



President's Welcome

Another eventful year – within and with-out the bridge world. For the Club, we have managed to weather the COVID pandemic storms for the second year and I would like first of all to thank all our members for your considered and thoughtful approach to playing our game in times of trouble and strife. It will be great to be able to get together with whanau and friends over the festive season and I know for many people it will be the first time you've been able to physically be together in many months. Enjoy!

In planning this newsletter, the Committee wanted to cover our two key events over the past two months (Babich NZ Wide Pairs and our Christmas Cheer Tournament), the Committee's deliberations on our subscription rates and table money charges, and to confirm the results of the election of room reps for 2022.

I am so sad that we received the news of the death of our member, Kay Townsley, as the newsletter was in production. Kay was one of the recipients of a "Jubilee Ribbon" at our 75th anniversary party in May where we celebrated and acknowledged those members who had contributed to our Club over the past several decades. Ray Kemp, her good friend over many years, has provided a fitting tribute to a wonderful woman for this newsletter. Her loss will be felt by all.

Reports on our two very successful events – the Babich NZ Wide Pairs event and the annual Christmas Cheer tournament also follow in this newsletter. My thanks to the Babich organising committee of Ken Bateman, Craig Killington and Clare Veltman – the evening was a lot of fun and we had some notable local successes in the national results. Of course, my thanks to

the team who organised the Christmas Cheer tournament – Liz Burrows has written a report on the event, but it goes without saying that this was the least of her tasks to ensure another highly successful tournament – thank you, Liz! Photos from both events can be found on our website www.pnbridge.nz.

The Committee has also been taking a long look at our finances. It is no surprise to anyone who has been following our annual reports and accounts that the Club has been reporting cash losses over a number of years. Clearly this is unsustainable. We are hopeful of being able to turn this around but two years of COVID has seen many of our plans put on hold (most notably to promote the Club Rooms for hire to increase income through that avenue). While we have been buoyed by government business subsidies during the pandemic, we have taken the opportunity to analyse various cost centres to understand where we need to match income with expenditure. The paper that our treasurer, Grant Elliott, presented to the Committee is attached to this newsletter. The Committee approved his recommendation to increase the subscription by 9.09% and table money by 8%. This means that for 2021 a full subscription will be \$120 (up from \$110) and table money will be \$5.40 per session (up from \$5.00). Cash table money will remain at \$6.00. I hope that you will be able to support these new fees and charges. For my part, I feel very comfortable that this decision has been based on sound financial analysis and that we now have a coherent financial plan to support us to continue playing our 5 weekly sessions in our own Club Rooms. Both Grant and I would welcome any comments or queries on the attached information and the decision.

I want to welcome and congratulate the Room Reps for 2022: Tony Fayerman (Daytime sessions), Maxine Keay (Monday Bronze and Silver graded session) and Morgan Booker (Tuesday Gold and Platinum graded session). Many thanks to these members for continuing with this responsibility – and also many thanks to Laura Griffin who has stood down from her role as Room Rep for the Silver Graded Sessions on Thursday evening. You've all done a great job during 2021 – thank you!

Finally, many of you have commented very positively to me on the new blinds in the Club Rooms and the emerging Jubilee Courtyard. So many people have been involved in making both these initiatives happen and I want to thank you all. However, on this occasion, I want to particularly single out Anne Gordon and Maxine Keay who made the blinds happen and Russell Harris for leading the crew who have been working (often in the rain!) on the Jubilee Courtyard. I am so inspired by and thankful to everyone who has contributed to the Club during 2021.

Meanwhile, I hope to see as many of you as possible over the summer bridge sessions and send my very best wishes for a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year.

Denise Servante
President

Kay Townsley



Kay was a friendly, kind person whom we all loved when we encountered her in whatever circumstances. Some people play bridge because they are very competitive, some like winning and some get a kind of frisson from losing. Kay was not in any of these categories. She just loved the game and enjoyed socializing with as many folk as possible. To achieve this, she would play up to three times a week, and had recently joined the Hokowhitu club to get an extra daytime fix.

A while back she gave up playing evening bridge and, as a daytime player, particularly with her easy-going nature, she was sometimes under-estimated. A few weeks back, I was following her around the room in a Mitchell movement and, as I sat in a seat she had just vacated, a younger player at the table was shaking her head. On asking what the matter was she said she had just been taken to the cleaners by Kay.

