



Palmerston North Bridge Club August 2010

Editorial

Hello again. Here we are again, late in the month, but there is a plan. After a trend of committee meetings getting later and later in the month, we did not have one at all in August. Next one is 3 September, and we will talk about fixing all the dates ahead of time in future. My plan is to publish the newsletter a week or so after each meeting.

Specials this month - check out Andrew's article on our club library; and what stop cards are all about and how to use them.

Ross Quayle

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Club Results for July

Congratulations to all our winners.

Monday:	Noeline Kenning & Bob Lawrence	61.88%
Junior :	Warren Fitzsimons & Heather Millar	60.71%
Snr/Snr Res Teams:	Ross Quayle/Amy Thomson/Alister Stuck/Wayne Burrows/Liz Burrows	132 VPs
Intermediate:	Tom Price & Margaret Price	54.24%
Friday:	Bob Lawrence & Susan Parker	55.99%

News

Congratulations to Bob Hurley on reaching the dizzy heights of Gold Grandmaster. That is well deserved; I can remember very few easy gains from playing against Bob.

The Working Bee was held at 1.30 pm Saturday 7 August, to prepare gardens for planting as well as general maintenance. Thanks to the 14 attendees. Good progress was made on the gardens. Ev and

Bob Hurley and Teresa Thorn did a follow-up and tidy-up and disposal of rubbish.

Mini-bridge

Wayne Burrows and I are working on the mini-bridge course scheduled for early October. Next month's newsletter will contain the definite announcement. If you have friends who would be interested in "bridge with trainer wheels" please send them along.

A big part of the lessons will be set hands illustrating aspects of good technique. We intend also offering a session for interested club members (pitched at junior and intermediate players) to try out these hands also. It will be a something of a dress-rehearsal for us, and a chance for less experienced players to improve their game. We will discuss setting up tricks by ruffing, when you should hold up your ace, signalling, and many other points and we will be happy to include any point of theory that you want to ask about.

The Bridge Club Library

If you have just started playing bridge you will quickly learn that there is always something else to learn! The lessons from Wayne give you enough background, especially on bidding ACOL, to play with enjoyment for several months but eventually you will want to learn things like how to get that extra trick that others seem to get or how to bid these mysterious things called transfers that some partnerships use. If this is you now is the time to investigate the bridge club library.

The library is in the corner of the back room and is kept locked. However, the key can be obtained from the session host who should have one or know where one is.

When you have selected the book you want write your name and date on the card in the pocket at the back of the book and drop the card into the grey box. Return the book into the same grey box when you have finished with it. I will unite book and card back together. You may have books out for a month.

Many of the books have a red spot-sticker or a yellow spot-sticker on them. The red spots indicate books for beginning players and the yellow spots are for those more suited to intermediate level players.

I can especially recommend *The Principles of Card Play* by Paul Marston as one to start with. The book is divided into 3 sections – play in notrumps, play in a suit contract and lastly defence. The first 2 sections should help you to find out where to get those extra tricks you need once you have bid into a contract and counted your definite winners or losers. It covers topics like discarding losers, setting up side suits and the danger hand. The last section looks at the opening lead, third and second hand play and discards. Each chapter has exercises with answers for you work through and repeat if you don't get them all correct. I found the best way to read this book was to work through a chapter by dealing out the hands and then deciding how to play them.

The House of Cards series are also very readable slim books for beginners. Some of the titles you might like to try are: *No Trumps are Easy!*, *Stayman & Transfers*, *Declarer Play*, *Defence* and *the Acol Flipper*. There are several others.

A word of warning – even books based on ACOL can have some slight differences from what Wayne will have taught. My advice is to stay with what you have learnt to start with until you are really confident and then it is up to you what you do but make sure you discuss it with your partner before playing.

If you have any questions or concerns about the library please contact me. And if there is a book that you think should be in it I would like to hear about it.

Andrew Brodie

What are the rules about Stop Cards?

The rules state:

“The use of Stop Cards is mandatory in all A Point Tournaments and is recommended in all other tournaments.

The “STOP CARD” is used during the auction as a Skip Bid Warning.

Before a player makes a bid that skips one or more levels, a Stop Card should be placed face up on the table to LHO, before making the (skip) bid. After allowing for any questions by LHO to be answered, the person who made the bid waits for approximately 10 seconds (but less at one's own discretion) before removing the Stop Card and LHO may bid.

