



## The President's Address

We have come to the end of another year and I am coming to the end of my stint as president of the SABF. It has been an interesting and challenging 6 years where we have had to face the ravages of COVID and adapt to the challenges of online bridge while all the time finding ways and means of getting our players back to our clubs.

At times it has been quite tough going and the fact that I have survived this long is in large part due to the ongoing support and hard work of my committee comprising Roz, Jocelyn, Kit, Helen, Delene, Barbara, Arie, Peter, Neil and Bernard many of whom have been with me from the start of this journey so a big thankyou from me to all of you. My thanks also go to Nicky our webmaster and Dedre our editor who have also helped in making my job that much easier.

Yes our membership is diminishing and has been ever since the 1980s when it hit its peak so this isn't something new that we only discovered yesterday. But I have every intention of playing bridge at our clubs in 20 years' time and many of you reading this article do too. So we can either listen to the moaning Minnies out there with their forecasts of doom and gloom or we can get off our butts and make sure it happens. That is the single vision that has driven me and my team over the last 6 years and the legacy we wish to pass on to our future committees.

And to end this year on a happy note read Peta Feinstein's article on what is happening at the Links, the biggest club in our country. That's what I'm talking about 😊

I wish you all a safe and peaceful festive season and all the very best for the New Year.

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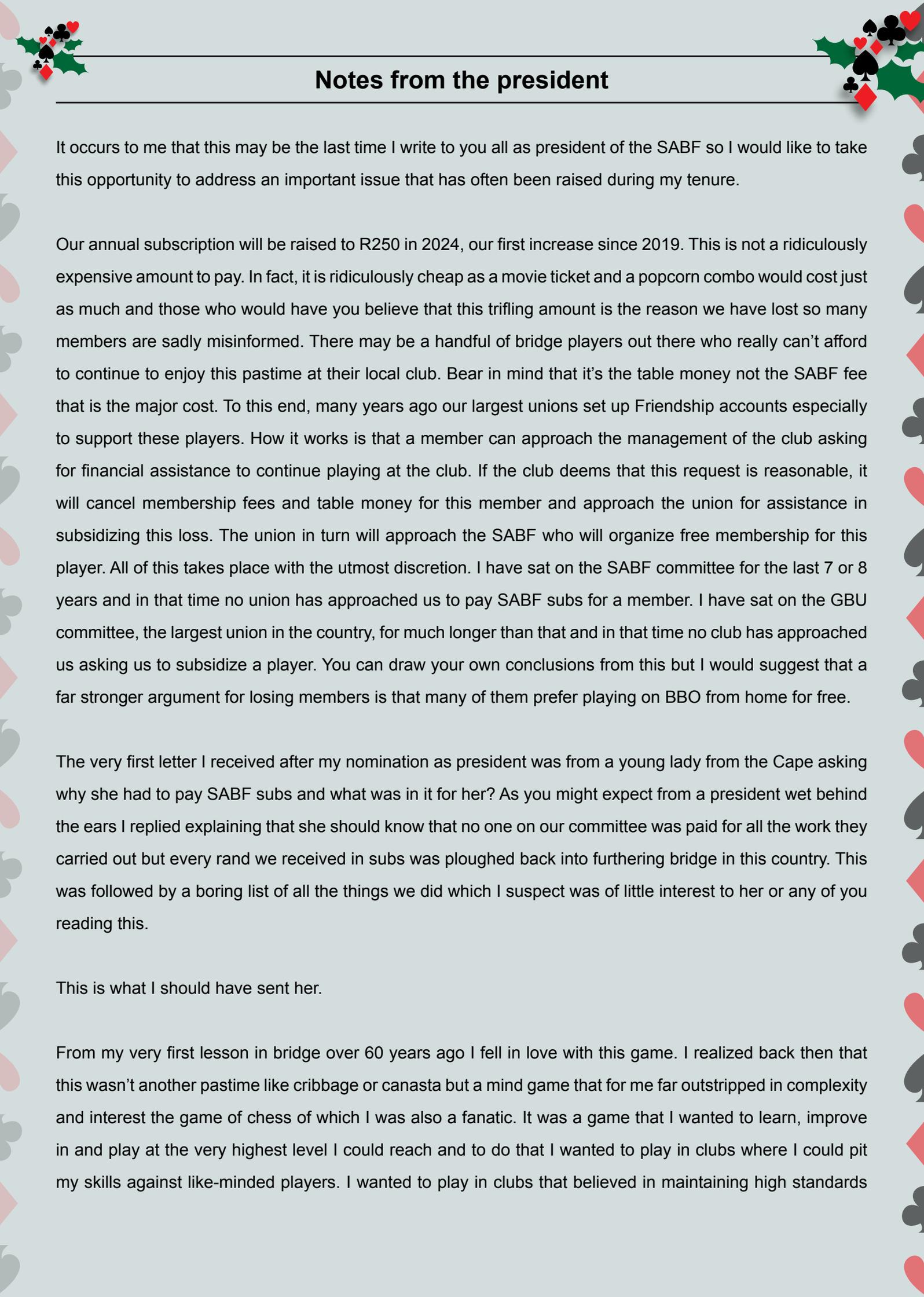
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## Notes from the president

