



BALLINA
BRIDGE CLUB

Newsletter October 2020

from the President

Chery McCallum



I hope by now you are all enjoying more freedom than you have been able to in recent months. I know a few of us have taken short trips away for a break. If you did, I hope you enjoyed it. If you haven't been able to get away, I hope you were at least able to get out and about locally.

The Management Committee has finalised their Covid Safety Plan and I hope that it will be lodged with the relevant authorities soon. At our last meeting we have, guardedly, set Monday October 26 as our reopening date. This date will enable us to assess the heightened risk associated with the coming school holidays and postpone reopening if necessary. We have received some new guidelines from NSWBA and clarification on this may impact our plans. Our Club will have a limit of 10 tables per session and we will be asking Members to enter their names, online, for the session they wish to play. Paul Smith has done a lot of work to organize the site for us, so go in and have a look, and get familiar with it before you need to use the site to register for play.

When we reopen, we won't be having an afternoon tea break and you will need to bring your own water or drinks, as well as your own pen/pencil and hand sanitizer.

Our tables are in the process of being enlarged and we will have plastic covers, that will make the sanitizing of the table after play, much easier. We aren't able to stay after a session to socialise, and although the car park is outdoors, within the Covid rules, we can't have Members congregating there either. I know this all seems harsh, but this is the only way we can start to play face to face bridge again. There is also the fact that if we are found to be breaking the Covid rules, the Club will face a \$10,000 fine and each person breaking the rules will have a \$1,000 fine. The Covid 19 Safety Plan will be sent to our Members once it is registered and we will have Covid Marshalls at the sign in and temperature check station. Automatic sanitizing equipment will be installed near the sign in desk.

Please remember that we are going to be paying by vouchers only when we resume our face to face bridge. We are asking our Members to purchase a sheet of 10 vouchers (\$50), as we are endeavouring be cash free in this Covid time. If you are finding it a financial drain, please try and ask a friend or your partner to share with you. Your vouchers will be available at the club from the first day back. To ensure this, please pay online 24 hours prior to the session you wish

to attend. (bank details below).

Unfortunately, at the last meeting, Wendy Doyle, Assistant Treasurer, handed in her resignation and Judith Crafti, Secretary, asked for a 'Leave of Absence' from Management Committee, as neither of them will be returning to the Club in the foreseeable future, owing to health issues and neither thought it was their place to be making decisions that had no effect on them. Ken Jones has offered to take on the role of Secretary in Judith's absence. Two members have advised that they are willing to come onboard Management, and have now been invited to fill the vacancies (which will be ratified at the next Management Meeting) and hopefully stand at the next elections. I would like to thank Wendy and Judith for all the work they have done, in their roles, on the Management Committee.

Once again I have sad news, for our long term Members, Lex Teakle passed away recently. Those who knew her must applaud her fighting spirit. I believe her funeral was by invitation only.

That light is getting closer so, keep your fingers crossed that the visitors to our area, over the next few weeks, bring nothing but their smiles with them.

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Play Committee Report - September 2020



Marjorie Askew

Whilst we await more encouraging advice related to the resumption of face-to-face bridge our focus continues to be on online events.

You can check the latest advice from NSWBA to Clubs on restarting face-to-face bridge in the [NSWBA September news issue](#). This advice is based on NSW government regulations. We have also been advised we are classified as an 'indoor recreation facility'.

Ballina Bridge Club Online

1. The Ballina Challenge:

Round 3 of the Ballina Challenge was completed and Round 4 is about to get underway.

In Round 3 all Groups were keenly contested, with lots of close matches, and everyone was rewarded with some masterpoints. Taking to the 'podium' were new winners in all Groups. Well Done.

Orange Group:

- 1st: Bill Powell & Marjorie Askew
2nd: Janet Brown & Anne Jackson

Yellow Group:

- 1st: Sue Burns & Rebecca Rogers
2nd: Anne Riley & Ngaire Wills

Green Group:

- 1st: Ange Bettess & Peter Lamont
2nd: Arthur Renshaw & Bruce Mathieson

Special congratulations to:

1. Our newsletter editor Ange and partner Peter. Ange and Peter were perhaps the 'rawest' pair taking part (as per masterpoints). They have competed in all rounds of the Challenge, improving each time. I suspect this is their first 'major bridge win' and in such a 'prestigious event'!
2. Sue and Rebecca – 'first-timers' in the Challenge and winners in the Yellow group.

