



AUCKLAND NORTHLAND REGION AUGUST 2025



NEWSLETTER



Eds: Lysandra Zheng, Jane Stearns



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Auckland-Northland REGIONAL HUI RECAPS AND RESOURCES

The **2025 Regional Hui** was hosted at **East Coast Bays Bridge Club**, featuring nine speakers' presentations and two workshops. It highlighted the roles of **Presidents** and **Club Captains**, with a focus on growing clubs, retaining learners, and creating a welcoming and inclusive path for new members to become part of the community.

Thanks to our co-ordinator, **Mary Chamberlain**, and MC **Jane Stearns**, as well as everybody who contributed or attended – and, of course, thanks to the **ECB Team** who put together a fabulous morning and afternoon tea and lunch! 17 of our 21 clubs were in attendance, a new record for the event. Keep reading for a [summary of talks](#) and links to [digital resources](#).

1 Growing Club Membership

Clare Coles | Cambridge

What makes a club special? The answer varies by club, surely, but as Clare states: it's about the *people*. Players, committee, directors, teachers – the list goes on.

As a Club Captain, Clare is focused on bringing out the best in her club's members. It's about creating the right environment for your players to thrive – such as having sessions for different levels, and balancing the needs of “social” and “competitive” players.



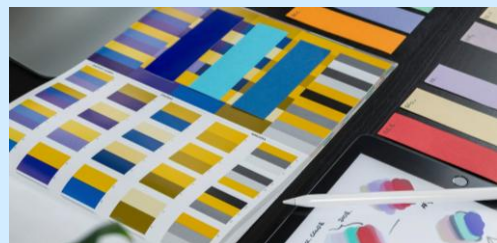
[CLICK TO VIEW](#)

2 Poster & Newsletter Design

Lysandra Zheng | Akarana

First impressions matter: we don't like to admit it, but we're all in the habit of judging books by their covers. A clean, professional approach to your club's poster, website, and newsletter design is essential – and all using nothing fancier than Microsoft Office.

Lysandra provides an overview of basic, but critical, design principles, including composition, colour, and image choices, with a range of digital resources provided.



[CLICK TO VIEW](#)

3 Annual Financial Reporting

Sue Brown | Kerikeri

Have you re-registered under the Incorporated Societies Act 2022? If you haven't already, make sure to do so no later than 5th April 2026.

Re-registration brings new reporting obligations – clubs must produce financial statements in accordance with GAAP. Sue provides a comprehensive guide to what you need to know and do, depending on the size and financial assets of your club.



[CLICK TO VIEW](#)

4 Women & International Bridge

Jan Cormack | Auckland

Confidence, concentration, and commitment – top level players must exhibit and refine such qualities.

What social factors result in women being under-represented internationally? Maybe it's about having responsibilities away from the table – maybe it's about the perennial gender “confidence gap”. Food for thought.

International bridge is filled with the good, the bad, and the ugly. Jan's reflections were entertaining and informative, giving insight on a side of bridge that we rarely see.

NO DIGITAL
RESOURCES

5 Player Retention

Ken Dixon | Waitemata

So you've just finished your lessons – what now? How do you keep players interested, motivated, and coming to the club?

Waitemata's success is an excellent case study. Ken emphasises that beginners are *always* “dazed and confused”. “Easygoing” sessions, mentoring programmes, and extra learning and revision resources are among Waitemata's keys to success.



[CLICK TO VIEW](#)

6 NZ Regional Championships

Hamish Brown | Akarana

What are the Regional Championships? Who gets to participate? How do we want to run the event going forward?

All important questions addressed at the NZ-wide conference that Hamish brought to the fore in Auckland-Northland. An interactive and participatory presentation saw a wide range of opinions represented.

Recommendations ultimately veered towards changing categories and playing online to maximise inclusivity.

NO DIGITAL
RESOURCES

7 NZB Club Toolkit

Anne Barrowclough | Auckland

Do you know about the Toolkit? A new addition to the NZBridge website contains a variety of resources for clubs, including materials on governance, policy, operations, and marketing.

All resources are simplified – pages on the Toolkit tell you what you need to know within a single A4 page. Everything is freely accessible – see what your club needs.

[CLICK TO VIEW](#)

8 Fair Play Committee

Julie Atkinson | Auckland

The Fair Play Committee is one of several new sub-committees that has come with the dis-establishment of the Chief Director role.

Player conduct and integrity are the focus of Fair Play – and ensuring players and clubs alike know their rights, responsibilities, and recourse on these fronts.

Contact Julie at j.atkinson@gmail.com if you have any matters you'd like to raise.

9 New Teaching Materials

Alan Grant | Wellington

The Teaching and Learning Committee are working on fully revising our official teaching materials going into 2026 – including restructuring lessons to emphasise card-play at an earlier stage.

