you can always ask someone. At congresses, you play the same hand as everyone else. Someone else might have gone for a different option. When I was a junior, I played all of the national events so I could see what the better players were doing. And books are also good for learning. I have read over 100 bridge books.

Q: Any book you'd recommend? Card Play Technique by Victor Mollo.

Q: Do you only play congresses? I mostly only play big events. I do a lot of bidding practice training for those events on BBO and Cuebids. There's a rubber bridge game in Sydney that I play most weekdays as well. Rubber Bridge is where people play for money. It used to be how bridge was played before duplicate bridge.

Q: Any hobbies outside of bridge? Bridge takes up a lot of my time. I like cooking and music, but I don't have any talent for either.

Q: What's next on your bridge calendar? Summer Festival of Bridge in Canberra. The main event there is a teams event. After that, I'm hoping to play in the Transnational World Championships in Poland.

Want to read more about people in our bridge community? Join our Facebook page

Bridge NSW has a [Facebook page](#) where you can find out the latest results and happenings in the community, and the latest news about Bridge NSW. It is also a great way to engage with the community.

To follow us, simply log in and head to our [Facebook page](#) and click the "Like" button. You can also use the QR code below to go straight to our Facebook page:



Bridge NSW News

Support for club beginner lessons in 2026

Many clubs are losing members. Beginner lessons are the way to grow your club, share the fun of the game, and support your community.

And Bridge NSW can help.

For clubs offering lessons...

Great. We want to help promote your lessons.

Bridge NSW support:

- Promotion on our [lessons page](#). Fill in the form to [add your course](#)
- Save time and look professional with our new [promotional templates](#), which Bridge NSW can customise for your club
- [Online Supervised Play](#) to help beginners gain confidence playing so they can join club sessions.

Contact Ben Falkenmire at comms@bridgensw.com.au.

For clubs wanting to offer lessons, but facing hurdles...

If something is holding your club back, contact us.

Bridge NSW support:

- Discuss finding a teacher
- Support for new teachers

- Access to free [beginner materials](#) for teachers and players
- Promotion services for clubs running courses (see above).

Contact Steve English at education@bridgensw.com.au.

For clubs not planning to offer lessons...

There are ways we can help. Contact us.

Bridge NSW support:

- Facilitate your club connecting with a nearby club to host shared lessons and co-promote
- Facilitate interested beginners to attend a nearby club running lessons
- Directing learners to quality online courses and our [self-study materials](#).

Contact Glenda Parmenter at community@bridgensw.com.au.

Coming up...

Now until early December: Clubs advise Bridge NSW of their beginner lessons asap and upload their lesson details to the [lessons web page](#) using [this form](#).

Tuesday 9 December Webinar @ 6pm – Supporting club beginner lessons in 2026.

We host a webinar to help clubs access support. [Go to MyABF](#) to register your attendance. Clubs outside of NSW are also welcome to join!

December/January: We promote the list of beginner lessons to a wide audience.

Northern Rivers clubs gather for Presidents' Day

It was **Ballina Bridge Club's** turn to host a Presidents Day last week with Bridge NSW's Glenda Parmenter bringing together club leaders from across the Northern Rivers to get up to speed on how Bridge NSW can support them and their clubs.

Representatives from **Brunswick Valley, Tweed Heads, Lismore, Yamba, Byron Bay** and **Ballina** clubs were in attendance, with apologies from Twin Towns, Lennox Heads and Bulimba. The mix of larger and smaller clubs made for a vibrant discussion about how clubs can attract and retain members and strengthen the bridge community in the region.



Introducing Bridge NSW website

Many clubs were not familiar with the offerings of the Bridge NSW website. Glenda, who is chair of the Bridge NSW Clubs and Community Committee, demonstrated to clubs the key areas on the website, including latest news, the fantastic event calendar, and helpful teaching support materials and director information.

Introducing MyABF

ABF's Julian Foster joined via online meeting link to demonstrate how clubs can use My-ABF to go cashless with their events for a very small fee. While it is a handy tool for many, Lismore noted that some of its members are not online. The group discussed ways for clubs to support those players to move online so no one is left behind.

Helping players connect

Finding partners can be a headache for players and clubs. Yamba explained how they use WhatsApp to great effect, helping connect players with partners for events. Other clubs are exploring bulletin boards, email lists and small volunteer teams who help pair up players each week.

Club fees

Several clubs compared annual fees, sessions and lessons. Everyone agreed it depends on club finances. For lessons, they also agreed there is a sweet spot between making lessons feel like a commitment with a decent fee, but also keeping them accessible.

Supporting teachers and directors

With new players entering the game, some clubs asked for more help in training teachers. Bridge NSW has [online resources already in place](#). Some clubs expressed interest in developing a formal teacher course similar to the Directors program.

Director accreditation also came up. Some felt the annual test was onerous and

suggested reframing it as a yearly refresher, potentially linked to the three-year reaccreditation cycle.



Local club snapshots

Ballina explained its current model of four beginner lesson blocks a year, offering free refresher lessons to returning beginners, plus a popular Monday social club. The club has also trialled a novice session to help newer players ease into club sessions.

Lismore openly shared its difficulties, noting it is considering winding up. The room responded with sympathy and a desire to look at ways the region can help.

Growing the game

Lismore reminded everyone of the health benefits and the appeal of bridge as a fun, challenging hobby. They expressed a desire for Bridge NSW to generate more awareness and interest in the game through advertising in local radio, newsletters, and via letterbox drops. Ballina noted its own success through radio and flyers.

