

Editor's Comment

Hello there fellow bridge players!

There is no doubt that bridge is actively being played on BBO, Real Bridge and probably as a social activity in private homes, but I am concerned that there is little support for organised events in the various clubs. Union and club organisers are telling me that it is becoming increasingly difficult to attract members to special live events. Both Western Province and Gauteng have struggled to attract teams to their clubs for the Qualifying Competition to find their entrants for a National Inter Union event which is coming up shortly. I do not believe entry money is the problem either. The Gauteng event was subsidized and the Western Province event offered a lot of bridge and good refreshments for their entry fee. Many would argue that Teams is the purest form of bridge so why this lack of interest? I can only conclude that the timing of the event was perhaps too close to the National SABF Congress which many players entered. It seems to be an ever decreasing pool of players who are interested in participating in these events. However even events in a particular region are struggling for entries as evidenced by KZN cancelling a planned event and NGBU not organising a face to face event in recent years. I hope this is a trend which can be counteracted.

All areas are struggling to attract youngsters to the game and Western Province is the region who are most active in this department. Gauteng's Thursday morning supervised play goes well although this of course is directed at non working adults. Sadly bridge is seen as an older people's card game and I think the general pace of life these days is more hectic and competitive than ever with many folk in their 30's and 40's working hard just to maintain their lifestyle with little time left for leisure activities. My son, who is a clever boy with the right kind of brain for bridge I believe, undoubtedly falls into this category. Hopefully as he gets older he will want to take up the card game which has brought his mother so much pleasure over the years. We played cards and board games with our children as they were growing up, an activity not as popular now as children are increasingly drawn to 'screen games' which can be done with a computer, ipad or a cellphone. We must continue to battle towards encouraging youngsters though as they are the future of bridge.

It is just a few people in our various areas who are driving bridge and I want to say Thank You to them all for what they do. When I was looking for monitors to help with the S A Trials recently, several people I asked said they would willingly help as they wanted to give back something to this game of bridge which had given them so much pleasure. What a lovely thing to say! If you have not served on your local club committee, or put yourself forward to help with an event, now is the moment to offer your services. I am sure it would be much appreciated.

We are halfway through a bridge year, and in a rather cold winter at the moment, so let's end by saying bridge is an indoor activity so let's enjoy playing and see what we can do on a personal level to support this card game!

Yours in bridge,

Deirdre Ingersent

THE SABF NATIONAL BRIDGE CONGRESS

2025 AFTERMATH



First of all let me say Well Done to The Links on the improvements they had done at the Bridge Centre prior to the event. The ladies and gents bathrooms had been upgraded and the big hall had ceiling to floor length thick curtains installed allowing the top section to be completely separated from the rest of the big hall. This was brilliant for the Pairs Final when the Championship Group (who need to use screens) could be cordoned off from the Congress and Plate Sections who played in the Main Hall. There was plenty of room away from the playing tables for the refreshments.

The Registration and booklet, in its perfect size plastic folder, were excellent. All the necessary information was clearly laid out and very user friendly. The schedule was well presented and all events went ahead according to the day and time specified. Special refreshments were given at various times during the 8 days of play and these were mentioned in the booklet. During two lunch hours, talks by Craig Gower and Neville Eber were given for free. They discussed hands that had been played that morning and provided tips for players. These were well received.

The Teams Event was poorly supported with only 20 teams participating but all teams who played enjoyed it. Swiss Teams was the format used for the qualifying rounds and then once the Championship, Congress and Plate Sections were known a round robin was played. 12-board matches were played during the initial swiss and 14 - board matches during the round robin. Not too short as one knows with 8-board matches there can be a dramatic swing. I found it disappointing that several Unions could not even raise one team to play in this event.

The Pairs Event had 68 pairs, three qualifying rounds of 26 boards each, then three final rounds of 32, 28 and 24 boards. Nice length sessions in other words. All players seemed pleased with this arrangement and it was a lot of boards played every day but surely one enters a Bridge Congress to play lots of bridge. Everyone I spoke to said they had enjoyed the event enormously and were pleased they had taken the opportunity to experience a real Congress. The cost was felt to be appropriate. Two side events were held on a day in between the Teams and the Pairs, the Mixed Pairs and a No Fear Event for players not yet playing competitive bridge. These were well received and will be retained for the next National Congress.

