

Tasmanian Youth Bridge Update

As with most places, Covid has impacted negatively on our efforts to expand the reach of bridge amongst our youth in the State. However, we have had some promising developments that we believe will bear fruit in the future.

Julie Rhodes has taken the initiative to contact all the high schools in the Hobart area to offer their students free lessons at the TBA Bridge Club. We're hoping that there will be a positive response to this invitation, and that Julie and her team will be able to inspire a new generation of young people to embrace the game we all love. Julie, who is an experienced teacher, and is accredited by the Tasmanian Education Department, is hoping to start weekly sessions on Wednesdays from March next year.

We have had a steady increase in the number of primary school kids that attend our mini bridge sessions at East Ulverstone Primary School on Friday lunch times - and so we've recruited the very experienced Sally O'Connor to join Delwyn Cure and I in supervising these sessions.



Sally O'Connor with 3 new Mini Bridge recruits



Our lunchtime sessions at East Ulverstone Primary School



The enthusiastic group - waiting for a lolly at the end of the bridge session!

At Marist Regional College Nilah Cains, Phil Harper and myself run a bridge tournament every Monday after school. I've also forged a strong alliance with the new Headmaster, Gregg Sharman, and he's appointed the Sports Master, Brady Yates, to be the bridge promoter in the College. This has given me an entree to address Year Assemblies at the College, and in the first two such addresses I have recruited 7 new students who are being groomed during Tuesday lunchtimes to play in our Monday tournaments.



Year 7 Students at their recent Marist College Assembly gathered to hear about the bridge sessions we run

Until recently I was also running bridge sessions at Leighland Christian High School in Ulverstone. I started just before Covid hit and unfortunately the initial group of 8 diminished to just 3 when we restarted after the Covid break. Two of the 3 have now fallen away - and unfortunately the school have not allowed me to address each Year to try and recruit new students, and so I have stopped for the time being.

Finally, Carol Whish-Wilson and her team from Devonport Bridge Club have just resumed their bridge classes at St Brendan-Shaw College after a recess caused by Covid. They teach a group of gifted students once a month.