

AYRSHIRE DISTRICT BULLETIN



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In this issue :

The ABC; How did we come by it?

By Ronnie Alexander.....2 & 3

Extract from 'Vague Memories that linger on'

By Albert Benjamin.....3 & 4

Don't Pass in the Pass-out Seat

By Sandy Anderson.....4

Council Minutes.....5

Double Dummy Problem

By Ian Dalziel.....5 & 6

Heard at the Table...

By Janice Thomson.....6

Shut Your Face-Book.....7

Memories

By Ian Dalziel.....8

Ian and Benito

By Janice Thomson.....8

What would you bid now?

By Stuart McCreadie..... 9 – 11

Council minutes.....12

Bridge Kroegentocht

By Eddie McGeough.....12 & 13

Results & Leagues..... 13 - 14

Play & Learn

Plans are under way to try a 'Play & Learn' session at the bridge centre. The format will be this; Play a hand of bridge and afterwards an advisor will extract some teaching points from the deal. There will be a few skilled 'overseers' watching the tables so hopefully they will pick up on those common mistakes you make and get you in the way of good, winning, habits. One session initially, if it is received well then it's likely there'll be more. It's planned to hold the first one on a Friday afternoon very soon. Keep an eye on the ABU site and my emails for details.

More of Ayrshire's history in this month's bulletin. This time Ronnie Alexander talks about how the bridge centre came about. For many the story will be familiar but for young ones like me (!) and the new generation of bridge players it's important that the history is told, and re-told. Also Ian Adamson gave me a copy of the SBU's Golden Jubilee magazine from which I have taken an extract. Albert Benjamin's article describes an unfamiliar bridge Golden age.

Albert Benjamin's story of bridge in its heyday gives some food for thought when we look at the amount of Ayrshire people playing in local and national competitions; The numbers do seem to fluctuate but the trend is downward. There are many still playing in clubs and playing social bridge, but without playing in events against better opposition the likelihood of improving standards diminishes. Yet that's what this fascinating game is all about; it's that we can always learn something new, try something new, even invent something new. Without this progress the love of the game can't be fully appreciated and many of its rewarding aspects never experienced.

The ABC; How did we come by it? By Ronnie Alexander

In the last article there was a promise to explore the acquisition and development of the Ayrshire Bridge Centre. Promises must always be kept, so here goes.

The present ABC did not come from Santa gift-wrapped and complete but represents the efforts over several years of far-sighted people who put the interest of Ayrshire bridge first and were prepared to put in a lot of hard work. Today's bridge players owe them a huge debt of gratitude

The desire to have premises that could be used solely for bridge had probably been around for a long time, but the first recorded mention in the ABU minutes is in 1976 when there is a reference to an attempt, half-hearted by the sound of it, to acquire premises two years previously and a decision now taken that something positive should be done. It was not clear at this stage just what the council had in mind. It sometimes appears as though they envisaged a privately owned Ayrshire club which any one could join and which would function along the lines of clubs in other districts e.g. the Buchanan in Glasgow or the Loreburn in Dumfries. The location of such a club was of course problematic. Ayr Kilmarnock, Ardrossan, Irvine were all considered as possible locations and in each case someone would say that players from one part of the county would not travel any distance to play bridge in another part. And they were probably right. Later the idea changed to become what we have today i.e. a focus for bridge activity which could be used weekly by clubs, where matches could be played and Ayrshire and national competitions held.

It is worth pausing at this point to describe how bridge functioned before the ABC existed. Clubs met where they could find room: church halls, community halls, hotels just as many clubs do today. These locations sometimes had their limitations. Hotels were not always welcoming towards bridge clubs and had no compunction about putting them out if the hotel needed the space and were not always pleased if the bridge players did not make great use of the bar. Likewise, meetings in community halls or schools were dependent on tolerant and understanding janitors or caretakers. A greater problem was finding accommodation for the competitions as the right space had to be found on the right day and at the right price and it usually involved the shifting of a lot of bridge equipment. Organisers did not have it easy. Having a building of their very own would therefore solve a lot of problems.

The council decided the first step should be to find out the attitude of the clubs to acquiring premises. Caledonian, Savoy and Ayr were positively in favour; Kilmarnock, Largs and Ardeer were in favour but more reserved, probably with regard to the situation; Prestwick, Saltcoats, Dalry, Beith and West Kilbride were opposed to the plan while Kilwinning showed no interest. Some clubs made it clear they could offer no financial support. Not a great deal of encouragement there then. And a distinct lack of vision shall we say. Indeed the council decided to write to clubs to say the project was to be shelved. BUT enter Ian Adamson.

Ian had heard from a colleague who happened to be on the Prestwick Town Council that the Prestwick Old Cronies Club was coming up for sale and he brought this to the attention of the Council. By March 1977 the council were putting in a provisional offer of £3500 for the Old Cronies hall. The hall was a meeting place for old men initially, later women were admitted, where they no doubt blethered, played dominoes or darts, perhaps even bridge, and generally enjoyed themselves passing the time. The men moved to a new club and the premises were no longer required. It had been advertised without result probably because there were restrictions on what use could be made of the site, any dealing in alcohol was strictly forbidden for example. The asking price was £4000 but because there were extensive repairs needed it was thought it would be available for less.