Yes, Kay could certainly play the cards expertly as those who encountered her in Senior evening bridge will remember. With her favourite partner, Jo Haddon, she regularly challenged the best club players at the top level. When Jo gave up playing, Kay linked up with anyone who was happy to partner her. For a while she steered clear of Acol, which she couldn't understand ("four card major openings, what is the point?") but eventually came (maybe begrudgingly) to play the system because it is so popular at the club. At heart, though, she was really a five card majors lady, either playing Standard American or Precision.

I had the pleasure of partnering her many times. We had a great many laughs and a significant amount of success at rubber bridge over ten years in the national competition, reaching the regional final three times. On the third occasion we won through to the National finals at Congress, but sadly had to withdraw at that stage due to other commitments.

Yes, Kay was in her element in those thirty hand rubber bridge matches where her powers of concentration and determination were key factors. Also, she relished the experience of getting back to hand shuffled cards which is one of the features of the rubber game. Whenever engrossed in conversation whether about rugby, books, or the royal family (all of which she loved) one had to avoid mentioning computer dealt hands. She was convinced that they led to odd distributions and every time there was a 4-1 or 5-0 trump split it would add to her conviction that the computer was not generating random deals.

So, farewell, Kay. Your passing will leave a hole in the lives of many of your friends and relatives, but your warm smile will stay with all of us who knew you.

Ray Kemp

Club Business

Babich NZ Wide Pairs



Fees and charges for 2022

New Subscription rates for 2022

Ordinary Home: \$120 (previously \$110)

Ordinary Second: \$95 (previously \$87)

Country Home: \$88 (previously \$80)

Country Second: \$63 (previously \$57)

Youth: \$66 (previously \$60)

New table money (to apply from 1 February 2022)

\$6.00 cash

\$27 for a 5 x table card

\$54 for a 10 x table card

Online payment is always preferred, please, to: 02 0727 0231184 00

Summer bridge

Is on Mondays from 1.15 and Thursdays from 7.15. A partner will be provided so just come along and keep your brains working over the summer. If you are happy to be a "spare" then please sign up on the roster in the Club Rooms or phone Denise on 027 353 0664.

Denise Servante

The evening was huge fun. It was our turn to host Feilding Bridge Club and we were also pleased to welcome members of Hokowhitu Bridge Club when their event was unable to take place. Participants arrived at 5.30 for high tea, dressed in their best and all looking mighty fine! The serious bridge kicked off at 7.15 with 13 tables – a fantastic result making for a competitive and fiercely fought tournament. Notable successes were Bob Hurley and Wayne Burrows (with an amazing score of 70.92% and national ranking of #3/750 – pictured receiving their Babich wine as prize), Jack James and Denise Servante (66.6% and #22/750) and bronze/silver combo of Craig Killington and Clare Veltman (49.9% and #374/750). Well done to everyone who took part, and particular thanks to the organising committee of Ken Bateman, Craig Killington and Clare Veltman.

Denise Servante

Latest Additions to the 70% Club

The following partnerships achieved scores of over 70% during club competitions since the last newsletter.

Alistair James & Jack James - 74.22

Anne Gordon & Charles Little - 70.17

Jack James & Morgan Booker - 72.22

Elwi Beshlawi & Sonia Smith - 78.13

Liz Burrows & Anne Gordon - 74.15

Well done to all these pairs.

Gayle Leader

Christmas Cheer

The Christmas Cheer in 2021 was a little different than most years. By restricting the number of tables to 24 and making sure every player was double vaccinated allowed for this event to happen.

The Tournament sponsors were Palmerston North's Mitre 10 who are always very generous to our Club. Prizes for 1st-3rd and Best Intermediate and Mixed Grade all contained Mitre 10 vouchers in them.

The day started off with a scrumptious morning tea (thanks to all those who contributed) that seemed to last all day.

The tournament itself ran very smoothly and was directed by Lorraine despite there being a few challenges along the way for her. She and her sidekick Paul were often seen delivering chocolates to the players. What I especially love about this tournament is the good spirit in which it is played.

The evening meal was catered for by Lynda Guthrie and Gayle Leader (and their helpers) and was a huge success with the meal being enjoyed by all.

