

PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

ALERT – April 3, 2023

Click here to access our regular game schedule.

Looking Ahead

- 499ers, don't forget our new **f2f 499er game on Thursday afternoons**.
- Both of today's (Friday) f2f games are Royal STaC games (extra masterpoints [25% each black, silver, red, and gold], \$2 surcharge).
- Spring Sectional Buffalo Bridge Center, Amherst, NY. Friday, March 31 Sunday, April 2
- ▼ Toronto Easter Regional. Tuesday, April 4 Sunday, April 9
- All of our f2f games during the week of April 10-14 will be upgraded club championships – extra masterpoints, no extra cost.
- Our club's 11th birthday party will be held on Tuesday, April 11 (the afternoon open game will be replaced by a rookie/master game on that day – see below)
- ▶ Barbara Seagram will be at our club on Wednesday, May 3 see below.

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A warm welcome to our latest new members

- Hilary Kekanovich
- Sharon Nesbitt



Barbara Seagram is Coming!

On Wednesday, May 3, you are invited to a fun and informal bridge lecture, lunch, and play day hosted by acclaimed bridge author, teacher, and goodwill ambassador Barbara Seagram. All are welcome to join us for Barbara's "Tricks Out of Nowhere" workshop, followed by lunch and an afternoon game.

Pre-registration with payment is required by April 26. Attendance is limited to 78. Barbara's workshops always sell out, so book early to avoid disappointment. Click here for more information and to register.



We're Turning 11!

We will be celebrating our 11th birthday on the afternoon of Tues., April 11 with a rookie/master game. (This game will take the place of the open game normally scheduled on Tuesday afternoons.)

And what kind of a birthday would it be without a cake? Well, we will have one – and the cake cutting and other ceremonies will start at 12:30 pm.

Rookie/master games are great because they allow all our members to mingle regardless of masterpoint level. Al Pengelly will be doing the honours in terms of matching up the pairs – so you will definitely be in good hands!

A sign-up sheet has been posted at the club on the Special Events bulletin board. Please note that you need to sign up as a *single* player. If you are not planning to be at the club over the next little while, you can email Joe Blake with your intent to play. The registration deadline is April 7.



Congratulations

to the following local players who earned extra masterpoints in the Tuesday and Wednesday STaC games at our club last week.

- William Christian and Pat McMillan, 7th in A (Tuesday)
- Malkin Howes and Ron Van Der Zwaag, 9th in A (Tuesday)
- Sandy Kendall and Denise Dolff, 1st in A (Wednesday)
- Marlene Dopko and Sue Durance, 2nd in A (Wednesday)
- Judy Beauchamp and Martin Jones, 3rd in A (Wednesday)
- Steve Cameron and Jim Fox, 4th in A (Wednesday)
- Bob Giilck and Debbie Miethig, 5th in A (Wednesday)
- Steve Allen and Joe Blake, 6th in A (Wednesday)

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More Adventures in Bridge

Contributed by Jennifer Verdam-Woodward

As I have mentioned in the past, I am forced by a cruel universe to work for a living, and so I can't go to all and sundry bridge tournaments during the year, as is my deepest heart's desire. Dave Longstaff has kindly set up a Go-Fund-Me to free me from the prison that is my life, but thus far it has a balance of zero dollars.

Therefore, when I got an email from the ACBL advertising a spring sectional tournament in Pittsburgh, I leapt at the opportunity (read: I asked Adrian if he was interested and he shrugged and said "Sure."). We canvassed other members of the group who all felt that Pittsburgh was too far to go for a weekend sectional (read: shrugged and said "No."). Undaunted, we emailed for teammates for the Saturday compact knockout and Sunday Swiss, and set off on Thursday afternoon. (The picture above is from Barbados because we completely failed to take any pictures while in Pittsburgh. Apparently, I forgot all about recording the event for posterity - and history will suffer for it.)

Pittsburgh is beautiful. It's set in the Allegheny mountain range, which is part of the Appalachians (watch me pretend to know geography and stuff!) and it is lovely even at this time of year. The dogwoods were flowering and there were daffodils, crocuses, and narcissi blooming as well (I also know botany and stuff! And how to use the Internet to identify pretty flowering trees!). The only flaw is that it wasn't particularly walkable where we were because there aren't any sidewalks, and also because we were on a MOUNTAIN (the playing site is less than 500 metres from the hotel as the crow flies - but getting there without a car would require us to fly like crows.)

