



# The SBU Monthly News

**May 2022**

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*Contributions to the Monthly News should be sent to the editor: [liz.mcgowan@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:liz.mcgowan@blueyonder.co.uk)*

# What's on Offer in June

## International Events

The **European Bridge Championships** are happening in Madeira from **12-22 June**.

Scotland are sending 3 teams (no Women's Team this time).

Our teams are:

<b>Open:</b>	<b>Alex Adamson &amp; Derek Sanders</b> <b>Steve Levinson &amp; Barnet Shenkin</b>	<b>Archie Bouverie &amp; Finlay Marshall</b> npc <b>Anne Perkins</b>
<b>Senior:</b>	<b>Mike Ash &amp; Bob Ferrari</b> <b>Sandy Duncan &amp; Bob McPaul</b>	<b>Roy Bennett &amp; Harry Smith</b> npc <b>Jim Hay</b>
<b>Mixed:</b>	<b>Gints Freimanis &amp; Liz McGowan</b> <b>Stephen Peterkin &amp; Sam Punch</b>	<b>Fiona McQuaker &amp; Brian Short</b>

The European Bridge League publish results and Daily Bulletins on their website: [www.eurobridge.org](http://www.eurobridge.org)

You can also (intermittently) get running scores in each match.

There will be extensive VuGraph coverage on BBO where you can watch the experts in action.

**The Championships also include **Women and Seniors Pairs** from 12-15 June.**

These are open to all members of the SBU – a unique opportunity to play against some of Europe's best.

You have to pay your own way – but why not combine it with a summer holiday in Madeira?

Closing date for entries is May 29 – details on the website [www.eurobridge.org](http://www.eurobridge.org)

## Weekly Events

The SBU runs these events **on BBO** for your enjoyment in the summer season

Tuesdays at 7pm:	Match Pointed Pairs
Saturdays at 7pm:	Swiss Pairs
Saturdays at 11.45 am:	Bronze Brunch
Sundays at 3 pm:	Teatime Individual

To enter go to [www.bridgebase.com](http://www.bridgebase.com). Click on **Play or Watch Bridge**; then select **Competitive** from the menu.

Under **Tournaments** click on **All Tournaments**. Enter **sbu** in the search box (top right).

Select your tournament and when your partner is online invite them to play, using their BBO nickname.

Payment is made in BBO\$, you can purchase those by clicking on the shopping cart next to your name.

## Other Events

Your Club and District also run tournaments. For details consult their websites.

Go to <https://www.sbu.org.uk>. Click on **Districts** to find the one that applies to you.

You will find your **local club website** on your District site.

If you can support a local tournament in these tough times for clubs please do!

## The Casebook of Samantha Spade, Bridge Detective

### The Case of the Elusive Suit

I was sitting in the café area of the bridge club, sandwich in front of me and a cup of coffee growing increasingly cold. I was examining a copy of the hand records from the previous evening and there was one hand in particular that was puzzling me. I had gone off in my contract while others had made it and I wanted to work out what should have happened. I was still lost in thought when there was a slight cough. Miss Spade had settled into a chair beside me with her cup of Earl Grey and was announcing her presence in her usual understated manner.

"You are trying to solve a bridge problem, I perceive," Miss Spade smiled. "Would you like to share it?" I showed her the hand with some alacrity:

None Vul	♠ KQ4	Dealer
	♥ A6	South
	♦ AJT5	
	♣ JT65	
♠ 873		♠ 965
♥ QJT98		♥ 7542
♦ 943		♦ K87
♣ A4		♣ K3
	♠ AJT2	
	♥ K3	
	♦ Q6	
	♣ Q9873	

My partner and I had reached a contract of 3NT, I explained to Miss Spade, myself as declarer in South. The lead was the ♥Q. I won this and set about my work suit, clubs, as I had 9 of them between the hands and only needed to knock out the Ace and King to set up three more tricks. Sadly, our opponents won the ♣K and led back a low heart. This took out my last stop and when West got in with the A♣ he ran off three more heart tricks so I went one off. I noticed that other declarers had made the contract and I couldn't work out how they'd managed it.

Miss Spade sighed gently and explained:

"The problem is your choice of work suit, I'm afraid. I realise that you had more clubs than any other suit, but that doesn't necessarily always mean it's your work suit – and especially after the lead is a heart. You only have one more stopper after the opening lead and so you must know that you cannot possibly establish the club suit before your opponents have established theirs – remember, a NT contract is often a race between declarer and defenders to see who can set up tricks first.

