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John's thoughts



The year creeps on apace. (c.f. *'The hours creep on apace – HMS Pinafore'*). The clocks have moved forward and for many students their two terms of teaching will be coming to an end. For our newer students there are several weeks to go before classes end.

Wherever you are in the learning cycle I hope you are continuing to enjoy your classes and if you have made the move from class to club that that is progressing well.

New electronic newsletter

We are hoping to launch a short monthly newsletter for students. If you wish receive a copy please email gill@ebu.co.uk and put monthly newsletter in the title line.

New proposals

Some of you may have seen on the EBU website the final proposals for the Pay to Play scheme. The decision whether to adopt this will be taken at a meeting of the EBU Shareholders in June. Who are the EBU Shareholders? Every County Association has shareholders (one is often the County Secretary) – the precise number depends on the size of the county's membership. If you have a view on the proposals then you should try to seek out your county shareholder and let them know your views.

If the vote is in favour of the proposals the implementation date is April 2010.

Come to Brighton

Please give a thought to trying out the Really Easy Summer Congress at Brighton in August. It really is an ideal way to try out your first EBU organised event. Pleasant surroundings, amiable company and an opportunity to see how a bridge tournament functions. Last year we had 20 tables in play. It would be lovely to have even more this year.

You can come on your own if you don't have a partner and we will endeavour to match you up with someone of similar standard. See the last page for details of how to sign up.

Contact Us

If you need to get in touch with us at the Aylesbury office then Lisa deals with *Bridge for All*, membership, general queries about classes and teachers. Mike Amos deals with Youth bridge and I deal with almost anything else!

Lisa Miller – lisa@ebu.co.uk 01296 317217

Mike Amos – mamos@ebu.co.uk 07786 062289 (but the signal isn't always very good!)

John Pain – john@ebu.co.uk 01296 317218



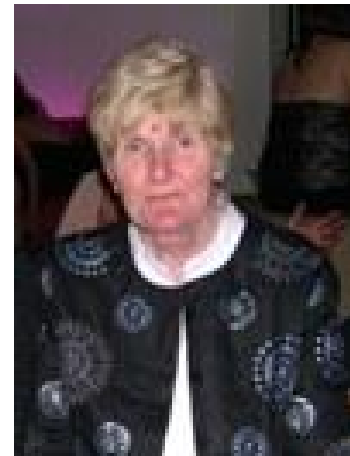
New series Pegs Takes Up Learning ...

Pegs, recently widowed, has taken up the game in Shropshire, where she lives and has just started her second term.

She rings me after every lesson, not to talk about the cards but to chat about who is on her course and what they do.

I was mildly bemused this week though, when she emailed me and said that she was in a grand contract of four Jacks and she made ten tricks! Good for her!

Peg's new game is about meeting new friends and starting out life on her own.



Who cares if she uses Jacks as trumps? She certainly doesn't

Pegs would have preferred to have continued with mini bridge forever really, but the class has now moved on to 'full blown' bridge, as she calls it.

Short of writing down all the cards that have been played in previous tricks (too time consuming, she says), it's really hard to remember what's gone. She says that she's been 'cheating' by turning up the cards from the nice neat row in front of her. Well there's only so long that you can get away with that!

It's worth knowing what the rules are regarding all this stuff, not least so that you can protect yourself from other student's misinformation.

On the current trick, so long as your side has not led or played to the next trick, declarer or either defender may, until she has turned her own card face down on the table, require that all cards just played to the trick, be turned up. It's important to know that you needn't feel rushed into playing the next trick just because the opponents have quitted their tricks.

Until a card is played to the next trick, declarer or either defender may look at, but not expose her own last card played.

So now Peg knows. Until next time.

♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠

The Bridge Players Dictionary as defined in the Laws

AUCTION. The process of determining the contract by means of successive calls

The Alternate Bridge Players Dictionary by Larry Bennett

AUCTION. A series of mental and physical contortions by which means a pair can accurately bypass the last making contract.

