

TABLE TALK – August 2020



Are you missing Live Bridge?

There is no way the club can operate at present, under Level 3. The committee have also resolved to follow New Zealand Bridge's recommendation that clubs stay shut until we are back at Level 1. Thus, the earliest we can expect the club to operate is Monday September 7th.

The Committee will let you know when the Club will open up and what effect the shut-down will have on the program for each of the sessions. There are likely to be some changes for the remainder of 2020. *(NZ Bridge has issued a later Advisory though it does not look like we will see bridge at our Club very soon...the club will keep you posted.)*

Another casualty is the Individual tournament which was due to be held at the Club on Sunday 30th August. The Committee still want to hold this event. Listen out for the rescheduled event.

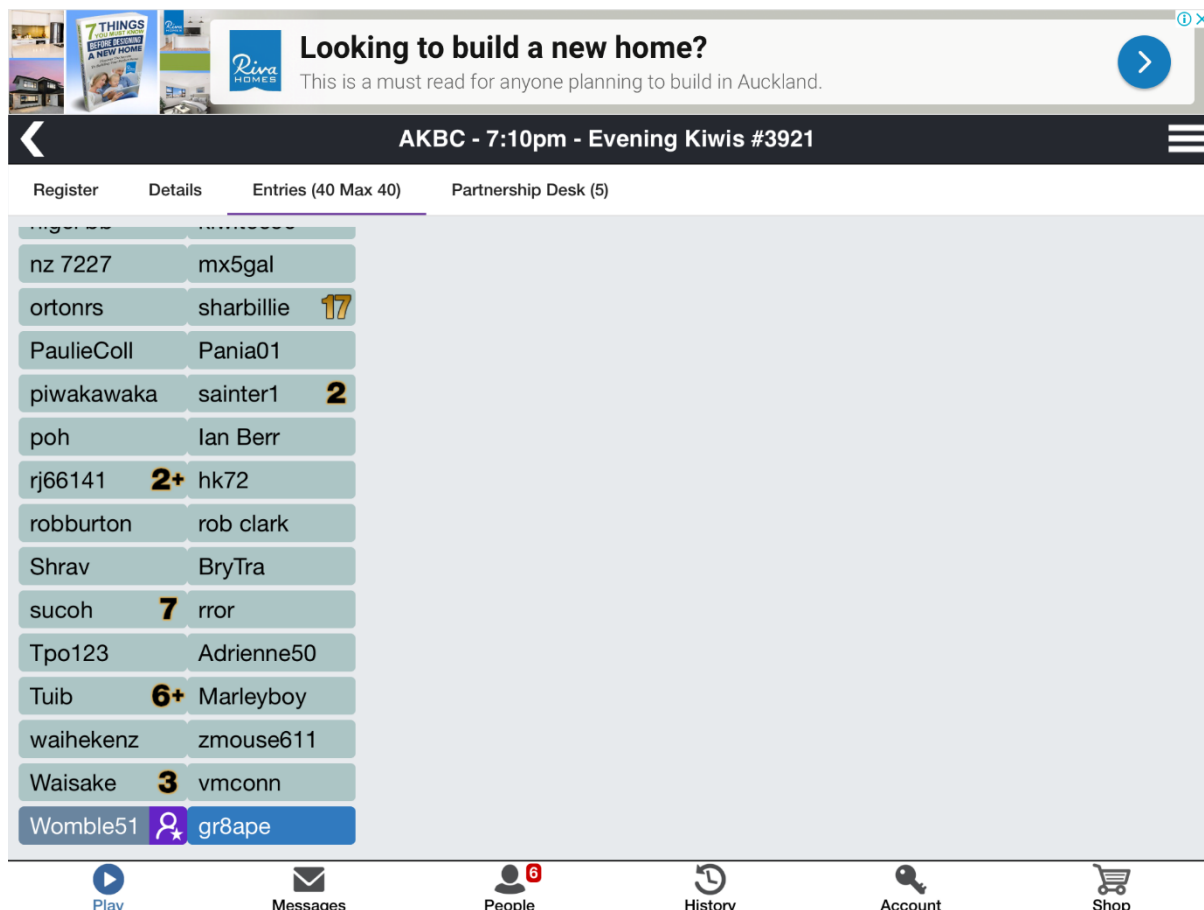
Programme Changes:

