

# AYRSHIRE DISTRICT BULLETIN



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## Ayrshire Congress

The Ayrshire Congress is a little earlier this year, and in an attempt to try and ensure mainly Ayrshire players take part the price has been kept low. Just £15 per person per day and this includes soup, roll & cake and free tea and coffee all day. Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> April is the Pairs and then the Sunday is the Teams of 4. There's an entry form at the Bridge centre, or contact the convenor Tom Lindsay, 01292 280091, [t.lindsay@talktalk.net](mailto:t.lindsay@talktalk.net).

There was a strong field in the recent Ladies National teams in Dundee. Ayrshire's Frances Murphy, Angela Knox, Fiona Abbott and Pauline Phillips finished in an excellent 3<sup>rd</sup> position. And managed to beat the all international team (in their head to head match) who eventually won the event.

The Junior Camrose and Peggy Bayer took place on 21<sup>st</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> Feb. The Ayrshire youngsters' tongue in cheek 'Player Profiles' are on page 12 of the Bulletin.

Below are comments from Paul Gipson's Blog :

### Junior Camrose

To be honest neither of the favourites played particularly well from what I saw, but England and Scotland played the final match with the Junior Camrose Trophy (for under-25s) at stake. Scotland needed to win by 18 IMPs and they achieved

this target after five boards. If the next seven boards had been flat then they would have won by 0.02 VP, but as it was England came back and won the match by 5 IMPs.

### Peggy Bayer

In the Peggy Bayer Trophy for the under-20s, England won with a match to spare but were not as dominant as previous years. A team with some new faces and stronger performances from Scotland and Ireland the main reasons for this.

# INTERVIEW WITH SHIRLEY MOORE

By Janice Thomson

**This month's interviewee is Shirley Moore. Shirley is a well-known player in Ayrshire bridge circles and plays at three clubs that I know of. She is a very keen participant in local and some national competitions although has cut down on the latter for reasons she expresses below.**

## **1. Shirley, you clearly enjoy our game, what brought you in to it?**

My mother-in-law started a class at St. Nicholas golf club as the number of lady members playing in their bridge group was dwindling. However all the ladies played VIENNA system, which is now extinct. A friend offered to teach me ACOL, so I was a beginner playing two systems. The next Spring the Caledonian Club in Ayr which played in Doonfoot School advertised a new club to be called GREENAN. As I live near the school, I went along to the inaugural meeting. A large number turned up so bridge was played. I played with Janet Wakeford who had just moved to Ayr from Eastbourne. Caledonian members came each week, Jim Wilcox, Ian Stewart, John Phillips and Ann Braid to organise the play, until we could run it ourselves. I became Secretary of the steering committee and in September the club became a proper club with a committee. I was secretary for two years and then President.

In the first year my partner and I went along to play at the new A.B.C. in an Ayrshire Pairs heat. The Director, Jim Murdoch had to show me how to fill in the traveller. To our delight we qualified for the final. When we were told when this was to be played my partner announced she would be away on a cruise then! I don't think I ever forgave her. After a few years she moved to Troon and played with Sheila Rennick.

We entered a team in the newly formed fourth division and I cannot remember if it was that year we won it or the next year. I was match secretary and team captain. We then had two teams. Now clubs have a hard time getting enough people willing to play in one team. Greenan club no longer play in the league, and the Caledonian club no longer exists.

The following year I went along to the Savoy Club which at that time played in the Savoy Park Hotel in Ayr. I enjoyed the play there and joined to play with Doreen Preece. The standard of play was high. The top pair was usually Frances Murphy and Betty Stevenson. They later played for the Scottish Ladies team until Betty and her husband John went to Zimbabwe. They had 2 teams in the league. On remembering these times I realise many of the people who played there have either passed away or they moved away. Crombie McNeil went abroad but I hear he is now much to the fore in bridge in the south of England.

I am still a member there. We have had to change venues a number of times. Savoy numbers dwindled and we only had one team which I eventually captained. Then it became difficult to field a team and we had none. However we are a thriving club again and have now had a team in the league for two years. I played for many years with Nan Miller until she became ill. I was President of Savoy and then secretary for three years, then Treasurer for two years and then Secretary again for five years. I am still on the committee and am now Match Secretary.