"Your first move should have been to count your top tricks – you have four tricks in spades, two in hearts, leaving you only three more to find. You know you won't be able to set up the clubs as you need to lose the two top tricks, but look at your diamonds. You can run the ♦Q as soon as you win the first trick. In this case it loses to the ♦K, but that doesn't matter: you can win the heart return and then make the three diamond winners in dummy. So, you make your 4 spade tricks, 2 heart tricks and 3 diamond tricks - contract made!"

It was my turn to sigh, ruefully.

"When you explain it, it all seems so easy – I only wish it had been last night!"

Miss Spade smiled gently, "Just remember – when thinking of establishing a work suit, make sure that you have enough stoppers in the opponents' suit to do so – count your losers as well as your winners in NT contract and then you will win the race – speaking of which we should race to our table as the tournament is about to start!"



*Helen Taylor*

*A welcome return of our Dundee author*

## Return to Face-to-Face Forum

### Paul Kerr, a member of the editorial board, writes

A recurrent theme - and one we have in Ayrshire - is the moribund state of F2F bridge.

It is concerning on a number of levels, of course, but key for me is that people have been sucked into either online bridge or, for some [quite a few] simply none at all.

3 years ago there were great numbers: today Troon bridge club [mine] looks like it has died. Now people are stuck in their houses and not getting the joy of human interaction and fun at a real bridge table.

I think on-line bridge on BBO is really great - and has been a life-saver for lots of us. Good for national/regional events maybe, but locally we should aim to get back to F2F. I don't know how the SBU can help press this agenda forward?

I know we 'must embrace change' but it will be good to keep the greatest game alive as a human activity and not a quasi-dead AI/IT only activity.

Quite sad.

*In previous issues we have covered the successful efforts of 2 bridge clubs, **Milnathort** and **Ness**, to get back to normal. These are clubs that hire premises to meet.*

*Here is a report from **Stirling & Union Bridge Club**, which owns its own premises:*

We started face-to-face tournaments at the beginning of October. We had been asked for afternoon Bridge and also for Tuesday evening Bridge. Tuesday evening used to be the "Improvers" night where players started off after the Beginners class but some had kept coming for very many years.

From the start Tuesday evening ran with 5/6 tables with a break over Xmas and also January due to the COVID situation. We have had 5/6 tables since the start of February BUT half the players are well experienced and playing on a Tuesday evening only because it's the only evening session where we can get a minimum of 12 players!

Afternoon Bridge has been a struggle. Monday afternoon needed help to avoid two and a half or three and a half tables. Wednesday afternoon was often cancelled and is suspended at present.

We were asked for Thursday evening but have failed to get three tables most nights since we started at the beginning of February.

From 5 evening sessions and 2 afternoon sessions before Covid this is a bit of a worry!

We know there is a lot of Bridge being played online, not just our two online sessions and the Tryst's two sessions but also a lot of "social" (using WhatsApp or F/T) team of four matches. Since June 2020 I have run a Teams Competition so a lot of people have learned how to set up their own little matches and it has proved very popular with our afternoon players.

We intend to try Friday evening next but after we stop our online Friday competition!!!

**Anne Ritchie**  
President, Stirling and Union BC

*At a recent Zoom Meeting of Bridge Great Britain the English Bridge Union reported a 50% reduction in entries to its events. The Welsh Bridge Union has lost nearly two-thirds of its membership and is struggling.*

*Membership of the SBU is currently approximately 4750, so we are doing rather better, thanks to the sterling work of our Executive, Education and Tournament Committees.*

*But we can surely improve!*

*If you have some spare time and would like to help ....send in your ideas, or volunteer to*

[education@sbu.org.uk](mailto:education@sbu.org.uk)

(See next page)

## Education Matters

### How Do We Recruit More Younger Adults to Learn Bridge?

As last year's BAMSA Conference slips into the past there are many lessons we still need to put into action from it. The seminar on marketing by Australian Peter Cox recommended greater flexibility in providing learning opportunities for bridge. Many of today's younger working population are working longer, sometimes irregular hours or shift patterns. They cannot commit to a weekly class of 2-3 hours.

