



AUCKLAND NORTHLAND REGION FEBRUARY 2026

♣ ♦ NEWSLETTER ♥ ♠

Eds: Lysandra Zheng, Jane Stearns

The squad to represent **Auckland Northland Region** at the **Regional Championships** in November are:

Open:

Steve Boughey and William Liu (Akarana)
Lysandra Zheng and Tim Pan (Akarana/Howick)

Senior:

Grant Jarvis and Jonathan Westoby (Franklin/Akarana)
Julie Atkinson and Patrick Carter (Auckland)

Women:

Jane Stearns and Cheryl Winsor (Paihia/Howick)
Kinga Hajmasi and Carol Richardson (Royle Epsom/Akarana)

Intermediate:

Heather Robertson and Dennis Watkinson (Auckland)
Jacinda Manconi and Suzy Hails (Mt Albert)

Congratulations especially to the Women's and Intermediate representatives, who earned their places over the course of a 2-day Pairs trial.

The teams will play an **online double round-robin** against other regions in early May, and the top teams will then have a **final playoff** just before National Congress in November.

A Hand to Remember



What do you do when partner reverses in the minors? With an extremely strong, albeit misfit, hand, some move must be made towards slam. Two tables seemed to know just where they were going, with an ace-ask sequence culminating in 7NT. A pair stopped in small slam – and lost 13 IMPs for their efforts when the clubs broke.

♠ 9

♥ -

♦ AKT93

♣ AKQT953

♠ AKQ62

♥ AKQ872

♦ 6

♣ 7

Trial Tales

PRACTICAL BIDDING



A strong hand with a good suit, and potentially well positioned honour cards given the heart bid to your right. Sometimes it's right to double on this hand, intending to show spades later. At the table, however, Jane opted for 4♠ – bidding exactly where she thinks she wanted to play.

This attracted a penalty double from her left, all pass. With West's nominal three tricks and East showing some values with the response, this may have seemed a reasonable bet at the time.

Jane would be pleasantly surprised with Cheryl's dummy – it's hard to imagine a better 6 HCP to be held. A fast auction meant the opponents never gauged their double red-suit fit and could not find a sacrifice in 5♦ or 5♥.



♠ 542
♥ KJ4
♦ J6432
♣ Q2

♠ AK9
♥ A765
♦ K
♣ AKT84

♠ 8
♥ 92
♦ QT975
♣ J9763

The **Intermediate and Women's Regional Trials** were held online over the weekend of 31 January and 1 February, directed by **Matthew McManus**. Congratulations to the winners and representatives – we'll see a little of how they got there!



♠ K43
♥ 964
♦ 953
♣ K876

♠ T
♥ J832
♦ AKT82
♣ A92

♠ 65
♥ KT75
♦ QJ76
♣ JT5

♠ AQJ9872
♥ AQ
♦ 4
♣ Q43

NO WAY TO GO WRONG?

Suzy and Jacinda earned a perhaps unexpected 12 IMPs for bidding and making 6♥ sitting East-West. With West's extreme strength, it seems hard to stay under the 6 level – and it would seem that once one is in slam, the absence of the ♥9 means the heart suit should play for just one loser.

With hearts as the trump suit, Jacinda had to approach the suit quickly, and had little choice but to play towards the QT83, and must have been relieved to see North play the ♥K. At two other tables, the slam of choice was instead 6♠, and declarer opted for a failing line of allowing South to win the third round of clubs and hoping they were endplayed, holding the ♥K and ♣J9. When this wasn't the case, they were doomed to lose an eventual heart trick.

It's always better to have multiple chances to make your contract. But sometimes having fewer options also means having fewer chances to make mistakes!

GOOD LUCK, BAD LUCK

Is a singleton Ace a stopper? Perhaps, yes, in the sense that it will stop the opponents running the suit. But having no option to hold up the suit as well as having full control of it in a suit contract can mean it's not ideal. In any case, however, it's probably a much better holding when your partner also reckons they have a stopper.

The opponents bid aggressively to 3H and Dennis had to choose. Perhaps trusting Heather's own NT bid (and declarer play), he bid 3NT, all pass. On the lead of the H4, they were lucky the opponents only had eight hearts – West would need several entries to run the suit.

