

The electronic newsletter for students from the EBU studying using the Bridge for All scheme

### Spring 2012

Welcome to the third edition of the new Ruffian. From now on it will only be available as an electronic edition.

# Personnel at the Aylesbury Office

There are two full time members of staff who work at the Aylesbury Office in the Education department:

Lisa Miller – Bridge for All administrator. Contact Lisa on 01296 317217 <a href="mailto:lisa@ebu.co.uk">lisa@ebu.co.uk</a> for any help regarding *Bridge for All* membership, books and stationery

John Pain – Education Manager. Contact John on 01296 317218 john@ebu.co.uk for anything else in bridge education.

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# John's thoughts

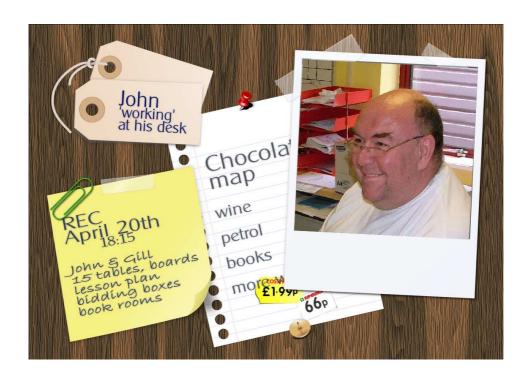
I would like to extend a warm welcome to all those who have started learning in recent months and also to welcome back exisiting learners. Those of us who have been playing for a while (I'm horrified to discover I have been playing for 40 years!) know what a great game it is and for many newer players offers a great new recreation outlet. I am reminded what a 'life saver' it can be by a local Aylesbury member who died at the end of February. He was a widower who joined a local bridge class and it completely transformed his life. From being almost a recluse he blossomed into a well respected local player and even took on organising bridge breaks for the many friends he made.

We shortly have the April *Really Easy Spring* break in Derby and there are places still available – see details later on. We are also advertising this summer's main event (not the Olympics) – the *Really Easy Summer Congresses* in Brighton. This has become a very popular event and last year we had nearly 40 tables playing. Finally we have the Autumn Break in Wroxton but that tends to fill very quickly.

#### Pay to Play

Please send Lisa an email (<u>lisa@ebu.co.uk</u>) to say when you finish being a student and move on to play in an affiliated EBU club. That way we can change your membership flag. Unfortunately we don't have an automatic way of doing this.

John Paín - Bridge for All Manager



# Really Easy Slams

I thought that this time I would highlight the final book in the *Really Easy* bridge book series – *Really Easy Slams*. Beginners often shy away from bidding slams because you have to make so many tricks – 12 for a small slam or all 13 for a grand slam, but there is no greater thrill as declarer to landing a slam contract. I remember playing with a novice player who was just taking her first steps into the wider world outside the classroom. It was one of those rare hands where I held a large number of points. I held 20 points but what made it even rarer was that partner opened the bidding in front of me. I cannot remember the details now but some moments later I had propelled my partner into 7NT – her first ever grand slam. She looked horrified, but after the opening lead she carefully played it out and made all the tricks. It was like a rite of passage had been crossed.

One of the questions I am often asked is 'When do you know that you should be trying for a slam'. Well probably the obvious answer is like my example above – you know by strength of points that you have enough:

- The combined hands have at least 34 points.
- ❖ Partner opens 2♣ and you have a positive response
- Partner makes a strong rebid (e.g. jump in a new suit, a reverse bid or some other strong rebid)
- When the two hands have a very good trump fit and enough aces.
- When you have a very long suit facing useful high cards in partner's hand.

One of the early rules you are taught is that 12 tricks might be possible with a combined holding of 32 points. A problem with that is 8 points could be two aces and even 33 points could be missing a same suit ace king. It's a fact, though, that many slams have been let through missing either two aces or an ace king because the cards are split between the defenders hands and the defence don't realise until it is too late.

Really Easy Slams takes you through various ways of bidding and making slams using a variety of methods. Most people will have heard of Blackwood (named after great American player Easley Blackwood) which is the method of asking partner how many aces they hold. But knowing when not to use Blackwood is just as important.

