

Non-bridge humour

A member who wishes to remain anonymous has sent me these Hilarious Signs.

Pizza Shop: 7 days without a pizza makes one weak.

Vet's waiting room: Back in 5 minutes. Sit! Stay!

Electrician's truck: Let us remove your shorts.

Plumber's truck: We repair what your husband has fixed.

Plastic surgeon's office: We can help you pick your nose.

Gynaecologist's office: Dr. Jones, at your cervix.

Maternity room door: Push, push, push.

Plumber's truck again: Don't sleep with a drip - call your plumber.

Outside an exhaust shop: No appointment necessary. We'll hear you coming.

Request from the Committee

Please help us keep our membership rolls up to date by telling Baujke Blok or another committee member of any inaccuracies or changes in your details.

Items for the Newsletter

Thank you to those who have sent me copy. Some more of it will appear in future issues.

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News Letter 2003

Taieri Bridge Club

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Bill Gates

Bert Oskam sent me an article from the magazine Australian Bridge about Bill Gates (famous for being the richest man in the world) who has become a bridge enthusiast. Gates is quoted as saying "At the moment computers are way behind at bridge....I have no plans to change that". Gates is quite correct of course but nevertheless computers offer superb practice opportunities on the internet. If you have access to the world wide web you will find literally hundreds of sites devoted to bridge.

Among the reasons that Gates gives for enjoying bridge are the mental challenge, the social element of a partnership game, and there always being something new to learn. Aren't these the very reasons we enjoy bridge at Taieri? - and we manage without Bill's billions.

Play problem

We all like to make a slam! What's your best line in 6♣ with a spade lead from West?

♠ A K Q J T 9

♥ 9 8

♦ 9 2

♣ A T 2

♠ void

♥ K J T

♦ A Q T 8 3

♣ K J T 9 8

What a mess! Your partner has overbid again; you should have forbidden him that sugar biscuit at tea-time - it's made him too frisky. Looks like you may have a heart loser, a trump loser, and a diamond loser. Your partner is looking hopefully across the table at you and you have a feeling that they might not accept blame for the auction. So what should you do?

See page 7.

Play problem answer

You'd better hope that clubs are 3 - 2 otherwise things could get very messy. But it's not best to finesse in clubs. If that loses you will most likely find those pesky opponents cashing the Ace of hearts. So I recommend (anyone have a better idea?) that you play two top trumps ending in dummy. If the queen falls you are home (5 clubs, 6 spades, one diamond). If not, then play spades, discarding hearts in your hand (hoping neither opponent has a singleton spade or they can ruff in and cash a heart before you've finished discarding them). When an opponent ruffs win the return, enter dummy with the last trump, finish the spades, and finally rely on the diamond finesse.

That line works if either the Q♣ falls doubleton or the diamond finesse works (and some 4 -1 breaks in clubs are OK too). Clearly better than an immediate club finesse.

Well, if you succeeded your partner will preen themselves on their accurate bidding. If you failed at least your perspicacious analysis might win the post-mortem.

Bridge Humour

The American player Edgar Kaplan was one of the originators of the Kaplan-Sheinwold bidding system (guess who was the other?) which is the basis of the main system nowadays used by American tournament playets. Kaplan was an entertaining bridge commentator with many bridge witticisms. Some of my favourites are:

4♥ is a very good bid -- but on some other hand. His lead was the middle from the top of nothing. East is wondering why he didn't pass 1♥. So am I. North doubled 5♥ to tell himself what to lead. He has left himself no flexibility; he can no longer go down.

Frieda's dilemma (Bidding and Play)

Frieda must try to reduce her trumps to the same length as East's by ruffing four times in her own hand. She aims for a two card ending with the lead in dummy. Dummy will contain ♠7 6, East will have ♥J 9, and Frieda will have ♥Q T. When she leads a spade East will be "finessed". This sort of play is called a trump coup. It will only work if East has not managed to ruff one of dummy's winners.

Conventions: Unassuming Cue Bids

When we overcall an opponent's opening bid we can have quite a wide range of possible hands - some people have anywhere between 8 HCP and 17 HCP. The usual reason for overcalling is to suggest to our partner a lead or possible sacrifice so we'll have a good suit and at least 5 of them. But how can partner judge what to do if (s)he has a good hand? Bidding game in our suit could be a disaster if we overcalled on thin values. But if partner always plays us for a minimum we may sometimes miss game.

Many experts play a convention called "Unassuming cue bids". Suppose we have overcalled an opening 1♦ bid with one 1♠ say. If our partner bids 2♦ (the opponent's suit) it means "I have at least 10-11 HCP and *support for your spades*; how good are you?". You can bid 2♠ with a minimum and stop low or bid anything else if you have opening points.

One of the advantages of this is that partner can raise the overcaller's suit without promising a decent hand (because good hands bid the unassuming cue bid).

Bidding and play

Frieda Mayr, our latest member who has just flown in from Sydney, recently picked up this hand as dealer.

♠ 9 4
♥ A Q T 8 7 4 3 2
♦ void
♣ Q T 8

Not being of timid temperament she opened 4♥. Somewhat surprisingly she heard a 4♠ response from her partner, a distinguished old gentleman called Gordon Rhode. What's this, she thought, doesn't Gordon like my hearts? Just in time she remembered that Gordon's bid must be a cue bid agreeing hearts. Thinking she had nothing to lose by showing her diamond void she gaily bid 5♦. She was somewhat taken aback by Gordon's reply: 7♥!

The bidding had been:

Frieda	Gordon
4♥	4♠
5♦	7♥

The lead was a small diamond. Gordon did seem to be on the same wavelength for this what she saw:

♠ A K 7 6
♥ K
♦ Q 7 6 3 2
♣ A K 5

♠ 9 4
♥ A Q T 8 7 4 3 2
♦ void
♣ Q T 8

Frieda counted up her tricks: 2 spades, 8 hearts, 3 clubs. That seemed to come to 13 but she checked several times just to make sure. Gordon was going to be proud of her. She ruffed the diamond lead and led a heart to dummy's king. Disaster! West discarded a diamond.

Well, the good news is that the four outstanding hearts are in the East hand. Unfortunately, dummy has only ♥K and so a normal finesse is impossible. Is there any hope for our heroine?

Look to page 6 for the happy ending but try to figure it out first. Notice that Frieda didn't use any ace-asking bid - with a void that would not have been very useful.