



The SBU Monthly News

September 2022

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(August 2022)

Contributions to the Monthly News should be sent to the editor: liz.mcgowan@blueyonder.co.uk

What's on Offer in October

National Events

National events will be run online till at least the end of the year

The **Diamond Trophy** is our Senior Pairs Championship. (You have to be aged 63+ on 1st January 2022)

It will run on BBO on **Sunday 16 October**, as a Simultaneous Pairs with heats in your District.

Entry fee = 15 BBO\$ per person, payable on the day.

Entries should be made in advance via your District website

The **Lord Thomson Trophy** is our National Simultaneous Pairs

Heats are run in the clubs on the week beginning **Monday 17 October**.

Check your club website to see whether your club is running a heat.

You can play in more than one heat: different boards are used on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, but Thursday and Friday play the same boards.

The event is run by ECats, and there will be a commentary on the hands played.

Entry fees may vary from club to club



Gold Cup: Not too late to enter Britain's most prestigious teams event.

Scottish teams eliminated in the early rounds get free entry into the Gold Cup Plate (Marion Hill Trophy)

So if you have enjoyed your online matches why not give it a go?

National (Red) points are awarded

Entries to the BGB Secretary, Sandra Claridge.

Closing date for the 2023 event is 3rd October.

You will find an entry form on the BGB site: [Bridge Great Britain, United Kingdom \(bridgewebs.com\)](https://www.bridgewebs.com)

Congress News

The next **Overseas Congress** will take place on the Greek island of Rhodes from **9th to 15th May 2023**.



The venue is the Hotel Mediterranean which is within 10 minutes walking distance of Rhodes town centre with its numerous bars and tavernas and 20 minutes walking distance of the old town with its meandering lanes and markets. It is on the beach and enjoys magnificent sea views across to Turkey.

The programme allows time to take in all the things you will undoubtedly want to do, including relaxing in luxurious surroundings either by the hotel's secluded private swimming pool, on the beach or in a taverna. Rhodes town is steeped in history as is Lindos which you can visit either by road or by boat from Rhodes ferry port. And whether you arrive at Rhodes airport or at the ferry port having

flown to Athens or Crete or one of the many other jewels of the Mediterranean, and taken an onward boat trip to Rhodes, you will be met and transferred to the hotel within the price quoted.

(Please note that you must arrange your own flights, but this should give you flexibility and it may be to your advantage to book your flight early to get the best price.)

Programme details are available on the SBU website: [Scottish Bridge Union \(SBU\) Home Page](https://www.scottishbridgeunion.co.uk)

Booking through Guaranteed Events (formerly Bridge Overseas) via sales@gebos.group (01656 747-700).

The Casebook of Samantha Spade, Bridge Detective

The Case of Avoiding Pitfalls

It was a stifflingly hot summer day – even Miss Samantha Spade had rejected her customary Earl Grey for an iced tea complete with a sprig of mint. I was sitting North and dealer at a table well out of the direct sunshine, but still baking hot, when I was dealt this hand:

♠ AK
♥ A642
♦ KT72
♣ AJ5

It was easy to bid: I opened 1♥, my partner responded 1NT and, adding her 6+HCP to my 19 HCP, I bid 3NT.

Even better, I thought – I could have a few sips of ice-cold water while my partner played the hand.

As ever, Miss Spade courteously thanked me when I laid down my hand with a flourish – it was a thing of beauty, and I felt a degree of pride in it (why I'm not sure as I hadn't actually created it). I then floated off into autopilot.

My partner paused for a moment or two when I laid down the cards and then nodded to herself as if she had reached a decision. She won the opening lead of the ♠Q with the ♠A. She then called for the ♦7 – and whether due to the warmth and my drowsy state – my fingers almost played the ♦2.

Samantha sighed gently and re-iterated "I actually asked for the ♦7."

I duly played the correct card and Miss Spade played the ♦A from her hand. Both opponents followed suit. She played over to the ♦K in dummy and then the ♦T which she overtook with the ♦Q. She then produced the ♦6 and 5. She made 5 diamond tricks, the ♠AK, the ♥A and the ♣A, nine tricks and contract made.