Here's an example from the book. It makes use of a convention called a 'splinter bid' which you may not have learnt yet. It is used in rare situations like this where you have 4-card support for partner's suit and a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> round control in the suit you bid. A 1<sup>st</sup> round control is an ace or a void; a 2<sup>nd</sup> round control is a king or, as here, a singleton.

		Dealer V	Vest			
		West	North	East	South	
<b></b> AKQ86	<b>▲</b> AJ7542	1 ♦	Pass	1♠	Pass	
<b>♥</b> A9	<b>v</b> 2	<b>4</b> ♣ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	$4NT^2$	Pass	
◆ AKJ432	◆ Q 105	5♥	Pass	5NT <sup>3</sup>	Pass	
<b>.</b> 3	♣A64	<b>7</b> ♠ <sup>4</sup>	All Pass			

- 1 4♣ is the 'splinter bid' showing 4-card spade support and a control in clubs.
- 2 4NT asks for aces and West shows two by bidding 5♥.
- 3 5NT confirms all four aces have been located and asks for kings.
- 4 7 ignores the request for kings and says I think this is what we can make!

7NT would be even better, of course, with six spades, six diamonds and two aces. Notice you have a combined point count of 28 – well below what you might expect but the hand makes because of having a) all the aces and b) two long suits to cash.

The book also covers use of cue-bidding as a way of finding out *which* controls (aces and kings) partner holds, rather than just the number as shown by this example:

		Dealer V	Vest			
<b>^</b> -	<b> Q</b> 54	West	North	East	South	
♥AKJ1086	<b>♥</b> Q732	2 <b>∀</b> ¹	Pass	3♥	Pass	
♦ KQJ1042	♦ A53	3 <b>^</b> 2	Pass	<b>4</b> ♦ <sup>3</sup>	Pass	
<b>.</b> 2	<b>4</b> 1064	6♥	All Pass			

- 1 2♥ is the strong Acol opening and 3♥ shows a positive response with heart support.
- 2 3♠ is a cue-bid showing first round spade control (a void).
- 3 East now shows his lowest first round control with 4. West knows the ♣A is missing so settles for 6. Can you see how Blackwood would not help? Suppose, instead of 3. West bids 4NT. East replies 5. showing one ace. If it is the ♠A there are two losers so West is none the wiser.

Really Easy Slams is the final book in the series and there is some meaty material within it – so perhaps it is less Really Easy and more Slightly Harder but it is an excellent first book for those wanting to investigate the world of slams. Really Easy Slams is available from the EBU Bridge Shop 01296 397851 or <a href="mailto:bridge.shop@ebu.co.uk">bridge.shop@ebu.co.uk</a>.

# Quiz on Pre-empting in a suit

A pre-emptive bid is a bid designed to shut out the opposition by skipping two or more levels in the bidding e.g. a 3 • opening. Pre-emptive bids are usually made on hands which have a long, good suit (for a 3-level opening a 7-card suit; 4-level an 8-card suit) but with little else of any use so probably no more than 10 HCP. It is a hand that won't be much use if your side end up defending.

When you pre-empt you are putting your side at some risk of being doubled for penalties, so you should never risk more than the opposition could make for themselves by bidding game. Suppose the opponents can make 4♠ - that will score 420 or 620 depending on whether they are vulnerable. You play in 5♥ doubled and go down two. If you are non-vulnerable that will be 300 points, 500 if vulnerable. So vulnerable against non-vulnerable is a bad result for you (500 against 420). You should therefore check the vulnerability carefully before pre-empting.

- For each of these EAST hands, how many tricks do you expect to make with your long suit as trumps if partner has a small singleton and no other useful cards?
- ❖ What would you open as dealer if you are a) non-vulnerable b) vulnerable?
- Would your answer be any different if the auction starts W: pass N: pass and then it is your bid?
- Cover up the right hand column before trying to answer!