I have a suggestion, but it does require more commitment from our average to better players and possibly those interested in computer technology in different forms. If we genuinely wish to increase participation effort from more people is required but not necessarily to teach. In Highland this year we have been sending recordings of the SBU 20 lesson course to students along with all the relevant notes. The students preferred this to online tutorials because they could pause at a difficult part or rewatch and they could study when they had the time available. These recordings could be tidied up-required video editors. We do have recordings of how to make bridge short tutorials and how to edit them which would help any players interested in this aspect.

My suggestion is that we recruit many mentors who are prepared to read and follow the SBU lessons and sit and watch students playing the hands giving advice when requested. We let the students play in shorter sessions perhaps in lunch hour for 30 min to 1 hour. Training in how to watch and mentor either on RealBridge or BBO can be provided in about 45 minutes during the summer. Mentors may be asked to answer questions before hands are played.

Mentors would commit to perhaps an hour per week either in lunch hour or in the evening. In this way we could train both younger working people and young women with families at home.

By making more short videos of more advanced techniques we could offer many more very short improvers courses to extend the content of the 20 lesson -course. These short videos have been proliferating on the web during the pandemic, but more topics need to be covered and they are relatively easy to make. More computer buffs required.

I do not believe this would detract in any way from conventional courses offered in clubs but might attract a wider range of bridge players.

If you think this might work and you would like to help by mentoring, editing, or making videos, contact [education@sbu.org.uk](mailto:education@sbu.org.uk)

*Ann Wickens* [highland@education.sbu.org.uk](mailto:highland@education.sbu.org.uk)

### How do we recruit more younger bridge players?

We offer more flexible courses!

#### Required

Mentors for 45 min to one hour at lunch time 1 day per week

Any reasonably experienced players required to follow the 20 lesson SBU course supervising play of the hands. No teaching necessary.

45 min training provided during the summer.

Apply now to [education@sbu.org.uk](mailto:education@sbu.org.uk)





## Look after the Aces, and the Tricks will look after themselves!

*By Jim Tudor*

Beginning with some sage old Bridge advice: “Avoid underleading Aces against suit contracts”.

Why is that good advice?

Look at the play of this isolated suit from Declarer’s (the enemy’s) point of view: Suppose declarer (South) is in a suit contract and needs to play this innocuous Spade suit combination:

**North**  
♠ K 5 3

**South**  
♠ Q 6 2

South plays small to ♠K and it wins, then small back towards the ♠Q and it loses to the Ace on her left (actually best to play low just in case Lefty held doubleton Ax). So, unless Declarer is very lucky, the two high cards have given her just one trick.

Is there any way Declarer could make two tricks from this combination (ignoring lucky breaks of the suit)?

Not under her own steam no, but if an opponent kindly led the Ace, or underled the Ace then Declarer makes two. Suppose Left hand defender led a small spade from, for instance, ♠ A 9 7 4 – Declarer plays low from dummy, right hand plays ♠10 (correctly playing high with the lowest of touching cards from J 10 8) – and Declarer wins the ♠Q. Now, when declarer plays the spade suit she will play small towards the ♠K in dummy. West can take his Ace straight away or wait. Either way, Declarer comes to two tricks in the suit when she was only entitled to one. All because West underled the Ace.

**Question** - Why is it different against NT contracts? i.e. why is under-leading an Ace not such a crime?

**Answer** – the risk of presenting declarer with a trick she doesn’t deserve is offset by the hope that you will regain more tricks in return, after leading your long suit – i.e. you will set up length tricks in the suit. It doesn’t always work that way of course. But that’s bridge!

There’s a similar principle with another auld bridge saying “Aces are for chopping the heads off Kings and Queens”

<b>North</b>	
♠ K 5 3	
<b>West</b>	<b>East</b>
♠ A 9 7 4	♠ J 10 8
<b>South</b>	
♠ Q 6 2	

South is playing in a suit contract and has this side suit to negotiate (looks familiar!). When she plays the ♠2 towards dummy (North) you can see it’s important that West doesn’t jump in with the ♠A as it will allow Declarer to score both the ♠K and ♠Q. West must be patient – allow the ♠K to win and wait for another round of spades to the Queen so he can play the Ace then. Chopping off the Queen’s head and holding Declarer to one trick in the suit.

You might say “This is all very well as you can see Declarer’s hand in this example. In real life she might have a singleton spade and you’ll never get your Ace?” There is always that risk, the bidding might give a clue to whether that is likely or not. But, even if it is a singleton, it’s not necessarily going to cost a trick as rising with the Ace could allow the King to discard a loser from Declarer’s hand. Once in a while it will be the wrong thing to do, but on the whole your results will improve if you look after those Aces!

