



BRIDGE TEACHERS

Spring Edition • April 2005

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To: All Bridge Teachers

Summer is coming and we hope all of you have big plans to both teach and polish your skills by attending the Atlanta NABC. We have added programs especially for those of you attending the NABC on the Friday following the ABTA convention. Read on for all of the details.



◆ See you at the ABTA Convention

If you haven't received your letter from Pat Harrington with all of the details of the summer program, check the ABTA web site www.abtathome.com. It looks like a great lineup — especially the full morning with Jerry Helms. Jerry did a two-hour lesson at the Pittsburgh NABCs last month and I had to admit to him that I had forgotten how fabulous a teacher he is. Don't miss his presentation!

◆ Starting times at the Atlanta NABC

All championship sessions will start at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. in Atlanta. The seminar schedule and other "extras" you are used to attending at the NABCs may not be held when you expect them to be. Be certain to check out the details which can be found at www.acbl.org (click on Atlanta NABC) under Education, Special Events and Celebrity Speakers.

◆ Special programs for ABTA conventioners

On Friday, July 22 there are two special seminars and a party for teachers to enjoy. Since the unusual starting times in Atlanta have eliminated the Friday morning session of the ABTA convention, the ACBL has tried to "beef up" the day for the teachers. See "Get Ready for Atlanta" on Page 2.

◆ New opportunity for lower-priced ACBL textbooks

We were delighted with your response to the reduced price of our ACBL teacher manuals (All Manuals \$10 All the Time!). Now the ACBL has added mix and match options to help you get lower prices on the ACBL textbooks. See below.

PRICE BREAK FROM ACBL

The ACBL Product Store is now offering a "mix and match" teacher discount for our five Series texts for quantities below 100. For example you can purchase eight Club books and eight Diamond books and receive the 16 book discount. Star teacher discounts will still apply. The "mix and match" discount will also apply to the E-Z Guide booklets.

Quantity Teacher Discounts

Texts	1-7 = \$13.00
	8-15 = \$11.00
	16-49 = \$10.25
	50-99 = \$8.50
	100+ = \$7.50

E-Z Guides

1-5 = \$3.50
6-10 = \$3.25
11-24 = \$3.00
25-49 = \$2.75
50-99 = \$2.50
100+ = \$2.25

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Get Ready for the Atlanta NABC

by Julie Greenberg

The Summer NABC in Atlanta is introducing a new format that calls for all championship events to start at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. It should be fun to mix things up a bit. But, since the seminars you are used to attending will be scheduled at different times, it might take a little planning to maximize your trip.

Many of you will be attending the ABTA Convention that starts on the Tuesday before the NABC and ends on the first Thursday evening following the annual ABTA banquet. (Visit the ABTA web site, www.abtahome.com, for details.) Note that the Hall of Fame Banquet will be on the first Saturday of the tournament and won't be a conflict this year. I'm sure you will be delighted to find that you can attend both events.

On Friday, July 22, the ACBL has

added two programs that should be of particular interest to you. There will be a Teaching Young People Seminar from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. where you can find out more about ACBL's school program and mini-bridge camp program.

On Friday night from 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., you will have an opportunity to take the ACBL's popular "Bridge Teachers and Bridge Cruises" course with Peg Cundiff. ***Please go online and pre-register for this seminar (deadline of July 1) if you want to attend.***

The ACBL will also host a teachers and club officials "thank you" party between sessions on Friday from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. You can get a quick snack and then head over to the Bridge

Cruise course.

Morning seminars will be limited to one hour, starting at 8:30 a.m. and ending at 9:30 a.m., so you can get to your games on time. Saturday morning you can meet with some of the ACBL officials including me and Carol Robertson at the ACBL Product Store. We'll answer questions and show you the latest in teaching materials.

On Sunday morning (July 25), you can Get Online with Bridge Base. If you haven't attended Fred Gitelman's seminar on Bridge Base since ACBL tournaments have been introduced, I'd encourage you to sit in. Every time I hear Fred speak, I marvel at the wonders of his site. And the Board of Governors meeting will be in the evening (7:15 p.m.), so you can attend both.

There will be lots to do in Atlanta, so sign up early. A full explanation of all of the Atlanta activities can be found at ACBL's web site. Click on the Atlanta NABC (on the home page) and go to Education, Special Events and Celebrity Speakers.

See you at the tournament!