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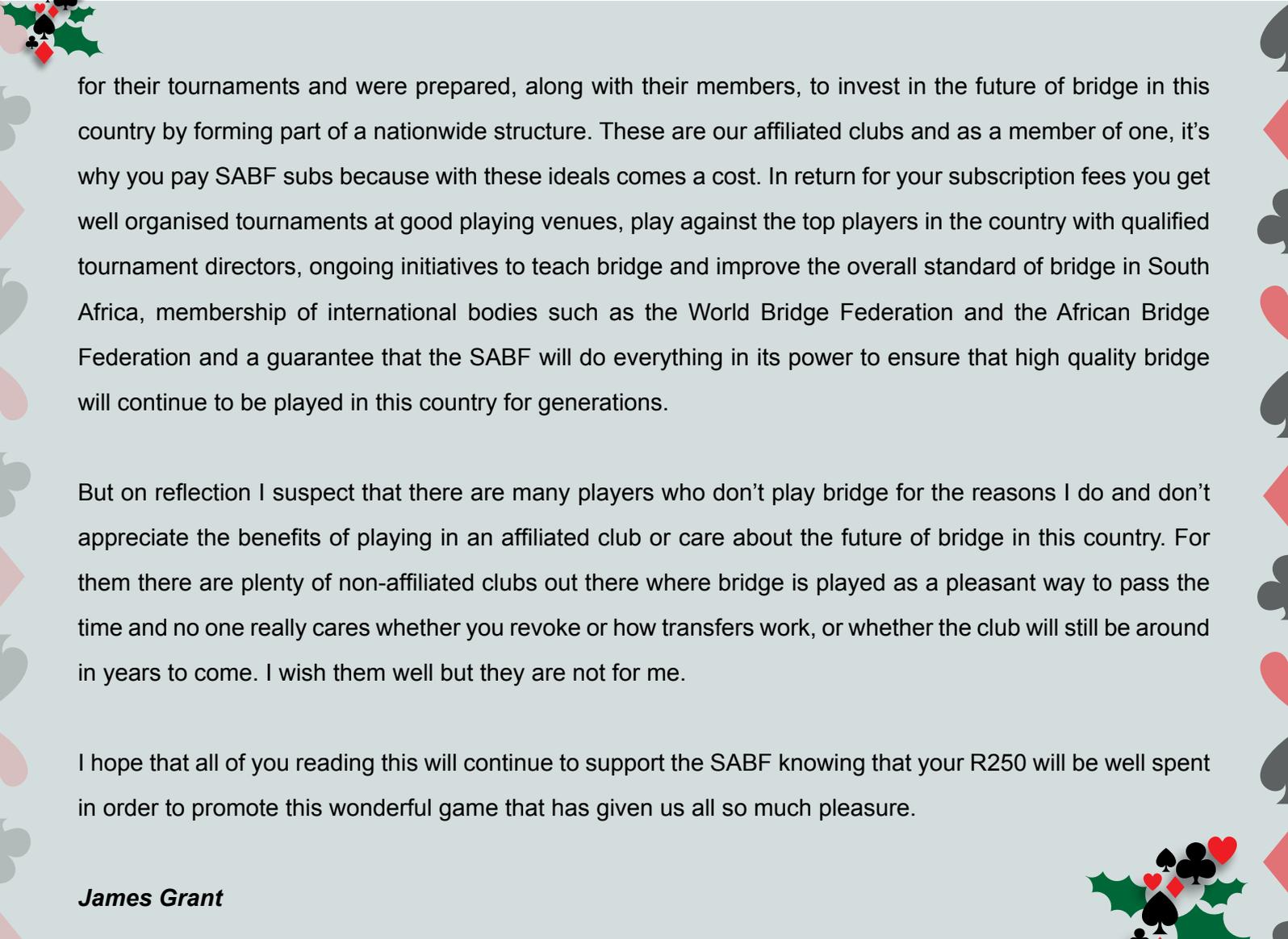
It occurs to me that this may be the last time I write to you all as president of the SABF so I would like to take this opportunity to address an important issue that has often been raised during my tenure.

Our annual subscription will be raised to R250 in 2024, our first increase since 2019. This is not a ridiculously expensive amount to pay. In fact, it is ridiculously cheap as a movie ticket and a popcorn combo would cost just as much and those who would have you believe that this trifling amount is the reason we have lost so many members are sadly misinformed. There may be a handful of bridge players out there who really can't afford to continue to enjoy this pastime at their local club. Bear in mind that it's the table money not the SABF fee that is the major cost. To this end, many years ago our largest unions set up Friendship accounts especially to support these players. How it works is that a member can approach the management of the club asking for financial assistance to continue playing at the club. If the club deems that this request is reasonable, it will cancel membership fees and table money for this member and approach the union for assistance in subsidizing this loss. The union in turn will approach the SABF who will organize free membership for this player. All of this takes place with the utmost discretion. I have sat on the SABF committee for the last 7 or 8 years and in that time no union has approached us to pay SABF subs for a member. I have sat on the GBU committee, the largest union in the country, for much longer than that and in that time no club has approached us asking us to subsidize a player. You can draw your own conclusions from this but I would suggest that a far stronger argument for losing members is that many of them prefer playing on BBO from home for free.

