

Australian Youth Bridge Bulletin January 2007

Editor: David McDonald eckythumpf@hotmail.com

World on-line Youth Team Championship

Learn bridge in the pool!

Worst convention ever?

The other Edge

Youth Masterpoint results

Statistically speaking

State co-ordinators' contact details

Queensland international hospitality

Age eligibility

Australia performs at international level

2007 Youth Calendar

ELEVENTH Annual Junior Collegiate Team Championship

The Fifth Chair Foundation, in conjunction with OKBridge (www.okbridge.com) is proud to announce that the eleventh annual Junior Collegiate Team Championship is to be held on the weekend of February 3, 2007. This annual event pits college and university bridge teams from around the world in online competition and is the premier online bridge event of its class. OKbridge, the Internet's oldest online bridge club, provides free, temporary player accounts for all team members. Fifth Chair, a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering online bridge education, provides hosts for each participating team to help team members become familiar with the OKbridge program, if needed. There is no registration or participation fee for this event.

Registrations for this event are currently being accepted by Lorne of OKBridge and can be sent directly to him at lorne@okbridge.com. Please include all of the following information with your registration and refer to the 2006 Conditions of Contest at: <http://www.fifthchair.org/coc.htm> before registering. 2007 will be similar.

1. Name and location of the participating college or university your team represents. A team consists of 4 to 6 university students at least two of whom must be from the same university.
2. Name, email address, age (member can be under 26 years of age at the time of the tourney) and college/university affiliation of each (4-6) team member (if any are Okbridge members, please include screen names).
3. Name, email address, age and college/university affiliation of TEAM CAPTAIN (if Okbridge member, please include screen name).
4. A team must consist of at least two people from the university that is being represented, but additional team members may be added that are in other universities.

Further information on this event can be obtained from Fifth Chair directly ([email info@fifthchair.org](mailto:info@fifthchair.org)) or by contacting Lorne@okbridge.com.

BRIDGE IN SCHOOLS

If you have any interest in helping to get bridge in schools up and running, or would like to teach bridge at a school, or know of any school which already has bridge or is interested in having bridge at school, please contact

David McDonald 0404 335 288

The LEARN BRIDGE Stunt

Leigh Barnier is a 20 year old bridge player who swims competitively, against people like Grant Hackett, and is a lifesaver on Sydney's Northern Beaches. If you want to play bridge with him at Macquarie Uni, email Leigh leigh_surfer@hotmail.com.

At the Telstra Australian Swimming Championships and Selection Trials for the World Championship Team in Brisbane in December, Leigh was about to swim a Final in Lane 7. As they are introduced to the crowd and the TV audience on Foxtel, most swimmers acknowledge the crowd with a little wave, but Leigh walked up to the pool's edge and produced a sign which said LEARN BRIDGE!

The TV commentators were perplexed. Olympic Gold Medallist Duncan Armstrong wondered if Leigh was sufficiently focused on his race. Leigh was – he swam a PB. Nicole Stevenson thought that he must be a special ambassador for bridge. His stunt attracted a lot of attention, and in the next hour or two, Leigh had never heard so many people use the phrase "but it's an old person's game".

Leigh has video footage of the stunt, which he will bring down to Canberra for the Youth Pairs weekend.

Thanks to our Contributors:

William Jenner O'Shea (Interstate Youth)
Leigh Mathieson (Triathlon)
Leigh Barnier
Peter Gill
Michael Courtney

News from Queensland

[Conducting](#) a Youth recruitment exercise [on](#) 15-17th January at Toowong.

Thirty young Chinese Bridge players (9-17 years), fully sponsored by the Chinese Government, [are visiting Queensland from](#) 8th Feb [for ten days](#).

For further information, contact Larry Moses larrymoses@bigpond.com or Richard Touton rhtouton@bigpond.com.

The Worst Convention EVER by Chris Mulley

Recently, Paul Brayshaw was trawling through the hard-drive of his computer and, between the cryptic crosswords and the pornography, he found a yet-to-be released YOBO from many years ago. For the uninitiated, the **Youth Of BAWA Oracle** was a newsletter, edited by Paul, containing much boring and uninformative material written by numerous people, with the occasional gem thrown in from yours truly to keep the punters coming back for the next issue. Nevertheless, YOBO as a whole did somehow manage to garner enthusiastic support during its lifetime, not just in WA, but also in the self-proclaimed bridge Mecca over East as well. Anyhow, Paul sent me the articles which I had written for that unpublished YOBO, and I felt that these pearls of wisdom deserved to see the light of day.