The venue was the Masonic Hall, which is huge and has a really nice playing space. The unit has three sectionals a year there, and it also runs a regional every September. They supply a free lunch for those people who play both sessions, which they found increases their play-through rate quite a bit. All their games are classified as single sessions, which allows them the flexibility to hold Swiss events every day (which also increases the masterpoint awards for each session).

We played pairs in the morning on both Friday and Saturday, but the rest of the time we played in teams events. Everyone was extremely friendly and very pleased that we had come. Saturday morning in pairs with no one vulnerable, sitting North I picked up this hand: ♠KQJxx ♥Qx ◆xx ♣Qxxx.

The auction was:

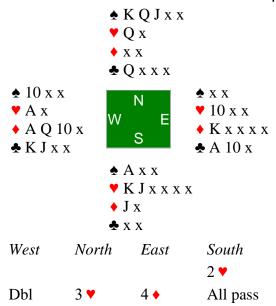
West North East South
2 ♥

Dbl 3 ♥ 4 ◆ All pass

Adrian led a small heart and dummy came down with

- **♠** 10xx
- **♥** A9
- ♦ AQ10x
- ♣ KJxx

Declarer called for the ace and I, wanting to ask for a spade switch for obvious reasons, threw the queen underneath. Declarer led a club to his ace, and then led a small heart to the ♥9 on the board. Adrian thought that the queen promised the jack so he ducked, and the board's nine held. When the smoke cleared, declarer had made 4♦ and was tied for top. Here is the full deal.



Please note the location of the jack of hearts...

Our team won the Swiss on Saturday afternoon. In the final match, we played against a very strong team and red, against white, I picked up this hand: ♠Q4 ♥AJ97 ♦AKQ6 ♣A43.

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------------------|------|-------------|
| | | | 1 🍁 |
| Pass | 1 ♥ | Pass | 3 ♦¹ |
| Pass | $3 \triangleq^2$ | Pass | 4 ♦³ |
| Pass | 5 ♣⁴ | Pass | 6 ♥⁵ |
| Pass | Pass ⁶ | Pass | |

- 1. singleton or void, heart support
- 2. tell me more
- 3. singleton, medium hand
- 4. EXCITED!!!!! club control
- 5. DELIGHTED!!! why yes, I do have a spade control
- 6. OH NO!!! I MISUNDERSTOOD!

The opponents asked the meaning of our auction and Adrian explained, inexplicably using far fewer exclamation marks than I have employed here.

The opening lead was a small spade. Adrian laid down his hand, and I was very disappointed because I hadn't read the raise to six as a spade control but rather just as a sign off. However, I still needed to find the queen of hearts to make seven in either hearts or no trump, and in a team game we shouldn't be there anyway, so I was almost not bitter at all. Like, AT ALL. I was seriously okay. Really.

Adrian's hand was: ♠AK85 ♥K432 ◆8 ♣K865. I won the queen of spades in my hand and played a small heart to the king of hearts on the board. East showed out, pitching the ◆10. Yay! I had successfully located the ♥Q! The fact that it was still backed by three little hearts was somewhat less exciting.

I played a small diamond to the ace in my hand and cashed the •K and •Q, pitching clubs off the board. Everyone followed, with West playing the •4, the •5, and the •J in that order. Phew! Now I played a club to the king on the board planning to play a club back to the ace. At the last second, I regained my sanity and instead played a small heart to West's ten and my jack. East pitched another diamond.

I played a small spade to the ace on the board. Both East and West followed. I played the ♠K off the board, planning to pitch a club from my hand. West looked unhappy and ruffed with the ♥6. I over-ruffed with the seven. Then I played the ace of clubs. West followed with the ♣J in perfect tempo, and East played the queen. I was left with the ♣4 in my hand and a feeling of deep trepidation in my heart. This was the situation at that moment.