The very first letter I received after my nomination as president was from a young lady from the Cape asking why she had to pay SABF subs and what was in it for her? As you might expect from a president wet behind the ears I replied explaining that she should know that no one on our committee was paid for all the work they carried out but every rand we received in subs was ploughed back into furthering bridge in this country. This was followed by a boring list of all the things we did which I suspect was of little interest to her or any of you reading this.

This is what I should have sent her.

From my very first lesson in bridge over 60 years ago I fell in love with this game. I realized back then that this wasn't another pastime like cribbage or canasta but a mind game that for me far outstripped in complexity and interest the game of chess of which I was also a fanatic. It was a game that I wanted to learn, improve in and play at the very highest level I could reach and to do that I wanted to play in clubs where I could pit my skills against like-minded players. I wanted to play in clubs that believed in maintaining high standards



for their tournaments and were prepared, along with their members, to invest in the future of bridge in this country by forming part of a nationwide structure. These are our affiliated clubs and as a member of one, it's why you pay SABF subs because with these ideals comes a cost. In return for your subscription fees you get well organised tournaments at good playing venues, play against the top players in the country with qualified tournament directors, ongoing initiatives to teach bridge and improve the overall standard of bridge in South Africa, membership of international bodies such as the World Bridge Federation and the African Bridge Federation and a guarantee that the SABF will do everything in its power to ensure that high quality bridge will continue to be played in this country for generations.

But on reflection I suspect that there are many players who don't play bridge for the reasons I do and don't appreciate the benefits of playing in an affiliated club or care about the future of bridge in this country. For them there are plenty of non-affiliated clubs out there where bridge is played as a pleasant way to pass the time and no one really cares whether you revoke or how transfers work, or whether the club will still be around in years to come. I wish them well but they are not for me.

I hope that all of you reading this will continue to support the SABF knowing that your R250 will be well spent in order to promote this wonderful game that has given us all so much pleasure.

**James Grant**



## **Changes to the 2017 Laws of Duplicate Bridge**

For those of you who like to keep up with the latest changes in the laws

Laws 73 and 89 have been revised and will come into effect on 1st January 2024. You will find the links to the document containing the revisions and also to Word and PDF versions of the 2017 Laws with the revisions included at :

<http://www.worldbridge.org/rules-regulations/2017-laws-of-duplicate-bridge>

These amendments are being implemented in an effort to promote fair and consistent play across all WBF-sanctioned bridge events:

- Law 73 concerns Communication, Behaviour, Tempo and Deception
- Law 89 concerns Prohibited Behaviour and Reprehensible Conduct

Should individual Directors wish to be added to the email list maintained by the WBF and receive information about matters concerning the Laws of Duplicate Bridge please ask them to email [anna.gudge@worldbridgefed.com](mailto:anna.gudge@worldbridgefed.com) to request inclusion for the future.

**Sid Ismail**

*National Tournament Director*

# THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD

*Here follows a number of articles by players who took part in this year's World Bridge Championships held in Marrakech*

## **Letter to the SABF regarding World Bridge Championships 2023**

As a member of the open team representing South Africa in the Bermuda Bowl 2023, I would like to thank the SABF for their sponsorship of players attending and for paying the not inconsiderable entry fees for the tournament. It is always a pleasure to play against the world's best player and thereby gain experience and improve one's game so that we can in turn share that experience and knowledge with all South African players. The venue and organization of the event were exceptional and I could find no fault. I would like to point out that tournaments in South Africa, such as the National congress, are also extremely well organized and it is gratifying that our organizing committees have the ability to do this at world class level.

While our team did not disgrace themselves, we have to ask why we were not competitive enough to reach at least the quarter finals of the event. The views I express are mine alone and do not necessarily express those of my teammates or the SABF.

### **Preparation for the event**

My impression was that the world class teams we met were much better prepared. All players arrived at our table with annotated versions of our convention cards. They rarely had to ask what our signaling or bidding meant because they were already familiar with these. Speaking to some players it was clear that they had coaches and captains who ensured that they were ready. Many countries sponsor coaching for their teams and arrange intensive practice sessions and even bridge retreats where players just play bridge for 1-2 weeks prior to the event. Most teams consist of professional players who play and discuss bridge daily. South Africa does not have the resources to offer this kind of training and sponsorship to their players but there are things we can do.

### **What preparation did we do?**

There was minimal preparation for the main event and in fact more time was devoted to the Zonal championships. I would like to thank a few people who did put in some effort to prepare the team.

