



OXFORD BRIDGE CLUB



Newsletter no. 2

August 2008

What's new at OBC?

More opportunities to learn !!

On page 4 you can find details of the expanded programme of teaching at OBC. One of the aims is to provide learning opportunities for those who are unable to attend weekday daytime lessons; another is to provide a structured sequence of courses at various levels.

More opportunities to play !!

On page 3 you can find details of a new master-pointed daytime duplicate session, which may be of interest to any members who are available on Monday mornings. This is intended for competent players, who may also attend the evening club duplicates – and for those who are not keen to go out in the evenings. Associate Members are welcome to attend, provided that they are confident of being able to bid and play at the normal club tempo.

More opportunities to help !!

If you'd like to help out by scoring from time to time at any of the club duplicate sessions – here's your chance. See the item page 4.

Laws

Amendments to the laws of bridge, agreed by the World Bridge Federation in 2007, came into force in England on 1st August 2008. A summary of the changes affecting players is on page 2. Tournament Directors can find the changes affecting them on the EBU website at www.ebu.co.uk

Richard Sills

Changes to the OBC bar

This note is to advise members that the management committee has approved a proposal to make changes to the OBC bar by dismantling the existing infrastructure. From September, the room will become both a designated teaching room for bridge lessons and extra space for additional tables on Wednesday and Friday club nights. This will enable us to eliminate the need for tables located in the tea room and increase capacity to twenty tables.

The club will retain its bar certificate. Both alcoholic and soft drinks will be available in the tearoom, both before play and during the half time interval. It is further proposed that, for convenience, drinks are provided in cans rather than bottles, with the exception of wine. The choice of beverages available will be lager, bitter, Appletiser and Coca Cola, as well as red and white wine. The prices of drinks will be amended to reflect the changes in products.

Whilst the soundings that we have taken indicate an overwhelming level of support from members for these proposals, if you have any concerns or suggestions as we implement the new procedures, please talk to me or send an email to the management committee.

John Briggs

Bridge Law Changes for Players

I'm sure everybody is aware that new laws came in on 1 August 2008. The list of changes is below. This is as the EBU defines them.

From the player's point of view, there are few that will affect them but the major ones are that you must now shuffle your hand and that you can ask your fellow defender if they have revoked.

1. Shuffle your hand before returning it to the board. This stops the next player getting information about the bidding or the play of the hand.
2. You are still required to agree a hesitation when it happens and the TD should be summoned if there is any disagreement. The new laws state that the best time to claim actual damage is at the end of the hand (e.g. rather than on sight of dummy).
3. You are now allowed to ask about the meaning of an individual call in the opponents' auction but it shouldn't be done in such a way as to suggest a call or play to partner such as "does that 2H bid show hearts?" – perhaps indicating that the questioner holds hearts.
4. You are not allowed to ask questions because you think that your partner doesn't understand.
5. There is now something called the "Clarification Period". This is after the auction but before the play. The declaring side may consult their Convention Cards to ensure there is no misexplanation.
6. The laws now state that the cards in dummy must be arranged in columns pointing lengthways towards declarer, trumps on the right, lowest cards at the bottom.
7. Defenders can now ask one another if they have revoked.
The two answers are (obviously): Yes or No.
If "No", there is no further action required.
If "Yes", the Director needs to be called and they will explain how to continue, but the procedure is as before for a card deliberately played. Cards played to the revoke trick subsequent to the revoke may be changed.
8. Players are now allowed to point out that others have a quitted trick card pointing the wrong way. Declarer can do it at any time, but dummy and defenders can only do it until the lead is made to the following trick.

The OBC Directors will be gently enforcing the changes for most of August, but we will expect the members to be aware of them. We will be stricter from September onwards.

I believe these changes make everything a little clearer and easier and are sensible revisions to the law book.

I will be quite happy to answer any questions you might have regarding these law changes and the changes to other laws which deal with infractions.

Max Booker

A plea from the committee

Some members have expressed disquiet at players turning up to play when they are suffering a heavy cold, coughing and sneezing. We appreciate that players are reluctant to let their partner down by crying off at a late hour. But if you are in that condition, please bear in mind that a far greater number of players may be upset by your presence – and your partner can always contact the Partnership Secretary (Richard Sills, 01865 721644), to try to get a replacement.

A plea from your friendly Treasurer

Would members try to bring the correct change for table money in as few coins as possible or in small denomination notes. Collecting and banking the money is onerous enough without members using payment as an opportunity to relieve themselves of all the copper or silver coins in their wallets or purses. I don't want to bring in draconian measures like some other clubs who operate a 'five coin' policy where members are surcharged if they pay with more than five coins.

