



# Newsletter May 2026

## Message from the President



Lorraine Bryant

**Ballina Bridge Club Congress** - I think everyone involved agreed that our Congress was a great success largely because of our willing volunteers. Chris Fitzgerald did an amazing job organising the kitchen, and she was there on both days, all day. The wonderful volunteers who delivered cakes, sandwiches, biscuits and fruit were very much appreciated by the players. Thank you to all those who gave up their time to assist Chris and the director. Your contribution to the success of the congress is particularly valued. Our Director, John McIlrath ran a very pleasant and efficient congress and we enjoyed the benefit of his considerable expertise. The Lennox Lions once again produced delicious lunches with a BBQ on Saturday and sandwiches on Sunday. We were fortunate to have Harcourts, Ballina and the Cherry Street Sports Group as sponsors this year. We thank them for their involvement.

Special thanks must go to Marjorie Askew and the Play committee for their organisation. Marjorie did an amazing job encouraging players from other areas to join us. We had players who travelled from many other areas including Perth, Canberra, Toowoomba, Caloundra, Coffs Harbour and Armidale.

**Directors' Courses** - While John McIlrath was in our area, the Play Committee requested that he run a course for Directors. There were two days, one held at Tweed on Thursday, 16th April for beginning or aspiring directors and one here at Ballina on 17th for Intermediate Directors. Both days proved very valuable for the attendees. A highlight of the day at Ballina was a delicious lunch organised by Jan Roberts. Thank you so much, Jan, for all your work. Your catering was absolutely wonderful.

**New Ramp** - The Management Committee has organised a new ramp at the entrance, providing better access to the club for our members. Thank you to Peter Waggott for overseeing this project. I have already received very positive feedback.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Thursdays May 14 & 21: Restricted Teams Championship**

**Sunday Shuffle Teams: Sunday May 31, 4-8pm**

**King's Birthday Teams, Monday June 8**

**IMPs Pairs Week May 28 - June 3**

**GNOT Pairs, Saturday June 20**

**New 'Country' Event at ANC July**

**Security** - Following a couple of incidents and the Fire Safety Check Report, which would not pass the sliding door locking system, we had a security firm check our security. We were advised to change the lock on the sliding door and issue new keys to those responsible for locking and unlocking the building with a new key register to be established. After so many years it was evident that we had no idea how many people had keys. If a key is required please see Peter Rostron or me.

**IMP Pairs.** - We will have another week of IMP pairs starting 28th May in the lead up to the King's Birthday Teams on 8th June and the GNOT Pairs on Saturday, 29th June

**New Event** - Following the success of Tuesday March Madness, a new event will be held on some Sundays for the next few months. Check it out in the Play News from Marjorie.

**Late News** - Congratulations to the Cusack Team – Margaret Cusack, Jenny McDowell, David Drake and Timothy Aley who competed in the Under Life Master Swiss Teams at the Autumn Nationals held in Adelaide this week. The team placed 5th out of 20 teams with 5 wins and 3 losses. A wonderful result. We hope they enjoy the rest of the program. (Photo page 7.)



## Play Committee Report - April 2026

### Events Gone:

#### Our Congress April 18 & 19:

This was the Big event of the month and seemed to: Go Very Well. This was due to a Great Team effort and Thanks to everyone who contributed. We were very grateful for everyone's contribution whether in the kitchen and/or 'tidying up', dealing, caddying, providing lovely cakes and nibbles for grazing ...

We had a 'Full House' with 48 Pairs competing and again from 'far-and-wide'. This year our furthest travellers were from Perth, followed by Canberra and Sydney; then from Queensland clubs: Toowoomba, Kenmore, Brisbane, Toowong, Redcliffe, Gold Coast, Surfers Paradise, Caloundra; and from NSW clubs: Armidale, Coffs Harbour, Yamba, Tweed, Lismore, Byron Bay.

