



### **President's Welcome**

In my last newsletter Welcome, I held out a hope for more spring-like weather – sadly, I have to repeat that hope this month. My mother-in-law (from rainy Scotland) is staying at the moment and has asked if this weather is normal for the time of year and I don't know how to answer her! I am sure Aotearoa will deliver some spring weather soon...

My Committee work programme this past month has focussed on fundraising and sponsorship. I am very pleased to say that all our sponsors from last year are happy to repeat (and some are increasing) their sponsorship for 2023. My thanks to Julia Wallace Village, Mitre 10 Mega, Brokenshire Plumbers, Naylor Palmer Optometrists, Martin Carryer Sculpture and New World (Pioneer Highway) for continuing their sponsorship. I am also pleased to introduce Peter Colville (LJ Hookers Real Estate Agent) and Tracey Dench (Travel Broker) to our Sponsors Board. We can all help to show our appreciation for their support by using their services where at all possible.

My thanks also to our Building Sub-Committee – convened by Grant Elliott and with fantastic support from Russell Harris, Zheng Zhang and Tony Fayerman. We are currently chasing quotes for the work that the Comprehensive Building Report suggested was required, and researching partners/sponsors to help us get it underway. As previously, if anyone has any special knowledge or expertise to help us with this, Grant would love to hear from you.

And now on to the controversial issue of biscuits and table money! Those of you who have been playing regularly at the Club will know that the Committee was been seeking feedback on the proposal to raise table money from \$5.40 to \$6.00 (card) and from \$6.00 to \$7.00 (cash).

This prompted a further discussion about whether we could save some money by offering fewer and plainer biscuits for our Monday afternoon session. The feedback was that the afternoon tea with a chocolate biscuit was the particular feature of this session which makes it so popular. Grant ran the figures and estimates that if we have 12 tables - 48 people to treat with one chocolate biscuit per week each - then it probably costs us \$312 per annum. Of course, many of us have more than one chocolate biscuit (I am guilty of this myself).

If we raise the table money from \$5.40 to \$6.00, then our income is likely to increase by \$3,000+ so cutting out chocolate biscuits on Monday by itself is unlikely to make a huge difference to our finances overall. However, we understand that it is not easy to watch the \$ and offer treats in the same breath. The Committee have therefore agreed to limit the biscuits available at Monday sessions.

The Committee has also reluctantly decided to increase table money from \$5.40 to \$6.00 (card) and from \$6 to \$7 (cash). As previously advised, the subscription rates will remain unchanged in 2023. If you play once a week, this represents an increase overall of 7.7% and if you play twice a week, the increase is 9%. Given that inflation is currently running at 9%, we sincerely hope you will understand and support this decision. I am aware that a few of you have indicated to your room rep that you feel the increase is a bit too steep. However, during my conversations with members, most of you felt that the Committee needs to do what it must to ensure our financial viability. If you would like to discuss the financial situation in more detail, then please feel free to get in touch with me in confidence.

The remainder of this newsletter contains much more interesting information. There is feedback from our recent events, notices of upcoming events and news of our members' triumphs. Bob Hurley has written a piece on "Tips and Conventions" - including some he picked up at Congress this year – which may be a regular feature in future newsletters. Ray has shared his "Pam Dealer" programme and would welcome feedback from those of you who use computers to support your bridge playing. In reading that section, I am awestruck by his commitment and abilities – who knew he was a software developer? At this point, I would also like to thank Ray for his ongoing commitment to edit the newsletters. I have lots of very positive feedback on his write-up and analysis of interesting hands – keep up the good work, Ray!

I hope you enjoy all the news and views. Happy bridging everyone!

**Denise Servante**  
**President**

## Up-Coming Events

**Tuesday 1st November** – PN Bridge Club Melbourne Cup Day  
- Sponsored by Tracey Dench Travel Broker

Play starts at 1.30 pm. Everyone is welcome – bring a partner if you have one. If not we will pair you up on the day. We'll play NO FEAR bridge (basic ACOL or Standard American with only Stayman, Blackwood and Gerber conventions).

