

Notes from Reno NABC Roundtable

Resources for creating lessons

- Barbara Seagram, Canada: Use Eddie Kantar's mini-lessons available on his website, www.kantarbridge.com. Look under "Learn" and then "Kantar Lessons." You can copy if you buy books and give credit. Lesson Manuals 1, 2, 3 and 4 (includes jokes, quizzes, etc.). Offering lessons at \$20 for two hours.
- Barbara Seagram's lessons and back issues of newsletters, www.barbaraseagram.com or bseagram@uniserve.com.
- ABTA lectures, <http://www.abtahome.com/index.php?id=24>.
- Mike Lawrence's lessons, <http://www.michaelslawrence.com/>.
- WWPD – What Would Patty Do? hands, www.bridgewithpatty.com.
- Bridge Winners bidding polls with expert advice, www.bridgewinners.com.
- Bridge Bulletin articles, Bridge Bulletin online via MyACBL, <https://web3.acbl.org/myacbl>.
- Common Game hands, analysis and lessons, <http://www.thecommongame.com/>. (Pre-selected games may only legal in lesson game.)
- ACBL special game hand records, http://www.acbl.org/clubs_page/special-events/hand-records-and-analysis/.
- Bridge Teachers for Youth one-page lessons, www.btfy.org, Teaching>Lessons.
- ACBL Hand of the Week, <https://web3.acbl.org/acbl-results/hand-of-the-week>.
- Learn to Play Bridge website, <http://www.learn2playbridge.com/>. Learning Modules with practice hands that can reinforce lessons, i.e., Stayman, Establishing Long Suits, etc. (Also good place for students to practice specific skills.)
- Bridge Clues daily bridge hands and flash cards, <http://www.bridgeclues.com/>.
- The Bridge Deck, Scarsdale NY: Use laptop and big screen TV to feature websites like BBO teachers section, <http://www.bridgebase.com/>, (you can set up your own hands and let the students see in real time how they are played), and Bridge Composer, <http://bridgecomposer.com/>. You can also download hands from The Common Game and upload them into Bridge Composer and project them up on the screen. Very inexpensive, \$20 total. Program will let you move a card from hand to hand. Bridge Composer gives you a pbn file that can be used in a dealing machine.

Counteracting decline in attendance at eight-week lessons series

- Mini-workshops (half-hour, two-hour, three-hour).
- Patty Tucker, Atlanta: Hold lessons at one and a half to three or four hours for \$20 to \$40.
- One topic per month with mini-lessons on that topic.
- Shawn Quinn, Texas: Run 30-minute lessons for \$10 and getting 20-25 people each week. Same topic each time but with different examples.

Attracting social players and newcomers

- Hold supervised play and/or chat games. As few as 10 boards and can ask questions. Each club can make your own rules. Seagrams's rule: "Change your bid, change your lead, change your mind...but you can't change your partner." Masterpoints can be awarded, and 0-20 players can participate.

- Offer 12-board games for working players. Trying this in England, called The Abridged Bridge Club. Go play a few boards on a Friday night before they go out on the town.
- The Bridge Deck, Scarsdale NY: Tried Groupon, got six players, but Groupon cancelled them.
- Patty Tucker, Atlanta: Use Duplicate Game for Social Players, <https://sites.google.com/site/acbleducationfoundationorg/home/social-bridge>, coinciding with Regional. Billed it as “Go to Lunch with Friends; Play Bridge with Us” with one helper per two or three tables to help with movement, scoring, bid boxes, etc. Separated by complete beginners and some familiarity.
- Club players often know social players. Encourage them to invite social players to social player/newcomer events. Have them help to dissuade negative image of duplicate. (There is a perception by social players that duplicate players are mean. They also are afraid that they will walk into a room where everyone else knows how to use the paraphernalia – bid boxes, etc. – and they’ll be embarrassed.) An Arlington TX club recruited players from local country clubs, by having their club players who also played at country clubs each call their friends and specifically invite them to play in a special social game at the bridge club. More than 125 other social players were called, and about 25 new players are consistently coming.
- Information about incorporating social bridge on the ACBL Educational Foundation website to lessen intimidation, <https://sites.google.com/site/acbleducationfoundationorg/home/social-bridge>.
- Arlington TX: Create a limited game specifically for social players and follow up with a “thank you” note.
- Use Mini-Bridge as an introduction, <http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/teachers/MinibrIDGE.pdf> or <http://www.ebu.co.uk/education/minibrIDGE>. It may be particularly useful for youth, but also may keep students from playing real bridge. (Can also be helpful to those teaching bridge for the first time.)
- Patty Tucker, Atlanta: Pick a local charity and having a charity event, maybe a supervised play. Bring a toy for a tot and play some bridge or coincide with The Longest Day. Give them a coupon to a free duplicate game. (Also a good way to get publicity.)
- Send to supervised play first. Don’t send them to a 0-299 game the first few times, or they’ll never come back.
- Barbara Seagram, Canada: In supervised play, let them look at notes and cheat sheets.
- Patty Tucker, Atlanta: Put bidding/response charts on the wall.
- Barbara Seagram, Canada: Invite students to a gentle duplicate game after three lessons.