Again very Well Done to President Lorraine for securing 2 local sponsors for our event: Harcourts Real Estate and Cherry Street Sports. We welcomed Natalie Leslie from Harcourts for Presentations on the Sunday; Natalie congratulated us on what she saw was a successful community event. Cherry Street Sports provided accommodation for our Director John McIlrath at their Colonial Motel; John reported he was well looked after. It was perhaps a little disappointing that more Congress players did not support the Dinner on the Saturday evening at Cherry Street Sports ie support your sponsor. I enjoyed my meal, one in our group went with the Kids meal – must have had too much good food earlier in the day! If you have any contact with either Harcourts or Cherry Street Sports in the coming weeks, please Thank them for their support; we're hoping both will continue with their support.

On the subject of food, The Lennox Lions provided good lunches both days. This is the third year of our 'Working Together' – and hopefully a 'win-win' for both.

Back to the Bridge: The field was divided into 4  
Ballina Bridge Club Newsletter

Divisions by masterpoints with 3 prizes per each division. The winners are listed below + you'll see all our winners in the photos in the following pages.

#### Congress Winners (+ with home club in brackets)

##### Division 1:

1st: Rachel Langdon (QCBC) and Nikolas Moore (Toowong)

2nd Marnie Leybourne and Nick Cantatore (South Perth)

3rd. Ian Michelson and Deborah McLay (Caloundra)

##### Division 2:

1st Sharyn Dilosa and Roderick Roark (Coffs Harbour)

2nd Jean Lowe and Terry Lowe (Ballina)

3rd Graham Carson (Tweed) and Ian Pick (Ballina)

##### Division 3:

1st Colin MacDonald and Chris Bauer (Ballina)

2nd Robert Sheahan and Ray Ghioni (Ballina)

3rd Beverley McCasker and Ross McCasker (Toowoomba)

##### Division 4:

1st Tracy Harris and Royce Collins (Yamba)

2nd David Drake and Timothy Aley (Ballina)

3rd Alan Toohey and Pauline Greig (Surfers Paradise)

Last but not least, Thanks to our Director John McIlrath who had a busy few days with the 2 x Directors Workshops preceding our Congress. As Director, John, of course, practised what-he-had-preached in the workshops. What stood out for me was not only John's comprehensive knowledge of the Laws, albeit after many-many years of directing but also i) his calmness/ temperament when taking calls (and maybe dealing with 'agitated' players) and ii) his desire to be 'out there' in the action; and not hiding away in the office. (You can see the latter in the only photo we seem to have of John; sadly we all forgot to take a photo at the workshops.)



## Play Committee Report - April 2026

### Coming Up:

#### Restricted Teams Championship Thursdays May 14 & 21:

Entries seem a little slow coming in for the first of our Teams Championships of the year, and for players with <100 masterpoints as at 1.1.2026. If you need any help with finding teammates please contact Peter Rostron our Event Organiser, or Robyn Thomas, our Thursday Partner Coordinator. You may nominate as a Team of 4/5/6 players or as a Pair looking for teammates. + If you're not 'teamed-up' and /or perhaps only available for one of the weeks and could be a standby, or substitute, for either week, please contact Peter or Robyn.

It's a 2-session event (in the 'normal' Thursday timeslot) with head-to-head teams matches. The Plan is to play a full round robin; the format will be confirmed once we know numbers. + Please note nominations close on Monday 11 May at 6pm – so that the directing team can plan the movement, set up the computer, organise scoresheets and ...

Please note: there will be NO Pairs play on these 2 x Thursdays and if you have too many masterpoints for the Restricted Team, perhaps think about joining another club session for these 2 weeks; our Partner Coordinators can assist if you're looking for a partner. (See poster on noticeboard and on page 12)

#### Sunday Shuffle Teams: Sunday May 31, 4-8pm:

Following the March Madness Teams, we're now trialing a Sunday Teams on the last Sunday of the month. So starting at 4pm and ending at approximately 8pm with a meal break mid-way. You can nominate as a Team of 4, or as a Pair or Individual looking for teammates (and a 'mix-up'.) + Of course this is a great opportunity for our less experienced players to play with more experienced players and learn more about Teams bridge.

