



PROMOTING the GAME of BRIDGE in SOUTH AFRICA

THE BRIDGE

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James Grant

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Who would have believed a year ago that we would all become techno wizards in something called WhatsApp? Or that we would be buying groceries and just about everything else online? That Zoom would now have a different connotation to the one we remember from the comic books we read as kids? That we might be stopped from entering a bank if we're NOT wearing a mask? Or that all of those friendly expressions such as "kind regards", "best wishes", "cheers" etc. would be replaced by the far more sinister "stay safe" ? In our own small community who would have

anticipated the mass migration to online bridge from previously technically challenged players?

But online bridge has brought with it not only its rewards but new challenges for us. It is far easier and far more tempting to cheat when playing online. In the wider world card games and cheating have become almost synonymous; dealing from the bottom of the pack, false shuffles, aces up the sleeve, the list goes on and on. This is all the more reason why it is paramount for us to protect the integrity of our game. We will continue to condemn and punish cheating whenever and wherever it occurs. One of the benefits of the new technology that surrounds us is cheating, and especially cheating online, is far more easily detected than it was in the past so a word to the wise – if you ever feel the temptation to cheat, don't!

We would like to take this opportunity to wish all our Jewish members and their families L'Shana Tovah and well over the Fast.

James Grant



AND WHILE I WAS SLEEPING

by James Grant

When did the Corona virus become COVID-19 - I missed that? Equally dangerous and deadly but the word corona slips off your tongue like a cold beer and always puts me in mind of that classic song by The Knack with the lines

Is it destiny, destiny, destiny,

Or is it just a game in my mind, Corona?

COVID-19 on the other hand sounds like a penal colony on a distant galaxy in Star Wars!

Like many of us I realized the new opportunities lockdown offered me. Now that I was confined to staying at home I could do those things I had promised myself I would do when I retired. I could learn to speak Italian, read

“War and Peace” again (OK, I was exaggerating a little when I used the word “again”), teach myself Origami. So far I haven’t managed to do any of those things, but I have been playing more bridge with the aim of improving my standard. At the same time I have been growing a beard – who says men can’t multi-task?

In the old days I used to make plenty of mistakes at the bridge table. The good news for partners and opponents alike is that now I am making mistakes much faster and, I would like to believe, of a much better quality.

James Grant

TWO UNORTHODOX LEADS

by Zia Mahmood, 24 Nov 2011

The Dutch world champions and the Italian team they had beaten in the semi-finals of the Bermuda Bowl met again a month later in the Champions Cup. This time the Italians were the victors in a close, low-scoring contest. Today's deal featured two of the more unorthodox opening leads I have seen.

Dlr: W	♠ Q9654	
Vul: Both	♥ 7	
	♦ Q642	
	♣ KT5	
♠ 8		♠ J732
♥ QJ86		♥ K93
♦ KT93		♦ J7
♣ J632		♣ A974
	♠ AKT	
	♥ AT542	
	♦ A85	
	♣ Q8	

At both tables, the contract was four spades by North, and East had to find a lead from among unpalatable choices. Sementa for Italy chose the ♦7, which his partner won with the King to return the ♦T. If declarer believed that Sementa had chosen the unorthodox lead of a low card from a doubleton, he could now have made the contract easily because he had a tenace in diamonds – the eight would force West to cover with the nine, and declarer's six would beat West's three. But of course, North believed that the diamonds were divided 3-3 or 4-2 the other way, and that East had played the Jack from J97 or J973 on the second round. So he won the ♦A in the dummy and played the ♣Q, ducked by East. A club to the Ten and Ace meant that declarer no longer needed to worry about the third round of that suit, but he had to do something with his fourth diamond. East exited with a club and North won the King, crossed to the ♠A and led a

diamond from the dummy; if West were to ruff he would be ruffing a loser, and if he were to follow then the diamonds "must be" 3-3. But no! East ruffed the ♦Q and returned a heart, taken by dummy's Ace. North ruffed a heart and led the losing diamond, but East discarded his remaining heart and now there was no way declarer could get back to his hand to draw trumps without promoting a trick for East's ♠J.

At the other table East tried a different gambit – he under-led his ♣A! North, Bocchi, won the Jack with the King and returned the suit to establish his Ten. East won with the Ace and tried a speculative manoeuvre by leading a trump, won by dummy's Ten. North led a diamond, ducked to his Queen, then threw a diamond on the ♣T, cashed the ♦A and cross-ruffed. Four bid and made!



About the Author.

Mir Zia Mahmood (born 7 January 1940) is a Pakistani-American bridge player. He is a World Bridge Federation and ACBL Grand Life Master and reached his highest ranking in April 2011 as the 10th-ranked World Grand Master. Zia was born in Karachi, British India, and now Pakistan. He was educated in England from the age of six to twenty-one. He qualified as a Chartered Accountant of the Institute of England and Wales and spent three years running a family business in Pakistan. He is married to Lady Emma, his wife since February 2001. She is the daughter of the 7th Earl of Rosebery. They have two sons: Zain and Rafi.

BRIDGE IS AN EASY GAME!

by Phillip Alder

I know you don't want to hear or believe this, but bridge is basically an easy game. As long as you and your partner know your bidding system, you will reach the right contract *most* of the time. And if you count high card points and suit distributions, you will usually find the winning plays. It is just a matter of application. To exhibit counting, here is a deal from Hugh Kelsey's excellent book "How to Improve Your Bridge."

Dlr: S	♠ KQ4	
Vul: Both	♥ JT	
	♦ 9765	
	♣ 8532	
♠ 63		♠ J982
♥ 75		♥ 642
♦ QJT832		♦ AK
♣ Q74		♣ JT54
	♠ AT75	
	♥ AKQ983	
	♦ 4	
	♣ AK	

West	North	East	South
			2♣
P	2♦	P	2♥
P	2NT	P	3♠
P	5♥	P	6♥
P	P	P	

South reached the ideal contract of 6♥. North, with his working spade honours, judged well to jump to 5♥. After winning the first trick with the ♦K, East switched to a trump. Declarer drew trumps, led a spade to dummy's queen, cashed the ♠K and played a spade to his ace, which he said afterwards was the percentage play. When the jack didn't drop South conceded one down.

There was no need to guess spades it just required a little detective work. After winning trick two in the dummy, South should ruff a diamond in his hand. A trump to dummy's jack is followed by another diamond ruff. This squeezes East into discarding a club.