Even then, their troubles weren't over. The 'normal' play of cashing the CAK yielded only four tricks in the suit. This along with three aces and the DK didn't quite add up to nine. Yet it's not such an easy board to defend. On the run of the clubs, East-West must coordinate protecting the diamonds and the spades. East's fatal misguess in discarding a diamond yielding not just the contract but also an overtrick. Heather and Dennis proved to be the only pair to both be in game and make it, for a gain of 9 IMPs.

They may have been lucky in the defense, but unlucky in receiving fewer "hints" from the opponents than others. At some tables, East found an aggressive weak two opening. Yet with the chances of the finesse and drop being so close to start with (about 50% and 52% respectively), the knowledge of East's six spades and weak hand should lead declarers to finessing West instead for the club.



♠ 4
♥ J762
♦ A952
♣ K974

♠ KJ
♥ QT853
♦ J86
♣ Q83

♠ Q87652
♥ K94
♦ QT7
♣ 2

♠ AT93
♥ A
♦ K42
♣ AJT65



♠ QJ5
♥ AKJ
♦ -
♣ AKQ9732

♠ 8
♥ 98763
♦ A7532
♣ J4

♠ 7432
♥ T5
♦ Q98
♣ T865



There's a bridge adage: "If they don't lead a singleton, they don't have one." The singleton lead is both common and powerful, and much of the time, it can be led without thought.

N	E	S	W
	1♠	Pass	Pass
X	P	2♣	Pass
5♣	P	P	Pass

What's your lead?

Thinking that only three tricks were needed to defeat Kinga and Carol's game, however, West attempted to cash the DA, only to be greeted with disaster in the dummy.

Although the spade suit still has two nominal losers, East is left with a serious problem once they win a trick. There's no good return with the DA gone, any diamond lead will set up the eleventh trick.



A terribly hot weekend saw players wearing personal air-cons to the club!

KERI KERI PAIRS

Patsy Walters and **John McIntosh** may not have had the most glamorous start to the Saturday Swiss Pairs, coming onto the radar only during the fourth round 7 VPs behind the leading pair. A victorious afternoon of 18.09, 13.59, and 17.76 VP wins saw them steadily and surely climb to first place.

They thus won the event with a healthy 9 VP lead over runners up **Mary Chamberlain** and **Emma Russell**.



Taking gold in Sunday's Matchpoint Pairs were **Neil Ruddell** and **Margaret Hooson**, who demonstrated great consistent bridge over the day. Coming in third in their section in the morning with 56.89%, they would need a little push in the afternoon to win the event.

Although certainly not the highest score in the field, 59.48% was enough to secure their placement. Neil and Margaret averaged 58.34% over the day, being narrowly victorious over **Judy Tremain** and **Alison Beer**'s 57.72% score.



Margaret Hooson and Neil Ruddell



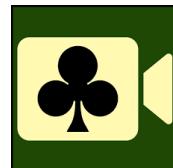
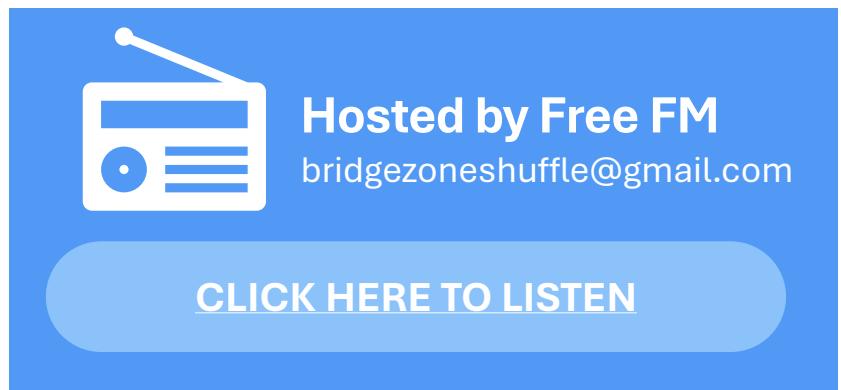
Vanassa McGoldrick and Yvonne McKinnon

A prize was also awarded to the highest scoring Intermediate pair of **Yvonne McKinnon** and **Vanassa McGoldrick**, who achieved a respectable 56.71% over the day and finished 7th overall.

THE BRIDGE ZONE

Join Hamilton's **Barry** and **Mereana** in their weekly podcast discussing all things bridge!

They've been recently joined by special guest **Ross Longney** from East Coast Bays – AKA the "JIN Man"! Ross represents the bigger section of bridge players and has been a part of the show since 14th January this year. **Catch up today!**



AUCKLAND INTERCLUB

As we get ready for the 2026 InterClub, here's an important note about registering for the first match on Friday 20th March.

