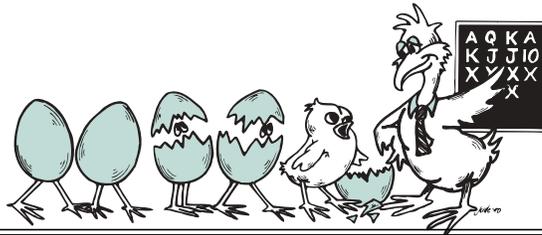


THE BRIDGE TEACHER



Want to Teach Bridge in a School?

More and more teachers are discovering the joy of teaching bridge to a classroom full of enthusiastic youngsters. During the Long Beach NABC, we heard some exciting stories from teachers who are developing school programs in their hometowns.

If your unit wants to see younger faces at the card table, and if you want to help secure the future of bridge, consider a school class. The ACBL and the ACBL Educational Foundation offer a funded program that just might be right for you. You can get details online at our school site (www.acbl.org, teachers, school site) or e-mail Charlotte.Blaiss@acbl.org for more information.

The school promo packet (available from the Education Department — Education@acbl.org) will give you a lot of information on how to start a school program. Here are a few news tips we picked up from the teachers attending the Long Beach seminar:

Getting Classes into a School:

July is the best time to visit school principals (before school starts) with an offer to bring bridge to the schools. If you go to the school to make an appointment with the principal, you might get in right away.

Tell the school official you want to set up a bridge club — that goes over better than saying you want to teach. Here's how Terri Atkinson, a retired school principal from Bakersfield CA, got her class started. She met with the principal (who did come out to talk to Terri while she was at the school trying to make an appointment). She started by presenting her ACBL teacher business card and said:

"I've been in your business and I know you're always looking for something to give

to the kids and I'm here to give you an after-school club where they can learn to play bridge. Bridge is better than chess because it is a social game where the kids learn to work with a partner.

My club is fully funded and available."

Using the "Final Contract Card" with the lessons was enough to justify teaching bridge in a math class in Spokane WA.

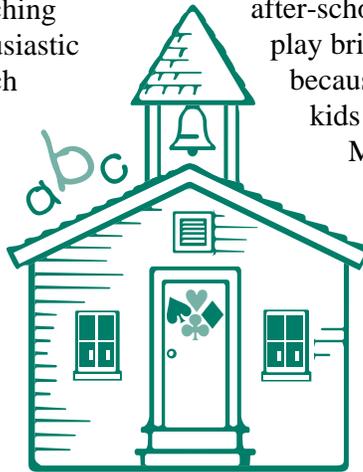
Be open as to when the classes can be offered. Different areas offer

different options. For example:

- As part of the math or enrichment program,
- Before school starts (DeWitt Hudson says Texas schools have an extended day program),
- After school (the school may run a late bus for students who stay for activities),
- On "Club Day" (this is standard in Canadian schools),
- On a "Game Afternoon" (Spokane WA offers this),
- On "learn through do" math/science nights (Alyse Galvin found this venue in the Anchorage AK schools and got the unit teachers to work with her).

Recruiting Students:

DeWitt Hudson had a good idea that worked. He prepared a letter to be sent to the students through the school saying that the ACBL had recognized them as good candidates to learn the game of bridge. This stimulated a lot of excitement and interest.



August
2003

VOL. 16 • ISSUE 2

The Official
Newsletter
of The
American
Contract
Bridge
League
Accredited
Teachers

IN THIS ISSUE

Teach in	
Schools	1-2
Are You Teaching ...	2
Prospective Member	
Packets	2
New Phone	
Extensions	2
New Orleans	
NABC	3
Marketing Bridge	3
Publicity Kits	3
Competitive	
Bridge	4
Download Logos	4
Club and Teacher	
Survey	4
Teachers' Bookshelf	5
Star Teachers	6
Value is Spelled	
A B T A	7
Fun Side of	
Teaching	7
Business Side of	
Running a Club ...	8

Summer
2003

continued on page 2

Fifth Chair invites teachers to
chat at their web site —
www.fifthchair.org

Prospective Member Packets

Have you seen the new Prospective Member Packets? They now include a current issue of *The Bridge Bulletin* and the new *Exciting World of Bridge* brochure, along with information on how to join the ACBL. Be sure to let us know if your players or students would like one. There is a link to request a packet at www.acbl.org.