But suppose South, oblivious to its significance, draws the last trump, discarding a club from the dummy. South cashes his two top clubs, plays a spade to dummy's queen and ruffs a club in hand.

Now the East hand has counted out. He is known to have started with three hearts, two diamonds, four clubs and, therefore, four spades. The spade finesse against the jack has become a certainty.



Phillip Alder

About the author.

Phillip Alder was a columnist for The New York Times and a syndicated columnist for 22 years with United Feature Syndicate. His bridge column appeared in over 200 papers worldwide. He has also helped to produce the Daily Bulletins at various WBF Championships and is a member of the WBF Youth Committee. Alder is the Associate Editor of The Bridge World magazine.

ASK AN EXPERT

"I will never take a simple finesse to make my contract when I can go down one executing a brilliant, complicated squeeze play."



by Richard Pavlicek

You are sitting South, the dealer, holding this gem of a hand: ♠ KQ ♥ A62 ♦ AKQT8 ♣ AT4

The bidding goes like this:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			2♣
P	2♦	P	2NT
P	3♣	P	3♦
P	3NT	ALL P	

You get the lead of the 5♠ and dummy appears: ♠ A432 ♥ T973 ♦ 93 ♣ 953. How do you play the hand? Where are your entries to dummy? **Have a go at it yourself, and then compare Richard's Results on Page 12.**

About the author.

Richard Pavlicek (born 1945) is an American bridge player, teacher, and writer from Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, United States. In 1966 he started to play in bridge tournaments in his spare time. Since then he has won over 400 events and accumulated more than 6,000 master-points. He is a Grand Life Master of the American Contract Bridge League and World International Master of the World Bridge Federation. His latest North American win was in 2004 when he and his son Rich became the first father-son partnership to win the Life Master Open Pairs. Pavlicek has written numerous bridge textbooks and lesson materials



ONE OF THE GREAT LADIES

SYLVIE WILLARD

researched and edited by Stephen Rosenberg

Sylvie Willard (born 7 August 1952) is a French bridge player. Sometime prior to the 2014 European and World Championships, she ranked 4th among 73 living Women World Grand Masters by world master-points and 8th by placing points that do not decay over

time. She was born in Trébeurden on the coast near the northwest tip of France. She was one of 8 children of Nicol and Irénée Bajos de Heredia. Her father barred bridge from the home as a threat to education and invited Sylvie only at age 18 to play the game with him elsewhere. She earned a degree in computer science and studied bridge later. She is married and separated; her son Fabrice has participated in some EBL and WBF bridge tournaments including in the France juniors' team.

In competition among national women teams, she is a 2-time world champion, winning the biennial Venice Cup in 2005, 2011 and 2015. France also won the 2002 Olympic Grand Prix, Ladies' Division, a non-medal event in association with the Salt Lake City Winter Olympic Games. She is a 7-time European Bridge League champion from 1979 to 2010. That year, she moved to first place in the European rankings.

Willard and her current long-time regular bridge partner Bénédicte Cronier (herself a Women World Grand Master, recently 8th-ranking by MP) both live in Paris. For several years they have frequently participated in the North American Bridge Championships, three-times-a-year 10-day meets organized by the American Contract Bridge League. They were co-recipients of the ACBL's annual Sidney H. Lazard Jr. Sportsmanship Award in 2013. According to selection chairman Sidney H. Lazard Sr. "*These women are the epitome of grace, good manners, cheerfulness and sportsmanship, making the bridge experience more pleasurable for everyone*"

THE PLAY OF THE CARDS

by Sven-Åke Bjerregaard



Sven-Åke Bjerregaard

This is an area surrounded by rules, hints and expert play. It is always important to make it easy for you partner in defense and difficult for opponents when you are declarer.

We will start with some rules. When I play in South Africa I see many players play top from a sequence when partner or declarer plays a suit. That's wrong.

Example 1:

Dummy holds AJx in a suit, partner leads small, dummy follows small and you hold KQx. Win with the queen. Partner will know you have the king but declarer does not. If you win the King, partner will "know" declarer has the Queen and will not continue the suit when back on lead.

Example 2:

Dummy holds Qxx, partner leads small and you hold AKx. Win with the King, I have seen to many players win with the Ace, Very wrong! This denies the King!

Example 3:

Partner leads small and dummy holds xxx. You hold KQx. Play the Queen, lowest from a sequence. If you play the King, partner will "know" declarer has the Queen.

Example 4:

Dummy holds xxx and declarer plays small from dummy. Do *not* play Ace from AKx or K from KQ unless you want to fool your partner. He might not ask you to play next week!)

Here is a hint from my experience. When you are declarer it's important not to reveal to much of your holding in a suit.

Example:

You are in 3NT and get a small lead. Dummy hold xxx and next hand plays the J or Ten. You hold KQx. Win with the King. When left hand is back on lead he will not know who holds the Queen. If you win with Queen, it's obvious you also hold the King, because RHO would have played the King. Same if you hold AKx; win the King. If RHO is back on lead he will think the leader holds the Ace. If you win the Ace, it's obvious you also hold the King, otherwise you would have ducked to break their communications

When you are declarer and the lead an Ace, you sometimes want them to continue, sometimes to shift. How can you achieve that when RHO gives a signal?

Example 1:

You are in a NT contract: dummy holds QTx, you hold J872. LHO leads the Ace which would normally be from AKxx(x). RHO plays the 9. If they play standard attitude (high encouraging) you should play the 8 giving the impression you only have 2 cards in the suit. The leader may think his partner has J9xx and continue. It often pays to use the same carding methods the opponents do. If they play standard attitude, play a high card if you want them to continue and vice versa if they play small encouraging.

Example 2:

You are in a suit contract and they lead an Ace. Dummy holds QTx; RHO plays the 5 and you hold J832. Play the 8, UDCA high card = discouraging. The leader may think his partner holds 532 and shift. As I wrote earlier, use the same signals the opponents do if you want them to continue or stop. Otherwise, always try to hide the smallest card in the suit. Experts control their carding from bottom. When they spot the smallest card, they are in control.

Now, in defense; let's say they are playing in 3NT. Partner leads small, dummy holds xx(x) and you have QJT. If you play the Ten and declarer wins the King, when your partner is back on lead, having started with A9532 in the suit he lead, he will not know if you have QJT or something like JTx. Then he should perhaps hope to find an entry for you, but if you hold QJT he would just continue. So, rather play the J at trick one. You partner will think declarer has KTx and he can play back a small to your possible Queen; that will keep communications open even if you had Jxx from the start. This is not 100% fool-proof since declarer may have KT stiff, but it's better than just guessing.

