



BALLINA BRIDGE CLUB

Newsletter March 2025

Message from the President

Lorraine Bryant

I was delighted to be asked to be in the Restricted Teams event at the Gold Coast Congress. I had a wonderful time with my team. The comradery was wonderful and although we didn't score amazing results, I would love to be a part of that team again. I hope that all the participants from our club had the positive and enjoyable experience that I had. A special result was the Novice Teams. Margaret and Rhonda who with their partners won the Novice Teams. In the final they played the Wan team who had twelve wins in a row and they soundly defeated them. Well done Margaret and Rhonda, we are so proud of you.

Our beginner lessons have started and have attracted a strong response. Thank you to all the members who put up posters, did letter box drops and encouraged friends and neighbours. Special thanks to Lyn, Judy, Clive, Rebecca, Bob, Sue and all the wonderful helpers from the Teaching Team who give up their time to teach people this amazing game.

The yellow bins on the side tables are for bidding slips, pens and pencils. Please do not use them

for your tissues and lunch scraps. The bidding slips are recyclable and should be placed in the recyclable bin at the end of each session. A reminder that we do not have kitchen staff to clean up and that we would like everyone to help. If you are on sit out or finish a round early, please pick up cups, wipe down benches or even wipe out a fridge etc. If unsure of how you can help, please ask. Chris Fitzgerald, our wonderful House Coordinator, is always looking for new helpers.

Please check your phone number in the new Programme Book and if incorrect, please let me know. We will publish a list of those incorrect phone numbers plus new members at the beginning of March. If you have a silent number which you do not want shared please tell us.

The trial of bidding boxes continues. Please send any feedback to Marjorie or to our Secretary, David Drake.

The Programme Book is now available for those who have paid 2025 fees. If you find a faulty page, please return it so it can be replaced – one copy per member only please.



UPCOMING EVENTS

**Country Teams Club Qualifier,
Saturday April 12**

Anzac Day: Friday April 25

2025 Congress: April 26 - 27

Thai By Night

Birthday winner for this month:

Chris Fitzgerald

The Harvey Norman Mixed Pairs attracted a very healthy 15 tables with 3 non competing tables. It is very encouraging to see the club returning to good numbers. From 1st March, sessions when there are 15+ tables will have two handicap awards given.

Next meeting of the Management Committee is 26th March. All feedback welcome.

If you have any contributions for the BBC newsletter, please contact Ange Bettess

0401 955 432 or email
angela.bettess@me.com



Clue 1. Small part actor assesses these when rebidding. (5,6)

Clue 2. Foreign currency embraces old Japanese capital and is intended to punish if not conventional. (8)

Answers to Bob Hart's cryptic Bridge clues on page 5.





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Marjorie Askew

Play Committee Report - February 2024

Hopefully you've picked up your 2025 Programme Book – with its bright sunny yellow cover! – and so you're planning your bridge year!

Events Gone:

Some good/great table numbers in February – so hopefully good signs for the year ahead?

'NEW' Saturday Novice Section: started Saturday February 15 at 1pm: It was great to see some new 'Saturday faces' with 8 pairs playing in the novice section. Thanks to Rebecca Rogers and Bob Hart for 'helping' with the movement and boards on the day. (Photos courtesy of Rebecca Rogers on next page.)

This novice section is for players with <20 masterpoints; it's listed on the online calendar, so please nominate online. If you're looking for a partner please contact Judy Forsyth; and if you're new to our online calendar, Judy's contact details will pop-up if you click on the event.

Harvey Norman Mixed Pairs: Wednesdays February 19 & 26: Great numbers for the first of our Harvey Norman events of the year. 30 pairs competed - Well Done to everyone who found a mixed partner.

Well Done to our winners: Paul Smith and Vicki Ivosevac, with Runners-Up: Clive Klugman and Judith Crafti. You can check the full 'rundown' online; go to: <https://ballina.bridgeaustralia.org/resultsbm.asp?id=595901&umbid=967>

Thanks to our event directors: Phil Hocking and Clive Klugman, who researched various options for a 2-week movement, posing challenges as our entry numbers kept climbing.