	Tricks: 6 (once • K has gone) non-vulnerable: 3 • vulnerable: pass any difference? You might open 3 • vulnerable knowing that South has values.
<ul><li>♠832</li><li>♥KJ108542</li><li>♦K</li><li>♣76</li></ul>	Tricks: 5 (the ♥AQ count as two losers) non-vulnerable: a bit weak but most would open 3♥ vulnerable: pass any difference? You might open 3♥ vulnerable knowing that South has values.
<ul> <li>A K Q 10 9 6 5 4</li> <li>✓ 4 3</li> <li>→ 8 7 5</li> <li>♣ -</li> </ul>	Tricks: 8 tricks likely (only Jxxx will cause you difficulty) non-vulnerable: 4 vulnerable: 4 any difference? no

A K J 10 7 5 4 ▼ 7 ▼ 3 2 ♣ A J 10	Tricks: 6 fairly certain spade tricks plus ♣A non-vulnerable: 1♠. You are too strong to pre-empt in case partner is the vulnerable: 1♠ one with the points. any difference? Yes, after two passes it is correct to open 4♠ since you know partner doesn't have very much.			
<b>★</b> 8 <b>♥</b> 63 <b>♦</b> A Q 10 9 7 6 5 4 2 <b>♣</b> 7	Tricks: 8 tricks likely non-vulnerable: 5 ♦. Open as high as you dare! vulnerable: 4 ♦. Reign back a bit vulnerable!. any difference? Open 5 ♦ at either vulnerability.			
★ K 8 ♥ Q 9 7 6 5 3 2 ◆ A 3 ★ 7 4	Tricks: 4 tricks at most non-vulnerable: pass. The points are scattered and the heart suit is to vulnerable: pass poor to be any use. any difference? pass			

#### How should you respond to partner's pre-emptive opening?

The golden rule is 'never rescue'. In other words don't bid another suit just because you have a void in partner's suit – the words 'frying-pan' and 'fire' spring to mind! Remember partner will have at least a 7-card suit and a partner I played with many years ago said 'if partner bids it, let partner play it'. That means if you do bid it is because you have a constructive reason for doing so.

Suppose partner opens 3. You know he will have a 7-card suit and about 6 tricks if non-vulnerable and 7 tricks if vulnerable. So what matters is the tricks you can bring to the party rather than points and trumps.

<ul><li>★53</li><li>▼AK62</li><li>★KQ3</li><li>★A654</li></ul>	Partner opens 3♠ vulnerable. You have two spades which gives your side at least nine and more important three tricks. More than enough to bid 4♠. Most players would raise to 4♠ non-vulnerable as well as the ♦KQ should bring in a trick.
AQ54 ♥62 •AQ873 &65	Again partner opens 3. You should raise to 4. at either vulnerability but for a different reason to the previous one. You have an 11-card fit in spades so where are all the hearts? By raising to 4. you make it harder for the opponents to find their best spot. Not vulnerable you would still bid 4. without the AQ.
<ul><li>★KQ10</li><li>▼K65</li><li>◆AQ54</li><li><b></b>*K32</li></ul>	This time partner opens 3♣. Remember partner will have very little outside his club suit and 5♣ looks a long way off! You should bid 3NT counting partner for seven club tricks, plus the ♦A. A non-club lead gives you the ninth trick.

#### Countering a pre-emptive opening

The aim of the pre-emptor is to make life difficult for the opposition, but suppose that is you. How can you deal with it? Most people play that double of a pre-emptive opening is for take-out – just like a take-out double at the one level but of course it is two levels higher. But the requirements are much the same – opening hand, shortage in their suit and an emphasis on having the major suit they haven't bid.

AA763 ♥9 •AQ10 &KJ1084		Your right hand opponent opens 3♥. By doubling you show an opening hand and four spades. Partner will now judge where to go.
AKJ10843 ♥6 ♦K7 ♣A62		You right hand opponent opens 3♣. With an excellent suit of your own and good points you should jump to 4♠ - an indication of where you want to play. If you only bid 3♠ partner might pass.
AAK32 ♥AQ764 •J1092 •-	<b>▲</b> 87654 <b>♥</b> KJ109 <b>◆</b> AQ <b>♣</b> 87	South opens 3♣, West doubles which emphasises both majors, North jumps to 5♣ - what is often called an 'advance sacrifice'. The intention is make life really awkward for East. What do you do as East? 5♥ or 5♠ are both brave bids but both should make. It just serves to show that pre-empting does what it says on the tin – that of making life difficult.