Some experts play the Smith signal to show if they hold the Queen or not. The Smith signal has other complications so if you use it I recommend this is the only situation where it can be useful.



THE BRIDGE LOUNGE

by Jeff Sapire

There are some conflicting adages in bridge. “when in doubt, bid one more” as against “the five level belongs to the opponents”. But when it comes to really distributional hands, it is almost always right to keep bidding. On the hand below, once South elicited some support from partner he was never going to stop!

Dlr: W Vul: NS	♠ Q73 ♥ Q7 ♦ AT63 ♣ Q976	
♠ AJT95 ♥ 62 ♦ 92 ♣ KJ53		♠ K8642 ♥ KT93 ♦ --- ♣ AT42
	♠ --- ♥ AJ854 ♦ KQJ8754 ♣ 8	

The bidding:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
P	P	1♠	2♦
3♦*	4♦	4♠	5♦
5♠	P	P	6♦
P	P	P	

After two passes, East opened 1♠ in 3rd seat. South started quietly with a simple overcall, and West’s 3♦ was the ‘cue bid raise’, showing a genuine high-card raise to 3♠ (a jump to 3♠ would have been pre-emptive). North showed diamond support, and South pressed on over 4S. West decided to risk the five level with the extra trump, but South was not about to let opponents play with such a freaky hand.

West doubled with alacrity, but had she passed, no doubt East would have doubled.

The play was brief and quite a shock for the defenders. Dummy ruffed the opening lead of the ♠A, drew two trumps finishing in dummy, and led the ♥Q, covered by the King and Ace. He then cashed the ♥J, ruffed two hearts in dummy, and conceded a club, scoring a lovely 1540.

When the hand was over, the defenders just looked at each other in a slight daze, like a boxer who has been floored and is groggily trying to get up. I don’t think that they did anything wrong, and the double was more than reasonable – it was South’s incredibly shaped hand and the lie of the hearts that caused the freak result.

But South made a good decision to bid on. With 7-5 hands, you should *never* defend – you just never know who is making what – perhaps they can make something, and you have a cheap sacrifice, or vice versa, or sometimes both sides can make something! (Once in a while it is wrong when neither side can make a high-level contract).

Another aspect to note is that North’s two black queens were not needed in 6♦, so effectively NS made the slam with a combined 17 count!

About the Author

Jeff Sapire, a top-class bridge-player in his own right, has represented South Africa. He teaches all levels – beginner, intermediate and advanced. To find out more about his well-structured and informative lessons, contact him on jeffshirl@telkomsa.net, or ‘phone him on 011 486 1495 or 082 551 2526.



FICK'S PICKS

by Hennie Fick and Stephen Rosenberg

I am often asked by readers for tips and help with mainly bidding problems. These will all tend to be at Beginner-to-Intermediate level. I collected a whole batch together and sent them to my friend Hennie Fick for his expert view. He selected some, hence Fick's Picks, and here they are:

HAND 1.

My female partner and I play a very standard game – 5 card majors, strong NT, approach only with a club. If I open say 1♦ (promising at least 4) and my partner responds say 1♥, I would normally go 1NT with 12-14 HCPs. But what about these two hands:

1. ♠T64 ♥97 ♦AKT3 ♣AK52 no spade stopper?
2. ♠T64 ♥975 ♦AKT3 ♣AK2 three-card heart support?

Hennie: *I follow a very simple bidding philosophy on these types of hands. The idea as opener is that whenever her hand is balanced she should rebid it as a balanced hand. So on both the hands above I would rebid 1NT – showing 12-14 points and a balanced distribution. Obviously if opener had 4 hearts with partner she would raise those automatically. There is one case where the best style for opener is to raise on 3-card support. The hand has to contain either a weak doubleton or a singleton so on ♠72 ♥Q95 ♦AK105 ♣K832 I, and most of the bridge world, would raise to 2♥ with a convention built in for responder to ask the opener whether she had a 3-card or 4-card raise.*

HAND 2.

We are vulnerable, our opponents are not. My RHO opens 2♦, announced as “multi”. What is my best course of action with this hand? ♠T ♥AT97 ♦AQT3 ♣AJ52 I am sure that opener has a weak 6-card 2♠ hand. Where to now???

Hennie: *The key to taking the best action on this type of auction is to understand that if we pass originally the bidding will come back to our hand and therefore we don't need to take immediate action. The other main point to note is that, although some play a multi including some strong options, the 2♦ bid is most of the time a hand of the weak 2♥/2♠ opening variety. The responder would generally use a 2♥ relay bid after which the opener would tend to pass if she has hearts or correct to spades if she has spades. In the case of the latter action having been taken, with their suit being disclosed, we can now double with our perfect takeout double hand, and such a double is understood to be takeout. So initially pass and after the anticipated correction to 2♠ - Double.*

HAND 3.

West is the dealer, both vulnerable. The bidding has gone

WEST	NORTH Partner	EAST	SOUTH Me
1♦	P	1♥	X ¹
2♥	?		

¹ negative for the other two suits.

In the light of West's bid, does my partner have to bid, or can she pass? What sort of hand should she have if she does bid?

Hennie: *With the 2♥ bid on your partner's right, she is not forced to bid anymore. If she does bid voluntarily we can expect some sort of hand with competitive values, something in the 7-9 point range would be normal. The following hands would qualify for a competitive action :*

- ♠KQ76 ♥32 ♦874 ♣KJ53 – 9 good points and a fit with partner's Spades – bid 2♠
- ♠AJ942 ♥873 ♦6 ♣J862 – only 6 points but nice distribution and a 5th spade – definitely worth a competitive bid – again bid 2♠
- ♠AJ98 ♥87 ♦762 ♣AQ76 – not a hand with which we could bid originally, but now not only worth a competitive bid but at least a game try – bid 3♠ to invite game

HAND 4.

Both sides vulnerable. My partner opens 1♠ (at least 5, 12-14 HCPs). What do I respond with ♠T64 ♥AQ973 ♦A3 ♣K2?