New Phone Extensions: ACBL Is No. 1

Callers to the ACBL often were frustrated by the need to dial or press "1" before a three-digit extension. Beginning in September, all extensions will be changed to begin with "1," and callers now are asked to enter a four-digit extension. Julie Greenberg's extension, for example, will be 1262. It will take a while for publications to reflect the change, but we believe this will enhance our customer service in the long term.

ARE YOU CURRENTLY TEACHING?

If you are currently teaching and have an e-mail address, take advantage of the opportunity to be listed on the ACBL web site in the "Find a Teacher" section. This may be a good way for you to attract new students.

When we decided to update our online teacher listings, we notified you that Star Teachers would automatically be listed, but we would like you to fill out an application to update our files. Unfortunately, many of our Star Teachers have never submitted an e-mail address and so their names will not be displayed online after September 15, 2003.

The Star Teacher Program application may be accessed at www.acbl.org, Former Headlines, Star Teacher Program, Application. Fill it in today to either update your information or to get an online listing. For more information, e-mail Julie at Julie.Greenberg@acbl.org.

Send us
your e-mail
address,
Today!

Want to Teach Bridge in a School?

(Continued from page 1)



Recruiting an In-School Teacher to Work with Your After-school Program:

All schools require teachers to do some sort of in-service days during the year. In some states and schools, the teachers will be allowed to work with the after-school bridge program

in lieu of a teacher work day.

Gathering Supplies:

You will need basic supplies for your class (cards, boards, tablecards, etc.). Consider this. When recruiting teachers for your school program, some unit members will not want to be involved. Ask those who don't want to be active in the program to support the program by buying one of the following (depending on what you decide you need):

- a Mini-Bridge kit (\$25 from the Ed Department),
- a *Teach Me to Play* workbook (wonderful for homework assignments),
- cards, duplicate boards, bidding boxes.

After-school Programs:

All of the teachers at the Long Beach seminar agreed that you can't hold an after-school class without providing food. Consider asking your unit to form a committee to work with you and provide snacks.

Selling Yourself:

Be aware that schools may be obliged to run background checks on any bridge teachers and their aides who will be participating in the school bridge program.

Take the TAP and get business cards (through the ACBL or a local company) to establish your credibility.

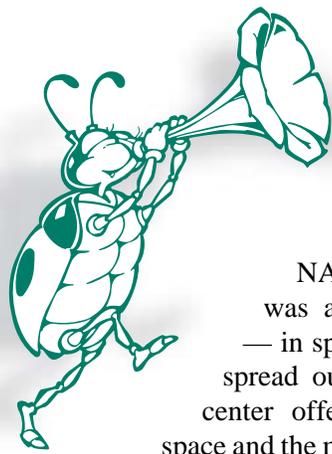
Tricks of the Trade:

Brenda Simpson uses a poster that says, "Bridge Is a Tricky Game" to get her classes started. She quizzes the students on what makes bridge a tricky game and goes from there.

Brenda also encourages her students to study by giving them a folder to keep their handouts in. She uses sheets from *Teach Me to Play Bridge* by Jude Goodwin-Hanson. If the student does the "homework," she gives a piece of candy as a reward.

Why don't you join the teachers who are bringing bridge to schools this year? It's a worthy cause that will help keep the game of bridge alive and well for future generations.

Contact the Education Department
if you have questions.



Looking Forward to the Fall NABCs in New Orleans

by Julie Greenberg

The Summer NABC in Long Beach was a great tournament — in spite of it being a bit spread out. The convention center offered good playing space and the meeting rooms were excellent. We enjoyed great weather and the fun, beauty and excitement of being by the Ocean — the total California package.

