

Cecil Richey

The NIBU community was saddened to hear of the death of Cecil Richey on February 20th after a long illness. Cecil was one of the good guys – a true gentleman both at and away from the bridge table; he took up the game in the late 1960's and became its most passionate advocate. Cecil's diary was always full, playing with different partners at whichever club was on that night while weekends were spent at an NIBU competition or attending a congress somewhere.

Cecil was a former President and Chairman of the NIBU. He also dedicated much of his time to working for his local club in Belfast, Kelvin-Malone.

On a personal level, I was honoured to know Cecil for over 40 years. Not only did he teach me to play Bridge – Beginner's Lesson 2 "Dummy Reversal"!! - but we formed a team with Neill Cauwood and John Conlon that won every NIBU event at one time or another. A win that gave Cecil particular pleasure was claiming the Burke Trophy in 1986 playing for Down – the county where he was born and grew up.

Cecil was a keen advocate of aggressive bidding years before it became accepted as normal. His weak no-trump openings, ostensibly 12-14, were often shaded to 11 or even a decent looking 10 count. When I suggested he might like to take up the Mini-no Trump, 10-12, he was delighted to oblige, duly inspired by the notion that a flat 9 count with a couple of 10's or 9's need no longer be passed. This deadly weapon tended to attract much hostile bidding from the opposition but their penalty doubles were often countered by a confident redouble. This resulted in Cecil's scoresheet frequently recording the somewhat unusual score of +510.

The Bridge community has lost one of its most popular characters.

Michael McFaul