Hennie: *When we have opening hand values (12-15) and a 3-card fit in opener's major, we generally have two main options:*

1) *with a balanced hand jump to 3NT – this bid indicates 12-15 HCP, 3-card support and I generally prefer a totally balanced hand i.e. 4-3-3-3*

2) *with a more unbalanced hand, change suit to keep the bidding open and after opener's rebid jump to 4 of her major – this is referred to as a delayed game raise – it shows 12-15 HCP and a 3-card fit.*

So, on the above hand, I would bid 2♥ initially (this does show a 5-card suit) and after partner's response jump to 4♠ showing my game going hand with a fit.



About the Author.

Hennie Fick hails from the Eastern Cape but has now made his home in Gauteng. His bridge-playing abilities have already been rewarded with Springbok colours. He is a SABF Grandmaster and sits 14th on the list of South African players by Performance Index. He runs a very successful bridge-teaching practice. To find out more, contact Hennie on 078-136-1210 or email him at henniefick@gmail.com.

THE CIRCLE OF LIFE 1

by Sarita Mathur, during lockdown, April 2020



The Circle of Life is never ending;
It has no sharp turns
Smooth and secure within itself
Like the sun shining bright during the day
And disappearing into the night.
Our earthly bodies are here in this physical plane.
Our Mother Earth only to go out into the Light.
Until our soul takes birth
Again and Again.
So live and enjoy your earthly home Our Mother
Until the sky above, Our Father
Calls out to us: we do not live once
But Again and Again.

About the author.

Sarita Mathur is a Durban-based bridge player and established author, having already had books of her poetry published. She writes in the well-established free verse format that dates back to the early Greek poets. The critique on Amazon of her most recent book "Once Again Love – Reconnecting with the Heart" includes the following: "*author Sarita Mathur introduces readers to the joy of a life filled with love through a whimsical mixture of poetry and prose. At times heart-breaking.....*"



BRIDGE WITH THE ABBOTT

“BROTHER XAVIER’S WEAKNESS”

by David Bird

“Did you consider leading a spade on that last one?” queried the Abbot. “That would beat it, for sure.” “Finding the best opening lead is not always easy” Brother Xavier replied. It must be a couple of years since Xavier had found some inspired opening salvo, thought the Abbot.



The Abbot

Dlr: E	♠ 3	
Vul: None	♥ J854	
	♦ AQ963	
	♣ A54	
♠ KT82		♠ Q75
♥ T973		♥ AKQ6
♦ 8		♦ K5
♣ J872		♣ KT96
	♠ AJ964	
	♥ 2	
	♦ JT742	
	♣ Q3	



Brothers Xavier, Damien and Colin

“Evening Abbot” said Brother Colin, throwing himself into the South seat. “Are we all ready to play?” And they began to bid (yes bid, not *bied!*):

West Bro. Xavier	North Bro. Damien	East The Abbot	South Bro. Colin
		1NT	2♠
P	2NT	P	3♦
P	P	P	

“The 2♠ bid?” queried Brother Xavier who was on lead. “Normal” Brother Damien replied “*Spades and a minor*”. The Abbot raised a weary eyebrow. What was normal about bidding 2♠ to show a two-suiter? It might have worked luckily on this particular board. Next time, Brother Colin would hold a six-card spade suit and be seriously inconvenienced!

Brother Xavier led the ♥T and down came dummy. Brother Colin had no wish for West to remain on deal for a club switch. “*Play the Jack*” he said. The Abbot won with the Queen and persisted with the ♥J. Brother Colin ruffed and continued with the ♠A and a spade ruff. After a heart ruff in hand and another spade ruff, he played the Ace of trumps, pleased to see both defenders follow, “*Going ok so far*” he observed.



The Cloisters

“*These gratuitous comments are an unfortunate habit of yours*” muttered the Abbot. “*My partner was looking a bit grumpy. I was trying to cheer him up.*” “*I wasn’t looking grumpy at all*” declared Brother Damien. “*Just get on with it*” said the Abbot. “*This is the cloisters, not a primary school play ground!*” A third heart ruff, followed by a spade ruff, left this end position: “*Queen of trumps*” said Brother Colin. The Abbot won with the ♦K and had to lead away from the ♣K. Brother Colin won with the Queen and cashed the established ♠J, throwing a club from

Dlr: E	♠ ---	
Vul: None	♥ ---	
	♦ Q	
	♣ A54	
♠ ---		♠ ---
♥ ---		♥ ---
♦ ---		♦ K
♣ J872		♣ KT9
	♠ J	
	♥ ---	
	♦ J	
	♣ Q3	

dummy. The game was his!

The Abbot looked wearily across the table. *“Lead a club and he has no chance at all”* he said. *“A heart lead looked better”* Brother Xavier replied. *“I don’t like to lead away from a Jack”*. *“Trump lead beats it too”* said Brother Colin. Brother Xavier shook his head. *“I never lead a singleton trump”*.

The Abbot scribbled a near illegible entry into his minus column. Sometimes Xavier was truly hopeless. Did he rely entirely on such beginners’ guidelines? True experts, like himself, could sense a killing opening lead. As for lesser mortals ... well, they would probably do best to pick a card at random!

About the Author.



David Lyster Bird, (born 29 March 1946), is a British bridge writer with more than 130 bridge books to his name. He was born in London and is bridge correspondent for the *Mail on Sunday* and the *London Evening Standard*. He contributes regularly to many magazines, including *Bridge Plus*, *English Bridge*, *Bridge Magazine* and the ACBL *Bridge Bulletin*. He has been a co-author of books with some of the world's leading players or writers, including Terence Reese, Ron Klinger, Geir Helgemo, Tony Forrester, Omar Sharif, Martin Hoffman and Barbara Seagram. His series of humorous bridge stories featuring the monks of the St Titus monastery has run continuously in *Bridge Magazine* for 30 years; many of them have subsequently been collected in book form.

A bridge teacher was giving a class on counting losers and started out by saying:

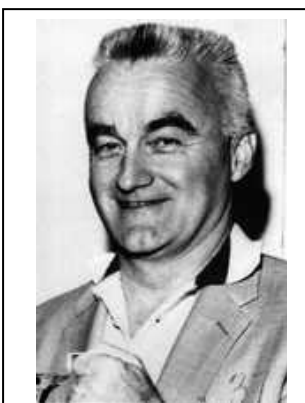
“This is a class on identifying losers.”

A female voice from the back of the class piped up

”Where were you when I needed you 30 years ago?”

