



April 2023

Franklin Bridge Club



A typical Wednesday night turn-out recently – all sessions this year have seen a sudden recovery in table numbers.

Our Club Is Full Again

The club's slow convalescence from the Covid years has suddenly transformed into healthy recovery, with table numbers now regularly back to pre-2020 levels.

And a strong response to the beginner lessons, which started on 23 March, augurs well for future growth: 10 tables, which included the many club helpers, played mini-bridge on the first evening. Tutor John Fergusson reported that, with some no-shows who may come later, the initial estimate is around 25 learners for the start of the lessons. John thanked all the members who turned up to help.

Despite the late arrival of the publicity cards, club members rallied to deliver close to 5,000 lesson invitations to letterboxes. Special thanks to a couple of members who delivered more than 500 of them.



Many club members turned out to welcome the learners on the first night of the beginner lessons, above, with at least one experienced player per table.

And thanks also to secretary Susie Longdell, who volunteered to have the club's phone diverted to her mobile and who answered approximately 20 calls that would otherwise have gone to voicemail.

All members are welcome at the beginner lessons, at no extra charge, so do come along and consolidate your knowledge: the topics for each evening are in your bridge programme, in the Thursday Night pages.

President's Resignation

At a committee meeting at the beginning of April Neil Miller resigned as club president and also from the committee for personal reasons, and the committee has regretfully accepted his resignation and thanked him for his service.

Linda Thornton has stepped up from vice-president into the president's position. The club is therefore now looking for a new vice-president.

And a reminder that we also still have a vacant position for catering manager on the committee. This role has help from members who assist with catering tasks, but we need someone to take overall responsibility for organising the catering, mainly for our tournaments as well as the NZ-wide pairs and the Christmas AGM function.

No Easter Bridge

A reminder that there is no Franklin bridge next Friday and Monday because of Easter. Wednesday and Thursday sessions are unaffected.

Our Popular Restricted Tournament This Month



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8B RESTRICTED PAIRS TOURNAMENT

Open players cannot play together

A very popular tournament takes place this month at the club – the Restricted Pairs on Saturday 22 April.

If you've never played in a tournament before but would like to, this is the one for you – there are prizewinners in different categories including for two Junior players playing together; and it's always more comfortable playing at your own club where you know so many people.

In this tournament Open players are not allowed to play with each other but must pair with a lower ranked player – eg Open with either an Intermediate or a Junior. Juniors and Intermediates can play with anyone.

Details are on the NZ Bridge website – click on the link to the poster for full details, and you can enter on the website too:

www.nzbridge.co.nz/events/7739/Franklin-Restricted-Pairs.

Morning tea is at 9.30am for a punctual 10am start of play. Bring your own lunch, and there is afternoon tea at the end of play. The cost is \$35 per person, and that can be paid online: details at the link above or on our club noticeboard.

Tuesday Our New Day!

A couple of items from the committee. First, Tuesday afternoon bridge:

“We understand that winter weather may discourage some members from coming ‘out’ to play, especially in the evenings, and for this reason the committee has decided to trial Tuesday afternoon bridge, starting in May. More information is to come; but the plan is to be seated by 12.45pm, and play will be from 1-4pm.

“We hope members will support this session, which will run as a trial until the end of the year and then be reviewed.”

And Club Policy Is Face-to-Face Bridge

“Our club’s policy is to promote face-to-face Bridge.

“During Covid lockdowns, online bridge proliferated, and continues to be popular with some players. The committee is from time to time asked to promote online bridge, mostly hosted by Auckland Club, but after discussion, it was decided that our policy would be to firmly promote and encourage face-to-face bridge.

“Many of our members come to bridge to spend a happy, sociable three hours, mixing with other members and enjoying the camaraderie. They prefer this to spending three hours at home in front of a computer screen.”

70% Club

The magic 70% was reached in a possibly unprecedented five sessions last month!

Carol De Luca and Trevor Robb starred separately in two of the five; and Trevor and Lynne Geursen achieved that rare feat, a Monday night 70%.