Afterwards, I asked about the odd way she had played the diamond suit. Samantha sighed patiently and explained. She drew out the whole deal:

	♠ AK	Dealer
	♥ A642	North
	♦ KT72	
	♣ AJ5	
♠ QJT42		♠ 985
♥ JT7		♥ KQ93
♦ 8		♦ J94
♣ QT86		♣ K32
	♠ 763	
	♥ 85	
	♦ AQ653	
	♣ 974	

"I could see I had woken you up when I asked for the ♦7," she began with a twinkle in her eye, "but can you see what would have happened if I had not?"

I tried unsuccessfully to look alert but had to hang my head, "I'm sorry, I just can't see it!"

"I blame this heatwave, it's almost too hot to think", Miss Spade replied. "I play the ♦2 to the Ace, then I play the ♦3 to the ♦K, followed by the ♦7 to the ♦Q. What happens then?"

"Oh, I see it now – you'd be left with the ♦T in dummy – and no way of getting back to the low, fifth diamond in your hand – there are no other entries. You'd have been blocked and probably one down!"

"Yes, indeed. Instead, I played the ♦7 to the ♦A – and as both opponents follow, I know my five diamond tricks are, to use the vernacular, in the bag – as long as I have unblocked. Then I play the ♦3 over to the ♦K – "

– "Followed by the ♦T over to the ♦Q – again to unblock. And the ♦6 and 5 are just waiting there for you to play!" I interrupted, but Miss Spade merely smiled indulgently.

"You know, there is hope for you yet! You may notice that I take a little time to plan the play when dummy goes down – and if the contract looks very easy, I look for any potential pitfalls – and do my best to avoid them."

"I only hope I can recognise it when I see it!"

I felt that Miss Spade agreed to that comment with a great deal more alacrity and enthusiasm than was maybe warranted.

It should be said that when I went home, I also dealt out the diamond suit and played it out both ways and can recommend it as a good way of seeing and solving the problem!

Helen Taylor



Internet Bridge – Another Development or a Bridge Too Far?

Alice Cowieson



Once upon a time four people sat round a card table with a pack of cards, a pencil and paper and possibly some ha'pennies. This was bridge or rubber bridge. A social occasion with a friendly bet on the side, often accompanied by alcoholic drinks and a possible cigar.

Sound familiar? Yes, many people still play that way. And why not? My first experience of playing bridge outwith lessons was a social afternoon with cups of tea and home baking while my new friends and I struggled to learn this complicated game from scratch. We attended lessons then tried to practice what we had learned. I had no idea then how much bridge was to take over my life!

The next stage was to join a club. The small local one didn't have bidding boxes and cards were dealt by hand then placed in the card holder to pass on, with a paper traveller detailing the scores in the back. Results were announced the next week once the TD had calculated it by hand. Many clubs still work happily that way.

And why not? There can be difficulties as I found. I had been partnered with a friendly elderly gentleman who was unfortunately rather deaf. Bids therefore had to be shouted loudly at our table so the whole room could hear what was happening.

By now I had been encouraged to go to Dundee Bridge Club for a learning play session and had discovered Bridgemates and computers were involved in this game I was getting hooked on. Hands were pre-dealt by computer and records of the hands were given to us at the end along with a sheet with the printed results. While we played and leaned in a small upstairs room, I was aware of how many people seemed to fill the rest of the club and how silent and serious everyone was. However, when these quiet members had a break, chat and laughter then filled the rooms. I rather liked the atmosphere. Bridge was obviously a serious game played by sociable people.

Back at my local club I told them of my discoveries.

"Computer dealt hands! Don't want that here. They are rigged to be as difficult as possible."

"Can't be doing with all that computer nonsense!"

"It's alright for those big clubs – loads of money."

Oh well, change isn't always welcome or even needed. I continued to attend DBC, though, and took more classes. On completing our last class, we were told that we were to take part in a national competition, run by the Scottish Bridge Union, which apparently was the overarching organisers of bridge. This sounded very grand. My partner of the night and I won the evening! How wonderful. Then our scores were compared with other class members throughout Scotland. Consulting the SBU results, we discovered that our percentage had gone down and another pair from our heat had overtaken us. How did this happen? The explanation was a little beyond my understanding at the time but I was cheered when the club result was published in the DBC magazine "The Grand Slam". My first mention in the magazine I was later to edit for 8 years.