The menus for the first 3 Sunday Shuffles are:

Sunday May 31: BYO plate to share (+ we may have a theme tba)

Sunday June 28; Souper Sunday

Sunday July 26: Christmas in July

(See poster on noticeboard and on page 13)

#### King's Birthday Teams, Monday June 8:

We're repeating last year's format so: A Fun day of Teams again with a Swiss movement and red masterpoints. The theme for the day is: Red, White and Blue + with a Birthday (or British!!) Morning Tea - which was a star attraction from 2025!!

Nominate as a Team (of 4//5 or 6) or a Pair/Individual looking for team-mates. BYO lunch, then nibbles with a drink at close of play. Closing date for nominations is Thursday June 4 at 6 pm. Liz Jeffery and Hilary Lewis are our Event Organisers.

(See poster on noticeboard and on page 11)

#### IMPs Pairs Week May 28 - June 3:

In the week leading-up to the Kings' Birthday Teams we're having another IMPs week, + we also have the Sunday Shuffle on May 31. These are also a good lead-in to the GNOT qualifier all day on Saturday June 20 which will be IMPs scoring.

If you're still learning about IMPs v Matchpoints there are 2 hard copy sheets from Janet Brown available at the Club (ask a Committee member if you can't find one) and/or go to pages 7 and 8 in our April 2025 newsletter: <https://www.ballinabridge.org.au/docs/newsletter/2025/4/April%202025>

#### GNOT Pairs, Saturday June 20:

If you don't know GNOT stands for Grand National Open Teams and this is our Club Qualifying Event (CQE). As a national event, it awards Gold masterpoints so this is an opportunity to win gold points whilst playing at your club. This year our CQE will be run as an all-day



## Play Committee Report - April 2026

Swiss Pairs. All are welcome to have-a-go!. See poster on noticeboard and on page 12.

### New 'Country' Event at ANC July:

The Australian National Championships (ANC) are being held in Belconnen Canberra from July 4-16. (States/territories host the championships on roster). In the first week the interstate teams' championships are held and these are then followed by individual events.

A new Country event is being offered in Week 1, from July 6-8: The Sean Mullamphy Country Club Teams Championships. If anybody is interested in playing in a Ballina Team in Canberra please contact me to discuss.

April was busy with the Congress and Workshops, May and June are also looking 'busy' with several 'special' events. + As always if you have any feedback on anything 'Play' at the Club please contact me.

email: [marjorie.askew@gmail.com](mailto:marjorie.askew@gmail.com)

or call: **0459 023 907**

Photo below: John McIlwraith directing at the Ballina Congress.



### Northern Rivers Directors Workshops, Thursday April 16 at Tweed BC – 'Basics', Friday April 17 at Ballina BC – 'More Advanced'

These were well attended by 'aspiring' directors 23 (I think I counted) at Tweed and 30 at Ballina with John McIlrath, a National Director and Chair of the BNSW Directing Committee our host/presenter.

The Tweed workshop focused on more 'basics' and covered: Movements, Compscore and The Laws, with Powerpoint slides and discussion; and notably lots of discussion on The Laws.

The Ballina Workshop was labelled 'more advanced' – not that that deterred many of our less experienced, and 'starter' directors, some of whom attended both workshops. There was more discussion including on (difficult?) topics such as insufficient bids, comparable calls, dummies rights, inadvertent bids, bids out of turn; these topics posed challenges even for our relatively more experienced directors. We also discussed the Profile of a 'Good' Director, and, as I've pointed out in my Congress report, as exemplified by John as our Congress Director.

A highlight of the Ballina Workshop was Lunch which was 'cooked' by Jan Roberts with a little help from President Lorraine; 2 courses and excellent! Many thanks Jan and Lorraine.

