

half hour later than the regular game and finish after about two hours (or whenever they become weary). The students will see the scores of the other players and will be able to compare their results, but they will at no point play against any players from the regular duplicate game. The students' scores do not appear on the official score slip.

The students play among themselves and stay at one table.

### How strong is 1NT?

*by Nick Hughes*

Times are changing, even in beginner circles. Paul Marston's new editions of *Introduction to Bridge* and *Language of Bidding* are due out soon. We're in for a surprise.

Firstly, there will be a stronger focus on 5-card majors, partly because Paul is keen to crack the US market.

Also, the 1NT opening has been trimmed back to 15-17. Again, nearly all the leading US teachers have switched to 12 point openings and 15-17 1NT for beginners, even Audrey Grant.

This is what they will end up playing so why teach them a dying method and make them change later?

One reason some writers have stuck it out for so long as that a 16-18 notrumps fits in with the old "mini - midi - maxi" mantra for opener's rebid.

That message is diluted with a 15-17 notrump because a jump rebid in notrumps shows a different strength. What exactly? The American duplicate style is to open 2NT with 20-21 and make a jump rebid of 2NT with 18 - 19. Responder is allowed to pass this.

### ABTA Office bearers

#### President

Lorraine Harkness  
lorraineharkness@bigpond.com  
397 Orange Grove Road,  
Orange Grove 2256

#### Secretary

Jean Rennick, 02 9623 6402  
21 Blamey St, St Mary's 2760

#### Treasurer

Colin Mitchell, 02 4324 3143  
118 Manns Rd, Narara 2250  
mitchell@coastal.net.au

#### Bulletin Editor

Nick Hughes, 02 9387 6175  
4/104 Anglesea St, Bondi 2026  
nhughes@bigpond.net.au

Deadline for Autumn issue - **1 Mar**  
Annual ABTA membership is \$20.  
Joining fee \$10. Exam fee \$10.

**Ad rates: page \$30, ½ page \$20**

For instance:

1♣	?	♠ 10 5
		♥ K J 6 4 3
		♦ 10 7 4 3
		♣ 7 2

Responder bids 1♥ over 1♣, planning to pass 2NT or maybe sign-off in 3♥ if that's possible.

Thus we have been taken away from the notion that a jump rebid of 2NT is forcing to game, offering a choice of contracts.

Another trend is to open 1NT with a 5-card major to avoid rebid problems like 1♥ - 1♠ - ? when opener has a balanced 17-count.



## Australian Bridge Teachers' Association Quarterly Bulletin

Vol. 17 No. 2 Summer 2004

ABTA Bulletin (Print Post No. PP232178/00001)

Editor: Nick Hughes

### President's Report

Dear Fellow Members,

As a new year begins we tend to look back over the past year with a certain sense of satisfaction at seeing some of the beginners with whom we started off at the beginning of the year, progress into the club, albeit reluctantly!

It is always disappointing to lose some students, especially those you thought would really make the grade - those who had more potential than others who drop out. Was it something someone said on their first day that upset them, or was it the fact that they found the whole duplicate scene too competitive.?

If your intake and club is large enough to have an ongoing Supervised Duplicate session and then a "soft" session, then the problem of transition is relatively easier. But when you might only start off with maybe 8 or 10 and then ½ drop out, its very hard not to have to almost force these new players to join the main duplicate game.

The suggestion I always make is to fill out a systems card for them well before they start with a "P.P" on the top (protected pair) then when they are introduced to the club members the

members are now very aware of who they are. Also make it a Club rule that the protected pairs are *not* to be doubled and don't allow any form of multi twos to be played against them. There is *nothing* more humiliating than for the new player to be doubled and go for 800 or more! You are almost guaranteed to lose them. Next thing you hear they have joined some outside, unaffiliated group where the bridge standard is low but the atmosphere is much more fun.

There must be thousands of bridge players out there in the many homes,

### ABTA AGM

This is on at the usual  
time and place:

**Sunday 18th January**

**9.30 am**

**Executive Lounge  
Ground Floor Rydges**

We'll elect new office bearers  
and discuss the past year and  
plans for the future.

