

February 2026



Wellington Region Newsletter



Your 2026 Bridge Season Starts Now

Leagues. Interclub. Rubber Bridge. Regional and Club Tournaments.
There's something for every player this year.

Whether you're a seasoned competitor or thinking of entering your first event, the Wellington Region offers a wide range of opportunities.

Ready to plan your 2026 Season?

Events, dates, formats and entry details
wellingtonregionbridge.nz/tournaments
[NZ Bridge Events](#)



Region events - Entries closing soon

Interclub
Starts 27 March, All grades

Entries close 7 March 2026
Enter on the Wellington Region website

Region events - Enter Early

National Swiss Pairs 20A
14 & 15 March

Entries close 10 March 2026
Enter on the [NZ Bridge website](#)

Regional Championships
Intermediate, Women & Senior
Trial date 21 March

Entries close 14 March 2026
Further details & link to enter are on the
Wellington Region website

Rubber Bridge
April to November

Entries close 31 March 2026
Enter on the Wellington Region website

Wellington Regional Mixed Pairs
6 April

Entries close 2 April 2026
Enter on the [NZ Bridge website](#)

Wellington Congress
25-27 April

Entries close 2 April 2026
Enter on the NZ Bridge website

Looking for more Bridge?

Find upcoming tournaments in the Wellington region on the [NZ Bridge website](#).

2026 Regional League Championships

Three Leagues - A-point, Intermediate, and Junior - for players who take part in Wellington Region tournaments. Trophies are awarded for the top players in each league and cash prizes are available for Junior League champions.

You don't have to do anything except play - every player is automatically included.



A-point

Earn A-points at any Wellington Region Tournament, whatever your grade. Get a league point for every A-point, or part of an A-point earned.

A-points count from tournaments in the Wellington Region for the year from 1 November 2025 to 30 October 2026. The Premier Teams event run through the year at the Wellington Club is excluded.



Intermediate

Intermediate grade players get a league point for every B-point at any Wellington Region Intermediate Tournament.

B-points count from intermediate tournaments in the Wellington Region from 1 March to 1 November 2026.



Junior

Junior and Novice grade players earn points for Junior, Intermediate & Multigrade tournaments.

Points are awarded for success & for participation. Double points are awarded for Wellington Congress.

Points are earned in Wellington Region tournaments held between 1 March and 22 November 2026.

A-Points 2026

Competition underway

2026 Current Leader

Nigel Kearney

Close Contenders

Anthony Ker

Martin Reid

Oliver McCready

Johnny Davidson

Intermediate 2026

Competition Starts 7 March 2026 with the Wellington Intermediate Pairs.

Junior 2026

Competition Starts 1 March 2026 with the Hutt Multigrade Pairs.

Go to the [Wellington Region website](#) for the full information about how points are awarded, in particular for Junior League.

Results are updated every 2 months and posted on the website. Check-in to see how you're doing!

Meet the 2025 Champions ... could this be you in 2026?



Nigel Kearney
2025 A-point League
Champion
Wellington Bridge Club



Mary Scott
2025 Intermediate League
Champion
Kairangi Bridge Club



Murray Lobb
2025 Junior League Champion
Waikanae Bridge Club

Player Profile: Wellington Region Intermediate League winner, Mary Scott



Mary Scott is a member of the Kairangi Bridge Club and the 2024 and 2025 Intermediate League champion.

When did you start playing bridge?

I started lessons in 2019 – just in time for everything to shut down with the pandemic! It turned out to be a surprisingly good period to practice new tricks on-line with your friends.

What's your favourite type of event to play (teams, pairs, Swiss, social nights) – and why?

I enjoy all formats. For me, it's about playing with people you enjoy and play well with.

Do you prefer bidding, declarer play, or defence?

I love the bidding, especially when you and your partner can accurately describe your hands to each other and land in the right contract. I also enjoy trying to make No Trump contracts – it often feels like a game of cat and mouse with the defence. That said, I enjoy defence too, particularly when you and your partner are communicating well and working as a unit.

What's the best bridge tip someone has ever given you?

Don't panic. Easier said than done.

What do you think made the difference in winning the Intermediate Championship?

That one's easy: having great partners: Peter, Carol and Sushila!

Is there a convention or bidding idea you particularly like?

I'm a complete convert to five-card majors. Once I started playing them, I never looked back. While Acol and five-card majors probably end up with similar overall success, I much prefer the precision and the range of bidding options that five-card majors open up.

What tip would you give to someone moving into intermediate events?

Intermediate players are a friendly bunch – not nearly as fierce as the Open players – and we still make plenty of mistakes. So don't be afraid to give it a go.

What's something people might be surprised to learn about you?

I'm a classical musician – and yes, it's a real job!

Is there a book, video, or other resource you've found especially helpful?

Books tend to send me to sleep, especially ones on defence, but I've really enjoyed Bernard Magee's podcasts over the years (although I do put him on double speed when I listen).

