



Mary Oshlag, Germantown, Tennessee – Unit 144

EIGHT IS ENOUGH

Mary Oshlag, together with bridge teacher and director Mr. Jack Wynns, devised and developed a form of bridge based upon the concept that a less experienced player may be able to play with bridge players with more experience. The concept became called

In an article, which appeared in the June 2008 issue of The Bridge Bulletin, published by the American Contract Bridge League, page 26, Mary Oshlag describes how she and Mr. John Wynns began this bridge event and how it caught the attention of the ACBL and also of the bridge community in general and became a popular feature of the many bridge units in North America.

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How It Began

There was no bridge game on Wednesday night at our Club, and the Unit 144 asked me to think of something. Bridge teacher and Director Jack Wynns and I brainstormed; our plan was to find a way to get players with less experience to play with experts. The *Eight Is Enough* concept is the result.

Here's how it works: Once a month we hold a Swiss team game. Each player is assigned a point value. A Flight A player counts as three points, Flight B as two and Flight C as one.

(The masterpoint limit for each flight depends on your club.)

No team can have more than eight points. This means that if two Flight A players want to play together, they have to play with two Flight C players. Three plus three plus one plus one equals eight. Sometimes we have four Flight B players, who team up. They each count as two points and two times four is eight - eight is enough.



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With the Unit Board's approval, I started advertising the game. I put posters in the playing area and articles in our newsletter. We had eight teams the first month - maybe when I said eight is enough, they got the wrong idea!

I remember that the second month a player brought a guest from out of town. That guest was told that we might have eight teams, and we had 16! It was growing. We are now in the third year and typically have between 20 and 30 teams.

Because it is a special game we only hold it once a week. We think it would lose its appeal if held more frequently.

The response to this game has been incredible! It is really heartwarming to have people tell me how much they enjoy it and what a wonderful game it is. One day I had a message on my answering machine. It was from a local player who played for the first time. She thanked me and told me that in her forty years of playing bridge, that she never had such a great time!

For her it was a new game, a new partnership and a new friendship. That is what we want to hear from our bridge players.

Eight might be enough, but the concept alone is not sufficient. We've found you have to call and email. There are lots of players who want help getting partners and teammates. I try to build teams of players, who would enjoy playing together; many friendships and partnerships have developed because of this.

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Other things have helped *Eight Is Enough* be successful. There's lots of good food - if you have food, they will come. We keep the game moving. It starts at 7:00pm and we try to end by 10:00pm. Jack Wynns usually gives a short lecture before each game, and the Flight C players love it. We've also featured guest speakers by Tim Bourke, Frank Stewart, and Brent Manley.

The game was improved by stratifying it. I take a photo of the winners and post it on the bulletin board. A note and the photo is sent to each member of the winning team. These are little touches that can be done to improve the game.

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The personal contribution of Mary Oshlag is presented above for the benefit of the bridge player. This article of Mary Oshlag is preserved in this form and archived on this site for future reference.