Thus, I would like to take the opportunity to introduce the worst bridge convention that I have ever seen: **The Gorski 2♦ Opening**. Several years ago, Paul and I found this while flicking through a book of bridge conventions. That was the sort of thing we used to do with our spare time back then. I'm sure it's the sort of thing we would still do, if we could actually find some spare time ... but I digress. Even to this day, I have not seen a worse convention than the Gorski 2♦ opening.

The opening bid itself seems harmless enough; a 2♦ opening to show either a minimum opening with five hearts and four spades (Flannery style) *or* a weak NT with 4-4 in the majors. This looks like a pretty useless addition to bidding theory to me. Why a weak NT would want to play in a 4-2 fit (or "break" as many prefer to call it) at the two-level is something of a mystery. Still, maybe Mr Gorski knows something that I don't.

Mr Flannery obviously thought minimum hands with five hearts and four spades were a problem to bid, so he invented the Flannery 2♦ opening to cover those hands. I've got a suggestion for him. Open 1♥. Then bid 2♥ over partner's 2♣ or 2♦ response and pass a 1NT response. Admittedly, you **do** have a real problem if partner responds 1♠. Re-bidding a random number of NT between 1 and 3 would be my choice. I should note, however, that the only thing that Flummery does is ensure that heart contracts also end up in partner's incapable hands, along with all of the other contracts.

Mr Gorski patently was experiencing similar problems to Mr Flannery, but he also had difficulty describing his hand when he held a weak 1NT opening. I've got a plan for you, Mr Gorski. Why not open them 1NT? Or re-bid 1NT if you are so terrified of playing a weak NT? Of course, it would mean that you would have to play that shockingly artificial convention, Better Minor, if you wanted to play 5-card majors. It's so much harder to play that than this Gorski 2♦ thing. But, believe it or not, we haven't even got to the worst part of the convention yet. It is so truly horrible that I must quote it directly, and in full:

“The only forcing response is 2♥.”

Not only have you forced your partner to play this weak NT hand of yours at the two-level or higher in a suit, (s)he can now no longer play it in 2♥, so higher is much more likely. example, you hold the fairly typical collection of ♠ Qx ♥ Jxx ♦ Kxxx ♣ Qxxx. Partner opens 2♦, Gorski. Your bid. Whichever option partner has, you want to play in 2♥. Well, you probably don't want

to play in 2♥ opposite a weak NT whilst having a Moysian fit at the table, but your great system has made it the most attractive alternative. However, playing Gorski 2♦ together with responses, your choice of scores is now:

2♠: -500 2NT: -300 3♣: -600 3♦: -600 3♥: -300

Make your selection. This response structure gives you *all* sorts of good alternatives. The only “fit” is the one your team-mates will have at the score-up.

Some would bar partner from the auction so they could play 2♥, but anyone with that much imagination would have already succeeded in stopping partner from opening 2♦ in the first place, if they hadn’t already earned themselves a holiday from the game for cheating. I guess you could decide to pass the 2♦ bid and try for the magic -500. Bargain! Of course, you could also end up going for -500 when partner has the Flummery option and 2♥ is gin, but it protects you against going -600, so that must count for something.

Now, to fully comprehend the horror, imagine what might happen if you had only one or two hearts and a similar number of spades, or if they start doubling you. Who needs to bid game or slam against this sort of bidding? All you need to do is wheel out that brilliant counter-convention, DALT (**D**ouble **A**nd **L**ead **T**rumps), write down “00” and decide later which 2-digit number you need to place in front of it. Alternatively, you can write a “1” in the positive imps column and decide which number to write after it when you hear from your team-mates which game their opponents decided to go down in. This second method does have a down-side, though, as sometimes you gain more than 19 imps.

So, in summary, the Gorski 2♦ opening does not make it easier to bid problem hands, and the response structure ensures that you play a contract two levels higher than the real world. In my opinion, that makes it the worst convention I have ever seen. At least with Gerber, you can choose not to use it. Here, presumably you have no other systemic way of bidding the hand. If forced to play this convention, I would rather psyche another opening than use it – at least psyching has some minuscule potential upside. That, in itself, is conclusive proof that this has to be the worst bridge convention that I have ever seen.

My personal suspicion is that the inventor of this system was not in fact Mr Gorski, but some long-suffering ex-partner of his who thought that the best way of defaming him would be to construct the worst convention possible and to then name it after Gorski, so that Gorski would be remembered by bridge players everywhere as an absolute lunatic, who should have stuck to Snap rather than over-taxing his brain with bridge. Who am I to interfere with such an honourable goal?.

