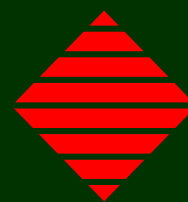


RUFFIAN



Spring 2018 Edition



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New Year – New Ruffian Editor

The first Ruffian of 2018 is here, and it's also my first as editor. I'm EBED's new Education & Youth Officer, and it's a great joy to be working towards growing the game that I love.

I first started playing as a teenager, partnering my Grandfather, who was a good player, against my Mother and Grandmother, slightly reluctant third and fourth respectively. I was fascinated straight away, if not blessed with natural talent, and over the last fifteen years I've gradually learnt more and more, through playing, directing and teaching beginners.



One of the great things about bridge is that all players are students of it really, even top internationals will always be thinking about trying to improve their play. No bidding system is ever perfect, no defensive method infallible, and every single hand is different (if everyone in the whole world dealt a pack of cards every second, it would still take a minimum of 600 trillion trillion trillion years to get every possible combination!). That said, the *Bridge for All* books are a fantastic place to start your love affair with the game, and I hope you're enjoying working with them. I'm always keen to hear about interesting hands you've played, your stories of how you got into bridge or anything else that you'd like to be included in The Ruffian, so feel free to send things to me any time.

David Emerson, EBED Education & Youth Officer
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BRAND NEW! – Really Easy Overseas Congress

8th – 14th October 2018, Iberostar Royal Andalus, Chiclana, Cadiz, Andalucia



The EBU will be running a 'Really Easy Congress' alongside their main event in Andalucia in October. It is aimed at less experienced players, and will be the first ever Really Easy Overseas Congress so it is your chance to be a little piece of history!

There is free time to explore the area built into the programme, including a whole free day on the Friday the 12th of October. If you enjoy the Really Easy programme from the 8th to the 12th, you can join the main Swiss Pairs event at the end of the main congress on the 13th and 14th at a discounted extra charge. See www.ebu.co.uk/competitions/andalucia-congress for more information.

The accommodation cost is £665 per person for 7 nights Dinner, Bed and Breakfast, and should be booked through Bridge Overseas on 0800 0346 246. There is also a bridge fee of £70 payable to the EBU - to pay this fee, or for more information, please call Nick on 01296 317203.

Bidding Tips

There are students who read The Ruffian who are at various different levels of experience with bridge. This section is designed for new players, but if you have been playing for a little while a bit of revision is never a bad thing! Keep reading for some tips for improving players, but if you're new to the game don't be put off if the more complicated sections don't make sense, just be patient and let your teacher get you to that stage at the right time for you.

When to Overcall a Suit – and When Not to

What bridge players call a 'competitive auction' is often the most interesting part of bidding, and getting them right will give you good results when playing duplicate. As you know, we usually need at least 12 points to think about opening the bidding, but most partnerships will overcall with as few as 8 points, if they have the right hand.

Don't overcall with only a 4-card suit

Although in Acol you should be quite happy to open with a 4-card suit, for overcalls in a suit you should have a minimum of 5 cards. This is primarily because by overcalling's very nature, you are likely to have bidding space taken away from you by your opponents, so it's important to be more precise on the first round. It also allows you to overcall more safely with weaker hands like the 8 point ones mentioned above. By promising your partner 5 cards, they have a clear idea of your hand straight away, and you can leave some of the decisions to them. There are some other ways of showing hands without a 5-card suit, but they require more points than a normal overcall, like the hand in the picture. Your teacher will cover these options in your lessons.



There are a few different reasons for overcalling

Overcalling is not just about trying to get into the contract – it can also help you in other ways. Imagine your opponents have opened 1♣. The responder has all sorts of bids open to them, but if you can interrupt their bidding then it can make life much more difficult. This is particularly the case if you're able to bid spades, but stick to the 5 card golden rule of overcalling. You want to make life difficult for your opponents, but not for your partner.

A good overcall can also be used to help your partner in the defence, particularly with their opening lead. Unless they have a very good reason not to, your partner will almost always lead the suit you overcall, so be a bit careful about your holding. If you have the ace and king, leading that suit would be very helpful, but if you just have a long suit with not such high cards, you might be better not to overcall even if you have the 8 point minimum as it could make your partner lead a suit which is helpful to your opponents.