A reminder to Monday night players that because of the play missed through Covid, that Monday night October 26th has been changed to a Howes Championship night. The Patrons Pairs set is reduced to 3 weeks, starting 2nd November.

Watch out for other changes as a result of the current loss of playing nights.

On-line Bridge?

Some of you have been playing on-line, especially at the Auckland Club sessions run by Patrick Carter. For many, it has been a frustrating time of no bridge. We hope soon to be back at Level 1 and have the club-rooms full with bridge-players.



The screenshot shows the AKBC online bridge interface. At the top, there is a banner for "Looking to build a new home?" with a Riva Homes logo. Below the banner, the title "AKBC - 7:10pm - Evening Kiwis #3921" is displayed. The interface has tabs for "Register", "Details", "Entries (40 Max 40)", and "Partnership Desk (5)". The "Entries" tab is selected, showing a list of players and their scores. The list is as follows:

| Player 1 | Player 2 | Score |
|------------|------------|-------|
| nz 7227 | mx5gal | |
| ortonrs | sharbillie | 17 |
| PaulieColl | Pania01 | |
| piwakawaka | sainter1 | 2 |
| poh | Ian Berr | |
| rj66141 | hk72 | 2+ |
| robburton | rob clark | |
| Shrav | BryTra | |
| sucoh | rror | 7 |
| Tpo123 | Adrienne50 | |
| Tuib | Marleyboy | 6+ |
| waihekenz | zmouse611 | |
| Waisake | vmconn | 3 |
| Womble51 | gr8ape | |

At the bottom of the screen, there is a navigation bar with icons for "Play", "Messages", "People" (with a red badge showing 6), "History", "Account", and "Shop".

Just a look at what some of our players have been up to during the “lockdown”. There may be a couple of familiar names at the bottom: “Womble51 and “gr8pe”. If you do not know who they are, ask Darren and Caroline!

Wednesday Teams:

We had managed to run 2 nights of the 4-week teams’ event before we were locked down again. The usual wonderful assortment of team colours was worn, and a glass of wine got all those new partnerships off to a good start. After 2 rounds, Red Team were in the lead, followed by Gold Team.

No Bridge... but the work continues....

News from Kevin Griffin



How's that for a nice roof?



With three air-con units.

Great news! All the major sections of the roof have been completed and all three air conditioners are back up and running. Thanks very much to Mark, the roofer, for lending muscle (while I was swanning around on Mt Ruapehu) and to Terry Evans and his crew for completing these jobs. It has been a very sad time for Terry with the death of his wife, Rita. Rita had been a club member for many years and I am sure all members send their condolences to Terry.

I have been told that having the third air con unit operating has made a big difference.

Thanks to all the members who provided heaters during the time of these repairs. I think at times the heaters were too effective, with some complaining about the heat, although we were lucky that the weather behaved with slightly warmer temperatures. There are still some heaters to be collected by their owners once the club is open again. Fingers crossed it will be soon.

While the scaffolding was up, the rotten wooden battens on the west face were removed and new ones fitted with the help of Neil Miller, a top hand on the drop saw! These have been primed and weather permitting will be top coated before the scaffolding is removed, which will be done shortly. Then some minor flashing and guttering to be completed which the scaffolding is currently obstructing. Then, job done!