### Poetry, please!

I've seen several versions on this little poem which is accredited to that great chap 'Anon' but here's one:

#### A bad night at the bridge club

I'm giving up bridge - tonight's my last night.
It's Amen to Stayman - I give up the fight.
The insults and muddles are giving me troubles
And I can't sleep at night for thinking of doubles.
May cards are all rotten and I have forgotten
Who's playing and what's trumps
And what's gone on my right.
So it's goodbye to Blackwood, I'm off to the backwood
I'm bidding goodbye to the dear little club.
I can't stand the hassle, I can't stand the pain.
I'm getting those bad cards again and again.

I'm giving up bridge – tonight's a bad night.

Declarer is horrid and nothing goes right.

My partner's a dope and I'm losing all hope

And when she says double I know we're in trouble.

My partner's points are not high and I'm wondering why

She kept on bidding right up to the sky.

We're in seven spades and all my hope fades

When surprise, surprise, her high bid pays.

We're winning all tricks, the defenders feel sick

And I have to admit my partner's a brick.

I'm giving up bridge – tonight's my last night. So it's goodbye to Gerber, I give up the fight. Be kind to your partners and don't mind their cheek, For it's only a game – oh, I'll see you next week.



#### Ode to the singleton

I feel that justice should be done
To that fine card - the singleton
It is so solitary and small,
It never takes a trick at all.
So solitary and undismayed,
It dies as soon as it is played.

And yet in has not died in vain,
For, when those clubs are led again,
You trump them gaily, once or twice
And justify their sacrifice.
Two tricks, observe, instead of one,
Thanks to the little Singleton.



### Bridge Scoring – the advanced things

Last time I looked at the simple mechanics of scoring a normal contract such as 4♠, 2NT or 6♥. This time I want to look at the effect of doubling and redoubling. The earlier article on pre-emptive bidding talks about going down when doubled and you will find it very helpful to know what the penalties will be if you go down too many. Knowledge of these scores is essential when it comes to sacrifice bidding otherwise you cannot calculate with any accuracy whether it is right to bid on and be doubled or to be more cautious and pass.

Doubling (the red X in the bidding box) has the effect of increasing the value of tricks that you make but also increases the penalties for tricks you don't make. Redoubling (the blue XX in the bidding box) increases everything again. Here is the full score table:

Trick scores – scored by declarer's side when the contract is fulfilled	Normal play	Doubled	Redoubled
For each trick above the first six in ♣and ◆	20	40	80
For each trick above the first six in ♥and ♠	30	60	120
For the first trick above six in NT	40	80	160
For each additional trick in NT	30	60	120
A trick score of 100 points or more on one bo	ard is GAMF	_	

A trick score of 100 points or more on one board is GAME; A trick score of less than 100 on one board is a PARTSCORE

Bonus Scores	Not vulnerable	Vulnerable
For making a PARTSCORE	50	50
For making a GAME	300	500
Small slam bid and made	500	750
Grand slam bid and made	1000	1500
For making any doubled contract	50	50
For making any redoubled contract	100	100
Overtricks		
Normal play undoubled	Trick value	Trick value
Doubled overtricks	100	200
Redoubled overtricks	200	400
Undertricks – scored by the opponents for		
beating the contract		
For each undertrick undoubled	50	100
For the 1 <sup>st</sup> undertrick doubled	100	200
For 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> undertrick doubled	200	300
For 4 <sup>th</sup> and subsequent undertrick doubled	300	300

For the 1 <sup>st</sup> undertrick redoubled	200	400
For 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> undertrick redoubled	400	600
For 4 <sup>th</sup> and subsequent undertrick redoubled	600	600

You can see how dramatic the effect of doubles and redoubles can be. Suppose you play in 1NT redoubled, vulnerable. 1NT redoubled is worth 160 trick points; since that is over 100 you also get the game bonus of 500 and you get an extra 100 points just for making a redoubled contract. So altogether you get 760. Plain, good old 1NT would have got you only 90.

You might think that 7NT is the highest score you can get for making a contract – a Grand Slam bid and made must be worth a lot. It is. A vulnerable 7NT will score 220 trick points, 500 for the game bonus and 1500 for the grand slam bonus – 2220 altogether. But the largest possible score you can get for making a contract is 3160 – for making 1NT redoubled with six vulnerable overtricks: 160 for 1NT redoubled, 500 game bonus, 100 redouble bonus and 6 lovely overtricks worth 400 each.