When council discussed the plan needless to say it did not receive unanimous support. One member, an accountant to trade, said it would be a white elephant, the ABU would lose a lot of money on it and it would take 20 years to become financially viable. How wrong can experts be! Other council members, the majority, were more optimistic and felt that by donations, interest free loans and making full use of the premises success could be achieved. The clubs were to be informed of the now more detailed plan(11 clubs were in favour and 6 against) and the project would be put to the AGM. It was and met with the approval of the meeting by 40 votes to 2.. Council reported that £2000 had been received in donations and a further £3300 promised in interest-free loans. In addition clubs would be asked to undertake fund-raising activities. (This AGM and previous council meeting were held in the Old Cronies hall) The council went ahead with the purchase of the hall. At the next council meeting In August there was a confident statement that the hall would be ready for the start of the season. *Continued on page 3*

Continued from page 2

It was reported that the stage which occupied part of the hall had been removed, the heating converted to gas, chairs had been bought and carpeting was in hand. Meantime £6164 had been received and all legal fees had been paid. They didn't hang about.

Fundraising had taken place but the only items mentioned are a Kilwinning Club Fair which raised £550 and an Irvine fair which produced £700 ; a stall was taken at the Rozelle Fete and £145 raised. Also £300 was made at a fete in Ayr Town Hall. There was an anonymous donation of £500. People were rallying round but not everywhere.

In the attempt to maximise the use of the hall – and its income -other groups were allowed to rent the hall; the Orange Lodge met twice a month and the Townswomens guild used it too. A Christmas party was organised partly to raise money and partly just to let members enjoy themselves. It consisted of a buffet supper followed by not too serious bridge. It was said to be very successful and profitable to the tune of £108. These parties continued for several years and then for some reason interest fell away and they were abandoned. The hopes that an ABC (Ayrshire Brdige Centre was the name that was chosen) would stimulate interest in bridge were coming to fruition. Beginners classes were taking place on Mondays and Thursdays and the latter class formed a club, The Riggs Club, which applied for membership of the SBU in September 1978 and it was reported that there was the intention to form a Troon Club although the ABC could not claim credit for that. Credit rested with Ian Dalziel. The Bruce club, also from a class followed in 1980

The official opening of the ABC was on the 16 September 1978 when a team of internationals would play an Ayrshire team and by then the finances were healthy and the treasurer was in a position to repay all the loans except one for £2500. As a PR exercise a coffee morning for the neighbours was held on the 13 January 1979 and apparently went well. In the hope of continuing the flow of funds clubs were asked to introduce a 5p levy on their table money but not many were prepared to part with their bawbees and only Savoy, Ardeer, Kilmarnock and Kilwinning accepted that invitation. But to give them their due Caledonian donated £200.

At the AGM in 1979 the President was able to report that the ABU was debt free. In addition they had bought the adjoining land which did not go with the hall but belonged to Kyle and Carrick ,for £500.

A huge amount had been achieved in just two years . This was the result as already said of the hard work, often real physical stuff with the jackets off, of many people most of them sadly no longer with us but one or two are and they can look round with pride and say to themselves (no one else will listen) "I helped to make this". It's a worthwhile memorial. Thanks lads and lassies

Next month we'll look at the further improvements made to the hall over the years.

An extract from “Vague Memories that linger on”

By Albert Benjamin – submitted by Ian Adamson (SBU's Golden Jubilee magazine 1933-1983)

Staying on the historical theme; thanks to Ian Adamson for giving me a copy of the SBU's Golden jubilee magazine.

In the early thirties, rubber bridge dominated hugely the activities of the bridge clubs in Glasgow. Then came duplicate (mainly friendly inter club matches with teams of eight or more) with a heady onrush, swamping rubber bridge and inevitably forcing the formation of an organising authority which became the Scottish Bridge Union.

There were few bounds to the enthusiasm which duplicate engendered. Glasgow alone had more than a hundred teams or clubs and this was fully reflected in all the newspapers.

An incredible eight, yes eight, Glasgow newspapers of substance (few have survived) featured bridge mainly on a daily basis. And topicality was all. Indeed it was frightening. Match results had to appear the morning after and it was unheard to publish a deal no matter how interesting if it was more than a day old!

Continued on page 4

Continued from page 3

The most ordinary league match would receive a full report with half-time scores, names of players with critical comment were not unheard of. One pair of doctors used false names lest their patients be offended. In those days they expected twenty-four hour availability. The NHS was yet to come.

Others who had not played conspired to have their names included in the list of players. One may easily imagine the object of such deception.

When in 1936 I played in the final of the Scottish championship for teams of four (about one hundred and fifty teams had taken part originally in this knock-out) hundreds and hundreds of spectators besieged the old St. Enoch Hotel yet vugraph was unknown and very few could observe the play. The Daily Record carried a report by their own bridge correspondent and also engaged the services of Henry Mullen for a special expert appraisal. We won by a record aggregate score and Mullen wrote of the team "Mitchell and Leighton would make their contracts even if the roof were on fire. Judith Golombok (not yet my wife) played a captain's role. As for Albert Benjamin, I have seen him play better".

Robert Kidd was paid on newspaper lineage. His morning Scottish national had umpteen regional editions and he endeavoured to have local results and a different bridge story for each region, Ayrshire, Borders, east coast, Aberdeen, Inverness and many more. He worked all hours on the telephone and it was not at all unusual to be awakened by a phone call at two a.m. asking for a match result!

