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To: Sharon Thompson president@northshorebridgeclub.com.au

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Monthly Newsletter

February 2025 | Editor: Russell Spear

Dear Sharon,

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CLUB NOTICES

Your Old Phone Could Save a Life

North Shore Bridge Club, in partnership with Bendigo Bank and Rotary, is collecting unused phones to support victims of domestic violence. These phones will be professionally wiped of data and then regifted, providing a safe and essential means of communication for those in need.

This initiative makes a real difference, and we encourage you to donate any unused phones. Simply drop them off at either The Willis or East Lindfield, and we will ensure they are donated to this important cause. Thank you for your generosity!

New to North Shore Bridge Club pairs Congresses in 2025

We're excited to announce a change to our Congress events for 2025!

Instead of Restricted sections, we're introducing **Intermediate sections** to encourage more entries and make the events even better for you.

All players with under 750 Masterpoints will be eligible to play. Depending on the level of participation, we hope to offer both Intermediate and Restricted prizes – this will be determined by the number of entries.

In addition, we have our special **Stratified Pairs** event this March! This unique format allows to participate either **face-to-face** or **online** (or both). The event will take place over five Saturdays in March, with prizes available for four divisions:

- **Open**
- **Intermediate (<750 Masterpoints)**
- **Restricted (<300 Masterpoints)**
- **Rookie (<100 Masterpoints)**

Key details:

- Play all five sessions for the best chance to win, or a minimum of three with the same partner to qualify.
- Face-to-face sessions: 1:00 PM at East Lindfield
- Online sessions: 1:30 PM
- No entry is required – just show up at your preferred session! Visitors are welcome.

Mark your calendars and join us for an exciting year ahead at North Shore Bridge Club!

New Calendar Filters

We've added some fantastic new filters to our **calendar**! You can access it by clicking on **Events** in the menu or **Club Calendar** in the left-hand side shortcuts. This will take you to the calendar, which (in our opinion) just got even better!

The new filters include:

- **East Lindfield (EL)**: Shows all events at our East Lindfield venue, including congresses, events, and duplicate sessions.
- **The Willis (WS)**: Displays all events held at The Willis.
- **Online (RB)**: Highlights all online sessions, events, and congresses.
- **Congress or Events**: Includes all face-to-face and online congresses and events.
- **Intermediate Events**: Shows congresses or events with Rookie, Restricted, or Intermediate sections.
- **Bridge Lessons**: Lists all of our bridge lessons.
- **All**: Displays everything (this is the default view, so it can look a bit busy).

Tips for Use:

To make the calendar your go-to for checking what's on at NSBC, use one of the specific filters. For example, selecting **East Lindfield (EL)** will show all events at East Lindfield, while **Online (RB)** focuses solely on online sessions. When you find an event, click on it to see the details, including entry links if applicable.

We hope these new features make it easier to stay informed and plan your bridge schedule.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Membership Update

December, January, and February are typically busy months for managing membership cancellations and renewals. Historically, our attrition rate is around 20 - 25%, and we've been working hard to reduce this by understanding why members leave. The most common reason is time constraints, which we can't do much about. However, the second biggest reason is members not having a regular partner—this truly saddens me.

In the coming months, we'll be focusing strongly on partnership matching. While this is no easy task, we're exploring ways for members to connect, trial partnerships, and find their ideal bridge partner. Stay tuned for updates on this initiative as we develop solutions.

Mentoring Program

We officially launched the mentoring program in January, and I'm thrilled to share that it's going gangbusters! We already have 24 mentor-mentee partnerships.

We always need more mentors. If you'd like to lend your bridge experience, give back to the game, and help someone improve, please register here: [Mentor Registration](#).

For those wanting to improve and join as a mentee, register here: [Mentee Registration](#). Currently, we have more mentees than mentors, so there's a waitlist—but this evolves daily. Come join us and make 2025 the year you grow as a bridge player!

Arriving Late to Sessions

Here's something I learned last month: when a face-to-face director sets up a session, one of their key inputs is knowing how many players are present, as they need to decide what movement to use. The movement they choose determines the number of boards required, and these boards are pre-dealt and distributed before the session begins.

Now imagine this: five minutes before start time, the director has counted the players, chosen movement, and distributed the boards. Then Harry and Sally walk in late. The entire movement changes, boards must be recollected, and new ones distributed. This causes delays for everyone and a huge amount of stress for our Director.

While life occasionally gets in the way, arriving late shouldn't be the norm. Unfortunately, some members are habitually late, which affects everyone else's experience. Please allow yourself extra 15 minutes to get to bridge. Respect your fellow members, who may have tight schedules, and the directors, who juggle multiple tasks before every session.

