

TABLE TALK

JANUARY 2026



TAURANGA BRIDGE CLUB | 252 Ngatai Road, Otumoetai 3110 | 07 576-5022 | www.taurangabridge.co.nz



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Rebecca Tayor
Sue Collin
Jill Ussher
Mark Newman
Robyn Brand
Lynette Lauder
Graeme Ingham
Alastair Collie
Carol Goldsworthy

Kay Wright
Anne Peacocke
Kerrie Little
Louise Fletcher
Cec Gardiner
Brian Mackie
Liz Kendall

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



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

- **Holiday Bridge** Final January Holiday Bridge this Friday afternoon. **No partner required.**
- **Tauranga Mini Congress** Anniversary Weekend Saturday 24th Jan – Monday 26th Jan. We would appreciate contributions for morning tea and Sue Sherwood will require assistance in the kitchen... all three days. Sign up sheets are up on the board!!
- The **Bridge program** begins Tuesday 27th January. You will be informed when the booklets are available. **NO** Club play Monday evening 26th Jan (mini Congress).
- 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.
- **Fun Over The Bridge** Sunday 8th March at Mt. Manganui Bridge Club. *Make a note in your diary!!*

OUR NOVEMBER WINNERS

MON	Christmas Cheer Pairs <i>Ultimate Motor Group</i>	Brenda Brett Kelly & Judith Malcolm
TUE	Christmas Handicap Pairs <i>Farmer Autovillage</i>	Sue Greig & Jenny Lynam
WED	Festive Handicap Pairs <i>Toner Law</i>	Dale Allen & Carol Goldsworthy
FRI	Christmas Pairs <i>Tauriko Players</i>	Julie Lankshear & Jill Ussher N/S 59.31% Derek Webb & Pat Webb E/W 60.19%





This month I thought I'd put on my tech hat and chat to you about the new BridgeMates and give a few hints and tips around their use.

As you're probably aware their introduction hasn't been without teething problems. Thankfully we very quickly figured out what was causing the problem and were able to put a workaround in place. Meanwhile in the background there has been a lot of back and forth with Jan Spaans (NZ agent for BridgeMate), Bob Fearn (developer of our Compass scoring software) and the folks at Bridge Mate HQ in the Netherlands. It now looks like they have narrowed down the exact issue and both Bob and BridgeMate HQ are working on fixes that they will roll out to us in due course.

For the most part the process of entering information into the new BridgeMates is pretty similar, and in many respects easier. Instead of trying to figure out which button you need to push for a Queen lead you just select it from the options presented to you. There are a few gotchas though and so I thought I'd run through those for you here.

To conserve battery power the BridgeMate screen will go off after a set period, much like the old ones did. To wake it up all you have to do is tap the screen. If that doesn't do anything then the Bridge Mate will actually be powered off, hold down the power button on the right hand side of the Bridge Mate for a couple of seconds until the small light on the top of the face lights up. Once powered on and your table selected it shouldn't power off for the remainder of the session and so can be awoken just by tapping the screen.

When entering the names of the players at your table the BridgeMate will now provide you with a list of options that matches whatever you've entered. What it does though is wait until there is a pause in your typing before it lists all the matches, so if you type very slowly it will update the list after every digit that you type of someone's player number. The problem is that when it updates the list of matches it briefly prevents you from typing anything else and so if you're not aware it will completely miss some of what you're entering. If you are able to type fast enough you won't have a problem, otherwise just be aware.

Also when entering names, if you do just enter a partial name or number and need to scroll the list try to scroll by dragging the bar on the right hand side of the list rather than scrolling the list itself.

Unfortunately if you drag on the list itself it will invariably select the name that was under your finger when you started dragging which won't be the correct name. If you enter the full number for a player then they will be the only match that displays in the list, you still need to tap on their name in the list to select them for that seat position. Once you do select a player for a seat it will return you to the table diagram with the four seats. At this point just tap on the next seat that you want to enter, don't tap the Continue button at the bottom of the screen until all four seats are filled.