When a player omits to use the Stop Card before making a skip bid, or to pause for the mandatory 10 seconds when required, the failure to do so may be taken into account by the Director, and subsequently by an Appeals Committee, when assessing what action to take under Law 16B (extraneous information from partner). In addition, frequent omissions may attract a procedural penalty.”

So we do not have to use them at club level but we choose to do so, because they are useful and because it helps train ourselves in their use.

Once a stop card is used, the next hand may not bid until it is removed from the table.

Note that the length of time the stop card is left on the table is discretionary. This recognises the many different circumstances that can arise. The most significant contrast is when bidding is contested and when it is not. For example, in the common sequence Pass – 1NT – Pass – 3NT - ? the stop card may be used for a token second or so. Compare that with 1S – 4H - ? where responder with a modest hand may have been considering between 1NT, 2 of a suit or a minimum raise. Now, after the 4H bid they have one chance and probably one only to show their hand. Their choices are between pass, 4S or double, (which usually shows values with poor spade support). They are entitled to some time to think about this choice. They may want to check the vulnerability and think about that. Their partner, however, is not allowed to draw any inference from the length of time they take to bid. Anyone can see that with nothing you will pass, therefore if you stop to think you must have something. Use of the stop card, for the full eight to ten seconds in this case, serves to protect the opener from inevitably receiving some unauthorised information if partner takes time to pass. It is a politeness to the opposition – it is of no advantage to the side which uses it.

So please practice using the stop cards whenever you make a skip bid; and use sensible discretion as to how long it should stay on the table.

Love those misfits

Here is a hand from a Tuesday night this month. South dealt and nil vulnerable. I was West and Evelyn Hurley was my partner.

I held:

♠
♥ J983
♦ A2
♣ KQ107652

Our bidding went:

South	West	North	East
Pass	1C	Pass	1S
Pass	2C	Pass	3S
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

At first glance I liked my hand a lot, but after the almost inevitable spade response from partner started to devalue it. With only ten points and four poor hearts compared to seven good clubs I was not tempted to rebid anything other than two clubs. Over 3S I thought what on earth do I do now? I have possibly only one trick for partner in spades. I bid 3NT hoping desperately that one of our suits would run, or it could be embarrassing. The lead was the three of diamonds (fourth highest). Here are all the hands:

♠	9642	♠	AQJ1087
♥	K	♥	Q104
♦	QJ63	♦	K985
♣	AJ93	♣	

♠	J983	♠	K53
♥	A2	♥	A7652
♦	KQ107652	♦	1074
♣		♣	84

Such is the fate of two promisingly shapely hands. A void opposite a void might be fantastic for defending a suit contract but is not ideal for playing no-trumps. Usually one tries for more than a combined 22 points as well. I need two entries to dummy to run the spade suit and there is only one quick one. There seem to be five losers at least, one diamond, one club, one spade and two hearts, and so I will take one down if I can get it. I decided to play on the red suits, if they behave then there will be only the three losers and then the defence will have to lead black suits for me. So I played the eight of diamonds from dummy to the ten and

ace, and returned a diamond. North played the jack, I took the king and lead ace and queen of spades to set up that suit. If the defence is patient they can get me two light, but it takes a bit of effort to see how. South lead a club to the king and ace, but then North took the queen of diamonds which is a mistake. I confess to using my double-dummy solver trying to work it all out. I end up with club winners and a possible heart entry to hand, and spade winners and a possible diamond entry to dummy. At some stage North must lead the king of hearts, but this is comfortable because they can deduce I don't have the ace of hearts, or otherwise I would be trying to use heart entries to reach dummy's spades. If this is inevitable for North, then probably the sooner they do lead it the better. One of the pretty results of a club continuation is an end-play of dummy. I must hold dummy's diamond stop, so after the clubs are gone and the king of hearts, North can lead a spade and win two diamond tricks with queen and six over dummy's nine and five.

After the queen of diamonds was lead North and I led clubs at each other and the defence took one spade, only one heart, one diamond and two clubs; and I was content with my one down.

I have no regrets about the bidding, there is nothing I would do differently next time. However, note that hearts plays nicely – but for only nine tricks, not ten. (I wouldn't want to play hearts if one defender had four trumps to ace-king!).

Ross Quayle