



The Links Newsletter

December 2020

Dear members,

The year has come and gone, and certainly was not anything anyone expected.

Covid has disrupted all our lives in so many ways. Our thoughts are with all of those who have been affected by the Virus in some way, or who have lost loved ones.

Thankfully for us bridge players, we've been more fortunate than others, and online bridge has been our saving grace. BBO has provided a fantastic outlet for many people who would have been in lockdown, on their own, trying to find mindless things to keep themselves busy.

What would we have done without it?

When we were forced to close clubs, our immediate thought was "What do we do to raise funds to keep The Links Club running?" Despite not being there, we still have monthly expenses.

AND THEN CAME ROBERT STEPHENS - OUR OWN SAVIOUR!

Words alone cannot express our gratitude to this man. He picked up the ball, and ran with it. And Online at The Links has grown from strength to strength. What started out as a small undertaking to keep us afloat, has broadened into a Virtual Club, under the auspices of the SABF, allowing pleasure for everyone all over South Africa, even attracting overseas players.

But few realize what actually goes on behind the scenes. All we do is log in, register, play and get our results. But that's not where Rob's work ends. He spends countless hours fielding calls, day and night, has done a tremendous job getting non-technical people hooked up. He has produced a brilliant website, with so much useful information, and results from tournaments within minutes of completion. Let's not forget all the administration he does in setting up tournaments, assisting with your BBO\$, and consultations with BBO and other national unions. He's extended tournaments to include a weekly free individual tournament and recently a Mixed Pairs event.

Whilst many of us have had more spare time since Covid converged on us, Rob is pretty much on duty all day, every day. I've seen him start tournaments and field calls whilst at the bank! He's certainly learnt to manage his time and multi task. This he does together with his other normal daily tasks, never getting flustered.

**Rob, we applaud you!**

With a lot of persistence, we have managed to persuade Rob to get some help, giving him some free time. Thank you to Noah Apteker who has undergone training, and steps in as Tournament Director whenever he can.

An enormously huge thanks to Lotte Sorensen who also assists with the Tournament Directing regularly. Lotte also undertook, very successfully, to initiate a Wednesday night teams event – very professional and a huge success.

As a bridge community, we are extremely indebted to all of you.

Many of you ask about our staff.

They are fine. They've stayed on the premises, keeping them tidy and looking after the gardens. I know there are many of you who continue to look after them - Thank you! We've been fortunate to be able to keep paying

them, and are sending them home for Christmas. We will be giving them a bonus which THE LINKS will pay for. Normally at this time of year, we make collections for them, money they rely on to sustain them. We will continue to have tournaments throughout December. Rob has included some free tournaments for Christmas and New Year. Details are below. Subscription fees for The Links will be waived until the clubs open, but we urge you all to pay the SABF and GBU fees, especially if you're playing online. The Links is its own virtual club, but have only been able to do this with the assistance of, and under the SABF umbrella.

We are all missing our face-to-face bridge, but the health and safety of all is our first priority.

For the foreseeable future, we will only be able to continue Online Bridge.

For those who haven't tried it yet, we encourage you to do so. You'll really enjoy it.

From The Links Committee we wish you all Seasons Greetings and please stay safe.

Regards

*Peta Feinstein*

Chairman



### Upcoming Links Sessions:

All sessions will continue as usual, Weekdays 10AM & 3PM and Weekends 9:30AM & 2PM.

The only exceptions will be 25 December and 1 January. We will host 2 Free tournaments each on both those days. Times will be 09:00 – 11:00 & 15:30 – 17:30. They'll also be slightly shorter 18 board tournaments. The registration process will be like it was in the beginning: "Competitive", "Free Tournaments", "The Links..."

Perhaps you can fit one of these in, in between your lunch or dinners? 😊

### Subs 2021:

As The Links remains a member of the Gauteng Bridge Union and South African Bridge Federation, without whom we may not be continuing our partnership with BBO, we kindly ask you to pay their fees for 2021. They are reduced at an all-in R125. If your main online club remains in another part of the country, then by all means pay your membership through your local union. The Links as a club will not be charging any membership fees until such time that live bridge becomes a possibility again.

You may pay the above R125 to the following account:

Name: GBU

Bank: Nedbank

Acc#: 1756013144

Reference: SABF# & Name



#### The Links Online Teams League:

4 editions of our online teams league have taken place over the last few months, starting in June, with great enthusiasm and support from teams around the country.

This event is typically a 5-week long tournament, taking place on BBO on 5 consecutive Wednesday nights. So far, we've had between 3 and 4 graded sections, with teams of all different levels entering.

Keep a look out for the 5<sup>th</sup> edition starting on the 6<sup>th</sup> January. For more details, including previous winners, go to <https://www.linksbridgeclub.com/bbo-teams.html>

#### IMP Pairs:

Keen to play teams, but don't have teammates? IMP pairs could be for you!

To break up the Wednesday night Teams League, each edition going forward will be separated with a 2 week IMP pairs competition. More details will be released in the new year, but expect the first of these to take place around the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in February.

#### The Links Mixed Pairs:

As there weren't enough dates this year to start & complete the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the above teams, we decided to initiate the first Links Mixed Pairs tournament. We envisioned this to be a fun, end of year event, for players to try something new. As the name suggests, players of opposite sex formed partnerships and entered in advance. For an evening event, which typically wouldn't attract large numbers, 48 pairs registered and played over the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> December. Congratulations to Bernard Donde and Carol Stanton for a fairly comfortable win over James Grant and Tas Nestoridis. The formidable Cape Town pair of Kathryn Herz and Eckhard Boehlke took 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

Full results can be found at <https://www.linksbridgeclub.com/mixed-pairs.html>

#### The Links Individual Tournament:

The Links continues to host a free Individual tournament on Sunday afternoons, starting at 16:50.

