

# TABLE TALK

FEBRUARY 2026



TAURANGA BRIDGE CLUB | 252 Ngatai Road, Otumoetai 3110 | 07 576-5022 | [www.taurangabridge.co.nz](http://www.taurangabridge.co.nz)

- HAPPY -  
*Valentine's*  
- DAY -

WHAT'S HAPPENING/  
COMING UP  
(Make a note in your diary)

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Maria Arhanic  
Julie Bickers  
Mark Burggraaf  
Yvonne McRae  
Fieke Noteboom  
Alastair Pratt  
Margaret Wakelin  
Jill Warwick

Please make sure that your birth month is entered into Hello Club – no need to put the year

- Friday drinks this Friday 27th February at the end of play.
- Our 2026 **Bridge Lessons** begin Wednesday March 4th 11am & 7pm. Please let friends & family know. The lessons will be followed by supervised play for a number of weeks.
- We now have our own Facebook page... Please use this to promote our Lessons – share onto your personal Facebook page (if you have one).
- **Fun Over The Bridge** Sunday 8th March at Mt. Manganui Bridge Club. Make a note in your diary!! Sign up sheets are on the noticeboard... Open, Intermediate & Junior Teams are required. Pop your name up on a slot even if you haven't got a team.
- Sunday Bridge is back in action ... 3rd Sunday of the month. 12.45pm for a 1pm start. No partner required.
- **Bay Pairs** first session was Sunday at the Mount. Next session is Sunday April 12th at Whakatane. Enter on NZBridge website.

## WAIKATO BAYS REGION NOVICE, JUNIOR & INTERMEDIATE LEAGUE TOURNAMENTS

The Novice League is held on the same day as the Junior however rather than all day, it is an afternoon Tournament only. This is a superb opportunity to dip your toe in the water. You play 24 Boards, just like a Club session.

The Junior & Intermediate Leagues are all day Tournaments... 24 Boards in the morning (usually a 10am start), a break for lunch and then 24 Boards again in the afternoon, followed by a social gathering with nibbles & drinks and prize giving.

I mentioned the venues in an earlier Table Talk, some hold all 3 leagues on the same day however the smaller clubs split them for logistical reasons.

The Intermediate League kicks off in Taupo Saturday 28th February The Novice/Junior League in Hamilton 14th March.

## THE BENEFITS OF PLAYING BRIDGE

- Improve your concentration and problem solving skills.
- Improve memory.
- Keeps your brain young and your mind alert.
- One of the few activities to stimulate both halves of the brain in equal measure.
- Playing Bridge uses & develops logical thinking, inferential analysis, problem solving skills, sequencing, visualisation, lateral thinking, long & short-term memory, observation & psychology (or cunning).
- Believed Bridge can boost the immune system.
- Builds social connections.
- Fun, entertaining and a low-cost hobby.

*“Bridge is one of the last games in which the computer is not better.”*

Bill Gates



**This month I'd like to touch on the Regional Championships competition, as trials for these teams are fast approaching.**

The Regional Championships used to be known as the Interprovincial Championships, or IPs for short. Each of the 7 regions around the country field teams in Open, Womens, Senior and Intermediate divisions and they do battle against each other for the Dougal McLean Trophy. It isn't easy to find historical results but it seems like it's been a while since Waikato Bays lifted the Dougal McLean Trophy but we have had some individual teams doing well in recent years.

NZBridge has been experimenting with different formats for this event to try and regain the prestige that it commanded in years past while also being mindful of the cost to the regions of all these teams travelling from all over the country. Last year they moved back to holding it immediately prior to the National Congress as it used to be many years ago but the downside of this is making Congress week even longer for those players selected to represent their region.

This year a hybrid approach has been adopted. Round robins will be held online on RealBridge over the first weekend in May to determine the top two teams in each of the four divisions. Those two teams will then play face to face on one day prior to the National Congress in November in Palmerston North. So the Regions need to have selected their teams well before the May round robin weekend and as the Regions have a lot of autonomy on how exactly they run their trials.