The winners were as follows:

First- Bob Hurley and Russell Wilson

Second- Marilyn Miller and Martin Carryer

Third- Ken Batman / Jan Whyte

Best Junior-Angela / Paul Harper

Best Inter- Megan Eddy/Barbara Robinson

Best Mixed Grade- Morgan Booker/Zheng Zhang

A big thank you to all the volunteers (you know who you are) who helped make this event happen.

An especially big thanks must go to Paul Orsborn. He spent all day at the Club doing numerous tasks including filling in for a pair who had to retire due to illness and carving the ham.

Merry Christmas Everyone and a Happy Healthy normal 2022.

Liz Burrows

Palmerston North Bridge Club Prize Winners 2021

Championships

Bronze: *Bryan Northcott Cup*

First- Maxine Keay & Terry Young

Runners up Elwi Beshlawi & Dianne Gardner

Silver: *Rod Doherty Tray*

First- Maxine Keay & Terry Young

Runners up- Tony Fayerman & Colin Tod

Gold: *Culpan Tray*

First- Morgan Booker & Zheng Zhang

Runners up- Anne Gordon & Hans van Bunnik

Platinum: *Doreen Millar Rosebowl*

First - Wayne Burrows & Bob Hurley

Runners up- Sue Lynch & Heather Simpson

Memorial Trophies

Bronze: *Keith Rowland Cup*

Elwi Beshlawi & Sonia Smith

Silver: *John Whibley Memorial Cup*

Tony Fayerman & Terry Young

Gold: *Maude Nash Tray*

Morgan Booker & Zheng Zhang

Platinum: *Jack Cliff Memorial Cup*

Martin Carryer & Sue Lynch

Handicap Events

Teams: *Stubbs Jewellers' Cup*

Tony Clear, Anne Gordon,

Laura Griffin & Hans van Bunnik

Myra Stubbs Teams

Bob Hurley, Evelyn Hurley

Gayle Leader & Denise Servante

Pairs: *Whitehead Trophy*

Julian Kissock & Terry Young

Silver Butler Tray

Reuben Leberman & Dan Lynch

Points Cups

Bronze: *Chaunia Milne Tray*

First- Elwi Beshlawi

Runner up- Grant Elliott

Silver: *Jack Cliff Memorial Cup*

First- Julian Kissock

Runner up- Charles Little

Gold: *Joan Palmer Cup*

First- Morgan Booker

Runner up- Martin Carryer

Platinum: *Whitehead Cup*

First - Bob Hurley

Runner up- Sean Lynch

Monday: *Vera Rees Tray*

First- Jan Whyte

Runner up- Zheng Zhang

Denise Servante

Improvers Corner

When you started playing bridge someone may have mentioned that the only Maths you need is the ability to count up to thirteen. This is a relaxing and encouraging comment, particularly if Maths wasn't your favourite subject at school. However, you soon find out that this is far from the truth. Counting up to thirteen may be useful for checking you have the right number of cards in your hand as you take them out of the tray but there are many other numbers and counts that you have to absorb to improve your game. You need to know that four cards is the minimum for a biddable suit, five cards for an overcall, eight or more cards between the two hands for a fit. You also need to become familiar with the different ways a trump suit could split: 3-2, 4-1, 5-0 etc. And then you move onto HCPs and all the numbers that involves: 12 for an opener, 6 for a response, 25 for game etc.

I assume you have automated all these numbers by now, but beyond that there are other magic numbers that all have their place to help you make and defend contracts. You may have heard of the rule of eleven, the rule of fifteen or the rule of twenty. Today I want to talk about the rule of seven.

The rule of seven comes into play in very specific circumstances but once you are aware of it, then it can be a contract saver. A typical situation is that you are in 3NTs and the opponents are unkind enough to lead the suit in which you only have one stop and not many cards. For example, you may have Axx opposite xx spades. In these circumstances you have to work out whether to hold up your ace for one or two rounds or to cash it immediately. Holding up the ace may seem like just delaying the inevitable but it could interfere with or even sever communications between the opponents. Against that, each time you hold up you are losing a trick so you have to be very careful about being generous to the opponents.