There will be a raffle, spot prizes and a prize for the best hat. Please bring a plate to share for afternoon tea while we watch the Melbourne Cup LIVE! Entry is \$5.40 (card) or \$6 (cash) and there will be a cash bar (with bubbles).

Gayle Leader will be running 2 x \$5 and 3 x \$2 sweepstakes: if you want to participate in the sweepstake but do not want play on the day, then let Gayle know how many sweepstake tickets you'd like (email [gayle.leader@icloud.com](mailto:gayle.leader@icloud.com)) or sign up on the sheets at the Club Rooms.

**Friday 11th November** – NZ Wide Pairs, sponsored by Loveblock Wines, hosted by Hokowhitu Bridge Club – play starts at 7.15 pm.

**Monday 29<sup>th</sup> November** – daytime Xmas party – please bring a plate for a shared lunch at 12.30 with play from 1.15 pm.

**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> December** – Mitre 10 Mega Christmas Cheer tournament – more details to follow. Enter online at NZBridge.

**Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December** – Prize Giving and multigrade bridge – more details to follow.

**Denise Servante**

### Julia Wallace Village Swiss Pairs (24<sup>th</sup> September)

The day was a great success: 20 tables and the full range of players from Junior to Gold Grandmasters. We also had a very good turnout from within our membership – well done to everyone who took part. Particular congratulations to our members, Marilyn Miller and Martin Carryer (2<sup>nd</sup> overall), Jack James and partner (3<sup>rd</sup> overall), Debbie Marcroft and Garry Hodge (top intermediate pair) and Suzanne Carpenter and Sonia Smith (top Junior pair). The tournament was sponsored by Julia Wallace Village, Ken Bateman was tournament secretary, Lorraine Stachurski was our Director, Gayle Leader was catering manager, Patricia Henaghan and Julie Palenski provided full kitchen support and Liz Burrows/Denise Servante sat in as reserve pair. Thanks also to Liz McMillan for organising a fabulous raffle and to all members for their contributions to prizes.

**Denise Servante**

## Julia Wallace Open Day (5<sup>th</sup> October)

Thanks to Chrissy Thompson from JWV for an entertaining and informative tour of the facilities at Julia Wallace Village and a delicious afternoon tea. If you were unable to join us for the day, Chrissy is happy to show any of our members around – just get in touch to arrange a suitable time.



**Denise Servante**

### Tips and Conventions from Bob

(1) If you bid game to *make* (sometimes you will bid game knowing its probably not making but you have a good fit) and the opponents bid over your game you should double or bid one more. *Do not pass it out*. If the first of you to bid is unsure which action to take they may pass leaving decision to partner.

(2) Many of you will play 1D (1H) X shows 4 spades and bidding 1S shows 5 spades. If you don't, I recommend it. You can take that a step further when the bidding goes 1D (X). Use XX to show 4 spades and bid 1S to show 5 spades. Most players now play any new suit over the X as forcing so XX to show 10+ points is no longer required. As spades is the boss suit it is important to know how many spades your partnership has when bidding. I've used 1D as the example but the same applies to 1C or 1H (X).

(3) If partner opens 1H or 1S in 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> position after two or three passes it may be quite weak. A response by you of 2C (called *Drury*) shows 10 or 11 points and 3 card support and should be alerted. This allows you to bid game when required but also to stay at the two level when partner has a minimum opening bid. But always check with partner first before you play this (or any) convention!

**Bob Hurley**

## Club and Tournaments Results

Congratulations to the following pairs who attained 70% or more in our club since the last newsletter:

Maxine Keay/Cindy Lowndes	70.63
Suzanne Carpenter/John Redmayne	71.00

And here are the players who have done well in recent tournaments.