Use classroom equipment at home

Available from the Bridge Shop

Pellisier tables - folding wood tables	£85.00
798mm square; Mahogany coloured frame; folding for easy stacking	
De-luxe Club table	£69.90
Club tables - folding plastic tables	£55.95
Black with metal legs; top 34 inches square	
Corded velvet table covers - Green, wine or blue	£14.35
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NEW!! – Plastic card holder for players who have difficulty holding a fan of cards (set of 4 red, green, yellow, blue)	£ 9.99
Carta Mundi Superluxe playing cards - per dozen	£14.85
Black Jack cards - per pack	
Large figures for easy reading (Min. order 2 packs)	(per pack) £ 1.65
Plastic wallets , set of 16	£13.75

EBU members get a 10% discount on all these items. Prices include VAT.

Books in the ***Really Easy Series***

Really Easy Bidding
 Really Easy Play in No Trumps
 Really Easy Play with Trumps
 Really Easy Mistakes
 Really Easy Competitive Bidding
 Really Easy Defence
 Really Easy Modern Acol
 Really Easy Slams
 Practice Beginning Bridge
 Practice Continuing Bridge

All books in the *Really Easy series*

£9.99

Standard English System Summary Card	£ 2.50
Useful Conventions Summary Card -	£ 2.50

Carriage costs will be added to orders.

Also available EBU Diary and handbook, covering 18 months from August 2007 to January 2009, All members get a free diary, additional copies

£ 4.00

How to order: Telephone 01296 397851 between 9am and 5pm and ask for the Bridge Shop, or send an email to bridge.shop@ebu.co.uk.
 Alternatively, an order can be faxed (01296 317220)

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

Master Point Encouragement for New Players

Master Points are the way we measure a players achievement over a lifetime of playing. You can win a few points in most organised games.

The first ranks can be very hard to achieve for fledgling players, especially in an established club when the top third of the field are very often the same experienced members each week.

Your teacher can issue master points to your group as soon as you can manage twelve boards and so long as you have at least three tables.

At a time when new ranks have been welcomed at the higher end of the Master Point ladder, the Tournament Committee also decided that it was appropriate to review its strategy at the other end of the scale to help encourage new players to aspire to higher accomplishments earlier.

Local Master; New, Your first step on the Master Point Ladder. Points are mostly collected in 10s and 6s so I hope you will feel a suitable sense of achievement on reaching your first target. A pen should drop through your letter box shortly after your points have been registered.



Club Master; is next, just another hundred – for some reason easier than the first.

Area Master; 2nd new level, at 500 points a stepping stone between 200 and a 1,000 (District Master). The stairs get steeper from now on, the next level is County master at 2,500. A full list of categories can be found in your EBU diary on page 5.

All teachers know that students love collecting master points. The added value of earlier acknowledgment and encouragement by the EBU help teachers in particular to provide incentives to their students as they evolve from class room to club room. The new ranks were effective from January 2008.



Quick lesson

Expert players know how to play various card combinations to make the most of what are often quite meagre resources.

Suppose you have A K Q J 9 in one hand and singleton 2 in the other. You cash the tricks from the top. 72% of the time you will make 5 tricks. Some of the time, however, one defender will have at least five cards to the 10 stopping you from making 5 tricks.

It isn't always as simple as that. Suppose you need to make four tricks from A K J 10 opposite 5 4 3 2. How do you think you should proceed? You could cash the ace and king hoping to drop the queen; you could finesse the jack, hoping the queen is in the right place.

The correct answer is a combination of the two. Play the ace first (you might drop the singleton queen) and then finesse the jack on the second round. There is still only a 53% chance that it will work – but it is the best chance you have.

Added Value

The whole point of the auction is to try and determine a suit fit with partner and then play at a level that can sustain the combined value of your hands.

The partnership will need to have a combined point count of at least twenty five to be able to sustain a game level contract. Anything less than that and you will have to settle for a part score. Or will you?

Once you have determined an eight-card (or more) suit fit with partner, additional considerations come into to play as to whether the combined value of the hands will make more tricks than the point count indicates.

Partner opens 1♥ and you hold this, how do you respond?

♠ A654
♥ KQ87
♦ Void
♣ 98762

We have nine points and excellent support for partner's heart suit. We are certainly worth a raise, but to what level?

