



THE BRIDGE TEACHER

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For Your Information

The ACBL Bridge Series Teacher Manuals

As they are updated, The ACBL Bridge Series teacher manuals will be available for free download from the ACBL web site. The Bidding in the 21st Century teacher manual is available now by chapter (to make downloading easier). Go to: <http://www.acbl.org/teachers/materials.html>.



Summer Fun at the ABTA Convention

This is the year to make a special effort to attend the ABTA annual convention. See the article on this page.

Time to TAP!

The TAP has been expanded to include new teaching materials and a look at all of the changes in the updated ACBL texts and teacher manuals. All ACBL Accredited Teachers can take the program free and earn a continuing education credit on your profile. The Nashville TAP will run on Saturday, Sunday and Monday mornings following the ABTA Convention to accommodate our teachers. Sign up today at Dana.Norton@acbl.org.

ABTA Celebrates Fifty Wonderful Years!

By Deborah Murphy and Julie Greenberg

Every teacher will want to be part of the American Bridge Teachers' Association's 50th Anniversary celebration this summer. Make your plans to join us in Nashville from July 17th through the 20th for the annual ABTA Seminar/Convention at the Renaissance Nashville.

There is an impressive lineup of speakers for the 50th Anniversary Blast. This is your chance to learn from the best and network with fellow bridge teachers. You can stay in Nashville after the Convention and play bridge at the Summer NABC and participate in the new TAP course. The TAP is being offered on Saturday, Sunday and Monday mornings from 9 a.m. to noon to accommodate the ABTA teachers. You'll want to find out all about *The ACBL Bridge Series* updated materials.

ABTA is dedicated to helping those who teach bridge do it better – more

effectively – more knowledgably – more professionally. Attend the ABTA Seminar/Convention and be one of the first teachers in your area to learn about the latest teaching materials and methods.

The Seminar which focuses on the Business of Teaching starts Tuesday afternoon July 17 and ends Wednesday afternoon. The Convention starts Wednesday afternoon July 18 and ends Friday morning. Featured speakers include Larry Cohen, Barbara Seagram, Audrey Grant, Frank Stewart and Sabine Auken. Jerry Helms will do a feature presentation on Friday morning. If you've attended one of Jerry's sessions, you know what a treat it is to learn from one of the best teachers we know.

Thursday evening is our awards banquet followed by the fun and fabulous Max Hardy Memorial Panel with Zeke Jabbour, George Jacobs

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THE BRIDGE TEACHER'S BOOKSHELF

Bridge is Back

By Pat Harrington

Good news! Bridge is on the upswing. In the heyday of bridge there were several packaged bridge-based games (Bridge for Juniors, for example). But for the past decade or two, the only place you might find a game of this type was on eBay. Well, bridge games are back. It was only a few months ago I reviewed a new game called aBRIDGEd for The Bridge Bulletin. And already there is another game based on our favorite pastime. Bidittle, a nicely boxed board game from Atlantis Company, was originally created with kids in mind — to give them something else to do besides playing video games and watching TV. But it is a good game for all ages and the perfect solution when one of your students

ABTA – *continued from page 1* and his infamous partner Claude Vogel and David Lindop. ABTA will announce the winner of the annual Book of the Year Award and celebrate any new Master Teachers. It's a great event.

The cost is \$40 for the Seminar and \$150 for the Convention if you register by June 15. Check out the ABTA website for the latest details and registration application at www.abtahome.com. You can contact Deborah Murphy at bridgelady@earthlink.net if you have questions.

See you in Nashville!

asks how to get their grandchildren started playing bridge.

The package contains two Bidittle decks, regular decks missing all cards lower than the seven, a bidding board with pegs to keep track of bids, and scoring cards. Each player is dealt 7 of the 32 cards in play. The remaining four cards are placed in the card chest with the top card turned face up.

Players bid for the number of tricks they think their hand can take. A bid of 3♥ says the player expects to win three tricks with hearts as trump. You can play in notrump too. Possible bids range from three to eight, with a point score assigned to each level. If the partnership meets or exceeds the bid, they score. If they do not fulfill the prediction, the opponents (defenders) get that score. Bidding proceeds as in bridge, with each bid required to be higher than the preceding bid and three passes ending the auction.