Updated lesson resources are already in use by a few clubs and teachers across the country, and will be gradually rolled out over the coming months.

[CLICK TO VIEW](#)



Waitemata Bridge Club was inspired by the hui to take action in promoting their club – they've newly created and installed a lesson advertisement next to the West Auckland intersection.

Not sure where to start with advertising and promoting your club? Check out the **NZB Toolkit: Marketing Resources**, linked below for help on attracting and retaining new members!

[MARKETING
RESOURCES](#)



MARY
CHAMBERLAIN
CO-ORDINATOR

MC
JANE
STEARNS



ANR MAIN REGIONAL

Our annual **Main Regional** Pairs and Teams event was held over the weekend of 19-20th July. The Region are always grateful to **Auckland Bridge Club** for their support in hosting these major events.

Two intense days of bridge saw 24 tables in the Pairs and 32 in the Teams. A remarkably consistent day from **Gary Chen** and **John Wang** – scoring 62.22% and 62.32% in the morning and afternoon respectively – saw the pair claim victory on Saturday.

Fraser-Hoskin won Sunday's Teams by a respectable 5 VP margin, emerging with an undefeated 6-0-0 scoreline.

Congratulations to all prizewinners and thanks to all participants for making it an excellent event.



TEAMS

- 1st **Jeremy Fraser-Hoskin & Kevin Hu**
Michael Cornell & Hugh McGann
- 2nd **Clair Miao & Wayne Burrows**
Tom & Steph Jacob
- 3rd **Diana & Hugh McAlister**
Carol Richardson & Steve Boughey

PAIRS

- 1st **John Wang & Gary Chen**
- 2nd **Lysandra Zheng & Tim Pan**
- 3rd **Liz Fisher & Blair Fisher**



KERIKERI

NEW WORLD TOURNAMENTS

Kerikeri Bridge Club held dual Junior and Open tournaments on the weekend of 2nd and 3rd August, generously supported by New World.

The **Open 5A** turned out to be a family affair, with mother-and-son duo **Hamish** and **Sue Brown** achieving victory with an average of 63.40% over the two sessions, followed by **Anna Chappell** and **Marilyn Kennedy** who scored 58.24%.

The **Junior Pairs** turned out to an intensely close competition: **Elfy Patek** and **Tracey Kastelan** came out on top with 56.68% – but anything could have happened, with 2nd place **Ron Bywater** and **Julie Rossitor** scoring 56.53% and both 3rd placing pairs ending on 55.68%.



KEVIN HU

AKARANA
BRIDGE CLUB

Congratulations OUR NEWEST GRAND MASTER

Kevin Hu has been playing bridge since 2017, and after an explosive last few years is our region's newest Grand Master, achieving a total of 1000 A and B points (with at least 500 As) – while still being a Youth player.

After having already comfortably achieved the requisite 500 A points for the status, Kevin saw his opportunity in a local 8B Multigrade. He needed only 5 Bs for promotion.

The first session was a resounding success. Playing with **Tim Pan**, the pair achieved 64.77% over 28 boards, a full 10% above the next pair in their section.

A maths challenge from that session: **What scores 1800?**



After the opponents opened 1♦, Kevin showed a strong hand with hearts, his partner jumped to 3NT, which their opponents doubled.

What would you do?

♠ AT6
 ♥ AKJT975
 ♦ 5
 ♣ A3
 ♠ J5
 ♥
 ♦ AK7642
 ♣ K8652
 ♠ Q87
 ♥ Q64
 ♦ QT98
 ♣ QT4

♠ K9432
 ♥ 832
 ♦ J3
 ♣ J97

Run to the relative safety of 4♥? Perhaps you would have feared the diamond suit – and been scared of a bad heart break. Then you would have turned a top board into an average-minus.

Kevin had no such reservations, trusting his partner's 3NT bid completely. He pulled out the blue card (metaphorically, the bidding was all written)... and was soon scoring up 1800 for a redoubled game and two overtricks.

Despite their first session lead, Kevin and Tim couldn't quite win his "promotion" tournament, scoring only 53% in the afternoon – but second place more than sufficed.

Congratulations, then, to the victors, **Graham Wakefield** and **Mark Robertson**, who had a great day scoring 58.44% and 62.91% respectively over the two sessions.

Well Played

You are South, playing Pairs, declarer in 3NT after East overcalled 1♥. West dutifully leads ♥K, and East plays ♥A and another (West discarding the ♦7).

Not an easy board – 75% of declarers in the contract failed to make it.
Warning: Counting to 13 required!

There are only **seven tricks off the top**, and *maybe* a working club finesse? In any case, Kevin thought the club suit was worth a try.