If you do find yourself running late, please call the Director or someone you know at the session. This will allow the Director to account for your arrival in the numbers when deciding the movement and minimise disruption. Your punctuality—or a quick phone call—would mean so much to everyone. Thank you!

Annual General Meeting

Our AGM is coming up in April, and we're looking for fresh eyes and hands to join the committee. We have a few key areas where we'd love some help:

- **Marketing:** I currently handle this, but new perspectives, extra hands and ideas would be invaluable.
- **Member Engagement and Growth:** This critical role involves helping members settle in, find partners, and feel part of the club—ensuring they renew year after year.
- **Human Resources:** We've done a lot of work ensuring our employee contracts are compliant; we'd like someone to help us maintain this.

If you're interested in any of these areas or would like to chat about what's involved, please contact me on **0422 613 53**.

Thank you, as always, for your support. Here's to another fantastic month of bridge at North Shore!

Shaz Thompson

MASTERS OF BRIDGE

An interview with leading Bridge Players

	Anita Curtis
How Long have you been Playing Bridge. How long teaching Bridge	I started playing bridge when I was 16 years old as one of the "Ron Klinger kids". Ron gave us lessons in the school holidays and we were sponsored to go down to the Canberra Youth tournament – an eye opener! I had a 20 year break for family reasons but got back into bridge in 2013, taking supervised and then teaching bridge
Over 98% of your Master points Gold/ Red, you rarely play Club bridge – how do you retain your skill level	I do bidding practice with my partners on BBO & zoom and play tournaments but am a firm believer in a life outside bridge.
You have a very well established reputation as a Bridge trainer where did that skill come from	School teaching (languages) laid the basis for my bridge teaching skills, although I no longer have to give out detentions! Lesson planning & a cohesive program are really important. The other essential ingredient is realising that everyone learns at different speeds & in different ways
You teach the five major conventions of Bridge, do you use those yourself? And what other conventions do you use	I use lots of conventions but they are an aid and aren't a substitute for bidding judgement. A common mistake for players is to take on too many conventions and not understand how they work.
Which do you think are the most effective Bidding Conventions other than the 5 Std Conventions for: Rookies and	Fourth Suit Forcing is one of the most important conventions, because it allows you to set up game forcing auctions. It also means that you can distinguish between invitational & forcing sequences. I like cue bidding &

Restricted Players	splinters too.
Defence plays around 50% of Bridge playing. What tactics would you teach/recommend for Rookie and Restricted players	• Pay attention to partner's signals • Work out what declarer is trying to do and count (e.g. draw trumps) • Look at every card and COUNT
Do you play active or passive defence	That depends on whether declarer has a source of tricks for example, there is a long running suit, you need to be active. If not, you can tend towards a passive defence.
For New, Rookie and Restricted Players what errors do you most commonly see. How should they correct them.	In the bidding, it's essential to know what is forcing & what isn't and to think ahead about what your rebid will be. As declarer, BEFORE you play to trick 1, plan how to make your contract & what techniques you need to use e.g. finesse, cross ruff, establish your side suit.
What are some of the rules you would teach for defence	• Don't do anything automatically. Look at dummy consider the bidding. • How many tricks can you see in defence? How many tricks will declarer make?
What do you see as the best ways for players to improve their game	After each game, look at the boards you did well on and boards that you didn't. Analyse why and ask an experienced player if you don't know.
Do you count the cards as they are played (of how many suits) Do you have a method for counting cards	I have a tendency to not notice my partner's card, so find a way to be effective to say the card in my head e.g. Spade 5.
Any other thoughts/questions you would add?	Enjoy your bridge! Be nice to everyone at the table!

LESSONS WITH ANITA

Anita Curtis has quite a number of lessons in the offing - they are specifically aimed at Rookie and Restricted level players who want to upgrade their skill level and be more competitive. Review the below and take up the challenge to improve your standard of play with an outstanding teacher

UNLOCK THE SECRETS OF BRIDGE WITH ANITA CURTIS'S INTERMEDIATE ONLINE LESSONS

Are you looking to take your bridge game to the next level? Anita Curtis's Intermediate bridge lessons are just what you need! Anita, a highly qualified teacher, has an extraordinary talent breaking down even the most complex bridge conventions and strategies into simple, understandable steps. Whether you're a Rookie player eager to improve or a Restricted player preparing to step into Open play, these lessons are perfect for you.

WHY CHOOSE ANITA'S LESSONS?