This Fall we are in for another treat in New Orleans. True, it's my hometown, and I do have a special place in my heart for this fascinating city, but who can resist a major tournament all in one beautiful hotel just minutes away from the French Quarter. (Go to www.NewOrleansonline.com for a great preview of the city.) Plus, read on for information on special features at this tournament for teachers.

ACBL Says "Thank You:!" On the first Friday between sessions, you are all invited to a reception. ACBL will celebrate its teachers and club officials and say "Thank You" for all you do for our organization.

Three Training Courses for Teachers: Three different training programs are now being offered for teachers: the TAP, Easybridge! and Better Bridge.

ACBL considers the TAP the ultimate and essential program for people interested in teaching bridge. For 15 years, the principles and the ideas presented through this program have been helping both experienced and inexperienced teachers to successfully teach bridge. The *Bidding Series* teacher manual is outstanding and can be used effectively by new or experienced teachers to get started. (At the ABTA Convention this past summer, I asked a room of more than 60+ experienced teachers how many of them had started with The *Bidding Series* course and 52+ answered "yes!") As teachers gain in experience, it is expected that they will add bells and whistles to their basic material to suit their styles and to make it their own.

Easybridge! and the Better Bridge courses are considered continuing education. They each present ideas and approaches to getting people started in bridge that have value. ACBL invites you to try all of these courses to find out what's right for you.

News About Easybridge!: Program Director Marti Ronemus, has streamlined the Easybridge! Presenter course into four hours! It will be offered on

Monday morning from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. If it's time for you to update your accreditation or you want to find out how to use Easybridge! to benefit your club and classes, don't miss this opportunity.

Teaching in Schools: Join us on the first Friday morning for an exciting program. There will be teachers who are already in the schools to share their experiences, there will be new school promotional packets and lots of information available. (See the article on page 1 about the Long Beach seminar.)

As a special treat, Kitty Cooper will be there to demonstrate one of the newly revised school lesson plans the way she teaches it. After extensive testing this summer in Albuquerque, Kitty is really excited about the new plans and looking forward to meeting with all of you who are interested in school programs. Look for the new school teacher manual at our web site next month.

Teachers Who Are Club Managers: Would you like to learn more about the business side of bridge? Have you recently assessed where you are now, set realistic goals for growth and developed a battle plan to get there? Marti Ronemus, a very successful club owner, will introduce a new seminar in New Orleans to show you how to do this. Pre-register for this Sunday morning course by calling Dana at 901-332-5586, ext. 1264 or by e-mail at Dana.Norton@acbl.org. The course fee is \$25. (See page 8.)

Bridge Teachers and Bridge Cruises: It was during the New Orleans NABC of 1995 when Arlette Schutte first introduced this seminar. Interest has remained high over the years as we have continued to update and work with this program. Peg Cundiff, who has been the bridge host on more than 100 cruises, will be the presenter. If you have any interest in working on a cruise ship, treat yourself to this program on the first Saturday morning.

NOTE: Go to ACBL's web site and check out the full list of seminars for the New Orleans Fall NABC. We hope you will make plans to attend as many of these special programs as you can.



Marketing Bridge

One of the major emphases of the ACBL's marketing plan is to provide professional services to help clubs and teachers promote bridge. A number of new marketing tools will be introduced throughout this year, the first of which is now available.

Publicity Kit for Clubs and Teachers

This includes information to use in working with the media, including information about the ACBL and bridge, media relations tips and sample press releases. You may request a copy from the Marketing Department at 901-332-5586, ext. 1368 or Ruth.Francis@acbl.org. The new "About ACBL" link at www.acbl.org includes some of this information.



Download Logos

The Cooperative Advertising Program web page (available at the Information link at www.acbl.org) now includes a link to ACBL logos for you to use with your advertising. The ACBL is in the process of creating sample ads to simplify your advertising production. We plan to have these available online this fall.

Club and Teacher Survey

You may have participated in the online membership survey conducted this year and seen the results in CEO Jay Baum's column in the September issue of *The Bridge Bulletin*. A survey targeted at clubs and teachers will be conducted this fall. If you have any thoughts about questions you think are important to ask, please contact Carol Robertson at 901-332-5586, ext. 1215 or Carol.Robertson@acbl.org.