It was almost a gala occasion when the final of the Gold Cup was played in Glasgow and the late M. Harrison-Gray's London team was opposed by a Glasgow team headed by Louis Shenkin. These were the days, pre-TV, of special Saturday coloured sports editions with the all important football results. The afore-mentioned Kidd warned the Evening News that an important result was coming through and the presses were held up. And eventually there appeared in the broad green acreage of the Stop Press

Gold Cup latest Shenkin leads Harrison-Gray by 870 points after 20 boards.

That was possibly the only time a bridge result appeared in the Stop Press. The Aberdeen edition missed the train and there was hell to pay.

This early score was a flash in the pan. Harrison-Gray brought the Gold Cup from England – just in case. He needn't have bothered since his powerful team retained the trophy despite a poor start and he would have taken the Gold Cup back to England – if it hadn't gone missing!

DON'T PASS IN THE PASS-OUT SEAT!!! By Sandy Anderson

e.g. After 2 Passes

1 of suit – pass – pass - ?

Especially at Pairs DO NOT allow the opener to play in a comfortable one level contract UNLESS you have less than 8 HCP OR have 4 or more of opener's suit and bidding 1NT isn't sensible. Partner is marked with values because your RHO could not respond SO

- (a) OVERCALL in normal style but don't be a wimp, partner will have tricks for you
- (b) DOUBLE with 8 HCP min and shortness in opener's suit, partner may even convert to penalties.
- (c) Bid 1 NT showing 10 – 14 HCP, balanced, not necessarily with a stop. I personally prefer 11-16 with a stayman enquiry system.

BUT DON'T PASS, FORTUNE FAVOURS THE BRAVE, and sometimes the STUPID!!

Council Minutes

Extracts from
January's Council
minutes.
+ News



Swiss Pairs Repairs

It's been decided to relocate the annual Scottish Swiss pairs from Ayr to the Menzies hotel in Irvine. It's hoped that the venue will give better food and improved parking facilities.

30 Down

Home fees have now been paid and show a membership of 534. About 30 down on last year.

Breene and Buchanan

The rescheduled date for the Breene (ladies pairs) and Buchanan (gents pairs) is Saturday 25th February, 1pm start.

300 Club – January £25 Winners

Len Freeman	119
Sam Malkani	117
Gordon Smith	23

Side Issue.

The possibility/feasibility of having side tables at each table in the bridge centre is being looked into.

Web

Possible improvements to the Ayrshire website were discussed. Suggestions for improvements would be welcome?

Norvite

When scored nationally Stuart McCreadie and Pat Smith were 1st in the 'selected boards' category and Alison Tudor and Jim Tudor were 3rd overall in the actual competition.

Screen Test

The bridge centre now has a new TV screen set up. When using bridgemates it's possible to have rolling results throughout the evening.

16 ♠ AKJ104 Dir: W
 ♥ K4 Vul: E-W
 ♦ Q643
 ♣ Q2

♠ 82		♠ 9763				
♥ 1097653	<table border="1"> <tr><td>N</td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	♥ AJ
N	E					
W	S					
♦ J5		♦ 987				
♣ 1043		♣ KJ95				

15	♠ Q5	
1	♥ Q82	
15	♦ AK102	
	♣ A876	

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	3	6	-	6	8
S	3	6	-	5	4
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

Double Dummy problem.

By Ian Dalziel.

“Deep Finesse” says North can make 6S, but there seem to be a club and heart loser.

However South *can't* make 6S, is there a clue here? This is easier than my previous problems so have a go. Solution on page 6.

Double Dummy solution to problem on page 5.

North to make 6S on any lead

		♠	AKJT4			East will make a passive spade or diamond lead. We need to throw East in with ♥A so that he has to lead a club away from ♣K. (That's why South can't make 6S as a club lead by West breaks up the end play). We can remove East's exit cards in spades and diamonds but what's to stop him exiting safely with ♥J?
		♥	K4			
		♦	Q643			
		♣	Q2			
♠	82			♠	9763	The answer is the ungainly lead of small from ♥K4. This goes against the grain as it breaks the "win in short hand" rule which we all do almost automatically!
♥	T97653			♥	AJ	
♦	J5			♦	987	
♣	T43			♣	KJ95	
		♠	Q5			
		♥	Q82			
		♦	AKT2			
		♣	A876			

End game.

		♠	T			This is the position after 4 spades and 3 diamonds have been played. North lead ♥4, if East rises with ♥A then South makes 2 heart tricks for a club discard. If East ducks, South wins ♥Q but East is thrown in with ♥A next round and had to lead a club.
		♥	K4			
		♦	3			
		♣	Q2			
♠	--			♠	--	This is an example of Morton's Fork which is a choice between two equally unpleasant alternatives. It is analogous to the expressions "between the devil and the deep blue sea", or "between a rock and a hard place". It is said to originate with the collecting of taxes by John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury in the late 15th century, who held that a man living modestly must be saving money and could therefore afford taxes, whereas if he was living extravagantly then he was obviously rich and could still afford them!
♥	T97			♥	AJ	
♦	---			♦	---	
♣	T43			♣	KJ85	
		♠	---			
		♥	Q82			
		♦	T			
		♣	A8			

N.B. In 6NT by N the play is identical to above. Note that 6D played by N or S makes without any end play. Declarer simply draws trumps and discards all his club losers on the spades and ruffs a heart. As to the bidding, I foresee a variety of contracts but I suspect 3NT+3 will be a near top.

Interpretations of things **Heard at the table last week:** By Janice Thomson
Or, well known sayings..... and what they really mean.....

"What's the deal anyway?" (Why are you going on about the bidding?)