Junior Bridge Focus

England's International Junior Teams have been doing fantastically well recently, and we are the only European bridge federation to be sending four junior teams to this year's World Youth Team Championships in Suzhou, China.



It's a major undertaking to get our junior players across the world, and so the squads are looking for sponsorship to enable them to make the journey to China in August. Donations have already been received from [Touchlight](#), [No Fear Bridge](#), the [Worshipful Company of Playing Card Makers](#) and English Bridge Education & Development, who have also set up a page on their website for individuals to donate through EBED, allowing gift aid to be reclaimed on qualifying donations.

You can donate through EBED [here](#) or find more information about the fundraising campaign [here](#). All contributions, no matter how small, will be most gratefully received.



The Young Bridge Challenge, one of EBED's main national youth events, took place on the 10th March, with the main prize, the Schools Cup, being regained by Haberdashers' Aske's Boys School, who have won the Cup in eight of the last nine years. They beat the defending champions, Westminster School, in the final, with HABS 'B' beating Reading School in the third place play-off. The remaining teams competed for the Schools Plate and the Harry Scully Trophy, for teams not all from the same school. The Reading

School 'B' team won the Schools Plate and the Harry Scully Trophy was won by a team formed of players from the West Midlands, Norfolk and London.

Stamford Youth Bridge Academy had an incredibly successful 2017, with the announcement that it has brought bridge to over 1000 young people during the year. This is a spectacular achievement, and congratulations must go to Liz Dale, Sandra Curran and Jenny Harding, the driving forces behind SYBA's success, and to all their 'Bridge Buddies' – volunteers who give their time to introduce bridge to teachers and pupils. More information is available on their [website](#).



Another recent success at the Junior level of bridge was the Surrey Schools' Cup, which saw an increase in entries of 60% this year. It was organised by Surrey CBA, with assistance from EBED.

The Cup was won by Westminster School, with the Salver going to Hampton School (pictured) and the Minibridge competition being won by Weydon School.



Over 50 children attended Warwickshire CBA's Annual Junior Bridge Challenge, held at West Midlands Bridge Club.

15 children were presented with their Minibridge certificates as part of EBED's Junior Award Scheme at the end of the day.

The young bridge players also participated in the Minibridge section of EBED's Students and Schools Sim Pairs as part of their very busy day!

Your Children and Grandchildren can Learn Bridge Too!

Junior Teach-In: 31st August – 2nd September 2018

After a number of successful events at Loughborough University, EBED have decided to relocate for this year's Junior Teach-In, which will be held at Phasels Wood Activity Centre in Kings Langley, Hertfordshire.

This is a two-night residential event with teaching and competition, with the main prize being the Arnott Davidson Trophy. This year we hope to also include an entry to EBED's Autumn Simultaneous Pairs, a chance to be compared with adult bridge players across the country.



We cater for all levels of experience from beginner to junior international, so please tell all your friends and relatives about it. The whole weekend including meals, accommodation and all the bridge costs just £110 per junior, or **just £95 if you book before the 29th June**. For more information, contact David Emerson at david@ebedcio.org.uk or on 01296 317228.

Tips on Defence

This section is designed for people who have progressed to the 'Continuing Bridge' book. If you haven't got that far yet, it may be of interest, but don't worry if it doesn't make sense!

Always Help your Partner

There are various methods of 'signalling' what your hand is like during the play to your partner to help them get their defence right. Here are some of the most useful ones:



Signals when Discarding

Many of these signals, rely on the idea of a high card encouraging a suit, and a low card discouraging a suit (this is often shortened to HELD (High Encouraging, Low Discouraging)). When you are out of the suit that has been led, and you're not ruffing to win the trick, your discard can be a sign to your partner as to a suit that you like, or a suit that you don't. Discarding an unnecessarily high card in any suit means that you like that suit, while a low card shows you don't. Bear in mind when interpreting signals what cards are missing. If your partner holds Q 4 3 2 they might play 4 to encourage!