## **2. You play at several clubs and have regular partners in each. Do you play a similar system with each of your partners?**

I joined Kyle club to play with Neil, it was a large club but alas membership has dwindled. I became Vice –President and then President for 2 years and am now in my third year as Secretary. Kyle probably has the largest number of high ranked players in Ayrshire which may have put a lot of less experienced players off as they do not understand all the bids and do not like to keep asking. Only more experience will give them the ability to deal with this as it can be upsetting.

*Continued on page 3*

*Continued from page 2*

I also joined Ayr club where I played with Steve Gray but alas its membership dwindled and it no longer exists.

I play a slightly different system with all my partners which sometimes gets a little confusing, for me and them. It is important to be able to trust your partner most of the time.

**3. You have been on a few committees. As I recall, you have acted as secretary in several clubs. This is an important job in the running (and success) of a club. Please tell the readers somewhat about this role and what aspects of the job do you enjoy?**

A secretary's job is to handle the business of the club, see that the president is informed of everything. If not a club playing at the A.B.C., then keep track of stationary. Organise committee meetings, do minutes, keep members lists up to date and notify members of any matters that crop up and now deal with Mempad, which in another year's time should be fully operational and should run like clockwork.

I have experience in office work, financial work and had a business in Ayr for 19 years so am able to deal with most things. I do not find being an office-bearer in a club at all onerous. I enjoy knowing all that is happening.

**4. You play a lot of club bridge. You also participate in local and some national competitions. I haven't noticed you playing in the afternoon clubs. Is this something you might do in the future? What do you think of, for example, new competitions being held in an afternoon situation?**

Neil and I enjoyed playing in pairs at Hutchiesons school and the Buchanan club for some years until we met some very nasty people. Two men whose names I will remember forever were warned by John Wilson but they continued to harass me and then they were fined and then got so indignant about being fined. It was most upsetting. The following year we met many pairs with no table manners, so no more.

I prefer playing in the evening but perhaps when I get older I may play in the afternoon. Or if some competitions were scheduled then I may be interested. I think more of the new players seem to like afternoon bridge probably as most of them are retired. I think also that as yet there will be no weird bidding to put them off. As they progress they will become able to cope when they meet this.

**5 (a). The S.B.U. (Scottish Bridge Union) has a "Better Behaviour" campaign going at the moment. What do you think of it? Do you think it will improve/is improving behaviour at the table?**

I think there is some improvement. When the leaflet came from the S.B.U. I printed off a copy for each table at Kyle the next Friday and everybody did read it and discuss it. I know some secretaries just put a copy on their notice board. Many members never look at their notice board.

**(b). Do you think that the S.B.U. Do enough to keep members informed?**

Yes I think they do but a lot of players are just not interested in anything outwith their clubs. When I started playing, most people only belonged to one or two clubs and therefore they would play in competitions but now some belong to four, five and six clubs and play as many times in the week, so they have no need for these competitions. They are getting all the bridge they want. You can take a horse to the well but you cannot make it drink.

**6. Do you think the A.B.U. Keep members informed? If, yes, give some examples. If no, give examples.**

I think the ABU are doing everything exceedingly well. The Bulletin and Jim Tudor's e-mails keep most up to date with what is going on. It is unfortunate that there are a few people not online but they usually belong to more than one club so have opportunities to hear of most things. I recently heard of a lady of 92 (not a bridge player) who has bought a laptop and now e-mails all her family and friends. So.....

