



# **Palmerston North Bridge Club Newsletter**

**October 2021**

## **President's Welcome**

It hardly seems possible that this is the October newsletter and we are approaching the end of another year. The newsletter is packed with information and news which I hope you will enjoy reading. This is indicative of the busy year we have had and clearly, we are moving into a very busy end-of-year series of celebrations and events. For my part, even with my trip away to UK, the lockdown and interruptions to our playing schedule, I seem to have been playing a lot of bridge and enjoying it very much. I hope you all are too!

In Committee, we have had a number of items on our agenda which may interest you. In our last newsletter we reported on the outcome of the grading review and a somewhat related change to the playing programme. This was chiefly to move all Silver graded competitions to run concurrently with Bronze graded competitions on Monday evenings. All events on a Thursday evening will become multi-grade competitions, with results determined on a Handicapped basis. The Committee established a working group to look into a revised handicapping system and the Committee has now agreed that we should adopt the XG handicapping system from 2022. This will be used for all handicap events in 2022. Morgan Booker convened this working group: many thanks to her and the group for their work in this area.

The Committee also receives monthly financial reports from our Treasurer, Grant Elliott. Another year of COVID interruptions and Government subsidies means that we are looking at an operational breakeven this year. This means it is rather difficult to model for a "normal" year but we have started to look in more detail at the various 'cost centres' within our Club budgets. This is related to our annual review of subscriptions and table money - we want to make sure that our charges to members reflect the actual costs of running our bridge sessions. It is likely that we will need to increase the subscription rate for next year but we are working hard to keep this increase to a minimum.

Associated with this is our effort to increase venue hire income - a report from the Sub-Committee established to look into this can be found later in this newsletter.

On a much more positive note, I have been so pleased with the support from our members for our Jubilee Courtyard project. It has been especially rewarding to see everyone "coming to the party" for this celebration of our 75 years. The project has also benefited from a number of our members who are providing their professional services free-of-charge, from the initial design work to project management, carpentry and manual labour. This means that we have significantly reduced the cost of the project and have now enough pledged to complete it. If you were planning/hoping to make a contribution, but had not yet got around to it, then we can still accept sponsorship donations which will be acknowledged in the same way as those pledges that are contributing to the build. More details are in the report which is included in this newsletter.

Finally, we are moving into the Christmas seasonal frenzy! There are lots of events between now and the end of the year. Full details are given later in this newsletter. I would particularly ask you to take note of the dates for our Babich NZ Wide Pairs event (12 November), the re-scheduled Julia Wallace Village Open Day (17th November) and the Christmas Cheer tournament (4th December).

As part of our Club celebrations, we have the daytime party and prizegiving leading into Summer Bridge in December and January. Before Summer Bridge, each session needs to elect its 2022 session representative to the Committee. We have also had a number of changes to our session hosts for 2022 - it goes without saying that our thanks go to all our members who have undertaken these essential roles in 2021 and I am looking forward very much to working with the new team as we move into 2022.

**Denise Servante  
President**

## This and That

### 12 November - Babich NZ Wide Pairs

To celebrate our Jubilee Year and our return to the bridge table, we will be organising this as a 'traditional good old days bridge' evening. Gentlemen in black tie and ladies in evening dresses, please! Bring a plate for high tea from 5.30 pm. Play starts at 7.15 pm. \$15 + raffle. Many thanks to our organising committee of Ken Bateman, Craig Killington and Clare Veltman. More details to follow. Register online at NZ Bridge or see Lorraine.

### 17 November - Julia Wallace Village Open Afternoon

This event (part of our sponsorship arrangement with JWV) has been rescheduled from September. The afternoon day will start with a tour at 2.00 pm followed by a presentation and afternoon tea. More details to follow.

### 29 November - Daytime Party

All welcome. Bring a plate for a shared lunch from 12.15 pm.

### 4 December - PN Christmas Cheer Tournament

A highlight of our year! Very popular and numbers are limited so book early to avoid disappointment. Registration online at NZ Bridge or see Lorraine.

### 9 December - Prizegiving and Social Bridge

All grades. Bring a plate to share for supper, from 7.00 pm

### SUMMER BRIDGE

Monday at 1.15 pm from 13 December 2021

Thursday at 7.15 pm from 16 December 2021

All events will be held subject to prevailing COVID-related restrictions!

