

Continued from page 7.

In the afternoon session Gordon (North) had enjoyed being declarer in 4♠ on hand 17.

	♠ K 6 5 4 3	
	♥ A K Q 9 4	
	♦ Q	
	♣ T 2	
♠ T 9		♠ J 7 2
♥ 8 7 5		♥ J T 6 3
♦ A K J 8		♦ T 7 4 3
♣ K Q J 8		♣ A 5
	♠ A Q 8	
	♥ 2	
	♦ 9 6 5 2	
	♣ 9 7 6 4 3	

East led a diamond to West's ace and Gordon ruffed the diamond return. Now he established his heart suit before drawing trumps: A♥, heart ruff, A♠, Q♠, diamond ruff, K♠ and now his 3 good hearts. 10 tricks and a very good score.

Latest news from one of our members

The government announced today that it is changing its emblem to a condom because it more clearly reflects the government's political stance. A condom stands up to inflation, halts production, destroys the next generation, protects a bunch of pricks, and gives you a sense of security while you're actually being screwed.

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Taieri Bridge Club

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Taieri Tournaments

The club held two tournaments in August. Our tournament in aid of the Cancer Society raised almost \$1000 thanks to a splendid turnout of 28 tables. First North-South was Patricia Haden and our own Donna Ruwhiu; first East-West was Marettta and Derek Malloch. Peggy Morton and Nancy Hawker earned a commendable second place. The second tournament was the Graded Pairs tournament that offered prizes in three different grades so players of all abilities had a chance to win something. This was another successful event for the club with a turnout of 21 tables. The top pair was Eugene Feng and Dorothea Stewart. Taieri's practice of not providing a massive sit-down lunch (and therefore a much reduced entry fee) is clearly well liked and was adopted by the Otago bridge club at their recent Swiss pairs event. But they were not able to match Taieri's magnificent selection of snack food that was available throughout the day.

Last hand drama

At the end of a long tournament even experts sometimes have lapses of judgement. This was the last hand of a 60 board tournament at Otago.

♠ K Q 7 6 ♥ K 8 ♦ A T 8 7 2 ♣ 9 6	♠ 8 5 3 ♥ A Q J 9 7 5 2 ♦ Q 4 ♣ 2	♠ A J ♥ T 6 ♦ K J 9 3 ♣ A K J T 3
	♠ T 9 4 2 ♥ 4 3 ♦ 6 5 ♣ Q 8 7 5 4	

East-West were an experienced partnership with many national titles to their name. North had no such experience but was not to be intimidated. An expert auction saw East-West bidding to 6♦ at which point 99% of Norths would have passed. Not our heroine! Noting that East-West were vulnerable but her side was not, she sacrificed in 6♥. East knew he should double but, unwilling to be talked out of his slam, bid 7♦. This was two off, losing the A♥ and Q♦ (declarer playing the pre-emptor for diamond shortage). The moral? Don't assume your opponents will always get it right!

Continued from p6.

	♠ T 6 ♥ ♦ K J 6 ♣	
♠ ♥ ♦ A Q 3 ♣ J 8		♠ K J ♥ J ♦ T 7 ♣
	♠ ♥ ♦ 9 8 5 4 ♣ K	

The lead was now in dummy. She now played the J♣ and a confused North made the mistake of ruffing! Now Frieda overruffed, drew the last trump, cashed J♥, crossed to dummy with A♦ and won the last trick with 8♣; making 5. Gordon later quipped that this was ruff luck for the defenders.

The event had produced its ups and downs but they had taken to heart a dictum of S.J. Simon: "Don't try for the best possible result on every hand, just the best result possible." Their mixture of pragmatism, discipline, and developing partnership trust was turning them into a formidable couple at the bridge table. Secretly, both hoped to be a couple in another sense of the word but neither knew the way forward.

Hands from the Graded Pairs Tournament

Newly reconciled Frieda and Gordon had played in the Graded Pairs event. Hand 13 from the morning session had given Frieda particular satisfaction.

