

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

September 2023



Pirates take away the dress -up.

As usual in Te Aroha tradition, the final night of the Saxon Teams saw all 40 players dress up for the occasion, the theme this year being movie characters...and the important first prize went to "Pirates of the Caribbean"



A mean looking bunch led by one-eyed captains Ross and Austin, ably assisted by female pirates Joan and the rum-looking (oops, sorry, I mean rum drinking) Laurie. She finished off the rum bottle and was seen swigging away at the port before the evening was out.

We could hardly call Oscar the best dressed as indeed he was the least dressed of all there that evening but his outfit as Mowgli from “The Jungle Book” won him the best individual performance of the evening.



Creativity was to the fore this evening. “The most creative” was indeed a tough call but taking the honours and the chocolate bars were “The Wizard of Oz”.

The Wizardand the wicked witch



Now, if only I could recognise that witch. I think it is the glasses which gave away his identity!

Meanwhile, the Pirates seemed quite threatening, this next lot not only had evil looks but bulk on their side:



Don't be fooled by Bernie's laughter. This lot were truly bulky and mean! However, you may not think that creativity and Vikings go together that well. If so, you would be wrong as yon Viking Richard, standing with shield all at the ready was awarded the chocolate for the most creative individual. Great horns and helmet which surely had rarely been seen before up the rough tough Norwegian coast.. but were worn as this lot of Vikings sailed up the Waihou!

Now, "The Golden Girls" were far too busy and focused to worry about the above awards.



Shirley, Rochelle, Norma and Nancy remembered that there was an important bridge competition to win...and did they win? They cleaned up by over 20vps! Not only did they look glamorous but they can sure play bridge, too.

The following all received special commendations:

“The Blues Brothers”



“Brokeback Mountain”



“The Great Gatsby”



Prison Break



The prisoners seem to be a happy crew considering their status though mainly they were restricted correctly to just bottled water: none of the sumptuous goodies the rest of us had for supper.

The only sad note in the evening was that one of Gatsby's friends, Anna Mikaelis, played her last game at the club this evening before heading back to Germany where she assured us she will become a regular bridge player.

So, that's 9 of the 10 teams. One other sad note is that no-one thought it worthwhile to take a picture of Barbie and Ken. There were 2 of each and they looked pretty smart, I am sure you will all agree. So, apologies to Hermanna, Linda and Martin. Please tell your fellow teammate he is allowed to take a "selfie" too.

Good on you, Te Aroha.....a splendid evening's bridge. ..and thanks to Rochelle and Anna for organising the event and getting us all up to speed on this last night of the event. We hope that the new players who experienced Tuesday evenings for the first time enjoyed themselves.

LEAVING ON A JET PLANE.....or not!

"All my bags are packed
I'm ready to go
I'm standin' here outside the door....."

The words of a famous John Denver song. Alas, the words would have to be rewritten to refer to the recent trip to Hawaii by the producer of this newsletter. Departure date was 5th September for himself and his dearly beloved but on the morning of that day, he discovered the difference in the meaning of "and" and "or"

This is what he read:

"You need an E Passport **or** ESTA Visa Application Form."

This was the truth:

"You need an E Passport **and** an ESTA Visa Application Form."

Time of discovery of mistake: day of departure

Time required to get an ESTA: 3 days

Comments made by newsletter producer: not printable!

Yet, there is some good news emanating from this debacle:

The same two people will be taking off for Honolulu on October 3rd, armed with e-passport **and** Esta. and:

He was able to play in all three weeks of the Saxon Teams.

So, no harm done really...except to his pride and eyesight!

Back to Bridge

Well, he's never really been away. It takes more than a broken leg to keep Nick away from the bridge table. Here he is "escaping" Waikato Hospital and he was soon back to playing at both Morrinsville and Te Aroha. Here's hoping you get sitting rights for just a little while, Nick.....and welcome back.



