



#### Results

#### Naturalish can be better

Acol and 4+ club aficionados will smile smugly after reaching 6♣ on the deal below:

Round 3, Board 4, West deals, all vulnerable

♠ K 6 5 ♥ A J 9 8 ♦ 10 6 ♣ A 10 6 5	<table border="1" style="background-color: #006400; color: white; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td><td style="padding: 2px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W</td><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	♠ Q J 10 9 8 ♥ 6 ♦ J 9 8 7 3 ♣ J 9
N	E					
W	S					
♠ 7 4 3 ♥ Q 10 7 4 2 ♦ Q 4 ♣ 8 7 4						
♠ A 2 ♥ K 5 3 ♦ A K 5 2 ♣ K Q 3 2						

In the modern vernacular so popular today, 1♣ is often a prepared short club (2+), the start of a weak notrump and transfer response sequence.

Pairs like Paula and David McLeish, Michael Courtney – Joan Butts and Sue Lusk – Viv Wood, however, open four-card suits.

I watched Sue and Viv (who I kibitzed in Round 3) bid accurately to 6♣ after a 1♣ – 2♣ inverted minor sequence, earning 12 IMPs in a match they lost by 5 IMPs.

6NT is also a make on the hand, but needs a modicum of luck – top marks to those who bid 5♣.

One very experienced local pair, on the 2+ clubs bandwagon, bid 1♣ 1♠ (6-10 or diamonds, forcing), and after a 1NT rebid and 2♦ (GF) 2♥ continuation, then 3♣ were in the right strain, but making four overtricks when 3♣ was the final contract.

#### Submissions to Editor, Stephen Lester



Lesley Gunson, here with Keith Mitchell, models one of the **Play Bridge** bags which are so popular

I watched a relay pair grind out a mile of bids to reach 6♣ too, the same way John McIlraith and Patricia Grigson endured a relentless auction to 7NT on this deal:

Round 1, Board 5, North deals, NS vulnerable

♠ Q 9 6 2 ♥ 10 3 ♦ 8 6 2 ♣ 7 5 4 3	<table border="1" style="background-color: #006400; color: white; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td><td style="padding: 2px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W</td><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	♠ K J 5 ♥ Q J 7 6 2 ♦ 7 3 ♣ K Q 10
N	E					
W	S					
♠ A 3 ♥ A K 5 ♦ A K J 10 ♣ A J 9 2						
♠ 10 8 7 4 ♥ 9 8 4 ♦ Q 9 5 4 ♣ 8 6						



Viv Woods, LUSK team

I am surprised at the number of Wests who didn't drive to 7♥ or 7NT on the deal.

Yes, we've opened 1♥ on less, so the problem has to be that we are scared this is one of those times.



John McIlrath did not enjoy the relentless auction to 7NT

The relay pair, Western Australian pair Jon Free – Ron Cooper were able to pinpoint the exact shape and controls (including queens) in the East hand after East's opening 1♦ bid (10-14 HCP with 5 hearts). I sometimes practise on BBO against these guys, and when they have the wherewithal to relay out their shape and controls, it is awesome to watch.

Back to the TRAVIS – LUSK tussle:

The LUSK NS pair had another chance to beat TRAVIS on this deal:

Round 3, Board 8, West deals, nil vulnerable

<p>♠ 10 9 ♥ 7 2 ♦ 10 6 5 3 ♣ A K 10 5 2</p>	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		<p>♠ A Q J 7 5 ♥ A Q 4 ♦ 8 4 ♣ 8 6 3</p>
	N										
W		E									
	S										
<p>♠ K 6 4 2 ♥ K J 8 5 3 ♦ -- ♣ Q J 9 4</p>		<p>♠ 8 3 ♥ 10 9 6 ♦ A K Q J 9 7 2 ♣ 7</p>									

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
<i>Smart</i>	<i>Woods</i>	<i>Havas</i>	<i>Lusk</i>
pass	pass	1♠	3♦
4♦	dbl	4♠	5♦
5♠	all pass		

Three points about this auction: 1. I would have bid 5♣ over 4♦ on the North hand, obviously a save in diamonds and suggesting a club lead if defending. 2. I would not have bid 5♠ in the direct seat over South's 5♦. Bitter experience has taught me that the five-level belongs to the opponents. 3. I might have started with ♣7 against 5♠, even without North bidding 5♣.