1. Alon Apteker arranged for team members to play in the OCBL online tournaments at his own expense which afforded us an opportunity to practice at a high level.
2. Robert Stephens made an effort to arrange practice matches between the Open, Ladies, Mixed and Senior teams. This was unfortunately met with apathy and very few sessions resulted.
3. Leif Stabell arranged online practice matches for our teams and his input was gratefully received.
4. Sven Bjerregaard, a Swedish international, devoted considerable time and arranged practice matches for Robert Stephens and myself with other Swedish internationals.
5. SABF offered coaching to the Ladies team but money available for this was minimal and inadequate.

### **What minimum preparation is required in the future?**

With limited resources and no government or sport body's support, we are very limited as to what is possible.

Some things can be done with little financial implications;

1. Appoint a functional Captain/coach for each team. The captain has the following responsibilities
  - a. Administration work. These duties are covered in a section that is available on the SABF site.
  - b. Arranging practice matches. These should be compulsory. Players who qualify to represent SA must be able and willing to devote some time especially just prior to the event when practice matches should be arranged daily. We all know that we improve as an event progresses and if that improvement occurs before the main event starts, we can expect to see much better results
  - c. Ensure that all team members have copies of all the convention cards of their opponents and have discussed them. Some may feel that this is a waste of time as each pair will only play 1/3 of the other players but I believe that a lot of knowledge can be gained from studying opponents' convention cards such as new ideas on signaling and bidding conventions. Familiarity with their methods also frees up mental effort to concentrate on judgement.
  - d. Encourage discussion and constructive criticism after each match so that mistakes are not repeated.
2. Ideally a coach should be appointed for each team. This costs money and is probably beyond the means of the SABF particularly if an international coach is recommended. SABF is reliant on subs and philanthropy (currently largely non-existent) to fund this but any major improvement in the performance of the team is highly dependent on bringing in new ideas and correction of ingrained poor habits. The lack of government support can only be changed with transformation which is a long term goal. More active fundraising is essential.
3. Practice, practice, practice. I felt I went into this event 'cold'. This was largely my fault but it should not have been allowed to happen.

## **Why does the SABF sponsor teams to play internationally?**

A common complaint from some members of the SABF is that a lot of their subscription money is spent on sending an elite few players overseas and they do not see any benefit from this.

Tournament bridge players play in SABF organized events in order to improve their game. One of the best ways of improving one's game is to play against better players. If we do not participate in international events, the overall standard will unquestionably decline. We saw this and have still not recovered from the years of sport boycotts in the 1980's. Failure to participate internationally will ultimately lead to the demise of tournament bridge in South Africa.

Bridge is a game of experience and while there is some value in formal lectures which the SABF has organized in the past, the best experience is gained at the table. Players do not take full advantage of this when they play against stronger opponents. There is resistance to asking the experts their opinion. I believe this may be due to a reluctance to embarrass themselves or their partners. I know that all my teammates would be happy to answer any questions at the table but they feel it would be inappropriate to volunteer criticisms or advice. If players want to take full advantage of international experience gained by our top players, they have overcome their fears and egos and actively request help from expert players. This ethos should be encouraged by the SABF.

South African teams have in the past shown that they can qualify for the later rounds of international tournaments. However, we all lack the consistency required to do this regularly. Even with limited resources there are ways of improving our chances.

**Bernard Donde**

# AND MARRAKECH . . . HOW WAS IT?

*Reportback by Roz Bernstein' our Ladies Team Captain,  
as told to Deirdre Ingersent*

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It was hot, hot and extremely hot with temperatures in the over 40 degree range the whole week! However the event was held in a luxury hotel with that magic word air conditioning so fine for the bridge play! We went out for supper each evening, all of us together, which was fun and we all stayed on at least a few extra days to savour Morocco.

In a 4 year cycle Venice Cup (the Ladies Event) is held twice and then there is the World Mind Games in between and a year off. In order to qualify for the world event a country must first get through Zonals. There are 8 different Zones and Africa constitutes one of those. South Africa needs to finish 1st or 2nd there to qualify. Our team was experienced with all players having made Zonals and only one player, Sharon Lang, participating in the world event for the first time. Africa was represented by South Africa, Egypt and Morocco getting automatic inclusion as the host nation.



#	Team	Ranking	VPs
1	TURKIYE		57.94
2	SWEDEN		45.39
3	POLAND		44.35
4	FRANCE		44.24
5	ISRAEL		38.39
6	USA1		37.50
7	INDIA		37.46
8	DENMARK		33.23
9	NEW ZEALAND		29.78
10	SOUTH AFRICA		29.35
11	CHINA		28.24
12	USA2		25.49
13	BRAZIL		25.31
14	EGYPT		24.82
15	CHINESE TAIPEI		24.73
16	UAE		23.85
17	AUSTRALIA		23.44
18	ARGENTINA		23.04
19	NORWAY		22.76
20	CANADA		22.44
21	GERMANY		19.80

There were 24 teams in the event and the tournament is organised as a total round robin with 23 rounds of 16 board matches taking 7 1/2 days. Three matches per day! Teams have 3 pairs with only 2 pairs playing each session and the Team Captain had to nominate her team 10 minutes after a match had finished ready for the next one. Failure to do this timeously resulted in the loss of some valuable VP's! In order to progress in the competition to the knockout stage one must finish in the top 8.