Glenda mentioned the Walcha club, which successfully recruited 20 new members through word of mouth and local media.

Not bad for a club with only 41 members! An article on the club appeared in the [July edition of Bridging NSW](#).

Lismore spoke about delivering free lessons in schools to Years 9 to 11 in the 1990s, which gave the club a real lift.

Byron, which operates out of Bangalow, shared its new aged-care outreach program funded by a \$2,500 council grant. Under the program, club representatives play bridge with aged care residents on a weekly basis.

Working together ahead

A shared takeaway was the value of working together as a Northern Rivers community. One idea raised was to create a regional WhatsApp group to share knowledge and resources.

Bridge NSW thanks Ballina Bridge Club for hosting such a warm and positive day. And to Ballina President Lorraine Bryant for serving up a delicious lunch! The enthusiasm across the room made it clear that, with a bit of coordination and shared effort, bridge in the Northern Rivers can continue to thrive.

Online Supervised Play a big win with clubs

Following the success of the September trial, Bridge NSW is again hosting **FREE** online supervised sessions. The last Sunday session is **7 December at 4pm**. Anyone is welcome to join. Use the RealBridge link for 7 December [on this page](#).

The online sessions are designed to **help beginners transition to sessions at their**

clubs. Ideally, supervised sessions are best attended face-to-face. But for some clubs and players that isn't an option, which is where the online supervised sessions can help. You can read more about [online supervised sessions here](#).

How do you join?

Players can come along to any or all of these sessions – your choice. There is no need to register. Just turn up and play using the RealBridge links on the [Play Online webpage](#).

If you need help with RealBridge, contact onlinesupervised@bridgensw.com.au.

Are sessions running next year?

Following the success of the trial, Bridge NSW is intending to host regular online supervised sessions in 2026. Stay tuned for details!

Director's workshop held at Castle Hill BC

From Leslie Treasure

Castle Hill Bridge Club hosted a Directors' Workshop on 22 November led by the always popular John McIlrath.

Directors from Maitland, Springwood, Thornleigh, Castle Hill and Warriewood were in attendance. Experience among the 17 participants varied, from fresh trainees to long-timers with many years of directing 'under the belt'.

John's aim was to increase everybody's knowledge and strengthen the pool of

directors. The workshop provided a nurturing environment for all.

I encourage all directors to attend future workshops. There is always more to learn... and certainly things to revise.



Leslie Treasure making smart choices

Don't want to miss the next Director's workshop? Join our Facebook page

To follow us, simply log in and head to our [Facebook page](#) and click the "Like" button. You can also use the QR code below to go straight to our Facebook page:

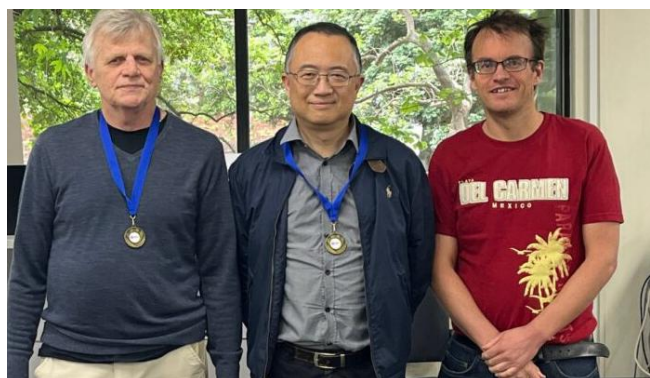


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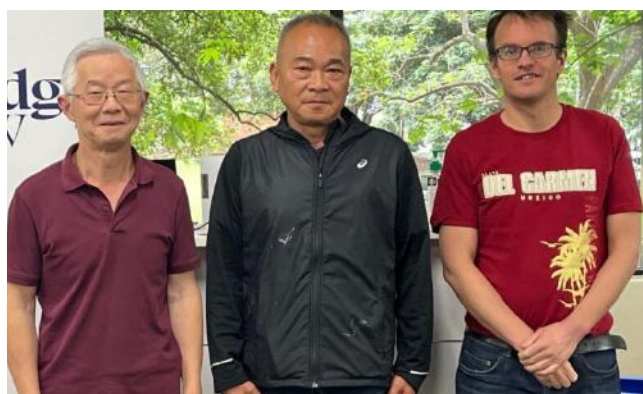
State Open Pairs Championships - results

A huge congratulations to our new State Open Pairs Champions, **Wieslaw Przewozniak** and **Patrick Jiang**! They cleared the rest of the pack by 1.76%.

In clear second place were **Cheng Huang** and **Michael Zhu**, while **Nicoleta Giura** and **Nick Hughes** held off the rest of the group to finish in third place. Well done to the top three Pairs!



State Open Pairs champs – Wieslaw Przewozniak and Patrick Jiang (with Bridge NSW's Fraser Rew)



2nd place – Cheng Huang and Michael Zhan



3rd place – Nicoleta Giura and Nick Hughes

Country Pairs

In the Country Pairs, top honours went to **Eunice de Vries** and **Wendy Mitchell**, flying the flag for our regional players.



Country Pairs champions – Eunice de Vries and Wendy Mitchell

Spring Swiss Pairs

Wrapping up the weekend on the Sunday, the Spring Swiss Pairs saw bridge legends **Warren Lazer** and **Pauline Gumby** lose only their first match to take first place with 84.69 VPs, 7.84 VPs ahead of the rest.