My move from my local club to DBC was laughed at in some quarters. Dire warnings about serious competition and unpleasant players were passed on from others worried that it would put me off. They were right about the competition and, yes, some unpleasant people but wrong about it putting me off. I joined the Board of Directors, became the secretary and eventually President. I helped make the club a welcoming place for all levels of players as, along with all bridge clubs, numbers were dropping. The SBU started the Better Behaviour programme and started placing some emphasis on Bronze players, who make up the largest group of members. All this we embraced, but did I hear someone mutter, "Why should I be chatty and friendly. Bridge isn't just fun – it's war!" Against the tide, our numbers remained steady. Our classes were well attended. We offered opportunities for all levels to play. The club was a busy place. In 2019 as I finished my presidential year, we were noticing a dip in our top-level completion nights. Measures were starting to be put in place to combat this. Had the pendulum swung too far? Then March 2020 – shut down!

We all know what happened then. DBC, like other clubs, was helped by the SBU to go online. Computer bridge in the shape of BBO was introduced to our members. I for one had only vaguely heard of online bridge but some of our members had been playing regularly for years. All members were offered help to get on board with this new way of playing but not all took it up. The general age of members was looked on as a factor in this.

"I can't use a computer. I'm too old for new skills"

However, we had two 90 year-olds who managed to get there! Why were people not playing?

"It's full of rude people. You can be shoved off the table."

"I don't want to waste my time looking at a screen."

"People can cheat easily."

"They have these horrible robots."

Membership numbers dropped that first year, mainly people for whom DBC was not their home club. Supporting one club was enough when play was so limited. Soon play was not limited. The SBU put all competitions online and because people didn't have to travel, these attracted numbers not seen in clubs for a number of years. New competitions were launched, congresses went online. A divide appeared. Members who played online and those who didn't. When restrictions eased some smaller, non-affiliated clubs started up. Member numbers dropped again the second year. But we had some members join to take part in our competitions who lived in England, America, Switzerland. We also had visitors, members of the SBU but sometimes not a member of any club. Through government grants, donations and the income from BBO, the club was managing to just hold its head above water financially.

March 2022, almost two years to the day, the club re-opened. Gently, one afternoon, then two, soon the first evening. Three sessions compared to the six before lockdown. We're about to start another round of membership fees. Will enough people come back? Numbers at the face-to-face sessions are growing, but slowly. Two sessions remain online.

The bridge world seems now to be divided into two camps. Those who want face-to-face and those who want the internet. Or should that be three camps, with some wanting their club nights face-to-face and their national competitions online? Does playing online allow for a raising of standards as the better players can compete against each other virtually? Can a club be a club if it's only online? Can you have your cake and eat it?

"And why not?" I hear some say.

Without sufficient players, the physical clubs will not survive. Many have already gone. How will people like me find this marvellous hobby? I don't want my club to change. I liked it the way it was. Am I just not moving with the times? The internet saved our bridge during the past two years but will it prove to be the final nail in the coffin of sociable yet serious bridge clubs?

Bridge Clubs with their own premises have the same expenses whether they are full of enthusiastic players or half-empty. Perhaps they might try to create some extra income by renting out a meeting place for other organisations?

The Carlton Bridge Club in Edinburgh used to host the local Scrabble Club; smaller bridge clubs used to meet within the premises of the Melville BC.

Here is one suggestion:



New Melville BC

Saturday 15 October 11am-6pm

With a return to SBU competitions Face to Face still (hopefully only) months away, the New Melville Bridge Club is vacant most weekends. This is not good news for the club. Ways are sought for using the premises.

On 15th October, the Melville will host a FOCAL Countdown Club tournament. This is a national club for fans of the popular Channel 4 TV show (Weekdays at 2.10).

If you play along with the TV show, why not come along and play for real? The tournament is run along "Swiss" lines, so you will play most of the day against people at about your standard.

Entry is £10 and further details can be found here. <https://focalcountdown.co.uk/edinburgh-2022>

Ten Basic Rules of Etiquette

“Be polite to your partner and your opponents... Bridge after all is only a game.”

1. Be nice, smile. No matter how good or poor your bridge, you are an Ambassador for the game. You can drive people away or you can make them love it.... **We need people.**

2. Don't Gloat. Don't compliment yourselves on a bid or the play of the hand until the opponents leave the table. Also, don't thank an opponent for a good board or a trick you shouldn't get. **This makes people feel bad and makes you look like a jerk.**

3. Don't give lessons to anyone at the table. If your opponent or partner wants to know what they did wrong or how to better play or bid a hand they will ask.