A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE

by John Swanson



Lew Mathe



Billy Rosen

The 1954 World Championship was contested by a U.S.A. team and France, the European champions. There were a number of unusual aspects of this battle for the Bermuda Bowl including the composition of the teams. The U.S. team members were Doug Steen, Milton Ellenby, Billy Rosen, Don Oakie, and Cliff Bishop. They had qualified by winning the Masters' Team Championship (now known as the Spingold) at the Summer Nationals. Lew Mathe was added as a sixth, a tribute to his bridge skills because he did not have a partnership with any of the other players. During the championship, the U.S. team proved their versatility and, I suppose, compatibility by using a different partnership combination almost every session.

It was a young U.S. team with an average age of 34 years. At 27, Steen was the youngest. Also the strangest. Mathe told of one morning during the event when he encountered a dishevelled Steen in the hotel lobby. Mathe asked what the problem was. Steen replied, *“I got stuck in the wall last night.”* This is not what one wishes to hear from a teammate during an important event. It seemed that one of Steen's out-of-body experiences had not been entirely successful. Steen retired from competitive bridge a few years later to make a fortune in the commodities market. Richard Walsh told me that he would come into the Bache office in Beverly Hills and perform transcendental chants sitting on the floor to improve his trading insight.

The French team qualified four-handed. Their choice of rounding out the team was remarkable. Rather than adding another French pair they created a true European team by selecting Jean Besse of Switzerland and Karl Schneider of Austria! That would not be possible these days because of sponsorship by national bridge organizations. Besse would go on to represent Switzerland in 10 world championships; The conditions of contest included a strange proviso: if the difference between the two

teams was greater than 24 IMPs after 192 boards, only 32 more deals would be played. If the match was closer than 24 IMPs, 64 more would be played. (The IMP scale then in use was roughly equal to 60% of today's scale, thus 24 IMPs then is equal to perhaps 40 IMPs now.) The Europeans must have been regretting this rule for they had gained 45 IMPs in boards 113 through 192 but the deficit was 36 IMPs. The U.S. team halted the slide, picking up 13 IMPs over the last 32 boards to win the title going away. This was to be the last World Team Championship for the U.S. for sixteen frustrating years.

The play and bidding throughout the match was far below what is expected of top players these days. Consider this hand:

<i>Mathe</i>	<i>Steen</i>
♠AQ4	♠KT962
♥A3	♥8
♦AJ8	♦K64
♣QJ873	♣A952
	Pass
1NT	3♣
4♠	Pass

Using a range of 15-17 HCP, the West hand is surely too strong for 1NT (good controls and a five-card suit). But the awful bid was 4♠. Despite the narrow range in high card strength defined by an opening notrump bid, there can be a wide variance in the value of a hand in support of a suit. It is a well-known principle that the notrump bidder must convey this information to partner when possible; an advanced cue bid of 4♦ in response to 3♠ is basic sound bidding (not that Steen could have bid more than 4♠ anyway).

The French pair did reach the excellent slam despite pre-emptive bidding by Oakie and Bishop. Marcel Kornblum received a heart lead. How should he play? Win the ♥A and cash the ace and queen of spades (so that the suit can be picked up should North have four to the jack).

Trumps split 3-2 so the king picks up the last outstanding trump. Then what? There is no distribution which can defeat the contract at this point. But declarer must be careful to start the clubs by leading low towards the QJ. This caters to either defender having all of the missing clubs. If South holds four clubs declarer has but to lead towards the remaining West honor. If North holds four the king will capture the jack, but declarer can enter dummy with the ♣Q and finesse the nine on the way back, shutting out the ten. Unfortunately for the Europeans, Kornblum started with the ♣A and the contract failed when North proved to hold all four clubs. The 7 IMP loss should have been a 7 IMP gain - and then another 32 boards would have been played.

On the return trip the champions stopped off for a 96-board exhibition match against the top British players: Reese, Schapiro, Meredith, Konstan, and Mayer. The result was a crushing 81 IMP defeat. Reese's report of the match in the February, 1954 *The Bridge World* included this hand:

Dir. East Vul. None			
	<i>Oakie</i>		
	♠A95		
	♥JT72		
	♦AJT		
	♣KT9		
<i>Reese</i>		<i>Shapiro</i>	
♠KQ6		♠JT	
♥K93		♥AQ54	
♦K6543		♦Q872	
♣A5		♣832	
	<i>Ellenby</i>		
	♠87432		
	♥86		
	♦9		
	♣QJ764		
<i>Reese</i>	<i>Oakie</i>	<i>Schapiro</i>	<i>Ellenby</i>
-	-	P	P
1NT	X	XX	2♣
P	P	X	P

Reese stated that, "Oakie knew that we played a fairly weak notrump, not vulnerable, and that accounted for his double." I say there is no accounting for it. Partner is a passed hand; game is out of the question. But Oakie found his partner with a quite suitable hand. It is not easy to see how the British pair defeated the 2♣ contract, but they played a sparkling defence. Ellenby won the diamond lead and tried the ace and another spade. Reese won and continued with a diamond, ruffed by declarer. Another spade and another diamond ruff left this position:

	<i>Oakie</i>	
	♠---	
	♥JT72	
	♦---	
	♣KT9	
<i>Reese</i>		<i>Shapiro</i>
♠---		♠---
♥K93		♥AQ4
♦63		♦8
♣A5		♣832
	<i>Ellenby</i>	
	♠87	
	♥86	
	♦---	
	♣QJ7	

Ellenby led a heart, won by East who returned a trump. Reese made the critical play of ducking the ace! Another heart, another

club, followed by a diamond insured a second trump trick for the defense. Reese noted in his report that if Ellenby had ruffed a spade and then led a heart, East would win and lead a trump. If declarer puts up an honour in an attempt to win and ruff his last spade, West wins and returns a trump. Again the ♣8 scores a trick. If declarer ducks the club, so does West.

Yet, the contract cannot be defeated. Can you spot declarer's error? It is surprising that it was overlooked by the players at the time and by Reese and The Bridge World editors later. When West leads the second round of diamonds declarer simply discards a losing heart. When a third round is led he discards again. After ruffing the next red card lead he plays a spade. West can win and force declarer with another heart but look at the difference:

Declarer cross ruffs, losing only to the trump ace. The location of the ♣8 is immaterial. This play should be in every player's repertoire. The principle is to eliminate the opponent's communication and to establish your own. All declarer needs to realize is that the two hearts are losers in any event and that there is no advantage of being on lead now rather than later. It is not necessary to consider the play in detail. The principle will see you through.

