

TABLE TALK

MARCH 2026



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



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

David Fornusek
Gill Friis
Sarah Graham
Bev Knight
Alan Lawton
Isobel McIntyre
Hilary McKenna

Robyn McLennan
Judy McLeod
Steve O'Brien
Pauline Taylor
Pat Verran
Janice Watson

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)

- Our 2026 **Bridge Lessons** are Wednesdays 11am & 7pm. The schedule is up on the noticeboard. You are welcome to attend any session. There is a recap prior to each lesson. **NO LESSONS THIS WEEK...** our President/Teacher is away on a 5-day bike race!!
- **Good Friday Bridge 3rd April** 12.45 for 1pm start. *No partner required.*
- **PLEASE NOTE... NO** Bridge Monday 6th nor Monday 27th April!! Easter Monday & ANZAC Day observed.
- **Bay Pairs** Next session is Sunday April 12th at Whakatane. Enter on NZBridge website.
- Sunday Bridge... 3rd Sunday of the month. 12.45pm for a 1pm start. *No partner required.* Next session **19th April.**
- **Friday Drinks** after play 17th April to avoid the eve of ANZAC Weekend.

OUR FEBRUARY WINNERS

MON	Dust Off the Cobweb Pairs <i>Cherrywood Shoes</i>	Shirley Bain & Judy Pawson
TUE	Welcome Back Handicap Pairs <i>Arizto Real Estate</i>	Olive Boyd & Pam Batten
	Happy Hour Handicap Pairs <i>Fika Café & Bar</i>	Mike McKeown & Bruce Gibson
WED	Welcome Back Pairs <i>Baybat Batteries NZ Ltd</i>	Michael Rhodes & Liz O'Riordan
	I Spy Pairs <i>Gaspy</i>	Jayne King & Maria Arhanic
FRI	Welcome Back Pairs <i>Metlifecare – Greenwood Park</i>	Norm Silcock & Tony Hacking
	Ron Scott Memorial Handicap Pairs <i>Tauranga Pewter Trophy</i>	Pat Ware & Derek Webb





This month I wanted to explore the touchy subject of giving advice at the table and remind players of the behaviour that we expect with regards to this.

We are blessed to have a lot of very experienced players at our club with a wealth of knowledge between them and they are only too happy to share that knowledge, which is wonderful. Unfortunately though there are times when people don't like to have their failings pointed out to them or the others at the table, especially as they might already be feeling glum about missing the contract that the accursed machine says they can make! Also, sometimes, despite the best of intentions, it can feel to a less experienced player like they are being told off.

Sometimes the timing of the advice offered can also be highly problematic from a law/etiquette perspective. If for example dummy has gone down and declarer is about to start playing the contract and the defenders start to critique the bidding this is highly problematic as the defenders are distracting declarer at a crucial time when they should be planning the play of the hand.

For these reasons we think the best approach is simply to not give advice unless you are asked for it. Now, the flipside of this is that if you are a less experienced player that craves the wisdom of the others at the bridge table then you are going to have to ask for the advice you seek. And please don't be afraid to do so! We all get a bit of a buzz out of helping others and so all of our top players are only too happy to answer any questions that you have and appreciate the opportunity to give back.

The final point I would make is that you won't always have enough time up your sleeve to do a quick debrief at the end of the round because the director is moving you along. And it is important that you move promptly when called to do so by the director so that the room keeps in sync. For this reason it can be useful to fill out a personal score sheet for every session, even if it's just so you have a place to jot down notes as you go. Then at the end of the session find yourself a hand record and a Grand Master and politely ask them if they would mind answering a few questions you had from the session. Unless Happy Hour at Fika is about to close I think you'll find them more willing to talk through the hands with you.

Mike.

Greetings! Well played!

In Bridge, etiquette around name badges and greetings is part of the broader emphasis on courtesy, fairness, and a pleasant playing atmosphere.



Name Badges

- **Wear them:** At clubs or tournaments, especially those run by organisations like the American Contract Bridge League or similar bodies, name badges help players identify each other easily.
- **First names are standard:** Bridge culture is friendly but not overly formal—first names are usually used even in competitive settings.
- **Placement matters:** Wear your badge where it's easy to read (upper chest area). This avoids awkward moments or repeated name-asking.
- **Visitors:** Sometimes visit the club, so name badges help make them welcome

Greetings at the Table

- **Start with a polite greeting:** A simple "Hello" to opponents and partner is expected.
- **Acknowledge everyone:** Greet both opponents, not just your partner.
- **Keep it brief:** Friendly but not chatty—long conversations can delay play.
- **Introduce yourself if needed:** Especially in tournaments

During the Game

- **Be consistent in tone:** Friendly but neutral — avoid overly enthusiastic or negative reactions that could convey information.
- **No mid-hand chatter:** Once play starts, conversation should stop unless it's about the game mechanics.
- **Use names sparingly:** It's okay to say "Thank you, John," but avoid anything that could be interpreted as signalling.

After Each Round

- **Thank the opponents:** A simple "Thank you" is customary.
- **Stay courteous regardless of result:** Win or lose, politeness is key.

Things to Avoid

- Ignoring introductions or greetings
- Commenting on hands in a way that could embarrass others

Dr. Rebecca Taylor .



Optimal Defence – Reading Declarer's Hand (II)

Hugh McAlister

♠ J2	♠ AK73	♠ 1096
♥ 9862	♥ 74	♥ QJ103
♦ 10542	♦ KJ97	♦ 86
♣ AK3	♣ 964	♣ Q872
	Dealer S, both vul. Contract 4S by S Lead AC	
	♠ Q854	
	♥ AK5	
	♦ AQ3	
	♣ J105	

Bidding:

South opens a strong INT (15-17). North responds 2C, Stayman. South replies 2S, and North raises to 4S with good values, seemingly a good contract.