The Waikato Bays trials will be held online on RealBridge on the weekend of the 28th and 29th of March. The trials will be held as Pairs trials this year and so any interested pairs are encouraged to put their names forward. More entries results in a more viable trial and if not enough entries are received the teams may be selected without an actual trial taking place. You must be available not just for the trial weekend but also for the round robin weekend on May 1- 3 and for the final in Palmerston North on Friday November 6.

It would be great to see a whole lot of our members trialling, typically we are well represented in the selected teams, and it would be wonderful if sufficient entries were received for all the trials to go ahead! It doesn't hurt to throw your name in the ring and see how you stack up against other pairs from around the region, especially when you don't even need to leave the comfort of your own home to do so! Entry is via the usual NZBridge tournament entry.

Each time you come to Bridge to play 24 or 26 Boards, do you think about how these cards arrived in the correct positions?

The Dealing Team headed by Sue Greig, and assisted by Norm Silcock, consists of 4 teams of two:

- Sue Greig & Jenny Lynam
- Sue Handley & Karyl Anderson
- Chris Andrews & Hilary McKenna
- Jill Ussher & Diana Foster

Each team is rostered on for a month. Dealing usually takes place on Monday morning in the office where the cards are dealt for the coming week including dealing two sets of Boards for Omokoroa and at times dealing for upcoming Tournaments.

1. The Dealing schedule is on the Computer which is connected to the Dealing machine.
2. The masters of the Hand Records must be located and photocopied (for you to take home should you desire).
3. The previous weeks' 'used' Boards must all be unpacked and placed on the bench... Red pack on top, Blue pack on the bottom, ready to feed into the machine. I don't know whether you're aware... at our Club the odd numbered Boards contain Blue cards ALWAYS, the even numbered Boards contain Red.
4. The dealer has a copy of the hand record in front of her so at any time she can check to ensure accuracy.

The Boards are packed into a crate in stacks of 7. We deal 28 Boards for each session. Each crate is labelled with details of the session. The dealt crates then go into the cubbyholes in the office ready for play.

You will be aware that we have many different patterns on the backs of our cards... they are discarded only when damaged or when the Dealing Machine fails to 'read' the cards.



**Dealing machine similar to ours**



## Leads against suit contracts

Hugh McAlister

1	<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
♠ 752		1H	-	1S
♥ QJ109	-	2C	-	4S
♦ QJ64	<i>All pass</i>			
♣ AJ				

### What would you lead, as West?

Leading suits bid by the opponents is usually unwise... you often end up setting up their suit, maybe finessing partner, often giving up a momentum. Leading trumps "just because other leads are uninviting" might be a safe passive lead, but more often assists declarer. Here, **I would lead 4D**, 4th highest of the unbid suit, with an honour. The hands:

	♠ 8	
	♥ AK763	
	♦ A83	
♠ 752	♣ K1084	♠ J3
♥ QJ109		♥ 842
♦ QJ64		♦ K75
♣ AJ	♠ AKQ10964	♣ Q7652
	♥ 5	
	♦ 1092	
	♣ 93	

Many would "automatically" lead QH...declarer plays AH, ruffs a heart, takes out trumps, plays a small club, and when West plays AC (s)he now has enough entries to set up dummy's 5th heart, making 6. With the 4D lead, this won't work, and declarer makes only 5S.

2	<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
♠ 92		1H	-	1S
♥ AK98	-	2S	-	3S
♦ A98	-	4S	<i>All pass</i>	
♣ J1072				

### What would you lead, as West?

Hearts have been bid by North, Spades may finesse partner, and leading or underleading the AD is a "no-no". I would lead 2C. The hands:

♠ AJ85		
♥ QJ1076		
♦ 2		
♠ 92	♣ A54	♠ 76
♥ AK98		♥ 54
♦ A98		♦ QJ6543
♣ J1072	♠ KQ1043	♣ Q93
	♥ 32	
	♦ K107	
	♣ K86	

Again, the "obvious" lead of AH allows declarer time to draw trumps and throw minor losers on dummy's hearts, making an easy 10 tricks. The Club lead allows defenders to set up their Club trick before hearts can be set up, contract down one.