This event is our Club Qualifying event for the NSW State, and Country, Mixed Championships. Any pair who competed can proceed to the State Final in Sydney on May 17 & 18. If you're keen please let me know. For more information go to: <https://bridgensw.com.au/state-mixed-pairs/>

We also had a 'side' section on the day with 3 tables both weeks: Great! But again extra challenges for our directors.

Coming Up:

March is a quiet month for 'special' events - but a busy month for our Teaching Team and I hear great numbers. Meanwhile Play Committee is busy 'gearing-up' for our Congress.

Ballina Congress Swiss Pairs, April 26 & 27: As advised last month his has been set-up on MyABF. To enter go to: <https://myabf.com.au/events/congress/view/2289>.

Entries, mostly from visitors, are growing, so if you're planning to play please post your entry. You can pay by direct bank transfer or with bridge credits.

The format is much as last year: Swiss Pairs on the Saturday and Sunday + a 'warm-up' Pairs event on Anzac Day, Friday April 25 at 1pm, and:

- 2 lunches are included – provided for us by The Lions as part of our ongoing fundraising partnership with them
- There will be an optional dinner at the Ballina Golf Club on the Saturday.

See the poster/flyer on pages 7-8.

Country Teams Club Qualifier, Saturday April 12: A Teams Day at the Club so please think about joining in, especially if you enjoyed the Australia Day Teams. Nominate as a Team of 4, 5, or 6 players, or as a Pair looking for teammates. + Yes, it's another state qualifying event, and this time for the NSW State and Country Teams, which again means red masterpoints at state championship level. (See poster on page 9)

Teams finishing in the top half of the field will be eligible to continue to the next stage: either a Regional Final or direct to the Zonal Final.



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Play Committee Report - February 2024

Bidding Boxes

Am repeating myself from previous newsletters but please give these a go so we can receive **your** 'user' feedback, which will help us to decide how these may be used at our Club.



+ Yes it may take a little practice to work out what may work for you. As I described it last month, whether a 'forehand' or 'backhand' stroke or?; and then how to 'place/stack' the cards from your left to right. + Here's how your goal (ie 7NT) should look ie from your left to right with the cards facing partner!

As always if you have any feedback, or suggestions, on anything 'Play' at the Club please contact me.

Marjorie (Chair of Play)

email:marjorie.askew@gmail.com

or call: 0459 023 907

Restricted Section - Saturday Photos



SSSSHHHHH!! As we had a great crowd at the Club on Wednesday this was announced. We are about to anoint a new Grand Master at our Club: John Fraser. John is a member of the 1000+ Masterpoints Club (with over 1270 masterpoints) but needed a 'couple' more red/gold points to become a Grand Master.



Indeed at January 1 John needed 0.92 red/gold points. On Australia Day he was awarded 0.90 red points (these will show on his account at end February) thus a tantalising 0.02 short. So onto our next Club red point event: the Harvey Norman Pairs. Playing with Ellen Watson in Week 1 and finishing 4th takes John comfortably 'over the line'.

However the 'suspense' will continue because the Harvey Norman Mixed Pairs was our Club Qualifying Event for the State Mixed Pairs Championships. The finals are being held in Sydney on May 17 & 18 and thus all red points for this event will not be credited until the event is completed; so hopefully at end May.

+ We know John is celebrating a 'big' birthday at end May – so it may be a photo finish for which comes first.

Very Well Done to John for his many years of playing bridge – and contributing to our Club.



Gold Coast Congress Report



Robert Eldridge

A large number of players from Ballina travelled to the 63rd Gold Coast Congress. We were played in pretty much every event – from the Bobby Richman Open Pairs Championship to the Teams events, individual day events and the walk in pairs. For those who haven't attended, the scale of the event was enormous with over 400 tables and pretty much every player and Australian writer one has ever heard of. A Who's Who of Bridge.

The first Gold Coast Congress was played in late February 1962 at the Chevron Hotel in Surfers Paradise. By 2007 the event had outgrown the use of two venues and moved to the brand-new Gold Coast Convention Centre – one great room with space for well over 400 teams and Aircon and acoustics. The event had become international with players attending from many countries.

