



www.gbu.co.za

THE BRIDGE BULLETIN

Volume 6, number 1
January 2021
Publisher: Gauteng Bridge Union
Editor: Stephen Rosenberg
stephen@valuersinc.co.za

FROM THE CHAIR

With Covid 19 still very much in evidence, and definitely going to be the most remembered topic of conversation in 2020, there is of course no news from clubs as these remained closed throughout the year for obvious reasons. I hope all our members have kept well and active at this time. We are luckier than some hobbies that bridge has BBO and similar online platforms to keep us going. The numbers of members playing online has increased and please remember that much pleasure can be derived from just playing online socially although competitions are fun, and as numbers are increasing, I can see people agree with me! If you don't know how to get started you can contact me to help you. I play with my cell-phone and many others play on an I-Pad or similar tablet, so you don't absolutely have to own a computer to play! Just download the BBO program, which is free, on to your 'phone or tablet, and start playing! Once you have BBO in your life, there are many options to enjoy besides playing. Many members enjoy playing with the robots and I have recently discovered a bidding programme and another which helps with playing out. While fiddling around one day with the many options I discovered an article by Paul Marston, a bridge expert, about self-kibitzing which is a method of cheating. A member has 2 profiles and 2 devices to play with and logs in on both at the same time. Now he has the chance to see all four hands. What pleasure can there be in cheating? And of course while playing with a laptop or tablet and having a cell-phone at hand to communicate with partner, another possible avenue to cheat exists. However one's integrity is at stake here and what enjoyment can be gained from winning an event when one has cheated. It reminded me of the story of the boy who won the cross-country event by shortening his route, but he derived no ultimate pleasure from this as he was found out. Interesting stuff to contemplate.

I would like to thank Stephen Rosenberg for keeping the GBU Newsletter alive and well at this difficult time with all the interesting articles he researches to fill up the pages!

Yours in bridge, *Deirdre Ingersent*

FROM THE EDITOR

OK, so 2020 is finally a thing of the past, although COVID-19 in new, mutated forms is still with us. As far as bridge is concerned, we have been living in a virtual world and continue to rely on BBO and other online platforms to allow us to satisfy our craving for a bridge game. Oh, and thanks to John Bryant and Mark Kenyon for their well-run, Cape Town-based afternoon Teams' events.

It's quite a lot of fun for me, researching and editing our GBU Bulletins; although I would be nowhere without my regular contributors, of whom you will find four in this issue – Deirdre Ingersent, Sid Ismail, Jeff Sapire and Sarita Mathur. I must emphasize the debt that I the editor, and you the readers, owe to Jeff for his outstanding insights, and to published author Sarita for sharing her latest inspirational poetry with us.

Who knows what 2021 has in store for us. I'm scared to say that it can't be much worse!

Stephen Rosenberg

When we all wished each other Happy New Year just over twelve months' ago, who would have believed that 2020 would turn into

THE YEAR THAT WASN'T!

Reflections as 2020 finally draws to a close ... contributed by Sid Ismail

1. The most useless thing I ever bought was a 2020 planner.
2. 2019: Stay away from negative people. 2020: Stay away from positive people.
3. The world has turned upside down. Old people are sneaking out of the house and their kids are yelling at them to stay at home!
4. This morning I saw a neighbour talking to her cat. It was obvious she thought her cat understood her. I came to my house and told my dog. We had a good laugh.
5. Every few days try your jeans on just to make sure they fit.
6. Does anyone know if we can take showers yet or should we just keep washing our hands?
7. I never thought the comment, "I wouldn't touch him/her with a 6-foot barge-pole" would become a global policy, but here we are!
8. I hope the weather is good tomorrow for my trip to the back garden. I'm getting tired of the living room.
9. Never in a million years could I have imagined I would go to a bank with a mask on and ask for money!



Sid Ismail

DESTINY AND FREE CHOICE

by Sarita Mathur



The Astrologer

I believe in astrology, that's destiny for you,
Your present and the future too.
However, Free Choice is a must.
It's your will,
To try and rise against the odds, never a victim be.
Destiny might throw boulders at you,
However you can victorious be.
That too is your choice, and it defines your destiny.
As it weaves your present into a future bright
That is if your choice is right, like the inverted 'V'.