Be there!

clubs etc. who have been to their local club a few time and felt intimidated. I know that here on the Central Coast of NSW I have one or two people who automatically ask the new players as soon as they discard, what their signalling system is!! The first impression is that they have cheated or done something wrong!! Very demoralising!

No matter how much tuition you give with encouraging cards etc they forget all about that in the game. We have to educate our current players to be very forgiving!!

As this is my last report as President (I am resigning at the AGM in January after 3 years - long enough) may I take this opportunity to wish you all the very best for the New Year.

I would also like to thank all those who emailed and made contributions and showed me so much support over that time.

I also wish to thank Jean Rennick our Secretary for her tremendous efforts as Secretary these past two years, and now has to resign through ill health. To Nick Hughes our vice president thank you for the Newsletter and all your support especially with the Seminars and to Colin Mitchell who took on the Treasurer's job and has been very efficient sorting out the many difficulties associated with the job.

Good luck to you all and continue the good work introducing this great game to many more in the future.

*Lorraine Harkness President*

### In this issue ...

From the President	1
Editor's desk	2
Mailbag	3
What is Easy Bridge?	6
Schools in America	7
Postfree ad	9
ACBL internet survey	10
GS Books ad	11
How strong is 1NT	12

### From the Editor's desk

We hope to see most of you in a few weeks at the AGM in Canberra. It's at the usual place and time - 9.30am Sunday 18th January in the Executive Lounge at Rydges.

Major changes in personnel with Lorraine and Jean retiring. Colin Mitchell has offered to take over as combined Secretary / Treasurer for this year but he, too, is planning to retire at the end of 2005.

Membership fees are due now, still just \$20 for the Newsletters, seminars and other benefits.

*Nick Hughes*

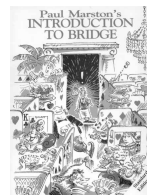
### How Old for Seniors?

*Nick Hughes*

Good to see the WBF is to raise Seniors to 60 & Over, starting now. The qualifying age will go by one year each year to reach 60 in five year's time.

## Bridge Teachers: All you need is patience

**50% discount on orders of \$120 plus. Postage added**



### Introduction to Bridge **\$12.95**

Standard or Acol

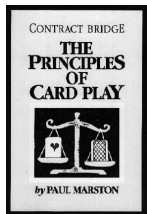
Presents the basic skills of bridge in a logical order. Easy to understand. Widely used by Australian teachers.



### Language of Bidding **\$20.95**

Standard or Acol

Takes your students further. A complete guide to basic bidding. Lots of quizzes, bidding practice and play hands.



### Principles of Card Play **\$18.95**

Gives invaluable tuition. Covers the elements of card play one step at a time. Great for all improvers and intermediate players.



PO Box 1426  
Double Bay NSW 1360  
Ph: 02 9327 4599  
Fax: 02 9363 9326  
Free call: 1800 652 922  
Email: books@  
grandslam.com.au

Also:

### Cheat Sheets **\$6.50**

4-card majors, 5-card, or Acol

Tells you what to bid in all basic situations.

### All About Notrumps **\$10.95**

Includes Stayman, transfers, play & defence.

### Winning Decisions **\$12.95**

Based on the Law of Total Tricks

### Opening Two Bids **\$8.95**

Weak twos, Multi twos & strong 2♣

## ACBL internet Survey

Last year the ACBL invited members to do an online survey. Yes it's America again but there are big similarities with Australia.

There were 7000 responses. 46% had been playing for 31+ years. A big number, remembering that this was an internet survey, so you'd expect more young people to respond. In fact, 75% were 55 or over. The same number had tertiary education, perhaps a reflection of internet users, rather than bridge players.

Anyway, about a quarter said they learned from bridge teachers, most learned from friends and family.

Why do they play? A lot (60%) said *earning masterpoints* was at least "somewhat important", a surprisingly high figure. Same number for *meeting new people*. Biggest support in the "extremely important" column was for *keeping my mind active*. Hmmm.

56% had played bridge online.