♠ AK73
♥ 963
♦ KT5
♣ K93

♠ T2
♥ Q52
♦ A642
♣ AJ85

After the ♣K, East kindly covered the 9 with their T, and West's spade discard exposed the break. Now Kevin was cold for 9 tricks... but saw **an opportunity for more**.

Knowing that East had five hearts (from their overcall) and five clubs (from the last trick), Kevin was very nearly playing the board "double-dummy". After cashing two spades, East's shape was down to only 2515 or 3505.

♠ AK73
♥ 963
♦ KT5
♣ K93

♠ 854
♥ K4
♦ 7
♣ 6

♠ 96
♥ AJT87
♦
♣ QT742

♠ T2
♥ Q52
♦ A642
♣ AJ85

West would be under pressure when he took another club finesse – short in both hearts and clubs, they were likely to hold ♠QJ and ♦QJ. With the ♦T still in dummy, they couldn't relinquish their diamonds. Another two rounds of clubs saw West uncomfortably discard the ♦8 and ♠J.

Perhaps if Kevin knew how unsuccessful other declarers would be, he wouldn't have taken the risk. But he played for the distribution favoured by the odds – and was rewarded when West inserted the ♦J, and East followed low.

In this **four-card ending**, everything was transparent to declarer. He confidently played the spade off dummy, catching West in an endplay – no matter which diamond they played, Kevin would ultimately score his ♦T.

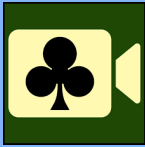
A carefully played hand where Kevin was well rewarded with a top (93%) for his attention during the play, reacting perfectly as the distribution came to light.

♠ 7
♥
♦ T5
♣

♠ Q
♥
♦ Q9
♣

♠
♥ T8
♦
♣ Q

♠
♥
♦ A64
♣



NORTH ISLAND PAIRS

SECTION WINNERS

FINAL

- 1st **Jeremy Fraser-Hoskin & Jack James**
- 2nd **Ian Berrington & Graeme Tuffnell**
- 3rd **Lysandra Zheng & Tim Pan**

PLATE

- 1st **Samuel Coutts & Brad Johnston**
- 2nd **Anne Somerville & Murat Genc**
- 3rd **Kevin Hu & Grant Jarvis**

The 2–3 August weekend saw NZBridge host a well-attended 20A North Island Pairs online tournament. 66 pairs entered, with the top 28 after day one advancing to the finals and the rest contesting the Plate.

Auckland–Northland players claimed half the podium. Ian and Graeme will soon represent New Zealand in the Open team, while Lysandra and Tim play in the Mixed.

We’ll review a hand where all three podium pairs scored well.

What’s your call?



N	E	S	W
Pass	1♥	X	Pass
?			

Conventional wisdom says to bid your longest suit – even if it’s unappealing – in search of a fit. Lysandra and Graeme, both sitting North faced this choice twice, once over 1♥ and once over 2♥.

Lysandra took the view that her hand was good for seven tricks but not eight, especially without a certain fit. With a questionable stopper in 843, she chose 1NT, reasoning it could survive five losers at the one level and partner might help – even Qx might prove a stopper if East leads “fourth best” from AKxxx.

Graeme took a more “standard” route with 2♠ – certainly his best suit, albeit not his longest – avoiding an uncertain club fit, especially when it forced the partnership to the 3-level. He went down one, but -50 was a good score compared to opponents making 2-level contracts or going down in 2♣.

Meanwhile, Jeremy in West faced no such dilemma – while many Wests took no action over the takeout double, Jeremy didn’t come here to pass. He kept the auction alive, and was happy to correct to 2♥ with an excellent doubleton after the 2♣ rebid. This saw his partner scoring 9 tricks on a misdefence, for +140 and a top board.

♠ AQJ
♥ 843
♦ J93
♣ 8743

♠ 9852
♥ QJ
♦ KT742
♣ 92

♠ K764
♥ T76
♦ A86
♣ KQJ

♠ T3
♥ AK952
♦ Q5
♣ AT65



TOURNAMENT SCHEDULING AND GRADING – CHANGES

Following a hui to consider **regional feedback**, a number of NZB Manual proposals were made to **NZBridge** and subsequently adopted.

Summary of changes:

- ❖ Clubs are **no longer limited** to a fixed number of events in each grade
- ❖ Clubs may now offer a **2B one session tournament** for charity and fundraising events.
- ❖ Non-consolation **3A tournaments** are reserved for the **Restricted Open** category (National Master and below)
- ❖ Three weekends annually are reserved for **online bridge**

**MORE
DETAILS
PAGE 12**

Decision-making about tournaments will happen at the regional rather than national level, with decisions to add and alter club tournaments ultimately being the responsibility of the **Regional Committee**.

Clubs are asked to remind juniors that they can "play up" and are welcome at intermediate tournaments where there are often prizes for the best junior pair.