Full results can be viewed on the Club website, in the 'normal' Results section.

2. Ballina Pairs Tournament on BBO, Tuesdays at 3pm

As per recent Club emails. Play Committee decided to hold our first online Tournament on BBO and this was held on Tuesday 22 September. 16 Pairs competed. We played 3 board rounds, with a fairly comfortable 7 minutes per board; this allowed everyone time to become familiar with the format and platform, and also to enjoy short chats with fellow members in the chat box. Results are posted on the Club website.

Masterbridge directed | facilitated the event for us and we were well looked after. You can find them at: <https://masterbridgeonline.com/about-us/>

This event will continue over coming Tuesdays and we would love to have more members joining in. We chose a Tuesday timeslot so as not to clash with face-to-face bridge when (??) this re-starts. It may be that a different timeslot might have wider appeal but until we have more supporting the event it's not really viable for us to explore alternative timeslots and or think about graded events; for now it is only viable to run an 'Open' event.

For advice on how to register for this Tuesday Tournament click on:

<https://ballinabridge.org.au/news/2020/9/19/bridge-base-online-ballina-pairs>

or for a pdf edition click on: <http://www.users.on.net/~bbclub/directors/BBORegistration.pdf>

You can only register for the event 2 hours prior to commencement, so from 1pm on Tuesday. You can register with or without a partner.

3. Ballina Teams on BBO Monday October 5 at 12.30pm:

This will be our first online Teams event. A test-run of Teams showed it works well on BBO - we'll see.

Entries are slow coming in – but hopefully they will pick up. Nominations can be in Teams, or

continued on P3



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continued from P2

Pairs, or as someone looking for a partner.

As always if you have any feedback or suggestions, please call or email me: marjorie.askew@gmail.com

Tip from Paul Smith about hand records on BBO -

Regular players on BBO know they can check on their last 50 boards by clicking on the History Tab (RHS). Here you'll see both Recent Hand and Recent Tournaments. Then if you click on a specific Board

you can see scores at other tables (blue button bottom right) for comparison.

However there's a lot more under the Hand Records Tab. But if, like me, you tend to go direct to the BBO log-in page you may well never see this which is on the BBO Home page. Paul Smith has kindly prepared this video clip to show how to access this and then what's there at <https://ballinabridge.org.au/news/2020/9/6/the-final-result-of-a-bbo-match>

Marjorie Askew



Congratulations

Carolyn Blair has been promoted to Club Master.

Carolyn has received points recently on Stepbridge which is a reminder to us to think about joining tournaments online.

On Tuesday 31 October 2006 the Ballina Bridge Club celebrated its 25th Anniversary.

The Club had its origins in 1981 when Sybil Morrow held a meeting at her home to discuss the possibility of forming a bridge club in Ballina. Sybil Morrow was to become the Club's Patron, and a plaque in her honour is attached to the Club's Board of Honour for Club Champions and Past Presidents.

Jenny Wardley was President in 2006. The Club held Bridge sessions seven times a week, and Mah Jong once. 435 people passed through the club each week. The Club had built its own clubrooms by this time.

The Club celebrated its 25th anniversary by holding a special afternoon tea and play, to which Ballina Seniors Bridge Club was invited.

In words from the time: "this could not have happened had Sybil not had the foresight to start the club. With the generosity and enthusiasm of the members and the dedication of past committees we have achieved our dreams".

Tuesday 31 October 2021 is **the ruby jubilee of the Ballina Bridge Club**. It is hoped we are able to celebrate this milestone in the manner such an achievement deserves.

- Rob Eldridge





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Claiming Online

Mark Miller



Nothing to do with recouping your medical expenses or trying to get a return on an insurance policy, claiming is an important part of any online bridge game. This affects casual bridge sessions including Ballina Challenge matches but most importantly any online teams or pairs events. The reason for the latter is that rounds are generally clocked and so there is some pressure to finish the round with time to spare to perhaps do a bit of text chat, review the scores from the previous round or just take a mental break.