It is pointed upwards, so life's gales and storms
May be the norm, you can rise above them all,
Your attitude is the key.
Yes, the choices you make affect your destiny.
Leading to a future bright,
Everything turning out alright,
Happiness and peace in sight.
That defines both Free Choice and Destiny.



Sarita Mathur

Sarita Mathur is a Durban-based bridge player and established author, having already had books of her poetry published. She writes in the well-established free verse format that dates back to the early Greek poets. The critique on Amazon of her most recent book "Once Again Love – Reconnecting with the Heart" includes the following: "*author Sarita Mathur introduces readers to the joy of a life filled with love through a whimsical mixture of poetry and prose. At times heart-breaking.....*"

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

"THE PRE-EMPT"

researched and contributed by **Deirdre Ingersent** after two 'phone requests from players about Pre-Emptive Bids.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines a pre-empt as doing or saying something before someone else does, especially to prevent them doing or saying what they had planned or to prevent their action being effective.

In contract bridge, it is a bid whose primary objectives are to thwart opponents' ability to bid to their best contract, with some safety, and to fully describe one's hand to one's partner in a single bid. A pre-emptive bid is an opening bid at the level of three, or four, or even five in the case of a minor suit. Similarly, a double jump overcall when one of your opponents has opened the bidding is also pre-emptive, e.g. West opens One Diamond and North overcalls Three Spades.



These bids are purely destructive. When you are dealt a long suit with little in the way of high cards, it is likely that your opponents have correspondingly more high cards and may make either a game or a slam. If you have the

opportunity of making a pre-emptive bid you may silence them completely or, by preventing them from bidding with normal bidding space and accuracy, drive them into the wrong contract.

Pre-emptive bids should be used with a certain amount of discretion. Obviously you do not want to give an 1100 or 1400 penalty just to prevent the opponents scoring 600 in 3NT. It is generally agreed by experts that one should be prepared to give a maximum penalty of 500 if doubled, which means that we should have six tricks for a non-vulnerable three bid and seven tricks when vulnerable. A further point to think about is that a hand which contains six or seven tricks, and a long suit is not automatically opened with a three bid. If the hand contains normal defensive strength it is opened one. A pre-emptive bid explicitly denies the values for a normal opening bid of one.

Two more points for the pre-emptive bidder. Do not pre-empt with two aces and if you open with a pre-emptive bid and your partner bids another suit below the game level it is a forcing bid, and you may not pass it.

Now to the pre-emptive bidder's partner. It is always tempting to bid 3NT when you have all suits guarded and at least an opening hand or better, but only one card in their suit. They may not have the top cards and no outside entry, so it does not work. You need a fit in partner's suit and preferably three cards in it. Perhaps after a Three Spade opening bid with one small spade but values in the other suits, 4♠ is the best option.

Which also seems like a good time to wish all our bridge players, their families and friends a Happy New Year for 2021 in the hope that it will be a much better year than the year that wasn't!



Deirdre Ingersent



Yours in bridge, *Deirdre Ingersent*

Patrick Hansen has written to remind us that playing on BBO should mirror real life as far as is possible! So please alert all unusual bids , but NOT in the Chat box as this informs everyone at the table, including your partner who may have forgotten what the bid means. Please use the Alert and Explain box, as this only informs your opponents and not your partner. If you are not sure how to do this, ask a friend!



THE BRIDGE LOUNGE

by Jeff Sapire

This hand has a bit of everything; the bidding, the opening lead and subsequent defence, and declarer's line of play. In a Matchpoint event, quite a few pairs overbid to a no-play 6♥, whilst others went off in game.

