

**BRIDGE TE AROHA: lovely place, lovely game ♠♥♦♣**

**Te Aroha News December 2023**



### **The Christmas Party and Prize-Giving.**

The last Tuesday of November was celebration time at the club with drinks, Christmas dinner, prize-giving and then bridge. The night was well attended with over 40 members along with guests Judith Howard and Sonia Crawford present. After some socialising time, it was time for the awarding of trophies which all looked sparkingly fresh (thanks, Joy) and certificates. Then, it was down to dinner and with Corolyn in charge, it was a feast. Lovely to see you back at the club, Corolyn, after what has been a difficult year for you.

Ham, beef, spuds, sea-food, all manner of salads (strawberries gracing one) to be followed by Christmas “pud”, chocolate log, fruit salad and a load of “pav”. Surely there was something delicious there for all palates?

Then there was bridge...and seeing this is Te Aroha, a glass or two of port, too, to round off the evening. It was lovely to see Laurie there, there for the port too!

## Saluting the winners.



My pick of the winners, at least pictorially. That's Moira and Martin who came through to win the Hemmes Kalma Trophy at the end of the year. In getting the trophy, Moira was heard to say this is the first one she has ever won. Nice.

## The Friday Town Clock



Congratulate to Nick on being the first winner of the Friday Individual event. Nick was not there to collect his new trophy.

A word or three of thanks to Peter TJ for donating this new trophy...and how

neat it looked. Peter spent a long time in creating this trophy and it really looks just great. Well done to both the designer and the winner.

### **The Golden Girls**



The "Golden Girls" team showed the rest of us not just how to look pretty good but to play well, too. They "cleaned up" to win the Saxon Teams. Congratulations Shirley, Norma, Nancy and Rochelle.

## All on her own



That's Rochelle who is very happy to win the Slam Cup. "The first of many such victories" Rochelle was heard to say. Let's see if she keeps her promise.

## Most Improved Player and Best Novice



Well played, Tineke and let's hope to see you get better and better.



Oscar seems to have picked up the game so well and he's reduced the average age of the club members considerably.

**Triumphant over Thames**



The club was in his two night battle with Thames with Joy and her partner winning the Enid Nichol and Gilligan Barclay trophies for best performing pair.

**Mokena Handicap Winner**



Well, Shirley was, along with Katrina who could not be there on prize-giving night.

**Top Individual**



That's Joan with her overall victory in the 6-night Auckland-Te Aroha Cup handicap event. The companion "scratch" Auckland Cup went my way.

**Early Season Jim Shine winner**



That's Victor who like all our prize-winners looked extremely happy on getting their trophies and certificates.

## The Big Scorers



at the club: 73.3% for Richard and Peter

## and A Big Thank You



to our retiring President. Rochelle will still be the club Partnership Steward... great news.

## To get you to Bridge on time

Well, you should all know that the aim is to start at 7pm sharp on a Tuesday


night in the New Year. It is possible (only a suggestion 😊) that that is why all dates in our program book for January and February 2024 are one day out. They are all Mondays, instead of Tuesdays. So, perhaps that is to help those who arrive at 7.01pm to arrive a day early? Anyway, I am sure you will all realise that the Monday dates should be Tuesdays. If not, the fridge is usually well stocked if you want to stay at the club overnight!

## “Second Best”

“Second best” is how I felt recently after playing in the Rotorua Christmas Party Tournament with Joy and the Taupo Christmas Party Tournament with Anna. Despite scoring between 65 and 67% in all 4 sessions of the 2 events, we were second in each session and second overall in each tournament. It’s tough coming out on top!

## Two lessons from two deals

However, there was a good reminder at the Taupo event that singleton trump leads can be very dangerous. Ironically, the poor choice of opening lead came from one of the victorious pair. Some mildly aggressive bidding saw us reach a rather good slam:

East Deals	♠ A Q 8 6 4		
None Vul	♥ A K 10 8 7		
	♦ Q 8 7		
	♣ —		
			
	♠ K 10 7		
	♥ J 4 2		
	♦ A K		
	♣ K 8 4 3 2		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		Pass	1 NT
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	2 ♠
Pass	3 ♥	Pass	4 ♠
Pass	4 NT	Pass	5 ♥
Pass	6 ♠	All pass	

After my 11-14 1NT opener, Anna showed 5+ spades (2H) and 4+ hearts (3H). When I owned up 2 key-cards (SK and DA) in support of spades, Anna bid 6S. How would you play this on the lead of DJ from West?

