
'Table talk'

Franklin Bridge Club Newsletter September 2015

With Richard Solomon (*while Nandy is overseas*)



Ron turns 99

Recently Ron Rooney, a regular Friday player, celebrated his 99th birthday at our bridge club.

Ron was born in the middle of World War 1 in Plymouth, England and left home at 18, cycling 200 miles (after sleeping in a ditch overnight) to find his fortune in London.

In London, he loved and played football for the East London Club, Romford. He was also a competent table tennis player and was introduced to bridge when spotted in a group of players sitting around a square table at an exhibition match.

He worked as butcher for couple of years before enlisting with the Royal Army Service Corps (RASC) during peace time. He survived active service in the disputed territories in Palestine and the British landings and invasions of Sicily and Italy before he was sent back to the UK for the D-Day landing in Normandy.

Ron married Edith Venables in 1946 and in 1953 the family emigrated to New Zealand where he joined the New Zealand Army and was stationed at Narrow Neck (around the bay from Cheltenham Beach on the North Shore) where he was in charge of catering.

He still plays a very good game of bridge and is often in the winning circle on Fridays.



'To finesse or not to finesse' is the question

by Lynne Geursen

Ever wondered about the thought process our top players use? Read on as Lynne will give you an excellent example. Ed.

Recently I had the pleasure of playing in the Papakura Restricted tournament with Bev Donaldson.

On the third hand of the morning, I picked up:

♠ A82 ♥ K6 ♦ AQJ10972 ♣ 2

I heard partner open 1♣ (showing 11-19pts and 4+ clubs). It was hard for me not to get to excited (7+ cards suits always give me a buzz!)

I bid 1♦, eagerly awaiting partner's rebid. My excitement was tempered somewhat when she rebid 2♣. Even so I was still keen on exploring a slam in diamonds.

"Why diamonds" you might ask? Well, let's think about what partner has told us with her bidding.

She didn't bid a major over my 1♦, nor did she rebid or open 1NT, so I knew her hand was unbalanced and less than 15 HCP without four spades, hearts or diamonds. So she will have at least one diamond and 12-14pts.

Perhaps the safest bid would be 3NT from my hand, hoping to run 7 diamond tricks plus 3 or 4 other winners in outside suits but I would rather be in 6♦ than 3NT.

North

♠ 65
♥ A43
♦ 64
♣ AKQ1087

South

♠ A82
♥ K6
♦ AQJ10972
♣ 2

North

♠ 65
♥ A43
♦ 64
♣ AKQ1087

West

♠ J10943
♥ J952
♦ K3
♣ 94

N
W E
S

East

♠ KQ7
♥ Q1087
♦ 85
♣ J653

South

♠ A82
♥ K6
♦ AQJ10972
♣ 2

only succeed by ducking the first two rounds of spades and then playing on clubs, giving East a trick. It's much better to be making 6♣ than failing in 3NT!

Here next is another Gerber adventure. However, it was not the convention more what the players were imbibing at the time that had the greatest impact:

Passing the Port by Andrew Janisz

North

♠ A6
♥ AQ1074
♦ A4
♣ KJ103

West

♠ 752
♥ J852
♦ 95
♣ Q872

N
W E
S

East

♠ KQ
♥ 963
♦ K10873
♣ 964

South

♠ J108543
♥ K
♦ QJ62
♣ A5

North

4♣
5♣
Pass!

South

1♠
4♥ (one ace)
5♥ (one king)

I should as editor of this issue both thank Andrew for this drunken contribution and also point out that Andrew was not sitting in the North seat when this next deal occurred.

A friendly game of Rubber Bridge was accompanied by a bottle of port. This was the last hand of the evening.

It seemed that North may have been a little distracted by the smooth taste between his lips and thought his partner was showing spades and hearts in his Gerber

My next bid was 4♣ (we had agreed that asking for aces), Bev replied 4♠ showing 2 aces. Once I knew we had all the aces, I was optimistic that Bev just might have the right cards for me and if 3NT was going to make why couldn't 6♦? So I bid 6♦ and waited for Bev to display dummy.