Also only going down one hand, **Linda King** and **Avril Zets** netted themselves a tight

second place from **Michael Machado** and **Kamalesh Gupta**, who won all of the matches by small margins to earn a respectable third place.



Spring Swiss Pairs champs – Warren Lazer and Pauline Gumby



2nd place – Linda King and Avril Zets



3rd place – Michael Machado and Kamalesh Gupta

Congratulations to all place getters and everyone else for giving it a go.

To view full results:

State Open Pairs: <https://nsw.bridgeaustralia.org/resultslistbyheadevent...>

Spring Swiss Pairs: <https://nsw.bridgeaustralia.org/teamresults.asp?id=16314...>

State Daytime Pairs Championships – results

Congratulations to the top three teams:

- 1st: **Wayne Zhu** and **Bob Sebesfi** – 70.20 IMPs, 135.80 VPs
- 2nd: **Anthony Burke** and **Phil Gue** – 69.40 IMPs, 133.93 VPs
- 3rd: **Ron Speiser** and **Andrew Peake** – 45.80 IMPs, 125.48 VPs

View [full results here](#).

State Restricted and Novice Teams– results

Congratulations to the top three teams:

- **1st: Team BISSETT** – Neil McMaster, Lucy D'Ambrosio, Jennifer Bissett and Shannon Queree – 223.81 VPs
- **2nd: Team CLARK** – Paula Corbett, Cath Gregory, Bevan Clouston and Don Clark – 160.35 VPs
- **3rd: Team SAPPIDEEN** – Ian Leigh, Wynne O'Brien, Ros Hoatson, Pamela Leathley & Julie Leigh & Tony Sappideen – 141.49 VPs

View [full results here](#).

Under 100MPs Pairs Championship– results

Congratulations to the top three teams:

Under 10 Masterpoints:

- 1 **Shanthi Dushy & Rajini Amalan** *Sydney* 59.5 IMPs
- 2 **Roberta Pavey & Sam Nicol** *Sydney* 55.4 IMPs
- 3 **Lillian Clark & Kari Braun** *St George* 54.8 IMPs

10–25 Masterpoints:

- 1 **C Jackson–Moore & Warren Mason** *Great Lakes* 65.4 IMPs
- 2 **Wendy Wade & Louise Ward** *Sydney* 64.0 IMPs
- 3 **Allan & Julie Kerrigan** *Orange* 63.4 IMPs

25–50 Masterpoints:

- 1 **Michael Braham & Denise Nicholson** *Sydney* 65.9 IMPs
- 2 **Anne Tubridy & Kathy Saurine** *Ballina* 63.5 IMPs
- 3 **Janice Tonuri & Sue Webster** *Cowra* 62.2 IMPs

50–100 Masterpoints:

- 1 **Sherry Gao & Richard Thode** *Sydney* 70.7 IMPs
- 2 **Jennifer Bissett & Neil McMaster** *Tomaree* 68.8 IMPs
- 3 **Peter Rostron & Janet Campbell** *Ballina* 66.4 IMPs

Top Pairs overall:

- 1 **Sherry Gao & Richard Thode** *Sydney* 70.7 IMPs

- 2 **Jennifer Bissett & Neil McMaster** *Tomaree* 68.8 IMPs
- 3 **Peter Rostron & Janet Campbell** *Ballina* 66.4 IMPs

[View full results here.](#)

State John Arkininstall Open Teams Final – re- sults

Congratulations to the top two teams in the
State Open Teams Final:

- **1st: Team METRO ONLINE** – Liz Adams, Peter Gill, Warren Lazer, Pauline Gumby – 109 IMPs
- **2nd: Team METRO F2F** – Elliott Kaplan, Tony Nunn, Nigel Rosendorff, Martin Bloom – 98.1 IMPs

Congratulations to the top two teams in the
Country Teams Final:

- **1st: Team NORTHERN** – Gary Lynn, Bill Powell, Clive Klugman, Marjorie Askew– 137.1 IMPs
- **2nd: Team WESTERN** – John Currie, Phil Glover, Amy Holman, Henry McMahon, John McMahon, Charles McMahon – 93 IMPs

View [full results here.](#)

Upcoming events

6–7 December: State Youth Championships (@ SBC)

The State Youth Championship will be held at **Sydney Bridge Club** on **6–7 December**. Come along and enjoy two full days of

bridge with the youngest of the bridge community. Players under 30 years of age are invited to play

Plenty of prizes are up for grabs and the winning players will each receive a medalion.

Can't commit to both days? Saturday is Pairs, Sunday is Teams – feel free to play only one of those days.

No partner? Contact Mitch Dowling on nswyouthbridge@gmail.com and a suitable partner will be found for you.

Details can be found here: <https://myabf.com.au/events/congress/view/2946>



The State Championships are a great prelude to the 57th annual **Australian Youth Championships** that start Saturday 10 January 2026 in Canberra. It's a great opportunity to meet young players from all over Australia. There is also a scavenger hunt, tonnes of fun bridge variants, and a BBQ to round off the week. Jeremy Reid is in charge – you can contact him on ausyouthbridge-week2024@gmail.com. Click here for all the details: <https://myabf.com.au/events/congress/view/3364>

9 December: Webinar – Supporting club beginner lessons in 2026

Find out what kind of support your club can get from Bridge NSW to offer and promote beginner lessons.