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Continued from page 3

**7. In a more light-hearted vein, please tell the readers your favourite:**

**Colour?**- Blue and green

**Food?**- Pan fried whole lemon sole with lemon butter sauce and for pudding - Crepe Suzette

**Books?**- Andrea Camilleri's Detective Montalbano novels.

**Film?**- Crocodile Dundee (because I have lived in Australia)

**t.v.?**- "Montalbano" & "Body of Proof".

**Pastime/s apart from bridge?** – Cooking - gardening – keeping fit – holidays.

**8. Lastly Shirley, from your long association with bridge do you have any funny or unusual stories (one will do!) you can share with the readers?**

I Played with a certain gentleman once – I opened 1heart – he paused for some time then bid 1 spade- I bid 2 diamonds - he bid STOP 3 N T. The lady on lead was ecstatic - she put down the Ace of Spades followed by the king – I only had two small ones and he only had two although he had bid them. She took the first 6 tricks with Ace, King, Queen and three more spades. He said he had bid spades as he wanted to play in 3NT and this so he would not get a spade lead. Not funny at the time but now I can laugh about it. It's good to laugh-sometimes we have to!

**Thanks for doing this interview Shirley and providing so much interest for the readers to enjoy. Don't be surprised now if you get conversations at the table about "Inspector Montalbano", t.v. medical dramas and food!!**

## Some Thoughts on the Laws By Jim Wilcox

At the Peebles Congress in December, the Director was called to my table for an insufficient bid. His first question to the offender was "Did you mean to make that bid?" Well, naturally, offender said "No", so the Director let him correct it without penalty, under Law 25.

I don't agree with that approach. If the offender does not immediately say "Sorry, that's not the bid I meant to make," then it should be treated as an insufficient bid under Law 27.

What this shows is how the Laws can be interpreted in different ways. I admit that the Law Book can be a bit of a minefield to go through, but if properly used the Director should always be able to arrive at the correct decision. I am, of course, talking about mechanical offences and not errors of judgment or hesitations which are a different kettle of fish altogether.

**The main offences in clubs are:-**

- |                                     |                 |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Opening leads out of turn.       | Law 54          |
| 2. Opening bids or pass out of turn | Laws 30 and 31. |
| 3. Insufficient bids                | Law 27          |
| 4. Revokes.                         | Laws 61-64      |
| 5. Penalty Cards                    | Laws 50 – 52    |

All of the above offences are easy to give a ruling on by the Director simply reading from the Rule Book.

I will deal with these offences in more depth in subsequent articles.

I mentioned Law 25 above and this is one with which a lot of club players are not familiar. I had an instance recently of a lady making a bid which was not the one she intended. She just picked the wrong card out of the bidding box. She didn't realise she could change it and so landed in completely the wrong contract.

Of course, the error has to be as above – a complete mistake – a change of mind is not allowed, and if offender's partner has called before the mistake is noticed, then too bad you can't change it.

As I said above, it is all in Law 25. The Director just needs to read it.

Finally, this month, could I just comment on Law 45B, which describes how a card should be played from dummy. In spite of this rule coming in many years ago, I still see declarers reaching forward and playing dummy's cards when the Law clearly states that declarer should name the card and dummy plays it. If dummy has gone to the toilet then it is different. Please observe this.

# 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)

I wonder if you have thought of this Jim? It has just occurred to me!

If you are wondering whether to 'bash' into a slam or check for Aces first then you should be more inclined to 'bash' if you are declarer and perhaps ask for aces if you are going to be dummy. Why?

If you are dummy and ask for Aces then when partner shows the Aces by 5D,5H etc.. then your RHO (*right hand opponent*) can't double for a lead as he's on lead. However if you are declarer then your RHO can double for a lead. Also if RHO doesn't double there is the negative inference if the leader is weak.

**Email from Ian Dalziel**

If you are planning to visit a club for the first time it is a courtesy to contact the secretary of that club. This saves embarrassment when a club is holding a members only event.

**Albert Defeated**

I've heard lots of nice remarks again about Kate Malkani's inventive decorations in the ABC.

Well done again Kate.

**Anne Ditova**

Has the Bridge centre got its own sinkhole outside of the kitchen door?

**Des Trought**

I'm looking forward to the Ayrshire Congress in April, not just for the bridge but for the lovely catering. Yummy!!

**Cilla Conimplant**

Is Jim Tutor related to Jim Tudor?

**Candy Syde** *No!..... Ed*

Re. etiquette at the bridge table. Last week at the Riggs club it was announced that the opening lead should be made prior to filling in the score card. What a difference this made. We played 27 boards and were out in the time it usually takes to play 24!

