

DeLAND FL BRIDGE CLUB MENTORING PROGRAM

By Lynn Berg

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 six-eight 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. We have promoted this 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. 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. Friends are willing to cooperate when this happens so that no one has to sit out.