When you're entering all the information for a board you will notice that there is a display along the top of the screen that is updated with each piece of information that you enter. If you realise that you've entered something wrong on a previous screen, for example you're on the screen to enter the opening lead but notice you selected the wrong declarer, just tap on whatever it is that needs correcting and it will take you back to that entry screen. Unfortunately you will have to re-enter any subsequent information again also, so if you are on the screen to enter the final result (having already entered contract, declarer and opening lead) and notice that the contract is wrong you will tap the contract in the top bar to select the correct contract but you will also need to re-enter the declarer and opening lead also.

When selecting the final result you may find that the button you need isn't in the list! This is not a bug, all the making contracts are in one horizontal row and so if you're in a low level contract not all the possible results will fit on the screen. The same goes for when your opponents sacrifice into grand slam and you take them 12 light, where is the -12 button? Both of these rows of buttons can be scrolled horizontally, so in the unlikely event that your result exceeds those immediately available just drag the list sideways until the button you need appears.

















At the end of the session when you're being a tidy kiwi and returning your bridgemate to the front of the room, they go into the trays with the power button facing upwards. We have a charging case in the office that the tray is placed into and immediately starts the charging process without needing to plug the units in individually. Naturally, this only works if the charging contacts are facing down wards!

Finally, some of the quirks with the name entry will likely be fixed as time goes by. The great thing about these being a lot more modern is that updates to the BridgeMates, the server and the software controlling the server can all be easily pushed out by BridgeMate HQ for us to install. In the meantime, don't be afraid to have a play when you get the chance. You shouldn't really be able to break anything and if you do then you've helped track down another bug for us!

A Challenging Declarer Hand – Know the Odds

Hugh McAlister



	 A954	
	 A96	
	 3	
	 AK986	
 K2	Dealer N, EW vul.	 QJ3
 1082		 KQ7543
 KJ1072		 865
 Q104		 J
	 10876	
	 J	
	 AQ94	
	 7532	

South finds her(him)self in a slim 4S, after an aggressive bidding sequence. Lead is 2H.

Plan the play...

Bidding: North opens 1C, East considers a weak 2H jump overcall but the poor “pips”, vulnerability and 2 Jacks persuade her/him to pass. South responds 1S (bid your major when you may only have one bid). North jumps to 3S and South accepts the invitation to 4S.

Lead: 2H...any other suit is an unattractive lead. Which heart you lead is up to partnership under standing.... at least the 2 denies a doubleton!

Play: You have likely 2 spade losers, 2 or 3 diamond losers and 0 or 1 club loser. The two singletons suggest a cross-ruff... we can ruff 2 hearts, 2 or 3 diamonds, plus the AS. We have 2 red aces and possibly 2 club tricks if the clubs break. If both clubs and diamonds break evenly we can count 10 tricks... but is that likely? Is there a better way?

Yes...we have a good side suit (clubs). Spades are likely to split 3-2, and we can afford to lose 1 club trick... look at dummy's hand, and reimagine it with both heart losers ruffed...

SO...take AH, and ruff a heart. Then lead a spade and duck (we don't want to play AS and risk losing control). Win the return, play AS, leaving one opponent with a winning trump, and ruff a heart with your last trump. Now play on clubs, from the top. If they divide 2-2, you make an overtrick...if they divide 3-1 (more likely), you lose one club, and two trumps, and make your contract.

Lessons:

1. NS only have 22 points... but they have aces and singletons. North has 6 and South 8 losers, so game is worth a go.
2. Note the importance of ducking the first round of trumps... to keep control. If you play AS and another round, you risk the opponents taking out another trump, thus incurring a heart loser.
3. The approach to this hand uses statistics. (a) trumps will break 3-2 68% of the time... important here. (b) cross-ruff depends on diamonds breaking 4-4, or the K falling in 3 rounds, and clubs breaking 2-2, a losing prospect. (c) you accept clubs will likely break 3-1 (more common than 2-2), and your plan still works.