The point count of between six and nine indicates that a raise to 2♥ is appropriate but the *added value* of the void in diamonds means that the hand is worth more than the point count indicates. Why is that?

Well, unlike a no trump contract the defenders cannot score any diamond tricks because declarer can ruff. We can therefore upgrade the *value* of our hand.

Once we have determined the heart fit with partner we can add *added value* points to our high card points.

With a void add **five points** to your hand:

With a singleton add **three points** to your hand:

With a doubleton add **one point** to your hand:

Let us re-evaluate our hand. We have a heart fit with partner. We have nine high card points and we can add five points for our void. That makes fourteen points. Partner has at least twelve points to open the bidding – that makes a combined point count of at least twenty six points. We are now worth a game-bid of 4♥.

♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠

Coping with very big hands

During your *Bridge for All* course you learn how to open very strong hands such as

♠	AK
♥	3
♦	AKJ654
♣	AKJ8

It's easy to open the hand 2♣ - the strongest possible opening. Such hands are pretty rare.

Imagine your surprise when partner opens the bidding 1♠ before you have had a chance to speak. After picking yourself up off the floor you have to decide how to reply with this monster hand.

What do you know? Partner has at least 12 points and four spades. 12 points plus your 23 makes 35 so immediately you start thinking of bidding a slam. But how to get there? You do not have to leap to 4NT (Blackwood asking for aces) straightaway. If you just bid 2♦ partner will make another bid – he promised to do that when he opened. So partner bids 2♥ which shows five spades and four hearts. Not ideal but now you can ask for aces - 4NT and partner bids 5♦ showing the fourth ace. This hand just gets better and better. Now 5NT asks for kings and partner bids 6♦ showing the missing king. Wow! Christmas and Easter all rolled into one. All that's left is for you to bid 7NT with a flourish.

Lets say that North leads a club. How do you play it?

♠	AK	♠	J10643
♥	3	♥	AK102
♦	AKJ654	♦	Q3
♣	AKJ8	♣	Q2

There are plenty of top tricks – 14 in fact (2 spades, 2 hearts, 6 diamonds and 4 clubs) but you just have to be careful not to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. One of the mantras I regularly keep telling my students is to 'play high cards from the short suit first'. In other words when you play the clubs or diamonds for the first time you should win with the queen. If you don't you run the risk of blocking the suit with no way back.

Just suppose you play it like this – win the ♣A, play ♠AK, ♦A, small diamond to ♦Q, cash ♣Q, play off ♥AK. Now you are stuck in the East hand, with all the winners in the West hand and nowhere to go!

The correct line is to win ♣Q, cash ♦Q, diamond back cashing 5 tricks, cash 3 top clubs, ♠AK and heart to ace. And if the diamonds happen to be unkind and break 5-0 – well you can dine out on your bad luck for years to come. (Luckily they weren't)

♣♦♥♠♣♦♥♠♣♦♥♠♣♦♥♠

So you think that maybe you are too old to learn bridge?

Just in case you thought that age is an issue when learning to play bridge it seems that any age between 4 years old to 90 years old is about the right age to play.

Boris Schapiro

(b. 1909 d. 2002)

Of London, England. World Grand Master. World Champion 1955, second World Teams 1960, World Pairs 1962. Won European Teams 1948, 1949, 1954, 1963. Won Sunday Times Invitational Pairs 1964, second 1991 at the age of **81**. Won World Senior Pairs playing with Irving Gordon in Lille 1998, aged **89**. Many national wins include Gold Cup 11 times, the most recent being in 1998 aged **89**. Boris was a bridge columnist for the Sunday Times.

Or maybe too Young?

Shivam Shah

(b. 1993 -)

Junior Bridge Player Shivam Shah from North London has been nominated for the male junior sports personality of the year at the British Asian Sports awards. Shivam has been playing competitive bridge since he was **four** years old. At **seven** he won a local competition and became the youngest in the world to win a bridge tournament, at the age of **ten** he won a silver medal at the world junior championships and at the age of **eleven** he was selected to play for the U20's team becoming the youngest player to represent England. Shivam is now 15 and plays his bridge in Northaw, Hertfordshire.