Any requests to establish or alter future tournaments should be forwarded to our **Regional Co-ordinator Grant Jarvis** (gjarvis@xtra.co.nz) to begin the process.

REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS 2026

New Zealand Bridge has redesigned the **Regional Championship** event. The trials winning pairs from each region will form teams to contest a **two day double round robin** to be held over **1 May-3 May 2026 online**. The top two teams from each category will then play each other in a **face-to-face playoff** of 48 boards to be held on the day prior to the National Congress in **November 2026**.

The ANRC will hold a trial to select the teams to contest this event from our region to be held **Saturday 31 January/Sunday 1 February online**. This trial will be a two-day round-robin Swiss Pairs.

Further details to follow.

Save the Date

31 JAN
SATURDAY

01 FEB
SUNDAY

Best of Luck to AUCKLAND-NORTHLAND'S INTERNATIONALS



15 of Auckland-Northland's top players are heading to the **World National Teams Championships** in **Herning, Denmark**. The prestigious event runs from August 20th to 31st and players from New Zealand will compete with the best in the world. Follow the action with **results** on the WBF website and **vugraph** on BridgeBase Online.

[WBF WEBSITE](#)

[BBO](#)

OPEN



Matthew
Brown



Michael
Whibley



Brian
Mace

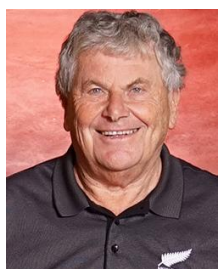


Malcolm
Mayer



Ian
Berrington

SENIOR



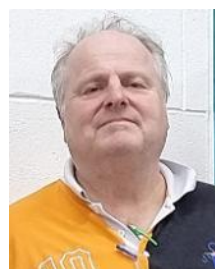
Michael
Cornell



GeO
Tislevoll



Julie
Atkinson



Patrick
Carter



Neil
Stuckey



Dwayne
Crombie

WOMEN



Carol
Richardson



Andi
Boughey



Lysandra
Zheng



Tim
Pan



Jan
Cormack

MIXED

UPCOMING *Tournaments*

AUCKLAND NORTHLAND REGION

14
AUG

AUCKLAND (ONLINE)
THURSDAY PAIRS
OPEN 8B

16
AUG

WAITEMATA
JUNIOR PAIRS
JUNIOR 3B

23
AUG

INTERMEDIATE PAIRS
INTERMEDIATE 5B

PAIHIA
JUNIOR PAIRS
JUNIOR 3B

INTERMEDIATE PAIRS
INTERMEDIATE 5B

MT ALBERT
JUNIOR PAIRS
JUNIOR 3B

30
AUG

AUCKLAND
BILLIE TOHILL PAIRS
OPEN 3A

**TUDOR BIGGS
ROSEBOWL PAIRS**
INTERMEDIATE 5B

06
SEP

PAPAKURA
INTERMEDIATE PAIRS
INTERMEDIATE 5B

WHANGAREI
OPEN PAIRS
OPEN 8B

11
SEP

AUCKLAND (ONLINE)
THURSDAY TEAMS
OPEN 8B



Changes to Tournament Scheduling and Grading

Following a hui to consider regional feedback a number of NZB Manual proposals were made to NZ Bridge and subsequently adopted.

Summary of changes:

Clubs are no longer limited to a fixed number of events in each grade

Although the Calendar of Events will roll over each year (2026 already appears) clubs can now apply to alter existing grades or add events -subject to some Manual conditions.

All decisions to add or alter club tournaments are now decided by your Regional Committee.

New 2B Event

To raise the status of one session charity and fundraising events – above 40C sessions- clubs may now offer a 2B one session event. Entries should be open to all clubs - as currently happens in existing charity events and tournaments in general.

3A Changes

After feedback from clubs and players it has been decided to use the 3A point category for that area between high standard intermediates and lower ranked open grade players (up to National Master). With the exception of the traditional consolation events at regional congress weekends participants will no longer meet higher ranked open players including grand masters. These new events will be called “**Restricted 3A**”. It is hoped that this will encourage greater entries and increase the competitiveness of participants currently struggling in A point events.

Note: - existing Open 3A events for 2025 may remain as open events

On-line Events.

Three weekends per year (just December 20-21 for 2025) will be allocated to clubs offering on-line tournaments. All clubs can apply and there will be no F2F clashes.

No on-line tournaments will be held in the evenings or weekends other than above. B point on-line events can be offered mid-week during the day

Multigrade 8B and Restricted 8B

This is not a change but these names still cause confusion.

A Restricted 8B allows for all grade combinations EXCEPT Open-Open

A Multigrade 8B has no restrictions ie allows for open-open as one grade.

A multigrade 5B has categories for Int-Int, Int-Jnr and Jnr-Jnr (no open players).