It is tedious for the opponents to have to endure the complete play of a hand beyond the point where they are not going to take a trick. So if you are declarer and know that you have the rest of the tricks then click/tap that claim button - it is there for a purpose. Also claim if you have a certain number of tricks but know that you are sure to also have an inescapable number of losers. For example claim 4 of the last 5 tricks.

The Ballina online pairs event on Tuesday is generously set to 7 minutes per round - more than the usual 6 minutes that we generally use as a guideline for face-to-face sessions. Many players will finish the round early and might be eager to get to the next round. The round will automatically conclude if all tables have finished so you don't want to be the only table holding things up. Claiming is a great way to get the session moving.

Now the laws of bridge say when you make a claim that you must also state a line-of-play. This explains how you will take the stated number of tricks without the opponents having a chance to interfere. **Things are a bit more relaxed in this regard for online bridge.** When you claim there is only a small text line to describe your claim and typing a message could take away any time saving compared to just playing out the hand. **So at club level it is quite common to just claim with no statement at all.**

Examples from an ABF game on BBO with my locked-down brother in Victoria.



Here West is in a 4H contract and the lead is with East. They had a long suit in clubs and those remaining cards are clearly winners. Declarer doesn't even need the final trump and claims. Some South players will look at their good diamonds and stubbornly believe they will take a trick. Yes it is remotely possible that declarer will cash the ace and then ruff a club and now have a diamond loser but it was not going to happen so I just

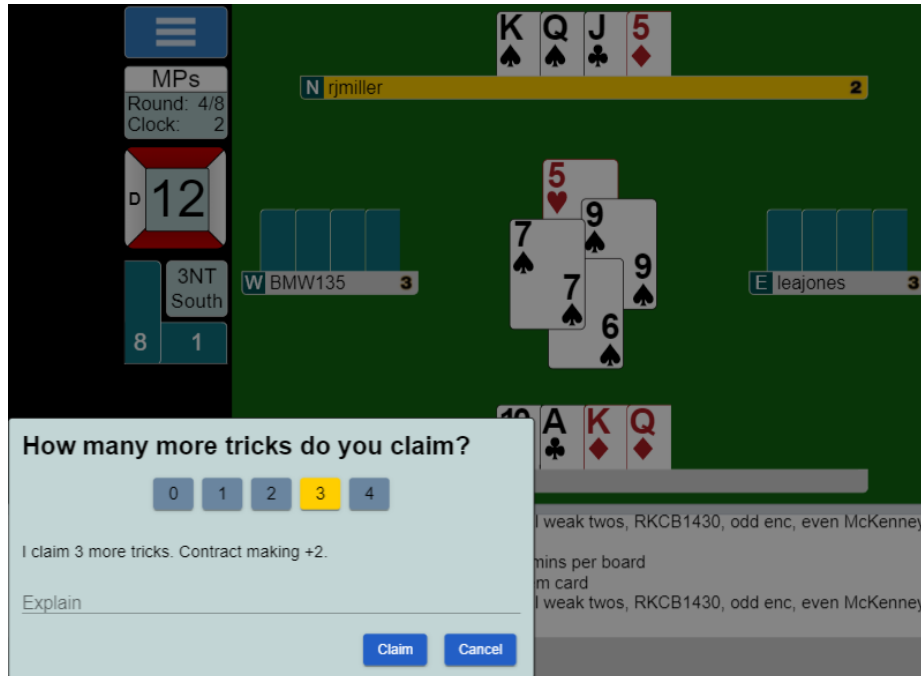
accepted the claim.