Competitive Bridge for Beginners and Students



by Lynn Berg

Bridge is a game to be played. In addition to the four deals played in an hour in a typical bridge class, you should be encouraging your students to play beyond the class. Of course, some of them will play at home — “kitchen bridge” isn't really a disparaging term, because it implies the

relaxed non-competitive game enjoyed by many players. But your students will improve faster, you will develop a demand (from them) for more advanced classes and you will also be helping ACBL preserve its favorite form of the game if you develop student interest in competitive bridge.

This can start with *The Play Series* Courses which accompany the *Bidding* and *Play of the Hand Series*. The hands are carefully tailored to the skill level of the players, but they will still offer a competitive challenge to new players. You can also hold a Pupil Game with a few boards and introduce the idea of scoring and comparing results.

Masterpoint awards for such an informal limited game are very small, but even tiny amounts are pleasing to newcomers.

To get started, I like the approach of Easybridge! Leave the players at tables of four, simply moving the boards with travelers. You can also have some three-person pairs — just let them take turns sitting out. For stationary duplicate, you could have whoever declares take the next turn sitting out.

For the second session, move boards and pairs, and you have a duplicate game started. Plan on 15 to 20 minutes per board. They won't get much done — but it doesn't matter! They are getting started. I like to use boards from a previous open duplicate game. They score right on the old travelers, and thus they get to see how their results would score.

If a table finishes quite early, I like the Easybridge! tip that they get to play a bonus board (also taken from earlier open duplicate game boards).

Scheduling is important for new players — when will they get to play? If you have a 9 a.m. class, you could add on play time from 11 to 12:30. For a 1 p.m. class, 3 to 4:30 should work. Class at 7? Start at 6:30 with class, so you can finish your game by 10 unless you have a young crowd.

Schedule an abbreviated game to coincide with a more advanced limited game. Our club has a 0 to 100 game on Monday afternoons, but to the absolute beginners, these are the “big kids.” So let the newbies play in their own game. Resist the temptation to combine the two groups even if both are small. You will scare off the very players you want to attract. Let them take breaks and socialize together and perhaps plan a joint game for a special event. Then have the novices “graduate” into the limited game when they have 5 or 10 points. By then they will be ready to compete. Just make sure they don't play too many boards too quickly; the stress is way too great.

ACBL allows short, 12-board games now. Take advantage of this format to supplement classes. We are adding such a game on to our *Play of the Hand* and *Defense Series* courses this fall, hoping they will develop into a 0 to 100 game on Tuesday mornings.

Play Homestyle pairs if you have a very small group. This format allows matchpoint awards even if you have only two tables. (A brochure on “Home-Style” bridge, which is a form of Swiss pairs, is available free of charge from the ACBL Club Membership Department.) To complement the relaxed atmosphere of such a game, make sure you have the simpler convention cards (SS4 – appropriate for players who use few if any conventions) or have the “Exciting World of Bridge” brochures on hand which have a convention card “front” already filled in for new players. (The Exciting World card can be placed in a convention card holder with the “inside” of a regular convention card for keeping results.) Name tags are a help for the shy. Offer refreshments, at least one break and some sort of icebreaker like Bridge Bingo.

If you get them to “play their cards right,” you will develop not just new duplicate players, but an on-going demand for your teaching services.

Editor's note: *If you run a monthly masterpoint race for these new student/players, those small pieces of points that they win will become very important and will help you hook them on ACBL membership.*

The Bridge Teachers' Bookshelf

I have a large collection of basic bridge books because I am always looking for a better way to present material to my students. Many bridge teachers periodically make changes in what they teach to keep the course fresh or because they have found something they like better.

Our ACBL *Bidding Series* still provides one of the best introductory courses for new players, but some teachers seem anxious to modernize the content. I don't feel that the notrump range you use is a big deal as long as you present it in a flexible manner. I tell my class, "A 1NT opening bid shows a balanced hand in a very narrow 3-point range. Some players use 15 to 17; some use 16 to 18." Then I tell them the range we are going to use in our course. I encourage teachers to stick with the material as presented in their course text. Making any change confuses the students so, if you use the *Bidding Series*, stick with 16 to 18.