4. Don't tell opponents or winners how lucky they are. Don't undermine their successes. You only make yourself look like a poor loser and a poor sport... **Be gracious.**

5. Learn not to get offended when a director is called on you. This is part of the game. The director is there to protect everyone and especially the integrity of the game.

6. Keep your voice even and the gestures consistent when bidding or playing the hands. Don't snap your cards or make any unusual movements to get your point across... **Be ethical.**

7. When on lead against a contract, LEAD and then write down the contract on your scorecard... Same thing for dummy, lay your hand down and then write down the contract.

8. Don't discuss the hands until the round is over. This takes time like #7 and it is rude.

9. Help the director. His / her job is tough enough without you adding to their problems.

10. Don't make decisions that the director should be making, even if you know the rule.

The number one way we humans learn most things in life, but particularly social behaviour, is by mimicking the behaviour of the more experienced ones. If this is you, then you are a role model for the newer players. And, if you feel the need to have a word with someone, always do it one-on-one away from the table, and preferably after play has finished. Maybe say something like “would you mind if I offer a suggestion?”

These suggestions come from the website of the New Melville BC.

Perhaps you have some others you would like to share ?

Quick Quiz

Mike Gallacher



1 Putting it All Together (defender)

North ♠AQ7 ♥J863 ♦72 ♣KJ83	
	East ♠K8 ♥92 ♦A85 ♣AT9652

Bidding

North	South
-	1♠
2♣	2♥
3♥	4♥
Pass	

You are East, and declarer is in 4♥

a) What can you deduce from the auction?

West leads the ♦3.

b) Can you estimate the distribution and HCP in each hand?

c) How are you going to defeat the contract?

2 Putting it All Together (declarer)

North ♠T42 ♥KJT72 ♦A83 ♣Q6
South ♠A ♥AQ863 ♦QT42 ♣J43

Bidding

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♦	1♥
1♠	4♥	All Pass	

The ♦6 is led.

a) What do you know from the bidding and the opening lead?

b) How many winners and losers can you see?

c) What if any, dangers are there?

d) How are you going to make the contract?

It's a Funny Old Game

The Tale of the Biter Bit.

This hand, featuring Wily Bob McPaul, was dealt in a Scottish Camrose Trial many years ago:

Board 5	♠A976 ♥T873 ♦KT94 ♣8	NS Vul Dealer E									
♠QJ85 ♥AKJ52 ♦8732 ♣—	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠T2 ♥964 ♦J6 ♣KJT543
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠K43 ♥Q ♦AQ5 ♣AQ9762										

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	-	Pass	1♣
Dbl	1♠	Pass	3NT
End			

The 1♠ response was supposedly 7-13 balanced, a clever ploy designed to make the stronger hand declarer. Bob duly punted 3NT. Partner's club holding was disappointing, but the contract had chances: he might make 2 spades, 1 heart, 4 diamonds and 2 clubs with the aid of a finesse

West led the ♥K, and East, playing Upside Down Count, dropped the ♥9. South's ♥Q clarified the heart position for West, and he continued with a low heart to keep communication with his partner.

It had been a long weekend, and East discarded a low club on dummy's heart winner. When reminded that he was required to follow suit he produced a sheepish ♥6. The ♣3 became a Penalty Card.

The Laws of Contract Bridge are quite complex, but some familiarity with them can be a useful asset. Bob knew that if he lost a trick to West while the ♣3 was still exposed he could require West to lead a club.

Why risk a finesse when you can compel an opponent to lead into your AQ? Bob ran the ♠6, and, when West won the ♠8, politely requested a club lead.

His plan was flawed. West cannot be compelled to lead a club when he does not hold one. Instead he cashed three hearts for one down.

It was rather embarrassing to fail in a cold contract. And quite annoying to realise you have missed a trick.

An Even Wilier Player, such as Extra Careful Jones, leads a **heart** from dummy at trick 3. When West is void in clubs he can cash 3 hearts, but the club finesse is now a sure thing.

