

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

**Te Aroha News June 2026**



### **Spa Town Saturday**

It was a big day in Te Aroha on Saturday June 6<sup>th</sup>. Among the very important activities taking place that day were the annual rugby and netball Cup competitions, both taking place in and around the Silver Fern Farms Event Centre. That resulted in rugby victories to C 46-7 in the Dr Dunn A Teams and 15-5 in Dr Lawrence B Teams. The netball matches went to Waihou 74-15 in the Hubbard A Team Cup and 24-15 to the same team in the B Team Curtin Cup.

However, we know **the** most important activity was at the Events Centre, the Spa Town Teams and the Restricted Open Swiss Pairs which ran alongside it.

We had an excellent turn-out with 22 teams and 10 tables of pairs competing. Both events played 6 x 10 board matches. Thanks to all who helped, our sponsors, Lion Foundation and Tatua Dairy Co, (thanks too to Malcolm for donating the lunch-time soup) to director and scorer, Allan Joseph and Jan Spaans, to our very efficient caddie, Debbie, to Tim and Joy for dealing heaps of boards, to Anna Kalma, on hand to help in so many different ways, to Paul and Gaye and all other helpers during the day and cleaning up afterwards, to all those who brought morning tea and donated

raffles, to Henk and Lisa for filling in to prevent an odd number of pairs in the Swiss Pairs. There's others behind the scenes, too: Lisa is obtaining the grant, June in keeping the kitchen with supplies, Paul in organising the prizes, Tim in organising the liquid refreshments. Thanks too to the Matamata Bridge Club for the supply of equipment. It was a real team effort and from the comments received afterwards very well appreciated by the players.

There were some good results, too, though Anna and my team were the highest locals in the Teams competition finishing 7<sup>th</sup>, finishing just ahead of the "Glass" team in 8<sup>th</sup> place. We had some great results in the Swiss Pairs with Laurie and Malcolm coming home 3<sup>rd</sup>, one place above Shirley Townsend and her friend from Dargaville, Pam Rope. Look below who were the top Junior pair in this event (not the guy in the middle!).



*Diane and Linda who were the top Junior Pair in the Restricted Open Swiss Pairs. Meanwhile, Laurie and Malcolm finished third in the same event.*

## Spa Town Teams Winners



*That's Hamish Brown, John Buckleton, Karen Harris and Marcus Dudley from Auckland, Hamilton and Te Puke. The Swiss Pairs was won by the Cambridge pairing of Irene Stewart and Don MacPherson.*

## Man's (and Woman's) Next Best Friend

It will come as no surprise to any of you that I regard this “man's best friend” as a game of Bridge. (Yes, I know my wife and family are right up there, too.) Very close behind comes food and it is a delight to see the constant supply of food whether it is veg or chutneys or fruit that appear at the club for its members. So, such a nicely presented collection that appeared early in this month deserves photographic recognition.



Now, you may think it strange that I extol and highlight in the picture a basket full of carrots. I think this vegetable adds great colour to the collection. One does not need to eat them!

Bring on those chokos, Paul. I will leave those tiny orange veges for others to consume and enjoy.

Oh, word of such foodstuffs is spreading. Rosa Mishkin, life partner of the director at the Spa Town events, was heard to be ordering up near double-figure quantities of Paul's green chutney, only restrained from greater number because of lack of supply. Maybe directors should be paid in future in chokos and carrots?

### **Pat stars at Waihi**

Pat Johansen had a wonderful day out at the Waihi Intermediate Pairs on Saturday June 13<sup>th</sup>. Pat and Nita Knight from Thames came first in the 30 pair field. They finished second with 61.95% in the morning session and scored a steady 55.77% in the afternoon to win overall by 4.12%. A lovely result. Pat said she and Nita had been friends for many years though this was the first time they had played a tournament together. Well done, Pat and Nita.



*Nita and Pat*

This board was great for Pat and Nita.

<b>Board 18</b>	♠ A 3										
East Deals	♥ K Q 6 4										
N-S Vul	♦ A 4 3 2										
	♣ 10 5 4										
♠ J 10 9 8 7 2	<table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 5 4
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ J 9		♥ 7 3 2									
♦ 9 7 6		♦ J 10 8									
♣ Q 8		♣ K J 9 7 2									
	♠ K Q 6										
	♥ A 10 8 5										
	♦ K Q 5										
	♣ A 6 3										
West	North	East	South								
	<i>Pat</i>		<i>Nita</i>								
		Pass	1 ♥								
Pass	4 ♥	Pass	4 NT								
Pass	5 ♥	Pass	6 NT								
All pass											

Pat and Nita play the jump to game as an opening hand. Nita asked for aces, heard two in reply and with a very strong flat hand of her own bid to 6NT. West led SJ and with both red suits breaking well, Nita scored 4 tricks in each red suit, 3 spade tricks and CA to make 12 tricks.

### Clubs Tournament at Cambridge

The Waikato clubs part of our region held their heat at the Cambridge Club on Sunday July 21<sup>st</sup>. There were 8 clubs or combined clubs taking part in the Open, Intermediate and Junior sections. The aim was to finish in the top two in the 7 round round- robin event.

Our Open team of Rochelle, Tim, Anna and myself came the closest, finishing third by just over 1 vp. Winning more matches than our rivals did not help as the wins were not big enough. However, Joy and former Te Aroha member, Peter Daffurn, were both in the combined Matamata-Morrinsville team which finished in first place.