This year's event purported to be the last Congress on the Gold Coast. So it was with mixed emotions that many attended, and then dressed in black on the Wednesday to grieve the loss. A couple of our players, having done unexpectedly badly, were heard to declare that they would never play this event again – well!

endeavouring to shape one's play. Small points maybe but ones our club might like to consider. Just as important as the play was also the social life outside the event. Thanks to my partners and team members who made it very enjoyable.



Bill, Marjorie, Gary and Clive unwinding



Basking in the glow of victory?



Novice Teams winners

It was not the best performance overall by Ballina players but with a strong comeback Rhonda Khong and Margaret Cusack's team was victorious in the Novice Teams event (U100MP)(photo left).

As did a number of other Ballina players, I played for six days, from 10am to 6pm,

and thoroughly enjoyed it. A number of aspects of the event impressed – particularly the orderliness of the event and the silence when playing. Having a progressive score shown was also helpful in

The following are some reflections on the event by some Ballina players:



A cocktail of Ballina players

Sue Burns

We arrived at our accommodation in Miami on Monday evening, in time for dinner and head off to a nearby Tavern. I asked Rob how he went in the Bobby Richman pairs the previous three days. He was disappointed with the fact that a lot of his opponents opened a weak one No Trump, and felt he and his



Gold Coast Congress Report

Robert Eldridge



partner couldn't get into the bidding

The next morning, we decided as a team to use in inverted commas modified landing after a weak No Trump opening. So, we went through the sequences to overcome this bid, practising on the drive to the Congress, going over it again as we waited for our first match. We practiced again at the beginning of day two and day three. We had it down pat.

We played 168 hands over the next three days and not once did anyone open a weak 1NT!

Rhonda Khong

When I think about the Gold Coast Congress, I think of waking up, going for a swim in the ocean before breakfast, playing all day and boozy dinners. This year I also had the joy of going home for a swim on my lunch break. It's an intense eight days of bridge but I must love it because after my first time, I just kept going back!

Peter Lamont

The 2025 Congress was the largest event of its type in the southern hemisphere catering to over 2000 players from all over Australia, New Zealand, and elsewhere. It is an eye-opener where you witness a wide diversity of players drawn to this wonderful game.

Bridge statistic

Suits of 11 cards or longer are extremely rare. There are exactly 233,224 such hands – not many given there are 635,013,559,600 possible Bridge hands. That's about one 11 card suit every 278 years, if you play every day.

Thanks to Paul Marston.

If the organisers are able to schedule another in 2026, I urge everyone, irrespective of your skill level, to go and experience this festival of bridge.



More players - but not their trophies!

Our Yellow Bins: These are intended only for bidding slips which should then be placed in the recycling bin at the end of the session. Please do not put tissues or food scraps in these bins. + Yes the glossy bidding slips are recyclable.



Answer 1: Extra Values [Small part actor assesses these when rebidding. (5,6)]

Values (in the form of High card points, shortage or cover cards), which are in addition to the values that a player has promised so far in the bidding.

Answer 2: Redouble [Foreign currency embraces old Japanese capital and is intended to punish if not conventional. (8)]

A call that doubles the penalties and bonuses that apply to a previous double. Used conventionally, a redouble may also convey additional information. For example, THE SOS REDOUBLE. When a part score in a trump suit has been doubled for penalties, a REDOUBLE is SOS. The Redouble is a rescue attempt to find a safer fit. See also [Responder's Redouble](#).





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Sweat the small stuff

Paul Smith

A famous self-help book from the 1990s was **“Don’t sweat the small stuff ... and it’s all small stuff.”** It advised that most things in life that stress you are ultimately unimportant. Clearly not a bridge player!

Playing bridge, those small chances add up over time to make a difference. Some recent examples

Brd: 10	North			
Dir: E	♠ J			
Vul: All	♥ K5			
	♦ KQ9852			
	♣ 10987			
	South			
	♠ A964			
	♥ A10943			
	♦ A106			
	♣ K			
3NT N				
Lead - ♣2				
	W	N	E	S
			P	1♥
	P	1NT ¹	P	2NT ²
	P	3NT ³	<end>	

- 1 Close call, many would bid 2♦
- 2 Not strong enough to reverse with 2♠, just inviting
- 3 Yummy, super maximum

As North, I could have started with 2♦ but I decided that valuing my singleton ♠J as one point was a bit optimistic and took the low road instead. Partner had a similar situation, not strong enough to reverse but can be sure that I have length in the minors. 2NT denied a four card minor and also denied

six Hearts, so they have to have something in Spades and I am super keen to be in game.

