

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

Te Aroha News March 2024



**Te Aroha takes to the Gold Coast....with
Super Sub and a Man concentrating**



It was neat to have you there, Alan, at the last minute as Peter Daffurn had to pull out. Meanwhile, do you think Guy concentrated as hard at the bridge table as he did over this particular sumptuous feast? (Yes, we did eat rather well.) Too well. A world first, perhaps, as this man needed a “doggy bag”!

Sleeping Partners



Obviously, partners in unison! Not much system discussion happening here.

Let's take a look at the three Te Aroha teams with a few extras who were only too happy to be included as honorary "Te Arohans" for the duration of the event:

The Te Aroha Teams



Anna and I had a good time in the Open Pairs finishing midway in the 2nd of 9 groups of 20 pairs and also finished respectably in the Swiss Pairs. We enjoyed the Open Teams with our teammates Alister Stuck (left) and Hamish Brown but did not finish as high as we would have liked.

The “Mix and Matchers”



Alan, Guy, Joy and Victor had a pretty good time in the Restricted section.

*In the Restricted Pairs, Victor and Guy did extremely well to reach the A Final (top of 8 groups) finishing there in 18th place. Alan and Joy also played well to be 4th in the B Final. The four, otherwise known as “**Up the T Ars**” finished 8th out of 86 teams. Along with Tim and Rochelle (in team Russell), the Kiwis were near the end in 1st and 2nd places but just could not hang on in the last couple of matches.*

While Joy spent time with husband, Gary, otherwise known as “Total Tourist”, Alan and Guy played in the Ivy Dahler Restricted Teams and finished a respectable 18th out of 76 pairs. Actually, Gary really deserves a special award for spending all week with 8 bridge players. To say they never discussed a bridge hand in his presence would be a gross distortion of the truth!



Tim and Rochelle with their Restricted Teams teammates, Mt Albert's Bigi Cameron and Emma Russell.

Tim and Rochelle finished 3rd in the C Final (that was the 3rd of 8 groups) and teamed up with Bigi and Emma not just to finish 4th in the Restricted Teams where they won the prize for the top Mixed Team but they also won the dress-up, "The Shuttlecocks" as you can see below.



The latest "goss" is that Tim and Bigi will be partners in this year's Spa Town Teams while Rochelle has a "leave of absence" pass.

Team Cars...or T Ars?



No misspelling of the name of Guy, Alan, Victor and Joy's team. I am sure Rochelle will not mind being an "l" short in her car's name. Rumour has it she just had one "l" of a time all week!

Actually, all 8 players as well as "Total Tourist" Gary and the other non-playing "Te Aar", Rochelle's better half, Honk, (his words, not mine, of course!), had a wonderful week. It was a real shame that it ended with such a sad piece of news from back home.

Meanwhile: **Back home: Well Taught**



A picture which would no doubt have pleased Hermanna. One of the latest of the Kalmas to learn, Foster's wife Karen, in action at the club with another recent learner, Oscar. In this late February session, they scored 60.88% on a Tuesday night, pretty good for two new players. Here they are getting a good score against their teachers, Tyrel (out of the picture) and Charlotte who would be pleased with the good form shown by these two new players.

People with other things on their minds

Three “burning” happenings

They must have a lot of important things on their minds because:

Two “diverted” leaders



Nero, he fiddled while Rome burned

King Alfred: entrusted with looking after a peasant woman’s cakes but was “distracted” as they burned.

And one more “diverted leader”



Peter TJ: he played bridge after putting on the sausage rolls for supper and “got diverted”...and the above was the result. Enough! Let’s turn to the good food.

There was the lovely supper our club put on when “Thames” came to town:



There were 11 tables at Te Aroha and the same number the following week at Thames, who put on equally good food. No need for dinner before bridge these two evenings.

Alex Barshai and Jena Robinson topped the rankings in the first heat with 65.23% with Malcolm and Fritz being the top Te Aroha pair with 60.45%. Meanwhile, at Thames, Tim and Jan Baker had a great night with 61.14% beaten only by locals Ted Cliffin and Barbara McFarlane who scored 63.41%.

At the half-way point in the two-club competition, Thames lead with 557.27 against Te Aroha's 542.73. There's plenty of time to catch that gap up later in the year.

A nice home for a bridge club sign.



Meet Anna Jordan. You might do quite soon as she said she would like to learn bridge. She was in Te Aroha a while ago as the props procurer for the first series of "The Gone" and while here, she spotted the above old bridge club sign lying rather unceremoniously at the back of the club. She asked if she could have it and here it is in the front of her new retro furniture shop in Whitaker St. She loves the sign and says it fits nicely in the shop. The photo was taken before the shop opened, in late March. That will be a nice advert for the club.

Anna's grandmother, Dorothy Grace Jordan, played at our club in the 1970's and 1980's. Anna recalls her grandmother going round to bridge games at Lilys Smyth's home. Here's hoping to see Anna at the club, too.