If you have all the tricks you need after playing the ace then maybe you don't need to hold up at all. If you have a loser in another suit then you might hope that the person who will win that trick can't take too many spade tricks. Let's start with the following combination of cards in a suit:

♠ A542

♠ 763

Say North leads ♠ K to your 3NT contract and East lays down those three low cards in the suit. What are you going to do? There are six cards out so the possible splits are 6-0, 5-1, 4-2 and 3-3. The ones that are bad news are the first two. With 4-2 or 3-3 splits you will lose only two or three tricks. With the 6-0 and 5-1 splits then you may lose four or five tricks and your only hope is that the player with the long suit does not have the outside ace.

But in those cases there is no point in holding up your ace since their partner who only has one or zero cards in the suit cannot get back to them via spades. So for this combination play your ace on the first round.

If the suit is split as follows then it gets a little trickier:

♠ A54

♠ 763

Now there are seven spades out to worry about. Again, however, there is only danger if they split badly (7-0, 6-1, or 5-2). As in the previous example, if the partner of the player with the long suit has only one or zero cards in spades then you could cash your ace straight away. But if the suit divides 5-2 it is important to hold up for one round to remove the two spades from one of the hands.

Next, consider the holding:

♠ A54

♠ 76

Hopefully, you are getting the picture and have already thought of the possibly spade splits: (8-0, 7-1, 6-2, 5-3, 4-4). In this case, if you hold up your ace until the third round of the suit then in the first four cases one of the players will have none left and you must hope they have the outside entry but cannot get back to their partner. If the suit splits 4-4 then too bad, but either player will only be able to cash one more card in the suit and if there is only one outside ace missing then you will make your nine tricks.

So in the previous hands we have had to hold up not at all, once and then twice. What do you reckon for the following combination?

♠ A543

♠ -

If you guessed that the appropriate choice is to hold up three times, you would be right!

By this time you are probably starting to think that you have enough to worry about without working out all these different combinations. This is where the rule of seven comes in handy. Count how many cards you and your partner have between you in the danger suit. Subtract this from seven and this tells you how many times to hold up your ace. Take a look at all the previous combinations and assure yourself that the rule applies in every case.

At the top of the next page is a deal from one of last month's Monday afternoon sessions where the rule of seven worked a treat.

Board 7 ♠ A 6 3
 South Deals ♥ K J
 Both Vul ♦ 10 3
 ♣ Q 10 9 8 7 5

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

♠ J 5
 ♥ A 10 9 6 4
 ♦ A 8 5
 ♣ K 4 2

West leads ♦6 against 3NT and South sees that he must try to set up clubs to make nine tricks. The unfriendly lead, however, makes things difficult. Let's assume South takes the ace of diamonds on the first round and later on leads a club. East will win it and, if she knows what is good for her will, lead back a diamond to partner. The contract will go down with four diamond losers and the ace of clubs.

However, South remembers the rule of seven, counts up his diamonds (five between the two hands, subtracts that from seven and realizes he needs to hold up for two rounds. EW persist with two more rounds of diamonds; South takes the third one and leads a club. If West had the ace of clubs then South would be doomed but it is his lucky day. East wins the club but has no diamonds to return so returns a spade. Now with five clubs, one diamond, two hearts and a spade South makes his skimpy contract.

Interestingly, if West leads spades to the contract instead of diamonds then the same rule of seven applies and South should resist playing the ace for two rounds. But in this case, it would be to no avail because the hand with the long spades also has the ace of clubs and when East gets in with the ace of clubs they will cash their extra spades as well, taking the contract one down.

Ray Kemp

Guidelines from Gavin

I've mentioned the Australian bridge fanatic, Pete Hollands, before. More recently I have come across another online enthusiast, Gavin Wolpert. He is originally from Toronto but at the age of 14 started travelling the world playing bridge and eventually settled in Florida. Amongst his achievements is a bronze medal, playing for the USA, in the Bermuda Bowl. Just this month he was a member of the team that won the prestigious Soloway KO in America.

On the web he has a big presence, tutoring, commenting upon some of the tournaments in which he has taken part and playing instant tournaments against the robots on BBO. What impresses me is his ability to

take part in live tournaments, whilst at the same time providing a commentary, answering (sometimes dumb) questions from spectators, staying friendly and calm, and still playing incisive bridge.