On a diamond lead, Havas was able to draw trumps and claim 12 tricks, while at the other table a club lead put paid to 5♠, 11 IMPs to TRAVIS.





My leading style is that a nine shows one card higher, unless I am leading from shortage. Both Wests were in 3NT on a club lead.



At the table I was watching, North led a low club and South inserted the jack, not the six at trick one. This meant West now had a legitimate line for nine tricks: finessing ♣10 would provide the extra trick required.

I was surprised, then, when West won ♣K, crossed to dummy with a heart and played a spade to the nine and North's jack.

North, seeing South's count card on the heart should be able to count declarer's 10 tricks at this point – four hearts, three spades and three clubs. The only chance is a diamond shift: now declarer is two down. 1 IMP to TRAVIS when the other table made only nine tricks.

In the combined fields, 3NT was made 29 times and went down six times. This does not say too much for our defence!

Last hand for the day features a rare technical brilliance:

## 2. CAUTION

North deals, EW vulnerable

### NORTH

♠ A Q 10 8 6  
 ♥ A Q 9 5  
 ♦ 8  
 ♣ J 10 8

### SOUTH

♠ K 5  
 ♥ K 10 8 6 4  
 ♦ A 2  
 ♣ A 7 5 2

West	North	East	South
	1♠	pass	2♥
pass	4♦	pass	4NT
pass	5♠	pass	5NT
pass	6♥	all pass	

North's 4♦ was a splinter bid, promising a diamond shortage and heart support. You then drove to the small slam in hearts via key card enquiries.

West leads ♦J. After winning this with ♦A, you cash ♥A and all follow. How do you plan to take another 10 tricks?

The last deal (not in any particular order) saw a flat board when both NS pairs misdefended.

Round 3, Board 7, West deals, nil vulnerable

♠ J 8 4		♠ K 3 2			
♥ 7 5 3		♥ K 10 4			
♦ A 7		♦ 8 6 2			
♣ Q 9 8 7 5		♣ A 10 4 2			
♠ A 10 9 7	<table border="1"> <tr><td>N</td></tr> <tr><td>W E</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	
N					
W E					
S					
♥ A Q J 6					
♦ J 10 5					
♣ K 3					
		♠ Q 10 7 3			
		♥ J 9 4 2			
		♦ K 9			
		♣ K 8 3			
		♠ 9 5			
		♥ K 10 8 7			
		♦ 3 2			
		♣ Q 9 6 4 2			
		♠ J 4 2			
		♥ 6 5 3			
		♦ A 10 7 6			
		♣ A 10 5			
		♠ A K 8 6			
		♥ A Q			
		♦ Q J 8 5 4			
		♣ J 7			
		♠ Q 6 5			
		♥ 9 8 2			
		♦ K Q 9 4 3			
		♣ J 6			

## Winkle winkle little star

Board 13, North deals, all vulnerable

♠ Q 10 7 3	<table border="1"> <tr><td>N</td></tr> <tr><td>W E</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ J 4 2
N					
W E					
S					
♥ J 9 4 2		♥ 6 5 3			
♦ K 9		♦ A 10 7 6			
♣ K 8 3		♣ A 10 5			
		♠ A K 8 6			
		♥ A Q			
		♦ Q J 8 5 4			
		♣ J 7			

Sydney identity Peter Fordham may, like me, have mobility issues, but he can still play a mean dummy and recognise the gamut of squeezes and

## SOLUTION to Tim Bourke's Test Your Play

If this came up at the table, I like to think that everyone would make 12 tricks on this layout

	♠ A Q 10 8 6		
	♥ A Q 9 5		
	♦ 8		
	♣ J 10 8		
♠ J 9 7 4 3		♠ 2	
♥ 2		♥ J 7 3	
♦ Q J 10 3		♦ K 9 7 6 5 4	
♣ K 9 6		♣ Q 4 3	
	♠ K 5		
	♥ K 10 8 6 4		
	♦ A 2		
	♣ A 7 5 2		

After drawing trumps and playing ♠K followed by ♠5 you should make sure of your contract by covering West's spade pip with the ten. On this layout, the ten will win the trick and you will claim your contract.

If instead you played ♠A or ♠Q on the second round of spades, you would no longer be able to make 12 tricks.

