

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

Te Aroha News January 2026



A New Way of Paying

Welcome to a new year of playing bridge in Te Aroha. For some, there has been no gap. Well, some of the weather has been rather unsummery.

One thing new this year is the way we aim to pay table money, using Compass dollars. Let Lee, our new Treasurer explain the key points:

Compa\$\$ is live!

“What is Compa\$\$? Compa\$\$ is a cashless system used by members for payment of table money, subs, and other transactions*. Every member has a Compa\$\$ account.

When you enter your NZB number at the start of a game our Bridgemates will know you were there and that you played. As a result, the system will deduct the table money from your Compa\$\$ account.

Money is added to the member's Compa\$\$ account by them making periodic top-ups to the Club's bank account via Internet banking.

When a member's account balance drops below a predetermined level, a notification email will be generated and sent to the member requesting a top-up to your account.

It is expected that members will keep their account in credit at all times.

Note: Compa\$\$ account transactions will be **updated once weekly** so transactions will not show immediately.

There is also no obligation for members to access their Compa\$\$ account using a log-in and password. However, it is available to members if they wish to see their transactions and account balance. Details of how to set up a log in for your Compa\$\$ account will follow shortly. Meantime, what you need to know is that there will be **no more coffee cards used** and **no more cash table money taken** at the Club. The exception for cash will be for Visitors. Any unused coffee cards should be returned to Lee, our Treasurer, and the member's account will be credited.

Please reference subs or top up when making payment. Top-ups to the Club bank account should be for a minimum \$20 though you can deposit any larger sum. The larger the sum, the less deposits you need make. “

If this system of payment is not for you, then see “President Paul” and he will ensure collection of cash and that the money ends in the Club bank account.

*Annual subs will in time be part of this system. For now, please pay your subscription amount, as per the invoice you have received and pay a **separate additional amount (minimum \$20)** for table money into the club’s bank account, clearly indicating **your name and for what each amount is for** (sub or table money). Lee can then allocate accordingly.*

Thanks to Lee for organising the new system. I am sure the changeover will be smooth.

Last Club Playing

Now, we do love our bridge at Te Aroha. Do you want proof of that? Take Tuesday night bridge around New Zealand. Now on average Tuesday night in November, there were 17 clubs taking part in X Club...around 200 to 300 pairs.

Fast forward to Tuesday December 23rd and the X Club results came up super quickly. “Why is that” you may ask? Well, there were only 11 pairs taking part and naturally, they were all playing at Te Aroha. Christmas Shopping all done and dusted. Let the playing continue.

There was no gap, either, with a session on Tuesday December 30th, albeit 2 and a half tables.

Bringing home the bacon.... Well, the hams, to be exact!



Joy and I had a great day in December at the Taupo Bridge Club's Christmas Pairs. We scored two rounds of 67% to win the event by about 4% even though Hamilton's Liz and Blair Fisher recorded a mere 76% in the second session. Also in the picture was a representative of the day's sponsor, Triton Hearing. Hey, that ham was heavy!

I have had a few good results recently:

1st Taupo Christmas Tournament, as above

2nd Auckland New Year Pairs

3rd Thames Congress Teams (with Anna)

4th Waitemata Open Pairs

Same Event: New Sponsor



Buzz Electrical

Thanks to Tyrel and Charlotte for their sponsorship in recent years of the Protag Swiss Pairs. The event continues in February this year but has a new sponsor as it is now called “Buzz Electrical Swiss Pairs”. Thanks very much to Tim and Adri’s brother, Jeff, who is an electrician around town. So, hopefully, if you need an electrician, Jeff Rigter’s company, Buzz Electrical, is the one you should be calling.

Quiet please, it’s Tea(TJ) Time

Now, it has been known occasionally that Peter TJ’s voice rises occasionally above the hubbub of play on a Tuesday night. (I refuse to define how “occasionally” this happens.) It happened on Tuesday 13TH January. “Quiet, please” came the voice and I knew whose larynx were in use. He managed to get all those who were discussing the weather or how they could have beaten the last 3NT contract in loud tones to be a lot quieter... but there was still a very loud gurgling noise echoing across the room.

Ross McIntyre to the rescue! Peter forgot the urn from where was to come his cup of tea had started to belch with overflowing water. Indeed, the level of noise had left Ross and others (who were of course waiting for the move to be called) to mopping up hot water duty. A good call, TJ. Best though watch bubbling kettles as well as over-exuberant (his word, not mine) bridge players.