[Go to MyABF](#) to register your attendance. Clubs outside of NSW are also welcome to join!

5 January – Summer seasons of OPL and OTL begin! (Online)

OPL and OTL are back again for Summer! Take advantage of a smaller playing pool, and maybe take out the top prize. Early bird offers are available **before 19 December**. You can register now for [OPL Summer on MyABF](#). OTL Summer registration details to come.

14-26 January – Summer Festival of Bridge (F2F)

The ABG gold point event always attracts a crowd, and for good reason. There is plenty of bridge on offer across the 12 days, including events for Novice, Restricted and Intermediate players. Registration [is on MyABF](#). Need some congress help? Try our [Tips for Playing on Congresses](#).

21-22 February – Open ITS

Let the qualifying begin! Compete for your spot on the team to represent NSW at the 2026 Australian National Championships in Canberra. MyABF page to come.

Clubs

Profile: North Shore Bridge Club

With Sharon Thompson (President)



You have an upcoming congress? North Shore Bridge Club is gearing up for a crackling festive congress on 15–16 December. As always, we're running Intermediate sections and awarding prizes for Novice and Restricted Pairs – keeping things competitive but still welcoming. We're big believers in giving up-and-coming players a taste of the congress scene without it feeling like walking into the lion's den.

What about young players? One of our favourite traditions is supporting young players. We offer free membership for anyone under 26, plus free club sessions and club congress entry for players under 16. It's our way of making the game more affordable, more accessible, and frankly, a whole lot more fun for young people.

Tell us about the history of the club. North Shore Bridge Club began in 2007 through the merger of three long-standing Sydney clubs – Lindfield, Willoughby and Cove – with Gordon Bridge Club joining us in 2015.

While our current form is relatively young, our roots stretch right back to 1962. We now operate two ABF-registered clubs and proudly serve 1,695 members.

How does the club attract players? This year we've welcomed 250 new members, that gives us confidence things are heading in the right direction. Our strategic goal is a net increase of 50 members a year, with eyes on reaching 2,000 members. New players usually start through our beginner lessons on Tuesdays and Saturdays, then we ease them into the game through our supervised sessions. We're lucky to have a strong and capable team, so we don't need extra support in running those sessions. We're currently working toward a merger with Lindfield Bowling Club, hoping for some healthy cross-pollination between bowlers and bridgers. For advertising, we find a mix of Google Ads, Facebook, local community channels, and good old-fashioned word of mouth works best.



What's the club's biggest challenge at the moment? Member engagement, especially for players without regular partners. We've launched a WhatsApp Partnership Group which has been a hit, but we still have

around 250 members who haven't played in six months. Many are busy grandparenting or struggling to find a partner – two things we're working to solve by strengthening our community bonds.



What has been a hit with members? One of our proudest innovations is the Education Hub – an online portal featuring recorded lessons across many topics. Clubs can sell these lessons to their members and earn a 20% commission. We've now got 15 clubs involved and a growing army of newly-inspired bridge addicts. Sharing really is caring.



What regular events does the club run?

We offer 13 online sessions weekly across all levels and 16 face to face sessions for supervised, Rookie/Restricted and Open. Each Thursday night we also run multi-event

online competitions attracting some of the strongest players in the country. Don't worry – we balance out the sharks by offering Intermediate, Restricted and Novice sections so everyone has a place to play (and a place to shine).



If the club had unlimited resources... We'd put bridge into schools and universities. If people learn the game young, the tougher concepts aren't nearly so intimidating later in life. It's an investment that would pay dividends for the future of the sport. Government grants for growing the game would also make a world of difference.



What are some upcoming goals for the club? Secure a "forever home" through the proposed merger with Lindfield Bowling

Club (decision due 12 December). We're launching our first Bridge Cruise in 2026 for members and friends. We're determined to keep building a community that people genuinely want to be part of.

Southern Highlands Bridge Congress

Rakesh Kumar



Teams winners Steve Hurley, Liz Hurley, Vicky Lisle, Ian Lisle

The ever-popular Southern Highlands Congress, held over the weekend of 1-2 November, was once again a great success. This was in large part because of the contributions of many SHBC committee members and volunteers who helped with the organisation. And of course, as in previous years, the catering was marvellous!

The usual format applied for both the Swiss Pairs on Saturday and the Teams on Sunday: 6 × 9-board matches with IMPs scoring. As in years past, the events were very capably directed by Jeff Carberry.

In the Swiss Pairs, the winners in the Open section were **Judy Murray** and **Anne-Marie**

Hazell, who also won the trophy for best regional pair. In second place were **Karen** and **Andrew Creet**. The Restricted section was won by **Audrey Belt** and **Margaret Hagar**.

This year, there was a modest increase in table numbers for the Teams, including a visit by bridge royalty in the form of Sophie Ashton and Sartaj Hans. However, in a reprise of 2024, the event was won by the **Lisle team**, with Ian and Vicky Lisle joined this year by **Liz and Steve Hurley**. The best regional team was that of **Steve Brabyn** and **Tony Lye** playing with **Mardi Svensson** and **Rakesh Kumar**.

The Teams featured lots of highly distributional hands, repeatedly disproving the notion that "the 5-level belongs to the opponents". There were also quite a few hands on which slam was possible but actually getting there was a challenge. See Player Development for some hand analysis.

Got a club story to share?

You can now [submit your club story](#) for the newsletter and more **on our website**. Go to the 'Latest bridge news' section on the homepage and under the articles you will see two red buttons. Click on the button on the right to submit your story or [click here](#). We'd love to hear from you!

