



Palmerston North Bridge Club Newsletter

August 2019

President's Welcome

By the time this newsletter reaches you, August will be almost gone and we will be on our way towards Spring. That means our Spring Fling tournament is in the planning stages. The Spring Fling tournament is intended as a social event for the Club and this year we will be hoping to boost numbers with the new members who have just finished their lessons and started playing Club bridge - mostly on a Monday evening. It would be great to see as many of you as possible at that event. Full details later in this newsletter from our Club Secretary, Liz Burrows.

Before then, the Committee is looking to have members' input into the Committee's proposal for our playing programme next year. Committee members Anne Gordon and Robyn Anderson have been leading our Committee discussions so that we can bring you a range of ideas for next year. The proposal document is included at the end of this newsletter. A questionnaire will follow later.

Please take the time to give us your thoughts - on what we propose and also what we don't propose. Any ideas will be very welcome and given full consideration.

The focus is to give more options for our Club members to play bridge more often in an environment that is fun and social. We all take our bridge seriously, but the most important thing is that everyone enjoys themselves and wants to continue playing and even to play more often than they do now. I cannot emphasise enough that all ideas are welcome - please get that niggly thing/big idea off your chest NOW.

Finally, many thanks to Laura Griffin for preparing and submitting an application to Pub Charity Ltd for funding for a couple of improvements to the playing environment in the Club Rooms. We have just heard

that a grant has been made so you will see a new water dispenser and some new furniture appearing around the rooms in the next couple of months. Well done Laura - thank you for your efforts. Thanks also to Don MacDonald and Tony Feyerman for selecting and installing a post box to the side gate. The idea is to dispense with the PO Box in town to make it much more convenient to collect our mail. Thanks to all for your efforts on behalf of the Club.

Denise Servante
President

Rejuvenation project

At last our new bridge players have moved into the junior room! It's fantastic to see a room full of people and to see them trying out their bidding. I was "phone a friend" for the first night and I was hardly called upon at all, except for a particularly tricky board that turned out to be a slam in spades. Everyone was very tolerant of our 'learner drivers' with their 'L' plates. We stopped for a supper break and held a mini graduation with certificates and took a photo (a special thanks to those who brought food to share and to Liz for coming to help out.) Next week there should be a few more that couldn't make it this week. Thank you so much to all our wonderful buddies too.

More good news from Laura who put in a grant application recently to help with our rejuvenation project's costs. We can now go ahead with making a new cabinet to replace our aging set of drawers and purchase a new set of tablecloths that will tone in better with the new colour scheme. We are also going to plumb in the water cooler to make it easier to fill.

Anne Gordon

Club and Tournaments Results

Congratulations to the following winners of our club competitions:

June

Monday
Afternoon
George MacLachlan
Anita Thirtle

Novice Plus
(Individual)
Michele Kay

Whitehead
Handicap Pairs
Tony Clear
Jan Whyte

Friday
Luncheon
Dianne Hunter
Gayle Leader

July

Monday
Afternoon
Tony Clear
Julie Bunnell

Novice Plus:
Keith Rowland
Memorial Pairs
Malcolm Loudon
Colleen Fraser

Jack Cliffe
Memorial Pairs
Morgan Booker
Zheng Zhang

Multigrade Butler
Pairs
Tony Clear
Debbie Marcroft

Friday
Luncheon
Sylvia Fray
Peter Avery

Over-Seventies Club:

Three new pairings have joined this club since the last newsletter:

Elizabeth & Ray Kemp 75.48%
22nd July Monday Afternoon

Michele Kay & Rita Hodson 71.43%
24th June Novice Plus

Carolyn Brodie & Clare Veltman 70.65%
22nd July Keith Rowland Memorial Pairs Novice Plus

Grand Slam Club:

Tony Clear & Cindy Lowndes 7 Diamonds Multigrade
Morgan Booker & Zheng Zhang 7 Clubs Open
Rueful Rabbit & Hideous Hog 7 Spades Open

Congratulations to all Club members below who have featured well in the following tournaments.

Hastings
Intermediate Teams
Garry Hodge
Debbie Marcroft
Laura Griffin
Cindy Lowndes
2nd

Masterton
Intermediate
Garry Hodge
Debbie Marcroft
1st

Dannevirke
Intermediate
Garry Hodge
Debbie Marcroft
1st
Hans Van Bunnik
Anne Gordon
2nd

Levin Intermediate
Anne Gordon
Hans Van Bunnik
1st

Feilding Charity
Barb Robinson
Jack James
2nd
Jan Whyte
Ken Bateman
3rd

Levin Open
Jan Whyte
Ken Bateman
3rd

Havelock Swiss Open
Ken Bateman
Jack James
2nd

Hawera Intermediate
Hans Van Bunnik
Anne Gordon
1st

Waikanae Multigrade
Carolyn Brodie
Clare Veltman
Best
Open/
Junior Pair

The Intermediate pairings of Garry Hodge & Debbie Marcroft and Anne Gordon and Hans Van Bunnik seem to be doing extremely well and my guess is they will be graded Open next year.