It would seem normal to play S7 to SA, then SQ and a third spade to the SK. Then, with all trumps drawn, you can play heart to the ace, diamond to the king and take the heart finesse for the overtrick.

That's fine but when West discarded on the second round of spades, you had a certain trump loser and needed the heart finesse to work to make your contract. The pressure is suddenly on. Would you have made 6S?

East Deals  
None Vul

♠ A Q 8 6 4  
♥ A K 10 8 7  
♦ Q 8 7  
♣ —

♠ 2  
♥ 9 6 3  
♦ J 10 5 3 2  
♣ 9 7 6 5

W N E  
S

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

♠ K 10 7  
♥ J 4 2  
♦ A K  
♣ K 8 4 3 2

Down 1 except that West had led S2 at trick 1 and I could draw trumps in four rounds and then take the heart finesse scoring +980. Leading a singleton trump is very dangerous (your partner may hold Qxx or Jxxx) and if there is no compelling reason to lead that singleton, do not. DJ seemed a sound choice from the West hand...or even any club.

While on opening leads, what is choice from this hand after a snappy sequence:

East Deals  
E-W Vul

♠ J 8  
♥ 10 4  
♦ A 10 8 2  
♣ A Q 8 6 3

W N E  
S

West North East South

4♦ 6♥ 3♦ 3♥

All pass

I suppose I should also ask you whether you would have doubled 6H? This board and sequence occurred recently at the club and Rochelle, South, and yours truly, in the North seat, were unlucky that Malcolm was on lead. Malcolm drew a very good inference that for North to bid slam missing two aces that they were not anticipating to lose a diamond trick.

Thus, seeing only one trick, he did not double but he did not lead a diamond either. He found the only lead to beat the slam for sure, CA, as this was the layout:



East Deals		♠ A K Q 9 7 5 3	
E-W Vul		♥ Q 9 6	
		♦ —	
		♣ 9 7 4	
♠ J 8		<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: green; color: white; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid black;">           N W     E S         </div>	♠ 10 4
♥ 10 4			♥ K 3 2
♦ A 10 8 2			♦ K J 9 7 6 4 3
♣ A Q 8 6 3			♣ J
		♠ 6 2	
		♥ A J 8 7 5	
		♦ Q 5	
		♣ K 10 5 2	
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		3 ♦	3 ♥
4 ♦	6 ♥	All pass	

When East played CJ, Malcolm continued with a second club. Trumps could be drawn via a heart finesse and the contract was down one. Had Malcolm led DA, declarer ruffs and has to decide how to play trumps. HQ can be played and East must cover to give the defence a chance. Laying down HJ will then see the slam make.

The South hand could have been much stronger for the 3H bid...and even with such a poor overcall, it still had play but not when Malcolm was West.

So, remember that lesson about a player jumping to slam after the opposition have bid. They should have first-round control of your suit. Look elsewhere to try to beat the slam.

### **Mid-month miscellany at the club.**

Three stories from one Tuesday session at the club.

### **What you want on your Christmas Tree**



*I am not too sure but if it has to be playing cards, then please give me a couple of aces and the king of trumps rather than random spot cards!*

## A break in time!



*Well, we needed a new clock and we got one and “we” opened the packaging and a small breakage did occur.*

## A “Doggy Bag” from The Grand



*Now, what did Rochelle have in her coffee cup? We can skip the obvious and other non-alcoholic choices. Inside is a little Pinot Gris from a session at The Grand, a loose translation of a doggy bag! “Waste not want not” she may well add.*

Well, our bridge club does close for Christmas...not for long though. There is a game on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December and if have not got a partner, just turn up and you will get a game or maybe ask someone you have not played with before or for a long time. The Tuesday reopening date will be confirmed on/after the evening of Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December. Friday day sessions commence on Friday January 12<sup>th</sup> 2024. Here’s wishing you all a Happy time over the Christmas/ New Year period.

*Richard*