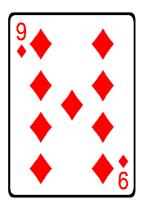
Undertricks can be very expensive when you are doubled – more so when redoubled. Four down doubled not vulnerable is 100 + 200 + 200 + 300 = 800. That sounds dreadful and most of the time it will not be a good score. But suppose your opponents bid to 6 not vulnerable. If they make it, it scores 180 + 300 + 500 = 980. So if you can bid 6, be doubled and go down for 800 you will concede fewer points than letting them make 920.

The largest possible score you can concede is for bidding and playing 7 redoubled, vulnerable and not making a single trick:  $400 + 12 \times 600 = 7600$ .

Knowing that 3NT is 400 or 600 isn't rocket science. Try to learn the scores for the common contracts that you play in week after week. For the less common results, try to work out the scores rather than relying on the bidding box to help. A little effort will reap big rewards and will turn you into a more successful player.



### The Curse of Scotland



The nine of diamonds playing card is often referred to as the "Curse of Scotland" There are a number of reasons given for this connection:

- 1. It was the playing card used by Sir John Dalrymple, the Earl of Stair, to cryptically authorise the Glencoe Massacre. Certainly there is a resemblance between the nine of diamonds and his coat of arms.
- 2. The Duke of Cumberland is supposed to have scribbled the order for "no quarter" to be given after the Battle of Culloden on a nine of diamonds playing card..
- 3. It has also been suggested that it is a misreading of the "Corse of Scotland" ie the "Cross of Scotland" or St Andrew's Saltire. There is a resemblance between the pattern of the nine of diamonds and the Saltire.
- 4. Nine diamonds were at one time stolen from the crown of Scotland and a tax was levied on the Scottish people to pay for them the tax got the nickname "The Curse of Scotland".

The first two explanations are the ones most commonly given.

### Events for students in 2012 9<sup>th</sup> Really Easy Summer Congresses at Brighton



**Novices and students** – Monday 13<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> August

Next Step – Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> August

The **novices and students** will be expected to play Standard English Acol and playing sessions will be between 15 and 21 boards. There will be an instructional session on Monday afternoon. There will be two play sessions of Tuesday followed by a short discussion of the hands so you can see where you could have done better. You will probably still be in your first year of learning or be part way through the second year. You may have had some experience of a supervised bridge session at the club but are probably not a regular club player yet.

For the **Next Step event** students will be able to use their own familiar system and more boards will be played – 21 to 24 boards per session. The emphasis will be more on play and there will only be one instruction session for this group. You will probably have been playing at a local club for a few months but may not have tried a County or EBU event before.



Both events are priced at only £32 for the bridge, but players have to make their own arrangements regarding accommodation and refreshments.

You can make your entry by ringing Peter or Dawn in the EBU Competitions Department – 01296 317203/219.

You can book rooms at the Metropole Hotel by ringing 01273 775432 and choose Group Bookings from the menu. Then mention Brighton Summer Meeting. You may find you can get better rates by booking directly online.

Or for alternative accommodation in Brighton please visit www.visitbrighton.com.

	Novices & students	Next step
Monday	2.00pm - 4.00pm Lesson	
13th	4.00pm Free time	
	7.30pm – 10.30pm Play session 1	
Tuesday	10am Play session 2 + seminar	
14th	11.30am Free time	
	2.30pm Play session 3 + seminar	2.00pm Play session 1
	5.30pm Free time	5.30pm Free time
	7.30-10.30 Free evening or gentle play	7.30pm -10.30pm Play session 2
Wednesday	10.30am Play session 4 – Swiss Pairs	10.30am Play session 3 – Swiss Pairs
15th	3.30pm Final results and departure	3.30pm Free time
	(1 hour lunch break 12.30 – 1.30)	7.30pm -10.30pm Play session 4
Thursday		10am Lecture
16th		11.30am Free time
		1.30pm Play session 5
		4.30pm Final results and departure

We are pleased to announce that in addition to the usual staff of Gill Pain and Ian Mitchell the guest tutors for 2012 are June Booty and Tessa Templeton.