Only one person per team needs to register for this date on the NZB website — either the Team Captain or the Team Liaison.

When registering, please make sure you include your team name so Patrick can arrange the format. There's no need for every team member to enter individually at this stage — just your nominated contact person will do the job.

Thanks for your help in keeping things tidy and easy to manage. We're looking forward to a great season of InterClub competition!

Entries close March 13th 2026, 5pm

**MORE INFO:
FLYER PAGE 9**

CLICK TO SIGN UP ONLINE

ONLINE DIRECTORS TRAINING

Register Now! COURSES STARTING SOON!

Two concurrent **training courses** are offered from **February to May 2026**.

The **Certificate of Achievement** prepares candidates for directing at their home clubs, with a modular credit-based learning system and no formal exams. The **Club Directors' Training Course**, meanwhile, is aimed towards prospective examinees who wish to be formally recognised as Club and Tournament directors.

This flexible online program includes:

- **5 Online Modules** – Each containing 4/5 lessons
- **Expert-Led Content** – Including specialist presenter videos, quizzes, forums, and detailed notes
- **Post-Course Revision** – Review materials and practical training sessions with experienced directors

[See pages 11-14 for more information.](#)



Interested?
Contact Allan Joseph:

foodmaidnz@gmail.com

ALERT! ... OR NOT?

In principle, alerts are a very simple matter. You tell the opponents when a bid might not mean what it looks like.

But determining what is “unusual” is never that simple. Some things might be so common (and taught to even beginners) that it seems unnecessary, while in other situations, alerts might help a partnership more than the opponents – wouldn’t it be nice if your partner always told you when you had inadvertently made an artificial bid?

A full list of the alert regulations can be found in **Section D – Appendix 7** of the **NZB Manual**. Here, we’ll just cover some of the more common exceptions to alerting unusual bids.

All explanations of alerts shouldn’t just name a convention or say “standard” – your opponents might not know what that means to you! Try to be as specific as you can. Bridge can be a game of deception, but not in this regard!

DO ALERT!

- Bids that show a natural suit *and another*
 - 5 of a major, 4+ of a minor
 - Fit-showing jumps
- Bids that aren’t **forcing** – but might look that way!
 - Responder’s weak jump shifts
 - Non-forcing suit responses to openings
 - Pre-emptive raises of openings
- Bids that “**don’t really mean anything**”
 - “Forced” bids, including some completed transfers and 3C after a Lebensohl 2NT

DON’T ALERT!

“Self-Alerting” Bids

Some bids are virtually *always* unusual, and it’s up to the opponents to ask if they wish to know. These include:

- All **Doubles** and **Redoubles**
- “**Cue bids**” – bids of any denomination that the opponents have already shown or used
- Any bids at the **4 level** and above
 - *Except* artificial openings
- 2C “**Game Force**”
- 2C “**Simple Stayman**” over 1NT openings
 - Yes, this means you alert a natural 2C!

FUNDING AVAILABLE 2026 BEGINNERS' LESSONS

Clubs can now plan ahead for their **2026 beginners' bridge lessons**, with \$300 available from the region towards their budgets to help support marketing and promotion.

Whether you're printing flyers, running social media ads, or advertising in your local paper, this funding is designed to help your club attract new players and grow the game.

Apply for your club's funding today!