	Oakie ♠--- ♥JT ♦--- ♣KT9	
Reese ♠--- ♥K ♦63 ♣A5		Shapiro ♠--- ♥Q4 ♦--- ♣832
	Ellenby ♠87 ♥--- ♦--- ♣QJ7	



About the author.

John C. Swanson, Jr. (born 1937) is an American bridge player living in Lancaster, California. Swanson has won 1 Bermuda Bowl, and 5 North American Bridge Championships.



RICHARD'S RESULTS



You can establish nine tricks by giving up the ♦J if it doesn't drop, but you can't reach dummy for the ♠A. The solution is to concede a diamond trick deliberately to force an entry with the ♦9. Win both top spades in hand, then lead the ♦T. If either opponent has ♦J-x-x-x, he must either lose his diamond trick (by ducking) or allow you to reach dummy to enjoy the ♠A. Note that cashing even one top diamond first would seal your fate. West held: ♠ J985 ♥ K4 ♦ J642 ♣ Q87

BORN TO PLAY BRIDGE!



Pennington Beach

Pennington is one of those small, delightful villages that abound on the KZN Lower South Coast, and like other towns and villages in the area is home to a number of retirement complexes. One of these is Umdoni Retirement Village (with a regular 10-12 table bridge tournament) with its Hibiscus Village. And one of the Hibiscus' residents is 85-year-old Sue van Wel, who was prompted to write by an article in the July edition of "The Bridge". Here's what she wrote:

"What a welcome change from nothing but Covid 19 and related issues, to get the SABF Bulletin which I read with much interest, especially the

early attempts to establish bridge groups on the Queen Elizabeth and the Queen Mary liners and the failure to attract enough people.

I was literally almost born at the Bridge table as my Mother was determined to make her Grand Slam despite increasing contractions and having done so, rushed upstairs to produce me! The other 3 possibly waiting for her to come back and finish the game!

But - back to the SABF Bulletin - my parents and their bridge-playing friends in London tried to collect enough people to go in another type of Bridge boat trip, say the Med. or similar but in 1937-38 the threat of war was already looming and not many people were prepared to take a chance. Sadly, after WW2 most people were too busy trying to re-establish their lives to think about cruises.....so it never happened for my parents.

But when I came to S.A. by ship with 3 small children, in 1974, I immediately put my name on the list of people wanting a partner- and to this day still am in touch with one of the players, living in Somerset West who was an active member of the Helderberg Retirement Village Bridge club but - sadly - has had to give up due to advancing Alzheimer's one of my fears.

To finish off ...you will be glad to hear ... there is no doubt that playing Bridge, even if you are not a top player, is the best brain-exercise possibleand I, and my friends here, are missing it so much.

I also really hope that it won't be too long before we can all get together again here on a Thursday but am not too optimistic as the CEO of Hibiscus is being super-protective of us oldies and no-one, even close family members living near-by, can come in. We have two cases, a-symptomatic, here and 2 in Margate - very scary.

Keep well and safe - and see youwhenever.

Love for now, Sue"

(Sue's letter was originally addressed to and very kindly forwarded to us by Mike and Lyn Carr, well-known members of the KZN bridge community. Ed.)



Sue van Wel

To conclude a heated auction, an expert player makes a forceful bid of 3♠, whereupon the Little Old Lady on his left doubles, followed by three passes. The expert looks at his LHO and asks, quite sarcastically "Do you know who I am?" The LOL replies "Yes, I know who you are!" The expert then says: "Do you know how many Master Points I have?" The LOL says: "No, but do you know how many spades I have?"



AN ACE TOO FEW

by Thomas Andrews

(Thomas Andrews is a good American club player and an informed and enthusiastic writer on our game; he writes mainly for Beginner to Intermediate players. Ed)

East was the dealer, with NS vulnerable.

Both pairs were clearly having some fun in this auction.

NORTH ♠A K J T 8 7 6 3 ♥4 3 ♦K 7 3 ♣—	SOUTH ♠5 ♥K Q T 8 7 2 ♦A Q ♣A K J 5
--	--

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		Pass	1 ♥
1 NT	X	Pass	Pass
2 ♣	4 ♠	4 NT?	X
5 ♣	Pass	Pass	X
Pass	5 ♦	Pass	7 NT
Pass	Pass	X	All Pass

West, perhaps thinking his partner's double was lead directional, led the ♠2. What do you do?

If you guess spades, then you appear to have thirteen tricks - eight spades, two clubs and three diamonds.

But wait, the spade lead has killed your only entry to the ♦K. How are you going to work your way around that?

If East has the ♣Q, you can try a position squeeze against him in hearts and clubs, but it fails because there is no way to get off dummy in clubs.

Perhaps a double squeeze? The position is wrong for that, unless East has all the hearts and your small hearts in dummy are a threat. You run the spades, pitching six hearts and a club at this position:

	♠---	
	♥43	
	♦K73	
	♣—	
♠---		♠---
♥---		♥A
♦x		♦xxx
♣Qx		♣x
	♠---	
	♥---	
	♦AQ	
	♣AKJ	

Crossing to the ♦A, you cash two clubs, pitching a heart and... As you can see, you have to decide before East does on the second club, so this squeeze fails.

Is there another line? Even if East does have the ♣Q, you can't squeeze him because the entry position is all wrong.

Well, what if East alone was guarding the diamonds - either holding J-10-9-8 or six of them? That wouldn't be inconsistent, on the bidding. Then on the run of the spades, you pitch five hearts and two spades to reach this end position:


	♠---	
	♥43	
	♦K73	
	♣—	
♠---		♠---
♥---		♥A
♦52		♦JT9
♣Qxx		♣x
	♠---	
	♥K	
	♦AQ	
	♣AK	

You cross to the ♦A and play the top clubs, and East is caught in a heart-diamond squeeze - he must keep the ♥A, but he also has to hold the top diamonds, or else you can overtake the ♦Q.