The organisation was slick, computerised and ran like clockwork. Up to date scores were published quickly on big screens and a print out of match results and hand records quickly produced.

Obviously play at the tables was with screens and no talking was allowed. Cellphones naturally not permitted and a penalty imposed for the handling of one, even if it was just to turn it off if you had forgotten to do it before play started! No warnings, just automatic penalty of 2 VP's. Tournament Directors walked

around and permission had to be sought from them if one wanted to use the bathroom! Rather than an Appeals Committee to settle a TD issue, it is now resolved by a Reviewer who consults with others as to their opinion on the matter. All players wore their “dog tag” when in the playing area and rules were tight even as regards viewing in the Open Room. One was allowed to do this but if one left, no re-entry during that session. A Vugraph was also set up with 2 different matches shown.

As for results, our South African ladies finished 20th out of 24 teams. The event was won by Israel, their first time ever to win. They only qualified in 8th position but came on strongly in Q/F, S/F and Final to clinch victory. They were a young team with two players aged 18 and the others in their 30's.

Our Open team ended up 14th and our Seniors 22nd. 24 teams in their events as well.



As for playing systems, most countries are playing 2 over 1 with more intricate systems in use opening with a club and involving a complicated system of transfers. Roz thought perhaps our South African team needed to do more thinking about their defensive play with a good signalling system. Some countries use a non playing captain and have a coach present as well. It would be impossible for South Africa to do this and tutoring ahead of time and good quality practice matches had been carried out. Are our top players exposed to enough high quality competition before attending a world class event? Probably not, but there are chances now with bbo to play in events with other country's top class players. Roz concluded that we were probably just not good enough to achieve a better result!

*Would Roz like to do it again?* Most definitely yes! A lot of experience gained by watching top players there whenever possible. *Was it an expensive thing to do?* Yes, but probably not as much money needed as one would imagine and of course the South African weak rand does not help when purchasing airtickets and hotel accommodation.

In conclusion Deirdre would just like to say that South Africa qualified with 3 teams this year which I thought fantastic, and it definitely generated a lot of interest amongst us average club players. Well done to all of you who experienced Marrakesh!

**Courtesy of the GBU**

# MARRAKECH

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Marrakech is without doubt a beautiful city but visiting it in the height of summer is not to be recommended. The temperature during the day was unbearable and hardly conducive to sightseeing and even leaving the hotel at seven in the evening was like walking into an oven. Interestingly, but also understandably, early evening was the time that the locals came out to socialize and shop as most shops and restaurants in our quarter anyway stayed open until midnight.

Though we didn't do well the bridge was fun and as always seems to be the case when things aren't going well Lady Luck abandoned us 😞.

## *Observations*

Tournaments at the highest level are all about bidding, and by this I don't mean that the best pairs out there are armed with dozens of conventions that give them a huge advantage over their opponents, I mean that the top players have a complete understanding of their basic system along with the nuances therein. They don't have bidding misunderstandings and when it comes to judgement calls, perhaps the most difficult area of bidding, they make the right decision more often than not. To have any hope of reaching this level of bridge you have to play an awful lot of bridge with the same partner and I'm not talking months here, I'm talking years. Following this logic it would make sense to hold Trials more than a year before the event not just a few months before as we have done historically.

Our Senior team spent a lot of time before the event playing together, analyzing hands, swopping ideas and making suggestions. But in hindsight when we arrived at the venue we did something silly; we all stayed at different hotels. The Norwegian Open team stayed at the same hotel as me and had arrived a couple of days earlier. They breakfasted together, they lunched together, they dined together. If you told me they all slept in the same room that wouldn't surprise me. Whenever I passed through the foyer there they all were listening to their coach, discussing strategies, analyzing hands. They reached the finals where they were narrowly beaten by the Swiss team none of whom to the best of my knowledge were actually born in Switzerland but that's another story.

So my suggestion for future teams is that a simple way to improve the morale, détente, communications and anything else you can think of is to make sure you all stay in the same hotel.

**James Grant**

# REPORT BACK FROM MARRAKECH

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Hi There!

A few thoughts come to mind about my stay in Marrakech. First the hotel and playing areas and facilities were absolutely special however whilst walking through the hotel there were a couple of major obstacles. One was a fountain and rivulet in the main passage where the light was dim. This resulted in a number of casualties. I slipped twice on the wet surface but Roz Bernstein and Brian Pincus were not so lucky as both landed up needing treatment at the local hospital.

The city itself had a number of excellent restaurants all a short taxi ride away where the food was both interesting and tasty, and many ordinary ones in the near vicinity. The people were nice and friendly by and large but poverty was prevalent. Taxi drivers always drove a hard bargain but were fine after that. There was lots to see, the old city and souks for example. On the bridge front we did reasonably well but could have done better. An interesting observation was that we lost to all of the teams who finished ahead of us and beat all of those below us, a feature I have never seen before. Unfortunately our Ladies and Senior teams fared poorly, but it's tough at the top. All in all it was a great experience and I can't wait to go to the next world championships!

