



THE BRIDGE TEACHER

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For Your Information

King/Queen of Bridge – It's time again to select the King/Queen of Bridge. This award is for an ACBL member who is a graduating high school senior and who plays and promotes bridge. Recent winners have been cited for outstanding tournament performances plus administrative, recreational and promotional activities related to bridge. The ACBL Educational Foundation will present a \$1000 scholarship to the King/Queen of Bridge. See the youth web site (www.youth4bridge.org) for details on applying.



Membership Increases – All membership fees are increasing. You should be aware that Junior membership fees go from \$14 to \$15 as of April 1, 2010, and first year memberships increase from \$26 to \$28 effective January 1, 2011.

Newsletters for New Members – Starting in 2009, first year ACBL members received four issues of the New Member Newsletter during their first year of membership. Starting this year (March, 2010) second year ACBL members will receive four issues of an eNewsletter to further assist them in becoming a part of our bridge family.

Youth NABC – The Youth NABC will be held once again in conjunction with the Summer NABC. The second weekend (Thursday night, Friday and Saturday) of the NOLA tournament will host this popular event. If you have students ages 19 and under, please try to bring them to this exciting competition.

ABTA – Summer Convention in New Orleans – Don't forget to make your reservations for the annual ABTA Convention. It is always a great event and plans are in the works to make it better than ever. Details are in this newsletter.

ACBL Headquarters – As we go to press, the ACBL plans to be settled in the new Horn Lake Headquarters by the time you are reading this newsletter. Our moving date is Friday, April 16, and our new address is: 6575 Windchase Blvd, Horn Lake MS 38637-1523. Check the web site for all of our new phone extensions.



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Third Youth NABC slated for New Orleans

By Brent Manley



YNABC Participants from Hawaii

Young bridge players are expected to come from across the U.S. and Canada to the third Youth NABC to be held in New Orleans this summer. The dates are from Thursday, July 29 to Saturday, July 31.

There will be games for players on all levels – even complete beginners can play a game called “cardrook.”

The tournament is open to those 19 years old or younger as of July 1, 2010. All events will be played at the New Orleans Marriott.

The first two contests were resounding successes. A total of 198 players attended the first Youth NABC in Atlanta in 2008, and 168 youngsters came to the 2009 event that was contested in Washington DC.

Last year’s Baron Barclay National Youth Open Pairs winners were: Jessie Stern of Lutz FL and Jourdain Patchett of Sarasota FL.

Each winner took home a \$1000 scholarship.

The Youth Swiss Teams defending champions are Adam Grossack of Newton MA, Sean Gannon of Atlanta, Andrew Dubay of Vooheesville NY, Adam Kaplan of New Port Richey FL and Stern and Patchett. These winners divided a \$4000 scholarship.

For more information,

visit the youth bridge web site at www.youth4bridge.com. The complete schedule and sign-up information is there. Also, youth can enter the mystery hand sweepstakes. The winner will receive a Samsung Netbook. See the web site for complete details.

Those interested in going to New Orleans may also contact Dana Norton at 901-332-5586 extension 1264 or e-mail her at: dana.norton@acbl.org. Check the youth web site (www.youth4bridge.org) for the schedule and details.



Amanda Harper



Bill Gates Addresses the Group



Isn't this fun!



Astronaut Greg Johnson Signs Autographs



The Naked Unvarnished Truth

By Marti Ronemus

Have you even noticed how the bad behavior of one or two people can wreck the reputation of a whole group? Think politicians. Think golf. Well, here's a couple of examples that could wreck us -- bridge teachers. I found this in my inbox (e-mail). This is absolutely unedited, the naked, unvarnished truth.

Dear Marti: Help! I'm a brand new player taking lessons at the ____ Club. This week we were learning about bidding up the line. Here's what my teacher said. "With 4-4 in the majors, bid up the line." Great. That makes sense.

Then he said, "With 5-5, bid DOWN the line." Okay. I think I've got it.