Maximize Your Trip to the Atlanta NABC

Tuesday, July 19

ABTA Business Seminar –

1 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Teaching Bridge for Fun and Profit

Evening: Dinner at Pitty Pat's

Porch (private dining room)

Wednesday, July 20

Jerry Helms! – 9 a.m. – noon

Convention Starts – 1:15 p.m.

Evening: Bus trip with guide to the Botanical Gardens (should be spectacular). Family-style Southern dinner at Mary Mac's

Thursday, July 21

Convention – 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.

ABTA Banquet – 7:30 p.m.

Friday, July 22

Teaching Young People

ACBL seminar on the funded school program and mini-bridge camp program

8:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m.

Play Bridge at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. (Starting times for all major events in Atlanta!)

ACBL Thank You Party for Bridge Teachers and Club Officials

Join us for a fun hour following the afternoon session.

6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Bridge Teachers and Bridge Cruises

Join Peg Cundiff, host of 100+ bridge cruises, for this popular ACBL seminar. Grab a quick

dinner and take advantage of the opportunity to take this course. ***You must pre-register online at www.acbl.org, Atlanta NABC, Education, or by e-mail, education@acbl.org by July 1. 7:30 p.m.-10:30 p.m.***

Saturday, July 23

Meet Julie Greenberg at the ACBL Product Store to see new ACBL materials and ask questions. 8:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m.

Celebrity Speaker Program – Jerry Helms 9:15 a.m.

Hall of Fame Banquet 8 p.m. Sign up online

Fast Food Ideas

We should get new ideas from every source imaginable, not just from other bridge teachers! I have two ideas for you from retail: from retailing giant Wal-Mart and from the popular hamburger chain Checkers. They are both successful because of attention to detail and focus on the customer. We should remember that teaching is a refined form of retail, and all of the principles that apply to sales also apply to us.

Who's the first person you see when you walk into a Wal-Mart? The greeter, of course. This pleasant person can answer questions and direct customers to the proper departments. We should do the same. Being at the door like a host as your class arrives allows you to set the tone for the session, to assess the mood of the pupils, to answer questions and to seat the participants as you wish. I like to use name tags, and my presence at the door with tags and marker guarantees that they get put on. If I can't be at the door myself, I nominate someone else to greet and put on the name tags. Anyone new is made welcome and asked to fill out a brief form for computer information. Even if your classes are very large (you lucky person), you show that you are attentive and accessible by being there at the door, not tied up with last minute preparations.

And that brings me to what Checkers has to tell us. As I waited to pick up my spicy chicken sandwich and diet soda the other day, I saw mounted on the wall instructions for the crew member Checkers calls the "expeditor." At the top and bottom of the bright, attractive sheet were general principles:

Top: Pay attention to details. Have a 360-degree consciousness of what is going on.

Bottom: Focus on the customer.

In between was a checklist of what needed to be happening for the crew to work together successfully.

We, too, should pay attention to details. A checklist of what we need to take to the class, how the room should be set up and then a list of goals for the specific class session would be helpful.

- ✓ My manual for the class
- ✓ Flash cards for review drill
- ✓ Handouts (last week and this week)

by Lynn Berg



- ✓ Cards or boards
- ✓ Numbered table mats
- ✓ The telephone—if I don't bring it, I have to walk the length of the room to answer it.

Even if I am using a detailed manual like the Club Series, it's wise to make my own list of the points I want to cover and the pertinent exercises—then I can check them off as I go. If you have trouble keeping on schedule, write down suggested times for each segment of the class and check them off as you go. Time management takes practice.

I have always been a list maker, and I find the process both invigorating and reassuring. Even daunting tasks are simpler when they are broken into smaller segments which are more "do-able." You should also identify a theme or main objective for each class; call it a "mission statement" if you like. That's the point you should use to summarize, to refer to as hands are played and to review when you start the next session.

The bottom of the Checkers expeditor list emphasized where our focus should be: not on ourselves but on the student. It's like the old saying that the "customer is always right." Too often as teachers, we are treated as if we have the tablets from Mt. Sinai in hand, and we can be patronizing to our students or resist any approach but our own. We are in retail. We have to attract business, keep it and attract repeat customers. This is more likely to happen if we forget the delightful ego-massage it is to have others hanging on our every word. Is everyone getting the point of the lesson? Has everyone had a chance to play hands and practice? Do the participants feel they are getting their money's worth? Will they be back?

I was asked recently why one should pay \$100 to attend my class when someone else was offering the same material for \$60. Privately I groaned that another teacher so undervalued her product, but all I said to the questioner was, "Come to the first class and see if you want to attend. If you decide not to, there will be no charge." I wasn't about to criticize a colleague or to boast, but my air of confidence paid off. She came to the class, stayed to pay her money and has taken another course since then.

