

Active ethics

"Active ethics" is the name given to the special attention we should all try to give to playing our game as fairly and as considerately as possible. Here are some things that we need to do.

1. Always maintain a courteous attitude to everyone: partner, opponents, director, kibitzers and teammates.
2. Do not express displeasure or satisfaction at a lead, play, bid, double or any other call partner makes.
3. Always make sure that any conventional bids used by you and your partner are alerted and clearly explained to the opponents when questioned. If you are playing in a tournament make sure your convention card is correctly filled in, legible and available to your opponents.
4. Do not look to see the place in his hand from which another player pulls a card in playing, nor draw inferences from them.
5. Always make bids and plays in tempo -- without special emphasis or inflection of the voice or method of playing the bidding cards that would give partner information on the nature of your hand
6. Do not draw any inference from the fact that partner has hesitated, or has bid with any special emphasis or inflection of the voice.

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Tournaments

With the new year now well under way bridge tournaments are beginning again. Of course this year we shall have several of our own at Taieri (and I'll write about these later in the year). There will also be several at the Otago bridge club but we should also not forget those at some of the nearer towns such as Oamaru or Balclutha. Playing in a tournament is great fun and I recommend it to everyone. If you are still a bit hesitant about your bridge skills look for B-point tournaments or graded tournaments; whereas if you want to pit yourself against some better players go for A-point tournaments.

Tamsin and I played in the Alexandra A-point tournament in January and had a marvellous time. The event took place on Friday and Saturday night, and during the day we enjoyed visiting various local gardens as part of the Alexandra "Art in the garden" festival. In this newsletter I shall discuss a couple of the hands we played.

Deep finesse at Alexandra

The Deep Finesse computer program was used at the Alexandra tournament last month to give players an idea (after play!) of how many tricks they should have been making on each hand. Deep Finesse assumes optimal play by both sides and so sometimes draws unusual conclusions. In my first hand

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

the program claimed that West can make 6♣. Since many good players had gone down in that contract some explanation was required. Suppose North leads a diamond (her best lead; it drives out the A♦ and seems to establish a diamond trick and a heart trick to defeat the contract). But see how Deep Finesse plays. It wins the A♦

hearts and the diamond return I knocked out A♠. North then cashed A♣ and continued with a spade. I then played all my diamond, heart and spade winners after which the position was this

	♠ none	
	♥ none	
	♦ none	
	♣ Q 5	
♠ none		♠ none
♥ none		♥ none
♦ none		♦ none
♣ J 9		♣ K 8
	♠ none	
	♥ none	
	♦ T	
	♣ T	

Do you see the error in South's discards? He should have saved two clubs rather than hang on to his diamond winner. Because now I played J♣ and, even though North correctly covered with the K♣, my 9♣ was established as a winner when the T♣ fell.

Perhaps the bottom line is this: despite all the technical skills you might have, a little luck never does any harm!

Deep Finesse at Alexandra, cont. from page 3

Here is the hand in question.

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

North had dealt and the bidding had been

North	East	South	West
1♥	Dbl	Pass	4♥

All pass

The West declarers naturally all presumed that North had all the points and so lost a trick in trumps by playing a low trump to the Jack. At my table I also made this natural but losing play. However luck was with me. The lead was a low diamond. This gave me a diamond trick but I still seemed to have a loser in spades, one in hearts and two in clubs. However, after my losing play in

and plays a spade to the Jack. Then it plays A♠ discarding a diamond from its own hand. Next it ruffs a spade (but the K♠ doesn't fall).

Now comes the dramatic play. It plays a club to the nine! You would never risk this ordinarily, holding the top four trumps, but in this case it is the only way to get a much needed entry to dummy. Then Deep Finesse ruffs another spade establishing the fifth spade. Next, the program plays a club to the Jack (which draws the final two trumps), plays the master spade discarding another diamond, and ruffs a diamond to get back into hand. Finally it plays a heart towards dummy (luckily the A♥ is on side); even if North takes this, she cannot cash a diamond because Deep Finesse has discarded its diamonds.

My second hand is another Deep Finesse statement; this time Deep Finesses says you can make 10 tricks with hearts as trumps. Looking at all four hands (page 6) you would have to agree, but no sensible player would adopt Deep Finesse's line (which is to "finesse against South" in trumps rather than "finesse against North"). Only one declarer actually did manage to make 10 tricks and although this required a defensive error the hand is quite interesting nevertheless. (See page 6)

Voluptua's triumph

Voluptua and Randy were playing their first game of the year. The holiday period had been a breathless passionate time full of the
(concentrate on the bridge!! Ed,) Returning to reality with a jolt, Voluptua had been working very hard on her card play. She had noticed how much Randy had improved and she didn't want to get left behind, and she had been studying the book that Frieda and Gordon had given her for Christmas (101 tips for busy bridge players). Her first chance to shine occurred at the regular club pairs night. On the first board she was West, declaring 3NT after North had dealt and opened 1♠.

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

The lead was 6♠ and already Voluptua had a

decision. Should she let it run round to her J♠ hoping that North had led from the Q♠? Since North had bid spades she played low in dummy and was relieved when her J♠ won the trick. Next she played Q♦ which North covered with the K♦.

Well, that looks good she thought. I've caught the K♦. But just before she called for the A♦ she paused. Wait a moment! The A♦ was the only entry to dummy, and there were two top spades there; but, if she cashed them immediately, the opponents might run some spades when they came in with the A♥.

So, in a moment of pure inspiration (otherwise known as bridge tip 73: *keep your entries fluid*), she let the K♦ hold the trick. When North played another spade she won with the A♠, drove out the A♥, and eventually enjoyed 3 spade tricks, 3 hearts, 4 diamonds, and 1 club. The two overtricks gave her a top score.

But even better was to come for Randy idly asked why she had "given up a diamond trick". Voluptua was able to explain that she had a diamond to lose anyway; and then she explained about those entries. "But I'm sure you would have played the same, darling" she ended sweetly.