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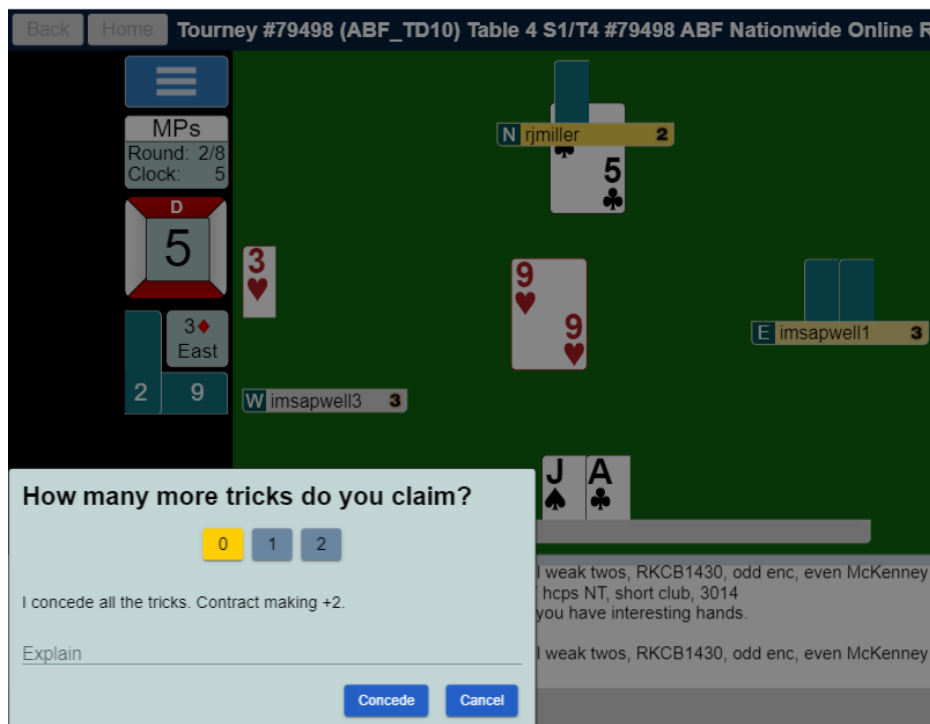
Claiming Online

Mark Miller



Here I have claimed in a 3NT contract. There is no way to avoid a spade loser as that suit is yet to be played and we do not have the Ace so I just claimed 3 of the remaining 4 tricks.

It does not matter how I play the cards so I did not provide any explanation for the claim.



East is declarer in 3D. All trumps have gone and I know that Dummy has the only hearts. Declarer should claim but hasn't so I cut the board short by conceding the last two tricks. This is done by doing a claim of zero tricks.

Stepbridge do not let you claim or concede in the last two tricks as they believe it is unlikely there will be any time saving but BBO is different.

So make use of the claim facility. If the opponents have made a claim and there is an obvious line of play that will ensure the claim is correct then do not be too pedantic about accepting the claim.

Thanks to our sponsors: Dancer's Car Care, Harvey Norman, Jetts and Somerville Laundry Lomax

Points aren't everything

Paul Smith

In the second week of the club's new, online, Tuesday competition you hold the following hand

♠6 ♥AK652 ♦10862 ♣K63

Your left hand opponent opens 1♣ and partner bids 2♣. Bidding the opponent's suit is known as a cue bid. Bidding the opponent's suit can have many meanings, depending on your partnership agreement. Sometimes you may be asking your partner for a stopper in the suit mentioned, sometimes you may be showing a stopper in the suit. In this particular circumstance, your agreement is that your partner is promising five cards in both majors. A so-called 'Michaels Cue Bid'.

Your right hand opponent bids 2♦, normally ten points or better with a good Diamond suit. What do you do?

The strong advice, in this situation, is to ignore high card points. Partner's bid immediately tells you that you have a ten card Heart fit.

With such a great trump fit, can you determine how many tricks you are likely to win, or lose?

With five cards in both Majors, your partner only has three minor suit cards. If partner has no honours in the minors then the most you will lose is three tricks. You only have one Spade, so only one loser. The trump suit is solid, so the worst combination would be four losers. But that would only happen if partner

has no points at all.

In most partnerships a Michaels cue bid would have at least eight high card points. But imagine a hand as weak as ♠xxxxx ♥xxxxx ♦x ♣Qx. That is, a single honour card. Now the Club suit has a single loser and you have a very good chance of making 10 tricks in a Heart contract. But this example is much weaker than your partner will have.

With all this in mind, your bid is 4♥, not as a sacrifice, but expecting to make.