Promoting lessons and clubs

- Barbara Seagram, Canada: Advertise in community newspapers instead of regular newspapers (cheaper). Typical advertisement – “Free Bridge Lesson for Absolute Beginners,” a one-and-a-half hour class called Tricks and Trumps and Following Suit, then an hour break and then a free intermediate lesson (also mentioned in the ad) of long suit establishment or entries.
- Barbara Seagram, Canada: Use free lessons to bring in newcomers and then telling them about upcoming lesson series and offering discount or free book if signing up that day. About 70% will sign up for lessons within the next year.

- Get community newspaper to come interview you. They like to have content – picture, names and small story for filler. Charity events also attract newspapers.
- Barbara Seagram, Canada: Hand out hot pink fliers to club members and asking them to put on bulletin boards, laundry mats, etc.
- PowerPoint slides/or videos placed at movie theaters during the previews. Good results, not too expensive and captive audience.

Engaging players

- The Bridge Deck, Scarsdale NY: Quizzes– What would you do with this hand?, etc.
- Send regular emails such as one for the first time they visit, one for the first time they earn a masterpoint or do a successful finesse or some other milestone.
- Send monthly emails similar to new first-year emails produced by the ACBL with tips and mini-lessons.
- Barbara Seagram, Canada: Sends an email newsletter as a way to keep in touch. Use the body of the email for information rather than having an attachment. Include an article and then an ad about upcoming classes, then another article, ad, etc. (Be mindful of potential spam email rules, especially in Canada.)
- Use email management system for sending mass emails.
 - Constant Contact, <http://www.constantcontact.com/welcomeback>
 - Pianola, <http://www.pianola.net/features/clubs>
 - PHP List, <https://www.phplist.com/> (inexpensive option, but a little less user-friendly than the others)

Engaging youth

- Use flow charts instead of bidding boxes, <http://btfy.org/documents/2008BeginningBidding.pdf>.
- Bridge Teachers for Youth posters, <http://btfy.org/posters.htm>.
- Another good resource is Jeff Lehman from New England Youth Bridge, <http://www.newenglandyouthbridge.org/>.
- Mini-Bridge as an introduction, <http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/teachers/Minibridge.pdf> or <http://www.ebu.co.uk/education/minibridge>.

More resources available from the ACBL

- The Resource Center, www.acbl.org/resourcecenter.
 - Order handouts, <http://acbl.mybigcommerce.com/handouts/>. (Free and ACBL pays the shipping.)
 - Download customizable ad templates, <http://acbl.mybigcommerce.com/club-templates/>. (To use the templates, save first to your computer, then customize with your information and then save it again.)
 - Download clip art for use in ads, fliers, websites, etc., <http://acbl.mybigcommerce.com/clip-art/>.
 - Handbooks, <http://acbl.mybigcommerce.com/handbooks/>.
 - Forms, <http://acbl.mybigcommerce.com/forms/>.
 - Logos, <http://acbl.mybigcommerce.com/acbl-logos/>.
- Tricks of the Trade Blog, <http://tricksofthetrade.acbl.org/>.

- Resource Center Forum, <http://tricksofthetrade.acbl.org/?forum=resource-center-forum-3>.
- Cooperative Advertising, <http://www.acbl.org/marketing/cooperative-advertising-program/>. (ACBL will reimburse 50% of the cost of your ad – advertising lessons, events to attract social players – up to a maximum of \$500.)
- If you are an accredited teacher and want to be found by someone using the Find-a-Teacher search, make sure that you log into MyACBL and fill out the application for online teacher listing.
- New Member Benefits program through Abenity that also includes previous favorites. Log into MyACBL and click on member benefits. You will need to register with Abenity and create a username and password. Lots of great discounts available from movie tickets to oil changes. ACBL Favorites category with discounts to Baron Barclay, Office Depot, FedEx Office and Bridge Magazine Online, http://acbl.abenity.com/perks/category/ACBL_Favorite_Offers/ACBL_Exclusive_Offers.
- Contact at ACBL and Stephanie Threlkeld, Stephanie.threlkeld@acbl.org or marketing@acbl.org.

ABTA

- \$45 per year for magazine and can attend a great convention, <http://www.abtahome.com/>.
- Don't forget about Teacher of the Year nominations. Deadline March 31, <http://www.abtahome.com/index.php?id=67>.

Ideas for future roundtable

- Projector to show websites.
- Secretary to take notes.
- Agenda of questions.
- Grouping of smaller tables instead of one long table.
- Outline of the questions and group them into topics to address one topic at a time.