I am convinced that the same attention to detail used in popular retail works for me, too.

Thinking Skills and Bridge are Natural Partners

Many years ago an article focusing on bridge as an excellent tool for teaching thinking skills was written by Jana Jackins for The Bridge Teacher. Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy for categorizing the six levels of thinking skills is still widely used in the field of education. Here is the body of that original article with a recent update. This article might give you some ideas when talking with teachers or students about the value of a school bridge program or bridge as a part of a summer camp.

Jo Echols, an ACBL Accredited teacher from Paducah KY, taught the Bidding course to a class of 7th graders at Lone Oak Middle School. Elaine Oehlschlaeger, a teacher at the school, contacted Jo to help with a nine-week exploratory class called "Thinking Skills." The students were to study "Bloom's Taxonomy," which classifies six levels of thinking skills. Oehlschlaeger explained, "I needed a project that would incorporate the different levels, but more importantly, would motivate the students. The game of bridge was perfect."

Jo taught for five weeks, five days a week for 45 minutes each day. A copy of Bloom's six

levels of thinking (Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation) was sent to each parent to help them understand why bridge was the perfect tool to use in teaching thinking skills.

Dedication and a great deal of hard work were essential in making this program a success. Jo worked with a total of 29 students, composed of mixed levels of ability. Each morning the room had to be prepared before school started. Since she worked with the students five days a week, Jo rotated lecture and play. One day may have been five minutes of lecture and the other 40 minutes were spent allowing the students to play hands. Other days were all spent teaching. Jo also asked the students to look for "bridge" terms, such as finesse and ethics, in the dictionary to help them understand how they were useful in everyday conversations. "This pilot program gave the school a good reason for teaching bridge," Jo said.

The "Thinking Skills" course was a huge success and the school continued it. They also started a bridge club during the second semester.

Last summer another teacher, Sandra Jones of New York, expanded on the thinking skills developed by bridge players and assessed the value of bridge as related to the mathematics curriculum and skills. Here's what

she came up with:

1. Improved memory work. Enhanced communication skills. Improved concentration. Reasoning.
2. Justification. Simple to increasingly complex problems to master and solve. Work with others to solve problems. Challenges.
3. Search for patterns. Building of personal values. Use variety of materials and concrete objects. Game provides immediate rewards.
4. Support system available for those having difficulty. Connections between every day situations for math use. Reading required. Listening required.
5. Getting along with others a necessity. Talking and discussing. Reviewing and revising plans. Thinking of alternatives.
6. Constructing arguments to justify reasoning. Deductive reasoning. Conjectures. Data management.
7. Probability. Number sense. Numeration.

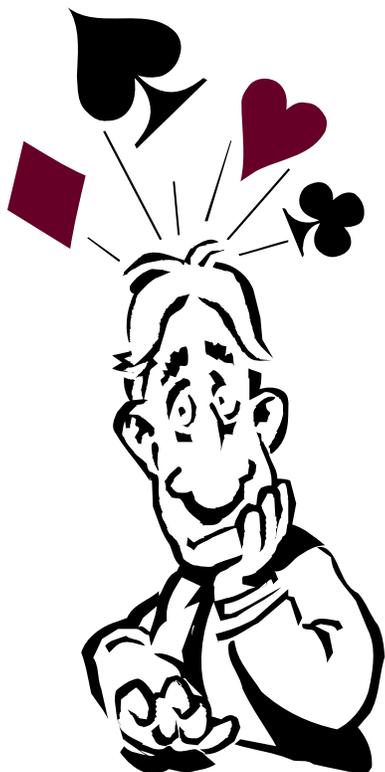
Sandra's list is wonderfully articulate and it shows how easy it is to incorporate Dr. Bloom's ideas when relating them to bridge.

DID YOU KNOW?

A recent survey told us that 25 million people in the USA know how to play bridge.

ACBL will celebrate its 75th Anniversary in 2012.

LTPB was downloaded 56,867 times in 2004 and more than 49,000 times by non members.



What Are You Doing this Summer?

by Harley Bress

The ACBL is pleased to announce that a new bridge camp program has been started for bridge players who are age 20 and under. The ACBL Bridge Camp program is designed to help teachers bring the joy of bridge to young people in a less formal format during the summer. Currently more than 5000 youngsters participate each year in the school bridge program. There has always been a significant drop-off in the months when school is not in session. The ACBL hopes that this program will “bridge” the gap.