**Wilf Uldamage**

An Observation! Aren't we lucky to have our own bridge centre.

**Jim Carna**



# What would you bid now? By Brian Senior

We are missing Sam this month as he has had a spell in hospital – it wasn't my torturing that put him there, honest! Hopefully he will be back next time.

The basic system is Acol (incorporating 3 Weak 2s, so 2C is the only forcing opener) 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...

① *South* None vul; Matchpoints

♠ K873	W	N	E	S
♥ T8	1H	X	2H	2S
♦ K63	3H	P	P	?
♣ KT94				

② *South* All vul ; Imps

♠ J86	W	N	E	S
♥ KT7	-	1H	P	2D
♦ AK982	P	2H	P	?
♣ AQ				

③ *South* All vul; Matchpoints

♠ Q96542	W	N	E	S
♥ Q5	-	-	-	1S
♦ AQ	P	2H	3C	P
♣ Q32	P	3D	P	?

## Problem 1.

None vul; Matchpoints  
Dealer West

<i>South</i>	W	N	E	S
♠ K873	1H	X	2H	2S
♥ T8	3H	P	P	?
♦ K63				
♣ KT94				

**Marks: Pass/Double – 10, 3S – 5.**  
**Stewart: Pass** – I have made a free bid with 2S and partner chose to pass, so I must respect his bid and PASS.

**Janice: Pass** – I have made a non-forced bid. I have said all I want to say with this hand.

**Stuart: Pass** – Perhaps I am surrendering rather easily, but if partner had four spades he would probably have bid 3S. Would double here suggest playing in a minor-suit contract? Or does it show good points for my free bid of 2S and allow my partner to pass for penalties if he has a suitable hand. I am not sure.

*I am not convinced that partner would have bid 3S with four spades and a minimum for his double. Rather, he would wait*

*to see if we could come again to show extras. The question is, do we have sufficient extras to justify a second positive call?*

*I would say that we have about a king more than required for the 2S bid so do have extras. With only four spades, the way to show extras is to double and leave it up to partner to choose whether to play or defend. No, double now would not suggest a minor-suit contract – we had our chance to suggest a more flexible hand and allow partner to pick a trump suit on the previous round, when we could have made a responsive double. Now, double means:*

**Sandy: Double** – Telling partner I have defensive as well as offensive values and making him decide whether it should be 3H doubled or possibly 3S by us, when we can afford to be one down non-vul.

**Jim: Double** – Perhaps I'm turning a plus score into a minus if partner chooses to bid 3S, but I can't bring myself to pass 3H when we hold the balance of points.

*As Jim says, we could be turning a plus into a minus if partner cannot find the winning action, but it is matchpoints and, almost certainly, we*

*can do better than defend 3H undoubled at this vulnerability.*

## Problem 2

All vul; Imps ; Dealer North

<i>South</i>	W	N	E	S
♠ J86	-	1H	P	2D
♥ KT7	P	2H	P	?
♦ AK982				
♣ AQ				

**Marks: 4C/D – 10, 3C – 9, 4H/NT – 6, 2S – 5.**

**Janice: 4NT** – It's IMPs so I must make a try here.

*Perhaps, but 4NT is not exactly making a try is it? Rather, it is taking control. Still, there was support for your choice of call:*

**Stewart: 4NT** – Not sure how partner would react to 4C so will bid 4NT as I have three of the five controls so should be a safe bid.

*At the other extreme:*

**Stuart: 4H** – Another wimpish bid which gives up all hope of bidding a slam. But I like even less the  
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*continued from page 6*

forcing but manufactured bid of 3C, because when I then support hearts my partner will place me with short spades. At Matchpoints I might have ventured 3NT which might provide the same number of tricks as a heart contract.

Is it old fashioned to force with 3D at my first turn intending to support hearts if partner rebids the suit? Instead of trying to play catch-up.

**Sandy: 4C** – Cuebid, agreeing hearts, 2H rebid isn't necessarily WEAK and as we are VUL at IMPs this cue might stir partner into looking for a slam.

**Jim: 4C** – I know I am showing a singleton or void with this bid, but my second choice bid of 3C would distort my hand shape even more. And I don't have a third choice bid! I would have jump-shifted to 3D initially to avoid this problem.

