

February 2021 Newsletter

While everyone has that sinking feeling that here we go again, as things stand, bridge play will continue at Wellington Club for all sessions. Wellington is in Alert Level 2.

And as NZ Bridge says we do not believe there is a need to panic but on the other hand we need to be vigilant. Please be super mindful of others and stay away if you are at all unwell. If you have or develop symptoms, then isolate and get a test and let us know if anything concerning results.

A reminder that under Alert Level 2:

- Maintain high hygiene standards (wash hands, use hand sanitizer, sneeze, or cough into elbow).
- Maintain contact tracing and display the QR code.
- Maintain physical distancing from people you do not know, consider wearing a face mask.

We hope over the next 24 hours there will be greater clarity and that the Alert Levels will revert to Alert Level 1 on or before midnight on Wednesday.



President's Message

Kia Ora members:

Is our seemingly incredibly successful club dying? That's the existential question that came up in our last committee meeting as we grappled with the issue of whether the current system of a largish operating committee should be replaced by a small board-style committee, focused on strategy and planning.

I have been approached by several members concerned about the proposed change and I put those arguments to the committee. In essence, these are that "if it ain't broke, don't fix it". It is true that in the time I have been on the committee it has operated well, including through the incredibly challenging Covid crisis.

A second argument is that the proposed new structure – of a board committee which will have four or five operating sub-committees (bridge technical committee; maintenance; tournament, social and catering; and players), will essentially mean the same people who volunteer to do most of the work at present, will also do so under the new structure.

The last argument I put forward, espoused by a senior member, was that this club is a highly functioning, successful club and the role of the committee is essentially to roll things along.

It is true that we are a very successful club – a large membership of 372, a strong competitive playing environment that puts us among the top few clubs in the country, healthy finances and excellent management led by Bridget but including the committee.

However, the notion that we should just roll over what we have been doing is the killer argument against the status quo, according to change proponents. We have a membership whose average age is going up every year, we have declining membership as members become infirm or die, we have player numbers trending down on all nights and, possibly, most importantly, we are finding it more difficult to attract new members, particularly of the younger generation. These factors have, and will increasingly, put stress on our finances and the club's viability.

A do nothing, no change scenario as we die by dozens of small cuts could be a death sentence for the club.

A board-style committee with a mandate of strategy and planning, will be more likely to successfully tackle these difficult issues than an operational committee that by its nature is bogged down with the minutiae of day-to-day activities.

Simon Louisson

Dot Procter RIP

It is with sadness that we advise our former club manager Dot Procter died on Tuesday February 9. Our deepest sympathies go to Nelson and all the Procter whanau.

Appointed in 1993, Dot was the club's first Club Manager - replacing the "Hostess" whose main duty was to arrange partners. She gave 20 years of great service to our club, working with 9 presidents and retiring in January 2012.

Dot was never a regular player. She told The Wellingtonian, in a profile written on her retirement: "I can see what the fascination is [but] I would rather be sewing or knitting or gardening. I did have a go playing with friends, but at night I would be trying to remember what [cards] I had and what I bid."

Nelson, a grand master, made the mistake many partners (husbands?) make of giving out advice on what cards she should have played.

Former President Derek Snelling, in a short eulogy to Wednesday night players said the over-riding memory of Dot her graciousness.

Those of us who knew her, will remember her with respect and fondness.

Directors' Corner

Unauthorised Information

One of the more common issues directors are called to rule on is where a player bids after their partner has "hesitated" before passing.

Firstly there is nothing wrong with taking a moment to consider whether to bid or not.

However, taking an unnecessary or long pause before passing can create unauthorised information for their partner. The pause suggests that the player has options (or values) and the partner must not use that information when making their own bid.

This doesn't mean they can't bid but their bid must be based on the cards they hold along with any other information obtained from bids, other than the information from the "unmistakable hesitation".

Law 16B1 covers unauthorised information and states: "*A player must not choose a call or play that is demonstrably suggested over another by unauthorised information if the other call or play is a logical alternative*" - pass is often a logical alternative.

Players can avoid putting their partner in a difficult position by bidding in tempo.

New Plymouth Taranaki Bridge Congress 6-11 March

Following our request for your preferences on a potential club series date change in order to accommodate players wishing to compete at New Plymouth as well as maintaining their team commitments for the month, a decision to change was endorsed by the Committee. The Committee took on board that the change did not suit everyone. The change was precipitated by the cancellation of the Gold Coast Congress and the Committee is committed to the published program unless there are extraordinary circumstances.