## ACBL Teachers' Manual

*I've included this to suggest how the ABF and ACBL might become more involved in teaching.*

New Year's Teacher Manual Special - During the month of January, the ACBL is offering the ACBL Bridge Series Teacher Manuals for only \$5 each. To view our ad in The Bridge Bulletin, please click here.

## This looks good too

[Http://web2.acbl.org/education/TAPTipsBooklet.PDF](http://web2.acbl.org/education/TAPTipsBooklet.PDF)

*101 tips for bridge teachers, 40 pages.*

*Here's an extract:*

## STATIONARY DUPLICATE

Type 1 - Jerry Helms, one of our TAP Teacher Trainers from Charlotte NC, has devised one type of stationary duplicate game. He reuses selected boards kept intact from one of the regular duplicate games he runs locally. The matchpointed traveller remains with each board.

A group of four students can play these hands and experience a type of duplicate bridge. They can see what other players have done on a hand and they can see the number of matchpoints awarded for a particular score. The students enter their result on the traveller and see whether the result is above or below average. When Jerry has several tables, he re-matchpoints the students' scores in with the results from the regular game. This gives them a total score which can be compared with the results of the players from the original game.

The number of boards played can vary with the experience level of the players. They should, however, be encouraged to move toward playing a hand every 10 minutes before they can be comfortable in a Novice game.

Type II - A second way of playing stationary duplicate is to attach a table of students to a regular duplicate game in progress at the local club. The students relay a board or two each round with one of the tables in the regular duplicate game. (Choose a N/S pair with the temperament to enjoy relaying with beginners.)

The names of the students will not show up on the recap sheet. They can start a

## Mailbag



## Travelling Teachers

We are developing a list of teachers who are interested in touring. This was advertised in the July 03 ABF Newsletter. If you are interested, send me an email. I'm nhughes@bigpond.net.au. (the edress published in the ABF Newsletter was wrong). We've had a few responses:

Hi Nick, I am interested in teaching tours. I have also been wondering if teachers at clubs in outlying areas would be interested in hiring lesson materials on particular improver-plus topics, quizz/lesson sheets, detailed notes, suggestions on how best to conduct the lesson, together with pre-dealt boards if they do not have a dealing machine or sufficient boards to deal from hand strips. I have a considerable store of lesson material and am not sure how to disseminate it to best advantage for students, and of course myself. A book of 'Lessons from the NSWBA' is another possibility.

*Tina Zines*

I've just seen in the latest ABF Newsletter details about registering as a touring teacher. I have done quite a bit of this in country WA over the last 15 years and am interested in my name being included. I have fully prepared lessons with notes & set hands and am a member of ABTA.

I wouldn't mind knowing what the going rate seems to be for this. I know I have my ideas about what's fair but others may not agree!

*Peter Smith*

## 4s or 5s?

Re: Lorraine Harkness on Fives or Fours

I, too, have been teaching four card suits up the line for the past 14 years, using Paul Marston's *Introduction to Bridge*. Initially, there were some derogatory comments by the experienced players. Through newsletters and gentle reminders, older players were encouraged to make the beginners feel welcome and less intimidated by refraining from comments about system (which beginners do not understand) and to play the four card system if they happened to be partnering a beginner in an Individual, as they were the experienced players and could more easily adjust. (Judicial Flattery). Consequently many of our more experienced players have switched to Four Card Majors, and now more than 75% of both Ovens and Murray Club and Benalla Club play Four Cards up the line. Isn't it nice to know that a club bid is a REAL suit?

If we all insisted on teaching what the majority play, we would all still be playing Goren, or worse yet, Culbertson.

*Maggie Brown*

I really enjoyed the July magazine. It's so good for teachers. I've just returned from the US and Canada, and stayed

with Audrey Grant, doing workshops and a new teachers accreditation programme with her. All very interesting. Cheers,

*Joan Butts*

### From the AmBTA

*The American Bridge Teachers' Association has an internet forum. Here is a recent letter*

(Leslie) has asked four different questions ....

1. What makes you a professional?

2. What services or goods do you provide for your students that they find of value?

3. What do the rest of you do to make yourself perceived as a professional, educator, facilitator, etc.?

4. What activities do you do in your class that you know your students love to do?

My answers.....

