

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

Te Aroha News August 2024



Ukrainians, Tri-Colour Tricksters and Te Aroha Thistles at Karapiro.

Where else could this be but the Cambridge Sixes, a really fun place to be on the first Saturday in August? If you have never experienced “The Sixes”, you really should try it.

38 teams of 6 players, 2 Open, 2 Intermediate, 2 Junior, all this year dressed to represent a country..a day where there were dress-up prizes, a quiz (do you know the new name for Swaziland? I doubt many of the 228 players did, certainly not the writer!) and 6 rounds of bridge, with a competition in each grade and an overall competition too. While the day was centred round playing bridge, it was essentially a day where players of all levels of ability mixed together in a really friendly environment. It was enhanced by the lovely weather at the beautiful Lake Karapiro venue. Well done, Cambridge.

So, to our teams, or teams which featured Te Aroha players. There were only two “Te Arrs” in the Ukrainian team which featured a player from that country, Luda Watts, in the traditional colours of her homeland, yellow and blue.



between Guy and Victor are Matamata players Luda Watts, Heather Sharp and Ian and Lynette Bond.

To add to the occasion, it was Luda's birthday. Guy and Victor finished 5th in the Intermediate grade with the team finishing 2nd overall, only 2.45 vps behind the winning (mainly Hamilton) team.

Te Aroha Thistles



Tim, June, Katrina, Ross, Alan and Rochelle. Five out of six looking at the camera was a major achievement for these wild Celts. The only thing missing from the picture is Ross' bagpipes which mercifully were not blown throughout the day. Rumour has it that Ross will blow them on Tuesday nights at Te Aroha when a table is playing slowly. That threat is certainly a good reason to speed up play!

This team come from "north of the border"well, north of the border between Cambridge and Matamata! Only one "mc" present though. Zhu, Rigter and Van Heuven do not sound very Scottish names!

Star performers were Katrina and Ross who came 4th in the Junior competition with the team 12th overall.



Well played on 47 of the 48 boards. Ross wondered briefly why he got a poor score (the penalty was of 4 figures) when other tables also went down in 4Sx. He soon realised that all the others going down were sitting East-West and he sat South! East-West's spades far outnumbered North-South's!

Tri-colour Tricksters

'Tis the time to be French what with the Olympic Games sharing the limelight with events at Karapiro.



Anna and I were helped by 4 players from Matamata: Colin Le Quesne, Deidre Freed, Deslee Howell and Michele Liddell. Notice the French influence. Maybe you should soften the “ch” in “Richard” next time you speak to me?

There were, though, no Gold, Silver or Bronze medals for this team which finished 19th overall though the team or one of its members did not go home empty-handed. I can report that for the second time this year....and maybe only the second time in living memory...one of the team members took back to Te Aroha one of the raffle prizes from a bridge tournament: a lovely baskets of goodies.

Eleventh Heaven

It nearly was 11pm and it was indeed “heaven” for one pair at the table on a recent Tuesday night at the Club. It was the last board of the night and it was seriously eating (perhaps “drinking” is a better word?) into “port” time! Tim was pacing up and down waiting to finish the scoring. A smattering of players looked across at the only table still in play.

Before the board was started, Rochelle fretted there had been no slams this evening.. no additions for the Slam Cup which she currently leads.

As West, I opened a Weak 2 in hearts and both Rochelle on my left and Joy directly opposite me both passed. Not so Adri on my right. He doubled. I passed and Rochelle bid 3D. Joy was not to be silenced either....3H. Adri's double was not quick and you will see why. Let the "argument" begin!

West Deals	♠	10 7 5
None Vul	♥	9
	♦	A J 7 6 5
	♣	A 7 5 2
♠ 9 6	<div style="background-color: green; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div>	♠ Q 8 4 2
♥ J 8 7 4 3 2		♥ A 6
♦ Q 3		♦ 10 9 2
♣ K J 6		♣ Q 10 9 8
	♠	A K J 3
	♥	K Q 10 5
	♦	K 8 4
	♣	4 3

West	North	East	South
<i>Richard</i>	<i>Rochelle</i>	<i>Joy</i>	<i>Adri</i>
2 ♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	3 ♦	3 ♥	Dbl
Pass	4 ♣	Pass	4 NT
Pass	5 ♥	Pass	5 NT
Pass	6 ♣	Pass	6 ♦
All pass			

You can see why this feature has 11th in its title. The bidding and the play were not quick...far from it.

You can also see what Adri meant by his double of 3H. Penalties! He was correct, too as this contract would be 3 down without the defenders doing anything clever....+ 500 against +430 or 460 for all those in 3NT.. a complete top.

Rochelle did not see it in that light...hence 4C.

Adri then tried 4NT ...to play. Rochelle saw this as a Key Card Ask. She had 2...hence 5H.

Adri tried to sign off in 5NT. To Rochelle, he was asking for kings..hence 6C as she had none.

Finally, there was a bid which they both agreed was to play...6D. As an observer to this auction, I was exhausted, never mind the East-West bidders, and Tim was fretting even more, still waiting to produce the final results.