Did you know?.....

- Wellington Bridge Club's annual calendar can be downloaded on to your mobile phone so that you can enter your partnerships etc, making your bridge books redundant as far as this function is concerned. Instructions are on our website. We will keep publishing the books for now, but they may go the way of the phone directory.
- We have a new tenant upstairs – James Plunkett, a personal trainer. James has agreed to a 2-year lease and hopes to stay long term. (No special deals for any members have been negotiated at this stage, but here's hoping.....)
- Able Access has made rubber ramps which have been installed outside the kitchen door for easier disabled access. We can't change the degree of slope on the ramp itself but these latest additions should help access through into the kitchen.

- Margie Michael has volunteered to take on catering for the club for local events. Thanks Margie, this is truly appreciated!
Our previous main caterer, Mindy Wu, has set the bar high, giving our club a reputation for first class food. We all appreciate what a great job she and her team have done. Mindy will still cater the Christmas Cheer tournament this year.
- The diary notice is below but here is a promotion notice for the Wellington Sixes Tournament:
It is being held on March 6. This is a FUN, FANTASTIC tournament, aimed at getting more of each grade taking part in tournaments. The event also fills a need in the National calendar ... there were, and still are in 2021, *no* Swiss Pairs events specifically for Intermediates or Juniors. A team consists of 6 players – 1 pair each of Junior, Open and Intermediate Players. Not only are there prizes for top teams, there are also prizes for team costumes, and competition can be quite fierce. Bridget has got names of players who would like to participate, and pairs available. Come on Wellington! – this is a great tournament and a really valuable participative and enjoyable day. In the Waikato, the Sixes tournament has become a favourite, to the point where it had to be relocated from Cambridge Town Hall to the Karapiro Rowing Centre, with over 54 tables!
- And, also included below, is Wellington Interclub Tournament, which commences on Friday 26th March. Wellington has always enjoyed real success here and we want to continue and enhance our reputation, if at all possible. This can only happen if we participate. It is one of the best ways players can really develop relationships as well as establishing their overall status compared to others in their grade. Don't be put off by the competition – for me I have always found that the Interclub tournaments foster the very best of what fair play and fair completion truly encompasses.
- **Rubber Bridge**
Calling all Rubber Bridge enthusiasts and those who want to take up this different style of bridge where the luck of the cards can give you the opportunity to shine! Winning pairs in the region get to play in the the National Bridge Congress in Mt Maunganui (to be played in the evenings of Sept 24-27). Entry is free and competition takes place in the comfort of your house.. In eight of the last 11 years, we have had the highest number of pairs of any region and this has entitled us to send our top two pairs to Mt Maunganui to compete on a knock-out basis against the top pair from each of the other 6 Regions. Please support this worthwhile, free fun event and help us get two pairs to Mt Maunganui.
In addition, we have a Cup to present to the Wellington Regional winners. In the Wellington Metro area we will continue with the usual knock-out format played at homes after doing a random draw by ballot. However, Waikanae Bridge Club are likely to again have a separate draw in their “Kapiti” area, with their winning pair (or top 2 pairs?) eventually merging into the main Wellington Metro draw at an appropriate time. Entries in by March 31.
- **Monday night play – \$5.00 table money for the first month**
The Monday night series in Wellington starting in May is something new, but has been instigated to offer another ‘all comers’ opportunity to bridge players in the region. Come along, participate!! (let's face it, you've been getting bored with nothing to do on a Monday night.!) This night welcomes players from all grades, all comers welcome.
And as a special offer – the first month of playing fees will be \$5.00 per player.
- **Mentoring Roles**
We are focussing on new players and working to encourage their membership and continued participation as a way to lift our membership numbers. Can you help? We need you to offer ongoing support, provide a listening ear, and kindness, understanding and appreciation of what new players experience. Please contact either Ruth Brucker or Margaret Curnow if you could offer support here.
- **Lessons 2021**
These start on February 16, at 7.45pm. Please encourage everyone you can. Many of us will remember how much we appreciated a friend encouraging us and what it meant to us.

- **Zero Alcohol Beer**

We now have zero alcohol beer available on the drinks trolley for those who like the taste of beer but not the alcohol content. This is in addition to a 2.5% light beer we already stock.

