

BRIDGE TE AROHA: lovely place, lovely game ♠♥♦♣

Te Aroha News April 2024



Moving home? Then call on the “TEARS”

No, put away your handkerchief. This is the “Te Aroha Removal Service” who take all the worry, all the “tears” away from moving home. Ask Alan Mace. Early April saw Alan shift a whole kilometre up the road in Paeroa. So, he had a bit of help shifting from Joy, yours truly, Ross, Tim and Victor and in no time at all, all were sitting at the back of Alan’s new abode drinking a couple of beers and eating pizza and some well cooked sausage rolls. (That is “nicely cooked” unlike some blackened ones which had been seen on a certain Tuesday night at the club!)



We see the gang above and below Alan is relaxing, can in hand, in his new abode.



Take away all the stress when “Tears” are shifting your belongings.

Club Tournament Successes in April

Winners at The Mount....again!

For the second year running, Tim and Richard headed over the Kaimai's to do their best at the Mt Maunganui 3A Multi Grade Pairs in early April and on both occasions, their "best" was very good, each time averaging around 65% over the two sessions to take first place.

Their second session this time was a "boomer", just over 70%...one of those sessions you do not want to end!

Damien and Lisa played in their first tournament, a Novice Pairs event at Cambridge in mid-month and did themselves proud by finishing 3rd equal. Hopefully, that will be the first of many tournaments they will play.

At the second heat of the Waikato Area Pairs, at Matamata, Joy finished 3rd in a first time partnership with Jena Robinson from Thames.

I have played in a few..well, more than a few tournaments and travelled the same weekend as Damien and Lisa played, to the South Canterbury Congress in Timaru. There, my team came 2nd in somewhat unusual circumstances. 16 teams took part and in the first of 5 rounds, we played strong opposition and over 12 boards lost by a massive margin, 80 imps to 0 or 0-20 vps. Not pretty! However, we won our next 4 matches well to finish 2nd. Not surprisingly, we could not catch the team which thrashed us!

SPA TOWN TEAMS and MULTIGRADE PAIRS.

Saturday June 8th is the date for the club's 2 tournaments. It really would be great to have some of our club members play in the Multi Grade Swiss Pairs. Many of you do not play tournaments though they make an enjoyable day. In the Multi-Grade, you play against those of your level...and being Swiss, even more so. The "guns" will be playing in the Spa Town Teams!

\$40 per player for a day's bridge.

Bring your own lunch...refreshments before and after play.

If you would like to play in the Multi Grade but do not have a partner, please speak to me. I will help you find one.

We have 13 teams already for the Teams but need entries for the Multi Grade Swiss.

Bad before Good..and the 5 Level is for one's opponents!

Now, if you are going to have a bad session and a good session in a tournament, do have the bad session first. You do feel much better at the end! Joy and I put that piece of advice into practice at the Auckland Club's ANZAC Day Pairs. We did not start off in much style and mustered a bit under 44% in the morning but had a good lunch as just under 68% in the afternoon pulled us up to 9th place. Guess which session this board came from.

West Deals	♠ K		
N-S Vul	♥ K Q 6 3		
	♦ K 4 3		
	♣ A Q J 10 9		
♠ A Q 10 9 4			♠ J 8 6
♥ 7			♥ A J 10 9 5 4 2
♦ J 10 9 8 6			♦ Q 7 2
♣ K 6			♣ —
	♠ 7 5 3 2		
	♥ 8		
	♦ A 5		
	♣ 8 7 5 4 3 2		
West	North	East	South
	<i>Joy</i>		<i>Richard</i>
1 ♠	Dbl	4 ♠	5 ♣
5 ♠	6 ♣	Pass	Pass
6 ♠	Dbl	All pass	

This was not the only board during the day when Joy had difficulty deciding whether I bid at the 5-level to make or as a sacrifice. Being vulnerable, she thought I held a stronger hand, hence her 6C bid. I was very relieved when she doubled 6S!

I was kind of right to bid 5C because 4S can be made especially after the lead of CA. Meanwhile, 5C is just one down though has chances of making if West does not lead or switch to their singleton.

However, West took fright after the 6C bid and took what they thought would be a cheap sacrifice in 6S. Not so! Joy did lead CA forcing a ruff in dummy. West lost the spade finesse and Joy played a second club won by West's CK.

