



Mentoring Program

Guidelines for Mentors

Congratulations! You have agreed to mentor another bridge player. You are contributing to that player's future enjoyment of bridge as well as the healthy future of bridge. Thank you.

As a Mentor, you will receive certain benefits and certain responsibilities. You will have the satisfaction of giving back to the game that you love by helping others. In the process, you may sharpen your skills by helping your Mentee learn bidding conventions and the bridge skills you use in every game you play.

Your responsibilities as a mentor will be to:

- * Give of your time unselfishly to help your Mentee;
- * Share your knowledge;
- * Use your Mentee's convention card during your first game;
- * Review your Mentee's play after each game;
- * The focus should be your Mentee learning rather than on earning points;
- * Help your Mentee develop a convention card reflecting the skills they learn; and
- * Commit to playing with your Mentee at least once a month for 6 months.

The Nuts and Bolts of Being a Mentor

Introduce Yourself. Before you and your Mentee meet for the first time, you should call them and introduce yourself. Your Mentee may be nervous playing with an experienced player such as yourself. During this phone call, you can set a time to meet before your first game. The call will provide an opportunity to discuss the Mentee's convention card as well.

The First Game you play with your Mentee will most likely be a "Pro-Am" game in either Knoxville or Oak Ridge. You should play your Mentee's convention card for this first game. This will be a time for you to observe and assess your Mentee's skills and abilities. Questions and comments during the game should be brief while the game is in progress. Emphasis during play with your Mentee should be on learning and not on earning points.

This first game will be a shortened game. You will have time to discuss your Mentee's play during a break at the mid-point of the game and after the game is over. As with other games you play, you should minimize your comments on the play during the game. It is important that you make the game a pleasant experience, not one which intimidates your Mentee.

After the first Game, you should plan on playing at least one game per month with your Mentee. Before each game, you and your Mentee should review their card and any new conventions and skills that you have mutually agreed that the Mentee will learn. While you may make brief suggestions during the game, detailed comments should be reserved for discussion at the end of the game. These comments should be as specific as possible and focus on how the Mentee can strengthen their game. Be as positive as possible. The point of the discussion is to help and encourage your mentee, not tear them down.

Each successive game should focus on the Mentee's strengthening existing skills and learning new skills. After you have reviewed a game with your Mentee, you and your Mentee should discuss new skills that will help the Mentee improve their game. You should both agree on what skills will be learned next. Before your next game together, your Mentee should devote time to learning the agreed upon convention or skill. Remember to go slowly in recommending new skills. You do not want to overwhelm your Mentee with too much.

Preferred Bidding and Defensive Skills

The following list represents the preferred bidding and defensive skills that your Mentee could be expected to learn. The specific skills should be selected by mutual agreement between you and your Mentee.

Bidding

- * 2/1 and 1 NT Forcing
- * New Minor Forcing
- * Cue bids
- * Reverses (Bergen, Reverse Bergen)
- * Bergen bids
- * Jacoby 2NT
- * Drury or 2-Way Reverse Drury
- * Western Cue Bid
- * Support Doubles
- * Inverted Minors
- * 1430

Defense

- * Discards (Standard, Upside Down, Odd/Even, Lavinthal), Attitude and Count
- * Leads
- * Penalty Doubles, Negative Doubles and Redoubles
- * Michaels and Unusual 2NT
- * NT Defense (Cappelletti, Landy, Modified Cappelletti)