*Jim Tudor is a member of Kyle Bridge Club. Although he works full time he has acted as Ayrshire’s Education secretary: he devised the format for the successful Play & Learn sessions and ran them (with a lot of assistance) at the Ayrshire Bridge Centre. And for several years he edited the monthly Ayrshire Bridge Bulletin. Currently he hosts a weekly BBO teaching table – if he ever retires from work he hopes to do more teaching.*

# Quick Quiz

*Mike Gallacher*



## 1) Counting high card points and distribution

You are sitting South. From the bidding, what is North's point range and distribution in a) and b)? In c) what is the point range of South's 2♦ i) if you are playing acol ii) if it is game force?

	<b>NORTH</b>	<b>SOUTH</b>		<b>NORTH</b>	<b>SOUTH</b>		<b>NORTH</b>	<b>SOUTH</b>
a)	1♥	1♠	b)	1♣	1♠	c)	1♠	2♦
	3♣	3♠		3NT	Pass		2♥	2NT
	3NT	Pass					3NT	Pass

## 2) Counting Tricks (defender)

<b>North</b> ♠T7643 ♥KJ ♦AQ93 ♣86	<b>East</b> ♠AQ92 ♥T74 ♦T6 ♣A954
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<b>Bidding</b>	
<b>North</b>	<b>South</b>
-	1♥
1♠	2♦
3♦	3NT
Pass	

You are East, and declarer is in 3NT  
West leads the ♣2.

What is declarer's distribution?

How many tricks can you see for the defence to defeat the contract?

## 3) Counting Tricks (declarer)

<b>North</b> ♠QJ843 ♥Q3 ♦A42 ♣J63
<b>South</b> ♠KT52 ♥KJ2 ♦K53 ♣KQ3

You South, declarer in 4♠.  
The ♦Q is led

How many winners do you have?  
How many losers?

How will you make your contract?



# It's a Funny Old Game: Adventures in the Weak NT

Example 1 from an online team match:

Board 5	♠A75 ♥52 ♦KJ84 ♣AJ86	NS Vul Dealer N									
♠KQ64 ♥QJ98 ♦QT92 ♣3	<table border="1"> <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		♠T932 ♥AK73 ♦A ♣KQT7
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠J8 ♥T64 ♦7653 ♣9542										

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1NT	Dbl	2♣
Dbl	Pass	Pass	Redbl
End			

The weak no-trump does not get caught as often as it might, but at this vulnerability North was in trouble.

South glumly trotted out his rescue manoeuvre, bidding the lower of his two 4-card suits.

West's double was takeout, but East was content to defend.

South knew he was in trouble, and wondered if a red suit contract might be better?

Surely redouble would be interpreted as SOS? When partner removed to a red suit North would be declarer....

North refused to accept the passed buck.

West led a trump and South did not much enjoy the play of the hand. He scraped 4 tricks together, but 4 down meant -2200, 18imps out when EW made their vulnerable game in the other room.

A few weeks later EW, who also play the weak NT, moved to the NS seats for example 2:

Board 9	♠K5432 ♥KJ4 ♦KQT ♣95	EW Vul Dealer N									
♠JT7 ♥9653 ♦653 ♣Q64	<table border="1"> <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		♠Q6 ♥87 ♦A97 ♣AKJ832
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠A98 ♥AQT2 ♦J842 ♣T7										

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1NT	Dbl	Pass
Pass	Redbl	Pass	Pass
2♣	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Redbl	Pass	2♦	Dbl
End			

The weak no-trump is much safer when not vulnerable!

South's pass meant that either she had nowhere to run, or she was content to play in 1NT doubled.

West crossed his fingers and passed, but North could redouble to show a 5-card suit – 2♣ might play better if South had a weak 4-3-3-3. When South passed, showing good values, West uncrossed his fingers and ran to 2♣.

South doubled that for takeout, and West redoubled, following the same thought processes as the previous South.

East thought long and hard – and obediently removed to 2♦.

An imperfect defence collected just 800 for 12imps this time.

Interesting that 1NT redoubled would be -1 on a club lead.... and 2♣ redoubled is just one down for -400, where 2♦ might have lost 1400 on better defence



# Results Page

## Ranked Masters Individuals

These were run on 30<sup>th</sup> April by Julia Palmer (aka Glutton for Punishment)

The **Benjamin** Individual is an Invitational event for the 19 players who have won most National points over the years, plus 6 whom have won most over the last two seasons. Online requires an exact multiple of 4, and many regulars find online too daunting, so there were just 16 players this year.