Jo Mayall

Te Aroha took 2 teams to Waihi in mid-month to contest this annual competition against teams from Waihi, Katikati and Morrinsville. Our B Team of Rochelle, Tim, Peter (Daffurn) and Ross (McIntyre) got unceremoniously "thumped" in their first match by the eventual winners,

Waihi A, scoring a mighty 0.76 vps. The only Te Aroha player who had a smile on his face after that match was Alan Mace as he was representing Waihi on the day! However, other matches went more our way and this team finished in third place with 64.76 vps , about 20vps behind the winners.

In 4th place (out of 8 teams) were our A Team of Henk, Hermanna, Jan (Baker) and Malcolm with 58.83 vps.



Some nice smiles from our players after enjoying their day at Waihi.

A Week in the Bay

Several of our players took part in the National Bridge Congress held at Bay Park in the last week of September. We played lots of bridge during the week and in midweek dressed for the occasion as Wednesday was dress-up day. Tim, Rochelle, Tyrel and Charlotte were seen as butterflies while “Elder Kalma” and “Elder Solomon” were part of the “Bible Belters from the Book of Mormon.”

Te Aroha also had a team in the quiz evening, the “Te Aarhs”, not to be confused with the “Wahs” of League fame. The “Te Arhs” displayed their general knowledge though not quite well enough to finish amongst the winners.



Members of the "Te Aarhs" team at the quiz evening. They look pretty intelligent, don't they?

Guy and Joy won the Plate Section of New Zealand Restricted Open Pairs. Tim and Rochelle finished 3rd in this event. Guy and Joy finished strongly with a 60% in the last round while Tim and Rochelle scored a fraction under 63% in the second round.



Tyrel, Charlotte, Rochelle and Tim were the top team with an average under 175A Points in the New Zealand Open Teams.



Top non-Open Team in the New Zealand Restricted Open Teams, Peter, Joy, Alan and Guy.

Anna and Richard qualified for the last 16 knock-out stage of the New Zealand Teams but their team got knocked out at that stage. They also finished second in the New Zealand Mixed Pairs. Meanwhile, “knocked out” unfortunately is what happened to Tyrel and Charlotte in the quarter-finals of the National Rubber Bridge tournament. They did at least have the satisfaction of losing to the eventual Wellington winners.

Alan enjoyed himself on the last couple of days by finishing 6th out of 82 pairs in the Intermediate/Junior Swiss Pairs. His first-time partner was Golden Bay's Lori Godden.



A nice moment for me during the week was in receiving Life Membership of New Zealand Bridge.

Bring on those slams!

Slam hands are always among the most memorable of the week. I was certainly thinking of slam when I held the following as East:

S K942 H AK9873 D A7 C Q and the bidding started as follows:


West North East South

3NT

4S 5C ?

Our opponents had a slightly unusual system where the opening 3NT bid showed a pre-empt in either minor. Anna bid 4S and North wanted to compete in whichever minor their partner had: hence the 5C bid. I would have loved to be able to ask for aces and suspected we might make all 13 tricks in spades but alas, the bidding was above 4NT.

In such a situation, one has to be cautious and not bid to the 7 level and as you will see below, that was a wise decision.

<p>South Deals None Vul</p> <p>♠ A J 10 8 7 6 5 3 ♥ 2 ♦ 10 4 2 ♣ 10</p>		<p>♠ — ♥ Q J 10 ♦ K Q J 9 5 3 ♣ J 7 6 5</p>		<p>♠ K 9 4 2 ♥ A K 9 8 7 3 ♦ A 7 ♣ Q</p>
				
		<p>♠ Q ♥ 6 5 4 ♦ 8 6 ♣ A K 9 8 4 3 2</p>		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	
4 ♠	5 ♣	6 ♠	3 NT	
			All pass	

What Anna lacked in high card points, she made up with length in spades. North led DK and Anna had no trouble in winning DA, drawing trump and setting up my heart suit to discard her club and two diamonds and make all 13 tricks. I wonder which minor North would have led had I bid 7S.

That was a score of +980. Our Wellington teammates did well, sacrificing in 7C. Naturally, that was doubled with the defence taking HAK, then a heart ruff and DA for down 4, -800 but still a 5 imp gain for our team. Exciting times.

A great week of bridge before returning to the real world. Here's hoping I can make it to Hawaii at the second attempt. More news then in October.

Richard