Results Page

Some results from events run over the Summer

Bronze League 11

These are the winners of the 5 Divisions

Division 1	COLINTON FOUR (Ian & Sue Campbell, Moira & Norman Poyser, Robert Hickling)	86.46 VP
Division 2	KESTREL BLUES (Roger Rist, Ross Angus, Margaret J Clark, Fiona Cockburn, Gail Corbett, Marian Duff)	78.34 VP
Division 3	HIGH SCHOOL of GLASGOW (Danny Hamilton, Michael Kennedy, Harry Stuart, Aidan Woodley, Kevin Ren, Alexander Duncan)	75.12 VP
Division 4	6 HEARTS (Stewart Green, Helen Noble, Jonathan Gibson, Flora Brodie, Jo Walker, Susan Middleton)	93.42 VP
Division 5	ABERDOUR HARBOUR (Tony & Marianne Hausler; John Bielski, Betty Bielska)	67.33 VP

A correction to the Winning Team of SOL 7, Division 1, the **Victor Silverstone Trophy**

The team was **Jason Hackett, Paul Hackett, John Sansom, Brian Senior, Clive Owen**

Apologies for omitting John Sansom and wrongly including an extra Hackett (Justin) and Diego Brenner in last month's issue

The Stirling Pairs

The first National event of the new season was run on BBO on **Saturday 16 September**.

68 pairs took part in a Swiss Pairs with 16 rounds of 3 boards

The Tournament Director was Horst Kopleck and the event was scored by Liz Forbes.

1	Martin Bateman & Callum McKail	60.92%
2	Mike McGinley & David Wiseman	60.55%
3	Alex Adamson & Gints Freimanis	57.47%
4	John Dick & Kevin Strathern	57.25%
5	John Burn & Ian McClure	56.01%
6	Liam O'Brien & Ronan Valentine	55.16%
7	Tim McKay & Derrick Peden	55.10%
8	Peter Hodgson & Ileen MacGregor	54.87%
9	Howard Greenwell & Angus Macdonald	54.84%
10	Roy Bennett & Harry Smith	54.25%

Master Point Promotions

August 2022

Life Master

Alison Carmichael	C
Marilyn Silverdale	W

National Master

Peter Braid	E
David MacDonald	W

Scottish Master

Marc Shearer	C
Aileen Stone	H

Regional Master

Rob Boulton-Jones	W
Daniel Corbett	N
John Scrimgeour	N

3 Star Master

Bill Crighton	N
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2 Star Master

Kathleen Don	C
Robert Thornton	E

1 Star Master

Ian Campbell	E
Sylvia Daly	A
Maggie Greer	E
Roy Roxburgh	N

Master

Anne Aitken	H
Patricia Gilmore	E
David Hartley	W
Sandy Kirkwood	E
Stephen Levinson	D

District Master

Gordon Fraser	W
Helen Henderson	E
Kenneth Latham	E
Murdo Morrison	E

Local Master

Charlotte Andrew	E
Tricia Bennett	A
Jamie Day	D
John Gillespie	N
Michael Kennedy	D
Carole Ann Malcolm	E

Club Master

Carol Byres	W
Patricia Collins	W
Avril Dennis	H
Judith Kerr	W
Tamsin Munro	N
Julie O'Brien	W
Joanna Osborne	H

Answers to Quiz

- 1) a) From the bidding you can estimate that South has 5+ spades and 4+ hearts and 12+hcps. North has 10+hcps and 4+ clubs and 4 hearts.
 - b) From the lead of the $\spadesuit 3$ you know partner has 4 diamonds; North has 2, South therefore has 4. So South's distribution is 5=4=4=0; and West is 3=3=4=3 North has 11 HCP, you have 11, South must have at least 11, so partner has at most 7
 - c) you can see 3 tricks in your own hand, the 2 minor suit aces and the $\spadesuit K$. Perhaps partner has the $\heartsuit Q$... Win the first trick with the $\spadesuit A$ and lead a club, causing declarer to ruff, When declarer finesses the $\spadesuit Q$ win your King and return a club causing declarer to ruff again, losing control of the trump suit. (declarer held only 4 hearts) so that you make your $\spadesuit A$. (Yes declarer might run the club, but would you?)
- 2) a) Opponents have bid diamonds and spades and you also know from looking at dummy that they have clubs.
 - b) Off the top the winners are 1Spade 5Hearts and 1 diamond. Losers are 2 clubs and possibly 2 diamonds
 - c) You see 7 diamonds between your hand and dummy. If East has 5 diamonds then West's lead is a singleton. The danger is if you duck the opening lead, East will win the $\spadesuit K$. give partner a diamond ruff and regain the lead with a top club for a second ruff, making 4 tricks for the defence
- To save yourself heartache win the opening lead with the diamond $\spadesuit A$, draw trump and play a diamond towards your Queen. You will lose a diamond trick and 2 clubs.