"The cards are stacked against me" (I don't think I am playing well but I will temporize with this...)

"You are the jack of all spades" (As usual he thinks he is great)

"I have to lay my cards on the table" (The partnership is over)

"She is such a card" (Does she ever shut up?)

"I usually play my cards close to my chest" (I am aware of my right-hand opponent's ability to look in three directions)

Shut your Face-book



An Open Forum for anyone who would like to submit any opinions, questions, gossip, suggestions, comments, abuse.....

(Submissions can be sent by email to : james_tudor@msn.com, or phone me on 01563 830130)

One thing gets my goat (a quaint expression this and I am rather more used to sheep)...I do very much enjoy the League matches but I definitely don't enjoy some of the participating teams at the bridge centre waltzing off and leaving their tea-pots for others to empty and rinse out...

Bo Peep

I think that the Ayrshire pairs format needs to be looked at. Tuppence Worth was right last month that there would be a lot of work involved in sorting out the qualifiers. However, if it was a job done by someone other than the local competitions convenor then it wouldn't increase their workload (would lessen it). It could be done by an individual, not necessarily an ABU council member.

Edna Spin

The feeling amongst most on the ABU council Edna is that the event could degenerate into near chaos if players could compete in multiple first rounds.

There would undoubtedly be many issues but the potential benefits perhaps mean that we should address these problems.

Having a dedicated Ayrshire pairs convenor would certainly be a start.....Ed.

I really enjoyed Alison's interview with Yvonne. I so agree with Yvonne that clubs should use computer dealt hands with printouts which are a great learning tool. It beggars belief that there is a duplimate in the Bridge Centre which cost thousands of pounds but is not used by the clubs who play there.

However I disagree with Yvonne that "match point is a fairer system than aggregate", it's not fairer just different and both methods of scoring have merit. When I started Troon Bridge Club back in 1979 I was well aware that England and America didn't play aggregate. If I had gone the "match point only" route at Troon BC, Kyle BC and the many other clubs I have started I think aggregate may have disappeared from Ayrshire by now. I didn't retain aggregate since "we've always done it that way" but because it has a strong intellectual case which has been outlined previously in the Bulletin by myself and the forthright Aggie Gates!

Ian Dalziel

It seems clear to me that Percy Perspiration and many others fail to understand how a thermostat works! If the room is cold then turning the thermostat to maximum won't heat the room up any quicker, it just means it will get too warm then someone will turn the thermostat down to minimum which won't cool the room any quicker, it will just get too cold and so it goes on. Just leave the radiator thermostats at 22 degrees, switch the heating on when you get in and everything will be fine. I agree with Tuppence Worth about wearing extra layers, however could I request that the ladies "peel off" within the realms of decency or we males may lose concentration on our bridge!

Ian Dalziel

Comments on the new screen in the bridge centre displaying the scrolling results:

I'm an old-fashioned sort . . . nah . . . don't like it.

Greasy Vet

Loved it...perhaps ABU can invest in little sets of opera glasses hanging from each table ? !

Bo Peep

Of all the events in the ABU calendar, The Ayrshire Cup is the most social. It is a team of four usually played in the home of a member of the "home" team.

This year we had the pleasure of playing one of the rounds in the home of Ken and Thelma Ling. We had a very nice game but the highlight of the evening was the supper!

Thelma (and I am certain Ken helped here) presented, amongst other tasty offerings one of her specialities "Crusty Mediterranean Parcels". A positive treat this was with second helpings very popular.

Perhaps now that the competitive scene is diminishing in popularity, these social gatherings will increase in number...so it is not all bad news !

What could be more enjoyable for we bridge players...good bridge, good food and good company!!

Janice Thomson

Memories

by Ian Dalziel.

Most of my bridge students admit to having difficulty remembering what they are taught. I don't think it's entirely an age thing, it's just that most people's brains including mine are not "wired for bridge". Hence rules that seem eminently logical to those with natural card sense can be like remembering telephone numbers for those without it.

At a recent bridge class I gave a table four hands to play. It was clear from their records that they had played four boards but they were all quite certain they hadn't played board 4. In fact they had played board 2 twice and hadn't realised (not unknown even at bridge clubs!), but the reason they knew they hadn't played board 4 was that the backs of the cards were quite distinctive with a nice picture! Of course four experts would realise when the same hand came up again but probably not noticed the backs of the cards! So the students memories were great for pictures but not for bridge!

If I give a lecture on say "opener's rebids" students may forget much of the lesson. However if instead I was to give a talk on "my most embarrassing moments" or "my blind date from hell", I'm sure they would remember every word! Of course the more people learn and play bridge they see patterns and their bridge memories improve. I have known students take up the game at 60 and struggle to count the trumps, then years later when in their seventies recall almost every hand they played at a bridge club!

When people start the game they struggle to remember the cards played, but they soon retain the cards that matter and rarely fail in a contract through memory. However this is "short term memory" which seems to be quite good, remembering their bidding system is "long term memory" and quite another matter! This is why it's a great mistake for an average player to use conventions, the supposed gains of the convention are lost by the failure to remember its complexities. Natural bidding with its innate logic is much easier to remember than the artificiality of conventions.

Most of the top players use a plethora of conventions so the club players follow their example and complicate their system in the vain hope that their results will improve, it's human nature I suppose. Believe me, the "experts" win despite their conventions not because of them! Two experts using natural bidding would be unbeatable, however experts seem "duty bound" to complicate their system which I think is nature's way of weakening their innate ability and level the playing field. It means that the less gifted have a chance as long they remain naturalists!