A different version of this article can be seen at www.poorbridge.com. If you occasionally see the humorous side of the game, I can highly recommend the site as a whole to you.

Winning Edge

This is the hand on which Adam Edgtton and his partner were nominated for the Best Play in the World in 2006 by a Youth pair.

Adam Edgtton from Australia and Niclas Ege from Denmark showed in a Pairs Tournament at the World Junior Bridge Camp in Slovakia in July 2006 that the harmony in their surnames can also be found in their defence.

Bd 21 ♠ J 10 9
 N/NS ♥ J 6 5 2
 ♦ A 8 5
 ♣ K 9 4

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

 ♠ K 7 5 3
 ♥ Q 10
 ♦ Q J 10 7 2
 ♣ A 2

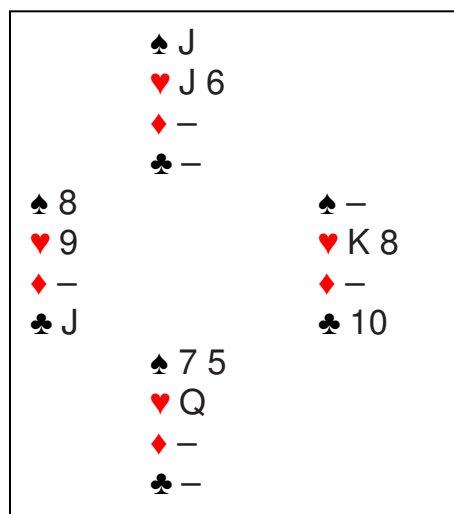
West North East South

<i>Edgtton</i>	<i>Ege</i>		
	Pass	Pass	1D
1S	Dbl	Pass	1NT
All Pass			

Edgtton led C6. Declarer rose with dummy's king in order to preserve an entry to the diamonds, Ege encouraging with C3. Three rounds of diamonds left Ege on lead with DK, as Edgtton discarded the discouraging S6. C5 went to the ace, and on the two diamond winners, Edgtton discarded two spades, Ege two hearts, and dummy a club and a heart.

Declarer played a sneaky H10, but Edgtton was not fooled and rose with the ace to retain the communications for the impending squeeze. He played a club to partner's queen and Ege smartly played SQ to the king and ace, isolating the spade guard in dummy, with the ending as follows:

Now when Adam Edgtton cashed CJ, dummy was squeezed, giving the defence the rest of the tricks for plus 100.



TOP 50 IMPROVERS

The ABF lists the Top 50 Improvers for 2006 of the 32,000 ABF members at <http://www.abf.com.au/master/improvers.html>.

Youth players on this list are:

5th: Pranjal Chakradeo (Qld)

20th Peter Hollands (Vic)

23rd (Andrew Brady (SA)

25th Sebastian Yuen (ACT)

31 Nabil Edgtton (NSW)

36 Shane Harrison (SA)

Shane had 0.00 masterpoints at the start of the year and 42.24 at the end of 2006!

38 Nikolas Moore (Qld)

42 Kevin Kinnison (ACT)

44 Justin Howard (Vic)

46 Ben Kingham (Vic)

47 Andrew Morcombe (Vic)

48 Andy Hung (Vic)

Congratulations to all the above youth bridge players.

The list attempts to figure out numerically who has improved the most in 2006.

POSTFREE BRIDGE BOOKS

Supporting Youth Bridge

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www.postfree.cc

Visit Bridge Museum

www.postfree.cc

First published in the "Bellerive Intelligencer" on August 19, 2006:

Statistically speaking

Researcher finds link between bridge and improved performance at school by children.

Do children who play bridge perform better on standardized tests than their non-playing counterparts? Dr. Christopher Shaw, a researcher from Carlinville in Illinois, recently completed a three year study that shows the answer to that question is a definite "yes."

Many bridge players have long believed that teaching kids bridge improves their critical thinking skills, but the evidence that bridge helped with school performance has been largely anecdotal. Shaw decided to take a more serious look at the impact that bridge has on test performance by school-age children.

In a 2005 study, Shaw examined six groups of fifth graders from the Carlinville Public Schools who were similar in academic ability. One group learned to play bridge as part of its math instruction, but the other five groups did not. All students took the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITSB) in Sept. 2001 (before bridge instruction began) and again in May 2003 (sixth grade) and in May 2004 (seventh grade). The fifteen students who learned to play bridge as fifth graders were mixed with the other students in the sixth and seventh grades.