You may ask "What would happen if it was West who discarded on the second round of spades?" The best chance is that East has ♣KQx(x) without the nine or a doubleton ♣Kx or ♣Qx. So, you would lead ♣J from dummy next: if the jack is covered, win the ace and then lead a low club and play dummy's eight unless West produces ♣9. (If trumps were 2-2, you would ruff a diamond before playing on spades, so that East would be end-played if he began with ♣K9 or ♣Q9 doubleton and would have to concede a ruff and discard). If ♣J loses to ♣K or ♣Q with West, play ♣A after regaining the lead and hope for the best.


other rare textbook plays that occur from time to time.

A tad overboard when the auction was:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	<i>Fordham</i>		
			1♦
pass	1♥	pass	1♠
pass	1NT	pass	3NT
all pass			

## THE BRIDGE SHOP

### Double Dummy Problem 1

<b>NORTH</b>		
♠ K		
♥ K 8		
♦ 4		
♣ A Q		
♠ --		♠ --
♥ Q J 9		♥ A 7
♦ 2		♦ --
♣ J 6		♣ K 5 4 3
<b>SOUTH</b>		
♠ A Q J		
♥ --		
♦ 3		
♣ 9 8		

South to lead with spades as trumps - North-South to win all of the remaining six tricks. Solution in tomorrow's bulletin.

This problem is taken from **A Compendium of Double Dummy Problems** by Hugh Darwen, available from **The Bridge Shop** [here](#).

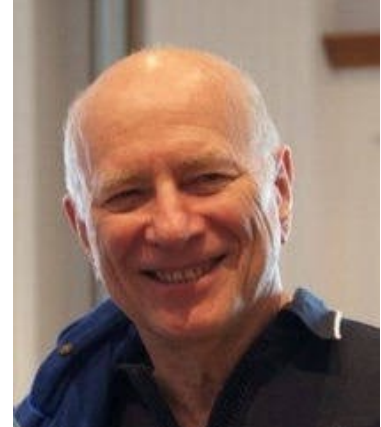
East tried a thirds and fifths ♠5 lead to East's king, a club back to East's ace, followed by a ♠2 – which Peter ducked to West's queen.

A club came back, and Peter, deciding that their carding was honest, rose ♠Q, throwing diamonds from dummy on ♠Q and the next two clubs.

West discarded a diamond and a heart, while East discarded a diamond and a heart. Now he cashed ♠AK, unblocked ♥AQ and exited a diamond. *Continued on next page*



Watch Learn Be Entertained



Ron edited the national bridge magazine, *Australian Bridge* from 1972 - 1984 and has provided the worldwide bridge community with a wealth of bridge books and articles during his reign as author, teacher, columnist, holiday host as well as Australian representative and evergreen player. We are lucky to be able to present a few of Ron's columns on defence, collected over a number of years.

## Problem 1

### What do you lead?

From **The Real Deal Workout**

For an annual subscription, see [www.ronklingerbridge.com](http://www.ronklingerbridge.com)

*Teams, South deals, nil vulnerable*

♠ A Q 2	♠ 5 4
♥ A Q J 7 6 4	♥ K 9 8 5
♦ 8 4	♦ Q 10 6 5 3
♣ 3 2	♣ 9 7

N
W E

West	North	East	South
			1♣
pass	1♥	pass	2♣
pass	2♦ <sup>1</sup>	pass	2♠ <sup>2</sup>
pass	3♥	pass	3NT
all pass			

1. Artificial, game-forcing
2. Showing values in spades

West leads ♦K. From A-K doubleton, partner would lead ace-then-king. If partner has ♦A as well as ♦K, partner will have at least three diamonds.

Your agreements are high-encourage, low discourage. Which card would you play as East?

The deal arose in the final of the 1996 USA selection tournament to choose its Women's Team for the World Championships in Rhodes:

Playing high-encourage, East signalled 'I like it' with ♦10 on West's lead of ♦K. West continued with ♦A, followed by ♦J. Suddenly ♦10 at trick 1 had created a problem at trick 3. Did West begin with three diamonds or with four?