Ian and Benito

By Janice Thomson

Ayrshire players of a certain age just might recollect a former Ayrshire player, Ian McClure. Ian played for some years here but then left the area. He remembers playing at quite a few Ayrshire clubs...The Riggs, Queens, Caledonian, Kilmarnock and Troon, to mention a few.

Nowadays Ian plays all of his Bridge online on Bridge Base Online (BBO). He goes under the name of *Darwin555*.

He has played in quite a few of the very popular (with kibitzers) Jimmy Cayne matches (*jec*) on BBO. Topping this, however, he has just played a 12-board match as a member of a four-person team headed by probably the most famous name in Bridge...Benito Garozzo (*sillafu* on BBO).

As it happened Ian was in the winning team. However, although pleased with this, he felt it to be a greater honour to be in Benito's team... !!

What would you bid now?

By Stuart McCreadie

Apologies to Stuart and the 'What would you bid now' fans for my editing error on problem 3 last month. If you spotted it then please award yourself 2 points towards this month's set. If you failed to spot it then deduct 10 points! .. Ed.

The basic system is Acol (incorporating Reverse Benji; so weak two's in the majors) with a 12-14 NT; Stayman; red suit transfers over 1NT/2NT; weak jump overcalls; RKCB; splinters.

In competition: negative/responsive/competitive doubles/support doubles and redoubles; Lebensohl after an overcall of our 1NT and after our takeout double of their weak two's. Michaels.

To add interest, marks will be awarded out of ten. The bid with the most votes will automatically receive 10 marks. To break a tie, I will use my casting vote. I will use my discretion to award the other marks. If I like a bid, I will give it a high mark even though there are not many votes for it.

Here are the problems. Decide your answers first and read on...

<p>① <i>West</i> ♠ A74 Game all; pairs ♥ AJ73 W N E S ♦ J5 - - - 2S(weak) ♣ QT52 P P X P ?</p>	<p>② <i>West</i> ♠ 43 N/S game ; imps ♥ AKQT86 W N E S ♦ 76 1H P 1NT P ♣ A75 ?</p>	<p>③ <i>West</i> Love all; imps ♠ AK74 W N E S ♥ QT84 - - 1D X ♦ J2 XX 2C 3D P ♣ J94 ?</p>
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Problem 1.

Game all; pairs
 Dealer South

	W	N	E	S
	-	-	-	2S*
<i>West</i>	P	P	X	P
♠ A74	?			
♥ AJ73				
♦ J5				
♣ QT52				

* Weak

Marks: 3S/2NT 10; 4H 9;
 3H 8; Pass 5.

Gordon: Four hearts. With partner expected to hold four cards in hearts, bidding game in hearts directly appears to be the correct choice. Although partner may be protecting, I think that we still want to be in game. The balanced nature of the hand and the soft values in the minor suits persuade me that the hand is not worth bidding more strongly. Although the system summary states Lebensohl after partner's take-out doubles of weak twos, not all partnerships transpose the full Lebensohl armoury that is used after overcalls of our 1NT openers. In particular the Staymanic cue-bids are often omitted. This is Gordon's method (and would appear to be

Stewart's and Sandy's also). My main interest was whether the panelists would bid or invite game.

Brian: Three spades. Or whatever the system says to show game values with both four hearts and a spade stopper. Yes, I know that partner may be shaded in pass-out seat, but the alternative of 3H may be an 8-count and we miss game too often when partner has a normal minimum. Only the immediate cue-bid shows all key features, making it worth the risk of getting too high once in a while.

Stewart: Four hearts. Partner will nearly always have four hearts after partner's take-out double of the weak two. I have to judge (or Guess?) as to whether I bid 3H or 4H. Not being faint hearted I choose 4H. This hand occurred at the Senior Pairs. I was playing with a partner with whom I had never played before and we had agreed Lebensohl without the Staymanic cue-bids. I chose 4H as well. This did not turn out well, as partner had a 12 count with a 2-4-5-2 shape including Qx doubleton spade. Even if trump had broken 3-2 instead of 4-1, the contract was poor. And 3NT had only minimally better

chances requiring misdefences from the opponents. I wondered if I had penalized partner for his enterprise in protecting, and if I should have bid an invitational 3H. There can't be a great deal in it especially at pairs, but I am consoled that the entire panel thinks we should be in game.

Janice: Two no trump. I am not inclined to leave this double in for penalty. Of course, it is pairs and a penalty double might score well especially as there may not be a making game for us....who knows. Therefore 2NT Lebensohl. And after partner's forced 3C reply, I will cue 3S, Staymanic, showing a 4-card heart suit and a spade stopper. Although partner's double of the weak 2S usually shows hearts, it is not always so as hands don't always come in ideal packages. He will though have 3-card support unless he is very strong. In any case, this gives him options...I have told him what I hold. Janice is employing the alternative version of Lebensohl
 Continued on page 8

continued from page 7

to Brian's. In this context 2NT and 3S are the same and receive the same mark. Leaving the double in might well have worked. South would have had to take some inspired views to arrive at 8 tricks.