### Bridge for All Breaks Spring and Autumn 2012

# Really Easy Spring Break – The Midland Hotel, Derby – April 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> 2012

There is still time to enter our spring break when we are returning to our popular spring venue of the Midland Hotel. This attractive hotel is right opposite Derby Railway station. We can take up to 60 people for the weekend, which is suitable for both 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year students. Subject



to suitable numbers, the event will be divided into 2 groups according to ability for Friday and Saturday, with everyone playing together on Sunday. There will be four playing sessions Friday evening, Saturday afternoon and evening and an extended session on Sunday either side of a light lunch. There will be an instructional session on Saturday morning where hands like this will be discussed:

South	Dealer V	Vest			
<b>♠</b> Q843	West	North	East	South	
<b>♥</b> K1042	1.	double	2♣	?	
♦K43					
<b>♣</b> 72	What is	your best ca	ll to get into	the auction?	

The hotel package of two nights dinner, bed and breakfast is £136 per person. There is no single person supplement. Hotel bookings should be made direct with the hotel on 01332 345894.

The bridge fee of £40 per person (which covers the four bridge sessions, teaching session, tea and coffee breaks and the Sunday light lunch) is payable to the EBU in the usual way.

Please note that because of the nature of this weekend, it is not possible to entertain non-residential guests at this event.



#### Really Easy Autumn Break – The Wroxton House Hotel, Nr Banbury October 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> 2012

This weekend house party is for more experienced newer players, with up to 5 years experience.



There will be one instructional session on Saturday morning but otherwise the emphasis is on play.

The hotel package consists of two night dinner, bed, breakfast and sandwich lunch on Sunday. Tea and coffee will be served twice on Saturday and once on Sunday.

The hotel package is £167 per person, (£139.90 per person sharing a twin/double room). Hotel bookings should be made direct with the hotel on 01295 730777 quoting Group Booking Reference 37501.

The bridge fee of £40 per person is payable to the EBU in the usual way.

Please note that because of the nature of this weekend, it is not possible to entertain non-residential guests at this event.

All our events use duplimated boards with hand records and the latest Bridgemate technology for scoring. Final results are displayed within minutes of the final table finishing.

You can make your entry for either event by ringing Peter or Dawn in the EBU Competitions Department – 01296 317203/219.

**+++** 

Do you have any news about your own bridge learning experiences or what it was like when you went to the club. I would love to hear your news about anything bridge related. Please email <a href="mailto:john@ebu.co.uk">john@ebu.co.uk</a> with any snippets that you think others would like to read about.



The next generation starting out with Minibridge.

# Use classroom equipment at home Available from the Bridge Shop



#### Pellisier tables - folding wood tables

798mm square; Mahogany coloured frame; folding for easy stacking

#### **Club tables - folding plastic tables**

Black with metal legs; top 34 inches square

Corded velvet table covers - Green, wine or blue
Bidding boxes, set of four - Red or green
Bidding buddies, set of four - Red, green or dark blue
Card holder (semi-circular, sits on the table)
Plastic card holder (circular, hand held, set of 4: red, green, yellow, blue)
Carta Mundi Superluxe playing cards (supplied per dozen)
Black Jack cards Large figures for easy reading (Min. order 2 packs)
Presentation Packs of Cards (2 packs)
Plastic wallets (set of 16)

Books in the *Really Easy* Series

Really Easy Bidding

Really Easy Play in No Trumps

Really Easy Play with Trumps

Really Easy Defence

Really Easy Mistakes

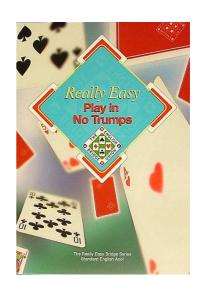
Really Easy Competitive Bidding

Really Easy Modern Acol

Really Easy Slams

Practice Beginning Bridge

Practice Continuing Bridge





Little Book of Bridge tips
Standard English System Summary Card
Useful Conventions Summary Card
Carriage costs will be added to orders.

Prices on application from the Bridge Shop – they often have special deals

**How to order:** Telephone 01296 397851 between 9am and 5pm and ask for the Bridge Shop, or send an email to <a href="mailto:bridge.shop@ebu.co.uk">bridge.shop@ebu.co.uk</a>.

Alternatively, an order can be faxed (01296 317220)

You can pay by credit card or we can send you an invoice with your goods.