Unsung Heroes

Bridge clubs across the country rely on the hard work of many unsung heroes to enable them to thrive. Whether you are a director, dealer, scorer, or one of the many people without whose contribution we would not be able to exist, I thank you. However, there comes a time when one person stands as a tall poppy amongst those who dedicate so much time to ensure our clubs continue. This is about our giant of a hero.

Fifteen months ago, the prospects for Paraparaumu Bridge Club looked bleak. We had become a leaky building. From the get-go our building manager was determined that the club would continue. He first organised a working bee during the heat of summer and sealed all the cracks that were letting in water, giving us time to raise the funds to reclad the building.

He then worked with others to raise funds in innovative ways, securing enough to apply for grants. He prepared the applications and remained positive that we would have all the funds in place in time to minimise disruption to our bridge playing. With the help of Waikanae Bridge Club, we were able to transfer our club nights there for six weeks while the work was completed.

Throughout the closure he was on site, ensuring that as each tradie needed access to certain areas these were kept clear. This required long hours, including over the holiday season. However, he secured not just a reclad, but a complete internal revamp – new carpet and linoleum, freshly painted walls, a new security system, new heating system, new windows and doors, new shelving, and a completely refreshed club.

It was a mammoth three months' work, supported by a series of working bees to prepare the building and move everything back in. So many members of our club contributed to this project – whether through working bees or buying yet another raffle ticket – but there has been one person, Alan Stevens, who worked tirelessly with positive influence and drive to make this happen. He is pictured here on a hot Tuesday afternoon moving items so we could remove the carpet coverings and expose the floor for the carpet layers.



Thanks to his dedication, we are now back in our beautifully renewed clubrooms – the result of 12 months of fundraising and months of hard work.

So thank you to all the club members who made this happen, thank you to the unsung heroes across the region who keep our bridge clubs functioning, and most of all, ngā mihi nui – a very big thanks – to all of our giants, especially our building manager, Alan Stevens.

Vicki Cogswell, Club Secretary, Paraparaumu Bridge Club

Junior Success Across the Wellington Region

Waikanae Bridge Club has enjoyed remarkable success in the Junior League, winning it in the last three consecutive years with two second places in addition.

This impressive achievement has been built on a culture of "success breeds success". The club celebrates members' good results in competitions and tournaments - in announcements at the start of play, online news, and monthly newsletter. Hearing about top juniors winning tournaments encourages the club's up-and-coming juniors to aim for the same success.

Senior players and previous Junior League winners also encourage the next group to really "go for it" by entering as many tournaments as they can.

The club culture strongly supports juniors and helps them become better players. One recent winner says:

"I personally learned a great deal from playing a series with one of our better open players, and we have recently started an initiative to encourage more open players to play at least one series with a junior player".

Well done Waikanae!

Hugh Wolfensohn, President, Waikanae Bridge Club

Waikanae's success is mirrored elsewhere in the region.



Kairangi Bridge Club's commitment to developing novice players has been well rewarded. In the final ranks report for 2025, three Kairangi novices featured in the top 20 nationally – an outstanding achievement for both the players and the club.

- **Pete McDowell** – 3rd=
- **Simon McDowell** – 5th
- **Philip Shackleton** – 10th

A fantastic result, reflecting the strong support structures built around Kairangi's new players.

The club puts significant energy into delivering twice-yearly lessons, backed by essential administrative support for the Tutor. When players move into session nights, they are supported by a buddy system, providing guidance and reassurance during those early "drop-out" weeks.

After graduation, new players are partnered with an experienced player for their first series to help build confidence at the table. Our Junior Coordinator then meets and greets them each week, sends a weekly email, and provides ongoing pastoral care. (The Tuesday Coordinator also plays an important role in ensuring new players feel welcome and supported.)

These results show how effective a well-structured and caring pathway can be.

Carol Stevens, Club Manager, Kairangi Bridge Club



*Craig Jackson (2nd) & Murray Lobb (1st)
2025 Junior League*

Region Players Strong in 2025 National Rankings

The NZ Bridge Final Ranks Report for 2025 shows Wellington Region players featuring across every level of the national rankings – from Novice through to Gold Grand Master. At the top end, Wellington Bridge Club's Alan Grant placed 7th nationally in the Gold Grand Master category.

Across the grades, our region was represented at Life Master, National Master, Master, Provincial Master, Local Master and Club Master levels, with players from Wellington, Waikanae, Karori, Hutt, Ōtaki, South Wairarapa, Paraparaumu and Victoria clubs all appearing in the national lists.

It's particularly pleasing to see Wellington players represented at every stage of the bridge pathway – a reflection of both individual achievement and the strength of our clubs throughout the region.

Congratulations to everyone who featured in the 2025 rankings.

