



Welcome to Lethbridge

By Bob Christie

When I left Lethbridge at the age of 18 in 1963 bound for the University of Alberta, I never expected to live in the frozen north for 45 years. Neither did I expect, in the last number of years, to return to the home of my youth to, in essence, retire. But I did!

Now I am in the enviable position of inviting many of my friends in bridge to my old (and new) home. When I left it all those years ago, it was a city boasting 35,000 people. Now it is pushing 90,000. 45 years ago there was no such thing as West Lethbridge...or Scenic Drive...or the University of Lethbridge. CPR was high profile in the city, but now it is simply a set of tracks through town.

Lethbridge still has the wonders of the Chinook and the widest streets in the country. It has some of the friendliest people you are likely to meet. You will find that it combines small town friendliness with most of the amenities of the large city.

We will do our level best to make your short stay with us memorable. If you need to know about a casino or a golf course, a place to eat, or a good choice for a store, a bar, or a gym for a workout, ask a local. If they don't know the answer, they will find it for you.



Lethbridge Post Office - Photo by Claus (mp2k_net)

Monday and Tuesday Events

Monday, April 7

This evening at 7:00 PM we begin the first series of Bracketed Knockouts. Winners will continue Tuesday morning at 8:45 AM, Tuesday afternoon at 1:00 PM and Tuesday evening at 7:00 PM.

For those who do not enjoy the sudden death format of knockouts, you have Charity Open Pairs and Charity 199er pairs this evening at 7:00 PM.

Tuesday, April 8

On Tuesday, the first of the morning Side Game Series goes at 8:45 AM with the Midweek Side Game Series sessions one and two at 1:00 and 7:00 PM the same day.

Also on Tuesday at 1:00 and 7:00 PM is the first two-session Stratified Open Pairs.

If you need an explanation about Bracketed Knockouts, Side Games, or Match Points vs. IMPs, see the articles elsewhere in this newsletter.

Social Events



Mark your calendar with the following:

Thursday, April 10

A reception will be held for the 199ers, at 5:00 p.m. Bring your hand records for an informal discussion of interesting and troublesome hands. Location to be announced.

Friday, April 11

At the end of the evening session, there will be a delicious lunch of fresh buns, cold meats, cheese, pickles and coffee served in the playing area.



Saturday, April 12

At the end of the evening session, there will be another delicious lunch of fresh buns, cold meats, pickles, coffee and delicious squares for those who need to drown their sorrows with sweets. This buffet will also be served in the playing area.

Sunday, April 13

An \$8.00, subsidized luncheon buffet, will be provided between the Swiss Team sessions. This will be held in the playing area. The tournament committee would appreciate the help of everyone to clean up their own luncheon mess. Otherwise both the Edmonton and Calgary units who have provided the cards and such will likely be very unhappy about how sticky their cards and tables were when they came back.

IMPS vs. Matchpoints

IMPS and matchpoints are very different games with very different strategies. For those of you who are confused about whether you want to play IMPS or matchpoints, here are a few of the differences:

- A bad board at matchpoints is, at the end of the day, just one board. A bad board at IMPS can cost the entire game. It serves the player well to be a little more cautious about flyers when you're playing IMPS.
- At matchpoints, every trick is important. If the whole field is in a major suit game but one pair makes 5, that extra 30 points can mean a cold top. At IMPS the bonus is one imp - hardly significant. In fact, the difference can be even finer at matchpoints. If the entire field is in that major suit game and making, but one brave pair has bid 3 NT making four, the extra 10 points can mean a cold top. At IMPS, the difference is deemed not to exist at all.
- When playing matchpoints, your opponents bid a partial that you think you can set by a single trick. You double, and if you set it one it is often called a matchpoint double and often worth making. At IMPS, on the other hand, when you double a partial, you must take into serious account that the doubled contract, if it makes, is likely to result in a huge game swing. As a result, matchpoint players are much more likely to double a partial contract for penalty (although there are some risks here as well) than are IMP players. IMP players

are much more likely to double game contracts since the loss is relatively minor (for example, making 5 diamonds may be worth 400 points but the same contract doubled and making would be 550 points. The 150 point margin would be 4 IMPS).

- At matchpoints, consider each hand on its merits. When you play IMPS, it is much more important to stretch for game when vulnerable. Consider a major suit contract bid to a partial but making game. If not vulnerable, the differential is 420-170 or 250 points - amounting to 6 imps. If vulnerable, the differential is 620-170 or 450 points - translating to 10 IMPS.