❖ **Tania Brown**
❖ AKNTHTREASURER@outlook.com

REGIONAL CHAMPIONS

Congratulations

Akarana Open Pairs

1st Andrew Braithwaite & Paula Boughey
2nd Zachary Yan & Blair Fisher

Mt Albert Open Swiss Pairs

1st Michael Curry & Barry Jones
2nd Hamish Brown & Johanna Perfect

Auckland New Year's Pairs

1st Jan Cormack & Grant Jarvis
2nd Neil Stuckey & Richard Solomon

Warkworth Restricted Pairs

1st Mark Bercich & Gabrielle Bercich
2nd Sam McNae & Chris Wilson

Waitemata Open Pairs

1st George Sun & Jeter Liu
2nd Barry Jones & Jenny Millington

UPCOMING

Tournaments

AUCKLAND
NORTHLAND
REGION

08
FEB

OREWA
RESTRICTED PAIRS
RESTRICTED 8B

14
FEB

WHANGAREI
**PROPERTY BROKERS
SWISS PAIRS**

OPEN 5A

21
FEB

PAPAKURA
INTERMEDIATE PAIRS
INTERMEDIATE 5B

28
FEB

AUCKLAND
**BELL TAYLOR OPEN
SWISS PAIRS**

OPEN 5A

07
MAR

EAST COAST BAYS
RESTRICTED PAIRS
RESTRICTED 8B

12
MAR

AUCKLAND (ONLINE)
THURSDAY SWISS PAIRS
OPEN 8B

FIND YOUR EVENT
HERE TO REGISTER

Regional
**RUBBER BRIDGE
COMPETITION**
SEE FLYER PAGE 15

Enjoy **twice the chances to win**, as our Region has two places to fill – courtesy of Tom Jacob and Malcolm Mayer defending the title for Auckland-Northland last year.

Register with **Grant Jarvis** (gjarvis@xtra.co.nz)

AUCKLAND NORTHLAND INTERCLUB TEAMS ONLINE

Important Information for Team Participation

Please Note: Players on each team should be from the same club.

1. The competition will be conducted online over nine Friday evenings throughout 2026 via RealBridge, organized by the Auckland Bridge Club.
2. C-Point Masterpoints will be awarded for individual matches, but not for overall final rankings.
3. There will be three groups based on players' grades at the start of 2026: Junior, Intermediate, and Open. Players are allowed to compete at a higher level than their current ranking. Clubs may enter multiple teams in any grade and are not required to participate in all three grades.
4. There are no fixed partnerships or team compositions. We encourage maximum participation, meaning that a "team of four" may include many players (from the same club) throughout the year.
5. Systems must align with NZB guidelines at each level. While system cards are not mandatory, pre-alerting, announcing, and alerting partner's bids are expected. It is advisable to include a brief description of your system at the beginning of a match in the chat, for example, "INT=12-14, 1C=4+, 4CM, high encourage."
6. A fee of \$9 per session will be charged to cover running costs, Masterpoint fees to NZB, RealBridge levies, and the Directors' expenses. This fee will be deducted from players' AKBC HelloClub Accounts.
7. Youth players can pre-register for eligibility to pay a reduced table fee of \$1 per session by selecting the "Youth Player" option.
8. The competition will proceed subject to a minimum of 30 entries from all clubs.

Late withdrawals and/or defaults can create significant challenges on RealBridge. We kindly ask clubs to take measures to avoid such situations. If necessary, a player from another club may be permitted as a substitute.



PRACTICE SESSION

Practice Session for New RealBridge Players

A practice session for those new to RealBridge will take place on Friday, March 13th, at 7:15pm

- The link to join will be available on AKBC's RealBridge page.
- If you can't make it to this session or desire additional practice, you can book a "Taster" session on the RealBridge website for a time slot in the New Zealand time zone.

The staff at RealBridge are fantastic and will help ensure you feel comfortable playing online. However, please be aware that there are only a limited number of time slots available. It's also recommended that players read all the information on the RealBridge page and conduct the camera and microphone tests beforehand.

Note: This session is free, features only a few boards, and does not award masterpoints.

**CONTACT
US**

09 524-5562
WWW.AKBC.CO.NZ

2026 DATES (Friday evenings 7:15 pm start, please be seated by 7pm)

March 20, April 17, May 15, June 19, July 24, August 21, September 18, October 2, November 27

ENTRIES CLOSE 5pm, 13 March 2025

TEAM CAPTAINS - HOW TO REGISTER YOUR TEAM

- a) entries on NZB Website (see March 20) with just the team "captain" name appearing. The team members may vary throughout the year.
- b) clubs outside of our region may enter
- c) all players must be from the same club (exception for one- night emergencies as defaults should be avoided).

FORMAT

Entry Guidelines and Auckland Bridge Club Support Notes

The number of entries will determine the specific format.

1. Matches will utilise IMP scoring. NZB Masterpoints will be awarded for each successful match.
2. The goal is for all four groups to play the same boards, facilitating future discussions within your club. RealBridge allows players to review hands at their convenience.
3. Players should be seated by 7pm. A link will be available on the AKBC website. This is the sole access point for each session, and the links are updated monthly.
4. It's crucial that players log in using the same name and number for each session. Ensure that the spelling matches exactly with your name on NZ Bridge.