### Solution overleaf

### From page 4

This was the endgame:

♠ --- ♥ K 10 ♦ 3 ♣ ---	♠ --- ♥ J 9 ♦ K ♣ ---	<table style="border: 2px solid green; width: 40px; height: 40px; text-align: center; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td>N</td></tr> <tr><td>W E</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ --- ♥ --- ♦ A 10 7 ♣ ---
N						
W E						
S						
♠ --- ♥ --- ♦ Q J 8 ♣ ---						

EW could no longer score their two diamond tricks when Peter played a diamond from dummy, and he guessed right in hearts when West was in with ♦K. Phew!



Roy Nixon setting up the playing area



**Problem 1**

**Solution**

The deal was reported by the late Dick Cummings in October, 1996.

**Cummings:** 'Should East overtake the jack (correct if partner started with three diamonds) or let it win (correct opposite A-K-J-9)?'

After some anguish, East decided to overtake ♦J. This was the complete deal:

	♠ A Q 2				
	♥ A Q J 7 6 4				
	♦ 8 4				
	♣ 3 2				
♠ 10 9 8 6 3	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ 5 4
N					
W E					
S					
♥ 10 2		♥ K 9 8 5			
♦ A K J		♦ Q 10 6 5 3			
♣ J 10 6		♣ 9 7			
	♠ K J 7				
	♥ 3				
	♦ 9 7 2				
	♣ A K Q 8 5 4				

East had made the right decision. She cashed two more diamonds to take 3NT one down.

**Cummings:** 'In my partnership, ♦6 would be the recommended come-on signal at trick one.'

Of course, there is no problem at all if the partnership plays low-like, high-hate. East would then signal with the ♦3 to encourage a diamond continuation.

USA (Gail Greenberg – Lynn Deas, Juanita Chambers – Shawn Quinn, Irina Levitina – Jill Blanchard who is Greenberg's daughter) went on to win the Women's Teams in Rhodes.

**Is it time to worry?**

*Ed: But for the disturbances caused by Covid 19, 2022 would have been the 50<sup>th</sup> occurrence of the National Open Teams. Still the flagship event of the Summer Festival of Bridge, the event has seen world class players compete, attracting teams from countries including New Zealand, Indonesia, the USA, Italy and Great Britain.*

*2021 put paid to 2022 being the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, with the event being cancelled, making 2023 the 50<sup>th</sup> National Open Teams.*

*John Brockwell, Australia's leading administrator and instrumental in helping create a majority of the national tournaments over the last 50 years, has been working on a treatise called "A Compulsive Pastime: A History of Bridge in ACT and Surrounding Regions". Due for release in 2023, this mammoth effort not only records bridge in the ACT, but the development of bridge in Australia since its inception in Australia. John comments on one of the battles facing the future of the game in ACP:*



Gabby Lorentz, only surviving member of AUERBACH, 1973 NOT winners in Sydney



## An Ageing Population (2018)

The inaugural National Open Teams was played in Sydney in 1973. The following year the tournament came to Canberra, and except for 1976, has remained here ever since (in 2021 there was no NOT, and in 2022 the event was held online).

Players from all mainland states and New Zealand contested the 1974 NOT. The teams were:

