

# MOOS NOOS



## CATHERINE AND JOL DO THE DOUBLE

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Four tables of beginners from lessons this year took part in the fourth Mini Moos afternoon hosted by Te Awamutu Bridge Club on Sunday 13 October.

Doing the double were Hamilton's Jol and Cath Glyde who won on their last outing at Hamilton.

Runners up were Richard Collier (Te Awamutu) and Liz Wall (Hamilton). Just pipped at the post by one point were our third placed pair, Moos stalwarts, Fred and Clare Grace. Thanks to Moshe for photos.



Place	Pair	Club	IMPS
1.	Cath and Jol	Hamilton	102
2.	Richard and Liz/Jane	Te Awamutu/Hamilton	96
3.	Fred and Clare	Hamilton	95
4.	Kasthuri and Mary	Hamilton	92
5.	Mary and Liz/Jane	Morrinsville/Hamilton	90
6.	Mary and Kasthuri	Hamilton	84
6.	Moshe and Marcienne	Te Awamutu	84
8.	Rae and Mary	Cambridge	81
9.	Ross and Jo	Morrinsville	78

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# MORTON'S FORK: by Nick Whitten

## Morton's Fork

The resourcefulness of Cardinal John Morton has earned him a permanent place in the English language. As Lord Chancellor under King Henry VII his task was to collect taxes for the royal coffers. Although he had a free hand as to what tax rate to charge he was no doubt aware any perceived deficiencies could result in him losing his job (or his head).

His approach was if the household had a Rolls-Royce (or its 15<sup>th</sup> century equivalent) in the garage he would say "you obviously have money to throw around; you will be taxed at the high rate". And if they obviously lived frugally he would say "you are obviously stashing lots of money way; you will be taxed at the high rate". Since then the term "Morton's Fork" describes a situation where one apparently has a choice, but in reality either option leads to the same (unsatisfactory) outcome. It can apply to any activity, including bridge.

Here is an example from one of the hands from Mini Moos 4 at Te Awamutu.

Board: 7

Dealer: S

All Vul

♠ 8 4  
♥ J 8 6 5 4  
♦ Q 9 2  
♣ Q 5 3

♠ A Q 6 2  
♥ K Q T  
♦ J 4  
♣ T 9 7 6

♠ K T 9 7 5 3  
♥ 3  
♦ A K 8  
♣ A J 4

♠ J  
♥ A 9 7 2  
♦ T 7 6 5 3  
♣ K 8 2

As was mentioned in the notes East might try 6♠ after partner opens 1NT, and if so South's choice of lead is critical.

Lead a club and declarer is doomed as South must make a heart and club trick sooner or later. But lead the ♥ A and declarer easily makes the rest of the tricks.

What was not mentioned was if South makes a neutral lead of a diamond or a trump. Declarer has 10 tricks (6 trumps, two diamonds, a diamond ruff and a club) so needs two more. So he draws trumps then leads his singleton heart.

South is now caught in Morton's Fork.

If he plays the ♥ A declarer now has two tricks with the ♥ K and Q

if he plays low declarer can finesse twice in clubs, losing only to the ♣ K

## MOOS CORNER — with Jane Stearns

### No Trumps Nightmares

Are you new to the game and enjoying playing your contracts in NTs? If you are, then firstly, that's great and good for you. Secondly, I hate you. If you fall into the other category of new player, (like I was) where NT very quickly becomes the bid of last resort, you have my complete understanding and sympathy. You endure a few NT contracts where you go 6 light, and then decide, it really would be best for all concerned if you played in a suit, even a 5 card fit holds appeal, rather than bidding the dreaded NT.

When you find you really have no choice but to put the letters NT down, a sense of dread overtakes you as the opening lead is made. You try to do what your teacher said. You count your winners. What happens when you do this? They do not add up to the number that you need. So you are in 3NT and can only count 6. Or you are in 1NT and can only count 4. Your heart moves to your mouth, you start feeling nauseous, you can feel a flush starting to creep across your face, and a bead of sweat has broken out on your brow. You know only too well what is about to happen, because it has happened before, and sure enough, it is going to happen again. You take your first finesse in an attempt to increase your trick tally, and it loses. The opening lead is returned, and the cards have suddenly changed, as the person to your left now has at least 20 cards of the same suit to play out, or at least that is how it feels. To add insult to injury, when entering the score, you find everyone else has made their NT contract with an overtrick.