Hastings Open	Wayne Burrows George Masters	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Hawera Open	Morgan Booker Zheng Zhang	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Jack James Sandra Calvert	3 <sup>rd</sup>
PN Swiss Pairs	Martin Carryer Marilyn Miller	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Jack James Marie Russell	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Feilding Intermediate	Julie Bunnell Anne Gordon	3 <sup>rd</sup>
	Laura Griffin Tony Clear	4 <sup>th</sup>
Waipukurau 8B Pairs	Anne Gordon Julie Bunnell	4 <sup>th</sup>
Levin Multigrade	George McLaughlin Anita Thirtle	3 <sup>rd</sup>

## New Zealand Congress

Junior teams	Prue Drake John Redmayne & partners	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Intermediate teams	Laura Griffin Tony Clear Debbie Marcroft Garry Hodge	2 <sup>nd</sup>
NZ Open Pairs Plate Final	Jack James Jeremy Fraser-Hoskin	2 <sup>nd</sup>
NZ Open Pairs Consolation2 Final	Wayne Burrows Clair Miao	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Open Teams final 8	Wayne Burrows & Bob Hurley were both in teams that reached the quarter finals	
Karen Martelletti Open Teams final	Jack James Jeremy Fraser-Hoskin Annette Henry Stephen Henry	4 <sup>th</sup>

**Gayle Leader**

## Pam Dealer

Do you use a piece of computer software such as Jack Bridge or Bridge Baron and wish either of them had the ability to produce hands of specific types such as transfers or a variety of two suited overcalls? Or do you prefer not to use computer software at all but would like to be able to print out North and South hands on separate sheets and practice bidding certain kinds of deals with your favourite partner? In either case maybe you need *Pam Dealer*. End of sales pitch – now read on.

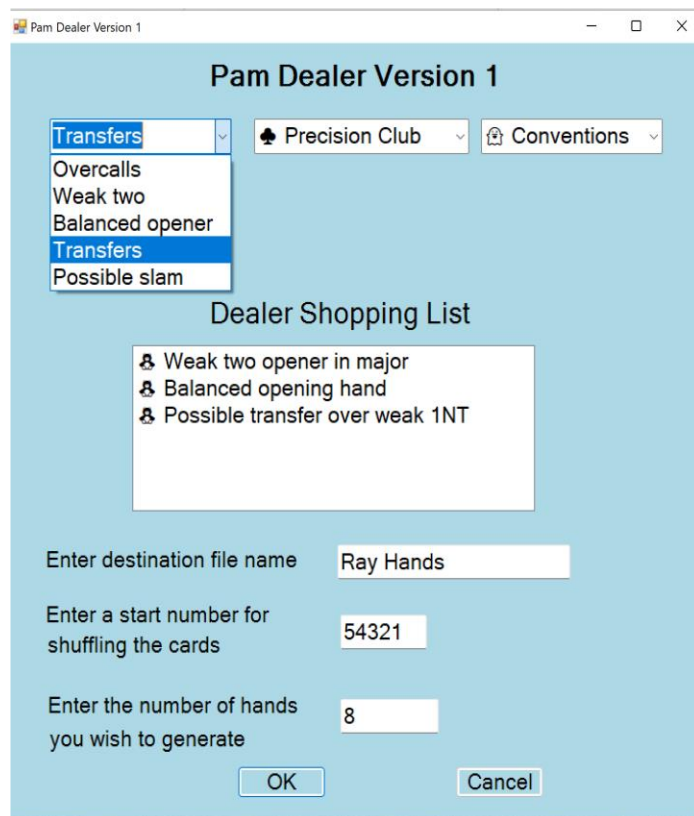
Maybe like me you sometimes augment your club bridge with some one-on-one play at home on the computer. There are various packages around that can keep most of us on our toes. Currently I use Jack Bridge which I find challenging and sometimes annoyingly smart. If you have thought about trying computer bridge but have not got around to it, get in touch with Pat or Martin Oyston who will give you any help and advice you need.

But no piece of software is perfect. I can do most things with Jack that I want to including specifying types and quality of hands but it doesn't deal with more complex situations or conventions. Also, it would be good to be able to generate a set of hands with a variety of given distributions.

So, in the end I decided to write my own software for describing a wider range of situations. I still use Jack Bridge to actually play the hands but it is fun and instructive to be able to generate specific kinds of hands that can test my bidding and play.

Then I thought that others might find such a system useful so prettied it up to make it more user-friendly. The resultant system can be used to generate hands for bidding and playing with any bridge package. As a bonus it can be used even if you don't have computer software. You can just print out hands and practise your bidding with a human partner.