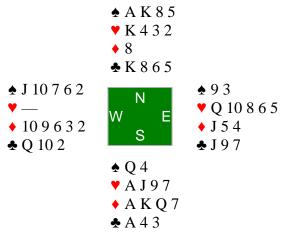


West still had the ♥QT. Still at large were two spades, one diamond, and one club. There was now no point in my ruffing the diamond on the board as all the diamonds were gone and West would just over-ruff and lead back the queen of hearts to my ace, leaving me to lose a club at Trick 13. However, West had already shown out of spades, so even though he dropped the jack of clubs as smooth as jazz, he must have the missing club. I played the ♣4 and ruffed it on the board. West followed, and said, "Nicely played," as I cashed the ♥A for my twelfth trick.

The opponents went back to their table and while scoring had an argument about that hand. Their North had also played it in 6 v and had gone down one. They felt that there was no way to make it on competent defence. West actually came back to our table and took a photograph of the board so he could show them how the play went.

It is worth noting that if West doesn't ruff the spade and just pitches a club himself, I will lead another heart off the board and his hearts will be pinned.

Here is the full deal.





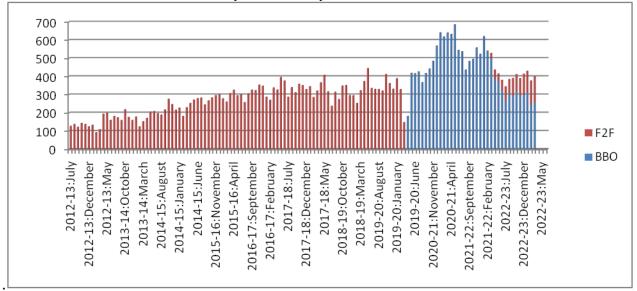
The Bean Counter

Contributed by Steve Allen, Treasurer

Let's have a gander at our income pre- & post-Covid19. Here's a graph showing the number of "bridge tables" (aka four-player table counts) over time. You can see how GRBC was born in 2012 and steady growth followed. Can you tell when we moved away from Gage Street into our current location? (hint: no)

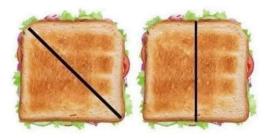
Can you tell when Covid19 arrived and online bridge soon became the only game in town? Those high (blue) spikes were very much appreciated for those two years when the world had stopped spinning. Online bridge was attracting more than twice the pre-Covid19 numbers! Now we don't make as much profit on BBO games compared to F2F games, so income was roughly the same as before Covid19. And with nothing else to do, our online Zoom-based bridge lessons were well attended too.

Starting last year, BBO attendance declined with the world waking up and a resurgence of F2F games. Thereafter, it has "bean" fairly level on my watch as treasurer.



Next week: paying the bills during Covid19. And then I'll stop reminiscing about the pandemic daze.

The geometry is too complicated to explain here but cutting a sandwich diagonally gives you more sandwich





Look in the bottom left-and corner of this poster. That's none other than our very own Ron Van Der Zwaag!

GRBC - SPRING TEAM LEAGUE - WEEK 5

| | BAKER | S. BOYD | T. BOYD | FUNG | HANEMAAYER | JAMIESON | PLAYOFFS | TOTAL |
|------------|-------|---------|---------|------|------------|----------|-----------|-------|
| BAKER | | 20 | 20 | 16 | 15 | 15 | WEEK 6 | 86 |
| FUNG | 4 | 9 | 17 | | 9 | 16 | WEEK 6 | 55 |
| HANEMAAYER | 5 | 6 | 10 | 11 | | 12 | WEEK 6 | 44 |
| T. BOYD | 0 | 14 | | 3 | 10 | 15 | WEEK 6 | 42 |
| S. BOYD | 0 | | 6 | 11 | 14 | 10 | WEEK 6 | 41 |
| JAMIESON | 5 | 10 | 5 | 4 | 8 | | WEEK 6 | 32 |

Prepared by Al Pengelly

Murder at the Bridge Table

John G. Bennett was murdered by his wife, Myrtle Bennett, in Kansas City, Missouri. It occurred during a game of bridge hosted by the Bennett's with their friends, Charles and Mayme Hoffman. On the evening of Sunday, September 29, 1929, the Bennetts were losing to the Hoffmans (in rubber bridge for money) late in the evening. The breaking point occurred when John played a hand in 4 and went down two. Myrtle chastised her husband for being a "bum bridge player." This caused John to slap her several times and announce his intention to leave town. Myrtle began to cry, saying "Nobody but a bum would hit a woman."