Teaching & Education

Last Online Supervised Play for beginners 7 Dec

The last **supervised play session** for this year will be on **Sunday 7 December** (4-5.30pm). These friendly RealBridge sessions help newer players (up to 18 months' experience) build confidence before joining club play. Players from both NSW and across Australia are invited to join any or all sessions. To join a session, visit the [Play online page](#) and use the RealBridge link for that date. Teachers willing to volunteer can contact onlinesupervised@bridgensw.com.au. Every teacher is a big help to the student experience.

We will be running these sessions again early next year for clubs looking to support beginners.

Webinar – Supporting club beginner lessons in 2026 – Tuesday 9 December, 6pm

Is your club losing members or struggling to run beginner lessons? Bridge NSW is hosting a **free webinar** on **Tuesday 9 December at 6pm** to help every club, whether you already run lessons, want to start but face hurdles, or aren't planning to offer them. We will cover promotion support (including [customisable templates](#) and our [lessons webpage](#)), teaching resources, ideas for shared lessons with nearby clubs, and ways to build beginners' confidence through our Online Supervised Play offering.

Head to [MyABF to book your spot!](#)

Advertise your club's lessons

We have a [website page](#) that promotes club lessons – Beginner, Improver and Online – happening at clubs across the state. Our website receives over 6000 visits per month. If any clubs are running online lessons and would like more players to attend, please let us know and we will include them.

Contact education@bridgensw.com.au.

Join the Bridge NSW Teaching community

Bridge NSW's WhatsApp Teaching Community is active and a great place to lodge a question and find answers.

[Click here](#) to join.

Player Development

Kate's Way #5

HCPs are only a guideline

Virtually all hands should be upgraded or downgraded. Bidding is based on trick-taking potential. Upgrades are frequent, downgrades infrequent.

Optimism is winning bridge – the power of negative thinking is underwhelming – the scoring table favours aggressive bidding and various studies show clearly that bidders are winners.

If your 1NT range is 15-17, look carefully at your 14s. Should they be upgraded? Or should you downgrade some 15s?

Is AJ43 KJ2 Q54 A75 in your range? What about AT9 KQT97 AQT 98?

Both are 15 HCPs, but I would not open 1NT on the first hand. It should be downgraded to less than 14 for the lack of spot cards, stray honours, and the 4x3 distribution.

The second hand could be upgraded to about 17.5 HCPs. A 5-cd suit is a plus – it's an extra trick. A good suit is a huge plus – you're very likely to take 4 heart tricks. The spot cards are good and all the honours are working.

Should you make the same bid on both hands? Probably not!

A few days ago in a local club game, my partner held this hand:

XX, AQT, KQJT_x JT_x

His right-hand opponent opened the bidding with 2H. He overcalled 2NT(!) showing roughly 15-17. Is that madness? 2NT on a 13-count?

Not at all! He's an optimist and upgraded his hand for the very good 5-cd suit (+2) and the position of his heart honours, which were virtually certain to take two tricks and a favourite to take three. Three aces, if you will. He wasn't quite sure how to evaluate, but guessed that his hand was worth around 18! I don't disagree.

It's not about the points – it's about the tricks.

I raised to 3NT with:

Axx xxx Axx xxxx

Because it's close and I believe in optimism too – and Aces should be upgraded.

Not surprisingly, we were the only table in 3NT. We made exactly nine tricks (five diamonds, three hearts and the spade Ace). Other tables overcalled 3D and played there, and one table passed. They saw only the "13 points" and missed the trick-taking power of the hand.

"The positive thinker sees the invisible, feels the intangible and achieves the impossible." – Winston Churchill

Karen McCallum (aka Kate) is a world-class bridge player and writer. She has won seven world titles playing for the US and

The next deal is the first of two from the last match that generated swings at several tables. It's the second problem hand. In fact East-West have no chance of making 5♣, but as it turns out North-South will always make 5♥, despite having only 17 hcp between them!

BD: 23	♠Q94	Dir: S
	♥JT9654	Vul: ALL
	♦AK76	
	♣-	
♠T863		♠AK2
♥7		♥K
♦JT4		♦Q952
♣AKQJ9		♣T8654
	♠J75	
	♥AQ832	
	♦83	
	♣732	
		N
	♣♦♥♠	T
N	5	10
S	5	11 12
E	2 1	7
W	2 1	

Across the field, 7 North-South pairs played in 5♥ – one doubled – while 5 were allowed to play in 4♥. Two East-West pairs played in 5♣, but in the same match, so there was almost no swing.

The final problem was associated with the very next board. After 1♦-P-1♠-X, a redouble showing 3-card support should set you on a path to slam. The auction might then continue -2♥ (by North)-3♠-P-4NT-P-5♠-P-6♠

or perhaps 6NT to protect ♥K and avoid any possibility of a diamond ruff.

BD: 24	♠J53	Dir: W
	♥T8643	Vul: None
	♦5	
	♣J876	
♠K64		♠AQ972
♥K5		♥92
♦AKQJT43		♦86
♣4		♣A932
	♠T8	
	♥AQJ7	
	♦972	
	♣KQT5	

				N
	♣♦♥♠			T
N	1			2
S	1		16	10
E	1 6	6 6		12
W	1 6	6 6		

Making the slam required just an even break in spades and the onside ♥A, more or less guaranteed by the takeout double. However only 2 East-West pairs bid a slam, even though 12 tricks are available in three different denominations.

