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Memories of their good boards had quite dispelled those of their disasters. They decided to enter the forthcoming A point tournament and to meet regularly from now on to practise their bidding. The suggestion to meet for bidding practice was made by Gordon who was beginning to find many things in Frieda besides her bridge that attracted him. He had been widowed for several years and Frieda's bubbly chatter quite dispelled his loneliness. But he was shy to declare his feelings fearing that Frieda would think him foolish. He would have been surprised to know the real state of Frieda's heart. She was very taken by his courteous old-world charm but her upbringing made it hard for her to give obvious encouragement. We shall leave our heroes there, hoping that they may find a way past their mutual reticence.

Tournament Appeals Committees

If there has been any irregularity at the table no matter how inadvertent, it is mandatory to call the tournament director; no stigma is so attached. The TD's job is to ensure fairness for all but sometimes they have to rule under pressure. If you would like to query the TD's ruling, all you need do is (courteously!) inform them that you wish to appeal. Your appeal is then heard by the Appeals Committee at the end of play. They will have greater time to consider all the facts.

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Taieri Bridge Club

Issue Number 78 June 2003

Taieri Tournaments

The Taieri B point tournament on 3 May was a great success for the club with 27 tables. Many thanks to all of you who gave your time, raffle donations, and organisation skills. The event was won by James Lee and David Stewart from the Otago Bridge Club. Jean Young, seventh out of 54, was the highest placed Taieri player; a very good result against some top class players. No sooner is one tournament over than we are preparing for the next. Our A point tournament will take place on 14 June. As I said last month, tournament is the best way to improve your bridge. So come along and compete, and sharpen your bridge against some tough (and not so tough) opposition.

New bridge players

This year's graduates of our bridge classes are now playing on Saturday afternoons and Monday evenings. Many thanks to Tamsin Meaney and Freda Stuckey for running this year's lessons.

Play for the drop?

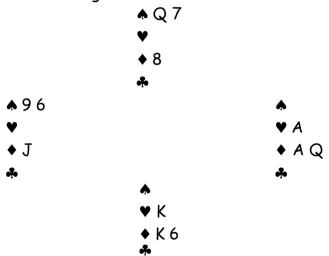
Hand 19 of the Taieri B morning session produced these cards for East-West

^	∧ A K J
♥J8542	♥ A
♦ A 9 7 5 4 2	♦ Q J 8 6 3
♣ A Q	♣ K 763

South was the dealer and passed at all tables. Most Wests now bid 1♦. Assuming North passes, what is East's best action? In East's mind, surely, slam is certain but a direct Ace-ask is not the wisest choice since East cannot yet be sure whether to bid the grand. So, a temporising 2♣ is the best bid now. At this point, West mush show discipline and make a simple 2♦ bid (2♥ would be a reverse showing greater values). Now East can take control, ask for aces, and bid 6♦.

Most declarers now received the $K\Psi$ lead. They saw that they could make all 13 tricks if they could catch the $K\Phi$. Should they play for the drop or finesse? When a diamond is played from dummy, South plays the $T\Phi$. Declarer should play the Ace (which, as the cards lie, did drop the $K\Phi$). The reason is that, at this point, there are 11 cards in South's hand that could be the $K\Phi$ but there are 12 cards in North's hand; so there is a marginally greater likelihood that North has the $K\Phi$.

that she was not being allowed to play in her magnificent 8 card suit. East's final double was made with some confidence. Here is how the play proceeded. West led their fourth smallest spade which Gordon ran around to his $J \spadesuit$. He then played the $T \spadesuit$, West covered with the $K \spadesuit$, and dummy's $A \spadesuit$ won the trick. Now Gordon played 8 rounds of clubs on one of which West made the slight error of discarding a spade. This was the position with 3 tricks to go:



On the Q \spadesuit East discarded Q \spadesuit and South 6 \spadesuit . Gordon now played dummy's last spade. Poor East had lost track of the discards so didn't know which Ace to keep. They discarded the $A\spadesuit$ and West had to give the last trick to Gordon's $K\spadesuit$.