Special congratulations to Gina Sangster and Bron Fergusson, right, who also had a rare achievement – 70% by a pair of Junior players! (The event was a handicap one but their 70% was gross.)



Packwood Cameron Prs	Wed 1 March	70.1%	Teresa Phillips-Carol De Luca
Molly Brough Prs	Fri 3 March	71.1%	Carol Moore-Carol De Luca
Mixed Prs	Mon 20 March	71.3%	Lynne Geursen-Trevor Robb
Individual Sess1	Fri 24 March	70.2%	Jim Buckland-Trevor Robb
Handicap Prs	Wed 29 March	70%	Gina Sangster-Bron Fergusson

Tournament News

Several members took part in tournaments last month. In mid March **Grant Jarvis** came fifth in the high-powered Kelly Peirce 10A Teams event, based in Rotorua and held online (three other Franklin members also took part). And late in the month Grant came sixth in the North Shore 5A Swiss Pairs.

On 25 March **Kevin Birch** came second with Mereana Cullen out of the 24 pairs at the Matamata 8B. Maureen Nelson also made the trip down to play with former Franklin player Margaret Wilson, who is now a member at Matamata.

Online Help

Back in 1974 the cocktail company Bols started sponsoring an annual bridge tips competition, inviting pithy bridge advice from top international writers and players. After around 20 years, the entire collection of Bols Bridge Tips was published in 1997, and the book can still be found on book-selling websites, usually for around \$20.

But you can also read the tips online, and Intermediates and ambitious Juniors will find a trove of useful pointers, enough to keep you occupied for the rest of the year: www.haroldschogger.com/bols1.htm. The advice below comes from the late US expert Ed Mansfield, and is relevant to players at a range of levels.

Think twice before you bid over five:
the five level belongs to the opponents.

“Many factors combine to make it usually unwise to bid five over five:

- a) Even though your hand might be quite distributional, the opponents' hands are often much more balanced. Therefore, you will frequently have more winners against their contract than you might suspect.
- b) Partner might have minor honours in the opponents' suits. It is difficult to envisage the defensive power of stray Queens, Jacks and Tens. However, such cards can often help defeat the opponents' five level contract. Other times your five level bid will not fare well because the opponents have minor honours in your suits.
- c) In defending high level contracts there are relatively few combinations of cards that need to be considered. Therefore, defenders are much less likely to err against five level contracts than they are to err against lower contracts.
- d) Unless the deal is a distributional freak, the combined trick taking potential of the hands (i.e. the number of tricks you can take in your best trump suit added to the number that the opponents can take in theirs) seldom exceeds 20.

Therefore, even if your five over five bid works out well, your profit will tend to be small. For example, suppose the opponents bid 5 6 with both sides vulnerable, and you successfully save in 5 4. If 5 makes, and you go two down doubled, your gain will be only 100 points (-500 versus -600).

e) The combined trick taking potential of the hands is often 19 or less. In these cases five over five bids are often disastrous.

Time and again I have seen players suffer 300 or 500 at five level when they would have gone plus against opponents' five level contract. I challenge you to keep track for several months of every hand on which you compete over the opponents' five level bid. I am quite sure that the points you gain from such competition will be outweighed by the points you lose.

You will find that when the opponents bid at the five level it will usually be best to defend."

Member News

from Our Roving Reporters



One of our prominent past members, Peter Goffin, passed away on 14 February, in his mid-80s. Peter was a member at Franklin during the 1990s, and after that at the Auckland bridge club, where he last played only two weeks before his death. Peter was a Master, and was married to Rachael Goffin, a Grand Master.

Peter was a good friend of Jim Buckland, who attended his funeral. The photo above was taken at Jim's 70th birthday at the Bracu Estate: Peter is second on the left, and Jim mid-right. Two other familiar Franklin faces are Lynne Geursen, first left, and peeking from the last chair on the left, Nelda Wormald.

Peter had a wide range of interests, including chess, the trombone, wine, and model railways – Rachael is obviously a special kind of wife, as their front room was given over to Peter’s railway tracks, including having a sliding door installed to accommodate them.