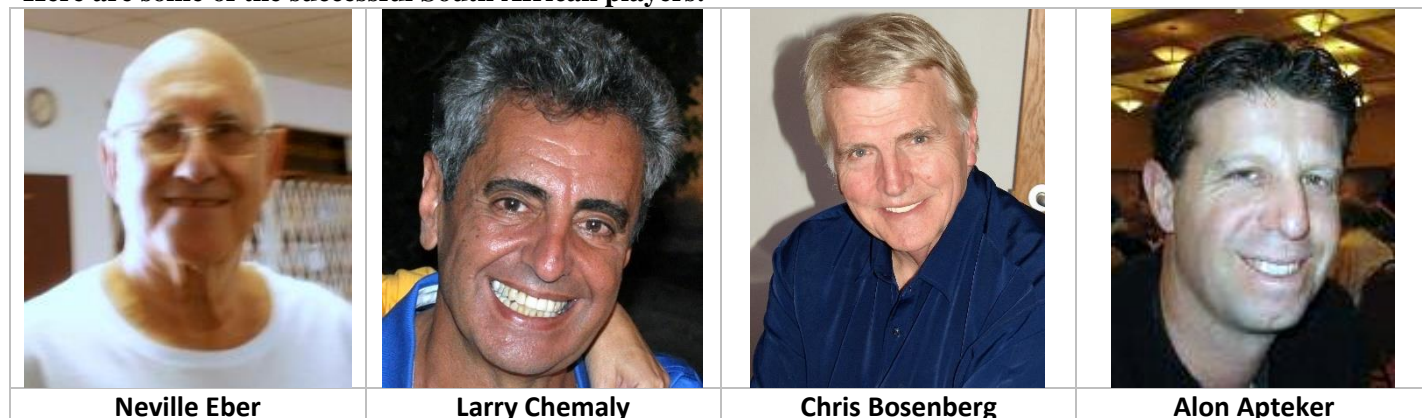
Now admit it, this would have been easier to find if you had held ♦A8 in your hand. If you think it is more likely that West has ♦JT98 or six of them, you are able to squeeze him in diamonds and clubs, but you have to decide which as early as possible, and it seems more likely that East is holding the diamond guard.

S A V SCOTLAND

On 18th August, an unofficial “virtual” test match was contested between South African team and a strong Scottish contingent. The format saw an Open South African team go head-to-head against their Scots rivals; and a second contest between Seniors’ teams from the two countries. The outcome was a resounding victory for South Africa!

					
1	SENIORS: James Grant, Larry Chemaly, Chris Bosenberg, Martin Grunder	52	1	Ferrari, Ash, Hay and Pedden	40
2	OPEN: Alon Apteker, Craig Gower, Neville Eber, Hennie Fick	40	2	Peterkin, Punch, Marshall, and Partner	25

Here are some of the successful South African players:



For this and other international results involving South African teams, go to www.sabf.co.za

PARTNER ISN'T A MIND READER

by Michael Berkowitz, 8th April 2020

Telepathy is hard. I remember trying to pass messages to my friends in class telepathically, but never having success. I told my sister about my efforts, and she was oddly encouraging. “Why don’t I think of a number and you’ll tell me what number I’m thinking of,” she said. I thought a while and said, “Seventy-two”. Her jaw dropped, “How did you do that?!” After that, I used to get very mad at my friends for not thinking properly during school.

Who’s fault is it when partner can’t read your mind? While there are some experts who love to be on lead, the vast majority hate it. Larry Cohen says, of the opening lead, "It's not bridge." He wishes the dummy would come down before the opening lead is made. Still, making leads is a part of life. There’s no amount of lead theory that can match the importance of having a partner who knows that you can’t hear them thinking “lead a spade, lead a spade, lead a spade”.

There are two main ways you can help partner with opening leads: make lead directing doubles and overcalls to show what suit you want led. When can you make lead-directing doubles? Well, the higher the level, the less you need.

For example on the auction 1NT--Pass--2♣, you should have good clubs and club length to double—something like ♣AQJT9 (We wish it could always be that good); ♣KQ1093 is probably more realistic.

You do have to consider what else could happen though. Imagine holding ♠32 ♥872 ♦53 ♣KJT872. The auction goes 1NT--Pass--2♣. You should absolutely double! Why? Your partner is going to be on lead against something and if they lead away from an honour, it will be a catastrophe. The opponents aren't likely to play in 2♣ doubled (or redoubled) and if they can make that, then they can almost certainly make a slam.

As your opponents bid higher, you need less in that suit to make a lead-directing bid. On the auction:

WEST	NORTH	EAST (YOU)	SOUTH
Pass	2NT*	Pass	1♠
Pass	5♥	?	4NT

*Jacoby 2NT

If you have the ♥KQ3, you should double! You don't care about what the rest of the deal is. Maybe partner has an ace or maybe not, but you still want partner leading that suit.

Overcalling is another area where you can help your partner out. My father once said, "If you make a bad lead when I didn't have a chance to overcall on the one-level, then that's unlucky. If you make a bad lead when I could've overcalled on the one-level, that's my fault."

Particularly when partner starts the auction by passing, you should look to help partner with a lead-directing call. For example, nobody vulnerable, you have ♠5 ♥KQT98 ♦J64 ♣8632. The auction is Pass--1♣ to you. You should get a 1♥ call in here. Partner's likely to be on lead against spades and you want to stop partner from doing something silly like leading from ♦Q732.

One last, more advanced idea: when partner pre-empts and the opponents make a takeout double, you can bid a new suit as a lead-directing call. You should only do this with support for partner's suit (and with partnership agreement).

For instance, you hold: ♠J74 ♥63 ♦AK843 ♣962. Partner opens 2♠ and East doubles. You should bid 3♦ on the way to 3♠ since the opponents are likely to get to 4♥ anyways and this is your chance to show partner what you'd like led.

About the author.



Michael Berkowitz hated bridge right up until he loved it. With two World Champion bridge players as parents, conversations at the dinner table often devolved to bridge. Each time that happened, Michael and his sister would charge their parents a quarter. This fund paid for their college education! While Michael learned to play as a seven-year-old, he didn't get serious about bridge until after college. He worked as a teacher and director at Honors Bridge Club in New York City, and became the Head Director for both Aces and Cavendish Bridge clubs. He's known as New York's most-loved director for his friendliness, quick wit, and compassion. In addition to directing and teaching, Michael edits for several bridge publications. Michael lives in Brooklyn with his wife Emily, whom he met at a bridge tournament.



MOSES' MOM

The legends of the LOLs (Little Old Ladies) and their exploits at the bridge table are surpassed only by the stories of Jewish mothers and their attempts to control their children right into old age – the children's old age, that is! Here's a little cartoon that says it all.

BIDDING A 4-3-3-3 DISTRIBUTION

by Larry Cohen

AS RESPONDER. If you are the responder to 1♣ or 1♦, typically show the 4-card spade suit. You don't want to miss a 4-4 fit, especially if opener happens to be unbalanced.

