



## **Mentoring Scheme**

It is acknowledged that mentoring is well established at the Club and this 'official' scheme is designed to augment the ad hoc mentoring that exists in offering pairs at all levels the opportunity to have a mentor to help them to develop their game.

What will a mentor do for you and your partner?

A mentor will do a variety of things to help develop your game:

- Discuss (face to face or online) with you both how to best achieve your aims
- Review your bidding system
- Give guidance and advice about how to get the best out of your system
- Discuss your approach to declarer play
- Discuss your defensive techniques
- Provide email and telephone advice on how to play certain hands (at your request)
- Analyse your results and provide feedback
- Maybe offer to play with you each of on occasions
- Observe you both playing on BBO (Bridgebase online)

A mentor will not be a substitute for lessons and will avoid tutoring you in topics covered by the Club's education programme.

What should you do if you and your partner want to be mentored?

- Register your request for having a mentor with either Darren Evetts (EvettsD@aol.com) or Beryl Latham (LathamB1@live.com). If you require additional contact details please contact the office.
- Tell us exactly what you would like from a mentor. For example, you may just want someone to analyse your results and discuss possible areas of development. This can be done via email.

What will happen after you make your request?

- A mentor will be suggested to you. You may or may not know your mentor. Once you agree to your mentor we will supply you both with each other's contact details (email and telephone number).
- Once a mentor has been agreed he or she will contact you to discuss your aims. Please be open about what you want to do or do not want to do. If all you say is 'I want to improve my game', that is fine. You should then agree with your mentor what the next steps should be. Remember that your mentor may never have done this before either.
- The mentoring scheme is designed to be a positive experience, so please feedback to us how you feel things are progressing. If you do not feel that you gel with your mentor then another mentor can be found. If the mentor feels you do not gel then equally he or she may request to be replaced. Both of these scenarios are understandable and should not cause any feeling of ill will on anyone's part.



## **Mentoring Scheme**

### **Questions & Answers about the scheme:**

**Q.** How do we get a mentor?

**A.** Contact Darren Evetts or Beryl Latham (Mentoring@WestMidBridge.co.uk).

**Q.** Can I be mentored as an individual?

**A.** No. This was how the scheme was first set up and we soon discovered that this format does not work.

**Q.** What should our aims be as a mentees?

**A.** Your aims as a mentee should be to improve your overall game. Your mentor will look at hands you play and talk through with you your thinking at the time. He or she will look at your systems and perhaps suggest new ones to help you deal with certain situations. You may have specific areas you feel you need to develop and these should be discussed with your mentor. Your mentor is not a substitute for education programmes.

**Q.** How do I become a mentor?

**A.** Contact Darren Evetts (EvettsD@aol.com).

**Q.** How good do I need to be at Bridge to become a mentor?

**A.** It is relative! If you feel you have something to offer a less experienced player then that makes you a good candidate for becoming a mentor. If your mentee outgrows you they will move on to another mentor.

**Q.** Can I be a mentor and a mentee?

**A.** Yes. We all have something to offer a less experienced player than ourselves and we can all learn something from a more experienced player.

**Q.** What should my aims be as a mentor?

**A.** Your aims as a mentor should be to offer your time, bridge knowledge and experience to less experienced players. You will discuss with your mentee what their aims are in order to best achieve your mutual goals. You may, for example, look at hands your mentee has played and talk through with them their thinking at the time. You will look at their systems and perhaps teach them new ones to help them deal with various situations.

**Q.** What if my mentor is moving too fast for us?

**A.** Tell him or her! Your mentor will be committed to providing you with guidance and support in order to develop your game. If you do not understand something then your mentor will expect you to say so and you must not feel uncomfortable about doing so.

**Q.** What if my mentor has no knowledge about something that we want to learn?

**A.** Your mentor may suggest a different mentor be found to support you or, equally, you may request a different mentor.



**Q.** How long does the mentoring process last?

**A.** Until one of you decides you have had enough. If you decide you want no more mentoring then that is fine. If your mentor decides he or she is unable to develop your game any further we will simply find you a new mentor. Remember that as you develop you may outgrow your mentor!

**Q.** Will I be expected to play with my mentor/mentees?

**A.** That is up to the both of you. However, mentors should remember that feeding back after each hand is not at all beneficial. Feeding back the salient points after the session is much more constructive.

**Q.** How long will it take for us to notice an improvement in our game?

**A.** Who knows! We all develop at a different pace. You may not even notice that you are improving, but those who play with you will!

**Q.** What if my mentees are not able to develop any further?

**A.** Sometimes people take longer to develop than others. If you find that your mentees are unable to follow your advice at your pace etc then it may be the pairing is wrong. Talk to us!

**Q.** Can I back out of the scheme if I do not like how things are progressing?

**A.** Of course. Either the mentor or mentees can withdraw from the arrangement at any time. It is designed to be a positive experience for all parties and sometimes people just do not 'get on'. If you withdraw from one mentor you can always try another one.

**Q.** Does the mentor pay table money when playing with his or her mentee?

**A.** Yes, unless the pair is playing at a session which is designated for the mentee (eg assisted play).