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Gordon's own finest hour had come about through Frieda's overoptimistic bidding so he was relieved when she herself recalled the hand. "You played that 6NT on hand 8 in the afternoon beautifully, Gordon", she said fondly (at least, Gordon interpreted her tone as a fond one and felt a frisson of excitement). This time, Gordon was South and the full hand was

South and the	tull hand was	
	A A Q 7 5	
	•	
	♦ 8	
	♣ <i>A</i> KJT98	7 4
∧ K 9 6 4 3		♦ 82
♥ T 9 3		♥ A Q 8 7 5 2
♦ J 9 7		♦ A Q T 5
♣ Q 2		4 6
	♠JT	
	♥ KJ64	
	♦ K 6 4 3 2	
	♣ 5 3	

West had been dealer and the bidding had been

W	Ν	E	5
Pass	2♣	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
Pass	6NT	Double	All pass

Frieda would have been the first to concede that her 6NT was an overbid but she was disappointed

Game swing

This was hand 3 in the afternoon of Taieri B. Dealer South.

	♠ QJ/62	
	♥AKJT8	
	♦ J 4	
	. 7	
∧ A 9		ΑT
♥ Q 9 2		♥ 753
♦ K T 8 7 3		♦ A Q 9 6 5
♣ A J 4		♣ KT53
	∧ K 8 5 4 3	
	♥ 6 4	
	♦ 2	
	♣ Q9862	

At one table South opened $2 \clubsuit$ showing a weak two-suiter including spades. In due course, North-South bid to $4 \clubsuit$ against which there was no defence. At other tables West was allowed to open $1 \spadesuit$ and, when East bid an aggressive $3 \spadesuit$, rebid 3 NT. You will see that West has 8 top tricks and can take a club finesse through South for the ninth. But a club finesse the other way would be fatal. At one table North led a top heart (wouldn't you?) and declarer artfully played the $9 \clubsuit$. That persuaded North she had struck gold and she led the other top heart setting up declarer's $Q \clubsuit$. A rare double game swing.

The tournament post-mortem

Frieda Mayer and Gordon Rhode had done creditably in the B point tournament. They had scored below 50% but had had a few unlucky boards. For a first tournament outing it had gone quite well. Meeting for afternoon tea in Gordon's bachelor flat they were looking at Hand 6 of the morning session (where Frieda was East and Gordon was West).

	♠ J 8 ♥ Q J T 5 3 ♦ 6 5 2 ♣ K T 5	
♠ A Q 6 2		♠ 953
♥ K		♥ A 8 6 2
♦ A Q 7		♦ KJ84
♣ J8764		4 9 2
	★ K T 7 4	
	♥ 974	
	♦ T93	
	♣ A Q 3	

They recalled the rather strange bidding:

Ε	5	W	Ν
Р	Р	1♣	Р
1♦	1♠	2♦	All pass

Frieda knew that she had played the hand

spectacularly well and was eager to relive the triumph. "South led the 9\ and, already I knew heaps about his hand" she said proudly. "What do you mean?" asked Gordon. "Well", she went on, "Surely that is a doubleton heart since with a singleton North would have had 7 hearts and would have bid. Also, South had overcalled so must have exactly 5 spades since with 6 he would have opened a weak two." Gordon certainly agreed with her reasoning so tactfully did not point out that South was a madman who had overcalled on a 4 card suit and made a rather non-standard lead.

Encouragingly, he said "And what happened then, Frieda?". Frieda remembered very clearly. "I won the heart in dummy, led a small club won by South who played a trump that I won in my own hand. Then I played my remaining club which was won by North. North played their singleton spade which I won with the QA in dummy and I played a third round of clubs, ruffing it with both opponents following. Now I started to count. South began with 5 spades, two hearts, and (I now knew) exactly 3 clubs; so they must have had 3 diamonds to begin with. But that meant that trumps were dividing 3-3. So I could draw trumps, ending in dummy and cash my two established clubs and the Ace of spades. I made 10 tricks for a top board." Continued on page 6.