



Table Talk

A newsletter from
Taupo Contract Bridge Club – June 2012

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Editor : Ralph Robertshawe.

Jope van der Leden



Foundation member, Tournament Director, rated player and bridge tutor, our friend Jope died on June 3rd after a short illness. He had played the previous Wednesday night, winning with Joan Berg the three night Tongariro Pairs - a fine note to go out on. Taken ill the next day he was hospitalized and died the following Sunday. Our loving sympathy goes out to his wife Marie, their family and wider whanau. His funeral was held in St Andrews Church with many Club members present to honour him and celebrate his life. President Rosemary Ritchie spoke of his passion for the game, his contribution to our local Club and wider bridge events and his friendship, panache and competitiveness at the table. Family and friends gathered afterwards in our Club Rooms for afternoon tea and a chance to share together what he has meant to us all. We shall surely miss him.

Born in the Netherlands in 1927 he was brought up in Amsterdam, getting caught in the German occupation of his country and forced into a work camp, ending up on German supply boats on the Rhine which gave him a love for boats and boating. When the war ended he headed to the then Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) where he worked on Police and Customs search boats, and with local independence coming got passage to NZ where he worked on the Roxburgh Dam before coming up to Taupo on similar work. He then settled on building in the local area. He was a practical engineer by inclination and after the demands of building got too hard he went into the food business, at one stage running his own Burger Bar. His inventiveness led him to an interest in coin-in-the-slot games and his inventiveness was given free rein with his own designed machines in many sites around the central North Island. In the early days of the internet he taught himself how to repair and programme computers, setting up Taupo's first Internet Café. In both of these interests he was well ahead of his time not only in Taupo but around the central districts and was well respected for his skills and pioneering spirit. He was a great supporter and sailor in the local yacht club – apparently his large frame was a sight to see in a small sailing dinghy. He was into bridge from the first attempts to establish a Contract Bridge Club in Taupo and soon established himself as a major force at the table as our Honours Board shows, and was a local master 13*, gaining some 25 A points and thousands of C points. He was a great financial supporter especially with our raffles – people would say he was very lucky at winning, but the truth was he bought so many tickets he was rightfully a regular winner! As he eased from his commercial efforts he was able to spend more and more time at the table, and was a willing partner to newcomers to the Club and in encouraging those who had progressed from lessons to play in Club sessions. At the Table he was a real character with some outrageous bidding and cunning plays which always kept his opponents on the hop (and his partners somewhat mystified!). At the AGM each year he could be counted on to question the Committee reports, while woe betide any treasurer who did not have all the answers to the published accounts! But for all his occasional cantankerousness in this area he had the Club always at heart, demanding good stewardship and correct service from those who had agreed to act on the committee. His contribution to our enjoyment of the game was truly enormous and our playing sessions are the poorer for his passing. May he rest in peace.

(Our photo is a recent one of Jope with his wife Marie obtained from the family. The Committee would like to honour Jope's memory with an appropriate trophy/award for annual competition – it would appreciate suggestions from members as to the nature of this award. Please give your suggestions to the President or any committee member.)

Open Tournament: This very successful tournament was held in May with the usual great support of members who ensured that our visitors enjoyed the best of TCBC hospitality. Nibbles during the session break on Saturday were excellent and the Sunday end of play meal was excellent – our thanks to the team under Helen Spencer and Anne Henneby who organized the traditional hospitality and to all members who supported them with food donations and kitchen and bar help and Peggy Nisbet who organized the raffle. For the record the Tournament was won by a pair from Hamilton, Elizabeth and Blair Fisher (their first

entry here), with the top Taupo pair *Rona and John Driscoll* – well done. Our thanks to Martin Oyston for coming up from Wanganui to cover the tournament directing and scoring. And thinking of Tournament players, *David Taylor and Ulrich Biesenbach* were in the winning team at the Napier Congress, David further honoured by selection in the Congress Team – quite a few of our braver members took part in the Congress with varying success. *Garth Robinson* won his first A point in a tournament over the weekend playing at Whakatane with *Rosemary Ritchie*, winning a session and coming 5th overall. Congratulations.