1. I decided I wasn't sure what professional meant, so I tried google. I scanned down the list and decided I liked this one the best...

"(person) has a service orientation, making expertise available to others, has a distinctive body of knowledge and competencies, coupled with appropriate attitudes and values, has autonomy in performance of work, within agreed boundaries and regulatory framework, and enjoys public recognition of the authority by virtue of operating under code of ethics."

Am I a professional? I don't know....I guess I try to be.

2. My students definitely value well-prepared lessons and attractive handouts. They also appreciate a nurturing environment where no one is criticized.

3. Here we're on stickier ground.....some of the activities that some of you have mentioned like mailings, emails, newsletters, seem to me to suggest more of a salesman image than an educator.

4. My students love to ask questions and they love to use cards-on-the-table methods for learning. I try to encompass both of these things. I also use visuals (posters) on the walls for emphasising the key points, students have different ways of learning, some are more visually oriented than auditory.

A couple more thoughts....

I think our students deserve the best we can give them, they are so brave. Bridge is a hard enough game to learn, we need to make it as pain free as possible. I also believe that most students' learning takes place outside of the classroom. We can introduce them to the bidding guidelines or a new idea (convention) or a play technique or a defence signal, but until they have tried it out and made it their own they haven't 'learned' it. No matter how good we are as teachers, if we think otherwise we are deluding ourselves. So, we need to be sure that the material we give them to learn from is excellent, and that it is readily available to them after the lesson. This can be a top quality (print-wise and content-wise) text book or top quality

## PAUL LAVINGS POSTFREE BRIDGE BOOKS SOFTWARE UPDATE



### JACK Version 2.0

(CD, IBM, \$116.50)

Jack was the World Computer Champion of both 2001 and 2002.

You may just play random hands, or deals from events like the Cavendish or World C'ships. More deals from top events can be downloaded from the net. Has a wide range of conventions, and defends using odds and evens, low or high encourage, underlead, overlead. Jack will tell you the "par contract" on any deal and can be asked to play and defend double dummy, even on hands you enter yourself.

Sophisticated and plays and bids well!

### Audrey Grant Bridgemaster

(CD IBM, \$89.95,  
extra deals \$34.95)

It takes 3 to 4 years to learn to play the dummy at even a passable level. The alternative is Audrey Grant's Bridgemaster, which takes 3 to 4 weeks for the same result, or for the very enthusiastic, 3 to 4 days.

Audrey Grant, North America's foremost bridge teacher has designed 117 declarer play deals specifically for novices, plus there are 30 more advanced deals. The interface and status bar, and options are all first class, the best around.

PO Box 807 Double Bay NSW 1360  
Tel. (02) 9388-8861  
pl@postfree.cc  
Website: www.postfree.cc

### Eddie Kantar Teaches Advanced Bridge Defence / Modern Bridge Defence

(2 separate CDs, \$99.50 each)

Based on best-seller AmBTA 1999 books of the year. Everything there is to know on defence. Practice hands, tests, and asks you questions.

### Play & Defend with Eddie Kantar

(CD – IBM, \$69.95)

100 problems. Firstly presented as a declarer play problem, then the same 50 deals presented as a defensive problem.

### EBA PLAYING CARDS

Best on the market, 100% plastic, matt-finish, long lasting playing cards for clubs. Only \$4.40 per pack POSTFREE.

Plastic long life boards - \$2.75 each

Large Bidding Blocks - 500 sheets, printed both sides.

### ALL MAIL ORDER IS POSTFREE

Save up to \$8.50 postage on a single item with postfree. What you see is what you pay. 15% discount to bridge club libraries & ABTA members.

The ACBL also have a *Resource Manual for accredited Teachers*, and

The *BridgeTeacher*, a magazine which competes with the AmBTA Quarterly and is available online. Here's the editorial from the last issue. It's about schools again. Sorry about that but that seems to be the main focus of teaching in America at the moment.

More and more teachers are discovering the joy of teaching bridge to a classroom full of enthusiastic youngsters. During the Long Beach NABC, we heard some exciting stories from teachers who are developing school programs in their hometowns.