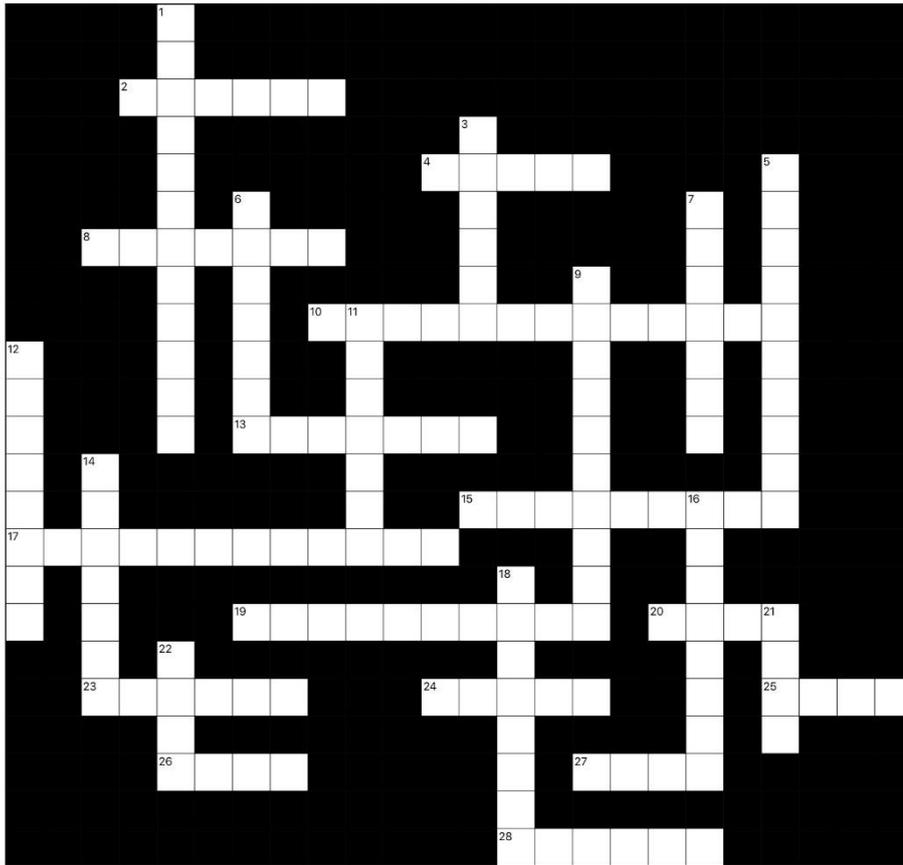
This is a fun and casual event where you enter as an individual and play 12 boards with different partners.

Feel free to join us by going to "Competitive", "Free Tournaments", "The Links Individual". Entry is free and registration opens 2 hours before the start. The session usually ends shortly after 6pm.

#### Collusion:

The threat of a substantial or even permanent ban may have escaped some of you, but let it be known that several pairs are currently under investigation for colluding with each other. If you're part of one of these partnerships, please be aware that you're ruining the game for everyone else, and it will catch up with you. Is it really worth it? Stop it now before it gets out of hand.

We do take this seriously, so if you suspect anyone of anything suspicious, please don't hesitate to contact Rob on WhatsApp (072 431 6599) or email [drowzee88@gmail.com](mailto:drowzee88@gmail.com) with further details.



## Bridge Crossword

### Across

- 2** The highest card of a suit that is yet to be played.
- 4** The "R" in RKCB
- 8** colloquialism to indicate a bad misplay.
- 10** Indulging in unethical actions with full intent to mislead opponents.
- 13** The type of fit in which declarer's trump suit is divided 4-3.
- 15** Any contract below game, is referred to as a ...
- 17** A bid that is not higher than the immediately preceding bid, and is therefore illegal.
- 19** A brief pause before a bid or play, considered somewhat shorter than a huddle.

- 20** No cards in a suit.
- 23** The player who makes the first call in the auction.
- 24** The type of movement where you play the next round against opponents who've obtained an overall score similar to your own.
- 25** A term describing a contract that should always easily make.
- 26** Colloquialism for a finesse.
- 27** A hand without distributional values, particularly one with 4-3-3-3 distribution.
- 28** The failure to follow suit when required to. Something players won't have to worry about playing online.

### Down

- 1** An invitational bid of 4NT after partner opens 1NT.
- 3** There are many types of this bid, one of which may result in a score of 790 or 1100.
- 5** The online site where thousands of players now have to play for the foreseeable future.
- 6** A sacrifice bid against a contract that the opponents would not have made.
- 7** An agreement to lead the second highest of touching honours.
- 9** A call or play with a defined meaning that may be artificial.
- 11** A card so placed that a finesse, if taken, will lose.
- 12** An opening bid of 3NT, usually showing a solid 7 card minor.
- 14** To play a card that is neither of the suit led, nor trump, and that therefore cannot win the trick.
- 16** A member of the other partnership or team.
- 18** A non-playing onlooker at a bridge table.
- 21** A play technique in which a player does not immediately play a card that might take a trick, but plays a small card instead.
- 22** To play a winning card while on lead.

Once you find the words above, search for them below! 😊

T A P K R R I N S U F F I C I E N T W A  
C E K O V E R O M M M D O E R I E M H G  
S E L A T I F I E L E O N M O C W T U N  
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