**Howard:** Dick Cummings Denis Howard Tim Seres Roelof Smilde (NSW)

**Auerbach:** Egon Auerbach Gaby Lorentz Olek Minc Eric Strasser (NSW)

**Grynberg:** Ted Griffin Robert Grynberg Ron Klingler Alan Walsh (NSW) George Havas (ACT) Bobby Richman (Vic)

**Sloman:** Don Evans Andrew Reiner Hubert Sloman Ian Weiss (NSW)

**McCance:** Ron Cook Ian McCance Wally Scott Ailsa Tandy (Vic)

**Cornell:** Michael Cornell Paul Marston Tom Winiata (NZ) John Newman (NSW)

**Hilditch:** Bob Bignall Ian Hilditch David Lusk (SA) Tony Hancock David Hoffman Viggo Pedersen (ACT)

**Lavings:** Paul Lavings Geoff Lewis Andrew Markovics Neil Mathieson Alan Richardson (NSW)

**Stewart-Richardson:** Peter Fordham Mike Hughes Don Stewart-Richardson (NSW) Ian Miller (NZ)

**Bourke:** Tim Bourke Bob Gallus David Smith (Vic) David Watkins (NSW)

**Newton:** Harold Hochmuth Stan Newton Peter Nuffield Les Szatmary Steve Szatmary Frank Theeman (NSW)

**Moore:** Frank Cayley Mrs P Evans Michael Hornibrook Tom Moore Eric Ramshaw Paula Schroor (NSW)

**Pearson:** Bill Hunt Belinda Pearson Neville Pearson David Smyth Judy Smyth David Sobell (ACT)

**Puusaari:** Marshall Ahearn Leon Kline Paul Puusaari Geoff Smith Bruce Wheelan (NSW)

**Hume:** Kevin Hume Tony Hutton Tony Ong Paul Wyer (NSW)

**Marchant:** John Marchant John McShane Kinga Moses Neville Moses Brian Rawson (NSW)

**Tabak:** Gabi Tabak (Vic) Lola Kremnizer Eve Maizels Grace Wagstaff (NSW)

**Dahler:** Ivy Dahler Gray Reynolds (Qld) Lila Bradbury Sheila Fowler Jean Read (ACT)

**Cuppaidge:** Stuart Craig George Cuppaidge Bruce Neill (Qld) Pat Webster (NSW)

**Havas:** Elizabeth Havas (ACT) Pauline Gumby Susie Isaacs (Klinger) Barbara McDonald (NSW)

**Neill:** Mrs J Cartwright Fay Landy Barbara Neill Sue Neill (Lusk) (Qld)

**Lyndon:** Margaret Drake Mrs E Hooper Edna Lyndon Jill Stubbs (Roe) (Qld)

**Curnow:** Roger Curnow Richard Douglas Gordon Schmidt David Vaughan (ACT)

**Challingsworth:** Helen Biddulph Anne Challingsworth Mrs B Fell Molly Gowing Joan Jordan Val Pratten (NSW)

**Downes:** Ken Downes Margot Downes Bruce Morrison (ACT) John McGovern (NSW)

**Colman:** Ralph Berlinski (Vic) J Colman Patti Dukes (NSW) James O'Sullivan (Qld)

**McCulloch:** Terry Gent Mrs W Johnston Haydn Lowe Mabs McCulloch (WA)

**Skov:** Michael Corrigan B Davis Eric Davis Gordon Kellerman Keith Skov D Whitehead (NSW)

**Calcraft:** Les Calcraft L Faraone Nigel Rosendorff Peter Smith (WA)

**Askew:** David Askew Peter Chan Phil Gue Gordon Henderson (SA)

**Vadas:** G Haley Colleen Leary (Pidcock) Mrs L Smith Ruth Spielman Chris Sundstrom Bob Vadas (NSW)

**Kahn:** Colin Carey Ron Hutchison Richard Kahn Bob Rawkins (NSW)

**Ridgway:** David Happell R More Gary Ridgway Lindsay Robinson (Vic)

**Clarke:** H Clarke Mrs M Clarke (NZ) Miss M Clarke A Cunningham J Wilson (NSW)

**Crichton:** John Chen Ailsa Crichton Ted Crichton Ziggy Klegeris (ACT) Mrs F Heweston Mrs F Kuylaars (Vic)

**Pettitt:** Margaret Bourke John Pettitt Juliet Pettitt Annie Schiffman (Grenside) (Vic)

**Witsenhuysen:** Peter Andersson Tony Cook David Grant Arch Morrison Peter Schmidt Fred Witsenhuysen (ACT)

**Brown:** Tony Brown Anne Glucina Martin Nash Adrian Pollock (NSW)

**Kingsford:** Helen Crisp Margaret Kingsford Garry Rippon Helena (Dinny) Watson (NSW)

**Kolts: 40** Geoff Kolts (ACT) recruited a house team of Canberra players who competed under the banner of the Canberra Kolts.

The number of competing players was 182. In the 45 years that have elapsed since (i) 53 of those players are now deceased—many played up until the last days of their lives, (ii) we have lost touch with 45 of the players - some of whom are certainly deceased), (iii) just five have ceased playing the game altogether, and (iv) 79 are still associated with bridge clubs - almost all as active players. (2018)

These data facts inform us (i) that once embarked upon, bridge is a game for life, and (ii) that the bridge population of 1974 was much younger than it is today.

It is the corollary of the second conclusion that should concern us, viz. that most of today's bridge players are aged or ageing - we know that, in 2018, more than half of the membership of the Canberra Bridge Club is at least 60 years old; in some local clubs, that proportion is certainly greater.

