

November 2019 Newsletter

President's Corner – Margaret Curnow

Hi everyone

Well year end is rapidly approaching. Thank you to everyone who attended the AGM and involved themselves in club priorities moving forward. Having the AGM on the same night as the NZ Wide Pairs continues to work well for us, with 60 people at the AGM and 21 tables playing bridge afterwards. Once again thanks to Mindy and her team for a delicious dinner.

Many of you will be really busy now as the year winds down and all those end of year events start appearing in our calendars and diaries. I hope you still find time for your bridge – we only have four more weeks after this one, so not very long before the enforced break from our weekly game.

Programme books will be out soon so get ready to book yourself up for 2020.

Nga mihi, Margaret



Free diner attracts plenty to lively AGM

There is nothing like the offer of a free dinner to counter the lure of an All Blacks Rugby World Cup game.

At the AGM, President Margaret Curnow acknowledged the contributions of former President Brad Tattersfield (pictured below right), Maureen Pratchett (below left), who has stepped down as Chief Director with Sandy McKirdy replacing her, and Treasurer John Wilkinson, who has been replaced by Donna Upchurch. Margaret also recognised the ongoing fine job done by our Club Manager Bridget Willcox.

She noted that while membership and playing numbers were down, the decline in Thursday night playing numbers had been arrested thanks in part to initiatives by the committee. She said the club needs to work on converting those taking lessons into membership – only 12 of 38 who took the lessons have become members.



Issues raised at the meeting by members and being considered by the committee included: sub discounts for those taking lessons; replacement cameras for those stolen (the committee is considering security options); the vexed perennial of car parking – the majority favoured removing or limiting parking on the eastern wall, although a significant number wished it to be retained. Isobel Ross noted that she has taken to parking on Thorndon Quay and “it has changed my life.”

Car park on eastern wall

Further to discussion at the AGM, the committee on Monday decided to deem the park on the eastern wall (at the motorway end of the building) as the same as those in the middle – ie cars parked there must be moved immediately at the end of play. Further consideration was given to another issue raised – whether more parks be provided for people with disabilities. The committee will investigate this further. When you receive your next invoice you will be asked if you have a disability sticker, so please indicate yes or no so we can assess the need for more accessible car parks. As always however the main issue is to show consideration and please, please move your car asap if you park in the middle.

Email your MP about slack policing – Peter Benham

When the issue of slack policing regarding thefts from the club was raised at the AGM, Peter Benham made the suggestion that members should contact their local MP and that the club should write to our electorate MP. Police have not pursued two thefts in which our security camera clearly captured the scumbags in the act – one actually nicking our security camera (see right). Our intrepid coppers failed to follow up on a clear picture of a thief stealing our copper piping despite us supplying a clear picture and car rego. Their lame excuses included that the car owner was different from the thief and that such thefts were a low priority.



Junior success

In a great lesson for all, Tuesday night juniors Caroline Hull & Shirley-Anne Morrow stepped up to Thursday night's intermediate Stockman Silver Handicapped Pairs and won the event.

Some juniors are wanting pay-and-play partners, so if you willing let Bridget know please.

It has been decided not to hold a WBC junior tournament in 2020 because NZ Bridge has scheduled it only one week earlier than the Victoria club junior event. They are not holding their Intermediate event for the same reason. This is only for 2020.

PUT IT IN YOUR DIARY

Club series

Tuesday/Junior – Committee Cup Pairs – starts Nov 19

Thursday/Intermediate – Summer Pairs – starts Nov 22

Wednesday/Open – Paul Titcombe Lowe & Co Premier Teams (Final) - starts Nov 27

Wednesday/Open – Premier Teams Plate (Pairs) - starts Nov 27

Friday Afternoon – Bill Te Tau Summer Pairs – starts Dec 5

Tournaments

- 17 November Masterton Multigrade (8B)
- 14 December Wellington Region Christmas Cheer (3A) (Wellington)
- 27-29 December Suzanne Duncan Open (Wellington)