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Dir. S Vul. Both | ♠ QT7 ♥ J72 ♦ 8653 ♣ AQJ | |
| ♠ 9852 ♥ A3 ♦ KT74 ♣ KT4 | | ♠ KJ4 ♥ T9 ♦ 92 ♣ 987532 |
| | ♠ A63 ♥ KQ8654 ♦ AQJ ♣ 6 | |

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| | | | 1♥ |
| P | 2♦ | P | 3♥ |
| P | 4♥ | P | |

The bidding looks normal to me - with a combined 26 points I can't see why some people were in slam. North has a slight problem to start – the hand is just a touch too good for 1NT (5-9), and 2♦ on four small isn't great either, though I think it's the lesser of evils. At some tables the South players liked the double fit in the red suits so much that they continued with Blackwood and finished up in 6♥. The South hand is good, but not that good, and should stop if all partner can

do is raise to 4♥.

Where the ♠9 was led that was the end of the defence. It went ten, jack, ace and after trumps were drawn the declarer simply played another spade towards dummy, inserting the seven, forcing out the king. Two spades, five trumps, two diamonds and a club made up the ten tricks.

I think the ♠9 is a fair shot, which just didn't work here.

Where a diamond was led, declarer had to work harder. Let's say you win the opening lead with the jack and play a trump. West wins the second heart and now plays a low spade (better than the nine now that he can see the seven in dummy). It would be reasonable to try either the ten or the queen, which gets covered, and you take the ace. You could try the diamond finesse again, but it's sure to lose, because East would surely have played the king at trick one. Correct play now is to finesse the club. Even if it loses, you can get to dummy with a trump to pitch the ♦Q and a losing spade. All you will lose is one spade, the ♥A and the ♣K.

About the Author.

Jeff Sapire, a top-class bridge-player in his own right, has represented South Africa. He teaches all levels – beginner, intermediate and advanced. To find out more about his well-structured and informative lessons, contact him on jeffshirl@telkomsa.net, or 'phone him on 082 551 2526.



Jeff Sapire

THE ONLY CHANCE

by Thomas Andrews

(Thomas Andrews is a good American club player and an informed and enthusiastic writer on our game; he writes mainly for Beginner to Intermediate players. Ed)

Look at this hand and the bidding where I am sitting South:

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Dir. N Vul. NS | ♠ AQJ5 ♥ 964 ♦ AJ64 ♣ 74 | |
| ♠ ♥ ♦ ♣ | | ♠ ♥ ♦ ♣ |
| | ♠ K74 ♥ JT853 ♦ 72 ♣ AK8 | |

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| | 1♦ | P | 1♥ |
| P | 2♥ | P | 4♥ |
| P | P | P | |

I do not agree with my partner's 2♥ call - he should probably only raise on a bad three-card fit when there is no other decent bid, and certainly 1♠ is crying out as another option. My 4♥ call was probably as questionable. My LHO made the least comfortable lead - the ♦T.

So, it looks like I've got a diamond loser and three heart losers - was there any way around that?

If the opponents never led diamonds, I'd have been able to eventually pitch my diamond loser on a spade (of course, if they drew trumps, I'd be stuck with a club loser...) But I did find one line which gave me a shot. If spades split 3-3 and either player has three hearts to a single honour, I can make by running spades. On the fourth spade, the situation might look like:

| | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Dir. N Vul. NS | ♠ J ♥ 964 ♦ J64 ♣ 74 | |
| ♠ --- ♥ AQ ♦ 53 ♣ QJ62 | | ♠ --- ♥ K97 ♦ K8 ♣ T953 |
| | ♠ --- ♥ JT853 ♦ 7 ♣ AK8 | |

Whatever East does, I pitch the diamond. If East ruffs, they get at most three trump tricks, and if West ruffs with a high trump, again they only get three trump tricks.

As it was, my line not only failed, but cost me a trick when West ruffed the third round of spades. My partner, who had left the virtual table to do some household chore, came back and asked, "how did you go down two?"

Dan Piro notices you can play a little deception on East if he holds two spades and any three hearts by varying the order in which you play your spades. Start with a low spade to the queen, then play the ace and a low spade back to your (now bare) king. If East started with two spades he might play you for starting with two small spades and decide not to ruff. Then you ruff a club in dummy and lead a spade to pitch

your diamond.