Yay!

Maybe there should be a tip from the above deal about defending at the 5-level! However, this month's tip comes from declaring a modest 1NT contract. A question for you. Which red suit finesse would you take as declarer after the opponents lead a club to East's ace and a second club?

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♦	Pass	1 NT

As you know, your fitnesses always fails while everyone else's works! Not true, of course, but it seems that way.

South has for certain 2 club tricks, 2 diamond tricks and HA. If they take the diamond finesse and that fails, they will gain only 1 more trick in that suit...and thus will still need to take the heart finesse to come to 7 tricks.

So, guess which finesse most declarers took (not you, of course!). Both finesses failed (of course!) and most declarers failed in their contract.

Given a choice of fitnesses, take the one that benefits you most even if the fitness fails...or “count your winning tricks”.

Saluting a special Grand Master



Celebrating becoming a Grand Master: Sonia ably helped by Lesley We see her from time to time at Te Aroha and she is a rather special person. At the grand young age of 97, Sonia Crawford has become a Grand Master. Congratulations. There was a premature celebration at the Mt Maunganui 3A Pairs when it seemed she had reached the magic 500 As she needed... but she was still a couple short. However, playing with Lesley Quilty, Barry Jones and Jenny Millington, Sonia's team won all 5 of their matches in Tauranga. They did not win by quite as many victory points as they would have liked and they finished in 3rd place in the 16 team field. That gave Sonia 4 more A Points and she now has 501.64 and is a Grand Master.

Thinking of you, Laurie

I think most club members are aware that within days of moving into their new home that Gary, Laurie's husband, had a stroke. That's really sad and just to say, Laurie, that all club members send you their best wishes and hope you will have Gary home soon.

A big “drop” of carrot!

Auckland's North Shore Bridge Club, overlooking Lake Pupuke, has one of the most picturesque outlooks of any bridge club in New Zealand. Yet, a recent visit there for its 5A Pairs caused me some problems.

Those who know me (maybe those who don't also know!) are aware of my dislike of carrots. Bridge folk may be unaware that there are two things I dislike more than this aromatic (not my choice of adjective) vegetable. One is sheer drops. I would rather eat a whole bag of carrots than have to manoeuvre a car close to a sheer drop.

I stayed the night before this tournament at the North Shore home of my bridge partner for the day, Neil Stuckey. All was fine until we left in good time for the tournament. Now, Neil has a lovely home down a long and near the bottom of a steep drive-way. I had no problem driving down there in the dark. In the morning, Neil said he would leave first so I had room to turn my car and would follow him to the sandwich shop across the road to buy some lunch.

That is when my fear, my panic set in. Neil had left and I just could not face turning the car round, stopping, facing upwards and then accelerating up the hill. There was a kind of bush which seemed to be the barrier to prevent cars descending onto his swimming pool many metres below. It freaked me out...and after a few minutes' panic with my car still facing the wrong way, I phoned Neil and asked him to return.

He thought I had a flat battery but was very obliging when I asked him to turn and drive my car up the hill. I was very relieved though not really relaxed (perhaps one reason why we managed only 48% in the morning). Kindly, Neil had bought me a chicken and avocado sandwich for lunch.

Yum....until I saw there was a faint orangey colour inside...and after starting to pick out the grated carrot, well, I never stopped. I have never seen so much carrot in one sandwich! Neil said that there was a ham sandwich he could have got, carrot-free, but thought it would be against my Jewish faith to eat that. I smiled and said I would much rather eat ham than carrot.



The amount of carrot far exceeded the sandwich from which it came.

Anyway, another mediocre session followed. I blamed this on the combination of sheer drops and drops, no, dollops of carrot. I can only say if you want a few good boards off me on a Tuesday night at the club, you can get me to drive up Mt Te Aroha beforehand and then buy me dinner with carrots. Fortunately, the staff at "The Grand" are well primed as my nickname there is "Mr No Carrot". I think now my reputation has spread as far as the lovely North Shore Bridge Club!

On then to May...and we will follow closely the battle for the Club Championships...off scratch and handicap!

Don't forget to put your name down on the wall if you would like to play in the Inter-Club on 23rd June at Cambridge. Open, Intermediate or Junior.

Richard