- **Expert Instruction:** Anita's experience and skill as a teacher make learning bridge engaging and accessible. She ensures that all players, regardless of skill level, can grasp material and apply it in real games.

- **Convenient Online Format:** The lessons are delivered online via Zoom, making it easy

- **Convenient Online Format.** The lessons are delivered online via Zoom, making it easy participate from the comfort of your home. Each session is just 2 hours long, so it's a manageable time commitment for busy players.
- **Comprehensive Resources:** When you register for a lesson, you'll receive:
 - Detailed Lesson Notes.
 - Practice Hands to reinforce your learning.
 - A recording of the session to watch at your convenience or for revision.
- **Flexibility:** Can't attend the live session? No problem! As long as you've registered, you still receive all the materials, including the video recording. This flexibility makes it easy learn at your own pace.
- **Better Together:** These lessons are even more beneficial when you and your partner attend together. Practicing the concepts as a pair will enhance your synergy and performance at the table.

KEY DETAILS

- **When:** Thursday mornings, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM (2 hours).
- **Where:** Online via Zoom.
- **Cost:**
 - Members: \$17 per lesson.
 - Visitors: \$20 per lesson.
- **Registration:** Email Anita at ac210927@bigpond.net.au. Be sure to register by the night before to receive your Zoom link in time.

WHO SHOULD JOIN?

These lessons are ideal for:

- **Rookie Players:** Enhance your understanding and build your confidence.
- **Restricted Players:** Sharpen your skills and prepare to take on the challenges of Open play.

DON'T MISS OUT!

Anita Curtis's Intermediate lessons offer an unparalleled opportunity to improve your bridge game in a supportive and flexible learning environment. Whether you're attending live or reviewing the materials in your own time, these lessons will help you build your skills and strategy.

Register now and take the next step in your bridge journey! Email Anita at ac210927@bigpond.net.au to secure your spot.

[Click here to see Anita's February and March Schedule.](#)

EXTEND YOUR BRIDGE KNOWLEDGE

EXTENDING ON THE FIVE ESSENTIAL CONVENTIONS - Stayman, Transfers, Strong 2 Clubs,

Blackwood and Pre-Empts

As Anita has indicated one type of effective convention to use is Cue Bidding and one of the most popular of Cue bids is Michaels Cue bids. In conjunction with Michaels Cue bids are Unusual 2NT. Michaels Cue bids are named after the person who devised the convention - Milton Michaels, a prominent lecturer and writer from the USA in the 50's and 60's. Unusual 2NT was devised by Alvin Roth in the 1940's and developed with his partner

There are a number of conditions which apply in which a Cue bidding can be made and over the course of time there have been alterations of the convention made to suit other thought options.

Sticking to the original concept of the convention the following is required

1. Either Cuebid can only be made immediately after the Opps opening bid as an overcall. In situation where partner passes and the Opps partner also passes then fourth position can still make the Cue Bid. If the Openers partner responds with a bid in the third position the fourth position cannot use a Cue bid.
2. Overcaller must have 5 cards in both indicated suits - other suit set ups such as 5 and 4 or 4 and 4 should not use Michaels Cue Bid as a bid
3. The most common method to play Michaels Cue Bid is to have either a weak hand (8-12 points) including distribution or a very strong hand - 16+ points. For hands in the intermediate range (13-15 points) then then overcall the higher ranking suit.

What do the Cue bids mean?

Michaels Cue bid

Openers bid is 1C, Overcaller 2C means a hand in which the overcaller has 5 cards of both majors

Opener 1D, Overcaller 2D means a hand in which the Overcaller has 5 cards of both majors

Opener 1H, Overcaller 2H, means a hand which has 5 of the other major (Spades) and 5 cards in an undefined Minor suit

Opener 1S, Overcaller 2S means a hand which has 5 of the other Major (Hearts) and 5 cards in an undefined Minor suit

Unusual No Trump

If you have two five cards suits but cannot use Michaels Cue bid (for example Opener opens 1C and you have 5 of both Minor suits then 2NT - a jump overcall indicates you have 2, 5 card suits both of which are the two lowest non-bid suits. To clarify the latter statement if you overbid a major suit bid it indicates 5 cards in both minor suits. If you overbid 2NT over a minor bid it shows 5 cards in Hearts and the other minor.

Bidding either Michaels Cue bid or Unusual 2NT makes hands that are difficult to describe much easier to bid

Responding to a Cue bid is relatively simple - if partner has a fit in a nominated suit then bid that suit at the next lowest level - if the Cue Bidder has a weak hand they will pass or if they have a stronger hand they will raise the bid

MAJOR RESULTS

The major event for the Month of January was the Australia Day Swiss Pairs Online Event for Open and a combined session of Novice/Restricted and Intermediate.