There are two obvious implications. First, bridge players cannot go on forever and an annual replacement rate of at least 10% is probably needed merely to maintain club membership numbers.

The death in the last three months of 2018 of three CBC members - Neil Naughton, Marie

Hotchkiss, Frank Hambly - who had between them played more than 500 sessions of bridge in the club in the previous 12 months - is a sobering reminder of the need for replacement.

The comprehensive CBC teaching programme and the teachers themselves (have an enormous responsibility for achieving the required level of replacement and maintaining the viability of the club. (The ABF is well aware of the need for replacement. Its marketing arm addresses the matter in the December 2018 issue of the ABF Newsletter - (Cox, 2018.)

The second implication of an ageing bridge population is retirement and its financial consequences. Many retirees live on fixed incomes, their incomes (even when indexed) do not keep pace with the rate of inflation, and the proportion of their total incomes available for "discretionary spending" is in constant retreat.

The administrators of many bridge organisations (the ABF, BFACT and the Canberra Bridge Club amongst them), many of whom are quite well off, appear oblivious to this. Their immediate response to any need for increased funding always seems to be to increase capitation fees, table monies and subscriptions.

This sort of behaviour cannot go on indefinitely. If it does, bridge in Australia will become the preserve of the well-to-do (as it is in Latin America and some Asian countries) and the egalitarian nature of Australian bridge will be lost forever.

For all that, as indicated by the pictures in the 2017 World Championship Book (Senior 2018b), bridge at the very top remains largely a young person's game. (Or else, Francesca Canali and Ron Tacchi are very flattering photographers.)

*Ed: Since 2018, there have been major influences directly linked to Covid, but the problem is still very real. It is key to note that online bridge is here to stay.*

*There will be a discussion session on January 17 to discuss online bridge and its influence on the game in Australia.*



## A marketing perspective

by Peter Cox, Head of Marketing

I read with great interest the history of the National Open Teams by John Brockwell.

With 2023 the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the NOT, when the players would have already been aged 20-50, many if not most of the players are deceased or no longer play. However, I was surprised to see how many are still playing in bridge events. He refers to the 40 teams and the 162 who played in the 1973 event, but this number grew, I believe, to about 282 teams in 2020. This year, with the effect of Covid 19, there are at least 73 teams and about 320 players in the SWPT plus Women's, Seniors and Restricted Teams and additional side events.

The world of leisure and sports has changed greatly over that 50-year period. In particular, the roll out of Broadband to Australian households from about 2000 and the development of the smartphone from 2007 has revolutionised the entertainment world including video games, gaming and gambling. Available leisure activities for the younger generations as well as retirees has greatly reduced participation rates and viewing of team sports such as golf, cricket, tennis, rugby, netball and a number of other sports.

I appreciate that John referenced my original writing in December 2018, on the need to replace our members as they age.

In this regard we both sing from the same hymnal. In that article, I looked at the loss of players, the low retention rate of beginners, the unaffordability of traditional media and the potential of using social media to attract new players. I have continued and developed such themes in the Marketing pages of the bi-monthly ABF Newsletter.

Covid created a seismic shift for bridge, with the closing of many clubs for over a year, the loss of beginner intakes for two years, the slow return of existing players and the reduction in the volume of bridge games around the country. Perhaps the addiction to playing was broken for some players, with the development of other interests, including families and grandchildren.

Online bridge was undoubtedly a saviour for many during Covid restrictions, but only a few clubs are now providing online games, a vexed question for the future of the game.

John refers to the increased cost of playing fees for ageing cohorts on fixed incomes. Membership fees of \$50 - 100 a year are far less than many other activities, however, with average sessional table money of about \$7-10 considerably less than going to the movies.

Even looking at congresses the daily entry fee is about \$50 – 60, but the cost of accommodation and airfares has increased. It is hoped this will only be temporary until people catch up on their missed holidays.

Another ageing problem exists for our largely volunteer officials in clubs for administrators, teachers and directors, many of whom are looking to retire. The average bridge club has less than 100 members in Australia, England and the USA and is largely a cottage industry and often a fiefdom. The biggest challenge we have is how to motivate clubs to provide a welcoming atmosphere, actively seek new members and to take advantage of the expertise that ABF Marketing offers for free.

I look forward to reading John's treatise on the History of Bridge in the ACT when it is published.