If your unit wants to see younger faces at the card table, and if you want to help secure the future of bridge, consider a school class. The ACBL and the ACBL Educational Foundation offer a funded program that just might be right for you. You can get details online at our school site

The school promo packet (available from the Education Department — Education@acbl.org) will give you a lot of information on how to start a school program.

Here are a few news tips we picked up from the teachers attending the Long Beach seminar:

### Getting Classes into a School:

July (January in Australia) is the best time to visit school principals (before school starts) with an offer to bring bridge to the schools. If you go to the school to make an appointment with the principal, you might get in right away.

Tell the school official you want to set up a bridge club — that goes over better

than saying you want to teach. Here's how Terri Atkinson, a retired school principal from Bakersfield CA, got her class started. She met with the principal who did come out to talk to Terri while she was at the school trying to make an appointment). She started by presenting her ACBL teacher business card and said:

"I've been in your business and I know you're always looking for something to give to the kids and I'm here to give you an after-school club where they can learn to play bridge. Bridge is better than chess because it is a social game where the kids learn to work with a partner. My club is fully funded and available."

Using the "Final Contract Card" with the lessons was enough to justify teaching bridge in a math class in Spokane WA.

Be open as to when the classes can be offered. Different areas offer different options. For example:

- As part of the math or enrichment program,
- Before school starts
- After school (the school may run a late bus for students who stay for activities),
- On "Club Day" (this is standard in Canadian schools),
- On a "Game Afternoon" (Spokane WA offers this),
- On "learn through do" math/science nights (Alyse Galvin found this venue in the Anchorage AK schools and got the unit teachers to work with her).

computer-printed handout notes and hands. With all the computer programs out there these days there is no excuse for not offering these. (I'll put in a plug here for the Dealmaster program by Ed Marzo. It will store and print your hands and notes just wonderfully.) Students also need a nurturing environment in which to do this learning of their own, and as teachers we should endeavour to provide this or find a club/group that does. So here is my addition to the lists the rest of you have already sent in:

1. Top quality materials to learn from
2. A nurturing, stress free environment in which to experiment and play.

*Maggie Sparrow  
Barrie, ON, Canada*

### A simplified 2♣ Opening

*By Nick Hughes*

A good time to introduce the strong 2♣ opening is in supervised play after a beginner course.

I like to at least mention a conventional bid so we can have a short chat on alerts, something they'll soon come across.

A problem with the 2♣ opening is that half Australia's duplicate players use Benjamin Two but that's just another adjustment beginners might have to make.

I say that a 1-opening shows 12-20 pts. With 21+, you are too strong to open at the 1-level because partner will pass with 5 and you'll miss game.

Instead open 2♣ on all hands with 21+, which says you have some great hand.

Both of you have to keep bidding until game is reached. No mention of 2♦ negative, nor of the auction stopping short of game.

Yes, someone will observe that you might end up in game with 21 opposite 0. These things happen but most of the time partner will have some bits and pieces.

It's good to introduce the concept of game forcing, which they will need to understand much later on when they come to jump shifts, reverses, belated support. Emphasise that both partners can take it easy after a 2♣ opening. For instance:

♠ A Q J 10 4	♠ 6
♥ A K Q 6 5	♥ J 8 4 3
♦ K 6	♦ 10 8 3 2
♣ 6	♣ 9 7 3

2♣	2♦
2♠	2NT
3♥	4♥

They might bid it differently. Good to talk about length points (West has 19 + 2), higher of 5-card suits, that East would pass a 1♠ opening. Note that East's 2♦ showed four diamonds. Don't complicate things.

It's also a fun hand to play with the ruffing finesse. Trumps break so nobody will go down.

Say that these 21+ hands are rare so you don't need four bids to show them, meaning that 2♦/♥/♠ openings can be used to show something else.

Which leads to "See you next week."

## What is Easybridge?

*This is from the Easybridge website in America. European Minibrige is a close cousin.*

Well, where to start. Easybridge! is both a marketing tool and a way to introduce people to *Duplicate* bridge. It taps into a market the ACBL never approached before...people who didn't know they wanted to learn to play bridge. They are lured in by the promotion of four free lessons and free refreshments. "Hey, Harold. Look at this. Free classes, free food. We're not doing anything Thursday night. Let's see what it's all about."