The Search for New Players

Club members have been trying. We had a good presence at the recent Domain Day, with a stand in the Clubs' Marquee. Then, we had an engaging poster delivered by club members to all houses in the town and sent to all on the local rural delivery runs. We had posters displayed at key points around the town...and then on March 27th, the big night, the first Beginners' Lesson for 2024, the class being taken by Charlotte and Tyrel.

and stop press news: the first night of classes saw 12 learners turn up...and with a few "refreshers" coming along too, we should have a good group learning this year. Thanks to all who helped promoting the lessons...and in Charlotte and Tyrel, we have excellent teachers who will also get the new players enjoying the game.

Waikato Area Pairs comes to Town

The first heat of this annual event took place at the club on 17th March. We had a decent turn-out of 10 tables, the 10th full table courtesy of Jan Baker who filled in with Anna Kalma. Anna had a busy day directing and scoring the event. "10" was a significant number as there were players from 10 clubs, including a visitor from the Hutt Bridge Club.

Tim and Peter Daffurn had a great morning scoring 61.20% and leading the field at that point. They could not quite keep that up after lunch and finished 4th. Hamilton's Helen Rinaldi and Catherine Cameron were the steadiest pair of the day and finished the winners with 119.27% over the two sessions.

No reward for accurate bidding!

Anna Kalma and I recently bid the following board to the top spot and scored almost zero match-points for doing so! Let's see whether you would have bid as me. I was sitting North with the following hand:

♠ A 9 8 7 5 4
♥ Q 10 7 3
♦ 10 7 4
♣ —

East started with 1C and much to my surprise, Anna, South, called 1S! West chimed in with 2H and with 6-card trump support and a void, I hoped 4S would end the bidding. No such joy!

In 6C, one of East's diamonds could be discarded on HA and even if DQ was not doubleton, East could have set up West's 5th heart for a second diamond discard. As it was, 6C would make easily for the loss of just CK.

Meanwhile, Anna had to lose 2 hearts and 2 diamonds in 6Sx, -3 or -800. As most of the field played in either 5C or a lower level contract, -800 was a complete bottom at the Cambridge Club where this hand occurred and from the 130 tables in play on X Club, netted us a wonderful 3.6%. That's what you get for bidding to the top spot for North-South. Well bid, though, by Karen Payne and particularly Margaret Fitzgerald of Cambridge, the latter converting the penalty double of 5S to the making 6C.

"The Wisdom of Solomon"



"Run, Rabbit, Run": You can never be too weak!

When your partner opens 1NT, especially when they show only 12-14 hcp, you really need to run if the opposition make a penalty double and you are very weak with a 5 card or longer suit.

This happened recently. Look at this awful South hand.

North Deals		♠ Q 7 6												
N-S Vul		♥ Q 5 4												
		♦ A K J 9 5												
		♣ 9 6												
♠ K J 3		<table style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S			♠ A 9 5 4 2	
	N													
W		E												
	S													
♥ J 8				♥ A K 2										
♦ 7 3 2				♦ Q 10										
♣ A K J 5 3				♣ Q 8 2										
		♠ 10 8												
		♥ 10 9 7 6 3												
		♦ 8 6 4												
		♣ 10 7 4												
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>											
	1 NT	Dbl	?											

Were there no double, South would "run" to hearts, usually with a 2D transfer. It is even more critical to run from 1NT if your side is doubled. Yet, South passed...and naturally, with all those high card points, West passed, too.

Luckily for South, North decided not to stick out 1NTx and called 2D. With 5 spade tricks (East would lead a spade and West plays SK and then SJ), five more in clubs and HAK, North would be clinging on to their DA hoping to make a trick at trick 13..... 6 down doubled, -1700! Ouch.

2H x would not be nearly as bad, no more than 2 down at most. In reality, East-West would probably drift off to 4S where they can make 11 tricks.

So, with a 5 card or longer suit, it is vital you do **not** pass 1NTx where you are very weak. South above could hardly be weaker. Run, rabbit, run....as quickly as you can!

“Sorry, Partner” comes to Te Aroha Or more exactly, Anna Kalma got the opportunity to talk for a couple of minutes on the international bridge podcast called “Sorry, Partner”. This regular program features an interview with a prominent bridge player but also has a small slot where a club member can talk about and promote their own club...and Anna got the opportunity recently to promote her favourite club, Te Aroha.

She highlighted how the town of only about 4,000 people has around 70 players, only about 12 years after it nearly folded when it had only 8 paying members. As such, it would be the fastest growing club in the country. Of course, she did mention that many of her family members play now or have played at the club. She also mentioned that compared to a lot of bridge clubs, the club has a youngish membership...and naturally, she mentioned the strong social side to the club with members eating at a pub before bridge, the lavish suppers where players mixed and mingled during play and the sessions after play where members had “a few ports” and talked about local issues, even occasionally bridge hands!

She also mentioned how around 10 club members head off to the Gold Coast Bridge Congress each year.

She said quite a lot about the club in just a couple of minutes. All positive. Thanks, Anna, for broadcasting to the bridge world what we local members know about our rather special bridge club in the town with the name “the love”.



A Happy Easter to you all. *Richard*