The ACBL Bridge Camp program is completely subsidized and will provide free ACBL “Bidding” and “Play” textbooks for all the campers, E-Z Deal cards, T-shirts for all the camp graduates, a trophy for tournament play, certificates and newsletters. Bridge camp graduates will also be entitled to join the ACBL for a special \$5 membership price. In addition, the teacher of the program may be eligible for monetary reimbursement.

There is a broad range of formats possible for a summer bridge camp. You may choose to have a completely autonomous camp with only bridge type activities. You may choose to have bridge as just one part of a more universal type of camp. Camps may be held daily or weekly, for a

full day, half day or even just a few hours. There are no requirements from us about how to run your camp, but we do have suggestions.

If you are interested in running a camp but are unsure of a suitable location, good places to begin your search include: day-care centers, summer school programs, libraries and recreation centers such as the YMCA. Bridge Camps could be added as a part of an existing program at such facilities. You might also be interested in renting space to hold your own camp at these facilities.

For more information about starting a bridge camp in your area, please contact Harley Bress at education@acbl.org and ask for your free camp promotional packet, which includes valuable information about running the program.



The Perfect Spot

by Harley Bress

While researching locations for camps in ACBL homeland, I encountered the Annie’s Nannies day-care center. The folks at this center run a summer program with all types of activities from educational to athletic. They were absolutely thrilled by what I had to tell them about the ACBL Bridge Camp program. They had to ask me twice about the cost of running such a program; they could not believe that everything was provided free of charge!

It took all of one conversation with one individual there and we were in! Because this administrator considered the program educational, it will be a “required” portion of the day for students. We will have lots of children ranging in age from kindergarten through sixth grade participating in the classes. With such a wide range of ages, we will be running two separate programs.

The camp bridge lessons will run between 60 and 90 minutes once a week for twelve weeks.

HAVE YOU TAUGHT “MODERN NOTRUMP BIDDING?”

The ACBL's new Play course, "Modern Notrump Bidding," is an ideal way to create a mini-course to help your students practice. Next month a teacher manual written by author Pat Harrington will be available for free download at ACBL's web site. This mini-course (booklet, E-Z Deal cards, teacher manual) will help you introduce your students to some of the more popular "pieces" of today's bridge game as it is currently being played in clubs and tournaments across North America.

This material covers:
15-17 notrumps and a 20-21 2NT opening, Jacoby transfers, using Stayman with transfers, slam bidding using transfers, Stayman, Gerber and a quantitative 4NT.

Use this Play course in conjunction with ACBL's *Commonly Used Conventions* and *More Commonly Used Conventions* texts.

The Play courses are set up for duplicate practice. The students can deal and play (eight deals – four sessions), get immediate reinforcement from the bidding and play analysis and have the fun of comparing their result to those shown on the scoreslip provided for each deal. This practice will familiarize your students with duplicate scoring and may help build interest in local newcomer games. Remember, the more your students play, the more interested they will be in learning more.

You can order "Modern Notrump Bidding" Play course booklets and E-Z Deal cards from the ACBL Product Store (800-264-2743) or from the secure online catalog at www.acbl.org. Watch for the new teacher manual – free online!

Teaching Conventions

by Ed Stoeber

Try a New Way

I have taught Commonly Used Conventions and More Commonly Used Conventions several ways and now am continuing with a format that works well for me and is being received enthusiastically by my students.

What has evolved is a course of four-sessions, 2½ hours per session, in which each session covers just one subject abstracted from CUC/MCUC to emphasize only what these students are capable of and interested in learning at this time.

At each session I give them a single sheet summary of what we are covering and eight practice hands on separate 5½ x 8½ sheets, all of which they get to keep. I spend 20 to 30 minutes discussing and answering questions on the summary sheet, and then we cover all eight practice hands. (Eight hands allow me to give examples of nearly every variation of the topic of the day.)

Some hands they bid and play and then we discuss; others they work out the suggested bidding individually on the handout sheet, and then we discuss. All players at each table get really involved in discussions among themselves, and it is easy for me to adjust the pace to meet the students' needs. At the end of the session, I give them another sheet with the suggested bidding and play of all eight hands. The students really like this approach.

I can easily give individual lessons on single topics using these materials, or bundle the topics in a variety of ways, depending upon perceived need. The extra sample hands I either invent or glean from randomly dealt hands in our weekly duplicate learning game.