Auckland Bridge Club Support Notes

The links for each Interclub evening will be displayed on the Auckland Bridge Club's RealBridge page. Players need to scroll down to find the purple links and select the appropriate link for their Interclub grade. The links will become active at 6:45 PM, and we encourage players to log in early to help us identify any missing participants. Once logged in, players do not need to stay in front of their computers until the session starts; we simply need to confirm their presence.

Players must sit at the table that corresponds with their team number, facing their partner, upon logging into RealBridge. They will be moved from that position once play commences.

The fee is \$9 per evening, or \$1 for Youth (to qualify as a youth player, one must have been born in 1999 or later). Payments will be processed through Auckland Bridge Club's HelloClub system, which recognises each player by their NZB number and automatically charges the appropriate amount.

For players without an Auckland Bridge Club HelloClub account, they must create one. Please visit the www.akbc.co.nz website, click on the Visitors tab, and select "Join as Casual Player (online play only)." Youth players should choose the "Join as Youth Player (online play only)" option.

If you require assistance with setting up an account, feel free to email or call the club at 09 524-5562. The office is open on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

Players can monitor their transactions anytime by logging into their HelloClub account and navigating to the Finance section. Once your account balance reaches zero, an automated reminder to replenish funds will be sent to you via email.



Wine prizes
awarded to the
top team in
each grade



2026 Self

Study Club Directors training course

Course Opens: 7 February 2026

There are 2 courses running concurrently

- Certificate of Achievement Course
- Club Directors Training Course

Both courses have the same content and both courses offer student support.

Certificate of Achievement Course

This course is designed to prepare you for directing at your home club

- No formal exams
- Assessment based on modular credits
- Entirely open-book — all resources may be used
- Begin at any time, and complete within six months of your start date

Club Directors Training Course

This course is designed to prepare candidates who are intending to sit the **NZ Bridge Club Directors Exams**, scheduled for 21/22 March, 11/12 July and 17/18 October 2026

You must **enrol separately** for these exams via NZ Bridge.

Course Structure

These two concurrent course comprising of 5 modules, each with 4/5 lessons a revision session and online practical training session/s

Requirements for the Certificate of Achievement

To be awarded the certificate, you are required to

1. Complete all modules and satisfactorily complete the lesson quizzes (and/or other required activities), and the module quizzes .Unlimited attempts allowed until a minimum score of 80% is achieved

2. Pass the Online Completion Quiz

20 open-book questions Must be completed within 6 months of starting the course .Each attempt must be completed within 2 hours. Repeatable until a 80% pass mark is achieved

3. Participate in 2 Practical Training Sessions

You should arrange for this with a suitably qualified director from your club or region. We shall send the requirements to your selected supervisor who will guide you and assess your practical directing skills during these sessions

Assessment results are reported to the course administrators

Alternatively, if this is not feasible

Participate in two online practical sessions (dates to be confirmed)

4. Assessment for Certificate of Achievement

Component	Weight	Notes
Completion of 15 Online Lessons	30%	
Passing 5 Module Quizzes	35%	
Completion Quiz	15%	
Two Practical Training Sessions	20%	
Minimum Total Required to Pass 80%		

Contact Details

Role	Name	Email
Course Presenter	Allan Joseph	foodmaidnz@gmail.com
Practical Training Administrator	Phillippa Gardiner	gardinerpcnz@gmail.com
Student Support	Mary Christensen	mary.christensen100@gmail.com



2026 CLUB DIRECTORS' TRAINING

There are two online Club Directors' training courses

Self Study Feb–June
Online July–Sept

- 5 Modules – each Module is approximately 4 hours in length
- Revision session
- Online practical session/s
- The Self Study course is modular with student support.
- These Modules will cover all the topics required for candidates to achieve the Certificate of Achievement, as well as preparation for the online NZ Bridge Club Directors exams in March, July and October

These courses are free to candidates as all expenses are covered by NZ Bridge.

Module 1 Movements Sat. 4th July

The Role of the Director
Mitchell movement
Howell Movement
Wrong board

9.30 am -1.00 pm
Conducting a bridge session
Announcements – calling the moves
Dealing with Slow Play
Fouled board

Module 2 The Auction Sat. 18th July

Comparable calls (simplified)
Withdrawn Calls
Calls out of rotation
Unintended calls

9.30 am -1.00 pm
Calls based on Misinformation
Inadmissible calls
Insufficient bid
Exposed cards

Module 3 The Play Sat. 1 August

Leads out of turn
Unintended designation
Penalty cards

9.30 am -1.00 pm
Dummy's rights and limitations
Revoke
Claims

Module 4 Regulations Sat. 15th August

NZ. Alerting Regulations
Making interim decisions
Appeals Procedure

9.30 am -1.00 pm
Written bidding/Incomplete bids
Consulting and Polling

Module 5 Scoring /matchpointing Sat. 29 Aug.