I called my system "Pam Dealer". Pam provides a "Pick And Mix" user interface which allows you to select deals of a variety of kinds via pull-down menus. A screen shot is shown at the top of the next column.



At the top there are three pull-down menus, at the moment corresponding to elementary type deals (Acol or Standard American), Precision Club bids, and other more advanced conventions such as Lebensohl and Bergen raises. Each deal selected by the user is popped onto the "Shopping List" shown in the middle of the screen. You can select as many or as few deal types as you like. Once you have listed the variety of situations you are interested in, you can specify other details such as the name of the file where results will be stored. When you have entered all the required information just press OK.

Pam has now done its (her?) job and passes control over to an industrial grade hand creator called Dealer. Dealer is pretty darned quick. I wrote that in a language called "Haskell" which always performs well in speed tests and has a high-quality random number generator. In the example above I have specified eight deals. However, out of interest the other day I asked for ten thousand deals. It took about five seconds to deliver the goods, producing six thousand sheets of hands. Obviously, I didn't print them out!

Once you have clicked OK with Pam, Dealer will quickly generate results in a new folder. In the above case it would be called "printed files folder for Ray Hands". Open the folder and you will see five files as shown at the top of the next page.





If you open the left-hand file you will see it contains a copy of all the hands that Dealer has produced. This is in the normal format that you get your hand sheets at the end of play at the club. The next one contains only East hands, and each of the others contain either North, South or West hands.

They are organized like this so you can print out the hands and bid them with friends, each person taking one of the sheets. In the simplest case you may bid the North-South hands with your usual partner and check at the end on the quality of your bidding.

So far I have described how to use Pam Dealer to produce sets of hands which you can print out and practise your bidding. If you wish to play the hands as well then you will need some bridge playing software such as Bridge Baron or Jack Bridge. Neither of these applications will read in hands from the above files. However, outside the folder Dealer has generated another file called (in this case) "Ray Hands.pbn". This contains all your hands in pbn (portable bridge notation) form.

Just read in the file to your favourite package and you can play the hands that have been generated. You can alternatively upload them into RealBridge and play the hands online.

The "pbn" hands can also be read into other software such as "Bridge Composer". Bridge Composer can show you for each hand what the possible scores are and what the best score for each side ('par result') might be. Using this software you can also convert the hands to "LIN" format which can be input into BBO.

If you have got this far in the article, then I assume you are interested in trying out Pam Dealer. Contact me at [R.Kemp@xtra.co.nz](mailto:R.Kemp@xtra.co.nz) and I can send you more information on how to use the package and also provide you with an initial copy of the software. What I ask you to do in return is give me feedback on usability and issues that you have found. It currently runs only on Windows computers so sorry to Mac or Android users.

**Ray Kemp**

## It's Bridge, Jim, but not as we know it

It had been quite a while since I had played in a Swiss event so was looking forward to the September tournament at our club. One of the attractions of Swiss is that it is so unlike the normal Match Point (MP) pairs that we usually play on club afternoons and evenings. I think it must be particularly confusing to 'newbies' who have never played in this style of tournament. The most obvious difference to MPs is what happens in each round. Instead of playing a small number of deals against another pair (typically two boards) each pair starts (in our case) by playing eight boards against a couple chosen at random. This could have been traumatic if a new pair had to front up to a pair of grandmasters but looking at results from that first round, fate was reasonably kind.

The second odd feature of Swiss, is the ladder system of allocating subsequent opponents who are nearby in the ranking. So, after two or three rounds, the room has divided into groups - experienced players mostly near the top table and novices relatively low down, with intermediaries bouncing between the two. This might be disconcerting to some players (don't worry, I've been there) but at least it means that matches tend to be more even than might otherwise be the case.

Perhaps the most significant feature of the format is the scoring. At MP, for each board the scores are sorted and results are based on one's ranking. This means that getting a score of 450 when everyone else gets 420 gives you a 'top' board. On the downside, each board is worth exactly the same so if you play 50 boards the most you can score on each one is 2% for your victorious achievement. Looking at it from the 'glass half full' point of view it means that even if you get a horrendous result on a board the most you can lose is also 2%. In contrast, in the Swiss event, the use of gross scores makes some deals much more significant than others. Making a vulnerable slam when everyone else is in game will net you 750 points towards your tally for a match. At the other extreme, if you go down in a vulnerable game that everyone else makes you will lose 700 or more points.

