

Restricted 3A Open Swiss Pairs Tournaments

Waikato – Bays Region 2026

Background and Recent Changes

New Zealand Bridge has recently introduced a new tournament category based on feedback from clubs and players. The 3A point category is designed for players who are between high-level intermediates and lower-ranked open grade participants, specifically up to the National Master level. Participants will no longer encounter higher-ranked open players, such as grand masters. The new events are named Restricted 3A Open.

The aim of this change is to encourage more entries and foster greater competitiveness among players who have struggled in A point events. It also supports intermediates in advancing to the open level while remaining competitive and gaining skills through participation. Copied from the Auckland Bridge Club website.

Sponsorship Overview Judith Howard as Sponsor

I have sponsored a series of 3A Restricted Open Swiss Pairs in the Waikato Bays Region, providing financial support of \$300 per year for the next three years to each club involved.

Targeted Clubs

My goal was to focus on smaller clubs that could benefit from an additional or more popular tournament. I attempted to secure events in both the Bay and Waikato areas. However, smaller clubs in the Bay were not able to support this initiative. I therefore contacted Rotorua and Taupo, but Taupo was unable to secure a suitable date.

Scheduled Tournaments

- **Te Awamutu Restricted Open Swiss Pairs – Saturday, May 16**
- **Morrinsville Restricted Open Swiss Pairs – Saturday, June 27**
- **Waitomo Restricted Open Swiss Pairs – Sunday, July 12**
- **Rotorua Restricted Open Swiss Pairs – Saturday, September 12**
- **Matamata Restricted Open Swiss Pairs* – Saturday, October 10 *has a sponsor**

Clarifying Tournament Categories

There has been ongoing confusion regarding the Restricted 3A title. Many players mistakenly believe it is equivalent to the 8B Restricted, where open players may partner with non-open players. That is not the case. It is crucial that both clubs and participants understand the distinction.