We’re used to seeing John Fergusson in front of the beginners’ and improvers’ classes, but in the photo above he can be seen last month addressing a church audience as part of his trip to a church leaders’ conference in Ilam, Nepal.

“Ilam is in the tea gardens of Nepal’s far eastern hills,” John said. “About twelve were baptised in the (cold!) river one afternoon. Brave people!” John flew back to Auckland just in time to start our beginner lessons the next night!



Not as exotic as Nepal, but Australia’s the place to be at the moment. Maria Casci and Chris Glyde have been holidaying in Tasmania. Constant cruisers Carol Moore and Henriette Annabell are off to Sydney, from where they’ll cruise back to New Zealand, visiting the Bay of Islands and Tauranga en route. And Bev Donaldson has a great family Easter get-together planned in Brisbane.

The two glamorous members at left go back a very long way ... When Teresa Phillip's children started primary school at Onewhero, Ann Anderson was the infant mistress.



Every member who was out delivering our lesson invitations last month will know the joy of spotting the line-up above: a chance to get shot of a whole bunch of flyers in one hit. So imagine the extra bliss when your delivery area is in the country ... stopping the car at one box ... then back on the road to stop at the next one, 100-300 metres further on ... and then you see these!

Kevin Griffin was so happy he took the photograph above – the only downside, he said, was that they were on Caroline’s side of the car!

NZ Bridge Letter

The first 2023 letter from NZ Bridge Chair Allan Morris was published in late March. Below are a couple of points from it, and the full letter is on the website: [www.nzbridge.co.nz/blog/10976/News-from-the-Chair --No-1-for-2023](http://www.nzbridge.co.nz/blog/10976/News-from-the-Chair--No-1-for-2023).

“It is clear with the distraction of Covid-19 we have lost impetus. Membership has declined from recent highs three years ago of around 13,600 to a present number of 12,440.”

“Bonus B Points for Junior and Intermediate Pairs. The current policy of awarding additional B points to the highest unplaced Junior and Intermediate pairs in open 8B tournaments will cease from 1 April 2023. While the original intention was to increase player participation from lower-grade pairs it has had unforeseen consequences with some players being regraded before they should be.”

Hesitation In The Bidding

What happens when someone takes a long time to make a call?

That is not in itself an infraction, but it indicates that the player was considering a different call, so their partner must be very careful not to base any decision on that inference.

That does *not* mean a player must pass whenever partner has hesitated. It means where there are logical alternatives a player may not choose an option which was demonstrably suggested by the hesitation.

Two examples:

1 N: 1NT E: (after an unmistakable hesitation) pass S: pass
 W: ??
 West has: S: K J 9 5 3 H: A Q 6 D: J 5 4 C: 7 5

It is likely “pass” is a logical alternative for West. The director can confirm this (or otherwise) by polling a few players to see what they would call given the bidding sequence (but without mentioning the hesitation).

Any assertion from West that they *always* balance with 11 points should not be taken into account (except in the unlikely situation of that fact being stated on their system card on the table).

If some players of the same standard would pass then “pass” is a logical alternative, so West must pass.

2 N: 1S E: pass S: 1NT (after hesitation) W: pass
 N: ??

Although it is apparent that South was considering some alternative to bidding 1NT, North has no idea what that alternative might be. Possibilities include:

- a 5-points with a few 10s and 9s which was (eventually) deemed to be worth bidding
- a hand with a long suit which was deemed not good enough to bid at the 2-level
- 10 points and 2344 shape with bad 4-card suits they didn’t want to bid
- a weak hand and a spade void and desperately hoping partner will bid another suit.

South is free to bid whatever they like and there is no problem.

What should one do if an opponent hesitates in the bidding?

It is important for “active” players (that is everyone during the bidding, and the defenders during the play) to avoid saying anything that might convey information.

The best thing to do is politely ask the opponents, “do you agree there was a hesitation?”

If the answer is “yes” (and they should not offer any explanation or justification at this stage), then the director should be called at the end of play, *only* if it is felt there might have been damage.

And if the answer is “no” then the director should be called immediately.



Any contributions to the newsletter, please email Wendy Morris,
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And if you want copies of any newsletter photos, please email.