The opening lead is a small Club and West puts their Ace on dummy’s King. Now my Clubs represent a trick if the opponents decide to attack the suit. Before West leads to trick two I survey my assets. It looks like six Diamond tricks, two Hearts and a Spade for my contract. If E/W decide to play on Clubs then that will set up my 10th trick.

Any problems on the horizon? Yes, the small possibility that one opponent has four Diamonds headed by the Jack. If I play off the top three Diamonds that would give the defence a trick. Not very likely but possible. Can I do anything about it? If I lead the ♦K from my hand and one opponent shows out of Diamonds then I have a finesse against the Jack, whoever has the four card suit.

The chances that a suit breaks 4-0 are not quite 10%. If I can guard against that rare possibility, then I am happy to do so. One time in 10 some people will not notice the extra chance and then I get a better score than them at the cost of a small amount of thought.

What actually happened? The suit broke 3-1 and so there was never a problem. Other people did not get to 3NT (“but I had a singleton Spade/Club”) and so this was a good result.

Brd: 15	North			
Dir: S	♠ A9			
Vul: N/S	♥ AK94			
	♦ A84			
	♣ K752			
	South			
	♠ K105			
	♥ 1073			
	♦ K10			
	♣ AQJ108			
3NT S				
Lead - ♦5				
	W	N	E	S
				1♣
	P	1♥	P	1NT
	P	3NT ¹	<end>	

1 Am I a wimp?

This should be a comfortable contract, there are 11 top tricks. 2 Spades, 2 Hearts, 2 Diamonds and 5 Clubs. With 11 easy tricks you should be thinking about how to make 12. Nothing extra is possible in Clubs or Spades. Hearts has a chance for a third trick. Can you see it? When you have a seven card fit you have more cards than the opponents so you should always think about the possibility of creating a length trick. If the Hearts break 3-3 then the fourth Heart in dummy is a trick regardless of how small the card is. One approach would be to win the ♥A at some stage and then immediately lose a Heart trick. Later, there is the chance that the ♥K will draw the last two cards from the defenders and the ♥9 will be a trick.

Any other chance for an extra trick? Look at the lead. A small Diamond,



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Sweat the small stuff

Paul Smith

probably “fourth best from longest and strongest”. In your hand you have the ♦10. If the lead was made from ♦QJ753 or ♦QJ6532 or any other combination containing both the Queen and Jack then playing small from dummy will allow your ♦10 to win the first trick. That would be your 12th trick. If the ♦10 doesn’t win the first trick then nothing is lost, you still have the Heart option. It is a low chance option but it is zero cost — go for it. If other declarers don’t get the Diamond lead then you are in front of them as long as you spot the chance.

What if the ♦10 does win? Now

you have 12 tricks ... so look for 13! How could you get 13? The Heart suit provide a slim possibility. There is no point in following the previous advice of losing a Heart to set up a length trick ... you can’t make 13 if you lose a trick. The slim possibility is that if you play ♥A and then ♥K that both of the ♥QJ will drop, making your ♥10 the 13th trick.

Improve the chance of this happening by taking all your Club and Diamond tricks, discarding a Heart from dummy, then the Spades, finishing in hand, and finally the Hearts. The opponents may come to a position where they are not sure what to discard

on all your minor suit tricks. The defenders cannot see your cards, they don’t know if you are trying to make a sneaky Spade or a sneaky Heart, keep them in the dark as long as possible. (if someone has both ♠QJ and ♥QJ then it is not possible for them to keep both and you are guaranteed to get your trick if you get the timing right and watch the discards).

What actually happened? The ♦10 did not win the first trick. One day it will, that is the reward for being observant and planning ahead.

Sweat the small stuff ... in the long run it will pay off.