Suit Preference Signals

N dealer	♠ K Q
Game all	♥ K 8 5 2
	♦ J 10 3
	♣ J 10 8 2
♠ 10 6 4 3	♠ J 9 8 5 2
♥ J 9 6 4	♥ none
♦ 9 8 5	♦ A 6 4 2
♣ 9 4	♣ A K 7 3
	♠ A 7
	♥ A Q 10 7 3
	♦ K Q 7
	♣ Q 6 5

In some circumstances, you can use different suits to tell your partner which suit you like. For instance, in this hand, South is playing in 4♥. West leads the ♣9 which East wins with the ♣K, and then leads the ♣A. When East plays the ♣4, West could be thinking that high-low could show a doubleton, particularly given four cards in dummy. Having worked out all of this, East can play a high club to ask for the higher ranking of the other two suits (not trumps and not the suit being led) or a low club to ask for the lower

ranking. So, here, East can play the ♣3, which West ruffs and then leads a diamond as requested, which East wins with the ♦A and then seeing four clubs in dummy can lead another club and make South either use a high trump or lose another ruff.

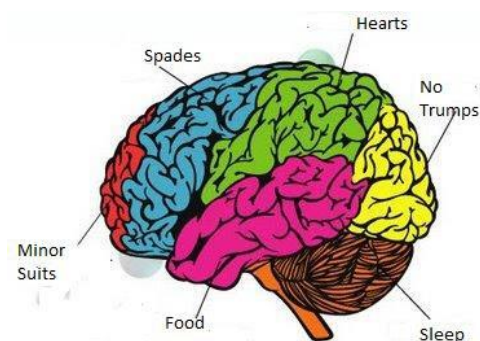
Count Signals

When partner is on lead, we would usually play attitude signals like the HELD method described above, but with declarer on lead we are unlikely to want to encourage. It can be more helpful to signal to our partner whether we hold an odd or an even number of cards. So, playing high first and then low shows an even number (NB leading high, low from a doubleton is an example of this!) and low and then high shows an odd number. Beware that any information you give to partner you are also giving to your opponents, as they are entitled to ask what carding methods you play, so sometimes you might give away that a suit breaks 3-3 or doesn't, so count signals are not always helpful.

Bridge Could Help Prolong your Life

A talk at a conference last year, 'TED 2017: The Future You,' identified social interaction and close personal relationships as the best predictors of longevity, and mentioned bridge specifically as a way of finding more social interaction.

The talk, entitled 'The secret to living longer may be your social life,' introduced the topic by discussing the 'Blue Zone' of Sardinia, one of very few places in the world where men have a similar life expectancy to women, and where there are six times as many centenarians as on mainland Italy, and ten times as many as North America. The presenter, Susan Pinker, a Canadian developmental psychologist, visited the region to try to gain an insight on what it was about their lifestyles that made them more likely to live longer, discovering that what might be thought of as possible reasons like a healthy diet or a 'positive outlook' did not seem to be major considerations of life there. Rather, she found strong, extended family units and tightly knit communities, and this made her think about her own life and what she could do to prolong it.



A Bridge Player's Brain!?

Referencing data from an extensive study of over 300,000 participants published by Julianne Holt-Lunstad, she suggested that social interaction and close personal relationships were as accurate as other measures such as alcohol consumption and smoking, and more accurate than measures such as physical exercise and obesity at predicting the life expectancy of the participants. Social interaction covers both 'weak' and 'strong' interactions, so the most simple of things such as making eye contact with people, handshakes and

short conversations, all of which can be a major part of any bridge session, would increase a person's level of social interaction.

The British government have decided that loneliness is such an important concern that a new Minister for Loneliness was appointed in January 2018, continuing work begun by the late Jo Cox, who begun the Commission for Loneliness. The EBU are hoping to meet with the new minister, Tracey Crouch MP, to discuss the role that bridge could play in tackling the problem, which is estimated to affect around nine million people in the UK, young and old.

If you would like to watch the talk, it is available on TED's website [here](#). It's only sixteen minutes long, so it won't take much of your time and it's well worth a watch.

Bidding Tips Again

This section is designed for students who have completed, or are close to completing, 'Continuing Bridge.' It will almost certainly be confusing to those who haven't got that far, but don't worry, you'll understand it soon enough if you keep going!