# Ballina Bridge Club Congress Winners 2026



Rachel Langdon and Nikolas Moore



Marnie Leybourne and Nick Cantatore



Ian Michelson and Deborah McLay



Sharyn Dilosa and Roderick Roark



Jean Lowe and Terry Lowe



Graham Carson and Ian Pick



Colin MacDonald and Chris Bauer



Robert Sheahan and Ray Ghioni (absent)



Beverley McCasker and Ross McCasker



Tracy Harris and Royce Collins



David Drake and Timothy Aley



Alan Toohy and Pauline Greig



**Ballina Bridge Club  
Swiss Pairs Congress  
April 18 & 19, 2026**



**Harcourts**  
Northern Rivers  
(02) 6686 1100



# Ballina Bridge Club Swiss Pairs Congress April 18 & 19, 2026



## Director's Corner

# Dummy's Rights

Dummy has very limited rights when a hand of bridge is being played. Dummy's rights are designed to prevent irregularities (Law 42D 2) or unintended errors.

Three examples are:



Sharon Carver

### Failure to follow suit by Declarer

Dummy may ask declarer when he fails to follow suit, if he holds a card in that suit. Dummy cannot question either defender when they fail to follow suit (Law 42D 1). Dummy should note a defender's failure to follow suit, so that if a card of that suit is played later in the hand by the defender, the Director can be called.

### Declarer asks dummy to play a card that dummy doesn't have in their hand

Declarer asks Dummy to play card that is not in dummy. Dummy should advise declarer that she doesn't hold that card and wait for declarer to choose another card from dummy.

### Declarer attempts to ruff a card in dummy while still holding a card in the suit lead

For example, declarer is playing in 4 Hearts and attempts to ruff a club in dummy, while dummy still holds one or more clubs. Dummy should advise declarer that she needs to play a club.



Happy times for the Fearsome Foursome and Friends in Adelaide.



**Clue:** Poop or orlop for example. (4)

Answer to clue on page 9 .



## Thai By Night

Birthday winner is Isobel Johnstone

## Ballina MahJong Club News

### Winners for April 2026:

- April 3 Good Friday - no play
- 10 Vanessa Reynolds
- 17 Ballina Congress - no play
- 24 Lynda Lovett



# Happy 80th Birthdays to Dawn Horder and Howard Jeffery

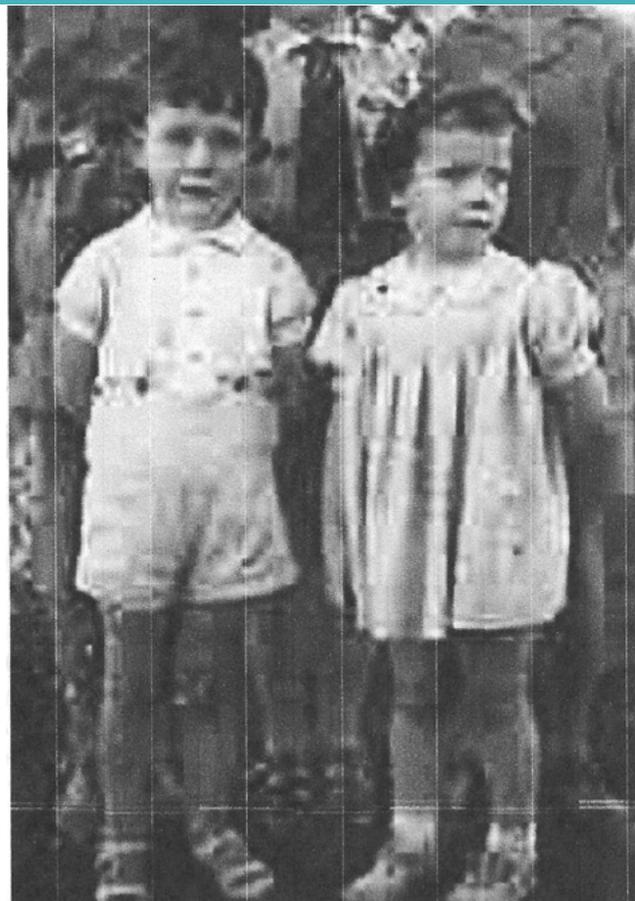


Photo above: Howard and his twin sister



**Answer to clue:** Deck  
- the 52 cards used to  
play Bridge.



## Rank Promotions at end April:

- Graduate:** Carol Lynch
- Local:** Yvonne Head
- Silver Local:** Timothy Aley
- State:** Peter Rostron

## Teaching News

Judy Forsyth



We have recently concluded both our Day & Evening lessons. New lessons will be announced shortly. We hope all new players will try the different sessions especially suited to them.