*I think that some form of cuebid is the correct compromise between Blackwood and a sign-off. And perhaps, even if your agreement is that 4C is a splinter, this might be the least-bad option. Two panellists suggest an initial 3D response and that is also a possibility.*

*But I have a 'clever' idea for you. If we play strong jump shifts, such as 1H – 3D, then we will never have a hand that wishes to bid 1H – 2D – 2H – 4D in a natural sense. Therefore, you can use that bid to say, 'I have a hand that is too good to raise to 4H, but I do not have a hand on which I can splinter' – so no black singleton. With that agreement in place, 3S/4C can always promise the shortage, while you can make a slam try without distorting your distribution.*

### Problem 3.

All vul; Matchpoints; dealer South

<i>South</i>	W	N	E	S
♠ Q96542	-	-	-	1S
♥ Q5	P	2H	3C	P
♦ AQ	P	3D	P	?
♣ Q32				

**Marks: 3H – 10, 3S – 7, 4H/3NT – 5.**

**Stuart: 3S** – Partner has made a forcing bid. I now rebid my suit but at a higher level than I would have, if East had not intervened with his 3C vulnerable overcall. It is now up to partner. At least he knows that, because of my previous pass I have a poor opening bid. Ugh! All my decisions in this set could turn out badly at the table.

*Well, it is true that your previous pass has limited your hand, and it is also true that a six-card suit is generally worth a second bid. However, the spades are weak, and you do have tolerance for partner's first suit. As it is easier for partner to show spades over 3H than hearts over 3S...*

**Stewart: 3H** – When partner is forcing I will bid 3H he will know that I will only have two.

**Sandy: 3H** – The new suit at the three-level is FORCING so I will need to bid something and it won't be 3NT with these clubs and this rubbish, especially at Pairs, so I will support the five-card heart suit with Qx and hope this gets a plus score.

**Jim: 3H** – North will understand I don't have three-card support after my failure to raise to 3H over 2H. I prefer this to rebidding the poor six-card spade suit.

**Janice: 3H** – Partner already knows I don't hold three of his hearts. I now show a holding of two with moderate values. Let's see where we go from here...

*Yes, any hand with three-card heart support would surely have raised to 3H over the overcall, so we are now showing only two. And partner can try 3S over 3H if he isn't convinced about the heart fit. He does, after all, know that we have five spades, as we have shown a minimum opening hand, so knows that he can afford to introduce doubleton support if need be.*

### Scores

Problem	1	2	3	Total
Sandy Anderson	10	10	10	30
Jim Tudor	10	10	10	30
Janice Thomson	10	10	10	26
Stewart Duguid	10	6	10	26
Stuart McCreadie	10	6	7	23

# MEMPAD – Get Started

In the near future Masterpoints will be submitted electronically and everyone will be able to view them in their own private environment.

Your space has now been set up and is waiting for you to get a login. It is VERY easy. This is what you do :

1 - On the internet go to [www.mempad.co.uk](http://www.mempad.co.uk)

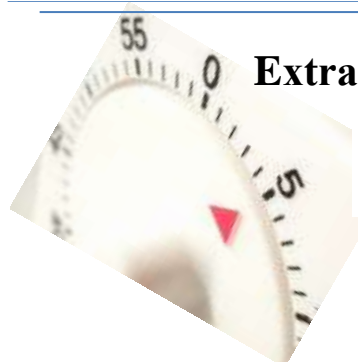
2 – Click on the ‘Contact SBU’ tab towards the top of the page.

3- This takes you to a page where you fill in the boxes ‘Name’ ; ‘Email address’ ; Masterpoint Number. In the ‘Message’ box say that you would like to apply for a Login to Mempad and include the following information : Title, Name, Surname, Full Address, Postcode, Contact Telephone Number, Alternative Telephone Number (Optional), Email Address, Home Club where SBU subscription is paid.

4 – You will receive an email from the Masterpoint secretary giving you your username (which is just your Masterpoint number) and a Password.