So they come in droves. (The stories we can tell. Once I had to borrow tables and chairs from the restaurant across the street because we ran out! Another presenter rented half a bowling alley and had such an incredible turnout that he had to spread into the empty but DARK half! One club in Florida had such a huge turnout they had to have someone stand in the parking lot with a sign that said, "Full! Come back tomorrow at 7 p.m.")

Easybridge!1 is 15 weeks long, the first four of which are free. During those initial weeks, you make sure they have a rip roaring great time, you bond them into a cohesive group, you feed till they burp, and, incidentally, teach them to play duplicate before they ever know what hit them. Week two, travellers go with the boards (no scores, just bids and results--2D bid, 3 made) and you hook them on seeing what the other guys did.

Easybridge! 2 and 3 are 10 weeks each.

Having 3 courses gives you a chance to recharge the game periodically.

A typical EB! session consists of a BRIEF...no more than 20 min....lesson and two hours of play.

Here's what happens:

#1 You go to an accreditation to learn how to effectively do EB! We can accredit you by mail/email/phone also, so if there are no accreditations near you, no problem.

#2 With our help, you pick a start date. We then provide you with all the personalized marketing you need, print ads, flyers, news releases, postcards etc.

#3: We also provide you with day-to-day guidance and help. Your presenter's manual gives everything you need for preparation and presentation and follow up. PLUS we have an on-line Best Business Practices newsletter called "Party Line".

Traditional methods of teaching bridge often create people who know the game, but don't play at our clubs. Easybridge! gets them playing (some 2 and 3 times a week). They are happy and ignorant, and loving duplicate.

**EASYBRIDGE! GROWS GAMES**

*Ron Klinger's Whist to Bridge is a similar concept. I believe that all these methods appeared because beginner courses were perceived as being too tough, long and complex.*

*The other solution is to continue to teach real bridge but cut down on length and content. Australian teachers have tended to do this, with good results. - NH*

## Schools in America

*The ACBL has invested a lot of money and effort in a program for teaching bridge in schools.*

*Money? For instance they subsidise the wage of accredited teachers who give a course to school children. Currently it's US\$350 for giving a 12 week course.*

*There is a manual for bridge at schools. Go to <http://www.acbl.org/schools/sbsmanual.doc>*

*Here is an excerpt:*

### Overview of Teaching Approach

This material is aimed at teaching Bridge to a target age group of children 11-13 but may be suitable for other age groups. There is an appendix of material for younger children.

Our basic approach is to start with the game of Whist to learn the mechanics of card play and trick-taking. Then we use the ACBL Club Series (Bidding) hands and lesson material with the games of MiniBridge and Bridgelt for the next part of the course, before we start bidding.

MiniBridge is Bridge without bidding. All players announce their points in turn. The side with the most points plays the hand. The partner with the least points puts dummy down and their partner, declarer, chooses a contract while looking at the dummy. The scoring is as non-vulnerable at duplicate Bridge.

Bridgelt is Bridge with bidding for the contract based on knowledge of partner's distribution and high-card points as written on a form in front of each player.

No "Standard American" bidding or use

of the textbook takes place until Lesson 8, and by then the concepts of contracts and scoring are well understood.



Each lesson is structured to last for an hour and 15 minutes. Middle school after school activities are usually 1½ to 2 hours with a break for a snack. It is easy to stretch them out to last 10 or 15 minutes longer or cut them to an hour by eliminating the in-class use of the worksheet (just play four hands). The same format should be used each week. Students like a familiar structure. The format is:

A very short interactive talk at the beginning (five minutes maximum).

Later lessons may include some exercises in the workbook (not needed until Lesson 8) or special worksheets. The worksheets are included in this manual and may be done as optional homework.

Play the four lesson hands.

By Lesson 3 the exercises use the hands from the special E-Z Deal Club Series cards. Since these hands are shown in the Club Series Book and Teacher's Manual, they are not repeated in full here, although they are analysed for these classes. There are sample talks in this guide with each new term bolded.