***Rob Stephens***

Hi, I thought everything about the event was top class. Marrakesh was a charming host city, notwithstanding the heat, with good hotel options and very good restaurant options. The local community were gracious and welcoming. The playing venue was grand, spacious and comfortable. The schedule was ideal. The tournament was well run – keeping to time, TDs visible, scoring efficient. My impression was that that the bridge contingent enjoyed Marrakech as a venue

***Neville Eber***



# “WHAT WE SHOULD BE TEACHING BEGINNERS”

Nothing is more important to the future of bridge than beginner classes. This is where we create customers. Without new customers ...sorry, you don't need me to answer this.

## The goal of a beginner course

Of course, the goal is to have a lot of students complete the course, the more the merrier, but it is a bit more complicated than that. They should also have a certain confidence, otherwise they will never survive once we open the lesson door.

Confidence comes from having clear simple goals, and it also helps if the students in the class get on, that way the social factor kicks in. Much better to have a group that looks out for each other, so part of your goal is to create a micro-community.

## The Evolution of a Beginners' Course

I taught my first beginner class in 1973 and it has been passion ever since. From those early days I have always owned bridge clubs. At one stage I had 6 Grand Slam Bridge Centres, and our business model depended on bringing in new players. I also ran the teaching program in Indonesia in the 1990s and taught online with Nevena Djurovic during COVID. More than 2,000 students came through our online program. So, I can safely say that during these last 50 years, I have taught a lot of beginners to play bridge.

Throughout this time, I have been constantly striving to improve the lessons and I can tell you one thing for sure – every single change has been to make things more simple.

Here are my three top tips (which have all been included in my books).

1. Take notrump opening bids out of the initial beginner course. In the bidding the partners begin by searching for a fit, with priority on the majors. Then they decide about game. Unfortunately, the 1NT opening is not about the conversation of bidding, it is only about game. This makes it an easy lesson for the teacher, but it is not the right starting point for the student. I incorporated this change in my 1988 beginner book.
2. Do not mention raising opener's minor. When partner opens in a minor, tell them to show a major.
3. Teach the 1NT response over a major is 6-11 HCP. Thus, a new suit at the 2-level is 12+ HCP. In other words, it is forcing to game. This one small change simplifies the bidding. We no longer have to worry about reverses and jump shifts, and all the trouble they create. This is also the method that is used by most tournament players these days.

Finally, a word of caution. Beware of those who say you should ignore the bidding and start teaching card play or perhaps even some other game. They may be suggesting an easier way for the teacher, but they are missing the essence for the student.

**Paul Marston**



*Paul is an Australian bridge player and the author of a series of books designed to teach beginners the intricacies of Bridge. The first of these “Introduction to Bridge” is available free of charge to beginners attending our registered teachers' classes.*

*Please contact **Arie Ridderhof** at [arie.ridderhof@gmail.com](mailto:arie.ridderhof@gmail.com) in this regard*



Bridge drives have always proved a good way for raising money for charity and most of you will be aware that the WCBU hold a regular online charity tournament on the first Friday of every month. Recently a couple of live charity drives have been held at our clubs

## ***Pathways School Westville***

Members and friends of the North Coast Bridge club enjoyed a morning of duplicate bridge while helping to raise funds for the Pathways school in Westville. Pathways is a non-profit centre for children with severe cognitive and physical disabilities

**Over R70,000 was raised**

***Kitty Philip***



## **Surgeons for Little Lives Foundation**

This drive held in early November at the Links was organized by Emma Bothner an 18 year old student and her mother on behalf of the Surgeons for Little Lives Foundation.

They are a non-profit organisation that launched in 2015, run by a group of Paediatric Surgeons, committed to saving the lives of sick children. This Bridge Drive is aimed at raising money to help fund specific projects which will improve the care given to the children in Gauteng and its surrounding provinces.

We all enjoyed a wonderful lunch laid on by the Links and held a raffle for some amazing prizes offered by companies supporting the event.

**Over R40,000 was raised for the charity.**

***Peta Feinstein***



# Sidz Quiz

A hand from a recent session at Benoni Northerns is featured below.

There is nothing extraordinary with this hand and the simplicity of the thought processes leads one to the remarkable solution that yields a return of > 90% return!

You will be defending as South.

West	North	East	South
			Pass
1♣	Dbl	1NT	Dbl
Pass	2♥	Pass	Pass
3♣	Pass	Pass	Pass

	N	
W		E
	S	

East (Dummy)

♠ Q J 9  
♥ Q J 10  
♦ 10 8 7 6  
♣ 8 4 2

South (You)

♠ A 7 6 4  
♥ 5 4 2  
♦ A 9 4  
♣ 10 9 6



Against 3♣ partner leads the ♦3.