Calculating Score
Score Adjustment

9.30 am -1.00 pm
Matchpointing
Assigned and Artificial scores

Revision and Q&A session Sat. 12th Sept

Online Practical Session Sat 10th Oct

9.30 am -1.00 pm

Online 90 min quiz

Opens Sun. 5th Oct.

Please contact
Allan Joseph

Email: foodmaidnz@gmail.com

- your name, home club, NZ Bridge number

DIRECTOR, PLEASE!





2026 TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS' TRAINING

There are two Tournament Directors' training courses

Online
Self-Study

Feb – May 2026
June – Sept 2026

- 5 Online Modules – each Module is approximately 4 hours in length
- Revision session
- Online practical session/s
- The Self-Study course is modular with student support.
- These Modules will cover all the topics required for candidates to prepare for the NZ Bridge Tournament Directors assessment weekends : 9- 11 May (Wellington) and 10 -12 Oct (Tops region).

These courses are free to candidates as all expenses are covered by NZ Bridge.

Modules 1: Setting up Sat. 7th Feb

The Role of the Tournament Director
Conducting Open Tournaments
Running Swiss pairs events
Matchpointing with adjusted scores

9.30 am to 1.30 pm

Mitchell, Howell and Web movements
Running Teams events
Scoring Fouled Board – Pairs and Teams
Neuberg Formula

Module 2: The Auction Sat. 21 Feb

Calls out of rotation
Withdrawn calls – lead penalties
Insufficient bids- directors guide
Exposed card
Unauthorized Information

9.30 am to 1.30 pm

Unintended Calls
Calls based on misinformation
Inadmissible calls
Mistaken explanation v mistaken call
Logical alternatives

Module 3: The Play Sat. 7th Mar

Dummy's rights and limitations
Leads out of turn –penalty cards
Unintended designation
Revokes with and without rectification

9.30 am to 1.30 pm

Cards from wrong board
Play out of turn (incl. premature play)
Claims and concessions
Awareness of potential damage

Module 4: Regulations Sat. 21 Mar

NZ Bridge Systems policy
Psyche Bidding
Making decisions at the Table

9.30 am to 1.30 pm

NZ. Alerting Regulations, Announcing
Rectification v Procedural penalty
Consulting and polling

Module 5: Score adjustment Sat. 11th April

Adjusted scores- when and how
Self- inflicted damage. Split Scores
Processing an Appeal
Coping with difficult situations

9.30 am to 1.30 pm Single weighted scores

Single weighted scores
Directors Error
Breaches of Etiquette

Revision Session Sat 2nd May

Online Practical Session Sun 3rd May

Please contact Allan Joseph with name, club, and NZ Bridge number.

Email: foodmaidnz@gmail.com





NEW ZEALAND
BRIDGE
A GAME FOR LIFE

NATIONAL RUBBER BRIDGE COMPETITION

Represent Auckland-Northland at the
National Finals during NZ Congress

ENTRIES TO GRANT: gjarvis@extra.co.nz

ENTER BY WEDNESDAY 1 APRIL

Arrange heat dates to suit with your
opponents and play in homes or a local club

JUNIOR SYSTEMS ONLY



\$1000 FIRST PRIZE

Two pairs to qualify from **Auckland-Northland**



EAST COAST BAYS BRIDGE CLUB

Lyons Avenue, Murrays Bay

RESTRICTED PAIRS – 8B TOURNAMENT

Sponsored by



Saturday, 7 March 2026

9.30 am Morning Tea, 10.00 am Play Starts

**\$35.00 per person. Payment please before the Tournament to our
Bank Account No 38-9015-0784953-00 (top-up account)**

**Particulars = Tournament: Code = Your Bridge #: Reference = Your name
East Coast Bays Bridge Club members: entrance fee deducted from your
Compa\$\$ account**

NZ System Cards Mandatory

BYO Lunch

**Continuous tea and coffee throughout the day
Refreshments served after close of play**

Entries close: NZ Bridge 1.00 pm Friday, 6 March 2026

Contact email: tournaments@ecbbridgeclub.co.nz

Please apply for seating rights at time of registration - we cannot guarantee seating rights, but will do our best to meet requests