While John packed, Myrtle grabbed his .32 Colt automatic from a bedroom dresser and fired four shots, killing him. The subsequent investigation led to a charge of first-degree murder.

The trial made national headlines. Bridge was a sensation at the time, and the beautiful young housewife was an incredible scandal. Myrtle and her prominent attorney, James A. Reed. both wept dramatically while addressing the judge and jury. The defense argued that the shooting was an accident and that the couple struggled over the gun before it discharged.

After eight hours of deliberation, the jury declared Myrtle Bennett innocent of murder. It has been argued that Myrtle's good looks and tearful state swayed the jury into making a serious mistake. It probably did not help public opinion that Myrtle thereafter qualified for a \$30,000 life insurance payout.

In later years Myrtle continued to play bridge, without any further notable incidents. She passed away in 1992 at the age of 97.

Ed. note: The other version of the story is that the judge was a bridge player (and that there was NO jury) and he understood the magnitude of the bridge play error committed by Mr. Bennett. He thus ruled that it was justifiable homicide.

Be of good cheer, all, we now have a zero tolerance program in place and no one can even be cranky at the bridge table. But just in case, remember that if you misbehave, the judge will very likely NOT be a bridge player.

(Reproduced with permission from Barbara Seagram's newsletter and drawn to our attention by Mark Obermeyer)





TIME YOU LEARNED OUR LESSONS!

IN THE CARDS (GET IT?)

Basic Bidding Five-Week Course. \$80 members/ \$90 non-members. Tuesday mornings, April 11, 18, 25, May 2, and May 9, 9:00 am – 11:30 am. Instructor: Cindy Mahn. Level: Novice. IN PERSON in our teaching room. Current Enrollment: 7.

THOSE WHO TAKE THIS COURSE WILL RECEIVE UP TO THREE FREE PLAY VOUCHERS.

- Inverted Minors. \$20 members/ \$25 non-members. Thursday morning, April 13. 9:30 am 11:30 am. Instructor: Tom Ramsay. Level: Intermediate. IN PERSON in our teaching room. Current Enrollment: 8.
- Opening Leads. \$20 members/ \$25 non-members. Friday morning, April 14, 9:30 am noon. Instructor: Susan Lawton (the Answer Lady). Level: Novice. IN PERSON in our teaching room. Current Enrollment: 4.

THOSE WHO TAKE THIS LESSON WILL RECEIVE UP TO THREE FREE PLAY VOUCHERS.

Click here for more information and to register.



Splinters/ Mini-Splinters

A full splinter (for example, 1♥ Pass 4♦) shows four-plus heart support, a singleton or void in diamonds, and 13+ HCP.

Mini-splinters (for example, 1 ♥ Pass 3♦) are a variation of full splinters. They can be made on weaker hands as well as on game-forcing ones, and they can lead to games on hands without a lot of high card points.

For example, you open 1 ♥ with ♠AK2 ♥KJ9873 ◆8743 ♣2 and partner bids 3♦ showing 9+ HCP and four hearts, you can be sure of a game if partner is minimum and have a possible slam if he has more. The effective use of mini-splinters can help you reach close games and find good slams. Learn more about splinters and mini-splinters in this workshop.

Regular partners may find it beneficial to attend this workshop as a pair.

Date: Thursday, April 20, 9:30 am - 11:30 am

Instructor: Tom Ramsay Level: Intermediate

Mode: In person in our teaching room Cost: \$20 members/\$25 non-members

Current Enrollment: 2

Click here for more information and to register.

Our in-person lessons, in addition to being lots of fun while improving bridge skills, are an excellent place to find new partners.

FOR OPEN PLAYERS



Dear David

100%

I've read a number of bridge books that set out a play problem where the author informs you that there is a line of play that guarantees the contract. Armed with that knowledge, it makes the reader study the hands closely to find the correct line. It has proven to be a great boon to my declarer play. "What can go wrong?" should always be uppermost in your mind when you are declaring a hand.

The following hand occurred on the last hand of an online game. Do not peek at the second hand diagram below until you attempt to solve the problem. This one is 100%.