Jan, Hanna, Malcolm and Adri were our Intermediate team. They recorded three wins and a draw in their 7 matches but the three losses were just a little expensive and they finished 6<sup>th</sup> out of the 8 teams.

Our Junior team was Ross McIntyre, Cam, Holly and Peter TJ. They had a couple of wins and finished in 7<sup>th</sup> place.

There was a lovely atmosphere at the event which made for a pretty nice day even if not a successful one for our club players.

### **Masses at Morrinsville**

There was a full house at Morrinsville for the club's Restricted Swiss Pairs tournament on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June. That's great for bridge in our area. There were even some Te Aroha players taking part with the highest finishing pair being Joy and Victor who finished in 9<sup>th</sup> place. Malcolm and Adri finished in 15<sup>th</sup> spot.

### **Remembering Tom Stephenson and Jan Meertens**

Tom was not a member of the Te Aroha Bridge Club. Yet, Corolyn is. Sadly, after being unwell for several years, Tom passed in early June. The thoughts and good wishes of all club members go to you, Corolyn, and to your family. We know Tom was a great helper for you in your very successful catering business. When you are ready, it would be lovely to see you back playing at the club.

Jan and Dorine Meertens had been members of the club for several years. For many years, Jan was a local vet. Jan loved his game of bridge, was a great conversationalist and frequently while he was playing bridge, was seen with a glass of his favourite red wine. They left the club a couple of years back to move close to their family in Hamilton. Sadly, ill health dogged Jan and he died also in early June. Our thoughts and best wishes go to Dorine and Jan and Dorine's family.

### **And those who have been unwell..**

It has been a bad month for our club members. However, hopefully, Nick, Laurie and Henk are on the mend. Again, our thoughts are with them and other club members who have not been too well.

### **Richard's Improver Class**

The first one was on a Wednesday in April. The second one is at the club on Wednesday July 15<sup>th</sup> and third one will be on a Wednesday evening in September. All are from 7.00 pm until 10pm. Come along with a partner and you will play a series of deals after which we will talk about them. They will all have points of interest for keen Junior, Intermediate and Open players.

The cost is \$5.00 per player, the proceeds going to our club.

If you are intending to come to the 15<sup>th</sup> July session, I would appreciate you giving me at least a week's notice so that we can have an even number of pairs playing.

Talking of improving, here is :

### The Wisdom of Solomon



### A Breath- holding Bid

Recently, I held this hand at the club:

North Deals  
N-S Vul



♠ 10 9  
♥ K J 9 8 7 5 3  
♦ J 7 6  
♣ 8

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♠	Pass	?

What to bid? Only 5hcp but too good to pass. It would be nice to be able to bid 2H but that promises at least 10hcp and partner will think I am stronger. So, I will have to bid a very off-shape 1NT and hope partner does not pass that.

Fingers crossed... and partner bid 3NT! They must have a very strong hand. So, at last I can bid my heart suit as hearts needs to be the trump suit. Even if 3NT were to make, we would be much better off in hearts. So, 4H it was and a rather surprised partner passed. I awaited dummy with interest and crossed fingers. The news was to be good:

North Deals    ♠ A K 8 7 6  
 N-S Vul        ♥ A 2  
                   ♦ A 5  
                   ♣ K 10 3 2

♠ Q J 5 4 2	N	♠ 3
♥ Q	W	♥ 10 6 4
♦ Q 10 2	E	♦ K 9 8 4 3
♣ Q 7 5 4	S	♣ A J 9 6

♠ 10 9  
 ♥ K J 9 8 7 5 3  
 ♦ J 7 6  
 ♣ 8

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♠	Pass	1 NT
Pass	3 NT	Pass	4 ♥
All pass			

West led SQ. I won in dummy and played HA and got some good news with HQ falling. I drew trumps and then led S9, finessing successfully and then could try a club to the king and ace. I could discard one diamond on SK and made 11 tricks, losing just one club and one diamond.

The morals of the story with such a hand are:

1. do not pass 1S even with only say 4/5 hcp.
2. certainly if your suit is a major suit, make sure it becomes the trump suit. You might want to chance 3NT if your suit was a minor, though depending on your honours, you might even then make it trumps.

Here, 3NT would have made as well though probably not making as many tricks as in hearts. There was no guarantee that bidding 1NT would have a happy ending though as long as your partner, or even the opposition, made another bid, you should be on the way to a good score.

### **Farewell Susan**

It was nice having Susan Impey from Opotiki for the last few months while she was relieving head at a local primary school. Her period at the school and at the bridge club has ended... but not before she came along to her last night at the club with plenty of chocolates which were very well received.

You are most welcome to come this way again, Susan.

## Slam Cup Swap



Now, I love bidding slams like every bridge player..as long as I make them! My problem at the club is finding them. Take one Tuesday in June. There was a good slam to bid North-South. I sat North while Tim sat East that evening. So, you would think I got to bid this slam. No way! 4 tables from the end the cards all got switched....and the last 4 tables played the board with East-West having the slam hands.

Up to that point, no pair had bid the slam. Yet, 3 of the last four East-West pairs bid and made 12 tricks, including my opponents and including Tim and his partner!

So, even when there is a slam my way, the cards are taken from me in advance! I have abandoned all chance of winning The Slam Cup this year. Not so, Tim!

*More Te Aroha news at the end of July. Richard*