Player news:

- First of all, a big shout out to Gary and Tricia Logan, who live on the “other” side of the Waikato River,

(this piece was written by a player who lives on the Pukekohe side of the Waikato River. For those of us who do live on the “better” side, the Pukekohe side is very much the “other” side. Diplomacy alone has meant that the above “misstatement” has been left in! We cross the river for food and bridge and very little else!)

but whose pharmacy is in Pukekohe, a.k.a Auckland. They have faced daily delays in trying to get to work. One day took 2 whole hours in the queue at 7am at Tuakau/Buckland to complete the trip. This was despite having an official pass, which in theory should let them through. Gary said “We had 8 calls from one patient yesterday re her prescription. We reassured her we would get her meds to her if she was unable to come and get them. Today she got the Tuakau Police to call us. They said it all depends on who you get at the border!”

- Table Talk also heard “on the grapevine” that Graham's Funeral Services were prevented from crossing “the border” from Pukekohe to Tuakau, with a fully-laden hearse. They turned back, tried another road, and were able to get through. Fact or someone’s vivid imagination, we are not quite sure.
- Notwithstanding that, our Roving Reporter continues to hear of many acts of kindness and support among our members. Well done to everyone who has reached out.
- Our Treasurer was doing a bit of weeding late on a recent Saturday afternoon, and as she grasped a handful of weeds, felt a sharp sting in her thumb. She applied ice and an antihistamine, but next morning her whole hand was swollen and red, and she couldn't “oppose” her thumb, so had to go to the local A & E.
- “I've got to get the swelling down by Monday night” she told the doctor “I need to hold my cards at bridge”. We tell this story to remind you that if you do have a problem with your hand(s), that we have 2 card holders in our store cupboard. And if you have mobility issues and have difficulty moving, please ask the Director to seat you North South (we have a card to reserve your place).

- During our 102 days of “freedom”, many of our members took the opportunity to go on domestic holidays. As well as trips within our region, we know of expeditions to the Hokianga, Wairarapa, Bay of Plenty and a road trip from Auckland down to Christchurch. Caroline and Kevin Griffin went to Mt. Ruapehu for a week, where they had wonderful weather.



That's Caroline enjoying the snow



It looks pretty nice

- No joy for Caroline and Darren in their third match in the Auckland-Northland heat of the National Rubber Bridge Competition. Second best this time. .. and no Inter-Club on which to report with the August heat being a Covid casualty.
- Master chef Jim Buckland was sorry not to share his 79th birthday with bridge friends during this latest lockdown. He has his spring garden up and running,



Jim's latest creation, sponge cake, sliced in half filled with brandy butter, with cherries on top and chocolate icing!

Now, it would be nice to get back to live bridge to tap Jim on the shoulder for a slice of that, wouldn't it?

- Linda Thornton says life is trucking along with the rhythm of the seasons up at the top of the Awhitu peninsula. They are harvesting macadamia nuts from their orchard

SIGNS OF SPRING



Cyclamen flourishing at Maureen's A dutiful mother watching over her triplets at Sue and David Spencer's

and grapefruit time is here, too!



It's marmalade season -- 4 different varieties in our reporter's cupboard 😊 Left to right


- *Seville orange (fruit from Bron and John Fergusson)*
- *Tangelo and lemon (David Spencer)*
- *Grapefruit (David Gardiner)*
- *Mandarin and Cointreau (reporter's husband made this from fruit from a Wednesday night raffle)*

Now, it seems one can get one's alcohol fix at breakfast time these days!

A USEFUL BID ...and a MAGIC HAND

These two hands discussed below came up at recent (Pre Covid) sessions at the club with in one case a pair and in another the whole room being unable to get to the right spots. They are both interesting.

What would you bid with the following?

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------|---|--------------|
| West Deals | |  | |
| E-W Vul | | | |
| | | ♠ A Q 5 4 2 | |
| | | ♥ K J 10 8 5 3 | |
| | | ♦ 2 | |
| | | ♣ 5 | |
| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
| 3 ♦ | Pass | Pass | ? |

Or as North with this:

| | | | |
|--|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| ♠ 8 7 6 5 4 3 ♥ A K 3 ♦ 9 8 ♣ A K | | | |
| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
| 1 ♠ | ? | | 1 ♦ |

There is always an answer though you might still be wondering about the second problem an hour or ten later!

