
'Table talk'

Franklin Bridge Club Newsletter
March 2017

- with Richard Solomon



SUNSHINE and SUCCESS on the Coast

Did you notice there were a few gaps at the club during the last week of February? That was because several of our players headed off to Auckland Airport for a taste of Gold Coast weather and to be among the 2,000 + players who took part in the week long Gold Coast Congress. Heading westwards were David and Sue Spencer, Trevor Robb, Lynne and Arie Geursen, Teresa Phillips, Carol De Luca, Bev Henton, Hannah Zhang, Kevin Wang and Julie Quilty. It was a shame Jerry Kuggeleijn had to pull out at the last minute. Julie missed you.

Pride of place at the bridge table (you do not want to know what happened after bridge, do you?) goes to Hannah and Kevin who won the Monday Butler Swiss Pairs, for players with under 500 master-points. Carol and Bev performed very creditably. They were 59th in the datums for the Open Teams event (out of 475 pairs) and came 17th out of 104 pairs North-South in the Ivy Dahler Butler Swiss Open Pairs.

They all reported great weather and that they had a wonderful time.

Back in Pukekohe

There has been not so much sun and far more of the rain. Have you noticed? There's also been plenty of road works. Surely you have noticed them in and around the bridge club?

There has also been the Monday night Restricted Teams. 12 has been a great number. The only person who has not been so happy has been the substitute organiser. Here's hoping that those who have been dragged in from Wednesday nights enjoyed the experience and may even decide to come again on a Monday. We all play the same game, no matter which night you come. Finesses still fail and you get the same bad breaks! Now, that's not a way to promote Mondays, is it?

There was a little drama at the end of this event when the final was not contested by the correct teams. The team of Lynne Geursen, Andrew Janisz, Hannah Zhang and Kevin Wang won on the night but their opponents in the final should have been Diane Conroy, Henrietta Annabell, Carol Moore and Darren Old. The two teams may if convenient play off soon to determine the true winners.

New Players ... and New Knowledge for "Older" Ones

Only three at this year's Beginners' class. We hoped for more. Maybe next time, we will enlist your help to encourage friends and family along ... or to give a hand in promotion. Nevertheless, Debbie is showing great enthusiasm to teach and welcome the new players. Meanwhile, Chris is teaching the "older dogs" a few new tricks on Thursday nights. His next Thursday night session (30th March at 7.00pm) is on "Losing Trick Count, a method of evaluating your hand." The programme is on our club website at the bottom of the "Lessons"

page. Come on you Wednesday night players. Maybe even some who come on Mondays? Come along to learn a bit more about a key area of the game, "Hand Evaluation". It's not all about how many aces and kings you hold ... or do not hold!

Inter Club Starts Again ... and so too soon does Rubber Bridge

And Franklin has two teams competing this year in the once a month Friday night competition at the Auckland Bridge Club. Not a great start this month as our Intermediate team of Roni, Ngare, Kevin and Darren lost out to the "Howick Hoons" 24-53 while in the Open, Trevor, Andrew, Henk and Christine (Egelmeer) lost both their matches, to Howick 5-19 and to Mt Albert 19-39. As any decent coach would say, "there is a long way to go." The next round is on April 7th.

Don't forget to put your names on the whiteboard at the club and enter the Franklin heat of the National Rubber Bridge competition. It's a fun way to spend an evening ... 30 boards ... and may the luckiest pair win! You cannot let Chris and Maria have it all their own way! Give them some competition.

Farewell to a Gentleman

That is how so many club members will remember Alan O'Shaughnessy who passed away earlier this month. We are sad to acknowledge the death of long-time club member Alan O'Shaughnessy, aged 84. Alan was a gentle man, with a wry sense of humour, whose life story was told at a commemoration afternoon at his home. Alan was born in Cairo, but grew up with his brother in a boys' home in Wolverhampton. As a young man, he joined the British Army and trained as a sniper. He had told his grandchildren that he could hit a watermelon at 1000 metres. He was also a champion boxer and in New Zealand pursued a career as an engineer. His grandchildren all spoke at his commemoration, all agreeing that he had been the best of Grandads. He will be missed by his family and many bridge friends.

News of Players Present and others who have moved on

In the latter category is Lorraine Vickers. We have a spy who keeps track of what is happening on other clubs' websites ... and our spy reports that Lorraine is now playing bridge at Hawera. She moved to Taranaki about three months ago. Going to a bridge club is a great way to meet people when you move to a new area. Hope you are enjoying your bridge games too, Lorraine.