ITSB performance increases naturally as students get older: sixth graders, as a group, outperform fifth graders, for example. Educators and parents pay great attention to the improvement of scores from year to year. What Shaw discovered, however, was that the students who learned to play bridge had a greater average increase in their ITSB scores than their non-playing classmates.

Table 1 compares the percentage gain in average ITSB scores of the bridge and non-bridge groups over the 32 month period from 2001 to 2004:

Table 1 – Percentage Gains in ITSB Scores

Subject	Non-bridge Kids	Bridge Kids	% Extra Gain by Bridge Kids
Reading	33.87	40.87	20.7
Language	45.04	51.07	13.4
Math	41.48	51.53	24.2
Science	37.52	52.27	39.3
Social Studies	36.77	45.13	22.7

Column 1 is the average percentage gain in ITSB scores for 86 non-bridge players. Column 2 is the average percentage gain in ITSB scores for 15 bridge players. Column 3

is the difference between Columns 2 and 1, divided by Column 1, i.e. the percentage by which the improvement of bridge players exceeded the improvement of non-bridge-players.

Over 32 months, the fifteen bridge players had 13 to 39 per cent more improvement in academic performance than the other eighty six students, with the actual percentage depending on the subject under consideration.

Shaw concludes that bridge might increase inferential reasoning, a cognitive skill necessary to play the game. "Bridge is a game that develops inferential reasoning skills, which are very difficult to teach elementary students.

These skills appear to be used in all five subject areas in middle school." Of some interest is that the subject with the largest improvement attributable to bridge is Science, not Maths.

Shaw's research continues with more data, which can be found at www.acbl.org/documentlibrary/news/statisticallyspeaking.pdf.

2007 Contact in Each State for Youth Bridge

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National - David McDonald	eckythumpf@hotmail.com mobile 0404 335288

AGE ELIGIBILITY FOR YOUTH

There is some confusion about how old you need to be to be a youth bridge player.

And no wonder. The following list should help you unravel the mystery.

U25 at 25th birthday = ABF Youth Club

Until you turn 25, you can join the ABF for free and then you get master-points.

Go to the ABF Youth Club section of www.abf.com.au for details.

U25 = ABF Youth Club

U25 'Till 25 1/1 = World Junior Pairs, Interstate Youth Teams/Pairs, 50% discounted fee for all ABF events (1/1/82 in 2007)

U26 'Till 25 1/1 = World Junior Teams and PABF Junior Teams (born on or after 1/1/81 in 2007)

U26 at date of event = Online World Junior Intercollegiate Championship held each February

U28 at previous 1/1 = World University Championships (born on or after 1/1/79 in 2007)

U30 at previous 1/1 = Australian Youth Week in Canberra and National Youth Bridge Triathlon (1/1/77 in 2007)

U20 at previous 1/1 = World Schools Pairs (would be: born on or after 1/1/87 in 2007)

U21 at previous 1/1 = World Schools Teams and PABF Schools Teams (born on or after 1/1/86 in 2007)

U24 (approx) at date of event = World Junior Bridge Camp (cancelled in 2007 anyway)

U16 at date of event = Under 16 events at Australian Junior Bridge Week (born on or after 15/1/90 in 2007)

TERMINOLOGY

"Youth" means all youth bridge in general

"Junior" means Under 26 or Under 25

"Schools" means Under 21 or Under 20.

July – 8 August 2006 11th WORLD YOUTH BRIDGE TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

AUSTRALIA v LATVIA

Round 5

11th WORLD YOUTH BRIDGE TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS Bangkok, Thailand

This is an edited version of page 7 of Bulletin 4 of the World Championships in Bangkok in August. Australia's Schools Team (4th) is playing Latvia (Silver Medalists) in the round robin. On these two hands, the Edgton brothers showed that bidding and making vulnerable games is a big winner at imps scoring.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

	A K 4 2	
	8 5 3	
	A K Q J 4	
	4	
Q J 5		10 7 3
J 7 6 4		A K Q 2
10 6		5
K 9 6 5		A J 10 7 3
	9 8 6	
	10 9	
	9 8 7 3 2	
	Q 8 2	

West	North	East	South
<i>Balasovs</i>	<i>Howard</i>	<i>J Bethers</i>	<i>Hung</i>
		2C	Pass
2NT	Dble	3C	Pass
Pass	3D	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

West	North	East	South
<i>Adam E</i>	<i>P Bethers</i>	<i>Nabil E</i>	<i>Imsa</i>
		1C	Pass
1H	Dble	3D	Pass
4H	Dble	All Pass	

Bethers' natural 2C opening saw Juris Balasovs respond with 2NT, a transfer to clubs, and Justin Howard doubled for take-out. When Howard followed that up with 3D at his next turn he showed a strong hand of course, and Andy Hung bid like a man, or even like two men. Hung lost the first nine tricks to be five down for -250, which must have looked at the time to be worth a small swing to Latvia.