Let's look at the **first** which also appeared a week or so ago in the Daily Articles I write on the New Zealand Bridge website (*nothing like a quick promo!*). The solution found at the table was a huge failure when North passed South's choice of 3 ♥:

| | | | |
|----------------|----------------|-------------|--------------|
| West Deals | ♠ K 10 9 7 6 | | |
| E-W Vul | ♥ — | | |
| | ♦ A Q 9 4 | | |
| | ♣ 10 7 6 3 | | |
| ♠ 8 | | ♠ J 3 | |
| ♥ 4 2 | | ♥ A Q 9 7 6 | |
| ♦ K J 10 8 7 3 | | ♦ 6 5 | |
| ♣ K Q 9 2 | | ♣ A J 8 4 | |
| | ♠ A Q 5 4 2 | | |
| | ♥ K J 10 8 5 3 | | |
| | ♦ 2 | | |
| | ♣ 5 | | |
| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
| 3 ♦ | Pass | Pass | 3 ♥ |
| All pass | | | |

South bid their longer major while North feared striking a misfit if they tried 3♠. “So, no double, not much trouble” they thought as they passed. While 4♠ made 10 or 11 tricks at most tables (not many West players opened 3♦, meaning North-South were able to easily find their spade fit), 3♥ was beaten by 4 tricks and was that bad a contract that even West scored a (spade) ruff.

On a good day, North might have tried 3♠, either directly over 3♦ (not a great idea, usually) or after 3♥. The fault really was in South’s choice of bids. When a pre-empt gets passed, high card points are normally fairly evenly divided between the two partnerships. So, South could expect their partner to have some high cards.

South had great shape. In these cases, it is really important you find the right trump suit and then hopefully the level will be right. So, South’s bid is 4♦ which shows two suits (usually but not always both majors and at least 5 cards in each suit.) The bidder does not have to be very strong in high cards but has a hand that is not very suitable for a take-out double, as here. 3♦x should be just one down despite North’s excellent trumps. 4♠ is where North-South wants to be.

Remember that bid when you have a hand like South’s. Playing in such a bad fit was unlucky but was unnecessary.

Now to the second bizarre problem which occurred a few Wednesday nights ago.

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| | | | ♠ 8 7 6 5 4 3 |
| | | | ♥ A K 3 |
| | | | ♦ 9 8 |
| | | | ♣ A K |
| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
| | | | 1 ♦ |
| 1 ♠ | ? | | |

There is a case for bidding 3NT and hope that East did not have a spade to lead. That plan would have backfired as East did have and a spade lead would have defeated this contract.

Your only other choice would seem to be a negative double, even though you are a heart short. Had you done that, the bidding would have continued:

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| | | | ♠ 8 7 6 5 4 3 |
| | | | ♥ A K 3 |
| | | | ♦ 9 8 |
| | | | ♣ A K |
| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
| | | | 1 ♦ |
| 1 ♠ | Dbl | Pass | 2 ♥ |
| Pass | ? | | |

What now? You have to bid game but which one? In the forlorn hope that partner has a spade hold, you could try an asking 2♠...but no joy as the bidding continued...

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| | | | ♠ 8 7 6 5 4 3 |
| | | | ♥ A K 3 |
| | | | ♦ 9 8 |
| | | | ♣ A K |
| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
| | | | 1 ♦ |
| 1 ♠ | Dbl | Pass | 2 ♥ |
| Pass | 2 ♠ | Pass | 3 ♥ |
| Pass | ? | | |

Another level higher..another problem! The director is calling the move! You have to bid game... but which one? Come on..4♥. Your partner has four hearts and you nearly have!

Looking forward to “seeing” you all in early September...and emphasis on “seeing”. *Richard Solomon*