Thanks must go to the hardworking Congress Committee comprised of Bernard Donde, Lotte Sorensen, Rob Stephens, Tas Nestoridis, Deirdre Ingersent and Sheila Francis. Also Waleed El Menyawi who has the role of Chief TD and Scorer and keeps the whole show on the road and up to time. He was ably assisted by Bernard Donde, Kit Gilmour and Helen Kruger as assistant TD's and a supporting team of staff Nicky and Grant Ewels, Patsi Shefer, Betty Ravenscroft and our regulars at The Links, Joan and Richard. There is a lot happening behind the scenes from furniture shifting to card dealing to washing

up of cups, saucers and plates used and all appeared to happen with the minimum of fuss.

Probably the most disappointing aspect of the whole eight days for me was the poor attendance at the SABF AGM which was held one evening. I cannot believe that there are not many aspects of bridge which could be better organised but it appeared apathy was the order of the day. There are few youngsters involved in the admin side of bridge and we are struggling to attract newcomers to the game we all love. Other countries report a similar situation but should not South Africa be trying to tackle the problem. There must be co-existence now between face to face bridge and online bridge, a fact we all realise, and the cheating element of online bridge is something like credit card fraud has to be recognised and handled.

Did I enjoy it? Of course I did! It was great to make some new friends and to reacquaint myself with others! e.g. I had a lovely lunch hour chatting with Di Knowler about bridge in the Durban area and the delightful couple from Germany, Michael and Gisela, whom I had played in our very first Teams match, always spoke to me in all the breaks and asked how we were doing. I will now think ahead and make plans to participate in the 2025 National Bridge Congress in Cape Town.

Report submitted by Deirdre Ingersent

For congress results: sabf.co.za/national-congress-2025

USEFUL HINTS FOR BEGINNER AND INTERMEDIATE PLAYERS

With grateful thanks to both Craig Gower and Neville Eber as these were discussed during their excellent talks held during two lunchhours at our recent SABF National Bridge Congress!

1. COUNTING

The importance of this is stressed all the time and yet many club players fail to do this. Count each suit, not just the trumps!

Remember the bidding sequence and count the number of points coming from each hand. This will help enormously with your play! If you think of top players, they take time if declarer before playing to the opening lead, studying the dummy and reviewing their own hand. They also take their time before playing to the 2nd and 3rd tricks and after those 12 cards have gone out, pride themselves on knowing where the rest of the high points are! It is a skill to be mastered so keep working on it.

2. DON'T BE A SLAVE TO POINTS!

The distribution of cards is of key importance. A long suit, or two long suits, or a shortage or a void are all important elements to be considered. How many times is it noticed that top players find a game contract where there are not 25 or 26 or 27 points?

3. GET THE BIG HAND BIDDING RIGHT!

Slams account for about 10% deals so make sure you have an efficient method of detecting slams. Also an accepted method of stopping short of slam if necessary. Top players are very careful checking Aces and Kings when slam bidding. They do not allow themselves to be caught out by an Ace and King in the same suit.

4 OPENING LEADS

A very important aspect of defending and one which the average club player does not pay enough attention to! Consider first the SUIT to be led and then the RIGHT CARD to give your partner the correct information they need.

5. MARGINAL BIDS

If you have a good fit with partner it is good to be AGGRESSIVE with the bidding, but if a poor fit be conservative. Consider the VULNERABILITY carefully. If vulnerable one trick down at 100 probably OK but two down 200 could be expensive. Also please remember that top players DOUBLE poor contracts. Familiarise yourself with scoring as 2 tricks down doubled 500 is more than a non vulnerable game e.g. 4 hearts = 420.

6. KEEP THINKING

Throughout the play out of a hand consider always where the opponents cards are. Even little spot cards can be important, especially in a NT contract.