But then it got confusing. "With 6-5, usually bid the longest first." Huh? I never saw a 6-5. What does it look like? Why 'usually'?

And there was more. "Also you need to think about reverses, with all their incantations" My gosh, Marti. I don't understand what a reverse is. And he wasn't done yet. He had more.

"Some say opener's rebid after Stayman should be up the line, but other notables recommend bidding down the line."

Which experts do you agree with, Marti? Personally, I'm losing it. Here's what he said next.

"Then we espouse the great debate of bidding down the line after a takeout double and the nuances of Walsh rebids. Now, get ready, because we're going to cover all this, a little at a time, over the next two hours.

He covered it, alright, but I wasn't there mentally. And I'm not going back. Obviously, I'm not bridge material. I'm disappointed in myself, and I had hoped to be able to play this game. The people I know who've mastered it seem to have a lot of fun.

Next, I was teaching an Elderhostel (now called Exploritas) in Vermont, and one of the students had been to lessons in her hometown. It had been such

a bad experience that her friend had to bribe her to try again. She said that half the time she didn't understand a word the teacher was saying, and just as she started to feel she was getting it, the instructor moved on to yet more new stuff.

And then, someone was upset because Easybridge! hadn't worked for their club. Digging a little deeper, it turned out that they had "improved" the program, making it "better." Yup. They made it so much "better" that all the students disappeared.

How does this happen? There is so much help for us teachers available through ACBL, ABTA, other teachers. There are such excellent resources, so many great books and lesson plans, I just don't get how teachers can go so wrong. And I'm sure these errant teachers blame it on the students, blame it on bridge, the economy, etc., etc., etc.

I'm sure these teachers were trying. I'm sure they prepared and developed their lesson plans with the best of intentions. But what on earth were they thinking? All of these students came away thinking how smart their teacher was and how dumb they were.

Let me confess. As a teacher, I've made (and continue to make) every mistake. I've been guilty of being too eager to show I know the answer, too eager to give the answer, rather than guiding my student to discover it. I've often tried to stuff too much into a lesson, rather than give just a couple of concepts. (Honestly, what was I thinking the day I tried to cover three kinds of doubles in one workshop.) I'm often unclear and ambiguous.

So I guess what I'm saying is this: Thank goodness our students forgive us and recognize that most of our errors come from being too eager to give them the whole entire gift of bridge. And thank heaven that most of us, most of the time, hit enough good notes that they come back for the rest of the song.

And is there anyone out there who can help me? What on earth is a "Walsh rebid?"

What is Your True Profit?

By Lynn Berg



I'm not talking about the positive experience of teaching: I get such a high from teaching, I should probably pay the students instead of the other way 'round. I mean actual net profit. Most of us who like teaching aren't necessarily great record keepers, but we still have to pay taxes. I happen to live in a state with no income tax, but that makes me an exception. We all need to keep accurate records, so we can get proper credit for the cost of doing business.

The gross income seems easy to calculate, and it is if everyone pays the same amount up front for a class. But that may not be true — some may pay more because they are only taking a few of the classes in a series. If the class costs \$10 a session if paid in advance, for instance, I charge \$12 by the class. I also give a substantial break to anyone who is repeating a class — \$5 instead of 10. So the net isn't so easy to calculate. If you are teaching several classes at a time, it might be easier to have a separate account (checking or savings) dedicated only to the class income. Then, at least, the gross will be easy to add up.

You have to know what are legitimate business expenses and what IRS or your state allows. At the moment, IRS allows fifty cents per mile for allowable car costs. I drive to another county every week to teach two classes. It is 44 miles each way, so I get a \$44 deduction from the gross. I've taken a tip from National Director Patty Johnson, and I have a separate savings account for any car allowance — I

sock that money away and use it to pay for routine car maintenance and insurance. Recently, I also paid for new tires out of that money. It's expensive to use your car in your work. Make sure you get credit for those costs.