In the **August 2019** edition of the ABF newsletter, Barbara Travis discussed just this sort of position.

I have noticed that people tend to 'underbid' opposite their partner's Michaels Cue Bids. Firstly, you have to discard the notion of HCP and adopt the notions of fit and 'quick tricks' – like you should do after partner preempts.



In the actual hand your partner has taken a bit of a liberty, only six high card points (Vulnerable against Not Vulnerable!)

Nevertheless, 4♥ does indeed make.

You need trumps to break 2-1, which will happen three-quarters of the time. Plus you either need the Spades to break 4-3, or the ♣A to be with South to make 10 tricks. Good possibilities.

PS Should there be an apostrophe in - Michaels Cue Bid? Of course! The main problem is to decide if it goes before or after the final letter

- Michael's or Michaels' If the convention is named after Michael Someone then it would be Michael's, but if the person's name is Chris Michaels then it would be Michaels'. Which is it? The internet reveals the unhelpful answer. The inventor of the convention was Mr Michael Michaels!

| | | | |
|---------|--|---------|--|
| | | North | |
| | | ♠ QJ83 | |
| | | ♥ 7 | |
| | | ♦ KQ7 | |
| | | ♣ AQ984 | |
| | | | |
| West | | East | |
| ♠ 6 | | ♠ A9542 | |
| ♥ AK652 | | ♥ J9843 | |
| ♦ 10862 | | ♦ 9 | |
| ♣ K63 | | ♣ J7 | |
| | | | |
| | | South | |
| | | ♠ K107 | |
| | | ♥ Q10 | |
| | | ♦ AJ543 | |
| | | ♣ 1052 | |

BBC Online Session 29/9/20



When I was asked to write something for the club newsletter, the only brief I was given was that it be something to do with these unusual times. You'll have to admit that was a pretty wide remit. In writing an occasional piece, whether in Covid time or otherwise, one of the risks of such writing is the uncertainty of relevance. Hopefully this next article is meaningful/thought-provoking for somebody else. For the interested and the curious, this involves a journey which might at times seem circuitous, but which has a point.

And so once again to Gabriel Garcia Marquez, whose other great book has the title above, "Love in the Time of Cholera". Now you might be forgiven for expecting from this title a rattling good yarn set in the time of an epidemic, and although it was written more than 30 years ago, the title itself has an intriguing prescience about it. On one level, that is the framework of the story, but the guts of the book is a variation on the biblical allusion to 'The Pearl of Great Price' (Matthew 13 for the more curious). In Garcia Marquez' version, the character Florentino Ariza discovers his pearl of great price at an early age, the beautiful and aristocratic young Fermina Daza, who until her 70th year, has been married to another. It is only at the end of both their lives, and after Florentino has waited 51 years, nine months and four days, that the two of them have the opportunity to come together. And does it happen, does boy get girl? To answer that you will have to read the book. So what does this metaphor of the 'pearl of great price' stand for, according to Garcia Marquez?

The majority of us in the bridge club are in the third trimester of our lives. The Australian author Alex Miller has written a book called 'Journey to the Stone Country', which draws on his experience of Aboriginal culture, and is an allusion to the journey of all of us in the third trimester of our lives. For a lot of people, that journey can be a lonely and difficult trudge, accompanied by a loss of so many things including health, friends, loved ones, capacities, regard, belief in oneself and above all connection to others. For me, the upside of this journey is discovering that pearl of great price, otherwise known as the getting of wisdom. By our time of life, we all possess these grains of wisdom, garnered from a lifetime of experience, hard work and disappointment. They are the things we wish we had known and could use when we were young, but which of course mostly come with age and experience.

When I look around me, I can't help noticing what seems to me the waste of that experience and wisdom in our society, and the assumption that retirees are invisible and no longer have anything to contribute. In that respect, Marquez sets his stories in societies which have an entirely different ambience, different ethics, in which there is an almost utopian and courtly respect for all people including the elderly, where age is automatically associated with the getting of wisdom, wisdom born of long and hard experience, and where work is valued not by its price, but in and of itself, and has its own dignity, no matter how menial. As Marquez suggests, we have the capacity to survive and endure difficult times, (including this one, we might add) through our ability to connect with one another, and by appreciating the duality of life, we are able to empathize and respect one another, which in turn makes for a fulfilling life.

