

Answers to Pottage quiz

- A. ♠ A T 9 5 4; ♥ K 3; ♦ K Q T 9; ♣ J 2
2♠. You have the perfect hand. Expect partner to pass with 2 or more spades (with a singleton or void in spades they might try 3♣ asking for your minor and you would bid 3♦)
- B. ♠ A T 9 5 4; ♥ K Q T 9; ♦ K 3; ♣ J 2
2♦. You are asking your partner to bid their better major; then you will pass.
- C. ♠ A K Q 9 5 4; ♥ K 3; ♦ K Q T; ♣ J 2
Double. You have a natural lead and expect to defeat their 1NT easily.
- D. ♠ A T 9 5 4 3; ♥ K 3; ♦ Q T 9; ♣ J 2
2♣. Your partner will then bid 2♦ and you will bid 2♠.
- E. ♠ A T 9 5; ♥ K 3; ♦ K Q 9; ♣ J 4 3 2
Pass. You have a good hand but no sensible bid.
- F. ♠ T 2; ♥ 2; ♦ A T 9 5 4; ♣ A K Q T 9
2NT. You don't mind playing at the 3 level in partner's better minor.

Those American presidents

1. Bill Clinton
2. John Kennedy
3. Richard Nixon
4. George W. Bush
5. George Bush Snr.
6. Ronald Reagan
7. Gerald Ford
8. Lyndon Johnson

New Letter

Taieri Bridge Club

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Christmas party

The club's Christmas party took place on 10 December and we had a record turnout. Opening the bar beforehand induced much merriment and led to a rather louder evening than usual. Frank, our director, had to instruct us not to enjoy ourselves so much but his advice was blatantly ignored. Congratulations to all those who went away with prizes from the various competitions of 2003.

Alexandra tournament

Several Taieri players competed in the January tournament at Alexandra. Congratulations to Adrian Dever and Donna Ruwhiu who came 6th and to Tamsin Meaney (playing with Wyn Jones) who came 9th.

Bridge Lessons 2004

Tamsin will be starting this year's bridge lessons for new players on 24 February. If you know of anyone who you think might like to learn bridge (or brush up their skills) please give their names to Tamsin. New members are very important to our club!

Low level contracts

Most of time we play in part-score contracts rather than game contracts, and slam contracts are even rarer (one a night if you are lucky). Yet most hands one sees in books and magazines feature high level rather than low level contracts. One reason for this is the game or slam bonus which heightens the drama. But another reason is that part-score contracts are often much more difficult to play. After all, if you are in 7NT, you simply have to ensure you don't lose any tricks! That's much easier than the contract of 1NT where you have to work out the optimal sequence of winning *and losing* tricks. Here's a hand (from Secrets of Success by Tony Forrester) that is much more like the bread and butter stuff we usually hold. West is declarer in 1NT and receives the lead of 3♦

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

Yeuuch! We would need a miracle to make this contract and the first thing to realise is that we are almost certainly going down yet again. Many players would tackle the heart suit hoping to find South with 3 hearts to the Queen thereby winning 4 tricks in hearts. Forrester is firmly of the opinion that we should play on spades, trying to

Know your American presidents

Who said

1. Abortion should be safe, legal, and unnecessary.
2. Ich bin ein Berliner.
3. I would have made a good pope.
4. A tax cut is really one of the anecdotes to coming out of an economic illness.
5. We're enjoying sluggish times, and not enjoying them very much.
6. Well, I learned a lot....I went down to (Latin America) to find out from them and (learn) their views. You'd be surprised. They're all individual countries



7. I've had a lot of experience with people smarter than I am.
8. Literature is mostly about sex and not much about having children. Life is the other way round.

Pottage Defence to 1NT

Last month I wrote about the advantages of having a defence to the opponents' opening 1NT, particularly about being able to show a two-suited hand. This month I shall describe the Pottage (aka Capelletti) conventions which is in common use around Otago. If your opponent opens 1NT you have the following possibilities

- 1 Double; a standard penalty double, 15+ HCP
2. 2♦: shows both majors and asks partner to bid their better major
3. 2♣: shows a single suited hand and asks partner to bid 2D; you then pass if your suit is diamonds or bid your long suit
- 4 2♥: shows at least 5 hearts and a minor suit
5. 2♠: shows at least 5 spades and a minor suit
6. 2NT: shows both minors - ideally at least 5 cards in each.