ACCORDING TO GOREN

by Paul Marston, born in New Zealand in 1949, an Australian bridge-player and published writer on the game. Charles Goren (1901-1991) is probably the best-known bridge-name of all time. Born in Philadelphia to immigrant Russian-Jewish parents, he learned bridge while studying law at McGill University and won his first major bridge event at the age of 32. He went on to become a household name in the USA with about 10 million book sales along with TV and radio shows. He made the cover of Time Magazine in September 1958 and his daily newspaper column is still going, syndicated in 174 newspapers, mainly in the USA, under the name of Goren Bridge. These days the author is my good friend Bob Jones of Florida.

Goren's number one bridge partner was Helen Sobel (1910-1969). She learned her bridge from a fellow dancer while on the chorus line of Broadway shows such as *Animal Crackers*. (It is no co-incidence that Harpo and Chico Marx were mad-keen bridge players.) She went on to become, arguably, the best female bridge player of all time. It was clear that she was the sassy member of the partnership with Goren, yet, annoying as it must have been, it was Goren that the journalists held in awe. "According to Goren" would win any bridge argument!

The key to the success of Goren's books was the introduction of high-card points – 4 for an Ace and so on, an idea he borrowed from Milton Work. It appealed to the average bridge-player because it was simpler than the Culbertson honour-trick system. Later he took this further when he adopted the idea put forward by a Toronto actuary to include points for short suits. His books became the basis of the Standard American bidding system.

All his thinking is just as important now as then, but it is not the full story. We must also judge how well our points are working, especially in suit contracts. A key thought is that "strength opposite shortage is wasted!". The deal below illustrates this point; the bidding features the Jacoby 2NT response, which shows a game-forcing hand of partner's major, and opener's rebid shows a shortage.

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Dir. S Vul. NS | ♠ QT75 ♥ AKQ ♦ AT2 ♣ 954 | |
| ♠ 62 ♥ JT83 ♦ 742 ♣ KJ73 | | ♠ J4 ♥ 97652 ♦ J53 ♣ AT8 |
| | ♠ AK983 ♥ 4 ♦ KQ98 ♣ Q62 | |

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|------|-------|-------|-------|
| | | | 1♠ |
| P | 2NT | P | 3♥ |
| P | 4♠ | All P | |

The knowledge of the ♥ shortage alerts North to sign-off in game. West leads a club, and despite having a combined 29 HCP, ten tricks are the limit.

It is a different story on the next deal. Here North has no wasted honours opposite South's shortage, and an easy slam is reached despite holding just 23 HCP combined.

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Dir. S Vul. Both | ♠ KQ2 ♥ K7532 ♦ 983 ♣ K3 | |
| ♠ J85 ♥ QJ ♦ KJ74 ♣ QT82 | | ♠ T976 ♥ — ♦ AQT65 ♣ J654 |
| | ♠ A43 ♥ AT9864 ♦ 2 ♣ A97 | |

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|------|-------|-------|-------|
| | | | 1♥ |
| P | 2NT | P | 3♦ |
| P | 4NT | P | 5♦ |
| P | 6♥ | All P | |

The knowledge of the diamond shortage is just what North wants to hear. 4NT is KeyCard Blackwood; 5♦ shows three KeyCards. North can see 12 tricks; a missing ♥Q should fall under the AK. Discount any



Paul Marston

honour's in partner's short suit apart from the Ace., which you should count as just 2 HCPs. Then head towards slam when the partnership has 26 (new) points. I call this the Golden Rule of Duplication!

The San Diego Union-Tribune

January 20th, 2014



Rhoda Walsh

If there's one thing Rhoda Walsh loves, it's a challenge. As a little girl, she'd flip over her jigsaw puzzles to assemble them grey side up. She went to law school in the mid-1950s just for fun. And at 80, she ranks among the world's top women bridge players. Age has only sharpened the retired lawyer's prowess at the card table. She plays, teaches, studies or lectures on bridge virtually every day and travels every other month to tournaments around the country. "I'm at the top of my game today," she said, in an interview this week at her La Costa Glen apartment. "Bridge is a big part of my life."