Liz Burrows

Upcoming Tournament

Our Spring Fling Tournament this year will be on Saturday October 19th Start Time: Midday. Theme: "High Tea." Further information to be announced later.

Liz Burrows

Improvers Corner

So, you play on a Monday evening and would like to join the over 70s club? Well, a good way to start would be to hook up with Carolyn Brodie since she seems to have the knack, achieving that feat three times already this year with two different partners. Failing that, you might examine her results to see just how she does it. The last time she got over seventy per cent was on the evening of 22nd July so I checked out some of the hands she played with Clare Veltman to see if I could pick up some tips.

One pattern I did notice was that Carolyn and Clare tended to play in no trumps when other pairs would be in a minor suit contract. In the last newsletter, I extolled the virtue of playing in a major suit fit rather than in no trumps. This is because playing in a suit contract usually gives opportunities to make extra tricks by ruffing. For example, bidding and making 3NT non-vulnerable will score 400 whereas bidding and making four spades will score 420.

If the choice is between playing in a minor suit or no trumps then the converse is true. Go for no trumps. Each trick in a minor suit is only worth 20 points. Bidding and making three diamonds, say, will net you 110 points whereas bidding and making 2NT will get you 120. The difference at higher levels becomes even more marked. Bidding and making a non-vulnerable 3NT will give you 400 whereas a contract of four clubs will only gain you 130.

Let's have a look at three hands where the two Cs achieved top boards by following this guideline.

Board 5

North Deals
N-S Vul

♠ Q 5 3
♥ K 10 8 6
♦ 7 2
♣ K Q 8 3

♠ A 8 4 2
♥ A 9 3
♦ J 9 6 4 3
♣ J



♠ J 9 6
♥ Q 2
♦ A K Q 8 5
♣ A 10 7

♠ K 10 7
♥ J 7 5 4
♦ 10
♣ 9 6 5 4 2

Here is one perfectly acceptable bidding sequence.

North	East	South	West
Pass	1D	Pass	1S
Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

East's first bid is easy. The hand is too strong to open 1NT so just start with the longest suit. But look at West's reply. It would be a mistake to agree diamonds straight away even though she has five of the suit. Partner could still have four spades so bid that suit first since a major suit contract is preferable.

Back to East, and now she has a choice. She could rebid diamonds to show a good five card suit, but this is a poor option in Acol. East's hand is quite strong and balanced. The better rebid is 1NT showing 15-16 points balanced.

West will now realize that they should be in game. Partner has shown 15-16 points and she has ten so they have at least 25 points between them. She should therefore either bid five diamonds or three no trumps. Of the two choices, the minor suit game looks safer since West has a singleton club but getting nine tricks is usually easier than making eleven so I suggest three no trumps is the better option. Occasionally, that will go badly wrong when the opponents lead off the first five club tricks, but partner has shown a no trump hand so trust in her.

The play in three no trumps is quite interesting. There are eight tricks off the top and most Souths would either lead a club or heart which provides the ninth. In practice, it is difficult for the defence to stop declarer taking ten tricks which is what the two Cs duly did. Two other pairs were in five diamonds making, but a score of 630 beats 600 so Carolyn and Clare snaffled all the match points.

Hand ten on the same evening gives a choice between 3NT and five clubs, and you know which one Carolyn and Clare are going for.

Board 10
 East Deals
 Both Vul

♠ 8 6		♠ A 4
♥ K 8 4		♥ 10 9 7 3
♦ A J 3		♦ K Q 5 4
♣ A 10 4 3 2		♣ K Q 7

♠ K 9 5 2	♠ A 4
♥ A 6 2	♥ 10 9 7 3
♦ 9 8 7 2	♦ K Q 5 4
♣ J 5	♣ K Q 7

North	East	South	West
	1NT	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Always open 1NT with a balanced 12-14 points in Acol. You may have a heart fit but let partner check for that if necessary. West could look for a game in clubs particularly with that flaky looking spade doubleton, but again, trust partner and raise to 2NT instead, inviting game. East has fourteen points and is happy to accept the invitation.

Every declarer loves an easy hand to play and they don't come much easier than this. There are ten tricks to be taken without any effort and eleven if a spade isn't led to the contract. Two other pairs bid and made five clubs for 600 points, but again the two Cs gazumped the rest with their 630.

Still not convinced? Try board 16.

Board 16
 West Deals
 E-W Vul

♠ A J 9		♠ Q 8 6 3
♥ 7 6 5 2		♥ J 10 9 4 3
♦ 9 5		♦ 10
♣ 6 4 3 2		♣ J 9 5

♠ 10 5 4 2	♠ Q 8 6 3
♥ A Q	♥ J 10 9 4 3
♦ K Q J 7 6 2	♦ 10
♣ Q	♣ J 9 5

This time our dynamic duo were sitting North-South but had the same kind of decisions to make as in the previous hands.