★ Gold Grand Master

Alan Grant – Wellington Bridge Club (7th)

★ Grand Master

Sandy McKirdy – Wellington Bridge Club (6th)

Graham Stronach – Wellington Bridge Club (17th)

★ Life Master

John Donbavand – Waikanae Bridge Club (7th)

★ National Master

Brad Tattersfield – Wellington Bridge Club (19th)

★ Master

Luke Kelly – Karori Bridge Club (12th)

Anthea Black – Waikanae Bridge Club (13th)

Graham Cheater – Waikanae Bridge Club (20th)

★ Provincial Master

Walt Davis – Wellington Bridge Club (15th)

Chris Woods – Wellington Bridge Club (18th)

★ Local Master

Murray Lobb – Waikanae Bridge Club (14th)

Mary Scott – Kairangi Bridge Club (16th)

★ Club Master

Sam Macdonald – Hutt Bridge Club (3rd)

Stephanie Grummitt – Hutt Bridge Club (6th)

Steve Parsons – Ōtaki Bridge Club (11th)

★ Certificate of Proficiency

Ellie Molloy – Wellington Bridge Club (1st)

David Brosnan – South Wairarapa Bridge Club (6=)

Darien Fenaughty – Victoria Bridge Club (10th)

Christopher Meekin – Victoria Bridge Club (11th)

Vikki Clarke – Paraparaumu Bridge Club (12th)

★ Novice (Top 20 Nationally)

Pete McDowell – Kairangi Bridge Club (3=)

Simon McDowell – Kairangi Bridge Club (5th)

Philip Shackleton – Kairangi Bridge Club (10th)

Stephen Wilson – Upper Hutt Bridge Club (3=)

Alistair McMechan – Karori Bridge Club (7th)

Annie Judkins – Wellington Bridge Club (14th)

Natalie Winter – Karori Bridge Club (18th)

CJ Marland – Victoria Bridge Club (20th)

Regional Championships

The Open grade of the Regional Championships had only one team entry. No trial was held and the team representing the Wellington Region will be:

Peter Newell
Alan Grant
Anthony Ker
Martin Reid

Entries are still open for the Intermediate, Senior and Women grades. Entries close 14 March and you can enter as a partnership or a team.

Visit wellingtonregionbridge.nz/

Email:
regionalchamps@wellingtonregionbridge.nz
with queries or to add your partnership to another to make up a team.

Play online - stay connected

Did you know Wellington Bridge Club offers regular online bridge sessions in our region?

They currently offer a relaxed, social online game on Sunday evening, plus a more competitive programme of online series on Monday evenings for those who enjoy a stronger field and a sharper challenge.

Online bridge is a great way to

- fit a game into a busy week
- play from the comfort of home
- build confidence
- try new partnerships
- practice new systems
- Play with friends from across the country
- keep your bidding and card play sharp between tournaments

See [the Wellington Bridge Club website](http://theWellingtonBridgeClubwebsite) for session details and links.

Suzanne Duncan Pairs Wellington's Holiday Cheer

The Suzanne Duncan Tournament is an annual tournament held on the evenings of 27, 28 & 29 December. 2025 was well attended with 18 tables each night and with a good mix of players from all grades and clubs. There was also a number of players from outside the region taking the opportunity to play while they were in Wellington on Holiday.

The overall winners were locals, John Davidson & Nigel Kearney.



Regional Mixed Pairs

Spend your Easter Monday at the bridge table! Grab a partner and enjoy the Wellington Regional Mixed Pairs (5A) on Monday 6 April at Karori Bridge Club.

You & your partner must be of different genders. There are prizes, including best non-Open pair.

For further details and to enter visit nzbridge.co.nz.

Seating Rights at Tournaments

If you require seating rights at tournaments, please continue to request them – we want everyone to feel able to play comfortably. Seating rights are an important way of making our events accessible. To help organisers create the fairest possible movement for everyone, please make your request before the entry deadline, and let the host club know whether you need seating rights for all sessions (if it's a multi-session event). This helps clubs plan well and ensure the best experience for all players.



Seating rights negotiations, 9:59am

Wellington Region website & Contacts

Our new regional website is now live at:
wellingtonregionbridge.nz

You'll find tournament information, entry links, draws, results, leagues and regional updates all in one place.

We now use role-based email addresses. That means you don't need to remember who currently holds a position – your email will always reach the right person.

Please use:

chair@wellingtonregionbridge.nz
secretary@wellingtonregionbridge.nz
treasurer@wellingtonregionbridge.nz
interclub@wellingtonregionbridge.nz
regionalchamps@wellingtonregionbridge.nz
leagues@wellingtonregionbridge.nz
rubberbridge@wellingtonregionbridge.nz

If you're unsure who to contact, email:
secretary@wellingtonregionbridge.nz

Newsletter Content

To submit items, results, photos or club news for the regional newsletter, please email: newsletter@wellingtonregionbridge.nz