### Report from the Venue Hire Sub Committee

The key focus for this Sub-Committee is to look at better promotion of the Club Rooms as a venue for hire. We have prepared and distributed a promotional flyer and are currently working on more visible external signage, a better web presence through our own and other websites and a higher profile on facebook and social media outlets. We have several requests of our members:

- a) Are you a marketing/promotions whizz? Would you like to join our Sub-Committee (much more fun than it sounds)?
- b) Are you involved with community groups that need venues/club rooms or are you planning an event or activity which would work well in our Club Rooms? We are looking for all opportunities to increase the use of our building outside of our Club sessions.
- c) Would you like to volunteer as our "Venue Hire" point of contact? Susan Baty has done a magnificent job for the past many years (thank you Susan!) and is looking to use her talents elsewhere. We need someone who enjoys meeting people, has great interpersonal skills and is able to pop

down to the Club Rooms to meet and greet new hirers and potential new hirers.

### Jubilee Courtyard a go-go!

Thank you to all our members who have contributed so generously.

Following the many, generous donations to this project from our members, the Jubilee Courtyard Working Party has begun the detailed planning for the build of this 75th celebratory project. The Working Party comprises Denise Servante, Robyn Anderson, Martin Carryer, Suzanne Carpenter, Russell Harris (Project Manager) and Lyndsey Chadwick. We have a burgeoning work force (many thanks to Ken Bateman, Craig Killington, Tony Clear and Julian Kissock for kick-starting this) and would very much welcome any further offers of help with the labour element of the project. If you are interested and able to help out (or know anyone who could help us), we will need time in the next two/three months so we can complete the project well before summer is over! Please let Denise or Russell know of your availability.

The celebratory element of the Jubilee Courtyard will be recognised through a number of acknowledgments of those who have contributed to or sponsored the project. These include plaques in the gardens, name tags on seats and a "wall of fame". The generosity of all members who have pledged donations and or contributed professional services and labour, means that we are no longer asking for pledges towards building the Courtyard. However, if you were planning/hoping to make a contribution, but had not yet got around to it, there are still sponsorship opportunities which will be acknowledged in the same way as those pledges that are contributing to the build. Please contact Denise to talk through the options.

### Session Hosts for 2022

Session hosts play a background but vital role at our sessions - they will ensure all appropriate players are aware of the activities in their room, support members to find partners and subs and generally aim to ensure that their sessions are well supported by members. For 2022, session hosts are as follows:

Monday afternoon - Jan Whyte (replacing Kate Cliff)

Monday evening - Angela Harper (replacing Maxine Keay)

Tuesday evening - Morgan Booker (no change)

Thursday evening - Maxine Keay (replacing Cindy Lowndes)

Friday luncheon - Jenny Kelland (no change)

Many, many thanks to Kate, Maxine, Morgan, Cindy and Jenny for their efforts in 2021 and good luck to Jan, Angela, Morgan, Maxine and Jenny for 2022!

**Denise Servante**

## Just because you are paranoid ...

I played a session on Monday afternoon the thirteenth of September, but it might as well have been *Friday 13<sup>th</sup>*. Yes, just because I'm paranoid doesn't mean everyone isn't out to get me. My partner and I had bad luck throughout the round. As each pair came to our table it was as if they detected the scent of victory and squeezed every last point out of us. Or maybe we weren't unlucky but just played badly. You judge from a couple of our worst results.

Here you are sitting South, both sides non-vulnerable and you pick up the following collection:

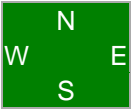
♠ 9 6 3  
♥ 7 2  
♦ J  
♣ A K J 9 6 5 2

A three club opener seems like a good idea, but doesn't deter the opponents. Here is the full bidding sequence:

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	3 ♣
Dbl	Pass	3NT	All Pass

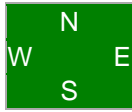
So now you are on lead and can achieve a top board for NS or a disastrous zero. Just to give you a bit of context, both East and West are generally bullish bidders. Before moving on, choose a card, any card.

It is tempting to lead off a top club to get a look at dummy. If you do, then this is what you see:

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

North contributes ♣8 which may be encouraging or may be a singleton. Declarer plays ♣4. So the question is, did East start with queen-four of clubs in which case you are going to make a lot of tricks or did he start with QT4 in which case you are going to give a trick away if you lead another club?

