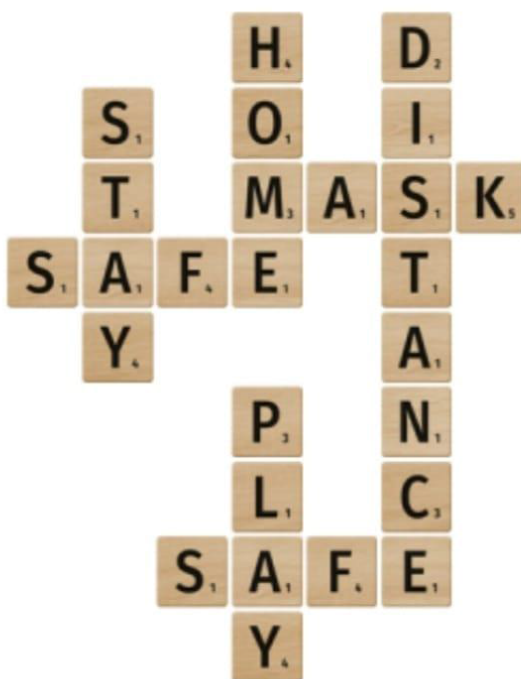


ENDGAME

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Scrabble® Association of India
Volume 1, Issue 2 – June 2021



SCRABBLE
ASSOCIATION OF INDIA



In this issue:

- Quirky ways
- History of Scrabble in Delhi
- The SAI accreditation system
- Puzzles and quizzes

Contents

Foreword	3
Winning friends and building study habits	4
Scrabbling in Goa: A newbie's view	6
Perseverance in the quest for perfection	8
Quirky ways	10
Humour	11
Scrab-ducation: Become better at Scrabble	12
Poetry corner	14
People of Scrabble: Mohan Chunkath	16
Club history: Delhi (SADel)	19
The SAI accreditation system	22
Tournament round-up	24
Game annotation	29
Puzzles and quizzes	32
Coming soon: MyWord.live	38
SAI round-up and new members	38
In memoriam	41
Solutions to puzzles and quizzes	45
Ratings	47

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Foreword

Dear SAI Members,

We hope you are staying safe and playing safe.

The past few months have been trying for the country as a whole. The Scrabble fraternity has borne the brunt as well, with many of us having been affected in some way or the other.

Yet, Scrabble has kept giving us reasons to be optimistic.

While most of us would agree that there is no substitute for in-person tournaments, the advent of rated online tournaments has offered players an experience as close as possible to the real deal. The rising popularity of these tournaments, coupled with the conducive nature of the wonderful Woogles platform, augurs well for the days ahead even as we remain hopeful for the tide to turn for the better.

Moreover, there has been no dearth of initiative from our members. Whether it be converting enthusiasts across varied age groups into competitive players or having regular online tournaments in different formats for players of all levels, many of our members have left no stone unturned in their endeavours to maintain and enhance our connection with our favourite mind sport. We are immensely grateful to them.

We also thank everyone who has contributed to this second edition of Endgame.

Happy reading!

Best wishes,

Rustom Deboo
Editor



Word Study Group: Winning friends and building study habits

by Archana Aggarwal and Hema Shah

“I have started using a dedicated diary to list each day's word list, to re-inforce in memory. Rote learning is on the anvil too.” – Bhawani Cheerath, retiree from Trivandrum

Until March 2020, Scrabble tournaments were played in person, with players sitting across a table from each other. The must-have equipment included a rotating board, a chess clock, your customised rack, your favourite tiles and tile bag, a score sheet cum tile tracker and your lucky pen.

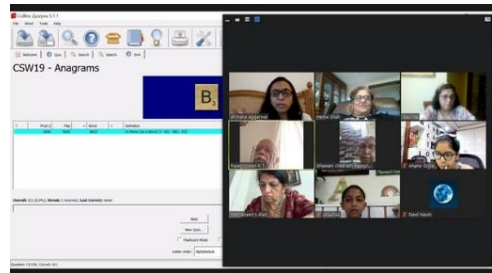
You would eagerly wait for the Tournament Director (TD) to officially signal the start of play with the words, “You may start your clocks now.” The silence in the room would be broken only by the rattling of tiles, as players shuffled them to draw the best rack.

Today, most Scrabble players recall that sound of tiles with a touch of nostalgia as ISC and Woogles ping to indicate the start of the game instead. The pandemic, followed by the subsequent lockdowns, has changed the way Scrabble is being played.

Scrabble has been an activity that several people discovered while they were at home searching for pastimes to amuse and engage themselves. Thus, a number of people across the country and various age groups got exposed to the game, resulting in a large pool of newbies or beginners.

Individual administrators undertook the task of orienting newbies, one or two at a time, to the tournament Scrabble scene. As the numbers and the questions grew, it resulted in frequent impromptu video calls.

One such query to Archana Aggarwal about how and where to study Scrabble words resulted in a small group getting together regularly. A few weeks later, Hema Shah started joining in on a regular basis and bit by bit, this motley group and its collective word power evolved. This group has now been studying together for almost a year, using ZYZZYVA as the primary tool.



A screen grab from one of the workshops conducted by the Word Study Group

“Scrabble to me has always been comfort, a cushion to fall back on when the mind needs one, and a celebration of homecoming when I finally return home once or twice a year. Disciplined word study six days a week with dedicated mentors was how I was introduced to

tournament Scrabble. They introduced me to the word 'bingo' (as a home Scrabbler for almost ten years, I knew the additional 50 points rule, but never knew it had a name too), and broke the myth in my mind that bingos are all luck. They introduced me to a world of like-minded people by encouraging me to play tournaments and develop a resilience for failures – an important skill set to hone for life. Not to forget the feeling of brotherhood and safety that is propagated automatically. The classes are no longer just 'classes', but my safety net and daily dose of a drug of choice.” – Neelanjana Bid, a geologist from Gurgaon, whose query to Archana on 'how does one study' triggered this initiative.

