

From the President

Our first events of the year went off with bang, as you will see in the reports below. I am so pleased to see big turnouts for the events we held in January, and also to see so many new members joining in the month. Welcome!

I feel I need to update members about the mooted move of the club to Challenger Reserve, even though the news is essentially no news! The Council meeting in December sent the proposals made to them by their own project team back for further review, which according to the minute we received appears to potentially delay the whole plan by up to 12 months. In addition, several councillors questioned the need to include the Bridge Club in the plans at all. In view of the continuing uncertainty this causes for the club, we have written to the Council asking for clarity about the future location of the club. Should their decision be to exclude the club from the Challenger plan, we have asked for confirmation that we can stay in our current clubrooms. Once we have clarity on our location, we can start planning for the improvements we so much wish to make.

I'll keep you posted when we know anything more definite than this.

Jim Willetts



January Swiss Pairs Congress

The SPBC January Swiss Pairs Congress was held on Sunday, 4 January 2026. The day was very well attended with close to a full house of 58 pairs. The winners of the event were Hamish McCracken and David Matthews, with Pauline Collett and Cathy Hood coming second and Tim Wright and David Schokman were third. Fourth place went to Mark O'Connor and Gordon Dunlop, and fifth place went to Trevor Fuller and Val Biltoft. Best South Perth pair (not in the top five) went to Cassie Morin and Cynthia Belonogoff. Best pair under 300 MPs were Anne-Louise Dubrawski and Andy Cayley. Best pair under 150 MPs were Paul Royle and Lesley Forman.



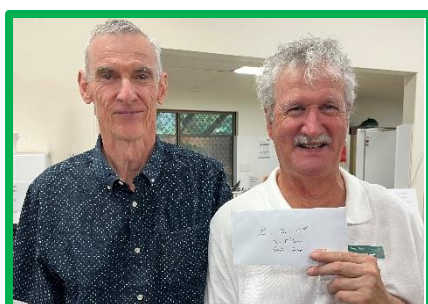
Hamish McCracken and David Matthews



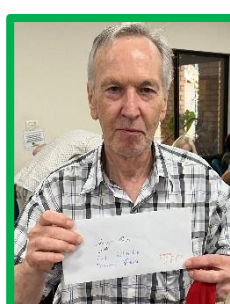
Cathy Hood and Pauline Collett



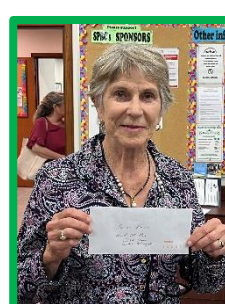
Tim Wright



Mark O'Connor and Gordon Dunlop



Trevor Fuller



Cassie Morin



Andy Cayley and Anne-Louise Dubrawski

Mentors in Teams of Three 2026

This event, previously called Masters in Teams of Three, shared between Melville and South Perth Bridge Clubs, was hosted by South Perth on 18 January 2026. It was a wonderful opportunity for players with < 150 MPs to be mentored by a well-experienced player. It was fantastic to see 18 teams enter and enjoy the day. Sincere thanks to the Mentors for generously giving of their time and sharing their bridge wisdom with their teams. Many players said they liked the format with the emphasis on learning rather than winning and appreciated the additional time to discuss bidding and play between rounds.

First place went to Colin Meek, Ronnie Malthouse and Kate Sawyer, who were mentored by Tom Lemann. Second place went to Ken Strain, Trish Christy and Rachel McRae, who were mentored by Valerie Isle. Third place went to Joe Ventner, Stephanie Laurie and Claire O'Donovan, who were mentored by Nilesch Patel. Fourth place went to Judy Palmer, Andrew Palmer and Rhonda Hulshoff, who were mentored by Robert Kirberger. Prizes were presented by Jim Willetts.



Jim with Team 'Tom'



Jim with Team 'Valerie'



Jim with Team 'Nilesch'



Jim with Team 'Robert'

Events coming up in February

The **SPBC Club Summer Teams** will be held over two Wednesdays, **4 & 11 February 2026**, commencing at **12:30 pm**. Entry is through the MyABF website and cost is \$20 per player, which covers both weeks. If you have not yet entered, please consider getting a team together and joining the fun!

The **SPBC Super Novice Championship**, for players with fewer than 50 MPs as on 1 January 2026, will be held on **Saturday, 21 February**, commencing at **9:15 am**. The cost is \$10 per person. Prizes will be awarded for first, second and third places. This event is a great opportunity for the newer players to play against others with a similar level of experience for red points. Entry is through the MyABF website. If you have not used the MYABF site and would like assistance to enter, please ask a Director or a committee member.

Masterpoint Ranking Promotions December 2025

Congratulations to the SPBC members who have achieved new Masterpoint rankings at the end of December:

Donna Ayriss	Graduate Master	Beth Bannister	Local Master
Gary Howell	Graduate Master	Louann Mokrzycki	Local Master
Mike Taylor	Graduate Master	Sharon Pratt	Bronze Local Master
Gail Mainstone	Club Master	Richard Cohen	Silver Local Master
Annette Woolley	Club Master	Mark Mullins	Regional Master

New members

Welcome to the following new members whose applications were approved at the January Management Committee meeting: Alison Lynch, Beverley Scott, Janet Timmins, Marion Jefferson, Prue Hart, Kate Sayer, Janice Olevson, Kathy Mallory, Steve Edwell, Jenny Parry, Matthew Pearce, Eric Parry, Lyn King and Terri Barbutt.

Kitchen Duty Roster

The February kitchen duty roster calls for those with surnames beginning with **B, D, E and V** to assist with setting up and clearing away the kitchen before and after the tea break. Please contribute to the smooth running of the tea breaks when rostered on. Instructions are on the wall in the kitchen if you are not sure what needs to be done. Many hands make light work, and if we all do our bit, the inconvenience to those rostered on is small. Thank you for your cooperation.

South Perth Easter Congress

The **SPBC Easter Congress**, proudly sponsored by TBIB Insurance, will take place from **Good Friday, 3 April to Easter Monday, 6 April**. The Welcome Pairs will be held on Friday afternoon, Open Pairs (all day) and Novice Pairs (morning only) on Saturday, Swiss Pairs on Sunday, and Open Teams on Monday.

This four-day congress is our club's major event of the year. It is always a fantastic congress, so please consider coming along. But fantastic congresses can only happen with a lot of hard work behind the scenes. There are already many people busily planning the organisation and logistics of the playing sessions, but we will need more volunteers to help across the weekend. Please consider lending your assistance when the call for helpers is made.

More than etiquette ... it's a law of the game

Further to the request in the December Newsletter, framed as *etiquette*, for players to leave their bidding cards on the table until the opening lead has been made, the ABF Regulations on the use of bidding boxes state:

"3.9 When screens are not in use, all the bidding cards should remain on the table until after the opening lead has been faced. "

If all the bidding cards have been put away prior to the opening lead being made, this is actually an infraction. If the opening lead subsequently comes from the wrong hand, it is simply restored to that hand, and the lead made from the correct hand, without any options for Declarer to accept/deny etc. The exposed incorrect opening lead card is therefore authorised information to all.

It is good to see that players have already taken on board the request to leave bidding cards on the table until after the opening lead has been made.