Online Introduction to Bridge for Young Players

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Australian Bridge Federation
Agenda

• Introduction
• Youth Bridge in Australia
• Building Youth Bridge Further
• How we marketed the program
• Progress so far
• Beyond the first 4 Lessons
• Question Time
Introduction
- David and Jenny
Youth Bridge In Australia
History of Youth Bridge in Australia

- **1969**: National Youth Pairs and Teams events since 1969
- **1982**: First Interstate Youth Teams event
- **1991**: Australia’s first national Youth teams attends World Junior event and wins bronze!
- **1969-2024**: Many youth players continue to play bridge all their life.
  - Ron Klinger was in the 1969 winning team
  - 20 years later David Fryda was too!
- **2013**: Youth Club Established: 254 members
- **2015**: 257
- **2016**: 250
- **2018**: 203
- **2019**: 194 (lowest)
- **2020**: 238
- **2021**: 206
- **2022**: 218
- **2023**: 235
- **2024**: 220

Several stop playing and return later after career and family commitments
Australian Youth Structure and Events

• Jenny – Youth Liaison to the Board
• Ella – National Youth Coordinator (since April 2024)
• Each Australian State and Territory has their own Youth Coordinator
  • The States and Territories
    • Run Youth “events”
    • Promote bridge locally to potential youth players
  • States are invited to send a team to participate in the Australian National Championships each year
• The ABF runs Youth Week every year in Canberra in January for players under 30 years of age
  • In 2024 we had:
    • Pairs: 24
    • Teams: 12
    • Junior Squad Selection (under 25): 10 Pairs
      • Selects the National Youth Team which the ABF sends to the world championships
• In 2024 a team of 6 women are self-funding their trip to Poland and will contest the U26 Women’s event
Building
Youth
Bridge
Further
How to Build the number of Youth Players?

Each state and territory has different approaches

Quality of teaching and mentoring varies between states

COVID changed the bridge world and the education sector

Education (school & university) sector is very familiar with “learning” via zoom/Teams

Bridge clubs transitioned to online play and lessons

The ABF and Paul Marston are partnering to teach a series of four beginners bridge lessons to youth players (under 25) online.

- Paul owns and operates Grand Slam Bridge Club in Sydney and Canberra
- He has taught beginners for many years
- He developed online teaching during COVID to hundreds

The ABF is sponsoring the lessons. The four lesson are free to attend.
Marketing Strategy

Marketing bridge to young people is very challenging.

There are many other things they would like to do in their “leisure” time.

Bridge teachers are used to marketing to retirees.

Our focus was on targeting the 30,000 existing bridge players in Australia (and New Zealand).

• The ABF advertised:
  • On our website
  • At National events
  • On social media – Facebook and LinkedIn
  • In our newsletter

• The States and Territories also advertised to their players and clubs
Know Any Potential Young Bridge Players?
Opportunity for 14 - 24 year olds to learn Bridge - FREE!!

Learn Bridge Online
Young Player Course
Age Range: 14 - 24 years
Level: Beginner Course
Location: Online
Date: Wednesday 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd May 2024
Time: 7pm - Approx. 8pm AEST
Practice Sessions: Sunday 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th from 11am-12pm AEST
Course Teachers: Paul Marston & Nevena Djurovic
Cost: FREE

Why Should Teens and Young Adults Learn Bridge?
✓ Academic Enrichment
✓ Socialise & Make Friends
✓ Enjoy
✓ Connect with Family & Community
✓ Competition & Travel
✓ Have FUN

About Our Course
Led by experienced Bridge teachers, Paul Marston and Nevena Djurovic, this course helps the next generation of bridge players master the important basics of the game. Players enjoy using their new skills playing with and against the other emerging young bridge talent before advancing to level 2.

Spaces will be limited. Don't Miss Out!

Got questions or want a notification email when registration opens just email - youthlessons@bridgelounge.online
Learn Bridge Online
National Young Player Course
May 2024

FREE ONLINE COURSE!!

Opportunity for 14 - 24 year olds to Learn Bridge - for FREE!!

Started with Awareness Campaign

Video on Facebook
Learn Bridge Online
National Young Player Course
FREE!!