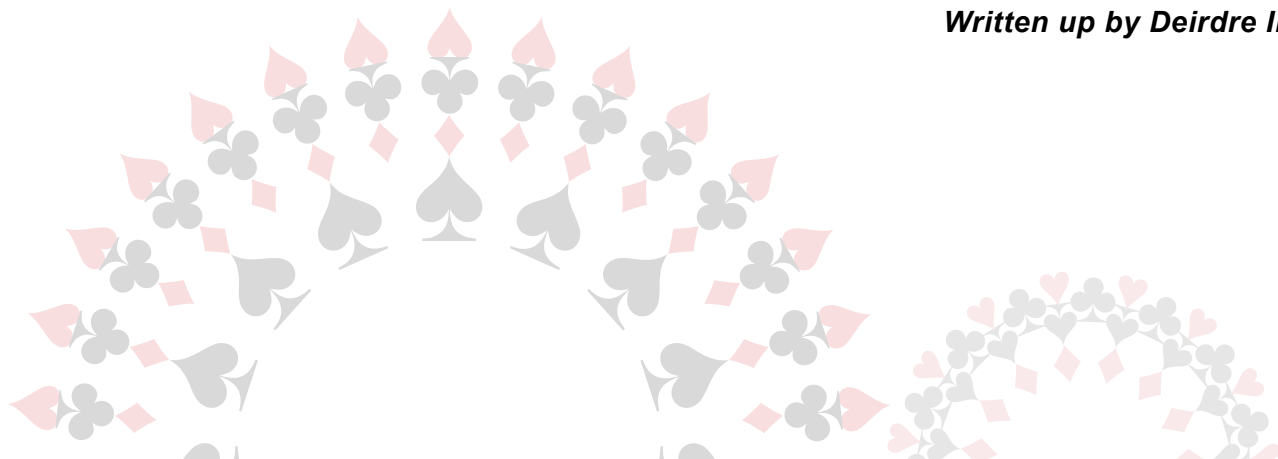
7. SEQUENCE OF CARDS

For Example Q J 10 is more valuable than Q J x. In NT a high sequence of 3 can be a valuable lead e.g. K Q J x

8. KNOW YOUR CONVENTIONS

An obvious point maybe but one often neglected by average club players. It is important to play conventions that both you and your partner know and are happy with. If playing with a different partner a KISS (Keep It Simple Stupid) system should be used!

Written up by Deirdre Ingersent



BRIDGE ACTIVITY AROUND OUR REGIONS

KWA ZULU NATAL

1. The online tournament that was supposed to be happening at the end of June has been cancelled .
2. The PETRAMANSELL TOURNAMENT will be held over the weekend of 18/19 OCTOBER at Mt Edgecombe.

It is a red point event held over 3 sessions, all day Saturday and Sunday morning. A lunch on Saturday, teas on both days and snacks during the Prizegiving on Sunday will all be included.

Bridge Union Secretary - Tanya (mobile 082 868 9524) call for any enquiries

NORTHERN GAUTENG

Delene Spencer (Chairperson) wrote about their concern about the possibility of Northern Gauteng losing their Clubhouse in Menlo Park, Pretoria (Jan Prins had arranged for the clubhouse to be built a long time back and they had paid for it!) as the City Council now want to use the ground for Mixed Use Development. There are 7 different clubs operating on this piece of ground and they have all sent an objection to the Council. This situation has been ongoing for many years but has now come to a head it seems.

Face to face bridge is held on Tuesday afternoon with about 9 tables and on a Friday afternoon with about a regular turn out of 10 tables. Many members enjoy playing BBO too!

BENONI NORTHERNS

Submitted by Pieter Gildenhuys

We have a regular face to face club on a Thursday afternoon and host anything between 8 and 10 tables. We have just been forced to put our table fees up to R30 a player, due to the increased costs of coffee and biscuits, and our Visitor's fee to R40. We are known as a friendly club and enjoy having visitors in our midst!

Recently we had a Coffee Shop Bridge Crawl through Benoni which was thoroughly enjoyed by all the participants! It was an innovative idea carried out by Pat Neumann, a Committee member. On a Wednesday morning 24 players met at our club at 9am where they were given a sheet of paper with written instructions and sent off to a particular coffee shop.



1. The organiser with all the bags set out



2. Getting ready to depart



3. Looking at the menu Pat with Diana. What shall we order? 4. Diana and Dierdre vs Helen and Heather playing board in the coffee shop 5. The happy winners wearing their winners headaddresses Pieter Gildenhuys and Rose Metzger

There the table was set up with bidding boxes and organised boards and opponents duly arrived clutching their instruction paper. Refreshments were ordered and 6 boards played. The results were noted on the travellers, some socialising done, and then all jumped in their respective car to drive to the next venue where we played another 6 boards with different folk and a third venue too. It was pronounced a huge success as people enjoyed the chance to get to know their fellow club members in a relaxed setting (the time allowance was excellent!) without the TD shouting All Move and Next Round! It was a free event!!! It was won by Pieter Gildenhuys and Rose Metzger.

SOUTHERN CAPE

Peter Ward submitted this report! Peter is to be congratulated on securing sponsorship for his various events, a very difficult thing to do in this current economic climate. He is definitely envied by the bigger Unions over this.

1. His Outeniqua Tournament held in George in early June attracted an entry of 14 tables. It was sponsored by Personal Trust.