The Sunset Beach Lifeguards have had a standout competition season. Over the weekend of 18/19 March, the Sunset Young Guns won 2 gold medals and the Sunset Hipsters won silver medals for the Long Course and Short Course. Rowing in the Hipsters (only their second season together) was our own Harri Fulton, taking a short break from his Canterbury university studies. There was a photo in the local paper this week, and as Tina pointed out "Harri is the tall white guy on the far end of the front row" -- being pale-skinned goes with being a redhead! Well done, Harri.

Of our current members, news of Margaret and David Gardiner who are in the South Island spending 5 days biking from Mt. Cook to Oamaru ("Alps to Ocean"), with Denis Gadd and his wife -- no, it's not downhill all the way ! It's apparently very up and down, but they do have E-bikes. May the wind be at their backs.

A Date for Your Diary



A Restricted 8B Tournament on Saturday April 29th at the Franklin Bridge Club

We would love to see all club members playing, or maybe lending a hand. There were 20 tables at our February tournament ... and we want to do better this time. Remember, "Restricted" means two Open players cannot play together. So, the playing field will be more even and there will be category prizes, like for top Junior-Junior, top Intermediate-Junior and so on. So, make a nice day of it as Franklin tournaments always provide excellent value for money.

This tournament is being sponsored by Flooring Xtra Support Centre courtesy of our own Don Barry. Situated at 661 Great South Road, Manukau City, that's a great place to visit for your flooring needs. Remember to support the club's sponsors ... and many thanks, Don.



Overheard recently...



No bridge news of Nelda this month but she cannot get out of the limelight. This was heard in a conversation between an older and a newer club member:

"Do you know Nelda? She's a delightful elderly lady who is a wolf in sheep's clothing at the bridge table!"

"Yes, I know her quite well. She is very good -- takes no prisoners"

We have our spies everywhere. Watch out!

Then, we have:



Batting or Bidding?

Top scoring Trevor ... but was it in bridge or cricket?

At 7pm on an early-March Wednesday evening, Trevor Robb tore himself away from the cricket to drop Robyn off to the club and came in "for a minute" to be sociable. Maria's partner for the night hadn't turned up (confusion in communication) and Trevor was asked whether he'd stay and play? What's a gentleman to do -- he stayed and played, giving up the chance to see Martin Guptill score NZ's highest-ever one day score (180 not out) and NZ win the game against South Africa. And he and Maria got top for the night with 60%. Trevor for the Black Caps next? There's a thought.

How high do you play your Negative Doubles?

This board came up during one night of the recent Monday night Restricted Teams and caused some confusion there. So, maybe a quick lesson for all at the club. What do you bid as West after the following sequence:

West	North	East	South	Neither side is	♠ AQ
Pass	1♦	3♠	?	vulnerable and West	♥ AJ7543
				holds:	♦ -
					♣ AKJ86

Apart from an opening hand and a few diamonds, you have no idea what your partner's hand is. Slam must be very likely but where? There are certain actions you just cannot take:

Pass obviously!

3NT Most of the time it will end the bidding and your partner has no idea you are that strong.

4♥ again not forcing and does not explore other possible contracts

4♣ Gerber. 4♣ just cannot be Gerber here. You must be allowed to bid clubs naturally and that takes precedence over Gerber.

So, what's left? You could bid a forcing 4♣ which shows clubs but by far the best option is a negative double. We use double usually to cater for hands for which no other bid appeals. Most of you play negative doubles at a lower level but it is wise to play them at least to opposition bids of 3♠ and if you are comfortable up to and including opposition jumps to 4♥. It is true a negative double does not really show 6 cards in one suit and 5 in another but it really is the only sensible option. You must make your partner speak again.

Here were the 4 hands:

Dealer	North	West	North	East	South	
North	♠ 876		Pass	1♦	3♠	With three spades and only one heart, North would try to make it harder for the opposition by raising to 4♠ (despite North-South have only 9 hcp, 4♠ is likely to be as little as 3 down ... -500). East has no desire to bid over 4♠. However, West insists, not by doubling 4♠ as that would be for penalties but by bidding the opposition's suit. East must now bid their second suit and an excellent slam has been reached. Had East only diamonds, then West could bid 6NT.
Nil Vul	♥ 8					
	♦ Q98763	Dbl	4♠	Pass	Pass	
	♣ 1032	5♠	Pass	6♣	All Pass	
West		East				
♠ AQ		♠ 4				
♥ AJ7543		♥ Q96				
♦ —		♦ AKJ105				
♣ AKJ86		♣ Q754				
	South					
	♠ KJ109532					
	♥ K102					
	♦ 42					
	♣ 9					

So, it is best to play negative doubles at least up to and including 3♠. Several pairs missed a slam on this deal, at least at some tables because they did not know what to do over the opposition's pre-emptive bid.

Until next time ...

Richard Solomon