Our evening group continues to meet on a Monday evening for social play. Special thanks to Clive who has now resigned from teaching after a lengthy period of supervising this session, along with Starlette who stayed to help after playing Monday afternoons. Guy is currently running this session of bridge. Many thanks to all concerned.

Lyn, after many years of conducting the Day lessons, has now retired. (She taught me, Judy, to play close to 30 years ago!) Special thanks to Lyn for all she has given to Ballina Bridge Club. Thanks also to the many people who gave some time to play with our learners in some sessions of Bridge. Rebecca has stepped into teaching our day beginners. We are hoping to reintroduce a Novice section on a Saturday afternoon. This is especially aimed at our new players out of lessons & for those who work during the day. More details soon.



Bridge is full of tips and little sayings to help us remember what to do. You need to be aware that they are only tips - not ironclad rules. You have probably heard of 'third hand high' and it is generally good advice but not always.

First, a simple situation where the advice is perfect. Partner leads a low card, dummy has no high cards and your highest card does not have another card touching it. Play high.



Partner has led the ♠3, the contract is of no importance. Dummy has three small cards. Play your Ace. Players are sometimes tempted to play the Queen because partner "might" have the King. If you give it some thought you can see that is wrong. If partner has the King then it doesn't matter whether you play the Ace or the Queen, either card will win. But if partner does not have the King then it is vital to play the Ace. Declarer's King is always going to win. If you don't play the ♠A then declarer may win the ♠K and later throw the rest of their Spades away. Take your trick!

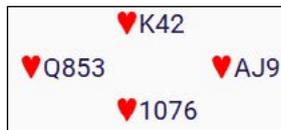
*By the way... how do you know that declarer does not have a singleton King?*

(Third hand high is always a little too simplistic. When you have high cards that are equal in value, play the lowest of them. From ♦KQJ you would play the ♦J. Declarer's Ace will win and partner will know that declarer did not start with ♦AQ because they would have won with the Queen. Knowledge is

power)



Your hand just got a little bit weaker and dummy got a little bit stronger. If the ♥K is played from dummy, then it is easy to plonk the Ace on it. But what if declarer calls for the ♥2 to be played? Now you need to play the ♥J



Perhaps the full suit looks like this and your ♥J will win the trick. Playing the Ace would instantly turn the King in dummy into a trick. Whose side are you on?

Yeah, yeah. I know your partner never has the Queen when they lead the three and so you are just sending your Jack to its death. Maybe the suit looks like this



Don't be tempted to play the ♥A just because you have an under endowed partner. Sure, the Jack will lose to the Queen but now your Ace is still alive to capture the King later.

Play the Ace immediately and declarer gets two easy tricks. Play the Jack and they only get one.

One last situation which has a slightly different emphasis (which happened to me today).



Partner leads the ♦3 and the ♦4 is played

from dummy. Where is the ♦A? Easy, declarer has the Ace because partner would never underlead it. Where is the ♦Q? Dunno, but I can find out at no cost.

If declarer has both ♦AQ then playing the ♦K does not gain anything. Instead, play the ♦10. If declarer wins with the ♦Q then now you know where it is and it cost nothing. If declarer wins with the ♦A then you now know that partner has the Queen.

Knowledge is power. Did declarer open 1NT? You now know where all the points in the Diamond suit are and how many points declarer has in the other three suits. Are you on lead later in the hand and need to cash some tricks? Knowing where the ♦Q is would be essential.