Monthly bidding contest

Philip Glover

RealBridge runs a [monthly bidding competition](#). Marc Smith, world renowned bridge author, moderates the competition.

Entries are received from all over the world. The answers are compared with the panel of experts and scores out of 10 are awarded.

This month's offering is Hand 3 taken from the November 2024 set.

EW Vul. Dealer North.	West	North	East	South
Matchpoints.		Pass	Pass	1♦
♠ A 6	?			
♥ A 8 6 2				
♦ Q 6				
♣ A Q 10 9 4				

ACTION MARKS	PANEL Competitors' VOTES Entries (%)		
	1NT	10	15
2♣	7	5	57
Pass	5	2	1
Dbl	2	0	23
1♥	0	0	1
2NT	0	0	1

Competition Entrant Average Score: 6.10

From Marc Smith: "A big majority vote from the panel here, whilst more than half of competitors prefer the panel's minority choice. However, a fifth of competition entrants opt for an alternative that receives no support at all from the panel."

A common situation: no bid is 100% satisfactory! Otherwise, no problem.

The majority of the experts saw no issue with bidding 1NT with a flimsy stopper in D. It opens up the bidding for Stayman and transfers.

There was no expert support for the X of 1D (having only 2S is the turn off!). 2C garnered some expert support, but it fails to express the hand values. How the auction

would continue after an initial pass is a mystery.

So, did you make the maximum scoring bid of 1NT?

Join the RealBridge contest in January and outscore the experts in 2026.

Don't miss out on the latest bridge insights. Join our Facebook page!

Bridge NSW has a [Facebook page](#) where you can find out the latest. It is also a great way to engage with the community. To follow us, simply log in and head to our [Facebook page](#) and click the "Like" button. You can also use the QR code below to go straight to our Facebook page:

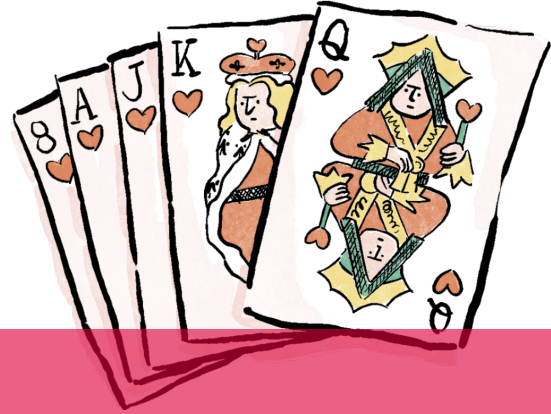


Upcoming Events

The following pages are flyers for forthcoming events and courses. The deadline for flyers to be received is the **second last Friday of each month**. Flyers must be a single A4 page and should be for events and courses in the following two months. To have your flyer included in the next issue, please send it to bridging@bridgensw.com.au.




Bridge
NSW



State Youth Championships 2025

 **10am, 6–7 December**

 **Level 1, 162 Goulburn Street, Surry Hills**

 **\$15 for FT students, \$25 otherwise
(includes light lunch both days)**



**Challenge
yourself against
the best in NSW!**

- ♠ Players born after 31 December 1995 are eligible (interstate players welcome)
- ♠ Youth Pairs on Saturday, Youth Teams on Sunday (4 players required per team)
- ♠ Need a partner? Email nswyouthbridge@gmail.com
- ♠ Red Masterpoints will be awarded at State Championship level. No yellow systems permitted.