Sandy: Three spades. My favourite convention "Pass the Buck". Partner should have four hearts but can't always have, so I'll look for 3NT and might finish up in 4H or 5C. Sandy bids 3S enquiring about a stop or semi-stop in spades. But I think there a slight risk that you may miss the 4-4 heart fit when partner has no stop in spades. If you decide that you are bidding game, I think I would bid a direct 4H (and yes, partner might occasionally have only three hearts) rather than look for 3NT which is slightly less likely. This 3S bid has a different meaning from the Lebensohl Staymanic 3S bids of Brian and Ian, and perhaps doesn't deserve the same mark, but I am in generous mood.

Sam: Two no trump. A Lebensohl 2NT and when partner bids 3C, I will bid 3S, showing four hearts and a spade stop. The Staymanic cue bid has the advantage in this instance of giving partner the choice of playing in 4H or 3NT. At the table your score will depend on whether you can limit the contract to one undertrick by your card play and it will also depend on opponents' defence. A 3H invitational bid (invitational because you are playing Lebensohl) would have been the winning choice.

Ian: Three spades. Lebensohl showing four hearts and a spade stop - in my version of Lebensohl. Going through 2NT and then cue-bidding 3S after the puppet 3C response, would show a 4-card heart suit and no spade stop. To complete the Lebensohl lesson - A bid of 3H after the 3C puppet response to 2NT would show a weak hand with 4-card (or more) heart suit

and would warn partner to go no further. Overall the case has been made for the Staymanic cuebid and both versions of Lebensohl are equal here.

Problem 2

N/S game; imps; Dealer West

<i>West</i>	W	N	E	S
♠ 43	1H	P	1NT	P
♥ AKQT86	?			
♦ 76				
♣ A75				

Marks: 2NT 10 ; Pass 9 ;
3NT/2H/3H 8

Gordon: Two no trump. At imps scoring, our partnership should try to reach game if it has a decent chance, and game in no trump is certainly in the frame, while 4H seems very unlikely. With it being impossible to find out if partner holds just the right cards for 3NT to be successful, 2NT appears to be the most sensible action.

Very true. If you have a solid major with outside Ace(s) think of playing in a no trump game rather than the suit. You need only nine tricks rather than ten. With no outside Aces tend to favour playing in the suit.

E.g. With - xx AKQTxxx xx KQx - then prefer to rebid in hearts.

Brian: Pass. It looks like an automatic 2H rebid and I might well make that call at the table without thinking. But the opposition know we are both limited and 2H gets a balancing double 90% of the time - and we can see that they have a spade fit and half the high cards. Very tough for them to balance over a pass and we could just have seven top tricks. If 1NT goes down, 2S or more rates to make their way.

I confess that I didn't think of Pass. If this is a part score hand, then this could be the winning decision as Brian explains. Most of the others decide to go looking for a thin game.

Stewart: Three hearts. Partner can now decide whether to pass or bid game.

Janice: Three hearts. With this hand at imps, I feel if I did not advance a bit further, I would need a Medic to take my pulse (The conductor?) *Boom boody-boom boody-boom boody-boom. Is that your pulse or mine, Janice? I do believe it is mine! Well, goodness gracious me!* I like the suit plus the spade shortage (partner does not have four) and the club Ace. Partner can pass this bid and I won't be too unhappy to play in 3H. *Stewart and Janice like the hand. However it is probably an overbid and unless partner passes, it will more often lead to 4H than 3NT, which would be the more likely game. However it will stop opponents competing in spades.*

Sandy: Two no trump. It's imps, so with no overcalls in spades or diamonds I'm inviting and hopeful. With virtually seven tricks in my own hand, I just need a little luck from partner to make 3NT, but a bit more to make ten tricks in 4H. *Sandy and Sam complete the argument for 2NT.*

Sam: Two no trump. I have seven tricks in my own hand, if the hearts run. A bid of 3NT might even scoop the jackpot. *Indeed if partner has for example the SK and DA, then you would want to be in 3NT. But these are specific cards and 3NT would be a gamble and an overbid. The disadvantage of 2NT is that you know what cards in partner's hand would be good cards, but your partner doesn't. And it would be better if we were vulnerable as the rewards to losses ratio would be greater. But I favour this bid because it is aggressive and pre-emptive.*
Continued on Page 11

Continued from page 10

But the opponents too might come to life with the spade suit. This might be the right bid against weak players, but we assume good opponents.

Problem 3

Love all; imps; Dealer East

<i>West</i>	W	N	E	S
♠ AK74	-	-	1D	X
♥ QT84	XX	2C	3D	P
♦ J2	?			
♣ J94				

Marks: *Please see Stuart's comments at the end....Ed.*

Gordon: Three spades. Showing top values in spades (at least the Ace), and allowing the partnership to play in 3NT, perhaps 5D, or, less likely, a Diamond Slam.

Brian: Pass. Any bid from partner in front of me shows a low point-count distributional opener. With a six-card suit and 10-11 HCP, or so, he would have bid 2D. 3D shows a seventh diamond but still very minimal high cards, so I pass as I can't see what game we can make.

Stewart: Five diamonds. The rebid of 3D shows a good hand and sound diamonds. Partner's

double and North's bid of 3C steers me away from bidding 3NT. It's not match points and I bid 5D.

Janice: Three no trump. North's bid is forced and he cannot have much. Partner is showing a good hand with diamonds (my Jack will be useful). I have the majors "stopped" and I just hope he has a club honour.

Sandy: Five diamonds. After the rebid of 3D from partner we must be in game and as he would have made a reverse bid with a four card major it has to be 5D. He can't have many clubs on this bidding.

Sam: Three spades. Showing partner where my points are. He may bid 3NT. Anything else and I will then bid 5D.

