



Gordon Bower

TaigaBridge Timeline

Source

1991

TaigaBridge founder Gordon Bower first learned to play bridge the Friday after Thanksgiving, 1991, making up a fourth with his high-school girlfriend and her brother when her mother decided they needed to learn how to play. Despite concentrating more on playing footsie under the table than on the cards, he somehow managed to learn how to play decent rubber bridge.

1993

Bored in his dorm room the second week of his freshman year, Gordon opened up the Fairbanks yellow pages to "Bridge Clubs" and got invited to come down to the Farthest North Bridge Club's Friday night duplicate game the next week. He and his pickup partner tied for third, and he went home that night with 0.43 masterpoints and a membership blank to fill in and mail to the American Contract Bridge League. He was hooked in no time. By the end of the year he was a regular at the club, had a bookshelf overflowing with bridge books, and the next summer, introduced the rest of his original foursome to the tournament scene.

1995

He became an ACBL accredited teacher in May, taught his first beginner's class in Fairbanks starting in September, and was certified as a director in December. He has continued to direct club games on a regular basis ever since.

1996

In summer 1996, the Farthest North Bridge Club became the first club in the Northwest to have a web presence, with Gordon as webmaster.

2001

The TaigaBridge business name was adopted in August 2001. That same month marked the start of regular weekly bridge lessons in Fairbanks, which ran continuously for the next four years, in addition to the four- to eight-week series which continued to be offered as demand warranted.

<http://taigabridge.net/about.htm>

In June 2003, TaigaBridge expanded into the new area of book sales, selling bridge books at tournaments throughout Alaska.

2005

In January 2005, TaigaBridge expanded beyond Alaska's borders with the launch of online book sales offering mail-order service worldwide. The inventory expanded to include poker books in addition to our primary market of bridge books and supplies. November marked a major change, with the relocation of the home office from Fairbanks to Juneau. We continued to service the Fairbanks and Anchorage tournaments and offer one- and two-day teaching seminars in Fairbanks.

2007

We returned to Fairbanks full-time for business as usual.

2011

Major changes! Moved from Alaska to Idaho, boxes of books in tow. I now offer books at Idaho and Montana tournaments to which I am invited, along with in-person and internet orders. It's now much easier to arrange for me to travel to a regional or sectional near you to play.

TaigaBridge Staff

Currently, TaigaBridge is a one-man operation:

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Gordon's introduction to the game of bridge is described above in the timeline. He is active in the Pacific Northwest tournament scene, an ACBL Silver Life Master, and a member of the *ACBL Goodwill Committee*. With regular Alaska partner Michael Schmahl he has several sectional and regional successes; was in the top 50 worldwide in the *2004 Worldwide Bridge Contest*; and was the winner of the *Fifth Friday Trophy* two years running.

He became an ACBL accredited teacher in May 1995, a club tournament director in December 1995 and an *Easybridge!* presenter in July 1999. He has also been involved in bridge politics, a past President of Unit 426, serving nine years on the Unit 426 board, four years on the District 19 board, and two years as District 19 Intermediate/Newcomer Coordinator.

Outside of bridge, Gordon is by training a mathematician and geologist. He is currently a statistician at the Idaho National Laboratory and available for hire as an independent statistics consultant. Previously he was adjunct lecturer in statistics and a staff researcher at PAIR, the office of Planning, Analysis, and Institutional Research at the University of Alaska Fairbanks 2007-2011). In the past he has worked for the Alaska Volcano Observatory, the International Arctic Research Center and the Alaska Mental Health Board. In his spare time he is also a classical violinist and composer.