North	East	South	West
			Pass
1C	Pass	1D	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

North has a choice of agreeing diamonds or trying for no trumps. The major suits are a little thin, but the hand is semi-balanced so 2NT looks like a good choice. This rebid shows 17-19 points balanced. South now has the option of looking for a slam or settling for 3NT. Six diamonds or six no trumps look like good spots, but they stuck with the modest game. Knowing Carolyn, I expect there was a brisk postmortem on that one, but they needn't have worried. No one was in the slam and the two other pairs in game opted for five diamonds so the no trumps game with overtricks scooped the pool.

To summarize: prefer a suit contract to no trumps if you have a fit in hearts or spades, but usually opt for no trumps over clubs or diamonds. Be careful, though. In each of the above examples, either one or both partners has shown a no trump hand. If both hands are unbalanced, or if the opponents have bid a suit in which neither of you has a stop then settle for the minor suit fit.

Ray Kemp

You must be joking

More witticisms from Tony's collection:

People with small minds talk about other people. People with ordinary minds talk about events. People with great minds talk about ideas. People with warped minds talk about bridge hands.

A player in a tournament suddenly slumped down in his chair, victim of what seemed like a seizure or fit of some kind. A doctor was hastily summoned. He took the stricken man's pulse and noted that it was steady and firm. Obviously it was no heart attack. From the victim's white face and clammy hands the doctor surmised that this was a case of shock. A bridge player himself, he picked up the victim's cards and studied them. He then turned to the others at the table. "Now could I please have a review of the bidding," he asked.

Tony Fayerman

Palmerston North Bridge Club

Committee proposal for Playing Sessions and Times 2020

The Committee has spent some time thinking about the playing programme for next year and particularly how to deal with low table numbers on Monday (Junior) and Tuesday (Open) evening sessions.

The main principle that has guided our thinking at this stage is to maintain or increase the opportunities for members to play at the club. So, we have not considered stopping any of the existing day or evening sessions. We have also not considered changing the lessons programme and how novices are introduced into playing sessions (but this is a very high priority for the Committee).

Do you agree with this? Would you play more often if a format could be found that you are comfortable with?

Other considerations have been:

- Least disruption to traditional playing sessions.
- Providing a Director for each playing group without adding to overall costs.
- Encouraging players within the Junior/Intermediate/Senior model to experience playing and joining socially with other level players.
- Attracting members to play more often by offering extra options.
- Promoting Bridge and Bridge players into the club.
- Continuing Bridge education.
- Improve members involvement and experience to retain club members.

Is there anything else that you think should be considered?

Our proposal is to retain all playing sessions with the following changes:

Monday Day, Thursday Night and Friday Day - no change

Monday Night - run a dual session (one director, two sections)

- 'Junior Pairs' (as usual - with Championship & Trophy matches)
- 'Senior Variety' (Teams, Individual etc)

Tuesday Night

- Multigrade session with a playing programme designed primarily to be social (see below)

Friendly Trendy Tuesdays (A night of social bridge.)

For example - Programme Outline:

- **Feb.** Speed Dating - Wine and cheese from 6.30pm, play from 7pm. Individual rotating partners event.
- **Mar.** Mentor Month - Pairs event play starting from 7pm mentor discussing boards and giving tips in a mid event break.
- **April.** Mix it up teams - Teams of one junior, intermediate and open plus one extra of choice. Play starts at 7pm.
- **May.** Goulash Month - Distributional hands challenge. Play begins at 7 pm.
- **June.** Kitchen table bridge - Rubber bridge scoring. Hosted by our Club Grand Masters with a discussion on the first night prior to play starting at 7 pm.
- **July.** Speed dating - Wine and cheese from 6.30 play begins at 7pm. Individual rotating partners event.
- **Aug.** Interclub Showdown - Interclub trophy event. Best score of junior, intermediate and open pairs to count towards the trophy. Play starts at 7pm.
- **Sept.** Mix it up Teams
- **Oct.** Swinging Swiss pairs - Swing your way up and down the room to land at the top!
- **Nov.** Potluck Partners - Draw a table number and a direction from a box as you arrive. Bring a plate to share for dinner before we begin, dinner from 5.30 play starts at 7pm. Novelty certificates at the end of play.

Of course, there are other options which may be a combination of the Committee proposal plus some ideas that the Committee haven't thought of. What do you like about the proposal and what do you not like about it? What would encourage you to play bridge more often?

Finally, there is a discussion at the moment about start time for evening sessions. Whilst earlier start times may suit some people, it may mean that other people would be less likely to be able to attend. So before we change anything, we need to get a good feel for how it would affect people who are already playing.

We would love your feedback about this.

A questionnaire will be sent out soon which is designed to help us collect and analyse your views before any decisions are made. But it is not the only way for you to have your say. Please contact your room rep or anyone from the Committee or the President, Denise Servante, with your views. This is your club, please help us to make it what you want it to be!

Thank you!