An interesting twist is that the top card of the card chest (the four undealt cards) is turned face-up. A player who opts to bid or double has the option of replacing a card in his hand with the face-up card from the card chest. The unwanted card is placed face-down at the bottom of the card chest and the new top card is faced. At the end of the auction, the four cards in the card chest are shuffled and one card is given to each player. Sometimes the “junk” you thought

you got rid of comes back to haunt you. Since there are only eight cards in each suit, a long suit might be only three cards long. The bidding can get quite lively when a good card is face-up in the card chest. A player might even outbid his own partner to get that card. The first team to reach 20 points wins. Instructions for versions of Bidittle for two and three players are included with the game.

Not only is Bidittle fun, it is a great way to start to learn some fundamentals of bridge. The game involves tricks, rank of suits, an auction, a dummy and even penalty doubles. We tried it with friends who happened to be bridge players and with our beginning bridge students. All agreed that Bidittle is easy to learn, fast-paced and enjoyable. A special benefit for younger players is that your hand contains only eight cards, easier to hold than a full bridge hand. And the game is educational, promoting teamwork and inferential reasoning skills. But best of all, Bidittle is a sign that bridge is alive and well. Anything that exposes more people to bridge is good for us and good for ACBL.

Bidittle comes in two versions, the boxed game with board at \$19.99 or a travel pack at \$11.99. For the time being, Bidittle must be ordered from the game creators online at www.bidittle.com or by calling 859-341-9329. Visa, Mastercard and PayPal accepted.



Enhancing Your Teaching Effectiveness

By Betty Starzec

Teachers should always be aware of ways to become better teachers. The things we tell our students to do to become better bridge players also apply to us becoming better teachers. To become better bridge players, I tell my students that they need to use CPR! CPR really works and is applicable not only to bridge students but to bridge teachers!

C — Classes. Take classes as often as you can. Only good things happen when you take classes. Even if you ultimately don't agree with what the teacher had to say in the class, you have experienced the logical basis for your own opinion.

P — Practice, practice, practice. The need to practice is both applicable for both teachers and students. Need I say more?

R — Read. One of the best ways to increase your knowledge on any subject is to read. Teaching and bridge are no different from history or science.

So, there is a great way to enhance your teaching effectiveness. It is a new course available from the ACBL Education Department and it is called the TAP. What? You say the TAP is not new! Well, you are right in a way, the TAP has been around since the late-80's and has been responsible for accrediting

more than 6000 teachers. But, in coordination with the updates to *The ACBL Bridge Series* as well as the ACBL no longer being in the book business, the Education Department expanded the TAP not only to provide the aforementioned updates but to provide samples of material from top professional teachers within the ACBL. You can learn teaching techniques from Eddie Kantar, Pat Harrington and Audrey Grant via demonstrations of their material; structure and marketing strategies from Roberta Salob; and, how to create lesson plans (Barbara Seagram's material is used).

In addition, the new TAP has been expanded to include information from outside sources, such as the University of Hawaii, which provided specific information on enhancing your teaching effectiveness. This is a 10-point article that is unbelievably relevant to much of the information in our Role of the Teacher. Number One on this "Top 10" list says it all — SEIZE THE MOMENT! As teachers, we would love to produce new players who can enjoy bridge for their lifetime. We need to recognize that we have a unique period of time when they first step into our classes to show them the magic of our game. Take advantage of this time — in other words, seize the moment!

Don't get me wrong — the TAP still includes wonderful role-playing demonstrations and other exercises, but with the addition of this new material the TAP has attained a new level of effectiveness for teachers. The TAP is even more relevant, it's even more fun, but best of all it is still free to accredited teachers. Join in on the next TAP class in your area and receive a copy of the new *Bidding in the 21st Century* text. If your area hasn't scheduled an updated TAP, contact your Unit Education Liaison and suggest that they schedule one. It can only benefit you and bridge in your area!

Time to TAP in NASHVILLE?

The Nashville NABC TAP is being offered on Saturday, Sunday and Monday mornings from 9 a.m. to noon to accommodate those of you who are attending the ABTA Convention. The new program is wonderful and I'm sure you will want to earn the continuing education addition to your ACBL profile by attending the course. Sign up today with Dana Norton at dana.norton@acbl.org. Remember ACBL Accredited Teachers can retake the course for no additional fee.

A LOOK Back at the E

There's nothing better than having a job that you love. I've had three (tournament director, Tournament Department Manager and Director of Education) and consider myself very lucky. With all of the recent changes in the Education Department, I've found myself taking a trip down memory lane that I wanted to share with you.