However, it proved not to be so. At the other table, Nabil Edgton opened at the one level

and Adam could show his heart suit. When Peteris Bethers doubled, Nabil made a mini-splinter and Adam liked his club fit and lack of wasted values enough to bid to game. Bethers doubled again, having substantial extra values, and that ended the auction. Perhaps declarer would have got the clubs right anyway, given North's two take-out doubles, but you never know.

Adam Edgtton was not hard pressed after Bethers led his club singleton, and the even trump split meant that ten tricks were easy; +790 and 11 IMPs to Australia, who led Latvia by 17-0 after six deals.

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

10 7 5 2	
A J 8 7 3	
Q 4 2	
5	
6 3	A J 9
K 9 2	10 5
8 7 6	A K 10 5
A J 9 7 4	Q 10 8 6
	K Q 8 4
	Q 6 4
	J 9 3
	K 3 2

West	North	East	South
<i>Balasovs</i>	<i>Howard</i>	<i>J Bethers</i>	<i>Hung</i>
Pass		1NT	All Pass

West	North	East	South
<i>Adam</i>	<i>E P Bethers</i>	<i>Nabil E</i>	<i>Imsa</i>
3NT	All Pass	1NT	Pass

Janis Bethers had a weak no trump and Balasovs had no reason to go on. Nabil Edgtton upgraded his hand to 15-17 with all those tens and Adam raised aggressively to game, a good strategy at teams bridge. With the two hands fitting well and the missing high cards also favourably placed, both declarers came to ten tricks after a low spade lead to the ten and jack; +180 to Bethers but +630 and 10 IMPs to the Edgttons.

2007 AUSTRALIAN YOUTH BRIDGE CALENDAR

Sadly, the World Junior Camp and World Junior Individual in Nashville has been cancelled.

January 13-20, 2007: National Youth Bridge Week at Fenner Hall in Canberra. Often described as the best week of bridge activities in the world. 1/1/77 is the age cut-off, but it's 1/1/81 for the national selection event which is part of the week. Enquiries to Brad grover@bigpond.net.au

January 18-19: National Under 16 Bridge Camp in Canberra. A small gathering of youngsters born on or after 15/1/1990 who are interested in bridge. Enquiries to Brad grover@bigpond.net.au

Feb 3-4 eleventh annual Junior Collegiate Team Championship.

A free online world university bridge championship. ANU Canberra came 2nd about 8 years ago. OKBridge (www.okbridge.com) provides free, temporary player accounts for all team members. The organizers provide a host to help team members become familiar with the OKbridge program, if needed.

A team consists of 4 to 6 university students aged under 26 of whom at least two must be from the same university.

Session times in Australia might be in the middle of the night. Further information from Fifth Chair Foundation ([email info@fifthchair.org](mailto:info@fifthchair.org)) or Lorne@okbridge.com. Entries to Lorne.

June 4-13: PABF Youth Teams Championship in Indonesia. Australia will send at least **two** teams. For those born on or after 1/1/81 (Junior Team section) or 1/1/86 (Schools Team section).

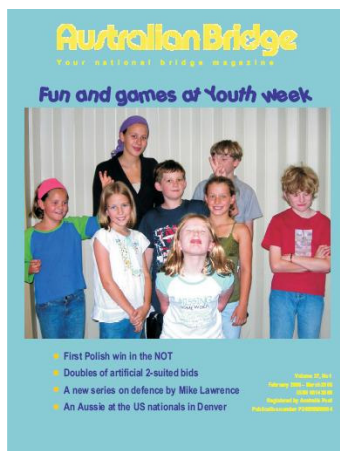
July 14: Interstate Youth Pairs Championship in Fremantle. Open to all born on or after 1/1/82.

July 15-20: Interstate Youth Teams Championship in Fremantle, WA. Teams from SA, Qld, NSW, Vic, ACT and WA are expected to take part. If you would like to try to be in your State's team, please let us know. Open to all youngsters born on or after 1/1/82.

September or October (date to be set) – one weekend: National Youth Triathlon, includes Individual, Pairs and Teams, possibly held in Melbourne. Open to all youngsters born on or after 1/1/77.

September 22-29: NZ Nationals – Australia usually send a subsidized team of teenagers. Great week. Enquiries to David McDonald eckythumpf@hotmail.com or 0404 335288 please.

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