Walsh played for the U.S. team in six world championships, is a Grand Master in the World Bridge Federation and a Grand Life Master in the

American Contract Bridge League. Over the years, she has amassed more than 19,200 masterpoints, a feat achieved by only 14 women nationwide. (For perspective, the ACBL said it can take a lifetime for a serious bridge player to earn 300 masterpoints.)

"Rhoda is one of the five or 10 best women players ever in the world," said Corinne Bond, a fellow La Costan who has played (and won) tournaments with Walsh off and on for the past 40 years. "She's truly a great player who was born to play the game."

Walsh said she was a dud at backgammon, and she could never remember which way the knight moves in chess, but when she discovered the game of bridge nearly 60 years ago, it was the perfect match for both her personality and her intellect.

Bond said Walsh's strategic, courteous, and unflappable playing style have made her a popular partner and teacher. "She's very steady and never gets rattled," Bond said. "She's gracious to other players not in her category and takes time to kindly explain things to them. She has infinite patience, which I think is one of her best qualities."

Walsh's family moved from New Jersey to L.A. in the mid-1940s with Hollywood dreams. Beginning at age 11, she landed a few bit roles in theatre and film, but stardom eluded her. At UCLA, she majored in theatre and English and was a year away from graduating with her teaching credential when a friend suggested law school.

"I didn't have the ambition to be a lawyer, I just thought it would be fun to go to law school," she said, of her time at L.A.'s Loyola Law School, where she was one of just six women students.

But finding a job in the 1950s as a lady lawyer was nearly impossible. Even a woman criminal defense attorney turned Walsh down, saying she wasn't tough enough. Eventually, she was hired at an all-male corporate law firm that paid her \$50 a week less than the receptionist. It was while she was working there as a young attorney in 1955 that she discovered bridge.

Her first husband was a bridge player, so to surprise him, Walsh began secretly studying the game with how-to books. The first time they played together as partners, on their honeymoon, she was so bad at the game it was "mind-boggling." But by their third match, they won a tournament. After a year, he refused to play with her, and she was asked before him to join the U.S. bridge team. They divorced after six years. A second marriage, to bridge player Richard Walsh, lasted just four years. She's been happily single ever since.

"Married couples shouldn't play bridge together," Walsh said. "Men are competitive and there's ego to deal with. It's hard on a marriage."

She and her second husband expanded on his invention of the Walsh System, a game-forcing system now known as "2-over-1" that's become an industry standard. By the 1960s, Walsh found she was making more money on the weekends as a paid bridge partner to aspiring pros than she was as an attorney, so she quit her job and spent 20 years touring the world as a professional. In 1968, she won all three U.S. national women's events and placed third on the women's world team. And in 1980, she was booked all 52 weeks at tournaments.

In the late 1980s, she left the pro circuit and started a personal injury law practice in West L.A., serving mostly her fellow bridge players. She moved to La Costa Glen in March of last year and retired her law practice a few months ago.

"I've had a great life," she said. "Thanks to the world of bridge I have friends all over the world."

PAVLICEK'S PUZZLE

"SIX NO TRUMP ON ICE"



You are South and find yourself playing 6NT with the hand and the bidding shown below.

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| | 1♠ | P | 2♥ |
| P | 3♣ | P | 3♦ |
| P | 4♣ | P | 4NT |
| P | 5♥ | P | 6NT |
| P | P | P | |

| | |
|---|-------|
| ♠ | AKJ92 |
| ♥ | 52 |
| ♦ | Q |
| ♣ | AK862 |
| | |
| ♠ | T |
| ♥ | AKQ43 |
| ♦ | AK632 |
| ♣ | JT |

Your Left-Hand Opponent leads the ♥J and dummy comes down. Nice! How are going to go about your contract?

About the puzzler.

Richard Pavlicek (born 1945) is an American bridge player, teacher, and writer from Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, United States.

Pavlicek began to play bridge in 1964 at the age of 18 while stationed in Stuttgart, West Germany, with the US Army. Upon returning to Florida in 1966, he started to play in bridge tournaments in his spare time.^[2] Since then he has won over 400 events and accumulated more than 6,000 masterpoints. He is a Grand Life Master of the American Contract Bridge League (ACBL) and World International Master of the World Bridge Federation (WBF).