<p>♠ 9 7 5 2 ♥ 4 ♦ A Q 3 ♣ J 8 4 3 2</p>	<p>♠ T 6 4 ♥ A K Q 2 ♦ K J 6 ♣ A 9 6</p>
<p>♠ Q ♥ 9 6 3 ♦ 9 8 5 4 2 ♣ K Q 7 5</p>	<p>♠ A K J 8 3 ♥ J T 8 7 5 ♦ T 7 ♣ T</p>

North was the dealer and the bidding had gone:

N	E	S	W
1♥	1♠	2♥	3♠

All passed and Frieda, in 3♠, received a heart lead. North won with the ace, cashed A♣, and played another club. Frieda ruffed, then ruffed a heart, and played one round of trumps (noting the fall of South's queen). From the bidding it seemed that hearts were splitting 4-3 so now she played heart ruff, club ruff, heart ruff, club ruff. That left the following cards:

See page 7.

The No-trump ladder

How does one show strong balanced hands of various strengths? The quicker that is done the better because then partner can take control of the auction and reach the optimum contract knowing the combined assets. The standard Acol no-trump ladder goes

12-14 HCP: open 1NT

15-16 HCP: open one of a suit and rebid notrumps at the cheapest level

17-18 HCP: open one of a suit and jump rebid in no-trumps

19-20 HCP: open one of a suit and double jump rebid in no-trumps

21-22 HCP: open 2NT

23-24 HCP: open 2♣ and over partner's expected 2♦ denial bid 2NT

The Graded Pairs tournament produced this 27 HCP monster:

♠ A K 9 2; ♥ K Q; ♦ A Q 7; ♣ A K Q 5

Using the principles of the above table surely we should have

25-26 HCP; open 2♣ and over partner's expected 2♦ denial bid 3NT; and, for the monster:

27-28 HCP: open 2♣ and over partner's expected 2♦ denial bid 4NT

The monster's partner held a balanced 7 HCP and could immediately bid 6NT.

A gift for Gordon

(Frieda Mayer has, in error, just presented Gordon Rhode with a packet of Viagra at Dunedin airport)

It was obvious to Gordon from Frieda's confusion that her gift of Viagra was entirely inadvertent. Nevertheless he was knocked off balance and searching around for something humorous to relieve Frieda's discomfort he somehow managed to hit entirely the wrong note: "Thank you, Frieda; when do you think we should try it out?". This was too much for Frieda who, in the heat of her embarrassment, could not bear even a hint that she might have made an improper proposal. Wordlessly she gathered her luggage and marched off to the taxi rank. Gordon hastened after her with apologetic entreaties but it was to no avail. In an instant she was borne away by taxi leaving Gordon to plod slowly back to his car.

Over the next few days both of them repented of their hasty words (or, in Frieda's case, hasty lack of words) but neither could think of a gracious way of restoring rapprochement. After almost a week Gordon sent Frieda a bunch of spring daffodils accompanied by a saccharine verse of his own composition:

Let's mend our fences, dearest friend
This sorry argument let's end
And so to you these flowers I send.

Frieda, while she welcomed this olive branch, was still too shy to speak to Gordon directly. She therefore replied in kind with a postcard in which she also resorted to verse:

I thank you, sir, for what you wrote
In that apologetic note.
I chose a pot-luck unknown gift
Which caused in us a friendship rift
I would that we our way could see
To put aside our enmity

Lovers of the English language will be relieved to hear that no further rhymed nonsense was necessary before Gordon phoned Frieda and she invited him round to tea.

He stood somewhat nervously before her front door and rang her bell. The door opened and they regarded each other at the threshold before embracing each other warmly. After a few seconds each became aware that their enthusiastic greeting was being witnessed by numerous passers-by - a hardly seemly public display. Frieda was the first to collect herself. "I'm so glad you came, Gordon" she said. Gordon replied "So am I, Frieda". But he had learnt his lesson and the supplementary phrase "It's all thanks to the Viagra" which unaccountably came into his mind was mercifully left unsaid.