

**Ours is a great club!**

The B-Point Tournament ran so smoothly but only because many people contributed. It caught us a little by surprise being a month earlier than usual but we are lucky that so many people offer their services so willingly. A special thanks to Baujke and Kathleen who filled in as scorers at the last minute. The tournament would not have happened if they had not dropped everything to fill in. On the Fun night we were fortunate in having some of Kim Stewart and Judy Robertson's cooking. These little unexpected delights make being a member of the Taieri Bridge club such a pleasurable experience.

It is also the time of the year when I'd like to thank Alec who has ably assisted with the learners this year. He has turned up every week without fail. Alec does an enormous amount already for the club in helping out with building projects but the bar would also remain shut many club nights if he was not there to man it.

If you would like to contribute but are not quite sure how then talk to a committee member. We need more people to volunteer for bar duty but there are other things which come up occasionally and it is good to know who we can call on.

Thanks to everyone for making the club what it is.

*Tamsin*

## News Letter 2006

# Taieri Bridge Club

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## Easter Monday fun night

The club held another of its holiday fun nights over Easter - a full Chinese supper at the club followed by an evening's bridge. And all for \$7.

Many members will recall that, at our last AGM, there was some discussion about running teams events and the committee was asked to consider whether we could have a teams event. One of the difficulties that faces us with a teams event is getting an even number of pairs so that teams of four can be formed. The club's committee would like to use the fun nights as an experimental occasion to have a Multiple Teams evening. At our Easter fun night we didn't quite manage to have the right number of players and so we had to hold a normal pairs event. However, be assured, the committee is alert to the possibility of a teams night next time - if only we can get the appropriate number of players.

### Hints for improving players

Counting is very important in defence and declarer play. One of the simplest aspects of counting is often neglected: counting your tricks as declarer. Consider the West-East hands below

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

Your contract is 4♠ and the A♥ is led. Should you draw trumps (they break), run diamonds, and take the K♥? Or should you try for an extra trick by leading clubs so that you can ruff a club before taking your top winners?

And, once you've thought about that, how about this pair of hands? Same contract, same lead; should you try to ruff a club?

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

In the first case you should set about trying to ruff a club. You have 4 spades, 5 diamonds, and the K♥ on top; that is 10 tricks and a club ruff will make 11. But in the second case you shouldn't bother. You have 11 top tricks; and no matter what you discard on the long diamonds you cannot avoid losing either two hearts or a heart and a club.

First, let's see how South succeeds in making 10 tricks. Her line is to draw trumps, play off the top diamonds, and give the lead to West. West can take two clubs but then has to lead a heart away from his ace or lead a diamond allowing a ruff in the South hand and a heart discard from the North hand.

Now let's see how the defence can contain North to 9 tricks. East must lead a heart that West wins. Now *West must not cash the second heart*. For suppose West does that and switches to a top club (or plays another heart promoting a trump trick for his partner). Then declarer can win the continuation, draw trumps, and then discard club losers on the established hearts. So, after winning the initial lead, West must play clubs to establish his winners before taking the second heart.

### Mississippi heart hand: solution

North leads top diamonds until West trumps. But then West has fewer trumps than North and so cannot afford to draw trumps (if she does play out her trumps North will have an extra one left, will ruff the next lead and take the rest with diamonds). If West leads a black card then North trumps and leads another top diamond, keeping trump control. So West, for all his wonderful cards, takes 6 tricks only.

### B-point tournament

April's tournament had a field of 25 tables and was won by Alan Gear and David Stewart from the Otago club. As ever the tournament was superbly run by a willing army of volunteers, supported by generous raffle donors, and enjoyed by all. We again had hand records which gave the results of the Deep Finesse program's deliberations, and I always enjoy trying to understand how it comes to its conclusions. This hand, board 16 from the first session, entertained me.

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

Deep Finesse says that North can only make 9 tricks in spades but that South can make 10 tricks. Certainly 9 tricks are readily available (6 spades, 2 diamonds, and one club).

### Trump control - the Mississippi heart hand

I don't know the source of this story whose mysterious title is "Mississippi heart hand".

Imagine you hold

♠: A K Q; ♥: A K Q J T 9; ♦: void; ♣: A K Q J  
and you are declaring 7♥. Happy? You should be!  
But, guess what? The hands are

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

Still happy? After all you have as many trumps as North so should be able to draw all his and run your black suit winners.

What is the optimal defence for North-South and how many tricks will they take? Answer on page 7.

Can any reader can enlighten me on where this problem comes from?

### Minnie van Driver's first game (continued)

Minnie waited apprehensively as her opponents seated themselves and announced a slew of incomprehensible pre-alerts. Unbeknown to her, her opponents were the dastardly Weasel and Ferret who were metaphorically licking their lips (or, as Sinclair would undoubtedly have put it, lubricating their oral orifices) at the prospect of easy pickings.

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

Minnie, as South, counted her points. Finding the total to be 14 she beamed. Here at least was a situation she could handle. "1NT" she announced. "Shhh" snarled the Ferret "write it on the bidding pad". Suitably chastened she inscribed "1NT" in beautiful copperplate on the pad. "No, idiot, not on your partner's side" sneered the Weasel.

Eventually, the correct bid was inserted in the correct place. The Weasel (West) scrawled a contemptuous 2♦ and Sinclair (North) had a difficult problem. Eventually he doubled trying to get across the quality of his hands - and the Ferret competed to 3♦.

Now Minnie was one of God's pure simple souls. Not for her were the intricacies of competitive doubles, Lebensohl or all their complex ilk. She imagined that Sinclair's double was showing diamonds and so she tremulously bid 3NT. The Weasel's double could be heard in the street. Fearing the worst but deciding to trust his partner, Sinclair passed. As you will see, Minnie should have lost the first 5 tricks. However, the Weasel led a low diamond expecting his partner to have the Q♦. Minnie's Q♦ captured the Ferret's J♦. One of the best parts of Minnie's game was playing off winners and she next played three top hearts and six top clubs. The Weasel's three remaining cards set him an insoluble problem. He could not retain a top diamond as well as three spades. Hoping his partner held the TD he kept his spade guard and discarded both top diamonds. But now Minnie's T♦ further squeezed a spade from him and Minnie (who knew a finesses when she saw one) then took the last two tricks in spades. Four doubled overtricks!