When your students move to the next course, you can remind them of the 15 to 17 range and give them permission to change. Of course, you will have to do a review lesson because using 15 to 17 affects other bids too. As we know, the 15 to 17 range fits best for players using weak twos — so plan to present weak twos at this time.

If you want a text that starts with a different notrump range, take a look at two new texts for beginners that came out in the past year.

Audrey Grant's *Bridge Basics I* won the American Bridge Teachers' Association (ABTA) 2003 Book of the Year Award in the beginner/novice category. This book starts at the very beginning with an introductory lesson and then examines one opening bid and the subsequent auction in each of the three remaining chapters (1NT, one of a major, one of a minor). Each lesson provides four deals but 16 additional hands are provided at the end of the book. These extra hands allow you to expand what looks like a 4-week course into a longer course. Modern approaches taken in *Bridge Basics I* are the use of 15 to 17 for a 1NT opening, and an 11–12 point 2NT response to a minor suit opening bid (ignoring the 2NT response to a major in order to keep the path open for Jacoby 2NT). Alternative approaches are mentioned when each of these "controversial" topics is presented, so the teacher could choose to use the traditional 13 to 15 range for the 2NT response. Illustrative examples would have to be changed in the text and, as noted, this might cause some confusion for your students. An eventual follow up to *Bridge Basics I* will cover competitive bidding.

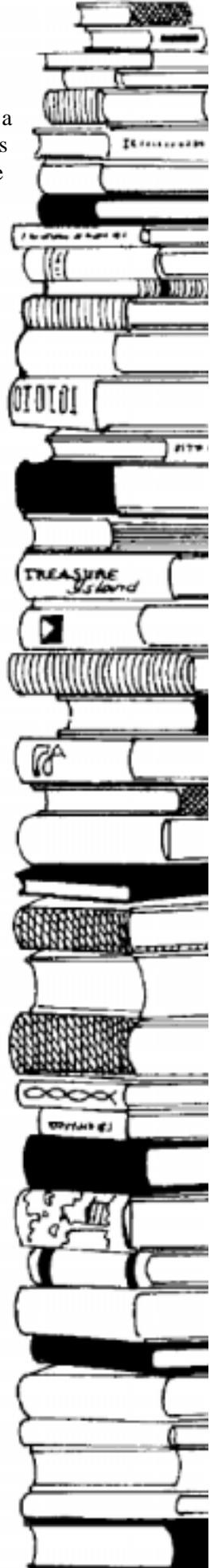
No student text is really complete without a teacher manual and Audrey has not let us down. The accompanying teacher manual spells out exactly how to teach the material. A major improvement over the *Bidding Series* lesson plans is in the use of the lesson hands as the primary teaching device.

New ideas are presented through the use of a complete hand played by the students. (The hands come at the end of the lesson in the ACBL course lesson plans.) My students respond much better to lessons that present ideas through play of hands instead of the lecture/exercise format used in the ACBL courses.

Norma Sands takes a different approach to the notrump range and presents it as 15 to 18 in *The New Standard American Bridge Updated*. She allows for flexibility in providing chapters on both forcing raises and limit raises and on strong twos and weak twos. I like the fact that she has alternative approaches presented in separate chapters so the teacher can direct the student to the proper chapter and tell them to ignore the other chapter for now (although it can be used for reference.) But the main focus of the text is the strong two, so some of opener's notrump bids may have to be adjusted. There are 19 short chapters in this book going from the basics to advanced topics like the Unusual NT. This means that one text can be used for several courses. A downside is that there are not enough hands in the book to provide material for a course and no teacher manual is available.

Bridge Basics I and *The New Standard American Bridge Updated* can be ordered from the ACBL (member price \$8.96). The *Bridge Basics I* teacher manual must be purchased at BetterBridge@BetterBridge.com.