Register here:
myabf.com.au

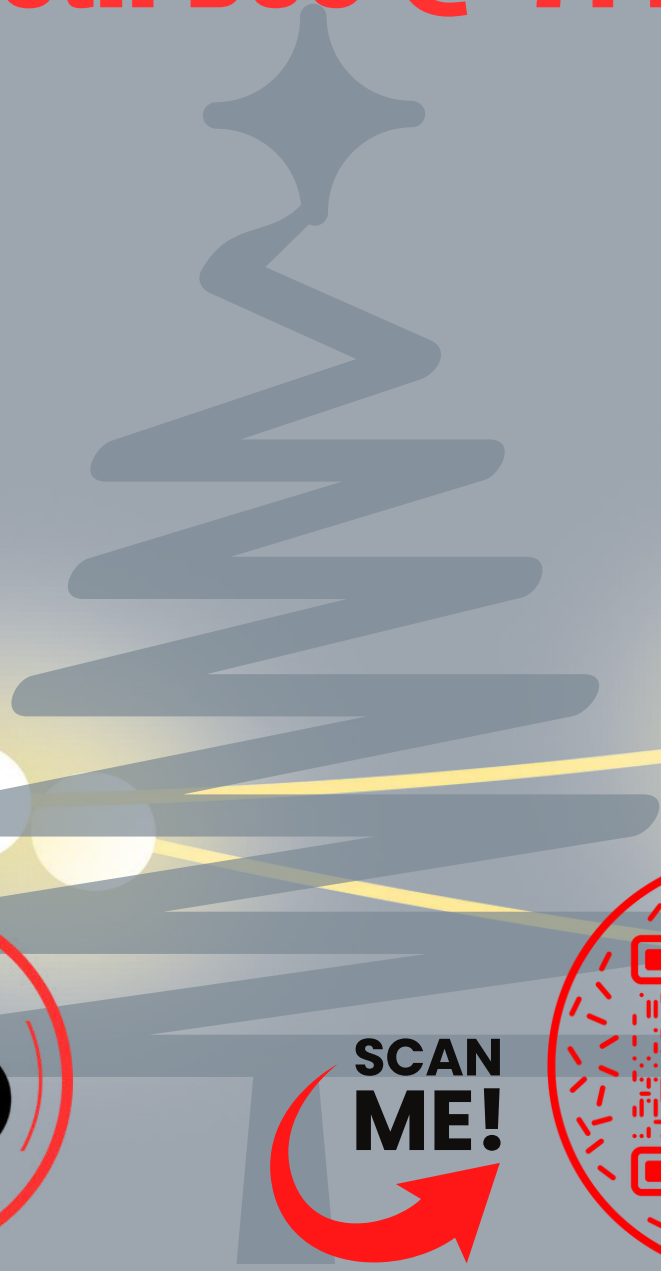
**Entries close Thursday
4 December**

Organiser: Mitch Dowling

 office@bridgensw.com.au

Xmas Teams

Thursdays 11th Dec &
18th Dec @ 7PM



**SCAN
ME!**



EXTEND YOUR BRIDGE KNOWLEDGE

with Will Jenner O'Shea

NORTH SHORE
since  1962
BRIDGE CLUB

**EXTENSIONS OF
STAYMAN AND
TRANSFERS.
DEFINING STRONG
HANDS BETTER USING
2C AND 2NT.**



\$60 per person
Includes Lunch
and Morning Tea


East
Lindfield

FRIDAY @ 10AM





Saturday Workshop

Consolidate & Extend Your Bridge Knowledge

With Will Jenner-O'Shea
Saturday December 13th, 10am – 3:30pm
@Goulburn Street

Each hand has an interesting Play or Defence Tip.

Topics

Clever Continuations and Extensions of Stayman and Transfers

Defining Strong Hands – Better Using 2♣ and 2NT

Finding the Best Contract

Revision and Practice Reverses and Showing Stoppers

*While this workshop does contain some more advanced topics,
it is suitable for players of all levels.*

Play Regularly to Reinforce

For Open players: (City) Monday to Thursday mornings (10.00am), Tuesday night (7.15pm), Friday ARVO (1.45pm) / (Polish Club Ashfield) Thursday (10.00am) / (Henley) Saturday (1.30pm).

For Supervised players: (City) Monday & Wednesday morning (10.00am) and Tuesday evening (6.30pm) / (Polish Club Ashfield) Thursday morning (10.00am).

All are Welcome: (City) Sunday Funday (1.00pm).



You do not need a partner. Please book online on www.sydneybridgecentre.com, or contact the office – Level 1, 162 Goulburn Street. office@sydneybridgeclub.org.au or 9264 6884

Costs: \$60 for Members, \$65 for Non-Members.

Notes, a delicious morning tea and a light lunch will be provided.



Festive Season Swiss Teams

Open | Intermediate | Restricted | Rookie

Sunday 14th December
10am - 2 x sessions



**SWISS
TEAMS**



Enter solo and play with many different partners

SBC Festive Individual

Sunday 28th December 2025

at the SBC clubrooms on Level 1, 162 Goulburn Street, Surry Hills

Entry fee: \$65 (lunch included)

RED Masterpoints. Director: Ronnie Ng

What is the Individual?

The scoring is normal matchpoints, but your partner and opponents are different each round. Depending on the size of the field(s), you play with or against most of the other players. Everybody is playing the same system. It's a fun competition without the hassle of arranging a partner and is also a great opportunity to meet people from all over the bridge world!

Programmes

Play commences at 10.00am sharp on Sunday 28th December for two sessions. There is a break for lunch between sessions and refreshment at the conclusion of congress.

Entries are OPEN to everyone. Please sign up in advance via MyABF.

Category prizes will be awarded. Prize money will depend on the number of entries.

An event system card will be posted on the event entry page soon.

All players are subject to the BNSW's Congress Disciplinary Regulations.

Organiser: Wing Roberts

• **Phone:** (02) 9264 6884 / 0487 350 160 • **Email:** office@sydneybridgeclub.org.au •

• **Website:** www.sydneybridgecentre.com •



SUMMER

Pairs

**OPEN INTERMEDIATE
& RESTRICTED
ROOKIE**

**ONLINE
THURSDAYS @ 7PM**



Summer

Online Swiss Teams

SUNDAY 4TH JANUARY

10am - 2 x Sessions





Sunday 25th January on Realbridge

10 am start 2 x Sessions Swiss Pairs (IMP) Event

Online Swiss Pairs

**OPEN &
INTERMEDIATE
RESTRICTED
SECTIONS**




SCAN ME 

INTRODUCTION TO BRIDGE

FACE TO FACE LESSONS

- Course starts Tuesday 27th January 2026
- Book your place at www.learnbridgeinsydney.com.au
- 2 hour lessons held at Lindfield Rollers Bowling Club
- 2 hour Supervised weekly practice sessions available
- Course notes for you to revise.
- No partner needed, just give it a go!
- Free tea and coffee

Only
\$150

**6 week
course**

**2hr lessons
full of fun
and a
workout for
your brain**

If you enjoy learning the game, further lessons and play will be available in the same time slot following on from the course.

WHAT OUR PAST PARTICIPANTS HAVE SAID....