Because of the 'all or nothing' scoring method it is easy to win or lose a match in one hand – not only a match but possibly one's standing in the whole tournament – one mistake or twist of fate can ruin your day. Well, as you may be able to gather, I am now going to give you my hard-luck story so get that box of tissues ready.

My partner and I were having a good day. After a successful morning which we maintained for part of the afternoon we were North-South at table two, in fourth place after five rounds and hoping to stay in the prizes with two rounds to go. The sixth-round match was going fine until we came to the hand of destiny shown at the top of the next page.

East Deals      ♠ A 10 7 4  
 E-W Vul        ♥ 9  
                   ♦ 10 9 8 5 4  
                   ♣ 9 6 2

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

                  ♠ K Q 8 2  
                   ♥ K 8 5 2  
                   ♦ 7  
                   ♣ K 8 7 5

West	North	East	South
		Pass	2♥
Dbl	2♠	3NT	All pass

I am sitting South and my two hearts bid shows 11-15 points with 4-4 in the majors and a singleton or void in diamonds. It is an unusual bid and could have thrown a spanner in the works for the opponents. Instead, it helps them get to a 3NT contract that is tricky to beat. West shows a good hand with her double, North shows a weak agreement with spades and East's 3NT is a bit of a gamble. At least he knows a lot about my hand which he hopes will help bring home the contract. At most tables the bidding would have been completely different. Other Souths are unlikely to have started with hearts and, not surprisingly, many EWs end up in a four hearts contract. It turns out that this contract can always make but two thirds of the pairs go down because of the bad trump and diamond splits.

The good news for us was that 3NT should go down, too, but that's not what happened in practice. We start well by taking four spade tricks so East must collect the rest. North next leads diamonds. A distracted declarer might let that run through to dummy, but our East is Wayne Burrows who, from the bidding, has realized the diamonds are going to break badly and does not want to end up in dummy with nowhere to go. Consequently, he takes the ace in hand. He runs another diamond trick putting pressure on me with my discards. The position after six rounds of cards is shown at the top of the next page.

♠                    ♠  
 ♥ A Q 7 6        ♥  
 ♦                    ♦  
 ♣ A J 10         ♣

                  ♠  
                   ♥ K 8 5 2  
                   ♦  
                   ♣ K 8 7

                  ♠ N  
                   ♥ W            E  
                   ♦ S  
                   ♣

♥J played

Next comes ♥J from East. To cover or not to cover? Can you work out what I should do without looking back at the full hands, or maybe even looking back to the full hands?

When in doubt, cover, is my motto. After this hand maybe I should change my motto. Playing my ♥K is just what declarer needs. He now can get back to hand with ♥10 and play ♦J. As you can see below, I am now skewered.

♠                    ♠  
 ♥ Q 7             ♥ 4 3  
 ♦                    ♦ 6  
 ♣ A J 10         ♣ Q

                  ♠  
                   ♥ 8 5  
                   ♦  
                   ♣ K 8 7

                  ♠ N  
                   ♥ W            E  
                   ♦ S  
                   ♣

♦J played

If I throw a heart, East discards a club from dummy. He now takes the club finesse and cashes two clubs and two hearts. If I throw a club he discards a heart and again finesses clubs. My king is captured and dummy is high.

So, not covering the heart first time around would save the day. If East continues with ♥10, this time I cover and my lowly ♥8 stops declarer in his tracks.

My mistake leads to a swing of 15 IMPs, turning a comfortable victory into defeat. Fate hadn't finished with us, however. In the last round we were sitting NS against a pair who got most of the good cards and nailed every contract that was going. After that, we slid down the ladder faster than a brickie going for his tea break. Swiss rolled, indeed.

Thanks to Wayne Burrows for confirming the card play on the above board. I don't normally name names in these articles, but I think in this case he deserves a mention in dispatches for some smart bidding and play.

**Ray Kemp**



You must be joking