Recent triumphs

- Club Series

Tuesday

Tinakori Salver Pairs

1st Caroline Hull & Oliver McCready

2nd Johnny Bell & Megan Turner

Wednesday

Woe Wilson Memorial Handicap Pairs

1st Stephen Henry & Peter Benham

2nd Brad Tattersfield & John Scott

Thursday

Stockman Salver Handicap Pairs

1st Caroline Hull & Shirley-Anne Morrow

2nd Ruth Brucker & Patti Poole

Friday

Spring Pairs

1st Cheryl Scott & Stephanie Smith

2nd Sophie Atkin & Graham Potter

Tournaments

Kairangi Open Pairs Labour Weekend

- 1st Anne-Marie Russell & Peter Benham
- 2nd Kate Davies & John Patterson
- 3rd Sandy McKirdy & Grahma Stronach

Babich NZ Wide Pairs 1st November

- N/S Joan McCarthy & Joan Waldvogel
- E/W and 15th Nationwide (over 1000 entered)
- Nigel Kearney & Anne Marie Russell

National 15A Teams 9th November

- 1st John Patterson, Kate Davies & Team-mates Grant Jarvis & Gary Chen (pictured)
- 3rd Alan Grant with Jane Lennon & Team-mates Jan Alabaster & Pam Livingston



The Things We Do For Matchpoints – Nigel Kearney

In my opinion, matchpoints is the most challenging form of the game. There is more luck than teams scoring, but every hand counts and the tough bidding and play decisions are more frequent. A significant number of matchpoints can depend on whether you concede -110 or -100. Here's an example from board 2 of the NZ Wide Pairs:

<p>Dealer: E ♠ J64</p> <p>Vul: N/S ♥ AQ8532</p> <p>♦ 9</p> <p>♣ K93</p> <p>♠ 9872 ♠ A53</p> <p>♥ J104 ♥ K9</p> <p>♦ QJ8 ♦ A753</p> <p>♣ J85 ♣ A1074</p> <p>♠ KQ10</p> <p>♥ 76</p> <p>♦ K10642</p> <p>♣ Q62</p>	<p>At our table East opened a 14-16 1NT and North balanced with 2H after two passes. East doubled for takeout, West bid 2S and everyone passed. The key on this hand is for E/W to not let N/S play in 2H. 110 for N/S was average but 50 for N/S was worth only 12%. In theory N/S can bid on to 3H and guess hearts to make it or they can double 2S and defend perfectly for 300. But in practice neither of those are likely.</p> <p>East's takeout double was the key decision on the hand. The hand that is short in their suit should try to take action if they can. If East passes, West should probably pass as well, expecting East to have three or more hearts. It would be the same if East was a bit weaker and opened a 12-14 1NT.</p> <p>Also note the effect of the vulnerability. When E/W are not vulnerable they can be more aggressive as even two down undoubled may be a good score.</p>
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Here is board 4 from the first round of the Poppy Roberts final:

<p>Dealer: W ♠ Q2</p> <p>Vul: All ♥ J10</p> <p>♦ QJ972</p> <p>♣ Q852</p> <p>♠ 854 ♠ A10</p> <p>♥ A842 ♥ KQ63</p> <p>♦ A1065 ♦ K843</p> <p>♣ 96 ♣ 1043</p> <p>♠ KJ9763</p> <p>♥ 975</p> <p>♦ -</p> <p>♣ AKj7</p>	<p>After two passes, East opened 1NT (12-14), South overcalled 2S which was passed back to East. Notice how much more dangerous it is to compete here compared to the first example. The hand is weaker, East is vulnerable so the risk of -200 is very real, and their suit outranks yours so you have to compete at the three level.</p> <p>At the table, East held his breath and chose to double. E/W were able to wriggle into 3H and N/S chose to defend. Again it is very difficult for N/S. As it turns out they both have a bit extra and 3S makes easily but neither has an obvious action over 3H. This time 140 for N/S was average and 100 for N/S was only worth 10%. N/S were allowed to play 2S at 8 out of 11 tables.</p>
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Here are some things to learn from the above examples:

- Just because you have opened 1NT, that doesn't mean you have described your hand and should not bid again. It often pays to double for takeout at the two level with a doubleton in their suit.
- If the opponents compete over your part score and it looks like other people will not, it is usually right to either double or bid one more. Just letting them pay there and make it will be a poor score.
- If you have extra values, consider redoubling. This may help partner to take some action. Both South's in the above examples might have redoubled and North then bid one more.

Remember that this is for matchpoints only. When playing teams with IMP scoring you usually just want a score in your column on a part score hand and are not so concerned with how big it is.