What other expenses do you have? Are you providing books in the lesson fee? If so, the wholesale cost of those books is a deduction. If you sell books separately, do you make a profit? Make sure that profit goes in the income account. How about handouts? It can cost ten cents a page and more if you make color copies. If you pay to have copies made, keep your receipts. If you do it at home, keep a log and know what a reasonable per page charge should be.

Do you use other visual aids? Have you bought a projector which is only used for classes? What about any computer software? Have you bought markers? Name tags? I use huge, easel-sized Post-its for my out of town classes. A pad costs about \$20 and lasts me a whole series.

Do you store large quantities of dedicated materials? You might even be able to get a tax credit for some percentage of your living space. It's worth consulting a tax professional at least once if you are trying to make your living through bridge activities and have unusual expenses. My late friend, Arlette Schutte, even had clothes and jewelry she only used for bridge — and she took a tax deduction for the cost!

You can get credit for membership in professional organizations like the ABTA as well. What about travel to the ABTA convention? What if you are asked to speak at a tournament? Travel and handout expenses may be deductible if you are establishing a business and have adequate records.

For many of us, bridge teaching is mainly a labor of love, done locally in the club we are trying to support. Even so, you probably have legitimate expenses which can help you at tax time. Have a brainstorming session with a friend and see what you can come up with.

FedEx Office Discount

Take advantage of a special discount on print pricing at FedEx Office locations. ACBL members can receive a 35% discount on 8 1/2" x 11" B/W and Color Copy printing (on specific papers and sizes). Use the link at: <http://www.acbl.org/marketing/index.html> — to print out the FedEx card with the discount number.

Remember, the Cooperative Advertising Program may pay some of the balance.



Play & Learn with Pat Harrington Volumes 1 and 2

Keep your beginners happy, and make more money too

by Amy Nellissen

I've been selling Great Games/Pat Harrington software to my students ever since Volume 1 came out in 2008. But it wasn't until this week that I finally sat down to play the second set, Lessons 7-13. It's easy to see why the American Bridge Teachers' Association (ABTA) named Introduction to Bridge Play and Learn with Pat Harrington Volume 1 as its 2009 Software of the Year.

First and foremost, this software is designed for bridge students, not players. Volume 1 (Lesson 1-6) is appropriate for absolute beginners with no prior bridge experience. The subjects covered in both versions follow Pat's beginner course perfectly: Three full lessons are devoted to trick taking and understanding what a contract is before bidding is introduced. Lessons 4 through 6 cover notrump opening bids and responses, major suit opening bids and responses, and minor suit opening bids and responses.

Volume 2 (Lessons 7-13) is for those who have completed an absolute beginner course or the equivalent. Subjects include dummy points, notrump bids by responder, notrump rebids by opener, takeout doubles, preempts, strong 2C openings and Stayman.

As with all of Pat's teaching materials, the students learn by first bidding and playing a hand. Only then is the deal analyzed to see what worked, what didn't work, and why. Students can rebid and replay each hand as many times as necessary before moving on to new material. When ready, a new tidbit of information is presented and immediately another hand is bid and played to reinforce the new concept.

When students make the right bid, the software gives positive reinforcement. For example, "Good. Now let's look at what North will do after your 1NT response."

When a bidding mistake is made, the software clearly explains why: "You don't have the strength required for a two-over-one response. Without a heart fit, and with no four-card or longer suit that you can bid on the one level, resort to a 1NT response."

Gets them playing outside the class

We teachers all know that the best thing for our students would be to get together to play with others outside the class. We also know this rarely happens.

Even when armed with phone lists of other students, few will make the effort to play.

This software helps address that problem. Now when students complain that they can't find people to play with or that they aren't available to come to supervised play, I counter with, "Have you tried the software?"

I point out that by using the software, the student will be the declarer on all eight hands in each lesson – as compared to the classroom where they will declare only once or twice in a two-hour class.