I won't bore you with an explanation of the bidding. Suffice it to say that the slam is a reasonable proposition. If the ♥K is held by South, it looks like you have a guess as to who holds the ♠Q, in an attempt to take all 13 tricks. You win the ♦K opening lead and the ♥Q fetches the ♥K in the South hand. Your problems are seemingly over, until you discover that North has four small hearts. You draw two more rounds of hearts in the East hand, and you now need to travel to the West hand to draw North's last trump. You could overtake a club winner with the ace and try to guess the spade ♠Q later, planning to ruff a spade if necessary to get rid of the club loser you created. It seems much easier to lead a spade to the West hand. This is the point where the author would tell you that the contract is 100%. Find it!

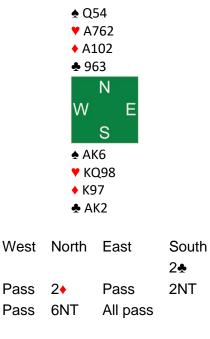


If you were happy/lazy/tired, as my partner was, you led a spade to the king and promptly failed by a trick when it was ruffed. What is the worst that could happen if you finessed the ♠10? If it loses to the ♠Q, you can now ruff a diamond to get to the West hand, draw the last trump, and claim. It doesn't matter if North has a club void, spade void, or the ♠Q. Finessing the ten wins, even when it loses.

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No. 108



I was sitting South declaring a 6NT contract. West led the ♠J. East followed suit, and I took the trick with the ♠K in my hand. I then played my ♥K. West followed small and East's ♥J fell. I continued with my ♥Q on which East discarded a spade. I took the marked heart finesse and scored two more heart tricks, with East discarding another spade and then a club. Now I cashed two more spades, on which East threw away a diamond and a club. If you were in my shoes, what would you do now?

SOLUTION

Here is what you can see at this point.



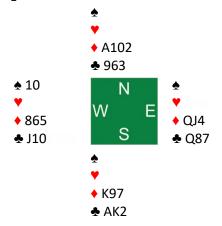
In order to make your contract, you must collect five of the last six tricks. You have four sure tricks, and need to find a fifth? It's time to take stock.

East has shown up with three spades and one heart = four major cards in total. Since the opening lead strongly suggests that West has the ♠10, it looks as if East originally held nine cards in the minors, from which he has already discarded one diamond and two clubs. Since most people will discard in a way that will leave a guard in every suit, this suggests that East started with four diamonds and five clubs.

For you right now, it's crucial to figure out who has the minor queens and jacks, especially the queens, but there are unfortunately no smoking guns on this hand. However, there is a helpful gadget in your toolbox that sometimes comes in handy, namely that *There is a higher probability that more high cards are distributed to those who have more cards in any given suit.* In other words, it is more likely that the Q and the Q (probably along with the jacks as well) are in East's hand. If you make your plan on the basis of this assumption, you will realize there is no point in finessing - meaning that you are going to have to fall back on an endplay.

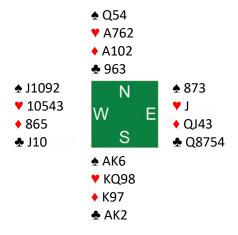
Meanwhile back at the ranch, looking at your remaining cards you see that your diamond suit has much better intermediates (the ◆109) than the club suit. So, you cash the ♣AK and lead a third club - and don't forget to cross your fingers. You are hoping that East will be forced to take the trick - and, as it happens, East does win the ♣Q.

Here is the full hand with six tricks to go.



As you can see, when you cash the ♣AK, East can't throw his ♣Q away or else dummy's ♣9 will be good. So, he will be forced to take the third club trick and now he has no choice but to lead away from his ◆QJx into dummy's ◆A10x, allowing you to collect the last three tricks and make your slam.

Here is the full hand.



The technical name of the gadget you used here is the *Theory of Vacant Places*. To restate: The theory of vacant places states that the probability that an opponent holds a particular card is directly proportional to the number of cards in the suit that he has left in his hand.