How Blue Club blues helped win club's blue ribbon event – Nelson Proctor

The battle for bragging rights for the premium pairs trophy hosted by the Wellington Bridge Club is in full swing. Played since 1972, there arose a mutually masochistic urge for me and Dale Lacey to play in the inaugural event using Blue Club, which both of us had to learn.

Blue Club has an interesting convention wherein, over a major opening, a leap to four of a minor shows huge trump support and, if the other minor is subsequently bid, shows whether the controls are alike (both first, or both second) or one first round and the other second. The opener will usually be able to work out what they are. When it comes up, it is very effective and leads to some good slams, as will be seen.

At favourable vulnerability, Dale opened 1S, and I looked at my rather attractive five card support and a K and singleton in the minors, and not looking too closely at the rest of the hand decided this was a great chance to see if partner knew the system. The Real Bridge Player never lets by an opportunity to trot out newly learned conventions. So I bid 4C and left hand opponent was obviously a player of the avante guard school who liked to keep up with modern bidding conventions, but didn't wish to hold up the game so hesitated slightly over Dale's alert, before passing.

Dale responded 4D, which I recalled indicated a mild acceptance of the slam try and showed first or second round control of diamonds. Holding the diamond king myself, it sure looked like the ace, so I continued as previously planned and bid 5D (which showed my controls were alike) and Dale bid 5H, showing 1st or 2nd round control in Hearts.

By this time the opponents wore expressions of the sort usually worn by those who realise they are in the presence of two masters of the game and settled back knowing that they were privileged to be able to participate, admittedly in a passive, but vital role.

That Dale had a heart control made my hand look very much better, though now that I had started to look at it, didn't seem to have maintained its first perceived pearly lustre. Bravely bidding Dale's hand for him, (another essential skill), I decided the grand slam was odds off so simply bid what I KNEW we could make, 6S. Dale seemed a trifle relieved and passed without further thought, as did the opponents, clearly stunned with the technical beauty of the auction. The lead was made without too much delay but no questions about the auction, which disappointed me somewhat, because I had hoped to expound the beauty and inner mysteries, the nuances, the inferences and the sheer magic of it all, as a great master would, to his neophytes.

I put down my dummy, and a slightly glazed expression appeared on partner's countenance, the sort of expression my partners usually exhibit when my dummy goes down. I'm used to it, I take it as a sign of silent tribute to the beauty of my bidding.

I wondered why Dale didn't claim, but then realised, that it was match point, after all, and an overtrick (even in a contract I didn't expect to be reached by the other mere mortals who were unhappily without the incredibly powerful bidding tools we had at our disposal) could give us two more match points. I confidently awaited the brilliant technical play to achieve this, entirely confident that a potential article in NZ Bridge Magazine was in the making.

At trick five Dale lost a trick, and I was a little disappointed but I fairly quickly worked out that the overtrick wasn't now likely. At trick seven Dale lost another trick, which was impossible to be consistent with our bidding tools. I was bemused when another "impossible" trick was lost, then ANOTHER, and ANOTHER. We didn't even make FOUR spades.

I was unhappily expecting minus 200 to be a poor score, and the opponents were looking less awestruck, but giggling happily. A few words of post mortem revealed that one of the partnership had had no idea what 4C meant but mistakenly thought I knew what I was doing, and didn't think it could be passed...

The true beauty of Blue Club was revealed when we opened the score card and found that our 6S un-doubled, four light for minus 200 was a top! At every other table our opponents were in 4H making plus 620.....

It seems unlikely, but the inaugural winners of the Poppy Roberts trophy were D Lacey and N Procter.



Christmas Cheer raffle items please

Can people bring items they want to donate for the Christmas Cheer tournament raffle please. No perishables for obvious reasons.

Raffle to be drawn at Christmas Cheer Tournament on 14 December.

Best wishes for our Inter-Provincial reps

Best wishes for WBC members of the Wellington Inter-Provincial team that is flying to Christchurch to defend their title over three days on November 23-25. No pressure guys, but Wellington has won the Dougal McLean Trophy for the last three years following a six year stretch of Auckland-Northland dominance.

Programme Books out this month Our revolutionary new programme books will be out this month. Instead of listing members by their surname, they are alphabetically listed by first names. There are quite a few Johns but in general it should be easier to search.



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No. 1 In Bridge

PROGRAMME
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