**Lesson:** Beware leading a suit bid by the opponents, **even when** you have nice honours, **in a suit contract**

## BOUQUETS



**Mike Bailie** you are Superman!! We appreciate your talents enormously. Thank you for pruning the trees at the rear end of the Clubrooms, fixing the 'broken' concrete block wall at the front of the car park and all the other bits and pieces you look after for us all. Thank you!!

**Mark Knox** thank you on behalf of us all for the lovely paintwork in the lobby... It was looking pretty shabby and you've given it a new lease on life. Many thanks!!

**Sue Sherwood** and your band of helpers... A thousand thank yous for the wonderful catering and kitchen service you provided over our big tournament at Anniversary Weekend. Attendees were very complimentary about the food.

**Jackie Blue** our fabulous Tournament Director ... Everything ran exceptionally smoothly thanks to your diligent work, your incredible attention to detail and your amazing organizational skills . . . THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! And you weren't even here for the event!!

**Norm Silcock** you are glue that holds it all together! Thank you for the hours of work you do preparing us for the big tournaments, Directing at the drop of a hat, preparing all the hand records, schedules and labels for the Dealing Team for the year. We appreciate you!

**Biscuit Fairies** ... Thank you all!!! Your donations are very much appreciated.



## Director Please!

In the game of bridge, one of the most misunderstood – yet essential – actions at the table is calling the Director. Inexperienced players sometimes hesitate, worrying that it signals conflict or accusation. Calling the Director is simply part of maintaining fairness and proper procedure in organized bridge. The Director is the official responsible for enforcing the Laws of Bridge. These laws are not optional guidelines; they exist to ensure equity when irregularities occur.

### When Should You Call the Director?

You should call the Director immediately if:

- A player makes a bid out of turn.
- A card is exposed unintentionally.
- There is an insufficient bid.
- A revoke (failure to follow suit) is suspected.
- A player hesitates in a way that may convey unauthorised information.
- Bad behaviour at your table (e.g. slapping down cards) or adjacent table (e.g. information on a board you may be about to play).

The key word is **immediately**. Players are not expected to resolve issues themselves. In fact, attempting to do so can sometimes make matters worse.

### Why It Matters

Bridge is a game of logic and ethics. Because information is shared imperfectly between partners, even small irregularities can create unintended advantages. The Director's role is not to punish but to restore equity. Often, rulings are procedural and neutral, designed to protect both sides. Importantly, calling the Director should never be viewed as rude, it is considered routine. Experienced players understand that protecting the integrity of the game benefits everyone.

### Good Table Etiquette

When an irregularity occurs, calmly say, "Director, please," without assigning blame or making commentary. Avoid discussing the situation until the Director arrives. Provide clear facts, answer questions honestly, and accept the ruling courteously.

Ultimately, calling the Director is not about confrontation – it is about fairness. In bridge, as in all competitive endeavours, clear procedures allow skill, partnership understanding, and judgment to determine the outcome.

**Dr. Rebecca Taylor**

Our afternoon tea roster is working extremely well this month after a sluggish start. THANK YOU to all who have volunteered.

Many thanks to the biscuit fairies... Your contributions are much appreciated.

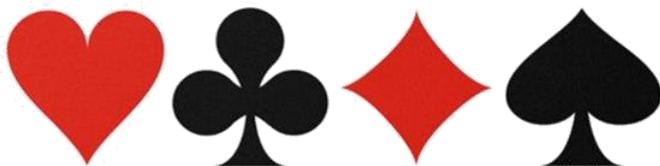
**FOR YOUR INFORMATION** *please read.* In the kitchen we have a dishwasher under the central island and, obviously, this works just like your dishwasher at home.

On Tuesdays and Fridays we use the sterilizer which is positioned on the left wall of the kitchen. This is NOT a dishwasher as you know it. The **crockery & cutlery MUST be washed** before they are placed in the sterilizer. The sterilizer does NOT remove lipstick or tea & coffee stains. When you take a cup for your afternoon tea and it's stained... that is because it wasn't washed before being placed in the sterilizer tray/basket.

The items that are stained must then have a Janola soak which makes more work for the afternoon tea volunteers... and we don't want that!!

**TEAMWORK  
MAKES  
THE DREAM  
WORK**

**GUESS INTELLIGENTLY**



**PLAY BRIDGE**

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