Julia Chadwick

(b.1886 – d. 1991)

Before I worked for the EBU I lived in Devon and had a proper job as a maths teacher. I used to play occasionally at Torquay Bridge Club in the late 70s where I first encountered a formidable bridge player called Julia Chadwick. Julia not only played at the club but went all over the country playing in major competitions. In her 100th year she went to her regular events including Kings Lynn, Peebles as well as her home congress in Torquay having a 100th Birthday party in each one. She continued to play at the club until she was 103. She died in 1991 aged 105.



Simultaneous Pairs Results

The Autumn Education Simultaneous Pairs featured several different events for different groups of people.

Bridge for All MiniBridge (197 pairs)

Pos	Pair Name	%
1	Alister Press & Anne Press (<i>Broadstairs Bridge Club</i>)	74.57
2	Nick Horslen & Julie Horslen (<i>South Bucks Bridge Centre Wednesday</i>)	71.21
3	Ian Gray & Patsy Gray (<i>South Bucks Bridge Centre Wednesday</i>)	70.01



John Cox presents engraved plaques presented by ECats Bridge to the winners Alistair and Anne Press.

Bridge for All year 2 (231 pairs)

Pos	Pair Name	%
1	Ken Cooper & Rosemary Boardman (<i>Tisbury</i>)	76.88
2	Ruth March & Nigel March (<i>Camberley Weds Group</i>)	75.14
3	Janet Barnes & Lyndon Day (<i>Mid Essex Bridge Club</i>)	73.60
4	Pauline Lazenby & Sheila Selbie (<i>Brighthouse Bridge Club</i>)	72.97
5	Dave Bender & Judy Edwards (<i>Greenwich Community College</i>)	72.86
6	Chris MacAndrew & John Guy (<i>Pitchcombe Bridge Club</i>)	72.40

Schools MiniBridge (50 pairs)

Pos	Pair Name	%
1	Scott Hobbs & Louis Bissex (<i>Claremont School</i>)	67.96
2	Chris Derrick & Jack Penman (<i>Blatchington Mill School</i>)	67.34
3	Alex Carter (Hurworth Sec) & James Carter (Heathfield) (<i>St Georges Bridge Centre, Darlington</i>)	66.01

Schools Bridge (115 pairs)

Pos	Pair Name	%
1	Jonathan Lee & Gwilym Elstone (<i>Loughborough Grammar School</i>)	74.65
2	Rye & Holmes (<i>Loughborough Grammar School</i>)	74.53
3	Thomas Street (Yarm) & Harry Runnacles (Yarm) (<i>Sr Georges Bridge Centre, Darlington</i>)	73.03
4	James Herring & Scott Boardman (<i>Loughborough Grammar School</i>)	73.00
5	Aaron Cullen & Sunil Dhanda (<i>Hastingsbury</i>)	72.03
6	Ming Ming Mei & Weiye Yang (<i>The Perse School</i>)	70.46

Here is one of the hands from the MiniBridge Simultaneous Pairs

<p>♠ KQ42 ♥ A92 ♦ 63 ♣ AJ104</p> <p>♠ 973 ♠ J106 ♥ 853 ♥ QJ104 ♦ KQJ82 ♦ 1095 ♣ 86 ♣ K52</p> <p>♠ A85 ♥ K76 ♦ A74 ♣ Q973</p>		<p>Board 3 : Dealer South</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>14</td><td>7</td><td>13</td></tr></table> <p>Declarer: North</p> <p>Lead : ♥Q – top of a sequence.</p> <p>North and South both have balanced hands and North should prefer game in no trumps rather than clubs. Nine tricks should be easier than eleven! The heart lead is a good one for declarer. Win the ♥K and finesse the club which loses, but now you have four spade tricks (they break 3-3), two hearts, a diamond and three clubs making ten tricks.</p>	West	North	East	South	6	14	7	13
West	North	East	South							
6	14	7	13							

The main difference between MiniBridge and real bridge is that in MiniBridge the declarer is determined by the player within the partnership who has the most points. In real bridge you have to bid for the right to be declarer.