2. His next event is the SCBU Oyster Festival Pairs Tournament, a one day event to be held in Knysna on Friday 27th June. Entries already received are 22 pairs and it has already attracted participants from Port Elizabeth and Cape Town!

Outeniqua tournament last Tuesday, sponsored by PERSONAL TRUST.

From left Vernon Rice, Prof Stadler (Personal Trust) me and Gill Norgarb (Outeniqua Bridge Club)

Thanks to Gill, Jenny Myburgh and their team. There were about 20 tables. Thanks to the sponsors.



Southern Cape Bridge Union("SCBU")
Oyster Festival Pairs Tournament
Friday 27 June all day
Presented by The Garden Route Bridge Club

"All Day" Red Point Pairs face to face Tournament

Venue: Knysna Angling Club

Starting Time 9H00

Playing fee R130 per player (R260 per pair)

In order to enter the tournament one needs to be a paid up SABF Member

The entry includes a generous tea and a excellent lunch by Kilzers Kitchen

Vernon Rice will be supplying Oysters and wine after the days play

Prize Money of R9 000 sponsored by



Brett Clark of Lomkor Insurance will also supply wine as prizes

Prize money and wine will be allocated to the top twelve pairs

Please submit payment with your entry:

The Garden Route Bridge Club– Standard Bank Knysna –

Account number 10167836771

Universal branch code 051001

Please send confirmation of payment to:

Peter Ward at pkward@netactive.co.za

Closing Date: Monday, 23 June 2025

EASTERN CAPE BRIDGE UNION NEWS

Glynis Dornon and Geoff Ellis (SABF Committee)

Glynis wrote that at her club, the Port Elizabeth Contract Bridge Club, there is regular face to face bridge and quite a lot of beginners playing. Not much excitement . . . but all looking forward to the Jay Bay Tournament which will have happened before this Newsletter gets published.

Geoff wrote about the same event, a red point Teams Event. He reported this was once a big event on their calendar held at a variety of different places including Port Alfred, Bedford, Cradock and St.Francis Bay but since Covid (what a deterioration in the support for face to face events in all bridge playing countries since that event!), and their once popular Port Elizabeth Mini Congress has not taken place either. However on the plus side, this event is looked forward to by visitors from Plettenberg Bay, Knysna and some from Western Cape coming to participate.

I quote " We all look forward to meeting our bridge friends again and having a great weekend ". It is this social aspect of bridge which we all enjoy but with the bridge community getting older and some folk not able to travel now, coupled with less money available in retirement to travel to events in an area not your own, which has led to a decrease in the number of participants.

GAUTENG

THE LINKS BRIDGE CLUB - THE HOME OF BRIDGE IN GAUTENG



The Links has had a busy year so far, hosting the supervision of local players for the online SABF Trials in February & March.

The SABF Congress was a great success over 8 days in May, as well as the recently concluded GBU Teams.

The regular F2F sessions run efficiently with stable attendance figures.

Saturday remains the largest club in the country, averaging 30-35 tables/week with 3 or 4 graded sections. Wednesday afternoons continue to average around 10 tables/week. Friday mornings are very small, averaging 3-5 tables.

We have a loyal group of supervisors who assist on Thursday mornings, where an average of 20 tables turn up for 2 hours of supervised bridge, playing anywhere from 8-12 boards and receiving invaluable advice from the experts. Many thanks to Neville Eber, Val Bloom, Bernard Donde, Tas Nestoridis, Diana Balkin, James Grant, Hennie Fick & Lotte Sorensen for their continued dedication to this initiative.

Rob Stephens supervises a wonderful "Gentle Tournament" on Tuesday mornings, where a large base of inexperienced players are getting valuable tournament bridge exposure in a fun and relaxed environment. Any newcomers or social players are encouraged to give these sessions a go, where about 15 boards are played in 2,5 hours, and some supervision is given where time permits.

All of these activities continue to rise in costs, and The Links is fortunate to be subsidised by it's online tournaments which continue to draw good attendance figures. All SABF affiliated players are welcome to play online on BBO in The Links' daily tournaments.

The Links hopes to start hosting teaching initiatives by the SABF in the foreseeable future, where the next crop of players can soon call The Links their next home.

If you wish to join any of The Links' WhatsApp groups, contact Rob Stephens (072 431 6599) who will assist you.

For further Links Club information visit: bridgewebs.com/links/

" HOW DID THE BRIDGE GAME GET ITS NAME ? "

Bridge seems to have emerged from two whist variants, Greek and Russian, played in French and English circles.