1	<b>Harry Smith</b>	<b>57.04%</b>
2	Bob McPaul	56.67%
3	Peter Moss	54.44%
4	John Dick	54.07%
5	John Matheson	52.22%

The remaining Individuals are open to all players of the appropriate rank.

The **Harrison**, for all Silver and Gold players, is by far the most popular, with 13 tables(!)

1	<b>Joan Forsyth</b>	<b>60.67%</b>
2	Diana Fairlie	60.42%
3	Simon Rowbottom	59.25%
4	Duncan MacDonald	57.08%
5	Rose Simpson	56.67%
6	Marc Shearer	56.33%
7	Sarah Gunn	56.25%
8	Andy Wilson	55.92%
9	John Burn	53.33%
10=	Allan Kirkwood	53.83%
	Eilidh Rennie	53.83%

The **Shenkin** for Masters, Star Masters and Senior Masters had 6 tables

1	<b>Roger Rist</b>	<b>57.50%</b>
2	Marilyn McDonagh	57.22%
3	Campbell Dunn	56.39%
4	Rob Bouton-Jones	54.72%
5	Jim Paterson	54.17%
6	Gillian Simpson	53.61%
7	Maureen Annan	53.06%
8	Nicola Dean	52.78%

The **Alan Fairlie** for all players below the rank of Master, also had 6 tables

1	<b>Gordon Fraser</b>	<b>61.25%</b>
2=	Dorothy Middleton	59.69%
	Stuart Morrison	59.69%
4	Alan Paterson	59.06%
5	Edan Gardner	58.75%
6	Jan Dargue	55.63%
7	Jack Shearer	54.06%
8	Andy Collins	52.50%

*Individuals are not popular with everyone. Results are quite random when playing with a series of unfamiliar partners, but they are generally played in good spirit and are a good way to meet new people – why not give it a go next year?*

# Master Point Promotions

April 2022

## Scottish Master

Margaret Anderson E  
Hazel Brown E  
Lesley Galloway C  
Sarah Gunn E

## Regional Master

Linda Grieve C  
Marie Mitchell N  
Sheenagh Young C

## 2 Star Senior Master

Cathy Cursiter W

## Senior Master

John Urquhart E

## 4 Star Master

Timothy Hedley W

## 3 Star Master

Walter Freedman W

## 2 Star Master

Hendry Richmond H

## 1 Star Master

Stewart Mckechnie A  
Sheila McLuckie C

## Master

Bill Hamilton C  
John Loudon E  
Perry Vassie E

## District Master

May Armour A  
Carol Brown E  
Kathryn Cons C  
Jack Silverstone W  
Gerald Smith W  
Mary Thompson W  
Ken Walker H  
Steven Wall H

## Local Master

Dawn Beckett E  
Peter Beckett E  
Irene Carter E  
Alex Craik E  
Alan Cruden H  
Wendy Cruden H  
Sue Denyer E  
Lydia Foale D  
Martyn Halsall H  
Steven Hendrie E  
Zillah Jamieson H  
James Laird E  
Gordon Lawrie H  
Margaret Mainland H  
Linda Milne H  
Patricia Shearer H  
Alexis Tevendale N

## Club Master

David Aim H  
Fiona Dempster E  
Heather Haig N  
George Horne N  
Robin MacEwen E  
Alison Morrison E  
Anne Paterson N  
Helen Paul N  
Fiona Phair N  
Janette Ramsay N  
Michael Sinclair H  
Allison Thomson N  
John Workman D  
Brenda Wright E

## Answers to Quiz

1a) North's distribution is 1-5-3-4 with 18-20 HCP

1b) play North for about 15-17 and a 6/7 card running suit.

1c) i) in Acol North has shown 10-12 HCP; ii) playing 2-over-1 forcing he has 12-15 HCP

2) Counting tricks (defender)

Declarer's distribution is 1-5-4-3. You have the ♣A and can count 4 spade tricks.

Win the ♣A and switch to spades.

3) Counting tricks (declarer)

You have 1 trick in diamonds and you need to make the other 9.

You have 3 Ace losers and a diamond loser.

The correct play is to take the opening lead with the ♦A and lead the ♥Q.

When defenders take the ♥A and return a diamond, take it with your ♦kK and cash the ♥KJ, dumping your diamond loser.