- **Youth Bridge Weekend**

This is being held over the weekend of 6-8 August 2021.



Youth Weekend Advert 2021 (1).pdf

PUT IT IN YOUR DIARY

Plymouth Taranaki Bridge Congress 6-11 March 2021

There is a flyer in the foyer. Played over 5 days, no evening sessions

Wellington Region Tournaments

Hutt Multigrade	8B	28 Feb
Wellington Sixes	3A/5B/3B	6 March
Kapi Mana Multigrade	8B	7 March
National 15A Swiss Pairs	15A	13 March
Kairangi Intermediate/Junior Teams/Pairs	5B/3B	21 March
Masterton Open	5A	21 March
Paraparaumu Open	5A	28 March
Upper Hutt Intermediate/Junior	3B	28 March

Club Tournaments

Monday night –	Tournaments will commence in May 2021	
Tuesday night –	Thelma Wylde Pairs	2 March
Wednesday night –	Andrew Thompson Memorial Teams	3 March
Thursday night –	J Robson Cup Pairs	4 March
Friday afternoon –	Hobson Pairs	5 March
Interclub -	All grades	26 March

Congratulations

Are due to Kate Davies, John Patterson, Sandy McKirdy and Graham Stronach on their recent win in the Top of the South Teams tournament. (picture above right.). And **South Island Teams** winners: Martin Reid, Peter Newell, Michael Ware & Matt Brown (pictured below)

John Davidson, Leon Meier, Tim Schumacher & David Skipper came third.

Otago/southland 10A Swiss Pairs

3rd E/W Mindy Wu & Pamela Nisbett

Waikanae Open Pairs 7 February 2021

1st Alan Grant & Anthony Ker

2nd Graeme Norman & Patrick D'Arcy

3rd Paul Carson & Lorraine Stachurski

Great work guys!



Monthly Club series winners and runner ups:

Tuesday Watts Jug Ladder

1st Rupert Rokeby Johnson

2nd Anne Gaskell

Wednesday - Young Cup Pairs

1st Joan Waldvogel & Sophie Atkin

2nd Brad Tattersfield & Malcolm Greig

Thursday - Alder Cup Ladder

1st Helen Climo

2nd Wayne Stechman

What can possibly go wrong? – Nigel Kearney

This is board 20 from Wednesday 10 February.

Dealer: W ♠ A96
 Vul: All ♥ 9
 ♦ 63
 ♣ AKQ9754

♠ J5
 ♥ A1063
 ♦ KJ4
 ♣ J632



♠ Q107
 ♥ K7542
 ♦ Q10852
 ♣ -

♠ K8432
 ♥ QJ8
 ♦ A97
 ♣ 108

S	W	N	E
	P	1♣	1♥
1♠	3♥	4♠	P
P	P		

South's 1♠ showed five as he would have doubled with four, so North jumped straight to game. East might have sacrificed in 5♥, which would have been best as the cards lie but the trump holding and weak hearts make it risky. West led the A♥ and switched to the 4♦ to East's queen. Think about how you would plan the play as declarer. There is no problem if trumps are 3-2 and the clubs run. Just win the diamond, play two rounds of trumps, then run the clubs. The defender with the last trump will ruff in at some point and cash a diamond but dummy then has winning clubs plus a trump to ruff a red suit lead. Having worked this out, declarer should then consider what might go wrong.

It doesn't look possible to pick up a 4-1 trump break and use dummy's clubs, so we have to hope they are 3-2. What about 4-0 clubs? We may be able to cope with that if they have to ruff with the long trump, which looks likely. It's better to cash one top club before drawing trumps. If everyone follows, we proceed with our original plan. If the club gets ruffed, maybe we can recover.

There are two further important points. One is that we must duck the diamond at trick two, otherwise East can ruff our club, lead a diamond to West, and ruff a second club. The second point is to unblock by leading the 10♣ to the ace. If we lead the 8♣ to the ace and East ruffs, they can play two more diamonds which dummy ruffs. Then we can draw trumps but cannot run clubs as West will not cover the ten. With the ten gone, we can lead the eight to dummy's nine and all the clubs are good.

So we duck the diamond at trick two, win the next one, and lead the 10♣ to the ace. It doesn't matter if West ruffs or not. We play two rounds of trumps next followed by a club finesse, losing only a heart, a diamond, and a trump.