It was then merged to become BRITCH or BIRITCH and by the end of the 19th century the word had become Anglicized and the word used was BRIDGE!

WESTERN CAPE
AT KEURBOOM BRIDGE CLUB ... NOVICE AND IMPROVER SESSIONS

There are two sections running concurrently on a Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. In the section aimed at improvers, we have the following opportunities:

- Monday mornings at 9.30am: *Tuition using prepared boards*
- Wednesday mornings at 9.15am: *Tuition using prepared boards*
- Thursday mornings at 9.30am: *Gentle duplicate with the use of Bridgemates*

You are free to come to any of these sessions with or without a partner. If improvement is what you are after, these sessions are for you. The cost is **R60 per session**, including tea and sandwiches.

Please arrive 10/15 minutes before commencement of play.

*For further information, please contact Neil Hayward 082-7829797 / neilhay@mweb.co.za or
Kitty Cruise 082-3260572 / kittycruise@absamail.co.za*

For more from WCBU visit our website: wcbbridge.co.za/home



**Western Cape bridge
invite you to enter the WCBU
teams – a red point event –
on 7th & 8th June 2025
at the Bridge Centre, Green Point.**

**The winners in the A & B sections will represent the
WCBU in the interprovincial teams competition
on 26/27 July online.**

Medwin qualification: No restrictions.

Berkowitz has the following restrictions:

- **No more than total 1500 PI points per 4 team members playing at the time**
- **No Grandmasters or current or former Springboks**

Saturday: 2 sessions 9.30 am - 12.30 pm & 2 pm – 5 pm.

Sunday: 2 sessions 9.30 am – 12.30 pm & 2 pm – 5 pm

Entries: SABF online: www.sabf.co.za

R1000 per team

Payment: WCBU: FNB 62926125263 ; REF: NAME

Entries close: Sunday 1st June 2025

- **Teams may comprise up to a maximum of six players**
- **No entries will be accepted unless in writing or online, and accompanied by payment**

Enquiries: Jocelyn Ashberg 083 460 3911 ashberg@iafrica.com

AFRICAN ZONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

This article was submitted by Diniar Minwalla

The above championships were recently concluded to determine which African countries would qualify to play in the Bermuda Bowl which will take place this year in Herning, Denmark. The South African teams qualified in the Open, Women and Mixed categories, and narrowly missed qualification in the Senior category.

Congratulations to all the qualifying teams:

OPEN

Alon Apteker, Craig Gower, Noah Apteker, Rob Stephens, Neville Eber, Hennie Fick

WOMEN

Carol Stanton, Vanessa Armstrong, Tas Nestoridis, Lotte Sorensen, Roz Bernstein, Sharon Lang

MIXED

Imtiaz Kaprey, Lorraine Weers, Chris Child, Anton Der Kinderen, Diana Rosslee and Gregory Hingle

Round 2 of the initial round robin in the Senior category saw Egypt take on South Africa. The following deal proved interesting: (hands rotated for convenience)

	74	
	J432	
	AK4	
	AKQT	
AJ62		KQ95
107		K9865
J6		Q985
98542		VOID
	1083	
	AQ	
	10732	
	J763	

At one table, the Egyptian North opened 1NT and was left to play there. East led the 6 of hearts. Declarer took the heart finesse, and proceeded to cash 4 club tricks. East chose to discard his diamonds on the run of the clubs, so declarer made 4 more diamond tricks to end up with 10 tricks.

There was more action at the other table. The South African North upgraded his hand to 18 points and opened 1C, planning to rebid 2NT at his next turn, showing 18-19 points. The Egyptian East made a take-out double of 1C, and South bid 1NT, which was raised to 3NT by North. East now decided to make a penalty double and West led a small spade. The defenders took their 4 spade tricks, declarer discarding a heart and

a diamond from dummy, and a diamond from hand. East, who won the 4th spade, now exited with a diamond.

A good start for the defence, would you say, by taking the first 4 spade tricks? Turned out to be quite the contrary.

Declarer won the diamond lead in dummy, and took the heart finesse, followed by the jack of clubs, East showing out. At this point, declarer has 8 tricks via 4 clubs, and 2 tricks in each of the red suits. The 9th trick could come from dropping the king of hearts on the ace, but this could hardly be possible in the light of East's take-out double and his club void.

When all else fails to fulfil your contract, consider a squeeze.