The Education Department was created in 1986 and I joined the department at the end of 1987. Mid-1988 I woke up one day to find that the other three people in the department had moved on and I was IT – the entire ACBL Education Department. Oops. It has been quite a journey from that point, spanning the next 20 years.

Sandi Clark was my first reluctant hire. An ex-tournament director, she wanted a position in the Tournament Department but nothing was available. I got her by default. What a break! Not only did Sandi forge a fantastic Junior Program for ACBL – something she claimed just happened as she worked to revive the college bridge program that had fallen on hard times – but she brought a sense of fun to our group. We had some magic moments along the way and found ways to laugh when times were tough.

Rena Hetzer was the next hard sell. I think I simply caught her at a weak moment and wore her down. She agreed to try a job working with our Area Managers in the field and found she was perfect for the position. They were a high energy group and Rena was the perfect ring leader. Working together, the

TAP marched forward and more and more teachers joined the “cause” each year.

The day Sandi, Rena and I hired Dana Norton, the sun was

a revived college program – all were booming. Those of you who have been with us a long time will remember our annual



My first staff – Julie, Rena, Sandi and Dana.

shining on us. We “pounced” on Dana, having no idea how to interview anyone, and she smiled throughout. Wow! Were we impressed with how she handled us – it was a match made in heaven.

Jana Jackins, on the run from a dull retail job, landed in our laps when we really needed more help. She was amazing. Jana worked with the school program, taking it to new heights, and was invaluable with our Juniors. She had an upbeat personality and a contagious smile – a pleasure to work with.

During this six-year period, we laughed a lot and had a lot to show for our efforts – the Junior Program, the School Lesson Program, the TAP, our teaching materials and support products, two newsletters and

summary sheets that we sent out at the end of the year. We were cranking out so much work, we needed a way to keep track!

When Sandi moved to Florida with her husband who retired



Charlotte receives the WBF Bronze Medal for her work with Juniors.

Education Department

By Julie Greenberg

early, I was incredibly lucky to end up with another reluctant hire. Charlotte Blaiss had just moved to



Charlotte and “her” winning team in Brazil.

Memphis with Gary who came into the office in 1994. Charlotte, a school teacher by profession, had intended to continue to teach in Memphis. Gary and I put a lot of pressure on her to give the Education job a try before pursuing her original plan. Fortunately, she fell in love with the job, our family-staff and our credo — work should be fun.

Charlotte was able to take the school program to new heights. Coming from a school-teaching background, she was able to help innumerable teachers start programs and make them successful.

In 1995 Charlotte and I attended our first WBL Junior Pairs and Camp in Ghent, Belgium. What a trip! There were enough memories

to fill a lifetime — but it was just the beginning for Charlotte. She and Panos Gerentopolus, the Chairman of the WBF Junior Committee, were kindred spirits. They continued to work together for the next ten plus years to develop both the ACBL and the WBF Junior Programs. Charlotte was honored by the WBF in



The Ed Staff at Sandi’s retirement.

1999 with the Bronze Medal of Distinction for her work with the Juniors.

Charlotte retired in mid-2006 and has left behind hundreds of happy, talented Junior Bridge players who will continue to bring distinction to the ACBL for many years to come. Her presence at the head of the ACBL Junior Program will be sorely missed. Thank you, Charlotte, for a job well done.

We’ve had other workers of note in our department. LaToya Kirk took over for a couple of years when Jana left and she was hard-working and fun to be with. We all planned her wedding during her first year. Harley Bress arrived next and helped us upgrade our web site and Internet exposure. He also did a great job in making the Junior newsletter a more interesting publication. Martha Walls was here for a couple of years and she zoomed in on the school program, updating our records and helping to make the program run more efficiently.

Today the department is down to me and Dana. I’m working with Betty Starzec on the teaching material updates and Dana is doing an amazing job with the school program and the TAPs. It truly was a blessing for me and ACBL when she joined the department. We’ve been joined by Tracey Yarbrow, our archivist and Education Assistant. She and Dana share an unequalled work-ethic. When they get going, you’d think a tornado had struck. Wow!

It goes without saying that our field staff has been key in the development of ACBL’s strong teaching program: Audrey’s teaching materials and TAP; Betty Starzec’s duplicate updates and Unit Growth Program; our TAP Trainers and the early Area Managers. But I didn’t think you were aware of what an enormous contribution our in-house staff has made and I wanted to pay tribute to their work. Thanks, fabulous staff!