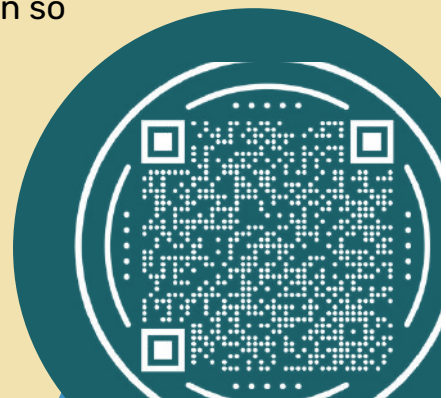
"Thank you for being such a good teacher, you have made the lessons so interesting and entertaining, it has all made sense."

"I have very much enjoyed these classes and I have been so impressed with the professionalism and supportive, welcoming culture."

"The course and our teacher, Liz were amazing!! It was a great first step into the world of bridge"

"This 6 week course is exceptional"

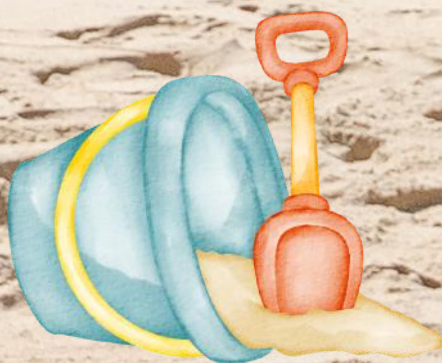
"I have played with some lovely people, we have lots of laughs and real catch-ups over a coffee."



Summer

Online Teams Championships

THURSDAY NIGHTS @ 7PM



Stimulate your mind & make new friends!

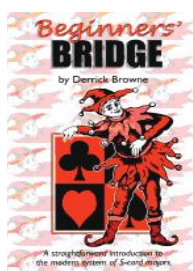
Learn Bridge!



Main teacher *Derrick Browne*

For just \$99 you get:

- ◆ *Beginners' Bridge* book
- ◆ Club joining fee



(Ongoing training & supervised play tailored to beginner graduates available)

Choose a course of six 2-hour lessons:

Thursdays 2pm from 5 Feb

Thursdays 6.30pm from 5 Feb


Enrol now with...

Trumps Bridge Centre



58 Spit Road, Mosman NSW 2088

trumps.net.au, trumps@trumps.net.au

 [Facebook.com/Trumpsbridgecentre](https://www.facebook.com/Trumpsbridgecentre)

phone 9969 5959 or 0412 947 279



... 'The top teaching club'

Learn to Play Bridge



Beginners' Course

*Bridge is the most fascinating card game in the world.
It is a very social activity, while being constantly
mentally stimulating.*



6 Monday Mornings @ City

February 9th – March 16th, 10.00am – 12.30pm

6 Tuesday Evenings @ City

February 10th – March 17th, 7.00pm – 9.30pm

City, Level 1, 162 Goulburn St, Surry Hills

Parking Available

6 Thursday Mornings @ Polish Club Ashfield

February 12th – March 19th, 10.30am – 12.45pm

Polish Club Ashfield, 182 Liverpool Road, Ashfield

Free Parking onsite

*\$159 for the full course (notes included). Free for those who have done our
Beginners Course before. You will have the option to continue your journey in
either City or Polish Club Ashfield once completed the course.
Both of our venues provide on-going Supervised Sessions.*



To enrol in this course, or for more information, please call
office on (02) 9264 6884 or email at office@SydneyBridgeClub.org.au.

INTRODUCTION TO BRIDGE

FACE TO FACE LESSONS

- Course starts Sat 14th February 2026,
- Book your place at www.learnbridgeinsydney.com.au
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- Weekly practice session available
- Course notes for you to revise.
- No partner needed, just give it a go!
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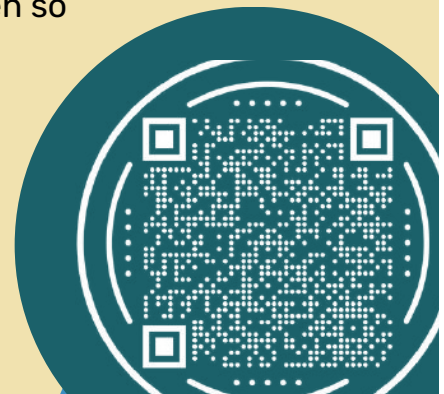
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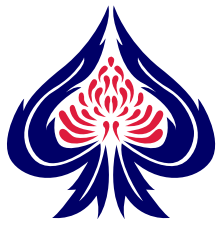
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Bridge
NSW



2026 Open Interstate Team Selection (ITS)



21–22 February 2026 (qualifying)
7–8 March 2026 (final)



Online and Sydney Bridge Centre



\$100 per player (qualifying stage)



**Compete for your
spot on the team to
represent NSW at the
ANC 2026 in
Canberra**

- ♠ Qualifying on RealBridge, 21–22 Feb (10am start)
- ♠ Top 14 pairs proceed to the final (*)
- ♠ Final at Sydney Bridge Centre, 7–8 Mar (10am start)
- ♠ Top 3 pairs from the final will represent NSW at the Australian National Championships (**)
- ♠ Representative team will receive travel subsidy to Canberra

(*) Format subject to change depending on entries

(**) Subject to Bridge NSW Board ratification



Register at
myabf.com.au

**Entries close 6pm
Thursday 19 Feb**

Convenor: Lavy Libman



lavy.libman@gmail.com



0410 763 935

Director: Ronnie Ng