No book on beginning bridge is "perfect." Teachers should decide which one they are most comfortable with and, more importantly, which book will be easiest for their students to use. As teachers, we have to remember that our students will take years to become experienced duplicate players (if ever) and it may not be best to teach them exactly what we play ourselves. A parent would never haul a child who was learning to crawl up by the arm and force him to walk before he was able. But that is exactly what some of us try to do to our beginning bridge students. We should be aware of the direction our beginners will go after classes end — to the duplicate tables; to play among themselves at home; to senior centers where old-fashioned bridge reigns; or to more classes. My students go in several different directions, so I try to provide sound basics that can easily be expanded on for those who move toward the modern bidding of duplicate.



STAR TEACHER'S



Eleanor Webb, Surrey BC — Eleanor graduated from the University of BC and became a dietician; later she graduated from York University in Toronto as a teacher. Now Eleanor is concentrating on teaching and playing bridge. Her teaching is based on the ACBL *Bridge Series* topped off with all the hints she can get (Harry Lampert, Carol Sydnor, and the ABTA quarterlies). Eleanor is a director and has taught on bridge cruises. She tries to avoid being negative. Eleanor was thrilled to see three of her former students at the Penticton Regional.

TIP: Her students love to hear her personal horror stories of bridge.



Janet Youngberg, Albuquerque NM — Janet didn't discover duplicate bridge until her children were grown. First, she was an avid novice, then a certified teacher and director and a Silver Life Master. In the past four years, Janet and a colleague have taught and directed bridge on seven cruises which have taken them to six of the seven continents. She has taught for the University of New Mexico Continuing Education Department, Duke City Bridge Club and the Junior League of Albuquerque. Last fall she was on the committee that spearheaded and established the school bridge program in the Albuquerque schools.

TIP: Tell your students that we don't want to enter old age without the mental gymnastics that bridge offers.



Linda Green, Delray Beach FL — Linda started playing bridge while she was a student earning her medical technology degree in clinical pathology. She began to teach bridge part-time. After playing internationally and in the World Olympics representing South Africa a few times, bridge took over as her full-time career. Linda subsequently compiled a book in the '80s on conventions and defense, *Bridge-Wise*. She was the president of The South African Women's Bridge Association and chairman of The Transvaal Women's Association for seven years. She immigrated to Florida in 1998 and is currently teaching at many country clubs, directs games five days a week and manages to play professionally on weekends.

TIP: When dummy appears, decide whether you want to develop your hand or dummy's hand and NEVER shorten the hand with the long trumps.



Beverly Kass, Tampa FL — Beverly owned a business for over 35 years and raised four children, three girls and a boy. She has four beautiful granddaughters and a very close family. When she retired, Beverly found that she needed some responsibility to make her free time worthwhile, so she took on the unit's publicity and education program. She was rewarded by the growth in the number of new members and increased interest in the game. At a recent birthday, Beverly received 30 cards from club bridge players and students thanking her for introducing them to bridge and helping them after the lessons. She was touched and felt very rewarded.

TIP: Supervised play is an important step in making your students bridge players. It keeps the students interested in learning more and in becoming members of the ACBL and your local bridge family.

Value is Spelled A B T A

Every year prior to the ACBL Summer NABC, the American Bridge Teachers' Association sponsors three and a half days of continuous education and social activities. You can meet your peers from across the country, learn from the best teachers in your profession, enjoy the company and stories of everyone in the group — and treat the trip as a business expense when tax day rolls around. What a deal!

There's something to be learned and enjoyed with each speaker. You may get a tip for improving your game or a gem to improve your classes. It's a smorgasbord of bridge!