In simple terms, a squeeze is defined as putting one or both the opponents under pressure where they are forced to make a fatal discard. It is important to identify the victim, which, on this occasion, must clearly be East who is known to hold all the important cards in the red suits. A bit of theoretical knowledge would help in identifying whether squeeze possibilities exist. With East as the clear victim, declarer took 2 more club tricks ending in dummy to arrive at the end position . . .

DUMMY

H: J4

D: A

C: A

EAST

H: K9

D: Q9

DECLARER

H: A

D: 107

C: 7

Declarer now played the ace of clubs from dummy, and East was caught in a "criss cross" squeeze. If he discards a heart, declarer cashes the ace of hearts, felling the king, and returns to dummy with the ace of diamonds to now enjoy the winning jack of hearts. If, on the other hand, East discards a diamond, declarer cashes the ace of diamonds and returns to hand with the ace of hearts to enjoy the now winning ten of diamonds. 9 IMPS to South Africa, but Egypt went on to take the Gold medal.

The Criss Cross squeeze can be identified when South holds an entry (ace of hearts) in North's threat suit (hearts, where the HJ threatens to become a winner) and North holds an entry (Ace of Diamonds) in South's threat suit (Diamonds, where the ten of diamonds threatens to become a winner).

You may have noticed that when the defenders took the first 4 tricks in spades, they paved the way for the squeeze to operate. Strangely enough, their failure to take the first 4 tricks would have resulted in defeating 3NT. Check it out for yourself!

THE BRIDGE LOUNGE

by Jeff Sapire

It's been said so often before – eventually all the plays that one reads about in the books come up at the table. I was watching a game when this hand was dealt. The final contract was reasonable, but when the hand was over it took all the players quite a while to figure out whether or not the contract should have been made.

South dealer, NS vul

		NORTH		
		S A8		
		H Q6		
		D KQ109843		
		C 32		
WEST	EAST			
S 7642	S QJ93			
H AJ9852	H 43			
D 7	D AJ5			
C Q9	C J1075			
		SOUTH		
		S K105		
		H K107		
		D 62		
		C AK864		

West	North	East	South
			1C
2H	3D	pass	3NT
All pass			

Opening lead: H8

2H was a weak jump overcall, after which the normal 3NT was reached.

Declarer won the lead in hand with the ten of hearts and played a diamond to the queen. East grabbed the ace and returned a heart, which west won, but that was the end of the defence. Realizing that there was no point in continuing the suit without any entry, west switched to a spade, but it made no difference. Declarer won the return with the king of spades and continued diamonds, playing to the king and then giving east the diamond jack. Declarer now had the rest, making an overtrick.

When the hand was over I asked the defenders if they could see a way to beat it. Not too difficult, you might say? All east has to do is to not take the first diamond. As none of the other suits will provide enough tricks for the contract, declarer will probably return to hand with a club and play another diamond – but now east wins (covering whatever declarer plays) and dummy's diamonds are dead. There is only one entry left, and declarer needs two – one to establish the suit and another to get back.

I then asked declarer if he saw a line to make it. Not so easy now, unless you know the play or are astute enough to work it out. A key question is – who has the ace of diamonds? It's possible that west has it, but most unlikely given the 2H bid. On the basis that east has it, the winning line is to play a diamond to the eight! This play affects the communications immensely. If east holds up now, then he loses his 2nd diamond trick altogether when declarer continues with a high honour. And if east wins, then next time south can play a diamond up to an honour, and now it doesn't matter whether or not east ducks, as diamonds can be continued from the dummy.

It's an interesting technique hand. You are prepared to lose two diamond tricks, so playing to the eight first forces the defender to win the trick.



Do me a favor. Take a few minutes off from playing online bridge . Your eyes Will appreciate it.

Dear Readers

If there is an article you have written or would like to submit a bridge story, we would love to see more content from all the regions contributing to our newsletter.

Please feel free to contact me via WhatsApp 082 430 4140 or by email: dingersent51@gmail.com

Yours in bridge

Deirdre

HOW MANY WORDS OF 3 LETTERS OR MORE CAN BE MADE FROM THE WORD BRIDGE?

- 4 words with 5 letters - bride, ridge, dirge and gride
(cut or scrape along or through with a strident or grating sound)
- 8 words with 4 letters - ride grid bier bird dreg gird bide drib
- 9 words with 3 letters - bid rid rig bed beg big die dig rib

P.S. I could not think of another 6 letter word! Is there one?



So you're saying you're absolutely sure you can't play bridge with me tonight?