Committee Activities: Derek Rankin has got the revised club website running very well so all the results can be found there: www.contractbridge.net/taupo. The new Bridge Scorer system is working well with results available before you leave the club to go home or else viewable (in private!) when you get home. Now we are interested in selecting a team of say 10 computer-literate members to operate the system to lighten the playing director's load each session. Until now we have been relying on the presence of Derek or David Taylor to ensure the system works but for the health of the club we will be training a wider team. The Committee has authorised the purchase of a decent sized TV to display results (and of course to allow for a Melbourne Cup night, etc) – up till now we have had to beg/borrow/steal a set and then spend ages trying to set it up and tie it into the system – not always successfully! Sound profits from our two major tournaments this year have made this purchase possible earlier than planned. Also we have started the upgrade of our bridge chairs with improved padding and new covers – a justified expense from our Refurbishing Reserve. We expect the chairs to be finished over the next few months so look for greater comfort! The car park security cameras proved their worth recently when we were able to identify a couple of small incidents from the recorded videos.

Bridge Lessons: Jocelyn Langdon has just finished her set of lessons with a class of 20 learners. This has been a major task for her and the Club is very grateful for the energy and interest she puts into developing new players. As part of their learning fee (\$60 for 10 lessons) we offer them free membership of the Club for the rest of the subscription year and waive the Entry Fee of \$15. Whether they take this up will depend on our welcome when they put in their first appearance at one of our sessions! Here is an article gleaned from the Rotorua Bridge Club newsletter (*acknowledged with thanks*) which we can all take to heart:

*(Jocelyn's) lessons are nearing an end and the people who have been learning how to play bridge are about to make that bold leap into playing on club nights (and/or days) - in fact starting Monday 18th June. Please be kind to them! Remember back when you first learned? It may be a while back for some of us but I still remember how nervous, and how stupid, I felt. (Still do feel stupid sometimes. And you don't need to tell me it's because I **am** stupid!) When most of us started it was back in the days of hand dealt cards and manual scoring. Everything is so much faster now, so we really do have to take it easy on these fledgling bridge players. New players are the lifeblood of our club – if you want to be playing into your 90's (and I certainly do), we need to bring new people along all the time. Jocelyn (and all the previous teachers) has done a stellar job in getting people ready to play, but it's up to the rest of us to make sure they keep playing, and enjoy it. So, a few pointers, especially on the first few nights, for welcoming these brand new players:*

- Let them consult their notes for the next 12 months

- Let them make mistakes without mentioning it

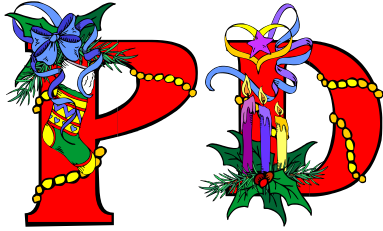
- IF they ask what they did wrong, keep it simple and only mention one thing

- Don't call the director unless absolutely necessary and if you do please reassure them that 'it's okay, not to worry'

- Let them know we have all felt like idiots (and some of us still do!) but they're supposed to be having fun, so just relax.

Please be welcoming..... **Our next set of learners lessons start mid-July with David Taylor as the tutor. Get any one you know who is interested to contact the Club on our Club phone – it always has the answer service on and we will follow up.**

And talking of new players, it has been great to have a couple of boys from David Taylor's school Bridge Club joining us for half the night on a Monday. We know it causes a phantom after supper but who can tell what this experience could lead to in Youth Members of the club and winning them for our great game. The committee appreciates your patience with them and welcome to them.



President's mid-winter Dinner

This event started by Rosemary last year will be on again this coming Sunday, 24th June, commencing at 1-30pm. The theme is 'Xmasy' so come in some glad rags if you can. You can arrange your own partner who does not have to be a club member. You can even enter on your own - Rosemary will find you a partner. Spouses are invited to join in the dinner even if not playing in the bridge session. (Expect play to end sometime after 5pm). The cost for the dinner is only \$5 per head and there is no charge for playing in the bridge session. There will be a cash bar.

Our President's Day is sponsored by UNITED TRAVEL to whom we are most grateful.

To assist catering entries MUST be made on the clubroom list by Friday or phoned direct to Rosemary.

Valete

The Club acknowledges with sadness the recent death of member **Alison Skelly** after a brave battle with illness over the last couple of years and extends to her family our sympathy.

We also wish to acknowledge the death of one of our long time sponsors, **Elaine Westerman** of Bayleys Real Estate. Elaine and her twin sister Yvonne along with their mother Dorothy have supported us over many many years and are sponsors of our Intermediate 5 B Tournament each year, with a representative from the family usually joining us at the Prize Presentation. We shall miss her and offer our condolences to the members of her family.

Not in the same way, but equally we shall miss our migrant players **John Branfield** and **Lorraine Bevan** who have indicated they will not be summering in Taupo in the future, and **Yvonne Pitcher** who has moved to the Hawkes Bay. Go well and you will always be welcome to visit us at the Club at any time.

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Thanks – Ralph Robertshawe (raldi.rob@xtra.co.nz)