Here are some of the thoughts, tips and ideas I got from the talk made by Norma Sands, a master teacher from Denver CO who has the distinction of running a full-time studio dedicated to teaching bridge:

TIPS FOR GOOD CLASSES

- Have a passion for teaching
- Don't get complacent about being a good teacher or you can't go forward
- Be professional
- Avoid negativity — never downgrade any other teacher or classes
- Keep your students involved
- Admit it when you are wrong
- Pick a logo and use it whenever you can to identify yourself
- Encourage your students to get the names and numbers of classmates so they can get together and practice
- Use pencils in class with your logo, name and contact number
- Use a basic text so students will have it for study and review

- Make handouts nice — proofread them, make them professional and durable



Norma Sands

PICKING A LOGO

A teacher can be defined by her business card and logo. Norma taught music for many years and used that part of her personality combined with bridge for her logo. She designed a music theme — a scale, the word BRIDGE, and pips substituting for music notes. Her information is printed on a clear blue lucite material that is very eye-catching.

Be creative. Go to your local copy company and get help in designing something that is uniquely you.



THREE TRAPS THAT TEACHERS FALL INTO

1. **Rambling:** Be careful not to talk too much. Stay on topic. Make announcements during a break and keep them to a minimum. Be careful not to let questions run amuck and get out of hand. Don't take "what if" questions.

2. **Unprepared:** Your first sentence is the most important one — it defines the topic and gets your students excited. Know what you are going to say. Don't talk over your students. Start when you have their attention.

3. **In a Rut:** It's easy to become complacent. Keep your lessons fresh and interesting.

The Fun Side of Teaching

Recently while playing at the Kate Buckman Bridge Studio, I noticed that two of my bridge students came to play in an "Introduction to Duplicate" game for the first time. From where I was sitting, I could see that they left as soon as the game was over, but before the results were posted. I heard the director announce that they had in fact come in first in their direction.

The next morning I called each of them and left a voice message saying "Congratulations, you came first last night!"

The following day, one of the winners arrived at my bridge class. She was very excited and said, "Thank you so much for calling me to tell me I came first. And by the way, how did my partner do?"

Enid R., T. O.

The Business Side of Running a Club

It's not enough to know how to direct a game and make great coffee. Running a top-notch club, big or small, in this millennium takes some business savvy. Likewise, it's not enough to teach bridge without getting your students practicing and playing.

At the New Orleans Fall NABC, Marti Ronemus, a very successful club manager, will introduce a practical workshop to show you how to use simple tools that you already have to discover the following:

- Where you are now,
- How to set realistic goals for growth,
- How to develop a battle plan to get there.

At the end of this intense four-hour workshop you will have:

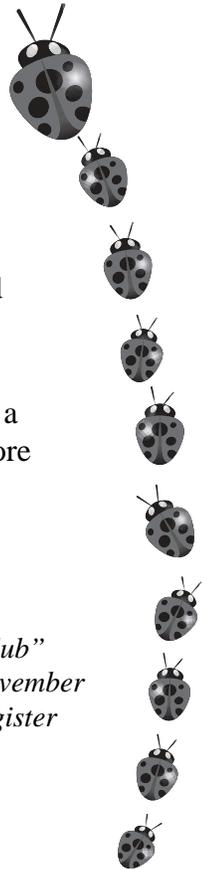
- Analyzed your customer base to find out your most profitable activities,
- Determined where your advertising dollars should be spent,

- Developed a practical marketing plan to increase your table count.

You will also leave with a concrete plan to bring in more players, keep a higher percentage of your customers and have them play more. Your customer service will reach top notch standards.

For best results, you'll want to bring a couple of reports generated by ACBLscore with you. E-mail Marti Ronemus at mronemus@suscom.net or mronemus@aol.com to find out what you need.

NOTE: The "Business Side of Running a Club" seminar will be held on Sunday morning November 23 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. You can register for this seminar (fee: \$25) by calling the Education Department at 901-332-5586, ext. 1264.



B ♦ R ♦ I ♦ D ♦ G ♦ E T ♦ E ♦ A ♦ C ♦ H ♦ E ♦ R

PRRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MEMPHIS, TN
Permit No. 854

THE BRIDGE TEACHER
AMERICAN CONTRACT BRIDGE LEAGUE
2990 Airways Blvd.
Memphis, TN 38116-3847
EDITOR
Julie T. Greenberg
PRODUCTION
Leona Allison • Dana Norton
CONTRIBUTORS
Lynn Berg • Pat Harrington
Marti Ronemus • Betty Starzec