John Briggs

Daytime Duplicate at OBC

From 1 September 2008, Oxford Bridge Club will be running a daytime Master-Pointed Duplicate Bridge session every Monday.

Session Time

10.00am to 12.30pm

18 - 20 boards

We have chosen a shorter session to allow parking without having to pay twice or move your car.

Please arrive before 9.50am, so that the Director knows how many people will be playing. If you become delayed, please call 01865 554414 to let the Director know you will be turning up, as you will not be able to join the session if you arrive late, without prior notice. The boards will be pre-dealt and hand copies will be available after the session.

Refreshments

Self-service tea, coffee and soft drinks will be available throughout the session.

Parking

Parking is available in the Ferry Pool Car Park at a cost of £1.50 for 3 hours or in the surrounding streets. **Traffic Wardens are pretty keen in this area, so be sure to park in public parking spaces only.**

Players

The session will be open to Full Members of the Oxford Bridge Club and visitors. Associate members of Oxford Bridge Club are also welcome, provided that they are able to play at the required speed (2-board rounds in 15 minutes, and 3-board rounds in 22 minutes).

Table Money

Members: £3.00

Visitors: £4.00

Max Booker

A plea from your friendly Tournament Director

I have been called to the table several times recently to give a ruling, after which the players at the table have said that they "wish they hadn't bothered....".

Just because the ruling is difficult is not a reason not to call the Director. The reason the Director is there is to ensure the fair running of the competition – let's face it, it really *is* a competition to outdo everybody else in the room and score some Master Points! Because of the rewards at stake, it is vitally important that everybody who plays gets a fair chance to do their best under the laws as laid down by the EBU.

While it will usually give the non-offending side an advantage to get the ruling (and therefore penalise the offending side) this is a by-product of the ruling given. The ruling is intended to restore equity, when unusual situations can prevent a "normal" score being achieved by the non-offending side.

If there is a problem at your table, it is your responsibility and your duty under the laws of the game to call the Director. They will then, as an unbiased party, give a ruling which sorts out the problem. Even if you know the laws (and most players don't know them as well as they think they do!), you are not allowed to give rulings at your table. This is the Director's responsibility, as they are running the event under the auspices of the EBU.

Please use the Director. No matter what they say (or don't say), that is part of the reason they are there. They will give consistent rulings to encourage the smooth flow of the game. ANY player from either side can call the Director during the auction, and either Defender or Declarer can call the Director during the play (but Dummy can't until the end of play).

Max Booker

Learning to play bridge at Oxford Bridge Club

In response to demand for lessons outside the working day, and for a comprehensive and structured teaching programme, we've revamped the opportunities to learn and practise bridge at OBC.

Bridge for beginners

An introduction to bridge for complete beginners, with Esme Alden Thursdays from 10.00am to 12.00 noon or from 7.30pm to 9.30pm Fee: £70 per term for 10 two-hour lessons There are still vacancies on these courses – tell your friends!
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Bridge for Progressors

A structured course, designed to cater for learners who have followed a beginners' course at OBC or elsewhere, or who are returning to bridge after a break; with John Briggs	Learn and Play: an opportunity to put developing knowledge of the game into practice, with Peggy Manuell
Wednesday afternoon and Tuesday evening	Thursdays from 10.00am to 12.00 noon
Fully booked	Fee: £4 per two-hour session

Bridge for Improvers

A structured course, designed to cater for learners who have been learning bridge for at least two years at OBC or elsewhere, and wish to further develop their knowledge of the game; with Cathy Rowland	Supervised Duplicate: randomly dealt hands, offering bidding and play problems, with advice from John Simpson
Wednesday morning, Wednesday afternoon and Thursday evening	Thursdays from 10.00am to 12.00 noon
Fully booked	Fee: £4 per two-hour session

Further practice

No Fear/Fun Duplicate: duplicate bridge in a relaxed atmosphere, with plenty of time to think about bidding and play	Tuesday mornings: competitive bridge in a relaxed atmosphere, but under pressure to bid and play at normal club speed
Every Monday at 7.15pm	Every Tuesday at 10.00am
Table money: £3 per session	Table money: £3 per session

Scoring Course at OBC

Oxford Bridge Club is running a Scoring Course for the SCBridge software & BridgeMates. All those who are interested in learning how to score using the software are requested to email me (max@xammap.com or td@oxfordbridgeclub.com).

I am planning on spending enough time to allow everybody some experience of how to enter the scores and deal with the various problems that crop up. There will be plenty of time for everybody to gain enough practical experience to keep them happy.

The most sensible time is over the weekend, probably in the morning of either Saturday or Sunday, but this is not set in stone. Once everybody has emailed their wish to come on the course, along with their preferred day and time, I can allocate dates. I would hope to be able to set something up before the end of August.

Max Booker