In the Open section the winners were:

Wieslaw Przewozniak and Patrick Jiang

Runners Up: **Raj Limaye and Ranjit Limaye**

Third Place Getters: **Gary Lane and Leo Goorevich**

In the Intermediate Section winners were: **Frank Hardiman and Andrew Grace**

Restricted Winners were: **Diane Hood and Neil Williams**

Novice Winners were: **Craig Beconsall and Bricet Kloren**

Congratulations to all our winners and congratulations to all participants who gave the competition splendid support

UPCOMING EVENTS

Online Swiss Pairs Congress - OPEN

Sunday, 16th February

NSBC Congress

| Club Championships | Pairs | Online | **Red Masterpoints**

[Click here to enter via MyABF](#)

Online Swiss Pairs - Intermediate/Restricted/Novice

Sunday, 16th February

NSBC Congress | Club Championships | Pairs | Online | **Red Masterpoints**

[Click here to enter via MyABF](#)

Summer Teams Championship

Thursdays starting 20 February, 27th February, 6th March

NSBC Congress | Club Championships | Teams | Online Real Bridge | **Red Masterpoints**

[Click here to enter via MyABF](#)

Stratified Pairs

Saturday starting 02 Mar 2025 13:00, each Saturday until/including 29 Mar, both Online and Face to Face at EL
NSBC Congress | Club Championships | Teams | Online Real Bridge | **Red Masterpoints**

No entry required - just show up as normal

Metro North Interclub Pairs

Sunday 09 March 25 13:00

Pairs | Face to Face | **Red Masterpoints**

[Click here to complete form and send](#)

GNOT (Grand National Open Teams)Qualifier

4 week teams Thursdays starting 13 March, 27th March, 3 April 17 April

NSBC Congress | Club Championships | Teams | Online Real Bridge | **Gold Masterpoints**

[Click here to enter via MyABF](#)

2024 Monthly Winners Tournament

Friday 21 March

NSBC Congress | Club Championships | Pairs | Face to Face East Lindfield | **Red Masterpoints**

[Click here to fill out an Entry Form and send](#)

LESSONS

To improve your bridge it is essential to practice, play, understand the nuances of play, reviewing with your partner each time you play, particularly the boards where you have not done well and very importantly, learning and reinforcing on a regular basis.

To reinforce concepts and to develop concept options, NSBC has a number of excellent teachers including Anita Curtis (see above), John Newman, Liz Wilkinson, Jamie Thompson and sometimes, specific but very well credentialed associates of NSBC such as Will Jenner-O'Shea, all coordinated by Sue Crompton.

Each of our teachers perform specific tasks and some are available to introduce short topics at the beginnings of actual sessions (including Sue). The following are a number of teaching sessions over the next few months which are well worth attendance if you wish to improve your bridge playing

Join **John Newman** at the following Lessons

1. Which bids are forcing

To bid with confidence you need to know the strength of rebids and responses. John will put it all in context so you can see broad simple patterns. He'll look at how to bid as a passed hand. Gain clarity about auctions that many players misunderstand and discover how much easier bridge feels!

Friday, February 28, 2025, 13:00. To join John at this session [please register here](#)

2. Many many Doubles

Winning players use takeout doubles all the time. They're flexible and they help you locate major suit fits when bidding space is cramped. We will answer these questions: Which doubles are takeout? Hint: almost all of them! Learn some new takeout doubles spots to make your auctions simpler. Which doubles are penalty? When is it more practical to bid a suit rather than double?

Fri, 14 Mar 25, 13:00. To join John at this session [please register here](#)

We have a session this February with our very popular associate teacher **Will Jenner O'Shea** -

Mastering Good No-Trump Games. Getting To Good No-Trump Games More Often Using the Fourth-Suit Forcing Convention Showing Stoppers, and Asking for Stoppers Improve Your Hand Evaluation Play and Defence Tips at No-Trump Contracts

Friday, Feb 14, 2025, 1000. To join Will at this session [please register here](#)

As there are many of you who like Anita Curtis as a teacher to review the training options she is offering please review Anita's programme [here](#)

DEAR DIRECTOR

My tip for newer players. Bridge is a game where you need to be brave and have a go. So often players just decide to invite partner to rebid rather than bid game themselves when they know they have enough points. Partner never does what you want them to do! If you are brave and bid game and make it, that is exciting. If you bid game and don't make it but you had a go then the sun still comes up the next day.