Richard Pavlicek

RICHARD'S RESPONSE

Win the opening lead and lead a diamond to dummy's queen. Next lead the 2♠! If this loses to the Queen, you have 12 tricks – 4 spades + 3 hearts + 3 diamonds + 2 clubs. If the T♠ wins, cross to dummy with a club and continue spades to drive out the Queen.

It would be an error to take the spade finesse at trick 2 – a heart return removes your only remaining entry; or even after unblocking diamonds and leading a second heart, you would have no further entry to your hand. No, you have to establish spades while all your other entries are still preserved. As we said at the start, "Six No Trump on Ice!"

Help us to keep bridge going in these well-nigh impossible times.

PAY YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO

It's only R 125 for the year, paid to GBU of which R 100 will go to the SABF and we keep a mere R 25

Please pay by EFT to GBU, Nedbank Account Number 1756013144

Reference is your surname and SABF number e.g. Rosenberg 6093



In the next four pages, we will be reprising articles from past GBU Bulletins, all written in more normal times. Hopefully, this melange of events, results, humour and hands will divert our attention away from COVID-19 and its even fiercer mutants, and back to what counts – bridge! This month’s first two pages of *Blast from the Past* are taken from the January 2017 edition, just four short years’ ago.

A DEEP FINESSE

by Peter Bircher



Peter Bircher

While we have a break from playing bridge I have analysed this hand from last Friday 16th December 2016, using *Deep Finesse*, and it makes for interesting reading.

Sitting West I opened 1♠. My partner Richard bid 1NT, forcing. I had a natural 2♥ rebid available and Richard pushed on to the heart game.

It was fortunate that we bid the game in hearts and not spades which has no chance on any lead except a heart.

North found the obvious opening lead, a club, but as it turns out, not the best!

South does her best by overtaking and firing back a trump:

| | | |
|-----------|---------|---------------|
| 16 | ♠ J42 | <i>Dlr: W</i> |
| | ♥ AJ9 | |
| ♦ 763 | ♣ KQJ4 | |
| ♠ AK1095 | ♠ Q86 | |
| ♥ KQ42 | ♥ 10876 | |
| ♦ J | ♦ AQ954 | |
| ♣ 983 | ♣ 10 | |
| 12 | ♠ 73 | |
| 13 | ♥ 53 | |
| 7 | ♦ K1082 | |
| | ♣ A7652 | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
| N | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| S | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| E | - | 1 | 3 | 3 | - |
| W | - | 1 | 3 | 3 | - |

plays the remaining trump from dummy, North winning with the jack. He can lead either a spade or a diamond, won with the ace. In either case declarer runs the spades letting north ruff in with the master trump. Any return is ruffed in hand and the West hand is high.

1. If North takes the king with the ace, she cannot afford to continue trumps so exits with a diamond. Declarer rises with the ace and ruffs a diamond and then ruffs a club. The top heart gives the entry to ruff the last club.

2. If North holds up the first trump, declarer can ruff a club and access his hand with a spade to ruff the last club. Declarer

As can be seen a club opening lead fails to stop the contract. However, the box says 4♥ should go down. What opening lead will beat it?

As North can’t afford to lead hearts without surrendering a natural trump trick, what lead will set the contract? As it turns out either a diamond or a spade leads to defeat.

On the diamond lead, declarer rises with the ace and leads a trump to one of the honours. North must be careful not to take this trick. Declarer switches to a club, South wins and fires a trump through allowing North to draw two more rounds of trumps stranding declarer with second club loser.

If declarer rather plays a club at trick 2, South must play low allowing North to win and continue diamonds, forcing West to ruff. Declarer can ruff a club and, gaining access to hand via a spade, can ruff another club. Now the trick is how to get back to hand for the second club ruff? The problem is the spades become tangled. If declarer tries the ♠Q and another, South ruffs with a small trump, setting the contract. If declarer ruffs another diamond he loses control.

On a spade opening lead, a similar result is achieved. Again, North must resist taking the ♥K with the Ace on the first round of trumps thereby maintaining trump control. When declarer tries to clear clubs, the defence continues spades eventually giving South a spade ruff for one off.