In my beginner and advanced beginner classes, I find that students who buy and use the software are much better able to keep up in the class. They play faster, with more confidence, and understand more. They tend to stay interested instead of dropping out.

Beginners need to miss a few classes?

"I love the class, but I'm going on a cruise, and I'll have to miss two or three classes. I'm not sure if I should sign up for Advanced Beginner."

In the old days, this question churned my stomach. I knew darn well that after missing two or three weeks in a row, most students would be so far behind that it was usually best to suggest they wait to join a later class. But who knew if that later class would fit into their schedules? That cost me students.

Now I can offer another option: "Take the software on your cruise and you'll be all caught up to rejoin your friends when you return."

Opportunities for Teachers to Make Money

The software retails for \$34.95. Bridge teachers can buy it from Great Game Products for \$21 plus the actual shipping cost. There are no minimum order requirements. (Contact Cindy Offterdinger, 888-762-8922, sales@bridgebaron.com.)

But the real financial benefit to teachers is that this software helps keep students interested and gives them enough practice and confidence to become intermediate students and hopefully, players.

Drawbacks

Currently the software is only available for Windows. For some reason I get lots of retired schoolteachers in my classes, and they all seem to use Macs. Great Game Products expects to have a Mac version available by next year (2011).



THE BRIDGE TEACHER'S BOOKSHELF

Teaching Declarer Play

By Pat Harrington

Every time a new book on declarer play comes out, I hope to discover a "magic bullet" that will allow me to help my slowly improving students become good declarers. Hope springs eternal, but I'm starting to believe I'm looking for the impossible.

At a recent online chat for members of the American Bridge Teachers' Association (ABTA), discussion turned to teaching declarer play. ACBL Accredited Teacher, David Germaine, said that each lesson he tried to find a new way to make planning a priority. I listened eagerly, hoping that my magic bullet was coming. David continued, "Once I made a rule that the declarer had to take a full 60 seconds before calling the first card from dummy. Declarer could plan the play, say a prayer, or count to 60, but they had to take that minute. It didn't work!"

We all know the first step to becoming a better declarer is to plan the play before playing that first card from dummy, But how do we teach students to think so they can make a good plan? There are THREE new books out there trying to give us the help we need.

Planning the Play of a Bridge Hand

I found the best teaching ideas in Planning the Play of a Bridge Hand co-written by Barbara Seagram and David Bird and published by Master Point Press. The secret to helping students remember is to give them visuals that make enough of an impact to stick in their minds. Here's an excerpt from Chapter 4 where the authors discuss leading a high card to finesse:

Example 1

| |
|------------------------|
| ♠ A 6 2 |
| ♠ K 9 7 4 ♠ 8 5 3 |
| ♠ Q J 10 |

Example 2

| |
|------------------------|
| ♠ A J 6 |
| ♠ K 9 7 4 ♠ 8 5 3 |
| ♠ Q 10 2 |

Example 3

| |
|------------------------|
| ♠ A J 10 |
| ♠ K 9 7 4 ♠ 8 5 3 |
| ♠ Q 6 2 |

The authors describe leading the ♠Q to finesse in Example 1 by using this visual: "If you have a lurid frame of mind, you can think of the ♠Q J 10 as an executioner's block. When the king's head appears, the axe (dummy's ace) will fall!" Then they show Examples 2 and 3 as equivalent positions. I like it!

I expect this well-laid out book will get a lot of use in my post-beginner classes. Teachers will be thrilled to find over 100 complete deals with the auction given (South declares all hands). The student practice exercises provide nearly 100 more declarer-dummy hands with contract and opening lead specified. Some of these could also be turned into lesson deals. However, students might choose a different lead unless you also specify the lead. In addition, an aggressive auction is sometimes required to reach the desired contract and our students with only basic bidding skills are likely to ask how to reach that contract. While I always specify the contract in a class on play or defense, I find it to be an unnecessary distraction when the bidding cannot be easily explained to students. It takes their focus away from the main lesson theme. The first six chapters deal with planning the play in suit contracts. The next four chapters deal with play in notrump and the final section, entitled Adding Clever Moves To Your Plan consists of seven chapters on more advanced topics such as trump management,