Read it in Colour



If you have access to the Internet on your computer now you can have this bulletin delivered in full colour directly to your breakfast table. Simply go to www.wasumi.org

when you get up in the morning to see the bulletin in colour. If you have access to a printer, you can print out that day's bulletin. You will have the latest results from the tournament as well as news of the day's highlights right there beside your cup of coffee. Otherwise you can wait until you get to the playing site (and until just before the afternoon session). Either way, we sincerely hope you enjoy what we have prepared for you.

Bracketed Knockouts ???

First of all, the concept of knockout means that you go head to head with one other team. One team goes on and the other is finished. This concept is often softened by a matchup that occurs frequently in the first, or occasionally in the second, round called a round robin. In a round robin, you square off against two other teams and two teams go forward while the third goes home.

Now, what is meant by bracketed? If you watch a knockout event being set up, you do not know where you stand or who you play until after all the entries are in. Each entry must list the total number of masterpoints held cumulatively by all members of the team. The directors then rank all teams from the highest to the lowest masterpoints. Ideally, the directors would divide all entries into groups of 16 teams. Of course, they almost always end up with an uneven

number of teams and as a result, not all “brackets” will have 16 teams.

Further complicating the issue is a situation where there is a large gap between two ranked teams. Then, it is likely that, in the absence of an equity consideration, one or two teams will be playing against teams with a huge masterpoint superiority or, equally unfairly, a huge masterpoint superiority over their competitors. For example, if your team held 6,000 masterpoints and the next lowest team in your bracket had 15,000 points you would feel you were just cannon fodder. On the other end of the spectrum, if 15 teams had between 1,500 and 2,000 masterpoints but the 16th team had 5,500, that one team would have a definite advantage. As a result, the directors try to set the brackets up to be as fair as possible to all teams. That may mean an extra bracket or two and more three way matches in the first session, but if you survive two sessions, you will earn some gold. The higher the bracket, the more gold you will win.

It is not unusual for intermediate players to get a lot of their gold by hooking up with an experienced team. At the recent Victoria Regional, your editor played with four players who, in turn held 3000+, 1300+, 1000+ and 8 masterpoints. We ended up in the top bracket and did not expect to win since the team was set up minutes before the event. To our surprise, we sent a very good team to the showers and the next morning in a rare, but not unheard of, second session



three-way we won both halves. We were beaten soundly that afternoon, but our novice team member who started with 8 black points left the event with the same 8 black and an additional 11.03 gold.

For those who have shied away from knockouts because you don't understand them, think of a long Swiss team match and just dive in. Knockouts are a lot of fun.

Side Game Series

Anybody who has been an attendee at Regionals over the past few years has doubtless noted the rise of the Side Game Series concept. The concept started out as a method of providing a game when, for one reason or another, people only wanted to play a single session.



More and more matchpoint players have found the Side Game Series to be very much to their liking because you are able to take any two games in a single series and they become your performance in the event.

So you can play Tuesday morning and again on Friday morning and those two sessions become your event results. On the other hand, you can play Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday mornings and your two best performances comprise your event result.

Some players have made playing the Side Game Series their preferred event. Try it - you might find that you like it better than other formats.

Support our Sponsors

The organizing committee would like to recognize and offer special thanks to:

- Dave Henderson at Taco Time.
- Pat Huxley at ATB Financial.
- Dean Gallimore at K.P.M.G.
- Don at the New Dynasty Restaurant.

We also want to thank:

- The Lethbridge Ladies Duplicate Bridge Club.
- The Canadian Western Bank.
- The West Side Branch of Scotiabank.
- Scotia McLeod Brokerage.
- Mocha Cabana Coffee House.
- Sutton Group Real Estate.
- Medicine Hat Wholesale Foods.

Remember, if we want our local businesses to support bridge, we need to support them. Showing our support for these “Good Friends of Bridge” will encourage others to come to our aid. If you are patronizing a sponsor, make sure they know you appreciate their support for our game.



In addition, the editor wishes to extend his appreciation to the good folks at Staples. Once again, Staples will provide an astounding turn around to give us our bulletins in good time each day. They have always stepped up for me wherever I do a bulletin. By charging us on one bill for all copies in 6 editions they, in effect, give us a nice discount to boot.

Many Hands Make Light Work

In a community the size of Lethbridge, organizing a Regional is a daunting task. Most everybody in the small but dedicated bridge fraternity has helped out, but there are a few who have stepped up particularly.

While not wanting to miss anybody, our Tournament Chairman, Gwen West, has wants to thank, in particular, John Landeryou (who most will know is Mr. Bridge in Lethbridge), Neil McDonald, Hanna Odlund, Lu Gunther, Dick Heywood, Lorraine Russell and Freda North.