I gather that besides having a keen mind, one of his key attributes is a good temperament. I followed his comments on a big tournament he won in 2011 which he was coupled with a partner he had only just met and where he only had a few minutes to work out a system before they played. Inevitably, they had a few misunderstandings. On one hand due to an unactioned transfer he played a two diamonds contract in a three-two trump fit instead of two hearts. As he explains in his commentary, there was no point in getting upset with partner or going AWOL. He just had to work out how the contract of two hearts would have fared (probably going one-off) and try to generate seven tricks from his poor holding in the diamonds contract.

On every hand Wolpert tries to visualize his opponents' holdings from all the information he can glean from the bidding and play. This is both illuminating and daunting. It is illuminating because inferring the opponents' distributions gives him a big advantage when he plays a hand; but daunting because most of us just don't have the mental capacity to generate and hold all this information in our heads whilst at the same time working out what cards have gone and what contract we need to make or defeat.

Still, even if we cannot work out the exact distribution and points of the two hidden hands when we are playing or defending a contract, then even if we can get some partial picture it should improve our performance. Here is an example from a Monday afternoon session where I should have used my imagination instead of playing kitchen bridge. See if you can improve on my performance. I was sitting South with the uninspiring collection shown below:

♠ J 9 8 6 3
 ♥ K 3
 ♦ 9 7 3
 ♣ A Q 3

My partner is similarly unimpressed by her cards as is obvious from the bidding:

West	North	East	South
		1 ♥	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
2 NT	All pass		

Partner leads ♣7 and dummy goes down:

♠ A 5
♥ 9 8 6 4 2
♦ A K 8 5
♣ K 2

♠ J 9 8 6 3
♥ K 3
♦ 9 7 3
♣ A Q 3

Declarer (West) plays ♣2 from dummy now over to you. What do you do? OK, you are first going to ask what our leads are. Generally, if we are making an aggressive lead we will lead fourth highest away from an honour. If, however, we don't want to lead one of declarer's suits we might make a passive lead of the highest card from a poor holding ("top of nothing").

Once I see dummy go down I am thinking "well done partner, for finding the opponents' weak suit". Partner seems to have led fourth highest club so I take the queen and cash the ace of clubs. On the ace of clubs partner plays the four. Better and better. Partner has obviously led away from a five card suit and we are going to take the first five tricks so I quickly lead ♣3. As you can see, things didn't turn out quite as I had expected.

Board 18

East Deals
N-S Vul

♠ 4 2
♥ A Q J 7 5
♦ J 4 2
♣ 7 5 4

♠ K Q 10 7
♥ 10
♦ Q 10 6
♣ J 10 9 8 6



♠ A 5
♥ 9 8 6 4 2
♦ A K 8 5
♣ K 2

♠ J 9 8 6 3
♥ K 3
♦ 9 7 3
♣ A Q 3

I had set up West's last three clubs and she was able to add four diamonds and three spades to that, making ten tricks. East was obviously concerned at the end of play wondering if they had missed game but when we looked at the expected score for EW they are only supposed to make 1NT. East thanked his partner profusely but should have patted me on the back instead.

Can you see why I went wrong? Wolpert attributes his success to looking over bad results at the end of play and working out what he might have done differently. When I went over this hand I realized how stupid I had been. For a start, how was the seven of clubs possibly going to have been fourth highest from partner? If I had taken a moment to imagine North's club suit what was it going to be? J-9-8-7-4? This is an unlikely combination. Even more unlikely would be West's corresponding

holding of 10-6 doubleton. West hasn't supported partner or rebid spades so surely must have four or more clubs.

So, after winning the queen of clubs what should I have done? Assuming West has, at most, two hearts, then partner has at least four hearts but was unwilling to lead the suit after East's initial bid of one heart. I must return the king of hearts, followed by the three. This way, we will take the first six tricks before declarer can get in.

So google Gavin and watch him at work on YouTube. He may inspire you to look at bridge hands in new ways and encourage you to improve your own game. But be warned, you may be so in awe of his mental dexterity and mastery of the game that you decide you can never reach his level of competence and resolve to give up bridge altogether.

Ray Kemp

You must be joking



Relax dear, the club championships are over

Supplied by Tony Fayerman