Ian: Four diamonds. I may have just passed the best spot - 3NT. But partner has made a jump bid – a good 6-card suit and I have a good hand. – it is imp scoring so the downside of 5D (if we stop there) is not so great. *The answers to this one have left me totally flummoxed. As Brian points out any bid from East at his second turn shows a lack of high card strength and a long suit. In this case he will have long diamonds and a hand just too strong to pre-empt in diamonds. I suppose he might be a bit stronger by partnership agreement. But the principle is that with a sound opener he should pass and then decide what to do after partner's*

next bid, which will usually be double, in principle for penalties. Now East with diamond length, high card strength and shortage in clubs can choose to bid a number of diamonds. This has been the Acol way from way-back. But the other six panelists believe that East has shown a strong hand with long diamonds and bid accordingly. If the panelists had made their bids with the qualification that they recognized that East was limited in regard to high card strength, I could have marked this problem sensibly. And I am not necessarily endorsing Pass as the top bid - much. This one is impossible to mark, so I am awarding everyone 10 marks. Readers who recognized that the 3D bid is weak are entitled to claim the moral high ground.

Marks: All bids receive 10 marks.

Congratulations to Sam and Sandy on their maximums on what turned out to be a two problem set.

Scores

1= Sam Malkani	30
1= Sandy Anderson	30
3= Brian Senior	29
3= Gordon Smith	29
5= Janice Thomson	28
5= Ian Dick	28
7 Stewart Duguid	27

Quick Quote

"Life is like a game of bridge. The hand you are dealt is determinism; the way you play it is free will."

Slight misquote from the Dalai Lama

But Mr Lama, how is "8 EVER – 9 NEVER" free will?...Ed!

Bridge Kroegentocht

By Eddie McGeough

Kroeg is Dutch for a café or pub; tocht is a tour - so a tour of cafés to play bridge.

It's a popular style of event in North Belgium and Holland, held usually in the summer.

Members visiting these countries, might try and check out if there is such an event taking place in the area they'll be staying and enquire if places are available to take part.

In Brussels a few years ago, I contacted the organiser of an event in Leuven, a beautiful city with a famous University, home of Stella Artois, about 30km East of Brussels. I was given instructions on how to get to the club where the event started – not far from the station.

We took the train – 30 minutes – and walked to the Pieterman Bridge Club receiving a very warm welcome.

Entering our names, paying the fee, we were given a map of the centre with the names of the cafés where the games would be played. We also received a 'movement card' – similar to the card for a Howell movement, which detailed the boards to be played, the café, opponents, and expected start time of the round. See the sample map and movement card images below.

Although the event was played as a Mitchell, N/S playing E/W, a difference was that the boards stayed in the café, and all the pairs move to a new café for each round.

(Common in Holland where the boards remain on the table and the players move.)

After everyone had received their maps and movement cards, final instructions were given. With the numbers involved, there were several sections, so each pair had to ensure they played in the correct section at each café, (the sections were coloured, the boards matched the colour of the section.), and of course against the correct opponents, sitting the right way – just as required in a normal event.

The start was announced; the N/S pairs took the boards for the café (duplicated across the sections). The N/S pair at end of the last round bring back the boards, with the 'travellers', to the club for scoring.

7 rounds were played of 4 boards. Each pair had 45 minutes to play the round and get to the next café.

We were paar nr. 125 Oost-West, so no responsibilities for boards. Just stroll in the sunshine to the cafés. This almost proved disastrous on the 1st round, where map-reading skills were found wanting, and a turn was made too early. Fortunately we got to the café just in time to play a couple from Holland; a local refreshment was called for. (*The payback for the cafés reserving 2 or 3 tables.*)

With the panic over, but still flustered, sitting West, I pulled the wrong bid, 1D, on this hand:

With a competitive auction, we stumbled our way into an unbeatable contract – when played by East!

W	N	E	S
1D (!)	2C	2H	P
4H	5C	P	P
5H	6C	6D	P
6H	P	P	P.

North		
♠	QJ975	
♥	-	
♦	2	
♣	AK97542	East
West		♠ K8
♠	432	♥ KT753
♥	AQJ96	♦ Q543
♦	AJT86	♣ Q3
♣	-	South
		♠ AT6
		♥ 842
		♦ K97
		♣ JT86

Continued on page 13

Continued from page 12

We finished the set, and made our way to the next table/café. With the sun shining it was tempting to linger on one of the café terraces, but work had to be done!

After the last round, we made our way back to the club, and the results. The scores were merged for all sections and for each direction. We emerged a respectable 15th out of 84 pairs with 54%. If I hadn't gone 7 off, vulnerable, in the last hand, (not doubled, and not a bottom!), we might even have had one of the top 10 prizes!

If you're visiting Holland or Belgium this summer, look out for such events.

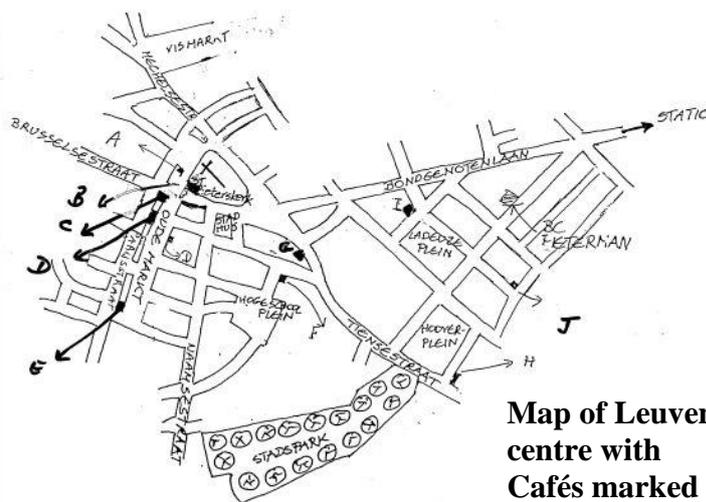
N.B.: cafés do serve coffee...