On the above hand bridge players will probably bid the hand like this

West	North	East	South		West	North	East	South
			1NT	or				1NT
Pass	3NT	pass	pass		pass	2♣	pass	2♦
Pass					pass	3NT	pass	pass
					Pass			

First year students will bid as in the first auction; second year students who have learnt Stayman should bid as in the second auction. North tries to find a 4-4 spade fit, but when South bids 2♦, North settles for 3NT.

Either way, it doesn't matter. Since South bid no trumps first he is declarer and West is on lead. West will lead ♦K – top of a sequence.

South should count his tricks – 3 spades on top (4 because the opponents suit breaks 3-3), 2 hearts, 1 diamond and 1 club. But that only comes to 8 so a bit of work has to be done. The extra trick can come from the clubs.

Can you see what happens if South wins ♦A straightaway? He has to take the club finesse but that loses to East's king who returns a diamond to put the contract one down.

How can South do better? You do not have to win a trick just because you can. So you don't have to win the ♦A immediately – you can duck or hold-up. West will play a second diamond and South ducks again. West plays a third diamond and South wins with the ace. Now you take the club finesse which loses to East.

Why is that better? Well East does not have a diamond to return, so West can never get the lead again. You make 10 tricks, losing two diamonds and a club.

Remember that when you make the opening lead you usually lead your best suit so it is quite normal for East to lead one suit and West to lead another and the play of the hand changes because of it.

The people on the playing cards

by D. J. McAdam

Who are the figures on the court cards in a standard deck of playing cards supposed to represent?

It is a simple question, but one with two different answers. If we're speaking of English playing cards and their descendants (which would include American playing cards), the answer is "no one." This answer is the one most scholars would agree on, based on historical research. It is also the answer most people would be dissatisfied with, because most of us seem to have heard (or think that we've heard) of a list of the people represented on the face cards, and just can't remember who's who. Isn't one of the kings Richard the Lion-Hearted? Isn't one of the Queens Cleopatra?



So then - now that we've tipped our hat to the scholars, let's get on with it. The **traditional** associations of persons with playing cards - the *meanings* of playing cards, if you will - are as follows:

<i>Playing Card</i>	<i>Historical Personage</i>
King of Hearts	Charlemagne
Queen of Hearts	Judith (of the Book of Judith, an Apocryphal Book of the Bible)
Jack of Hearts	"La Hire," a famous French warrior a.k.a. Etienne de Vignoles
King of Spades	King David
Queen of Spades	Pallas, a.k.a. Minerva
Jack of Spades	Hogier the Dane, one of Charlemagne's paladins
King of Diamonds	Julius Caesar
Queen of Diamonds	Rachel (of the Bible)
Jack of Diamonds	Hector of Troy alternately, Roland of France
King of Clubs	Alexander the Great
Queen of Clubs	Argine An anagram of Regina
Jack of Clubs	Lancelot

Bibliography

The only book to discuss this subject at length is the now out-of-print *Playing Cards: History of the Pack and Explanations of Its Many Secrets*, by W. Gurney Bentham. (London, Spring Books.)



Brighton 2008
11th – 13th August
Really Easy Congress
- especially for you



Monday

2pm to 4pm Pre-congress instruction session

7.15pm Welcome

7.30pm Pairs game

Tuesday

10.30am 'Improving your Bridge' presentation

2.00pm Pairs game

8.00pm Pairs game

Wednesday

11.00am Final pairs game which includes short
lunch break (lunch is not included)

4.00pm End of event

The bridge is split into two sections.

First section: for 1st and 2nd year students

Second Section: for players with up to a maximum of 5000 Master Points.

Players are welcome to extend their stay in Brighton and take part in the
Open Pairs on Thursday and/or Friday afternoon or the Mixed Pairs on
Thursday evening.

Entry fee:

The entry fee for this event is just £24 per person, and will include four
bridge sessions and attendance (optional) at the morning seminar.

To enter: 01296 317 203/5

Metropole Hotel rates midweek.

£55.65 pp b&b based on two sharing. £20 single room sup.

To Book: ☎ 01273 775432

Master Points awarded on National Scale, including a modest Green Point award.