Opponents are (mostly) nice about it. They will say things like, "I hate doing this" and "Sorry about that" or the old favourite, "Distribution ... terrible distribution". But you know in your heart it wasn't, it was your inability to play in NTs and the frustration that goes with that inability. The worst phrase people used, which was always intended to be a help, was: "You've got to make your losers first". This seemed to me the most banal piece of advice any person could possibly offer. I had no trouble making losers, I was making heaps of them. I had gone 5 light ... how many more losers was I supposed to make? Fourteen months. That's how long it took me. Fourteen months to get a grasp on what NTs was about. Some of my classmates had grasped it by the end of lessons. They got it. Why didn't I? It wasn't as if I wasn't trying. I was really keen to learn. I just couldn't get it. I had been returning home to my husband after bridge for a year and barking at him that I was giving up this stupid game. Fortunately I have a husband of the variety that takes an interest, offers consoling supportive words, rather than agreeing I should give up and the sooner the better so he could have some peace.

If any of this sounds vaguely familiar, let me offer you a ray of hope. If you continue to play bridge, there will come a point when you will understand what NTs is about. It may take a year, it may take two, it may take more, but that point will come for you. When it does you will be so glad you hung in there and kept trying. Fourteen months on, I came home and when my husband asked me how I had done I told him. "I get it. I get No Trumps." I was grinning from ear to ear. I hadn't come top that night, but finally, finally, the penny had dropped. I got it. Of course, this breakthrough doesn't stop me from routinely forgetting what I should be doing, and playing to the danger hand, or forgetting to duck when I know better. At least the principle of what I should be doing is lodged in my brain.

If you are struggling with NTs then I have two pieces of advice to offer you. One is to read a book by Paul Marston called Principles of Card Play. I came across it at congress a couple of years back now and it is simply brilliant. Check your club's library or local library to see whether you can borrow a copy. Ask your club to invest in a copy. Or quite simply, indulge yourself. If I had been given a copy of that book to read at an earlier stage, I am sure my struggle would not have been so great. The second piece of advice, and I really hate to tell you this ... you've got to make your losers first. Keep trying and good luck.



## INVITATION TO MINI MOOS GARDEN PARTY

Join Jane and Nick for the final Mini Moos for 2013 at the lovely Te Aroha Bridge Club. We plan to hold the Bridge in their club garden and serve Pimms and Lemonade as well as Strawberries and Cream. \$10 entry fee. Do support this small but enthusiastic club if you can. After a glass or two of Pimms the bidding will flow. Come and enjoy brunch in advance at the lovely Ironique Café and Bistro in Te Aroha. (Voucher in the Entertainment book if you have one) To those of you who might like to make a weekend of it and enjoy the spa and/or the mountain, we recommend Te Aroha Landings <http://talanding.co.nz/> run by Jillian O'Neill one of our Te Aroha Moos. Mention the Bridge Club when you book and a donation is made to the Te Aroha Bridge Club.

*See you there !*

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

SUNDAY 3 NOVEMBER—FINAL MINI MOOS AT TE AROHA

FRIDAY 8 NOVEMBER—NZ WIDE PAIRS

Join the entire country playing the same boards in one night. Hamilton, Cambridge, Morrinsville all run this event so you can take part at any of those three clubs.

Sponsored by Babich Wines the highlight at the Cambridge Club is that the entry fee includes a glass of the sponsor's product. Save it to the end if you are serious about the bridge or drink it first if there for fun.

A helpful booklet is produced by NZCBA accompanying the evening's boards which every participant receives at the end of the bridge. Containing helpful hints on how the bidding should go and the how to determine the best line of play, NZ Wide Bridge is a great event for beginners to take part in. You do have to pre-register and cannot just turn up on the night as the numbers that can take part at any particular club are fixed (there has to be an even number of tables) Ask about the event at your club and register now.

HAPPY BRIDGING EVERYONE!