STAR TEACHERS



Joan Anderson (West Des Moines IA) – From the very first time Joan saw bridge played, she developed a curiosity for the game. Joan claims to have learned by the trial and error method. In 1966, however, she found the key to learning bridge ... Joan *taught* her first class! Teaching that first class sparked a lifelong passion. After 20 years of running games and 10 years as a travel director, cruise lecturing and directing was a natural next step. It combines all of her passions: teaching, traveling and meeting people.

TIP: My first goal is to help my students find a comfort level that will help release the stress and expectations of learning this GAME. I find this especially important for the “seasoned” “citizen.

Only then can the class work together to learn the underlying concepts and the basic FUNDamentals.



Mary Erickson (Albuquerque NM) – Mary was born in Lexington KY and moved to Washington D.C. after graduating from high school to work for the government as a stenographer. After she married, Mary and her husband moved and lived in several states – wherever education and jobs took us. She started to play a lot of bridge in Plano TX and discovered duplicate in Albuquerque NM in 1972. Mary became an LM in 1987 and a Gold LM about 10 years later. While in Plano, Mary combined business with pleasure and ran the Plano Catering Service out of her home with her bridge-playing friend. When she moved to Albuquerque, Mary became a realtor and pursued that career for 22 years until she retired in 1994. She has been very active in bridge, serving on

the Unit 374 board as hospitality chair, treasurer for the Casa de Amigos board and is currently president of the Duke City Bridge Club. In the fall of 2004, she started teaching beginning bridge at the club and has continued to pursue this new career. Mary has three children, two boys and one girl, and seven grandchildren. She also has three step children, two girls and one boy, and two stepgrandchildren.

TIP: Be patient, keep your lessons simple and go slowly.



Marilyn Kroll (Boca Raton FL) – After retiring as a Clinical Social Worker in 1993, and having had a long standing bridge-playing background, Marilyn decided to combine her people and bridge-playing skills by becoming a bridge teacher. Her first students were friends who were total beginners. Some were eager, some reluctant and one said that she liked Mah Jong much better. They have all become serious bridge players, playing both social and duplicate bridge on a regular basis and the Mah Jong player has actually become a bridge addict. Her friends encouraged Marilyn to continue to teach and a serious teaching career was the result. She enrolled in the TAP and found it most helpful in training her to become a real professional. A

move from Chicago to Florida sparked Marilyn to take the Club director’s course. She directs two days a week at Jourdan’s Bridge Club and in addition has been teaching both beginning and intermediate bridge to groups at four different country clubs and to several private groups.

TIP: Love what you do. Marilyn really loves to teach and she enjoys her students. To help her students remember things (most of her students are retired), Marilyn makes up songs as mnemonic devices.



Elsie Mentuck (Port St. Lucie FL) is the 95-year old we all dream of becoming. In 1980 she moved to Florida from Massachusetts where she had started and run a bridge club. After settling in and running a few private games, Elsie opened her first large game in Stuart in 1989. She next added on two weekly games at the Community Center and continued to teach and run games in Port St. Lucie. After buying a new home in Lake Charles, she was offered space at Temple Beth El Israel where she still is today, teaching new players and directing four games of duplicate bridge weekly. Elsie is an ACBL Accredited Teacher, a club owner, a certified director, a member

of the National Goodwill Committee and has a record of over-thirty years as a successful bridge cruise host. She has completed two trips around the world. Elsie has more than 2,000 mps, and as she says, “although I cannot buy even a cup of coffee with them, they are invaluable in happy memories.”

TIP: Enjoy the pleasure of giving to your students and it will be returned tenfold in their participation in your club’s activities.