Gwen also mentioned my wife Carolla and I, but any thanks to me belongs with my good wife. I tell people I edit bulletins like this one, but truth to tell, all the credit belongs to Carolla who, in fact, does not even play the game. While I put some words into the computer, the job of editing, formatting, design and layout all fall to my wife. This week she will also be taking photos, and has even been pressed into service to pick up and deliver the Sunday edition. So, if you enjoy the bulletin, thank the little lady with the big camera.

The Wide Streets of Lethbridge

Visitors and newcomers to Lethbridge are often heard to comment on the wide streets in the downtown area. Many attribute this to wonderful planning by the earliest town fathers, but the truth is a good deal more pedestrian. When Lethbridge was first created, all buildings were, of course, wood frame. When you have winds that often streak out of the foothills at velocities well in excess of 100 kph, the original settlers worried about fire spread in a wind storm. Therefore, they planned their streets to be wide to act as fire breaks.



Mocha Cabana Cafe

One of our sponsors is the excellent Mocha Cabana Café. If you're looking for a quiet place to take a break, try this spot. The coffee is great – and so is the food. You can get salads, sandwiches and wraps, pizza and main dish entrees.



The Café also has live music Friday (6-9 PM) and Saturday nights (7-10 PM). This weekends offering is the Herb Hicks Jazz Trio & Sheena Lawson - jazz musicians.

Mocha Cabana Café is at 317-4th St. South. Their phone number is 329.6243. You can see more information (including their menu) on their website (www.mochacabana.ca/).

They are open every day:

- Monday – Thursday: 7 am – 9 pm
- Fridays: 7 am – 11 pm
- Saturdays: 8 am – 11 pm
- Sundays: 9 am – 7 pm

Wednesday's Events

For those Knockout addicts, be aware that the morning Knockout event begins on Wednesday morning at 8:45 AM. For the successful, this event goes until Saturday morning.

The morning Side Game Series continues Wednesday as well (at 8:45 AM).

Wednesday afternoon sees the second Stratified Open Pairs series, but those over 55 have the alternative of a Stratified SENIOR pairs event at the same session times of 1:00 PM and 7:00 PM.

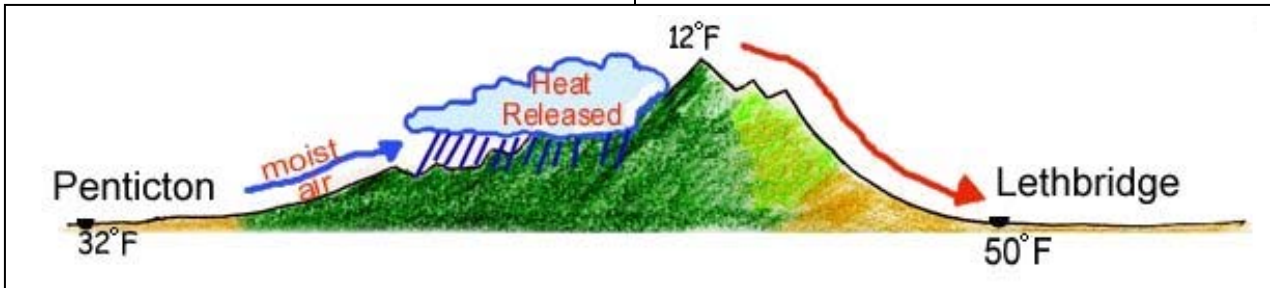
There is a single session 199er pairs event at both times in addition to the third and fourth sessions of the midweek Side Game Series at the same times.

Choose your event and we'll see you at the tables.

The Chinook

While Southern Alberta lore is replete with stories about the Chinook, it is a true meteorological principle. Generically the Chinook is called a Fohn wind.

It works like this. The Chinook is all based on the westerly flow and the mountains.



The moist warm Pacific air hits the mountains at sea level and is pushed upwards. As the air rises, it cools at about .5-.8 degrees C for every 100 meters it climbs. By the time it has reached about 12,000 meters above sea level, it has lost 60-80 degrees. Thus, if the air started at 10 degrees, it would be minus 50-70 degrees. Its moisture carrying capacity has been significantly reduced and precipitates as rain and snow in large quantities over the mountains. The now dry air then starts down onto the prairie. It has some 11,000 meters to drop. But a magical thing happens. Since the air is now dry rather than wet, instead of just reversing the temperature decrease, it heats at 1 degree C per 100 meters. The air hits the flatland over 100 degrees warmer than it was before the air started down. The air is very dry and therefore very light.