5 – Again go into Mempad [www.mempad.co.uk](http://www.mempad.co.uk) . Type in your Username and Password (note you can change the Password once in). Click on the ‘My Points’ tab to view your points, and there’s also options to view other information.

Done!



Extracts from February’s

## Council Minutes

+ News

### SBU business

The ‘Members services’ sub committee will investigate the possibility of funding the Scottish Bridge news magazine through advertisements. It would mean all members would receive a copy as part of their annual subscription.

### Improver’s Class

36 attended the class in January.

The next class is at 1.30pm on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> April. The topic for this is card play. Jim Tudor will give the presentation.

### Renfrewshire Match

Renfrewshire contacted Ayrshire proposing to reinstate the annual match we have with them. It was felt that there was little enthusiasm for people to play in this. The convenor always struggled to raise a team. Therefore we will politely decline.

### Leagues

The convenor, Frances Murphy, expressed concerns about the number of teams. If this reduces again next year the format will need to be reviewed.

### Knock Knock....

An initial quote for the proposed new entry system at the bridge centre has been received, £1320. ABU representatives will visit the company to find out more about the system.

### Workshop

The SBU Education secretary, Ann Wickens, intends to visit Ayrshire during the Summer to host an ‘Education Workshop’. Jim Tudor will contact club secretaries when details are known.

### 300 Club, £25 Winners, January

D. Clement (54)	E. Borland (182)	E. Munro (136)
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# Slam-a-Mia

By Jim Tutor

Continuing from last month's theme on Slam bidding we'll look at some hands to see how strong they look opposite your partner's opening bid.

The basic guidelines for High Card Points (HCPs) when considering a Slam are 33 HCPs to make 12 tricks in No-Trump and 30 HCPs are often sufficient for a Slam in a suit contract.

In reality, especially for Slams in suit contracts, the HCPs guidelines should be regarded as flexible...!

I'll start with an extreme example, your partner opens 1♠ and you hold :

You have just 10 HCPs but your biggest problem is how to find out if a Grand slam is on.

♠	K 6 5 4 2
♥	-
♦	A K 9 8 6 5 4 2
♣	-

As I said, this is an extreme example trying to show how distribution can strengthen a hand. However, it is strengthened more by the fact that your partner opened 1♠. What if they had opened 1♥? The potential of the hand would be less clear.

The 1♠ opener is good for your hand in that you have found a trump fit, but also it means that gaps you see in the spade high cards are now likely to be filled.

Let's take a more realistic example :

♠	A K J 8 6
♥	A J 9 7
♦	8 6
♣	6 5

You open 1♠ and if your partner says 2♣ or 2♦ then your hand is still just worth 13 points (14 if you like to add a point for the 5<sup>th</sup> Spade).

But if your partner bids 2♥ then you can see that your hands are fitting beautifully (note the 2♥ response to a 1♠ opener guarantees at least 5 Hearts).

So you raise to 4♥ and partner may press on to slam with a good hand.

Here's a deal from the Play & Learn (28<sup>th</sup> Feb). This was written prior to that date so I don't know how many bid slam.

## Board 19

South Deals

E-W Vul

♠ A Q 6 5 4 3  
♥ J 9 5  
♦ Q 4 3  
♣ 7

♠ —

♥ A Q 6 3

♦ A J 10 8 5

♣ A K 8 3

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ K 9 8 7

♥ K 8 7 4 2

♦ 9 7

♣ Q J

♠ J 10 2

♥ 10

♦ K 6 2

♣ 10 9 6 5 4 2

At the Play & Learn club nobody plays weak 2s so North will get to open 1♦.

When South responds 1♥ North's hand suddenly becomes huge. West will probably say 1♠ which shouldn't deter North too much. In fact it suggests that South might not have too many points wasted in the Spade suit.

Now the 'clever' bid by North might be 3♠. This would be a slam try, agreeing Hearts as Trumps and showing a singleton or void in Spades. Or perhaps you can bid 3♣ instead and see what happens.

The reality is with these distributional hands that fit well with your partner it's not always possible to determine if partner has the precise cards you need for slam.

In our deal above the odds must be in your favour. Bid 6♥ directly and apologise profusely if it goes pear shaped.