REGISTER NOW
Don't Miss Out! Places are Limited
https://bridgelounge.online/youth-bridge-registration/abf/

Registrations
Opened on 1 April
Attention: All Bridge Players

The Australian Bridge Federation (ABF) is offering all 14 to 24 year olds the opportunity to learn bridge for free!

We are asking all Australian bridge players to spread the word to young people about this wonderful opportunity.

The lessons will be given online by Paul Marston, one of Australia’s most successful bridge players and teachers, over a series of four lessons. The lessons will be presented on a Wednesday from 7pm to 8pm AEST. If you miss a lesson or want to ask more questions you can catch up with Paul on a Sunday at 11am AEST.

More details on this exciting opportunity are shown below.

To register interest for the course potential participants should go to the link: https://bridgelounge.online/youth-bridge-registration/abf/
When they get to that link they will be asked to enter their date of birth to validate that they are in the 14 to 24 year old age range.
On the next screen they will be asked to provide their name and contact details as well as their postcode.
If they are under the age of 18 then they will be asked to enter the name and contact details of a parent or guardian (we take working with Children seriously).

Once they have registered their interest in the lessons they will be provided with access to pre-course material and will receive some fun Kahoot quizzes. On Thursday April 25th everyone who has registered interest will receive an invitation to enrol in the course which starts on 1 May.

If you have any questions or need more information about these lessons then please do not hesitate to email or phone David Fryda from the ABF.
His email address is david.fryda@abf.com.au and his phone number is 0418 427458.

So please, forward this email now to your friends and family members so that we can get more young people interested in playing this great game!

If bridge is totally unknown to your friends then here’s a link to a Youtube video that summarises the game in under 4 minutes!
https://youtu.be/VwegUS0fdi8
And if you still want to know more before registering for our free lessons then take a look here: What Is Bridge

PS If there are any young people outside the 14 to 24 year age range interested in these lessons ask them (or their parents) to contact David

Followed up with an email to all players on 11 April
This is the registration page.

Date of birth was required to ensure the player was a youth (under 25).

We “allowed” children under 14 but they had to be supervised by an adult.
After Registration

• Between 1 April and 25 April
  • Paul sent emails, quizzes and videos to those who had registered
    • Designed to maintain their interest in the upcoming course
• On 25 April
  • Everyone who had registered was invited to enrol
• By 30 April we had just over 100 youths enrolled.
• Lessons commenced on May 1st.
• Paul presents a lesson on a Wednesday and a recap and practice session on a Sunday.
  • Lessons are recorded and all enrolees can access the recordings if they miss a session or want to replay them
  • Australia has multiple time zones so the Wednesday sessions are scheduled to be outside school hours in all time zones
Once registered and enrolled you have access to the Concierge Page.

On this page you can access the material from lessons that have already been given AND Many other fun things
The Numbers

121 registrations

77 attended lesson 1
The lessons are delivered via zoom and are for one hour.
The attendees are very familiar with how to use zoom.

Multiple zoom features are used during the lesson.

How many points have these hands?

a) ♠ K Q J 6
   ♥ A Q J 4
   ♦ K 5
   ♣ 3
   16

b) ♠ A K Q J 9
   ♥ 9 6 5 4
   ♦ A 5
   ♣ K 8
Pathways Beyond the First Four Lessons

Graduates from the course of FOUR lessons will have multiple options available to them:

- Continue with online lessons with Paul
- Move to their local club
- Join the Youth group in their capital city

State based youth co-ordinators will be “responsible” for nurturing the cohort and encouraging them to continue their engagement with bridge
Other Youth Bridge Considerations & Initiatives

Our competition = a very broad range of games

Making progress in bridge ≠ making progress in online games for example players progress to “level 24” or collect trophies

• We are considering incentives we can offer e.g. a point scheme or quizzes or rankings
• We also want to build on the concept of a community of young bridge players
  • The “human connection” element of bridge gives it an edge

The online lessons are being presented by a Seniors Bridge player

• We are enlisting younger expert players to provide supplementary lessons
Questions & Answers
David and Jenny

David Fryda
Executive Director

Jenny Thompson
Youth Liaison to the ABF Board
Thank you