When people hear of Chinook winds blowing at 90-120 miles per hour, the uninitiated are sure the whole town is going to end up in Saskatchewan. But this dry, down drafting wind does little damage. It is also capable of picking up a lot of the moisture (much of the snow never has a chance to turn to water, it just evaporates into the air directly from the snowdrifts). In fact, the translation of "Chinook" means "snow eater". A temperature rise of 20 degrees is not at all unusual.

The Chinook is very selective, however. As a callow youth, your editor can distinctly remember the radio reporting temperatures in Lethbridge at -25 or -30 while Fort MacLeod (50 km to the west) was basking in +20 temperatures.

Of course there is a price to pay for all this wind. Farmers have to use techniques to prevent the soil from blowing. Nobody's

hairstyle will remain in place so wind blown hair is de rigour. People laugh that you have to lean 30 degrees into the wind to stay upright when walking. And occasionally, the wind does do some damage - recently a fifth wheel turned over on the highway west of the city in winds measured at 113 kph. All true, but it is a small price to pay for several winter respites.

My Grandfather vs. the Chinook

My Grandfather was a pioneer veterinarian living and working out of the small town of Cardston, about 80 km south of Lethbridge. According to the story, Grandad was called to an outfit south west of Cardston in the Mountain View area. Being winter, he hitched a horse to a cutter (sleigh) to make the trip. He was in the barn treating the sick animal for some time and when he left the barn, he saw the Chinook arch in full formation over the mountains. He hurriedly hitched the horse to the cutter and made haste north-east back to Cardston.

As he told the story, he almost made it. All the way home the horse ran in snow, the front runners of the cutter ran in mud and the rear runners kicked up dust.



Chinook Arch – Photo by Andy Barnard

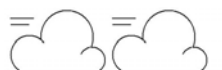
The Church and the Chinook

I have also been told of a congregation that arrived at their house of worship only to find that the entire main floor of the church was under snow. They found a solution by hitching their horses to the steeple and crawled into a second story window. When the service was over, they came out and... to

their horror, a Chinook had come through and all their horses were hanging from the steeple, dead.

True Chinook Stories

In the centre of Lethbridge there is a park called Galt Gardens. While it is now heavily treed, that wasn't the case back in the early 1900s. According to stories told to your editor, there was a group of hardy souls who wanted to celebrate the power of the Chinook and were also fans of the game of cricket. So, they decided to plan to hold a cricket game on the lawns of Galt Gardens on New Years Day... weather permitting. My sources tell me that weather did, in fact, permit - on well over half of the dates proposed for the New Year's Day cricket match.



Coming up to Christmas in 1964, I was attending the University of Alberta. I had come to know a Sri Lankan gentleman who was faced with a very boring holiday break. My mother gave permission for me to invite "Raj" home for Christmas.

When we arrived in Lethbridge, it seemed very dark and cold, and upon coming out of the Train Station I was in shock. My father was at the Station to fetch us, but the city looked like it had frozen solid, never to thaw again. The streets were not only snow covered, but badly rutted. It was clear that the city had not had benefit of its primary snow removal device (the Chinook) for some time. Raj looked at me like I had enticed him into the depths of a frozen hell. He was NOT impressed.

Well, we got home and the fire was burning in the fireplace. My parents, my brother, my sister, the dog and the cat were all home and welcoming. Raj relaxed a little and was determined to make the best of things.

The very next morning I went outside. It was sunny, but still. I looked to the southwest and, over the mountains, saw something that any Southern Albertan will tell you is the harbinger of a Chinook. Called the Chinook Arch, it is a line of clouds hanging above the mountains with a gap of blue sky between clouds and ground. The sharper the cloud line, the stronger the winds are likely to blow. This Chinook Arch was a sharp as I had ever seen.

I went into the house and announced to my Sri Lankan friend that we were about to be

saved from winter. He looked skeptical, but I advised him that by mid afternoon the wind would start to blow (it did) and that overnight it would seem as if the wind would blow the house off its foundations (it did that, too). I promised him that by dinner time the next day, the snow would be all gone.

The next morning, I rose to find Raj sitting on a foot stool in the front window and watching the snow measurably disappear across the front yard. In fact, it also melted the snow on the lake across the street and I commented that with luck the wind would stop that evening and we would have a hard freeze. "Why?" queried Raj. "Because it will give us good skating ice," I advised. Well, that is exactly what happened. The next evening we fitted Raj with a pair of skates and spent the evening on the lake. It was awesome to see and Raj finally learned to enjoy winter.

Upon our return to our joint residence in Edmonton, Raj was heard to tell people in the lounge that all the stories I had told them about the Chinook were "ALL TRUE!"

Lethbridge: Snow & Sun