Bridge NSW + Newsletter: As you may know Bridge NSW is ‘off and running’ as the peak body for bridge in NSW, representing 140 clubs and over 11,000 players across the state. A key focus is supporting bridge clubs. You can check them out at: <https://bridgensw.com.au/>

+ They have a new newsletter, aptly named: Bridging NSW. To read this and/or to subscribe to receive this regularly by email, go to:

<https://bridgensw.com.au/newsletter/>



Ballina MahJong Club News

Winners for the month of February were:

- | | |
|------|------------------|
| 7th | Lisa Wong |
| 14th | Susan Allan |
| 21st | Margaret Bryant |
| 28th | Jeanette Henwood |



We surprised Valda McLerie at tea time today, 28th February, with a special cake for a SIGNIFICANT Birthday!

(Photo: Valda on the left with Janine Jarvis.)





Ballina Bridge Club Swiss Pairs Congress April 26 & 27, 2025



Play starts: Saturday 10am, Sunday 9.30am

Cash prizes in masterpoint divisions

Conducted under the auspices of the NSWBA
Red Masterpoints at B4 Level

Cross Imps Scoring
Green, Blue & Red Systems only

Cost: \$100 per Player, \$200 per Pair

All entries via MyABF
Entries close 6pm Saturday April 20

Anzac Day Welcome Pairs
Friday April 25 at 1pm
(‘Walk-in’ \$5pp; red masterpoints)

+ WARM - UP
EVENT

Tournament Director
Mark Miller

Event Organiser
Marjorie Askew

Tel: 0459 023 907 e: marjorie.askew@gmail.com

All players are subject to the NSWBA’s Congress Disciplinary Regulations.

Ballina Bridge Club
Website: <https://ballinabridge.org.au>

PROGRAMME

'The Intro':

Anzac Day 'Welcome' Pairs: Friday 25 April: Commences 1pm, \$5pp, pay on the day; **red** masterpoints.

'The Main Event' - Swiss Pairs:

Saturday 26 April: Commences 10am, concluding approx 5.45pm.

Sunday 27 April: Commences 9.30am, with lunch and drinks following play and then Presentations, concluding approx 2.15pm.

PRIZES

Generous prizes will be awarded determined by number of entries. We expect to award prizes in 3 Divisions: Open, Intermediate and Restricted; 'Intermediate' is the middle third of the field; 'Restricted' the lower third of the field. **And** we award equal prize money per each division.

LUNCHES

Lunch is included for both Saturday and Sunday and we will endeavour to offer Gluten Free and Vegetarian options – but please request with your entry. Tea/coffee and light refreshments will be available all day.



Our lunches will be catered for us by the Lennox Head Lions; as part of our ongoing fundraising partnership with them.

+ SATURDAY DINNER – optional extra, pay on the day.

Join us for dinner at the Ballina Golf Club, Asian Green Restaurant. This proved very popular last year; a chance to catch-up with old and new bridge friends, and maybe not discuss the day's bridge hands!! Please pre-book for this so we can reserve tables: by email to Marjorie.

MAIN EVENT: ENTRIES & PAYMENTS

Please make your entry via MyABF. Preferred payment is direct to our bank account: BSB: 650 300 A/C No: 551649703 and by the closing date; please reference your surname and ABF Number.

HELP? Please contact Event Organiser: Marjorie Askew.

COUNTRY TEAMS 2025

BALLINA CLUB QUALIFIER



Saturday 12 April

Time: 9.15 for 9.30 am

Cost: \$15.00pp (\$60 per team)

Red Masterpoints at State Championship Level

Please bring your own lunch

The event is open to all players within our Region. Teams finishing in the top half the field will be eligible to continue to the Regional Final (or possibly direct to the Zonal Final) as part of the NSWBA John Arkinstall State Teams*.

Partner Coordinator: Liz Jeffery

Please contact Liz for help with teammates

Please nominate online: (Teams of 4/5/6 or as a Pair)

by: 6pm Wednesday 9 April

* For more information go to: <https://bridgensw.com.au/state-open-teams-country-clubs/>

Thanks to our sponsors and supporters

Harvey Norman

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