Furthermore, West's double was pretty aggressive and East had initially passed so EW appear to have about twenty points between them and are not likely to make 3NT anyway even if you give them a club trick. So South plays a second high club, partner shows out, and the queen is set up for East. He subsequently collects eight other tricks since each time North wins a trick he has to give one away into dummy's hand. Here is the full deal:

North Deals	♠ Q 10 7 5	
None Vul	♥ K J 9 4	
	♦ A 9 7 5	
	♣ 8	
♠ K J 4 2		♠ A 8
♥ A 10 8		♥ Q 6 5 3
♦ K 8 4 3		♦ Q 10 6 2
♣ 7 3		♣ Q 10 4
	♠ 9 6 3	
	♥ 7 2	
	♦ J	
	♣ A K J 9 6 5 2	

Unsurprisingly, 3NT was a top score for EW since neither of them has a long running suit and they only have 21 points between them. If you led anything but a club at trick one or two then congrats you would have got a top board. If not, pick yourself up, dust yourself down and start all over again ...

Still sitting South you pick up quite a decent hand:

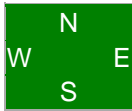
♠ A Q 10 6  
♥ A Q 10 9 8 3 2  
♦ 7  
♣ 10

Here is the bidding with both sides vulnerable:

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1 ♥
Dbl	1 ♠	Pass	4 ♠
5 ♣	5 ♠	Pass	Pass
6 ♣	Pass	Pass	?

Decision time again. I've talked before about the inadvisability of competing at the five level or above, so are you going to ignore me and bid six spades, or are you going to punish the impudence of West and double her?

I chose to double because I thought both sides had got too high. The alternative option of bidding six spades seemed crazy. East obviously has tram tickets so West isn't going to get much help there. So let's punish West. As it turned out it was us who got punished:

East Deals	♠ K 9 7 5 4 3	
Both Vul	♥ J 6 4	
	♦ 4 2	
	♣ J 5	
♠ 8		♠ J 2
♥ —		♥ K 7 5
♦ A K Q 5 3		♦ J 10 9 8 6
♣ A K Q 6 4 3 2		♣ 9 8 7
	♠ A Q 10 6	
	♥ A Q 10 9 8 3 2	
	♦ 7	
	♣ 10	

After the lead of ♠5 West can more or less claim twelve tricks straight away. Six spades would have been a good sacrifice.

So, would you have done better on these deals? If so, then maybe our fate was in our own hands. However, I prefer to believe it was just one of those days.

## Improvers corner

What is your pre-empting like? Novices often struggle to know when and how to pre-empt. Partly this is because when we introduce you to bridge we concentrate on showing you how to bid a making contract. Things are difficult enough just learning to do that! But eventually you have to start thinking of high level opening bids that are negative, in the sense of obstructing opponents from getting to their best contract and which may involve your side going down at a profit.

Finding the right pre-empt is an important skill. As one of the grand masters at our club observes, if the opponents pre-empt in front of him then he expects he is likely to get a bad board. You can understand his point of view. Gone out of the window is the sophisticated scientific approach that he takes with his normal partner. He may have to start guessing what to do at a high level and he can easily get it wrong.

Of course, this cuts both ways. If you are not careful, you may pre-empt your partner if they have a lot of points, but you have twice as many opponents as partners so the odds are on your side. To make it less likely that you are shooting yourself in the foot you should only pre-empt when you have less than an opening hand – maybe ten high card points at the most. Also your pre-empting suit should normally contain six cards (for a pre-empt at the two level) or seven cards (for a pre-empt at the three or four level).

Beyond those guidelines the degree of risk you are prepared to take is up to you, depending on the quality of your play, how reckless you are and how understanding your partner is. The risk you take is that your opponents may double you and leave you with a poor board. Again, if you haven't been playing too long then you may be hazy about how many points you can lose when you are doubled. This is particularly true nowadays when machines work out our scores. In the old days we all knew what penalty three off doubled would lead to without the help of a machine. Do you?

If you are non-vulnerable then three away doubled would set you back 500. That is a bad sacrifice against a non-vulnerable game by the opponents (400 or so) but very good if the opponents have a vulnerable game on (600+). If you are vulnerable, you can only normally afford to go two away (500) and then only against vulnerable opponents.