Tr 1: D3 - D6 - DA - D2



**QUIZ: How do you continue, and why?**

INTERCLUBINTERCLUBINTERCLUBINTERCLUB

2023

*My team arrived in second place which really wasn't shabby  
You're thinking we should celebrate for we should be quite happy  
You're right because in actual fact all that I am saying  
Is we might have come in tenth place if only I was playing!*



*Due to unforeseen circumstances I was unable to take part this year in my favourite annual tournament but as you can see they battled on without me 😊*

James Grant

Communications and entries are the life blood of card play.

When playing the dummy, very often you need to be aware of these issues, and check whether you may have later entry problems; and if you are able to do something about it.

**South dealer, both vul**

**NORTH**

**S 9632**

**H J8**

**D KJ74**

**C K92**

**WEST**

**S QJ108**

**H K9**

**D 103**

**C 108643**

**EAST**

**S 754**

**H 10953**

**D A95**

**C Q75**

**SOUTH**

**S AK**

**H A7642**

**D Q862**

**C AJ**



<b>South</b>	<b>North</b>
<b>1H</b>	<b>1S</b>
<b>2NT</b>	<b>3NT</b>

**Opening lead: SQ**

I like South's 2NT rebid. 2D is much too much of an underbid, and 3D is game forcing, which may be just a bit too much. 2NT is a middle-of-the-road action, allowing partner to pass if he has made a light response. Some players don't like bidding NT with two doubletons, but experts often do so with 'semi balanced' hands (5422 shape).

Despite dummy having bid the suit, West led a spade from his strong sequence.

Declarer totted up only five tricks off the top. Going after hearts would need the suit to divide 3-3, but that would only give another two tricks, so he correctly tackled the diamonds, hoping that they would break 3-2. That would get the tally up to eight, and then a club finesse would be the best shot for the game going trick. So he played a diamond to the king at trick two, won by East who returned a spade. Declarer won this perforce, cashed the queen of diamonds, played a diamond to the jack and then took the club finesse. It worked, but the fly in the ointment was that there was no re-entry to the dummy.

It's not really a difficult hand, but declarer never utilized the entries properly in the diamond suit itself. He had played the 2 to the K, then the Q with the 4 from dummy, and then the 6 to the J, leaving himself with the 8 in hand opposite the 7 in dummy. On the third round, the 8 to the J would have left the 6 in hand opposite the 7 in dummy, creating the vital extra entry. After the club finesse had worked, he could have cashed the ace of clubs and crossed to the 7 of diamonds to make the king of clubs.

# THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW



There are a number of decisions made by our committee during the course of the year which may affect you as a player directly and are published in our minutes on the website. But of course hardly anyone bothers to read these so we rely on your union representatives to inform your unions who in turn should inform their clubs who will inform you. Yes, right! So for all of you who missed the email here are some interesting facts.

We have raised our sabf subs for next year from R200 to R250. This might seem a huge increase until one considers that our last increase was in 2019 when it was increased to R200 so 5 years later it has been increased by 25% which for those of you who understand compound interest is about 4,5% per year and is far lower than the cost of living increases over the same period.

We would very much like to return to our pre COVID disciplines where these subs are paid by you to your local club as from a financial aspect this simplifies the unions' lives tremendously. Where unions are running online clubs or prefer collecting subs themselves they will inform you as to which bank account you must pay.

Selection by the unions for the Interprovincials is necessarily held before the tournament itself so to avoid disappointment make sure that your union when selecting teams is following the same rules as the SABF which means that

- a) No player who has represented their country may play in a Berkowitz team
- b) No player who is a grandmaster may play in a Berkowitz team



## The Links Bridge Club – 2023 Summary

### The Links has had an exciting year!



#### **Saturday Afternoons:**

We ended 2022 hosting just a single section on Saturdays, and immediately after the club reopened in January, players seemed keen to finally rejoin the club and start playing face-to-face. We had 2 solid sections for the first few months, before finally breaking into a 3rd section in May. Since then, it's been anywhere between 25-30 tables, with a record 33 tables just a few weeks ago. A few more tables and we'll be running 4 sections! Before Covid, we were averaging 60 tables in 5 sections.

#### **Thursday Morning Supervised:**

#### **The biggest success story to date.**

We started the supervised sessions towards the end of 2022, with around 4-6 tables in the beginning. Once word started spreading however, the attendance ballooned, and we quickly began hosting between 10-20

tables. We've hit a peak of around 24 tables, but average around 20 on a typical morning. The players who attend have really good things to say about the value and knowledge they're acquiring from our supervisors' expertise.

We intend to continue in the new year, as well as expand the experience with a "gentle" tournament on another day. Thank you to all our dedicated supervisors for giving freely of their time and expertise!

### **Wednesday Afternoons:**

Helen Kruger reopened her Wednesday afternoons earlier in the year, and has a loyal base of players who average around 7-11 tables each week. There is a mixed level of expertise, but generally in a very friendly and warm atmosphere.