So how do you play this hand on the lead of the ♠J? No peeping to the bottom of the page!

Do we duck a spade and win the ace and ruff our third spade with a little diamond in dummy and then use the other small trump to finesse for the ♣K?

Alternatively, win the ♠J lead with our ace immediately and play three top clubs hoping to discard two spades on the king and queen without either opponent ruffing and then finesse for the ♦K?

I am sure most players would not be expecting three rounds of clubs to hold up, as this will only work 33% of the time.

I won the spade and immediately laid down ♦A, just in case ♦K was singleton, then played the three top clubs, pitching my two spade losers.

The full hands were:

As you can see, although West ruffed the third club, it had to be with the ♣K, an important extra chance when the opposition had so few trumps. Meanwhile, those in 3NT who received a spade lead would fail in their contract if they touched diamonds. They would

response. Maybe it was just as well ... but more of that in a minute.

South may have been mildly surprised at the final contract but still, just, managed to thank partner for his dummy. He would have liked to have been in a different suit ... even no-trumps ... at a different level. Anyway, the play's the thing as West had led $\spadesuit 9$. He had no great plan at that stage and so ducked that to East's king. East played back a club won by the 10 in dummy.

Even with a touch or two of port inside, timing on hands is so "important". South should cash the \spadesuit and \heartsuit As and played a trump to his lone king. Now the \spadesuit Q and it mattered not whether West ruffed or discarded. If he ruffed, declarer could overruff in dummy, draw trumps, return to South's hand with the \clubsuit A and discard the spade on the \spadesuit J ... making 11 tricks. If instead West discarded a spade, declarer discards dummy's spade. A spade ruff followed by three rounds of trumps would put West on lead, with only clubs to play ... 11 tricks for declarer.

Alas, at trick 3, South played a heart to the king, then \spadesuit to the ace and two high trumps. Then came \clubsuit A and \spadesuit Q which West ruffed with the \spadesuit J. Although the spade disappeared from dummy, West played a spade to the bare ace in dummy, leaving dummy with no escape from a club loser for one down. Wrong timing: too much port.

Had North been more alert and bid on to $6\heartsuit$ or $6NT$, the declarer would have had to play the hand very carefully to make 12 tricks. Passing Gerber's response might have been the best action! As South commented, "I had just the trump "support" you needed.

On a Sunday afternoon in mid-August, the club held its annual Sunday afternoon individual, with a great field of 44 coming along. That's nearly 50% of the club membership. There were a number of our very newest members there too. It was a great afternoon for Irene Bronlund who top-scored with 62.36% to be followed by Terry Prior (59.98%) and Jerry Kuggeleijn (59.84%). And guess who was fourth? Why none other than a certain Ronald Rooney who scored a very impressive 59.68%. We will be expecting a 60% next year, Ronald, to celebrate the 100th.

A few of our club members will be playing in all or part of the National Bridge Congress which takes place in Hamilton in late September / early October. If you are a glutton for the cards, you can play for 8 solid days. Some will go along for just a few days. Maybe you might be interested in playing just one event? A nice one to choose would be the Intermediate Pairs, two session, morning and afternoon on Friday October 2nd. If you are interested ... and being at Congress is a great experience, ask Neal and Teresa Phillips and they can tell you a bit more.

Also, on the afternoon of Sunday September 27th, there is a one session Novice Pairs ... for those who started playing in the last three years. I know Sean, Tina and James (Fulton) are going. How about some more of our new players going along for a game ... only \$10 and you will play against others at your level. If you want to find out more, ask any of those three who are going ... or email me on rksolomon@xtra.co.nz .

That's all for this month.

In Nandy's absence...

Richard

p.s. if something amusing happens at Franklin, please tell me about it so I can include in the next issue. I was playing in a tournament recently when my left hand opponent had a "senior moment" and thought that they were dummy rather than on lead to my contract. Before anyone could stop her, she laid her whole diamond suit on the table ... and I had four major penalty cards exposed! Shame she did not lay down the other nine!