Respond 1♣ to 1♣ or 1♦ with: ♠ KT76 ♥ A32 ♦ Q76 ♣ 432. If you are responding to 1♥, you should raise to 2♥ with 6-10 HCPs in support of hearts and ignore the spades!

If you have more than ten HCPs, you can start with 1♠ and raise hearts next round – raise 1♥ to 2♥ with ♠ K654 ♥ KT7 ♦ QJ2 ♣ 654 but respond 1♣ with ♠ AQ76 ♥ A32 ♦ K32 ♣ 765.

If responding to 1NT, try *not* to use Stayman with 4-3-3-3 hands – just treat them as balanced notrump hands.

AS OPENER. If partner responds to your 1♣ opening with 1♦, don't show the spades with a balanced hand – this is the modern "Walsh" style. Rebid 1NT with 12-14 balanced HCPs and 2NT with 18-19 balanced. When partner responds 1♦, he either won't have 4 spades, or it is his job to show them later. So, rebid 1NT after 1♣-1♦ with ♠ QJ76 ♥ KJ7 ♦ KJ4 ♣ K32 and rebid 2NT with ♠ KJ76 ♥ KJ7 ♦ KJ4 ♣ AK2.

If partner responds 1♥ to your minor opening, he could easily be 4-4 in the majors. His job is to respond up the line with 4-4. With 12-14 HCPs, show your spades so you won't miss a 4-4 fit. But, with 18-19, jump to 2NT; partner can look for a 4-4 spade fit on his way to 3NT.

Accordingly, rebid 1♣ after 1♣-1♥ with ♠ AJ76 ♥ KJ7 ♦ T97 ♣ A32, but rebid 2NT with ♠ KJ76 ♥ KJ7 ♦ KJ4 ♣ AK2.

SUMMARY. As responder, ignore 4 spades only when you have to raise 1♥ to 2♥ instead. Ignore 4-card majors with 4-3-3-3 when responding to 1NT. As opener, ignore 4♠ after a 1♦ response or if you have 18-19. *This all takes some getting used to.*

Larry Neil Cohen (born April 14, 1959) is an American bridge player, writer and teacher. He is best known as an advocate for the "Law of Total Tricks" as a guide in the bidding. He has won 25 North American Bridge Championships events including the Vanderbilt, two Reisingers, the Spingolds, three Life Master Pairs, and four Blue Ribbon Pairs, and he is a two-time winner of the Cavendish Invitational Pairs cash prize tournament.



MORE PART SCORES

by Deirdre Ingersent

I think the key to getting more part scores for your partnership lies in two things – understanding basic bridge scoring (and I am very surprised how many club players do not understand the various scores for different contracts) and figuring out which side should be playing.

If your side has the preponderance of strength e.g. your partner opened the bidding and you hold at least 8 high card points then this is your hand to play.

Now consider this scenario which often happens – you have competed to the 3 level with 3 hearts but they have the higher ranking suit and have bid 3 spades. You can make 3 hearts but 4 seems most unlikely. A contract of 3 hearts is worth 140 points and if you bid on you most likely end up with a minus score. The best you can do is now defeat them in their contract. However just defeating them will only give you 50 points if non-vulnerable and 100 points if vulnerable which is not as good as the 140 you could have scored. So if you think you have a reasonable chance of beating 3 spades, *double the opponents*. Of course it doesn't always work out in your favour and if there is crazy distribution they might well get their contract.

Here is the other side to this. The opponents have the preponderance of points and so it should be their hand to play. Now your best tactic is to push them up as high as you safely can. When you are not vulnerable you can be more aggressive. If you can hold your contract to one down, that is 50 points to them or 100 if they double you; not as good as the 140 they could have got.

The final comment on this topic is if they have reached the 3 level and your hand is not suitable for another bid, let them play their contract undoubled. Do your very best with the defence you can, remembering this. If they make the contract it will be a normal result across the field but if you can get them one trick off this will be a good score, possibly a top, for you.

I think this ability to double for penalties is what sets the good club players apart from the average club player who rarely uses the double card for penalties. Something to consider, I'm sure.

UP AND UP THEY GO!

Here you will find a list of those players who have been promoted since our last edition. As requested, the list is in alphabetical order of surnames. Congratulations to you all on your achievement!



Allan Berman	Regional Master	The Links Bridge Club
Louise Berman	Regional Master	The Links Bridge Club
Andries Botha	Regional Master	Pretoria Bridge Club
Jeannie Burns	Club Master	BBO Club
Janice Chasan	Club Master	Western Cape Bridge Club
Jayne Christoforos	Club Master	BBO Club
Carol Denoon-Stevens	Master	Northerns Bridge Club
Laura Donet	Club Master	Two Hearts Bridge Club
Harun Ebrahim	National Life Master	G B U
Jo-An Epstein	Regional Master	SAWBA Ladies
Merle Feldman	Master	Bridge@Orchards
Sue Geldenhuys	Local Master	Western Cape Bridge Club
James Haslam	Master	Northerns Bridge Club
Elizabeth Horner	Premier Life Master	KZN Bridge Club
Jon Howlett	Local Master	Highway Bridge Club
Cynthia Kaplan	Regional Master	SAWBA Ladies
Tish Kaufmann	Club Master	KZN Midlands
Paola Kotton	Local Master	Bridge@Orchards
Chris Kruyshaar	Club Master	Western Cape Bridge Club
Debbie Levin	Club Master	The Links Bridge Club
Kim Liackman	Local Master	Bridge@Orchards
Neil MacLeod	Master	KZN Bridge Club
Trish McLean	Life Master	Northerns Bridge Club
Denis Molineaux	Local Master	OFSBU System Club
Colleen Patience	Local Master	SAWBA Ladies
Jenny Platford	Local Master	BBO Club
Jill Sack	Master	SAWBA Ladies
Mary Pat Schmidt	Club Master	SAWBA Ladies
Heather Schneider	Club Master	The Links bridge Club
Piet Streicher	Regional Master	OFSBU System Club
Stephen Swann	Club Master	Western Cape Bridge Club
Anita Venter	Club Master	SAWBA Ladies
June Vincent	Local Master	BBO Club
Peter von Hirschfeld	Regional Master	Western Cape Bridge Club
Bev Watson	Local Master	Northerns Bridge Club

For a complete list of promotions this year to date go to <http://www.sabf.co.za>