Try this quiz (answers on page 8)

Suppose they have opened 1NT. What do you bid with the following hands?

- A. ♠ A T 9 5 4; ♥ K 3; ♦ K Q T 9; ♣ J 2
- B. ♠ A T 9 5 4; ♥ K Q T 9; ♦ K 3; ♣ J 2
- C. ♠ A K Q 9 5 4; ♥ K 3; ♦ K Q T; ♣ J 2
- D. ♠ A T 9 5 4 3; ♥ K 3; ♦ Q T 9; ♣ J 2
- E. ♠ A T 9 5; ♥ K 3; ♦ K Q 9; ♣ J 4 3 2
- F. ♠ T 2; ♥ 2; ♦ A T 9 5 4; ♣ A K Q T 9

establish a trick in that suit. His thinking is that the lead seems to indicate a 4 card diamond suit so the opponents can't run more than 3 tricks in that suit; therefore, let them take those tricks and open up another suit for you. We may manage to lose only 3 diamonds, 3 spades (fewer if we can crash their spade honours together), and one or two clubs. There's every chance of being one down only.

On the other hand, if we start on hearts we may (failing the heart miracle) lose one or two hearts immediately and we might be two or three down. See what I mean about low-level contracts? In this hand we don't know quite what we should do because much depends on what suit the opponents switch to whenever they get in (and this will occur more frequently than if we were playing a higher contract).

One final point about this hand (which applies to many low-level contracts) and that concerns defence. If you were a defender you would know roughly how strong West was if she had opened 1NT. Therefore you know you are likely to defeat the contract but you want to defeat it as convincingly as possible; so to do this you want to frustrate declarer's wish that you broach suits for her. So play as passively as possible.

Gordon and Frieda play Sardines

On Christmas morning Gordon Rhode knocked eagerly at Frieda Mayer's front door carrying a bottle of champagne, some Belgian chocolates, and a bunch of red roses. Frieda had promised him a game of Sardines à deux and he felt that his luck was in. On the other side of the door Frieda was in a state of high agitation. She knew that Gordon had taken her humorous suggestion too literally and she wasn't quite sure what to do. In any case she had house guests: Voluptua her 18 year old niece with boyfriend Randy. Voluptua and Randy were embarrassingly demonstrative with their affection for each other and Frieda was finding it difficult sometimes to avert her eyes.

Stuttering Christmas greetings she opened the door to Gordon and explained that they would be four for dinner. Gordon hid his disappointment well and presented Frieda with his offerings. This deeply touched Frieda who, making introductions, opened the champagne and offered it liberally. A pleasant hour passed and all were feeling mellow. Abandoning her reserve Frieda suggested that they should all play Sardines and Gordon's eyes lit up. Frieda volunteered to hide first and after a few minutes Gordon followed in search, champagne bottle in hand. The young folk found themselves alone and repaired to the sofa; this was an

opportunity too good to miss. Gordon meanwhile was opening closet doors and cupboard doors until he heard a sound from Frieda's wardrobe (if truth be told she had recognised his coming and coughed discreetly to announce her whereabouts). On discovering her, Gordon too clambered into the wardrobe as required by the game and there they waited... and waited... and waited. But Voluptua and Randy were occupied.

Fifteen minutes passed and both Gordon and Frieda were feeling the strain of crouching in a confined space each trying not to intrude on the other's personal space but also acutely aware of each other. Eventually Frieda felt a hard object that seemed to emanate from Gordon sticking into her thigh. In fact it was the champagne bottle but Frieda's speculations were much wilder and she flushed a deep scarlet in the darkness. "Are you alright, Gordon?" she whispered. Gordon, whose arthritis was playing him up, answered "I'm a little stiff; am I poking you?". This did nothing to reassure Frieda who began to shake. Realising something was wrong Gordon reached out to comfort her and dropped the bottle. Suddenly all was clear, her anxieties vanished, and she in turn reached out to him. In a trice they were in each other's arms and there they stayed each hoping that the moment would never end.