So we all have at least a few grains of wisdom, that's all very nice and philosophical, a bit pie in the sky, if you like, but isn't that just some egghead spouting off again, how does that have anything to do with me?

Well in my next piece, I want to talk about the application of wisdom, because without application, wisdom is nothing. To borrow some words, it's 'a sounding gong or a clanging cymbal'. Unfortunately, one person's wisdom is not every person's wisdom, and that as they say, is where the rubber hits the road. In my next article, watch for the spinning wheels and the smoking tires, we might be in for a wild ride.

Dedicated to the memory of H-H, who was a brilliant raconteur, was always thought provoking and who made a difference to hundreds of peoples' lives.



2NT Means What When

TIPS ABOUT THE 2NT BID - JANET BROWN

2NT is a multi-faceted bid which means different things in different situations. It is the chameleon of the bridge table.

2NT as an opening bid shows 20 – 22 high cards points in a balanced hand. It is recommended that you allow yourself to hold a 5 card Major, even though this may not be your style for a 1NT opening. Some players blurt out 2♣ whenever they see a big hand, and later realise that they should have opened 2NT in the first place. So be careful.

♠ AK876
♥ AQ5
♦ AQ5
♣ J4

2NT as a reply opposite an opening bid shows 10 – 12 pts. (A limit bid) If the 2NT is opposite a 1♣ or a 1♦ opening then the bid denies a 4 card Major. Opposite 1♥ or 1♠, the bid shows a limit bid point count, unless you play the convention Jacoby 2NT – in which case 2NT changes its identity again.

“There’s no such thing as a 10 point hand”. If it’s a good looking 10 consider it as 11 and make your limit bid. If it’s a shabby looking 10, consider it as 9 points and shade your bidding down.

1♦ 1♥ 1♥ 2♣ **2NT in these situations** again shows 10 / 12 points. Partner has limited his
2♣ 2NT 2♥ 2NT hand to no more than 15 points. 2NT invites your partner to bid 3NT if
he holds 14/15 points (top of his range). Responder cannot make this 2NT
bid with lesser values. I see players go wrong on the first auction. They think, “Partner can look after
Diamonds and Clubs. I have honour cards in Hearts and Spades, so I’ll have a go at 2NT”. And they hold 7
or 8 points !! Bridge does not work like that. You must hold invitational values if you bid 2NT. You are
offering a game contract to your partner, and you need 11 – 12 points.

“There’s no such thing as a 10 point hand”.

1♦ 1♥ Now you have **JUMPED to 2NT** because 1NT was available as
2NT a rebid. This bid shows 18 / 19 points and is a balanced game force

1♠ 2♦ **No JUMP this time.** The bidding just flows on from 2♦ to 2NT
2NT and shows a minimum hand 12 – 14/15 points. Balanced



Your opponent opens with a Weak 2 bid and you overcall 2NT. You are promising 15 – 18 points with a stopper in the enemy suit. Partner can use Stayman and Transfers at the 3 level.

THE UNUSUAL NO TRUMP

Your opponent opens with 1♥ or 1♠ and you jump overcall 2NT. Most players use this bid to show a weak hand with 5/5 in the Minor suits. The bid is called “The Unusual 2NT.” Do not confuse this bid with the natural overcall of a weak two. They are not the same.

Your partner opens with a Weak two bid, and you respond 2NT. This is a special conventional bid asking your partner for more information. Perhaps you are playing the **Ogust** convention, which asks for a close definition of high card points and suit quality. Or perhaps you are playing the more modern **Feature Ask** and you want to know if partner holds minimum or maximum points, and also if he holds an Ace or King (A Feature) in an outside suit.



1NT 2NT is a bid in the beginner’s lexicon. Promises 8/9 points and asks Opener to pass with 16 and bid game with 17 / 18. If your Partner is opening 1NT with 15 – 17 points, then 8 is not enough for an invitational bid so you should probably pass with most 8 point hands.

I found this little picture on the Internet. It’s most appropriate to this topic.



2NT Means What When