Quiz Time

Which Te Aroha bridge player is known as “The King”?

A clue..... it is not the one who lends his name to the feature “Wisdom of Solomon”. ..and talking of which!

The Wisdom of Solomon

Grand Bidding



Hopefully, you bid this hand better than I did. It comes from a recent Tuesday night at the club. What is your bid as South with

East Deals
Both Vul



♠ —

♥ K Q 10 9 6 5 4

♦ A K

♣ J 6 5 3

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

Well, I made a rather poor bid, just 2H. I wanted to bid 4H which shows long hearts though normally no more than 14 high card points (with more high card points bid 3H) but I did not like having the void in my partner's suit. Partner, a

little conservatively raised to 4H and there we rested some three levels lower than we wanted to be!

East Deals	♠ Q J 8 6 2	
Both Vul	♥ A 8 2	
	♦ 6 4	
	♣ A K Q	
♠ 9 7 5 4		♠ A K 10 3
♥ 7		♥ J 3
♦ J 9 8 3 2		♦ Q 10 7 5
♣ 9 7 2		♣ 10 8 4
	♠ —	
	♥ K Q 10 9 6 5 4	
	♦ A K	
	♣ J 6 5 3	

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		Pass	1 ♥
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	4 ♥	All pass	

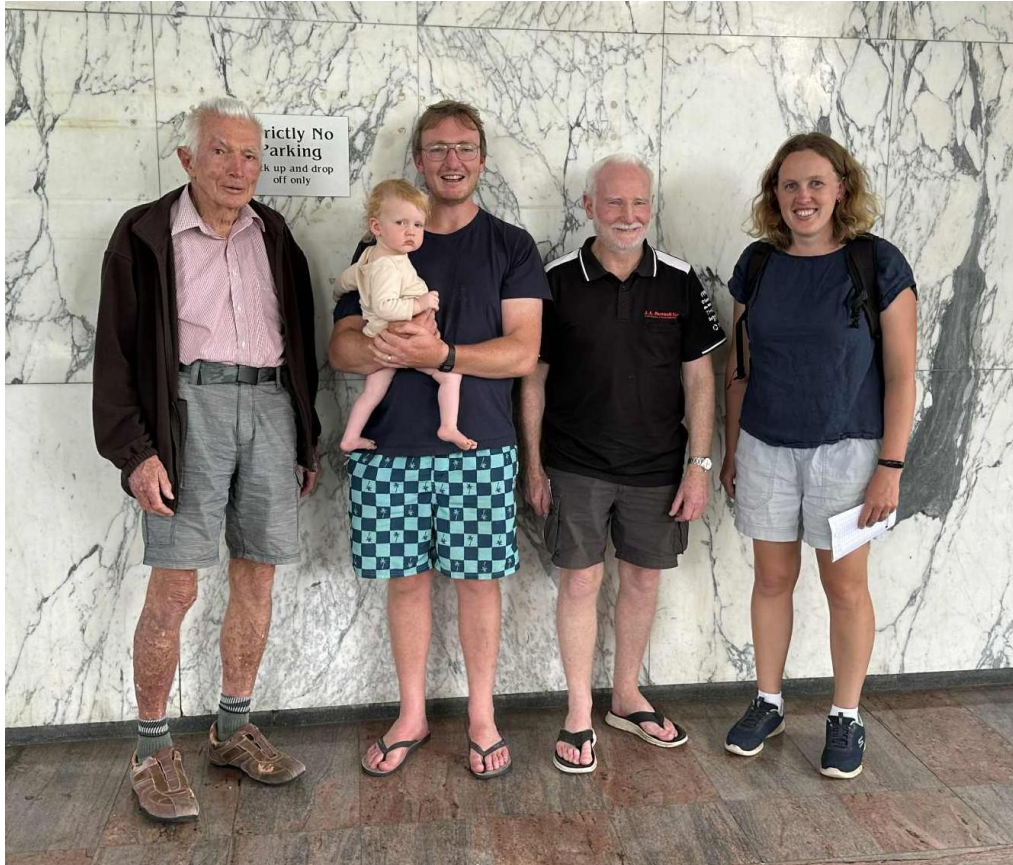
The good news was that the points awarded for the Slam Cup had not yet started. So, no loss there! Yet, how best to bid to at least 6H if not a level higher? At the club, only Alan and Moira and the two Rosses reached 6H with the other 5 pairs only making it to the game level.