Bidding against your opponents' 1NT opening bid

With Acol being the most common bidding system at most clubs in England, you're going to come across a lot of weak 1NT opening bids (12-14 points). This means it's useful to have ways of overcalling a 1NT opener, as there's more chance of a contract your way than when you're facing a strong no trump opening bid (usually 15-17 points). Really, the hands that are most worth doing this with are hands that are shapely but not necessarily lots of points – one long suit or two quite long ones. These are the hands where you only need a little support in a suit from your partner, but that aren't that good defensively against no trumps, as declarer may only need one stopper in your suit(s) to take that and make his contract in other suits.

'Continuing Bridge' introduces the 'Landy' convention, which uses 2♣ to show at least 5 cards in one major AND at least 4 in the other, which is a useful start. Your partner can pick their better major, bid 2♦ to show equal length in the majors and let you choose, or bid no trumps with some points and no support in either major. Here are two other options for conventional bids over 1NT which you and your partner could choose to play, or of course you can choose to play overcalls of 1NT completely naturally and open up lower bids.

Cappelletti

2♣ shows ANY 6-card suit

Always bid 2♦, which is passed or corrected

2♦ shows both major suits

2♥ shows Hearts and a minor suit

Bid 2NT to ask which minor suit

2♠ shows Spades and a minor suit

Bid 2NT to ask which minor suit

2NT shows both minor suits

This set of conventions allows for any combination of 2 suits to be shown, as well as hands with one long suit. The 2 suited bids usually show at least 5 in one and at least 4 in the other, with the heart and spade bids promising 5 hearts or spades. 5 cards in each is ideal, and with 5 in each you can certainly bid with as few as 10 points, maybe less if it's both majors.

Multi-Landy

This combines Landy and Cappelletti, by switching the 2♣ and 2♦ bids from Cappelletti. This opens up the useful Landy 2♦ bid by your partner to show equal length in the majors and let you pick, but it means that with a 6-card diamond suit you've got to play at the three-level, as after you bid 2♦ showing any long suit, your partner will bid 2♥ to give you another bid. This is my personal favourite, but it's best to try different things and find what works for you.

Youth Teaching Awards 2018

The EBU and EBED jointly present two awards for teachers who have made an outstanding contribution to youth bridge, and nominations are now open for both awards for 2018.

The Alec Salisbury Award

The Alec Salisbury Award is made to the school teacher who has made the most effective contribution to promoting bridge.

Alec Salisbury was the EBU's Schools and Youth Officer for many years, and was instrumental in the introduction of Minibridge to bridge teaching.

Last year's winner, Sarah Bell, a chemistry teacher at St Paul's Girls' School, and herself a former member of the England U26 squad, formed the first England U16 squad, who finished 4th in their first European Junior Championships and 8th at their first World Junior Championships the following year.



The Tom Bradley Award



The Tom Bradley Award is made to the (non-school) teacher who has made the most contribution to promoting youth bridge.

Tom Bradley was the former Treasurer of the EBU, who was a champion of attracting new players into the game of bridge.

Last year's winners were Jessica and Anton Mauve, who started a bridge club at their daughters' school in Weald, Kent, in 2016, and now run two sessions at the school, one for

beginners playing Minibridge, and another for developing players in Acol play. They also organise an inter-schools tournament in Kent each year.

More information on how you can make nominations for either of these awards for 2018 is available on EBED's website [here](#).



The Bridge Warehouse

The first and only choice for Bridge Players

The Bridge Warehouse is the one-stop shop for everything you might need to develop your bridge playing. Special companion books with practice hands that can be used with your “Beginning Bridge” and “Continuing Bridge” books are available, as are a number of other interesting learning resources created by EBED and the English Bridge Union.

You can order online and see what’s available and any current special offers at

www.bridge-warehouse.co.uk

or telephone 01296 317217 to order from Lisa, our Education & Development Team Co-ordinator.



Contact Us

You can get in touch with EBED through Lisa Miller, our Education & Development Team Co-ordinator, on 01296 317217 or by e-mailing lisa@ebedcio.org.uk.

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Thanks for reading, and good luck with all your bridge from everyone at EBED!