Next month : How to apologise to Partner 😊

# Why I don't teach Stayman or Transfers.

By Ian Dalziel

When I started playing bridge I was an enthusiastic user of conventions as I believed they would make my bidding more accurate. However I found the conventions were very accident prone and even when they operated successfully they usually gave the same result as natural bidding! I therefore gave up most conventions, found I didn't miss them and consequently rarely had any bidding misunderstandings.

Jim Tudor was open minded about Stayman & Transfers so we analysed 1,000 hands (about a year's bridge for a once a week player) and extracted all hands which would be opened 1NT. We bid these hands using my natural system (below) and then using Stayman/Transfers and compared the results. In a large number of case the results were the same, the natural system proved superior in some cases and the conventions in others, however over the piece the natural method was the clear winner.

The study assumed that both systems were correctly used but as I said artificial systems are much more accident prone than natural bidding (everyone agrees with this). Unless people have a really good grasp of a convention they either misuse it or forget some part of it and end up in a bizarre contact. People can also forget natural bids of course but as these bids 'mean what they say' this is less likely to happen and even if there is an error made it need not result in a disaster.

If a pair both put a lot of study into Stayman and Transfers *and* have good memories they should limit the "accidents" but will still lose points as natural bidding is better as the study showed. If players use these conventions but don't learn them properly or have memory lapses their losses will be enormous!

It's not that I'm against artificial bids per se, for example I'm a great believer in the takeout double which is about as artificial as you can get as it means the opposite to what it says! I also use the artificial 2C (23+) opener and Blackwood. The card play signalling system I teach is more complex than most.

My teaching is based on what works at the table *not* what's fashionable. I have played the system I teach over many years and find it works well, when it doesn't I amend it. Also I do thousands of post mortems over the years and analyse every hand I play. Bad results are nearly always down to bad luck or human error (including my own) very rarely a systemic failure.

It's true that most good players use a lot of conventions and I suppose new players want to copy them, it's only human nature I suppose, but experts get good results *in spite* of their conventions *not because* of them. These players success comes from knowing their system, good bidding judgement and excellent card play. Even so, when I played in tournaments I usually got two tops per session from "experts" whose conventions came off the rails!

You might think the 'better players' would find our study of 1,000 hands of great interest, not a bit of it! Their addiction to their conventions is based on faith not fact. Nothing wrong with faith but is "blind faith" a help to a bridge player? I think not. If you ask anyone if they keep profit or loss records of the conventions they use you get blank stare. Can all these experts be wrong? Of course they can, history is full of examples where all the 'expert' opinion was wrong.

Even if these conventions are right for experts (which I dispute) that doesn't mean they are right for you. If you are a golfer would you play any better using Tiger Woods golf clubs? If you are a tennis player will you play any better with Andy Murray's tennis racket?

However you can use bridge players' addiction to conventions to your advantage. If you keep your system natural you will rarely have misunderstandings and have an advantage over stronger players.

Here is a summary of the system I use for responses and rebids after 1NT. If you want to know more then I can email you my lessons on the subject.

OPENING BID	CAPTAIN'S RESPONSE	MEANING
1NT (12-14)	2NT	● Invitation
	3NT	● sign off
	2 of a suit	● sign off 5+ cards
	3 of a minor suit	● game forcing 4+ cards
	3 of a major suit	● game forcing 5+ cards
	4 of a major suit	● sign off

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OPENING BID	FIRST RESPONSE	OPENER'S REBID	RESPONDER'S REBID
1NT (12-14)	2NT	Pass with minimum. With a maximum bid 3NT, or show a major en route to 3NT.	If partner shows a major then seek a 4-4 fit bidding suits "up the line".
	3NT	Pass	
	2 of a suit	Normally pass, but with max and 4 card support and a doubleton raise a major to 3 in case partner has a 2 ½ raise! (i.e. 11-12 pts).	
	3 of a minor suit	Show cheapest 4 card suit but don't go past 3NT unless a 4-4 fit in a major is found.	Seek 4-4 fit in major or bid 4 of a minor if you seek game in a minor suit.
	3 of a major suit	Raise with 3 card support, show other major (at 3 level) or bid 3NT with a flat hand (4333).	
	4 of a major suit	Pass	

### National Pairs Semi-Final - Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February. Top 5 qualify for the final.