Lead:

West leads AC (often a good attacking, and safe, lead). East encourages with 2C, playing "low encourage". West continues with KC and a third Club. A good start... **What should East do now?**

If you don't stop, think and count, you would likely lead QH... no harm done? *Or is this a chance missed?* Declarer has promised at least 15 HCP... partner has shown 7, dummy has 11, and you have 5... at most partner can have 1 or 2 points more! Declarer MUST have AK of hearts and AD. If partner has QD, (s)he is finessable. We can see all the club and heart honours. *Our only hope is that partner has either Qx or Jx of spades... but does that help us??*

Lead the 4th club... everyone knows it's the last club. Partner will know this and trump with her/his highest trump (JS), trying to promote a trump in your hand... and it works... your 109x of spades now must make a trick... one down... well done!



Tip of the Month (cont'd)

Lessons:

1. Playing bridge is a lot like reading a book... you need to read the opponents' hands from the bidding and sometimes the play. In this case the bidding, and subsequent play in Clubs, pretty much positions all the high cards for you.
2. Trump promotion is an important weapon for both declarer and defenders. In the case of the latter, just as here, this is called an "uppercut". This derives from early 19th century boxing literature, perhaps because it describes a blow delivered unexpectedly "in-close". The fourth trick club lead (or any lead when partner can reasonably know that you can trump and be over-trumped) asks you to trump with your highest trump... in order to hopefully promote a trump in partner's hand, as happened here. Your assessment of where the remaining high cards are suggests this might be your only chance of taking the contract down.

BOUQUETS

A ginormous thank you to our President, **Mike Newton**. Overseeing the Club, sorting out the new Bridgemates (which has meant many unexpected call outs to the clubrooms), Directing, and teaching both learner sessions on a Friday as well as running his business and being a committed Dad and Karate participant with Liam and Abigail not to mention being Ange's support person for her Coast to Coast adventure!! Thank you!! Thank you!! Thank you!!

Thank you also to **Judy McLeod & Norm Silcock** for your huge contributions Directing & Scoring over the last couple of months! We couldn't have our Bridge sessions without you!

Thanks to **Robyn McLennan & Suzanne Jansen** for their fabulous work on Wednesday night... Convenor and Partnership Steward. We appreciate you!

Thank you **Pam Shea**... Coming all the way across town especially to help out with Friday drinks. Great having you on the committee!!

Thanks to another Committee member **Cathy Parker** who no sooner got the car park resealing done... has launched into all the challenging preparatory work - quotes & grant applications - to get our bathrooms upgraded. Appreciate all your hard work on our behalf Cathy!!

Rubber bridge is a variation of bridge, the game one would play if you played at home with 4 people, the game many of our antecedents used to play before Duplicate bridge and Bridge Clubs were invented.

- It is called “Rubber”, because the scoring revolves around a bonus for being the first pair to score 2 games (a rubber).
- There are a number of differences, but in truth 95% of the time you bid and play as you would at the club. The basic strategy is **more like Teams than Pairs** (don't concern yourself with over tricks, ensure you make the contract if you can).

In what ways is Rubber different to Duplicate?:

- You shuffle and deal the cards yourself, so there is more luck involved.
- Only 4 players are involved.
- It is usually played in the home, more sociable, etc.
- The scoring is slightly different, and is done at the table by the players... see below. Computers are not required.
- **The main difference with Rubber is the battle for the part score** (Duplicate has no equivalent for this). E.G. You may bid and make 2S, and score 60 “below the line” (scores below the line count towards a game). On the next hand you bid and make 1NT, scoring 40 below the line. Now, you have a total of 100 below the line, so that counts as a game. These battles, with sacrifices against part scores more common, are a lot of fun, and the essential difference with Rubber bridge.
- There are interesting differences in strategy, usually related to the part score...e.g. (i) you may have a 60 part score, partner opens 1S... you reply with 2S with a wide range of hands, but any invitational bid suggests slam interest; (ii) normally forcing bids can be passed in appropriate circumstances.
- “Honours” (score 100 for 4 of top 5 honours in one hand, 150 for all 5, and 100 for all aces in a NT contract, above the line of course) are a quirk of Rubber scoring.
- The **National Rubber Competition** is held at Congress. Each Region holds a knock-out competition, and the winners compete there (no cost, significant \$ prizes). The **Waikato – Bays Rubber Competition** starts in May. An introductory session will be held at Morrinsville Bridge Club on Sunday, April 12. If there is interest, I am happy to run a session at Tauranga (to discuss scoring, tactics, etc.). If you want to participate, or have any questions, please contact me.

Hugh McAlister 0272663488;
<hughdi20@gmail.com>

Tauranga Bridge Club now has a Facebook page.

Join us to keep up to date about news, club events and the successes of members at tournaments, we also look out for and promote some great Bridge learning resources and hope to grow the page going forward.

Why not follow us today at

<https://www.facebook.com/TaurangaBridge/>

Or use the QR Code



SOCIAL BRIDGE

Thursdays 1pm

Convenor: Irene Edgar

On Thursday afternoons a small group meet in the back room at the Bridge Club under the ‘supervision’ & guidance of Irene Edgar. (Bolivia is played in the main room at this time).

The group do not use Bridgemates, so no Master points are awarded and they use dealt boards from another Bridge session. It's very social, supportive and a great opportunity to play more Bridge. There is no appointed Director however Irene is there to ask if you have any questions.

This is a wonderfully supportive session for Novices and Juniors who feel they need more practice. Table money for this session is now \$5.00

Thank you Irene! We truly appreciate your contribution to the Club and this group. I know all your attendees thoroughly enjoy themselves!!