North's problem is that they do not know South has no spades while South would be surprised at North's club honours and few wasted high card points in spades.

Probably, South's best bid after 1S is 4H. North can then ask for Key Cards and hearing they have two will take a gamble and bid 6H. The real solution to

bidding even to 6H, yet alone 7H, is to use a cue-bidding method. If you are interested how that works, tap my shoulder at the club and I will give you a quick run-down.

A Family in Canberra



That's Eric, Tyrel, Brett and Charlotte and number 1 supporter, Sophie.

Here is Charlotte talking about their trip to the Canberra Festival of Bridge.

"Tyrel and I played in the Canberra Festival of Bridge, we had a **Glass** team, with Tyrel's Dad and Granddad playing in the main South West Pacific Teams.

We started with a good win, which matched us against the number 1 seeded team in the competition for our second match" *(including the top Australians, Sartaj Hans and Andy Hung.)* "This was quite an experience, playing against some very sharp players, and we suffered only a moderate loss. We then had a rocky day, but finished the last 2 days of the 4 day event with 5 wins, getting us to 24th out of 100 teams, with 7 out of 12 wins."

The top team mentioned in Charlotte's report only finished 3 places above the Glass team, in 21st place.

“Green (s)” is the colour!

Paul commented on a recent Tuesday night how Gaye was dressed in black ready to come to bridge. So, he thought it was fine to



come in his green T Shirt. However, Gaye changed colour at the last minute... and green became their joint colour.

It was more than that, though, as this sparkling collection of bridge club garden grown vegetables were on the produce tables by the door. By the end of the night, these tables were almost empty with one sprig of non-green carrots left for me to take home...ever the caring husband as most of you know my little dislike of that particular vegetable.

Well done, Paul... and Gaye. Keep those greens coming. What a splendid job you are doing, hopefully not adversely affected by the recent rough weather.

The King is revealed!

I discovered this piece of information in playing at the Matamata Bridge Club recently. It was one of their members, Lyn Baines, who asked me how “the King” was. That drew a rather blank look from me. Lyn explained: “whenever I took a finesse against Henk and his partner, Henk always seemed to produce this honour... and not in the place where I wanted it to be. Hence, he became known as “The King”.

“The King” has a big celebration coming up in a few days’ time. However, as he will not be at the club to celebrate on the actual day, there was an advance celebration on the last Tuesday in January.

Doesn’t Henk look great. Here’s hoping he enjoys the celebration on the actual day.



Henk and the cake.

The “Not so Well” Column



We hope to welcome very soon both Barbara and Pat back to the club after they both suffered some rather nasty pre-Christmas accidents.

Domain Day Sunday March 1st on (guess where?) The Domain (right opposite the Bridge Club).



As in previous years, the Club will have a stand. We want to attract new members to the Club. One way of doing that is demonstrating the game being played. So, we would like a few club members to come down and play for a couple of hours. We will have a table, chairs even cards, under Ross' gazebo in the stand. We want you to play and demonstrate what you are doing to anyone who stops for a look.

The day runs from 10am until 2pm. So, we hope to have 2 shifts, 10.00am until midday and then from midday until 2pm. If you are able to come for a couple of hours, please let me know either at the club or by email to me on rhsolomon@xtra.co.nz. It should be fun and you will be helping the club in the process.

Bridge Coming up

There's the first round of the Waikato Area Pairs to be held at Matamata on Sunday March 8th. The Te Aroha heat is at the club on Sunday April 26th.

Beat that!

Well, that is going to be rather hard for most of us to do. Did you notice the score Rochelle and Tim posted at the club on Tuesday January 27th? It was a mere 74.03 %. It seems she who prepares the certificates for the end of year awards (Rochelle herself has done that though Shirley B seems to have taken over that task) can start producing that one already.



What a great score and it was achieved despite a rather unsuccessful sacrifice of -1700 in 5D x on one board. That was not vulnerable, too! It seems Tim made a call on a one count. Rochelle was sent to get some refreshments as Tim gallantly went 7 down, doubled, of course. Ross Stewart and Alma were the happy beneficiaries. Oh, a brilliancy Tim claimed as his opponents could make grand slam (2310) but guess how many countrywide bid to that level!

That was just one blip in a fabulous evening's score which included their first entry in the challenging Slam Cup competition.

Happy bridging to you all in February.

Richard

