

Dear Members,

I hope you have all had a good Christmas and New year. The Christmas party at Oakdale on the 15th of December was a great success, the issue with speed of bringing out everybody's meal was improved greatly. I even got to taste the vegetarian option which was very nice. A few people have asked about tipping the staff, a healthy tip was donated centrally from club funds as I'm sure we would have all wanted to give something but it proves tricky as nobody seems to carry cash anymore. I hope you all liked the committee animated Christmas card that was played on the screen.

We are running a special Swiss Pairs event on Friday the 19th January at the club open to all members. This is the first in my memory at the club. Full details are on the website including a sign-up sheet. There is a lot of extra work involved above a normal duplicate session but if all goes well, we will have more of these events. They are designed so you play most rounds against pairs of a similar standard to yourself.

I'm often asked how do I know if I'm improving? Well, we all have a handicap which should improve as we get more experience. The link below takes you to an article which explains handicapping, it tells you how it helps bridge players compete on a level playing field and shows you how you are improving. You can follow your NGS grade through pianola or from your EBU account.

<https://www.ebu.co.uk/documents/magazine/mr-bridge/174.pdf>

Don't forget we have Friday afternoon sessions on Friday the 5th and 19th in January.

If you find me a bit grumpy at the moment it's because I have a bad back.

Rob