Are our pubs bridge-friendly enough to stage such an event?

**PIETERMAN KROEGENTOCHT:
PAAR NR. 125: OOST-WEST**

Start om:	Tegen:	Kroeg:	Giften:
14 u 20	25	Café Manger	17 tot 20
15 u 05	23	Den @t	13 tot 16
15 u 45	21	De Engel	9 tot 12
16 u 25	26	Artishock	5 tot 8
17 u 05	24	De Appel	1 tot 4
17 u 45	22	De Layens	25 tot 28
18 u 25	27	Libertad	21 tot 24

E 2
D 2,5
C 5
G 8
J 5
I 7
F 5



Map of Leuven centre with Cafés marked

Translation of Scorecard

Pieterman Bridge Club.Café Tour
Pair no. 125 East-West

Start at:	Against Pair No.	Café	Boards
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300 Club Pairs - Saturday 21st January

1	13	Ian Burn & Bobby Moore	61.46	£50
2	6	Sam & Kate Malkani	59.03	£30
3	8	Donnie & Anne Graham	56.60	£20
4	7	Fiona Abbott & Pauline Phillips	55.21	£10
5	2	Jim & Alison Tudor	54.17	
6	9	Sandy & Jane Anderson	53.47	
7	11	Sandra Wiseman & Jean Parker	51.39	
8	4	Nice McKell & Ann Fraser	50.69	
9	5	Jack Cleland & Ian Adamson	50.00	
10	16	Ronnie & Jean Alexander	49.31	
11	10	Henry Crone & Stephen Cole	45.14	
12	3	Margaret & Douglas Brown	44.44	
13	12	Ann Braid & Jim Wilcox	43.59	
14	1	Eddie McGeough & Janice Thomson	38.89	
15	14	Libby Crone & Joyce Rodger	37.15	

Local Results for Simultaneous events

North-South Wednesday 25th January

1	Jim & Alison Tudor	56.35
2	Eddie McGeough & Janice Thomson	55.82
3	Ian Burn & Pauline Phillips	55.03
4	Sandy & Jane Anderson	53.44
5	David & Sandra Wiseman	51.59
6	Henry Crone & Anne Fraser	47.62
7	Donald & Ann Cattanach	42.06
8	S Cole & Irene Davidson	38.10

East-West

Bobby Allan

1	Donnie & Anne Graham	64.29
2	Rita Stuart & Bobby Moore	55.65
3	John Hazlehurst & Frances Duck	54.46
4	Sam & Kate Malkani	52.98
5	Angela Knox & Robin Gardiner	50.30
6	Sam McNair & Anne Braid	48.21
7	David & Ira Clement	43.75
8	Steve Gray & Valerie Wood	42.26
9	Isobel Miller & Andy Graham	38.10

Wednesday 18th January

North-South

1	Jim Tudor & Alison Tudor	+3170
2	Tom Bonnes & Margaret Bonnes	+2070
3	Donnie Graham & Anne Graham	+2070
4=	Maureen Rennie & Sharon Lindsay	+120
4=	Stuart McCreddie & Pat Smith	+120
6	Jean Cunningham & Angela Knox	+30

East-West

Norvite

1	Shirley Moore & Steve Gray	+560
2	Frances Duck & John Haslehurst	+280
3	Sam Malkani & Kate Malkani	-760
4	David Wiseman & Ralph Wiseman	-1300
5	Eddie McGeough & Janice Thomson	-2640
6	Henry Crone & Stephen Cole	-3720

League Tables

31.01.12

Division 1	Played	Won	Lost	Drawn	IMPs	VPs
Kyle Arran	4	4	0	0	257	71
Kilwinning Abbey	4	3	1	0	173	59
Troon South Beach	4	3	1	0	-3	40
Ardeer	4	1	2	1	-48	37
Kilmarnock Annanhill	4	1	2	1	-58	33
Kilmarnock Grange	3	1	2	0	-41	24
Troon Eglinton	3	0	3	0	-174	10
Portland A	2	0	2	0	-106	6
Division 2	Played	Won	Lost	Drawn	IMPs	VPs
Kilwinning Corsehill	4	3	1	0	119	55
Riggs	3	2	0	1	80	40
Largs	3	1	2	0	13	32
Kyle Bute	2	2	0	0	64	29
Bruce	2	0	0	2	-2	20
Portland B	3	0	2	1	-125	14
Troon Bentinck	3	0	3	0	-149	10

League Results

31.01.12

Division One

Kyle Arran v. Kilmarnock Grange **18-2**

Ardeer v. Portland A **18-2**

Kilmarnock Annanhill v. Troon Eglinton **15-5**

Division Two

Kilwinning Corsehill v. Troon Bentinck **18-2**

Riggs v. Largs **13-7**

Late Results 1st Feb

Kyle Bute v Bruce **16-4**

Kyle Arran v Ardeer **20-0**