the danger hand, combining your chances and counting. A full listing of topics can be found at the Master Point Press website: http://www.masteringbridge.com/t_resources.php where they generously provide chapter summaries and the deals given in planning exercises at the end of each chapter. The site is well-worth exploring. Note – there is a special on one copy of this book for \$10 including shipping – good until April 30 but extended until May 15 for readers of this article. This book is also an excellent resource for students. Master Point Press offers quantity discounts on some of their books. List price at bridge supply houses is \$18.95 US (\$21.95 Canadian) plus shipping. E-mail marketing@masterpointpress.com for information on bulk discounts.

An Introduction to the Art of Taking Tricks

Our second basic declarer play book, An Introduction to the Art of Taking Tricks, is published by ABTA Master Teacher and ACBL Star Teacher Brian Richardson. Nine chapters cover topics ranging from basic plays in suits and notrump to hold-ups, the danger hand, plus a final chapter touching on defense. To see a complete listing of what's included, go to Brian's web site http://mysite.verizon.net/brian_delia/id5.html.

Again, teachers will find new deals to use in the classroom. Each of the nine chapters ends with four deals for classroom use (ready to use with declarers rotating), plus more than thirty discussion deals (with South declaring) in the body of the text. Each lesson deal is first presented with basic questions to help the reader bid the hand and then presented again with a complete analysis of the bidding and play. The majority of deals



Bridge: A Path to Math (and much more)

by *Patty Tucker*

Atlanta Junior Bridge (AJB) and BridgeAtSchools have joined forces. A nine-week curriculum geared toward Middle School students has been written, so that bridge may be taught as an elective/enrichment course during the school day.

John and Judy Hassett are the authors of this course. John (an AJB teacher) and Judy (a retired school teacher) collaborated to create a curriculum which meets the national math standards and reflects current bridge theory. Another AJB teacher Marty Nathan contributed quizzes,

handouts and ideas gleaned from his own youth bridge classes.

The curriculum is being field tested and proofed, and we plan to have the final product ready to go by this fall. AJB has already held a seminar to teach duplicate and social bridge players how to teach children bridge in order to have a stronger volunteer force to draw on in the fall. The next step is free bridge lessons for school teachers and school officials in the greater Atlanta area.

For teachers that learn bridge, teach the curriculum in their school and then form a bridge club; AJB is prepared to offer supplies, teaching assistants and organized opportunities to play. Grants are

available from BridgeAtSchools for those school teachers who would like to request a coach's stipend for their efforts.

This initiative will culminate in May of 2011 with a Georgia state-wide Middle School Bridge Tournament.

We'll keep you posted as we proceed. This curriculum will be available at no charge through the web sites for Atlanta Junior Bridge, BridgeAtSchools, Bridge Teachers for Youth and the ACBL as soon as the field testing is complete. If you would like a sample before then to get things started in your area, e-mail Patty Tucker at wimsey@mindspring.com or Barbara Heller at bhellerb@bellsouth.net.

Teaching Declarer Play

(continued from Page 6)

are played in notrump, but there are several suit contracts as well. A plus is that all seventy complete deals are biddable by your basic students who use Stayman and Transfers. An Introduction to the Art of Taking Tricks is available from Amazon.com or xlibris.com at \$19.99 plus postage. Contact the author at 310-454-9110 or via e-mail at brian_delia@verizon.net for a discounted price of \$17 per book plus postage on five or more copies.