Top Master Point Earners at our Club

Contributed by Allen Pengelly

This table lists the individuals who have earned the most master points at our club in each of three master point bands since the beginning of February.

| Open Players | | | 499er Players | | | 99er Players | | | |
|--------------|---------------------|-------|---------------|------------------|-------|--------------|-------------------|------|--|
| | Name | MP | | Name | MP | | Name | MP | |
| 1 | David Baker | 26.44 | 1 | John Kip | 14.86 | 1 | Nancy Cattanach | 7.95 | |
| 2 | Robert Griffiths | 22.97 | 2 | Shelley Metcalfe | 14.04 | 2 | Rick Arthur | 7.68 | |
| 3 | Mike Peng | 21.76 | 3 | Lynda Burnett | 14.01 | 3 | Molly Worden | 5.50 | |
| 4 | Edith Ferber | 19.91 | 4 | Barbara Arthur | 13.72 | 4 | Debbie Miethig | 5.31 | |
| 5 | Colin Harrington | 16.40 | 5 | Cheryl Kip | 12.69 | 5 | Brian Gaber | 4.96 | |
| 6 | Ted Boyd | 14.58 | 6 | Suzanne Edwards | 12.50 | 6 | Belinda Burt | 3.68 | |
| 7 | Kathy Russell | 13.32 | 7 | Roy Dandyk | 11.91 | 7 | Valirie Binkle | 3.52 | |
| 8 | Dave Quarrie | 11.36 | 8 | Cheryl White | 11.71 | 8 | Don Slowinski | 3.29 | |
| 9 | Neil Jeffrey | 11.36 | 9 | Lori Cole | 10.75 | 8 | Ben Cornell | 3.29 | |
| 10 | Sharon Boyd | 10.81 | 10 | Jim Dalgliesh | 10.49 | 10 | MJ Hartleib | 3.26 | |
| 11 | David Longstaff | 10.48 | 11 | Virginia Alviano | 9.09 | 11 | Elaine Doyle | 3.22 | |
| 12 | Scott Hills | 8.86 | 12 | Jack Cole | 8.42 | 12 | Audrey Cook | 3.14 | |
| 13 | Stephen Young | 7.62 | 13 | Barbara Lindsay | 8.02 | 13 | Larry Brooks | 3.12 | |
| 14 | Sandy Graham | 7.45 | 14 | Susan Durance | 8.00 | 14 | Louise Dawdy | 3.09 | |
| 15 | John Hanemaayer | 6.89 | 15 | Renate Boucher | 7.81 | 15 | Paul Raymond | 2.72 | |
| 16 | David Wilson | 6.88 | 16 | David Dennis | 7.58 | 16 | Stu Cowan | 2.68 | |
| 17 | Pat McMillan | 6.59 | 17 | Adriaan Kempe | 6.94 | 17 | Jane Wilson | 2.60 | |
| 18 | Neil Coburn | 6.20 | 18 | Martin Jones | 6.81 | 18 | Chris Beck | 2.23 | |
| 19 | Wayne Jordan | 5.94 | 19 | Marlene Dopko | 6.61 | 19 | Jeannie Leforge | 2.13 | |
| 20 | Diane Jamieson | 5.89 | 20 | Robert Giilck | 6.42 | 20 | Pauline Copleston | 2.11 | |
| 21 | Liz McDowell | 5.79 | 21 | Nanci Phelan | 6.02 | 21 | Judy Charbonneau | 2.10 | |
| 22 | Rebecca Kalbfleisch | 5.62 | 22 | Brenda Semple | 5.96 | 22 | Pat Northey | 2.06 | |
| 23 | Ronna Hoy | 5.46 | 23 | Anita Hanson | 5.50 | 23 | Philip Fiess | 1.96 | |
| 24 | Diane Bourdeau | 5.33 | 24 | Judy Widdecombe | 5.46 | 24 | Joan Stroud | 1.93 | |
| 25 | Moira Hollingsworth | 5.31 | 24 | Vivian McLellan | 5.46 | 25 | Kathy Chandler | 1.85 | |

If you would like to play in a particular game but lack a partner that day, you can either:

- Log in to <u>Pianola</u>, click on Partner Finder, and create a Partner Finder advert. This needs to be done at least a few hours in advance of the game. OR
- Log in to the game in question and register yourself on the Partnership Desk tab.

If you are looking for a regular partner, contact <u>Joan Slover</u>, our membership lead.

We have fun in **spades**.
We play with all our **hearts**.
We treat our members like **diamonds**.
We are turning 11 at our **club**.