The Business of Bridge

One Size Does Not Fit All

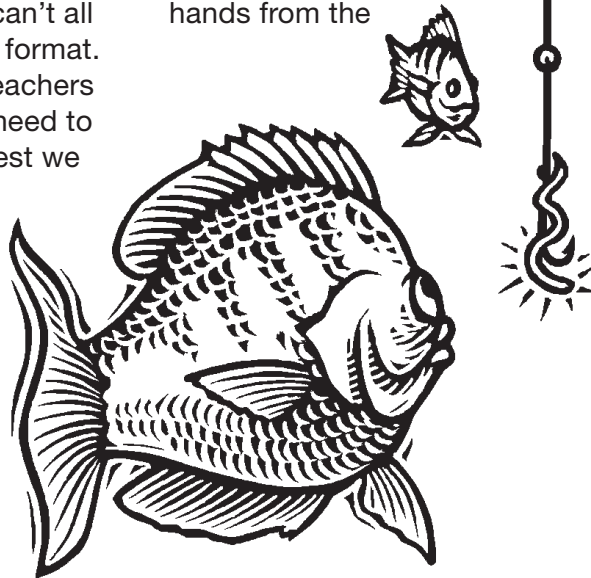
By Lynn Berg

I have what are politely described as “ample” curves, so I am well aware of the idea that one size does not fit all. Much as we like to teach, we can’t all use the 8 lesson, 2 hour format. And sometimes we as teachers can become jaded and need to do something different lest we screech with boredom at too frequent repetition. But what other uses can we make of the marvelous material in the bidding, play and defense series?

Teach the hands one at a time as the prelude to playing sessions. If you are running a 0-5 or a newcomer game, these hands will provide you with mini-lessons for over a year. When the players love the hands and the “hands on” approach to setting up and playing, you also will have developed an interest in more formal lessons. What better advertising of your skills and of the content of the courses? Naturally, as an ethical presenter, you will give credit where it is due for the source of the hands — and that attribution will also help publicize your other role as a bridge teacher.

Use one lesson as a workshop. For instance, the

stand-alone chapters on overcalls and take-out doubles work well for this purpose. Use extra hands from the



accompanying *Play* series course to create a three-hour format.

Teach a thematic series of three or four lessons. Use the spiral development of concepts in the three series to provide more and more sophisticated material and hands. This will allow you to progress with your students from the known to the unknown in an effective manner.

Try a Bridge Camp during a vacation season. You might have difficulty getting students to sign up for eight consecutive weeks during a vacation period. Run a five-day bridge camp instead with lessons and play every morning (or afternoon). If you have three-

hour sessions and start, for instance, with lesson two in the *Play of the Hand* series, you can probably cover all the material in the time allotted. For the other courses, choose the five lessons you think will be most effective

and give extra play time each day with hands culled from the *Play*

courses. Using those hands will ensure that the hands are appropriate

and well-designed for your purposes.

We all know that finding good hands is the worst and most important task. The eight ACBL *Play* courses offer great hands that are ours for the using!

Allow students to shop for the lessons they want, instead of signing up for eight or sixteen. Set out the chapter topics as a “menu,” and allow those who don’t want to commit to eight lessons to pay a “special” price for two or four lessons — again, paid for in advance, just not all eight.

Consider your bridge lessons as a series of jewels that you can string in many different ways. There’s more to life, after all, than one size fits all.

Need Some *Zingers* for Your Classes?

Here are some bits you can use to add a little humor to your classes ...

- ♥ One advantage of bad bidding is that you get practice at playing atrocious contracts. – *Alfred Sheinwold*
- ♥ I'm not sure whether glory or masterpoints is first on the list of beginning tournament players, but I know learning to play better is definitely last. – *Eddie Kantar*
- ♥ A player who can't defend accurately should try to become declarer (or dummy). – *Alfred Sheinwold*
- ♥ A lady is playing in her first duplicate hears an opponent say: "Alert". The lady says: "I am alert".
- ♥ Learn from the mistake of others. You won't live long enough to make them all yourself. – *Alfred Sheinwold*
- ♥ Years ago there were only two acceptable reasons for not leading partner's suit:
(1) having no cards in the suit; (2) sudden death. – *Alfred Sheinwold*
- ♥ We had a partnership misunderstanding. My partner assumed I knew what I was doing.
- ♥ The guy led the 8 from a 98 doubleton because his teacher told him "eight ever, nine never."
- ♥ Your play was much better tonight and so were your excuses.
- ♥ A fellow had made a bad bid and had gone down 1400. "I'm sorry," he said to his partner, "I had a card misplaced". "Only one?" asked his partner innocently. – *Charles Goren*
- ♥ When I take a 50-50 chance, I expect it to come off 8 or 9 times out of 10. – *The Hideous Hog*
- ♥ Know the difference between a serial killer and my bridge partner?
Answer: You can reason with the serial killer.
- ♥ Regardless of what sadistic impulses we may harbor, winning bridge means helping partner avoid mistakes. – *Frank Stewart*



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