### **The Links Online (BBO):**

Although online attendances have dropped off significantly since the peak of Covid, The Links' online tournaments continue to be a major revenue stream for the club, helping to subsidise to some degree the activities at the club. Some sessions are busier than others, and some have been forced to close completely due to a lack of interest. As long as players continue to support the club through these tournaments, we'll carry on hosting them as frequently as possible.

### **Looking ahead to 2024:**

As mentioned above, a gentle tournament will be initiated on another weekday morning. Any social and currently non-competitive players will be targeted to play in these sessions. A lot of interest was shown by players currently attending the supervised sessions.

A Friday morning session will be started by The Links. This will be a normal duplicate session, but with a twist – each week will be part of a bigger month-long tournament, with each new month marking the start of a new tournament.

Some new lunchtime speedball tournaments will be started during the week on BBO. These will be short, 12 board tournaments lasting just 1 hour. If you don't get enough of a fix in the morning, or late afternoon, then this could be for you!

The Links will continue to host several all day face-to-face Sunday tournaments, as well as other bigger tournaments throughout the year.

All of the above as well as other exciting initiatives will be published on The Links' website here:

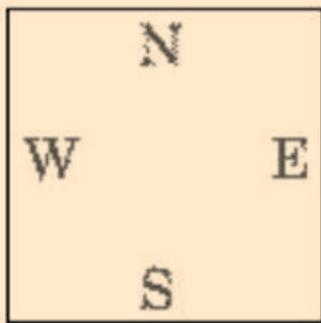
<https://www.bridgewebs.com/links/>

***The Links committee***



# Sidz Solutions

The hands are repeated for convenience.



East (Dummy)

♠ Q J 9  
♥ Q J 10  
♦ 10 8 7 6  
♣ 8 4 2

We (South) are defending a "routine" 3C contract with the lead of the diamond 3 from partner (North).

The negative inference one can draw is that partner has denied the A-K combination in hearts. And, since North bid hearts, declarer is thus marked with Ax, Kx, or honour-third in hearts. If Ax or Kx, there is a dire urgency to take our tricks before one is lost when declarer gets a pitch on the Q-J-10 in dummy.

South (You)

♠ A 7 6 4  
♥ 5 4 2  
♦ A 9 4  
♣ 10 9 6

We take the ace of diamonds and simply return the D9 at trick 2 to secure a second diamond for the defense! The full hands were –

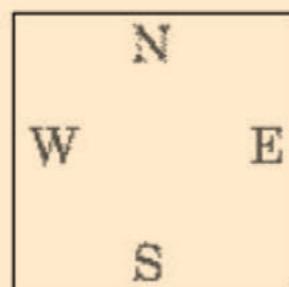
South / All

North

♠ K 10 8 5  
♥ A 9 8 7 3  
♦ Q 5 3  
♣ 3

West

♠ 3 2  
♥ K 6  
♦ K J 2  
♣ AKQJ75



East

♠ Q J 9  
♥ Q J 10  
♦ 10 8 7 6  
♣ 8 4 2

South

♠ A 7 6 4  
♥ 5 4 2  
♦ A 9 4  
♣ 10 9 6



# RANKING CHANGES DECEMBER 2023

Noah	Apteker	Gold Life Master	The Links Bridge Club
Vanessa	Armstrong	Gold Life Master	BBO club
David	Boyes	Regional Master	Western Cape
Frankie	Bradford	Regional Master	KZN Midlands
Jill	Browning	Regional Master	Sunshine Coast
Sandy	Chessen	Regional Master	The Links Bridge Club
Mary	De Villiers	Regional Master	Port Elizabeth Ladies
Jan	East	National Life Master	Local
Terry	East	National Life Master	Local
Geoff	Ellis	Regional Master	St Francis Bay Bridge Club
Merle	Feldman	Regional Master	Friday
Colin	Field	Regional Master	Le Domaine
Lorraine	Field	Regional Master	Le Domaine
Janet	Forgan	Regional Master	St Francis Bay Bridge Club
Jim	Hatt	Regional Master	Outeniqua
Jan	Hickey	Regional Master	Northerns Bridge Club
Liesel	Hutton	Regional Master	Port Elizabeth
Madeline	Joffe	Life Master	Western Cape
May	Kennelly	National Master	The Links Bridge Club
Janne	Masojada	Life Master	KZNBC
Marjorie	Mendoza	Regional Master	Ladies
Ann	Murray	National Master	Western Cape
Cathy	Robinson	Regional Master	KZN Midlands
Lotte	Sorensen	Gold Life Master	The Links Bridge Club
Lyn	Staples	Regional Master	Western Cape
Roy	Stephenson	Regional Master	Western Cape
Robert	Sulcas	Grandmaster	The Links Bridge Club
Julia	Van Der Byl	Regional Master	Friday
Paul	Van Der Wal	Life Master	Benoni Northerns Bridge Club
Anne	van Dijk	Regional Master	Bridge @ Orchards
Judy	Wulf	Regional Master	Western Cape
Ellie	Yanko	Regional Master	Le Domaine

*To All Our Members*