This system really works for me.



Bridge Teachers! Something just for you...

By Nancy Abbott

We are all ready for warmer weather and Spring classes, but we also need to be thinking about Summer, and that means the American Bridge Teachers Association Business Seminar and Convention held immediately prior to the Summer NABC.

This year's program will energize you for next year and help you become the dynamic teacher you want to be. The convention offers great seminars, teaching tips, networking with teachers from all over the country and great social opportunities.

The business seminar starts on Tuesday afternoon, July 19th. It runs from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. and will focus on "Teaching Bridge for Fun and Profit." The Wednesday morning session on July 20th (9 a.m. to noon) will be a major highlight of the week. We have the teachers' teacher, Jerry Helms, with us for the whole morning. He'll speak on what to teach, how to teach it and how to keep the students coming back for more.

The convention (registration for those not attending the seminar is 1:15 p.m., July 20th) offers a full lineup of terrific speakers. Lynn Berg, one of Florida's most successful teachers, Ed Marzo, the Dealmaster, Fred Gitelman, professional coach and designer of the Bridge

Base Online web site where you and your students can meet, Larry Cohen, the real deal himself, Carole Budnick, successful bridge businesswoman, Frank Stewart, bridge columnist speaking on "The Teacher's Task" and Ray Lee, one of our favorite publishers, are some of the featured presenters.

The fun and fellowship of being with other teachers is a highlight of the ABTA Convention. Two great outings are planned – a Tuesday night dinner at Pitty Pat's Porch and a Wednesday night trip to the fabulous Atlanta Botanical Gardens, followed by dinner at Mary Mac's. These outstanding social opportunities will allow us to enjoy being with our friends who have come together from all over North America.

The convention ends with our spectacular Awards Banquet at 7:30 p.m. Thursday. The 2005 Master Teachers will be introduced and Apple Basket and book awards will be given out. Our panel will feature George Jacobs, Jerry Helms and Lisa and David Berkowitz, and it should be a high point in our entertainment. The panel members will answer questions from the audience with humor and their own unique points of



view. Not to be missed!

Register today! You don't want to miss this event. Deadline to get the special convention fee is June 15. See you in Atlanta!

Seminar: \$40;
Convention and Banquet: \$150;
After June 15,
Convention and Banquet: \$175,
Wednesday night trip: \$50,
Tuesday night: buy your own dinner.

Send your check made out to ABTA to:
Pat Harrington
ABTA Business Secretary
14840 Crystal Cove Ct. #503
Fort Myers FL 33919-7417.

**Go to abthome.com
for details of the
Summer Convention
in Atlanta**

Mentoring

Mentoring Programs are popular throughout ACBLand. They are one of the best ways to help students become a part of the local bridge family. You can find a Handbook for the Mentoring Chair and examples of successful unit programs online at ACBL's web site at <http://www.acbl.org/units/units.html>. If your unit doesn't have a mentoring program, perhaps you can be the person to get one started. Here is an article written by Lynn Berg on the program at the DeLand Bridge Club.

We have tried a variety of approaches to mentoring, and this latest seems to be most popular: useful to the advancing players and not too onerous for the mentors.

Once a month (third Saturday 9:30-11:30 a.m.), we hold a

mentoring session. It is non-competitive. A mentor hosts each table, sitting North. The other players are distributed randomly in the other seats, receiving guide cards during the first round. We have players pre-register for the program so we have an idea of how many to expect, but no one is turned away who shows up without notice. We use abbreviated versions of Individual movements with three boards at each table, so the players rotate around North.

There's no clock. We usually get 6 to 8 boards played and discussed in the two-hour session. The mentors receive hand records to consult as the bidding and play proceed; the players get their copies at the end of the session. The hands are randomly dealt by Dealmaster.

The players pay nothing for the session. Each mentor receives a free play as a thank you for

helping. Our club has promoted this activity as a "give-back," and our best players volunteer. It is a great opportunity for the newer players to meet the stars in a non-threatening atmosphere.

To set up the game when I've had to "invent" a movement—say with four tables, I put three boards on each table and a printout of hands 1-12 at North. For the next round, I distribute boards 13-24 and another printout, and so on.

With five tables, it's easy just to use the Rainbow movement in the computer. Since there's no scoring, there's no worry about the curtailed movement.

An extra person just becomes a co-player with another rather than use a bump movement. Usually friends are willing to cooperate when this happens so that no one has to sit out.

Our mentoring program has definitely been a plus for our club.

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