Joy led HA and to her credit, Rochelle played the board extremely well. Joy played a second heart, won in dummy, and Rochelle discarded a club. A diamond to her ace was followed by a successful spade finesse. DK and I had to follow with DQ! A third round of diamonds to Rochelle's DJ was followed by a second successful spade finesse and then SAK. Rochelle could now discard her remaining small clubs on SK and HQ. Slam made! A top board at Te Aroha and around New Zealand...and even more important, another point for Rochelle..and, of course, Adri, in the Slam Cup.

Their reaction is recorded for posterity.



“High Five” for reaching even higher than the five level. Yes, 6D bid and made....and all, even Tim, got into the port before 11pm, just!

Calling our newer players

We have a good number of brand new players playing on Tuesday nights this year. Here’s something just for you. You may have never heard of the National Bridge Congress. It is held annually and lasts a whole week. Now, you brand new players, could not cope with playing bridge that length of time.

However, there is a 1 session event just for players at your level. The Congress takes part at Bay Park, Mt Maunganui. The Novice Pairs takes place on the Saturday afternoon, September 28th. It starts at 2.00pm and

lasts about 3 hours. It is specifically for players brand new to the game, players who have learnt in the last couple of years.

You get afternoon tea afterwards all thrown in and entry fee is just 10.00 per player. You need a partner. You do not need to enter in advance though you can, on the NZ Bridge website.

If you are interested in playing, ask me or Rochelle or Tim and we can tell you about entering and to get a small experience of what our National Congress is all about.

Club Gossip



Well, it is very happy gossip and it is not really gossip but factual. Grace and Oscar are officially engaged. Congratulations to them both. Now, although it is true they knew each other before they set foot in the Te Aroha Bridge Club, both being vets in the Morrinsville-Te Aroha area, we, the bridge club, can claim some matchmaking talent. Yet another bridge playing extended member of the Kalma family. The “gos” is for a wedding in the first few months next year...hopefully not on a Tuesday night! Following on Charlotte and Tyrel, our club is certainly the place to come to if you are looking for a partner...not one at the bridge table! Neat news.

Good Choice, Alan!

There is some irony in the above title. However, firstly, I want to put you in Allan's shoes....and mighty big ones they are! You are in 6Cx after this sequence:

East Deals E-W Vul		<div style="background-color: green; color: white; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
		♠	Q 9
		♥	A J 2
		♦	A K 9
		♣	A K 9 7 2
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		4 ♠	5 ♣
5 ♠	Pass	Pass	6 ♣
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All pass

Now, you and Alan have not got a bad hand though maybe Alan might have doubled 5S for penalties. You and Alan are sitting South.

No worries as the play or to be exact the opening lead is the thing that matters. East, yes, East, led a small spade, **out of turn**. You call the director who gives you the various options. Do you accept that spade opening lead? If not, you can forbid the opening lead of a spade from the correct hand?

Well, Alan presumed the opposition knew what they were doing and banned a spade opening lead. West could lead any suit except a spade...and chose a low diamond. Take a look...

So, next time you receive a lead out of turn, do not be too sure that one's opponent knows what they are doing. Had Alan accepted the spade lead, he would have been writing down +920 instead of -50. Oh, in case you are not sure which Allan has been featured, he was attired with kilt at the Cambridge 6's above!

The Wisdom of Solomon



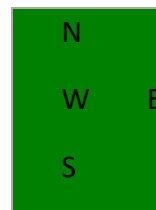
Insurance

Many deals are exciting, a bit freaky and neither side can be quite sure who can make what. When faced with such a situation, it can be the safest approach to bid on rather than risk defending. You may not get the best score you could but disaster is unlikely to strike.

What do you do here as West with just the opponents vulnerable?

North Deals
N-S Vul

♠ A 8 4 3
♥ J 6
♦ 5 3
♣ Q J 10 9 5



West	North	East	South
	1 ♣	2 ♣	5 ♦

?

Your partner's 2C promised at least 5 cards in each major. Being vulnerable, South bid 5D to make. They had a good hand, probably heaps of diamonds. Can they make 5D? Can we make 5S? I was not sure of the answer to either question.

If you pass 5D, what do you lead? SA seems sensible but say North had the SK and South no spades. Ouch, that could be terminable for the defence.

"Taking insurance" means here bidding on to 5S. It should not be too many down and if it is down, then likely 5D may make.

I "took insurance". Have a look.

♠ Q 5
♥ K Q 5 3
♦ 7
♣ A 8 7 6 4 2

♠ K J 9 6 2
♥ A 9 8 4 2
♦ 10
♣ K 3

♠	10 7
♥	10 7
♦	A K Q J 9 8 6 4 2
♣	—

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♣	2 ♣	5 ♦
5 ♠	All pass		

North led their diamond. South switched to a heart and the defence took 1 trick in each of diamonds, hearts and spades. Had North led CA, the defenders could have taken 1 more trick, a club ruff.

Meanwhile, against 5D, had I led SA, the defence could take 2 spades and HA...down 1. Some tables saw this happen. However, several West players led a heart...and East did not like leading away from SK. 5D made many times.

My insurance did not get us a top board but the end result was well above average for doing so. Worth doing in such uncertain situations.

Well, that's all for August. I know next time we will be checking on the Te Aroha- Matamata cycle way and two club members who are no relation but who one club member think look rather alike.

See you in September.

Richard