## RESULTS

1	Neil Thomson & Jim Steen	68.85
2	Jackie Ridge & Jane Lynch	65.00
3	David & Sandra Wiseman	63.46
4	Steve Gray & Hans Halsvedt	61.41
5	Sandy Anderson & Stewart Duguid	61.03
6	Fiona Abbott & Pauline Phillips	59.36
7	Jack Cleland & Jim Wilcox	58.72
8	Eddie McGeough & Janice Thomson	57.18
9	Donnie Graham & Eric Borland	56.54
10	Angela Sharp & Muriel Forbes	55.13
11	Margaret Little & Anne Boyd	54.62
12	Jim & Alison Tudor	54.10
13	Sandy Martin & Margaret Brown	53.59
14	Barbara Smith & Jonathan Kelk	51.28
15	Peter Thomson & Stewart Martindale	49.87
16	Anne Braid & Sam McNair	49.62
17	Joyce Hodgson & Mary Thomson	49.23
18	Thomson Kerr & Pat Smith	47.95
19	Stoian Kableskov & Andy Raeburn	46.92
20=	Alex O'Hara & Bessie Balfour	46.03
20=	Andrew Pelling & Ian Adamson	46.03
22=	Frances Duck & John Haslehurst	45.51
22=	Ann Prigg & Alison Hughes	45.51

24	Stephen Cole & Jean Parker
25	Joe Woods & Alan Lochrie
26	R Haswell & Sheila Templeton
27	Ted & Susan Hayman
28	Paul Wilson & Jim Barclay
29	Stewart & Douglas Denham
30	Bobby Moore & Ian Burn
31	Katherine Garven & Roderick MacLennan
32	Jane Carr & Margaret Withers

### Tourney Cup Qualifier

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February

1	Steve Gray & Alison Tudor
	Jim Tudor & John Bryson
2	Janice Thomson & Eddie McGeough
	Ian Burn & Stoian Kableskov
3	Frances Murphy & Rita Stuart
	Nicé McKell & Anne Fraser
4	Gordon Smith & David Wiseman
	Stuart McCreadie & Sandra Wiseman

The League secretary has only just returned from a well deserved holiday so the latest league results aren't available yet. Check the ABU website for updates under the "Competitions" tab, then "League 1" or "League 2".

## Junior Profiles

In the Junior Camrose and Peggy Bayer the youngsters had a bit of fun with their player profiles. This is the profiles of the 3 Ayrshire Juniors who took part.

### Junior Camrose

**Yvonne Wiseman** From a young age Yvonne has shown an interest in bridge, making her first international appearance at a very young age. At the age of 21, she is now in her third year of studying the periodic table at university and is hoping to become a master of chemicals over the next decade. Outside of bridge Yvonne enjoys food, shopping and learning Arabic (her favourite phrase is 'Anna acol kaaaak' which translates as 'I eat cake'). She also competes at an international level in women's bridge and is competing in Europe this summer. Family connections to the team sponsor Ralph have led her to being a regular member of the Scottish Junior team.

**Ralph Wiseman** the token sponsor of the Scottish squad, emerges from the depths of his lair in Glasgow to play bridge once a year. This event means a lot to him! The eager beaver did sneak in a practice game before the event, although he was too hungover to remember. Despite this, his top banter and ability to charm have won over the selectors once again. He's managed to make it into the second year at Strathclyde University where he is occasionally to be seen studying maths and his interests outside bridge include hockey, drinking and being a LAD.

### Peggy Bayer

**Stewart Pinkerton** At 18 years of age Stewart, every now and then, studies maths at St Andrews University, one day hoping to master basic addition. In terms of his bridge career, he had a baptism of fire playing for two years with his grandfather and made his first appearance in the Peggy Bayer in 2011. His hobbies involve bridge, sleep, food and learning to speak Glaswegian. His partner this year is Scott Lorimer, who he has not actually met yet.