Third hand high? Maybe. It depends on what your goal is

- Quick trick
- Setup tricks for later in your hand or partner's
- Restrict declarer's winners
- Gain knowledge about the hand

Know what you are trying to achieve and act accordingly. There is a reason partner has learnt the correct card to lead from any combination — it is so that you know what to do in third seat.

(On the first hand declarer does not have a singleton King because that would mean that partner had a six card suit and has lead sixth best. Partner doesn't do that)



# RESTRICTED

## TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP

*to be held on*

Thursdays May 14 & 21

*ALL nominations online\**

- ♣ **Pay on the day - normal \$5 voucher**
- ♦ **Start-time 12.45 for 13.00**
- ♥ **All players <100mpts at 1.1.2026**
- ♠ **All players must be members of the Ballina Bridge Club**

**Event Organiser: Peter Rostron**

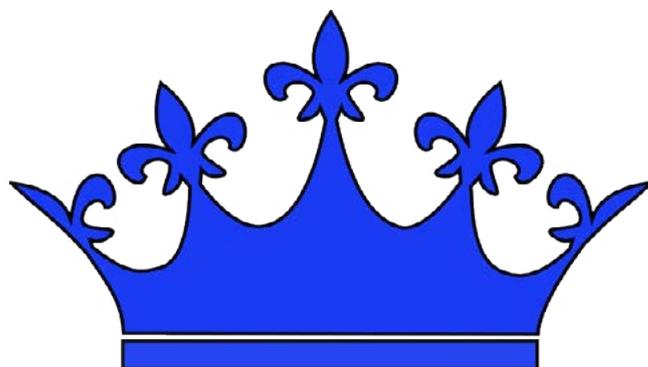
\* You can nominate online as a Team of 4/5/6 or as a Pair looking for teammates. Or please contact **Peter or Robyn Thomas**, our Thursday Partner Coordinator, for help with teammates.

**Nominations close Monday May 11**

**N.B. There will be NO Pairs Play on these days**

# KING'S BIRTHDAY TEAMS

Monday June 8, 9.30 start



## A 'Fun Day' of Teams

Enter as a Team of 4/5/6 players *or*  
as a Pair/Individual looking for teammates

**Red masterpoints**

**Theme for the Day: Red, White & Blue**

**'Birthday' Morning Tea  
(+ BYO Lunch)**

\$60 per Team (\$15pp if 4 person team)

Nominate online + one team payment  
preferred and by direct bank transfer

**Event Organisers:  
Liz Jeffery & Hilary Lewis**

Entries Close on Thursday 4 June at 6pm

# GNOT PAIRS

## GOLD POINT EVENT

**DATE: Saturday 20 June 2026**

**TIME: 9am for 9.30am start: 2 sessions**

**COST: \$40 per pair (\$20 per person)**

**Entries close at 6pm on Wednesday 17th June 2026.**

**Please enter online and pay per Pair (direct bank transfer preferred) by this date.**



**Event Organiser: Marjorie Askew**

This is your only chance to earn **GOLD POINTS** whilst playing at your club.

The event is open to all Northern Rivers Regional members.

For full regulations go to: <https://bridgensw.com.au/gnot/>



Looking for a fun and relaxed way to enjoy your Sunday?

Join us for **SUNDAY SHUFFLE** – a friendly competition in teams format on the last Sunday in May, June and July.

### WHAT'S ON

- Teams event. Imps scoring.
- Great for all skill levels.
- Social play. Friendly competition.

### MEAL THEMES

- May – bring a plate to share.
- June – Souper Sunday.
- July – Christmas in July.



### WHEN

31<sup>st</sup> May | 28<sup>th</sup> June |  
26<sup>th</sup> July  
4 to 8pm



### COST

Voucher on the day.  
Meals cost TBA.



### ENTRY

Nominate as a team,  
pair or single.  
Entries close Sat 6pm.

**Ballina Bridge Club**

Thanks to our sponsors and supporters

# Harvey Norman

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