Take All Your Chances at Bridge

Eddie Kantar's Take All Your chances at Bridge from Master Point Press is for teachers themselves as well as for those who teach more advanced students. The book consists of 100 declarer play problems presented in groups of four with the solutions following each group. Problems are either intermediate or advanced with the level specified. As the title indicates, your plan should go beyond the obvious play first seen to increase your chance of making the contract. I can see myself inserting one

intermediate problem into a lesson as a challenge to my better students. I especially enjoy Kantar's tips, which are inserted into the play analysis. For example, "When you decide to play the ace-king of a suit that contains both the ten and the jack, a suit you have no intention of finessing, at some point, lead the jack. You'll be pleasantly surprised at how often the jack is covered." Teachers will also like the appendix listing play themes of all deals, which makes it easy to find a hand for class. Order from bridge supply houses. List price is \$18.95 US (\$21.95 Canadian) plus postage.

I really appreciated the fact that Kantar's book displayed one analyzed deal per page. The other two books often required the reader to turn the page in order to read the complete bidding and play analysis. Even I, as an experienced player and teacher, find this mildly annoying. When the deal is no longer visible, making sense of the text is extremely difficult for students. I wish all bridge writers and publishers would try to complete discussion of a deal on facing pages of their books or repeat the deal when the page must

be turned.

The easiest way to access any of the websites in this article is to go to the online version of this article at www.acbl.org, click on resources for teachers to find the current issue of The Bridge Teacher, and then click on the hyperlinks in this article.

INTERESTED IN BRIDGE CRUISES?

The popular ACBL Bridge Teachers and Bridge Cruises course is scheduled for Friday July 23 at the NOLA Summer NABCs (following the ABTA Convention) from 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm. \$25 at the door.

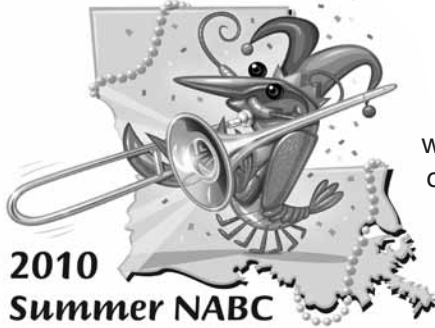
Don't miss this great opportunity!



New Orleans

ABTA in NEW ORLEANS July 20-23, 2010

by Nancy Abbott & Sandy Stevens



Did you wish you were part of the celebrations you saw after the Super Bowl? Did the Big Easy look like a lot of fun? YOU BETTER BELIEVE IT! New

Orleans is fun at all seasons and the organizers of the Summer NABC are saying that BRIDGE IS EASY IN THE BIG EASY!

We think you should join us for the ABTA Seminar and Convention. We will have a BLAST! We have many of your favorite speakers and activities as well as some new things planned. Great food, a Mississippi River cruise, the brand-new ABTA/MasterPoint Press Teacher of the Year Award, how can you bear to miss it?

The Seminar kicks off this year on July 20th right after the New Members Luncheon [at the host hotel]. We will have dozens of new ideas to help you make a great success of your Bridge business. We know you are committed to teaching the best Bridge you can, and we want you to be a successful Bridge entrepreneur as well.

We will have interactive workshops the first afternoon

and speakers who are VERY successful Bridge business persons Wednesday morning. Be sure to sign up quickly for these workshops as they are limited to only 25 persons per session. We will endeavor to give everyone their first, second and third choices, but it is "first come, first served." Wednesday Breakfast and the Business Seminar speakers are for members who have signed up for Seminar; not for early Conventioneers. Come in on Tuesday morning, meet the new members at the no-host luncheon and take advantage of the Seminar!

You will definitely be glad you did. After you get back from dinner on Tuesday evening in a nearby French Quarter Bistro, come back to the main ABTA meeting room for cards and conversation.

The Convention will convene at 1:15 PM on Wednesday, July 21st. You need to arrive about 1:00 to pick up your name tag and welcome packet with all the "goodies." We never know what will be in that packet, but it's always something useful and fun. We will have a short Annual Meeting where you will meet your new President, Joyce Penn; the new Vice President, Brenda Simpson, and the new Secretary-Treasurer, Kathy Rolfe. They are all working hard to make this the best Convention ever, so come along and support them.

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