**NEVER CRITICIZE
YOUR PARTNER**



DURING PLAY

© WORDS & UNWORDS



A HUGE thank you to all the hard work **Cathy Parker** has done over the past year to get our grounds asphalted!! Cathy applied for grants, got costings to get the sealing done in three parts to make it affordable taking the grants into consideration ... Literally hours of diligent work. In the end, to save a considerable amount of money, we decided to put Club funds towards the project so we could have it done all together. The sealing was due to be done on 29th December however the weather had other plans so in the end it coincided with a day's play which could not be avoided. It looks fabulous!! One wee sink hole which is being 'fixed' (sadly cost \$3000!!), then the cycle rack will be permanently fixed in front of the air conditioning unit. **THANK YOU CATHY!!!**

A round of applause to **Sue Sherwood** for a fabulous Christmas party! Thank you for all your hard work!!

Thank you to our Committee, led by the Reindeer Rider, for everything they did to ensure everything ran smoothly!

THOUGHT ABOUT...

PLAYING TOURNAMENT BRIDGE?

We are so fortunate in Tauranga to be surrounded by other Bridge Clubs which provides us with lots of lovely tournaments to attend.

Check out tournaments on NZBridge's website. My partner Joan Lloyd and I have already entered 17 for 2026... The furthest road trip is to Taupo.

We have the Bay Pairs held at Mt. Manganui, Whakatane, Tauranga & Te Puke. I earned my first A point at Bay Pairs Whakatane last year... Quite the thrill!!

We also have the Junior & Intermediate Leagues run in our area. Sometimes these are held on the same day (Hamilton, Omokoroa, Mt. Manganui, Tauranga) however because some of the clubrooms are smaller, some are held separately (Cambridge, Matamata, Te Awamutu).

There are also 'one offs' so check out the website.

We love the road trips, often car sharing. Of course the pinnacle is New Zealand's Congress now held in Palmerston North in November 7-14

AFTERNOON TEA

The roster is up on the noticeboard
PLEASE ensure you pop your name
up once or twice... new for 2026 - no
names = no afternoon tea.

Do you enjoy having a biscuit with
your tea? If the answer is YES,
please either pop money in the
Biscuit Fairy tin on the piano, or
bring a packet of biscuits once a
month. Currently we are 'spending'
approximately \$1000 a year on
biscuits which is not sustainable.



THE ART OF ETIQUETTE IN BRIDGE

A 'new' column from Committee member Dr. Rebecca Taylor

Bridge is often described as a game of skill, logic, and partnership – but at its heart, it's also a game of **courtesy and respect**. Good etiquette ensures that every player, whether beginner or expert, enjoys a fair and pleasant experience at the table.

Respect the Tempo of the Game. Bridge is meant to flow smoothly. Take reasonable time to think but avoid excessive delays that disrupt the rhythm of play. Conversely, don't rush your partner or opponents; a calm, steady pace promotes better focus and fewer errors.

Bidding and Play in Silence. Once the auction begins, keep conversation to a minimum. Remarks, gestures, or tone can inadvertently give away information. Speak only through written bids or politely asking what a bid means – it's part of the challenge and fairness of the game.

Protect Your Partner. Bridge is a partnership game, and mutual respect is essential. Avoid criticising your partner's decisions, especially during or right after a hand. Constructive analysis can wait until after the game in a friendly, supportive tone.

Handle the Cards Properly. Be gentle with the cards and place them on the table neatly. After each trick, wait until all players have played before gathering or turning over cards. Attention to small courtesies shows respect for both the game and fellow players.

Grace in Winning and Losing. Polite behaviour doesn't end when the last card is played. Congratulate opponents on a hand well bid and accept defeat with good humour. The best players are admired not just for skill, but for their composure and sportsmanship.

In short: good Bridge etiquette is about integrity, respect, and enjoyment. The smoother and friendlier the atmosphere, the better the Bridge.