

Jennifer Tallentire

New ACBL Regional Life Master

Jennifer played a little kitchen bridge when she was in her early twenties. It was 2 couples, and none of them knew what they were doing! The other couple moved away after a few months and that was the end of bridge for her.

Fast forward to when Jennifer was much older (won't go into that detail) and became friends with a woman who was volunteering with an organization she was also involved with. She told Jennifer that Sask. Seniors Fitness Association (SSFA) was holding learn to play duplicate bridge classes at the bridge club and talked her into going with her. Lorraine Garratt was the coordinator and Irene Huber was the instructor. They both made her feel comfortable right away. Jennifer enjoyed the 6 lessons and they were great. Irene encouraged them all to go to the Monday night beginner games at the club. They went and Irene as well as Joyce Butler were directing and helping everyone. Again they made her feel welcome and comfortable. They were so supportive! After a few weeks Jennifer's friend decided she didn't want to play anymore, unbelievable. By this time Jennifer was hooked and knowing she could go to Monday night without a partner, she went. It was scary but a very good decision and she continued learning. Jennifer joined the club.

Next the lessons at the club taught by Gaylene Spence started up for the fall and she attended. It was really helpful to get those lessons, tips, and the handouts from Gaylene. She did an awesome job with so many people, all at different skill levels.

Then Lorraine asked her if I wanted to play in the Helen Shields rookie-master game with her. They played and then - how lucky for her - she offered to play in the regular master/rookie games with her on Wednesday evenings. Jennifer was so lucky to have a partner so skilled and so patient, too! She has learned and continues to learn a lot from Lorraine and still can't believe all her patience and kindness.

Due to family concerns she had to quit playing for a couple of years, but with Lorraine's encouragement she came back to play again. Byron Seymour and Jennifer had played a few times previously so they started playing and now play regularly. Lucky to have another great partner!

Recently the club has offered some great learning opportunities for players trying to improve. She was one of the beneficiaries of playing/learning sessions facilitated by Jason Larrivee on Thursday nights. Fantastic! Jason allowed them to 'pick his brain' and he really instilled confidence and a much deeper way of thinking. It is amazing that even while we were critiquing our bidding and play, Jason managed to make sure no one felt threatened or unsafe to put ideas out there. Then Claire offered Tuesday night 'pick your brain' sessions. Again, excellent! The reviews of the hands and your thoughts on how to play them helped get some best practise concepts into her head.

You might have noted that Jennifer has mentioned many of the names of long-time and knowledgeable members of the club. All have been so helpful to her and she knows many others. It is so easy to see why she feels lucky to be involved with a club where so many people are willing to give their time and knowledge to help others become better players and to do it while having fun! Of course there are lots of others Jennifer hasn't mentioned as this is getting long, but all are contributing to the club's success.

So Jennifer's story is really about all the wonderful people at the club and how they impact new and developing players on their journey. She hopes to be on this journey for many more years.

With sincere thanks!
Jennifer