Does this mean that you shouldn’t lead the king from KQJ? No, as it is more often than not a good opening lead. Just on this deal it wasn’t. Funny game this Bridge!

(Peter and his lovely wife Marcelline have since made their home in Europe; we wish them all the best for 2021 and all the years to follow. Ed.)

BRIDGE STORIES FROM THE STORYTELLER

Some people say I have a screw loose, or that my elevator doesn't stop at every floor — but they're all liars. I'm as sane as the next guy. Ask anyone in my ward! They all want me as their leader when we break out of here. Meanwhile, gather round for my next story which is

A LITTLE OLD LADIES STORY

Three LoLs (Little Old Ladies) had been involved in a minor motor accident and were being seen by the admitting doctor at the casualty section of a local hospital.



LoL1 asked, very anxiously, "Will I still be able to play bridge?" The doctor, himself a bridge-player, posed the question: "How many high-card points in a pack of cards?" "Sixty" was the immediate reply. Rather concerned, our doctor turned to LoL2 and asked the same question. She snapped back with "Wednesday!" Totally disconcerted, the doctor now put the question to LoL3. "It's forty" she replied. Feeling happier now, the doctor asked, "How did you get that?". "Easy" was the answer. "I simply subtracted sixty from Wednesday!" And you know, she was quite right. (See below for the answer)

LoL3 subtracted 60 from Wednesday to get the answer 40. The numerical equivalents of the letters in Wednesday are 23+5+4+14+5+19+4+1+25 = 100. Take 60 from 100 and you have 40. So there! Not so hard was it?



INTERESTING HANDS

NUMBER 5 - "NO OVER-RUFF HERE!"

Ron Smith was pleased with his partner's defence on this deal from the first semi-final session of the 2002 Blue Ribbon Pairs. "Declarer tried to sucker my partner into over-ruffing," said Smith. "Partner (Reese Milner) didn't over-ruff and declarer couldn't make his contract."



| | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Dir. W Vul. NS | ♠ AQJ986 ♥ 652 ♦ Q7 ♣ --- | |
| ♠ K753 ♥ 93 ♦ JT984 ♣ KQ | | ♠ 4 ♥ AT84 ♦ K5 ♣ AJT863 |
| | ♠ T2 ♥ QJ ♦ A632 ♣ 97542 | |

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|------|-------|----------|-------|
| P | 1♠ | 2♣ | 2♠ |
| P | 3♣ | 3♥ | X |
| P | 4♠ | All Pass | |

Smith led the ♠A and declarer ruffed. Declarer played a heart and Smith won his ace. With no attractive alternative, he continued clubs. Declarer ruffed, played a heart to dummy's queen and ruffed another club. Now he led a heart and ruffed with dummy's ♠T. If Milner had over-ruffed, declarer could win any return, draw trumps and claim 10 tricks – losing a heart, a spade and a diamond. When Milner pitched, declarer could no longer make his contract. He lost

a heart, a diamond and two spades for down one. Is there a moral to this story? Perhaps it is that a winning play can sometimes be a losing one!

And now for two pages from January 2018!
First, eat your hearts out. This is what it was like in a normal year:

THE MAIN EVENTS

We know that it's very early in the year, but not too early for you to start diarising and preparing for these main events:



Graceland Casino Resort, Secunda

1. Graceland Casino Bridge Festival
GBU Red Point Pairs' Event with R 15 000 in Prizes
16 - 18 February 2018
(Two sessions on Saturday; one on Sunday Morning)

2. SAWBA National Congress
Interprovincial Teams, Pairs and Teams
The Bridge Centre, Greenpoint, Cape Town
1 - 9 March 2018

3. SABF National Congress
Teams and Pairs
The Links Bridge Club, Johannesburg East
27 April - 4 May

4. SABF INTER-CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS
Teams and Pairs
Durban (Venue TBA) **1 - 4 November**

And remember, there are still all the Unions' Mini Congresses to come, **Bridge@Orchards'** Rita Jacobson and Bertha Cohen Trophies, the Pierre du Toit Tournament, the NGBU's Jan Prins Pairs and many more.