At the top of the next column is a hand from Junior night this month. What do you reckon is a good pre-empt (if any) for this collection? Before you make a decision, you need to know what the vulnerability is! In this case, you are non-vulnerable against vulnerable opponents.

♠ K Q J 8 7 3 2  
♥ 7 6  
♦ 8 6  
♣ J 2

You are first in hand which is a good place from which to pre-empt. With the above hand, three spades would be a solid pre-emptive opener. If you felt lucky, at this vulnerability, you might even start with a four spade bid. Here is the full deal.

**Board 2**  
East Deals  
N-S Vul

♠ A 5 4  
♥ Q 8 4 3  
♦ A 7  
♣ A 5 4 3

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



♠ K Q J 8 7 3 2  
♥ 7 6  
♦ 8 6  
♣ J 2

♠ 9 6  
♥ A K J 10 9 2  
♦ Q 10 4 2  
♣ K

In practice, on the night, three or four spades was the final contract by East at three tables and four hearts by NS at the two others. In fact, NS can make six hearts as the cards lie but after a pre-empt by East that would be a difficult contract to find. I don't know if NS had to contend with an EW pre-empt but if so, well done to the NS pairs Maureen MacDonald/Dianne Reilly and Dianne Gardner/Terry Young who made a good profit on bidding four hearts.

So what we might learn from this deal is that long suits are valuable when playing a contract even in a hand with few points but can become useless in defence. Pre-empt when you can with few points and a long suit, but if you get pre-empted by opponents, be brave about competing if you, too, have a long suit.

OK, this is just one deal and it is not a good idea to develop strategies based on a single example. Just for fun I generated twenty deals where East has that specific hand as above and the other hands were randomised. In seven of those deals NS could get a game and on five others they have a slam. A contract of three spades doubled would make a profit for EW on 19 of the 20 deals. These are good odds!

**Ray Kemp**

## Club and Tournaments Results

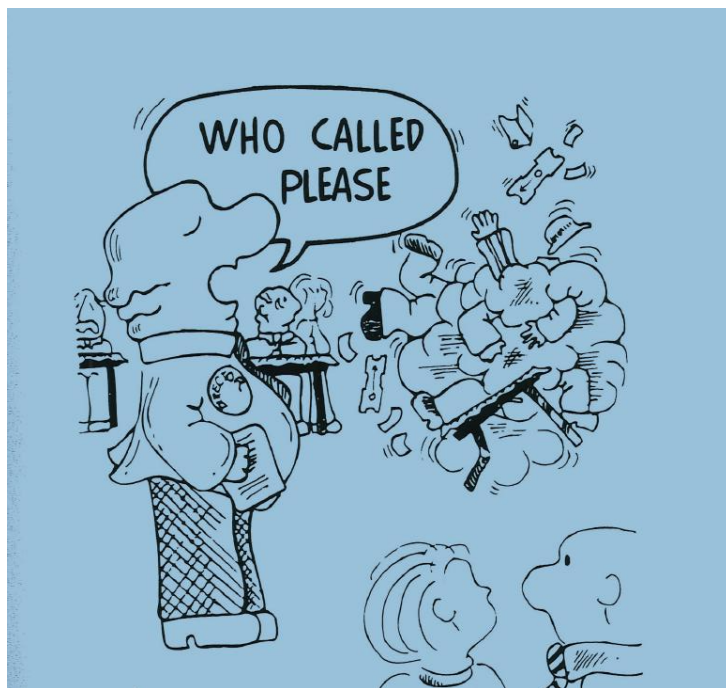
No local tournament results to report in these Covid times. In one on-line tournament a team was entered into the TOPS BBO teams tournament. There were about 80 teams all up divided into sections of 8. Our team won their grade. The team consisted of Julie Bunnell, Anne Gordon, Michael Hardman and Gayle Leader. The cost was \$20 each to enter (voluntary) and half the money went to Westport Bridge Club that was devastated in the floods a few months back. We played 8 matches over a period of about 2 weeks.

Here are new entries into the 70% club:

Sonia Smith / Elwi Beshlawi - 78.13%  
Morgan Booker / Jack James - 72.22%  
Anne Gordon / Charles Little – 70.17%

**Gayle Leader**

## You must be joking



Directing is about more than card play ...

**Tony Fayerman**