THE BERTHA COHEN TROPHY

A strong entry competed for the Bertha Cohen trophy, played at the lovely Orchards Bridge Club in Johannesburg on a warm Sunday in December.

The top ten positions changed hands frequently, with the progressive scores and positions being shown on a big screen throughout the day. This motivated the players to take chances and go for broke, especially if they were meeting a pair just above them on the log. The final overall winners were Bernard Donde and Hennie Fick, pictured



here with the impressive Trophy.

Congratulations must also go to the ladies of the **Bridge@Orchards** team for their initiative in asking players to bring gifts that would be distributed to local less privileged children for Christmas, with the usual generous results.



Betty Debbie Lorna Lily

THIS ONE'S 50/50!

by Peter Bircher

For those of you who don't know Peter Bircher, he ran a very successful club on KZN's South Coast, is an established player and Tournament Director, and a whizz at scoring and the computer systems so vital in running a tournament. For this edition, he writes:

This hand had half the field making and half going down in an obvious game. North/South will get to 4♠ after South opens with a club, North responds 1♠ and East puts in a diamond overcall. (It is feasible that South might open a strong NT with 14 HCP's and a 6-card club suit, hoping to protect the majors from attack, often a good ploy)

The obvious lead is a diamond. It should fail if East reads declarer for a singleton diamond and switches to a club at trick two. If this happened to you there was not much you could have done about it. West takes the Q-A of clubs and gives partner a club ruff to set the contract there and then. However, if East persists with diamonds, a lifeline is thrown, and the contract is now makeable.

| | | |
|----------|------------|----------|
| 3 | ♠ AQJ10432 | Dir: S |
| | ♥ K10 | Vul: E-W |
| | ♦ 5 | |
| | ♣ 852 | |
| ♠ 85 | ♥ 97 | |
| ♥ 86532 | ♥ J974 | |
| ♦ 1086 | ♦ AKQ742 | |
| ♣ AQ10 | ♣ 6 | |
| 10 | ♠ K6 | |
| 6 10 | ♥ AQ | |
| 14 | ♦ J93 | |
| | ♣ KJ9743 | |

| | |
|--------|-------|
| ♠ 4 | |
| ♥ K10 | |
| ♦ 852 | |
| ♠ 865 | ♥ J97 |
| ♦ AQ10 | ♦ Q7 |
| | ♣ 6 |
| | ♥ AQ |
| | ♦ J |
| | ♣ KJ9 |

Declarer ruffs and runs the spades reaching the position on the left with one spade still to play.

On the last spade, east and dummy both throw diamonds.

How the play continues depends on what west discards; If West parts with a heart, declarer cashes the top hearts and throws west in with a club. Down to only clubs, declarer must be allowed to make a club for the 10th trick. However, if West discards a club, declarer plays a club and eventually makes a club at the end.

THE PIERRE DU TOIT TOURNAMENT

by Helen Kagan of Helen's Tuesday Bridge Club



Pierre du Toit



Helen Kagan

The inaugural tournament to honour Pierre du Toit for his commitment, vision and very hard work to take the Links Bridge Club for the past 17 years to where it is today – a vibrant and technologically advanced club, was launched on Sunday 19th November by Helen Kagan of Helen's Tuesday Bridge Club, in association with Peta Feinstein, Chair of the Links Bridge Club.

The event was handicapped to give players a fairer chance at winning the tournament and was very well supported by 52 pairs playing all day long. A scrumptious tea was served in the morning which delighted the players, and then in the afternoon, a delicious tea and candy buffet was presented as well.

The overall winners of this event were Noah Apteker and Hennie Fick. Craig Gower and Merle Bracher took second place. After the handicap was applied, first place went to Alice Rummel and Elaine Wulfsohn. Nathan Herscovitz and Myron Elias took second place. Congratulations to all of you!

Thank you to all the players who supported this day to honour Pierre, who was a very happy man indeed that such acknowledgement had been given to him. This will become a yearly event. The date for 2018 will be in the new diary.

Helen Kagan