As the first group progressed to learning seven-letter and eight-letter words, it became difficult to incorporate new entrants. Thus, in April 2021, we introduced a second session for beginners looking to establish a word study habit.

We typically have a mix of participants – young kids, retirees, homemakers, and professionals who can set the requisite time aside for word study. The classes start on time and end on time, thanks to a 'complimentary' Zoom account where calls end with a PFFT (a valid word) at 40 minutes flat.

“I played LOUIE, SERRATI, AALII and STRAINER in friendly games. The sessions are doing me a world of good. I can see for myself how my game has improved in three weeks.” – KT Rajagopalan from

Trivandrum, who is now afraid that his friends who play 'family style' will not allow him to play with them anymore.

“Thank you, Archana and Hema, for your wholehearted efforts in helping us build our word skills. We are now able to make bingos due to the words we have learnt.” – Mehjabeen from Hyderabad, who has abandoned kitty parties in favour of Scrabble and is the only participant privileged to be in both study groups.

Such encouraging feedback from our spirited group members tells us that we are on the right track and helps us to keep going in our quest of spreading the word of competitive Scrabble.

Endgame Extra: Know the 51 vowelless four-letter words that are valid in Scrabble

- (1) BRRR, (2) BYRL, (3) CWMS, (4) CYST, (5) DRYs, (6) FYRD, (7) GRRL, (8) GYMP, (9) GYMS, (10) GYNY, (11) GYPS, (12) HMMM, (13) HWYL, (14) HYMN, (15) HYPs, (16) JYNX, (17) KYND, (18) LYCH, (19) LYMS, (20) LYNX, (21) MYCS, (22) MYTH, (23) PFFT, (24) PRYS, (25) PSST, (26) PWNS, (27) RYND, (28) SCRY, (29) SHHH, (30) SKRY, (31) SKYF, (32) SKYR, (33) SPRY, (34) SYNC, (35) SYND, (36) SYPH, (37) TRYP, (38) TSKS, (39) TYGS, (40) TYMP, (41) TYND, (42) TYPP, (43) TYPY, (44) WHYS, (45) WYCH, (46) WYND, (47) WYNN, (48) WYNS, (49) XYST, (50) YMPT, (51) ZZZS
-

Scrabbling in Goa: A newbie's view

by Amogh Bhamerkar

As I placed the last tile on the Scrabble board, my mind wandered to the new experiences lying ahead of me. My teammate Abhinav and I high fived each other with boundless joy, for we had just won the Open Baroda Scrabble Tournament. We were going from representing our school to representing our city at a national level!

From that point, I had decided that Scrabble will not just become a hobby for me, but also a lifelong passion. I got acquainted with Vimisha Patel, my Scrabble mentor. She held weekly meetings, made us mug up our twos and threes and a few basic bingos, and sent us off to Goa to participate in the All-India School Finals.



Peddem Sports Complex, the venue for the All-India School Finals in October 2019

When we entered the huge stadium at Peddem, we were literally awestruck. It was a whole new world. The bags of jingling tiles, the quick hushed tones of players murmuring to each other, and the whole atmosphere of being

amongst Scrabble greats playing in the WESPAC was indeed exhilarating.

The tournament began and we played our first game, which we ended up losing by over 200 points. The second game, we lost by over 50 points. Looking back on those games now, I curse myself for making a few wrong two-letter and three-letter words. We were, in literal terms, scrabbling to win a game, before fighting back to finish sixth out of the 13 school teams there. However, the experience of playing a national level tournament was more than enough for us.



The GOAT Nigel Richards posing with the participants of the school tourney

The most important part was that we got the chance to observe games of national and international players who were playing in the WESPAC. I saw so many words that I did not know were valid. We managed a single bingo in the seven games we played, while each of these top-level boards had at least four bingos on them already! All the players of the

school tourney got to take a picture with the GOAT Nigel Richards, who eventually won the WESPAC.

Though the All-India School Scrabble Championship was a side event along with the WESPAC, being a part of it was a great achievement for us. That was the point where I decided to pursue Scrabble even further, and I continue to live a fun ‘scrabbling’ life. And of course, the satisfaction of boasting that you went to Goa in front of your friends always brings a smile.



With my teammate Abhinav (right) – we finished in sixth place

Endgame Extra: Down memory lane

(Pictures contributed by Romilla Thakur)



Pune's lady Scrabblers at the annual Diwali get-together in 2018



Annual get-together of Pune Scrabblers with their spouses in 2016



(L-R) Viji Ramachandran, Rohaina Tanveer, Carolann Pais, Meena Bakhru and Neena Shahani at the 2018 Pune Open

Perseverance in the quest for perfection

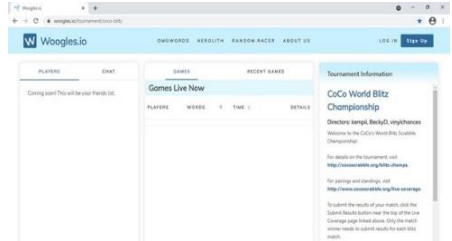
by Hriday Samtani

The inaugural Coco World Blitz Scrabble Championship witnessed 80 players worldwide battling it out for the coveted title.

Scrabble, the world's most popular word game, is an eclectic mix of word power, strategy, skill, and mental toughness. Combine that with lightning-fast speed, and the game induces an adrenaline rush like no other.

Until last year, I was not fond of blitz Scrabble (my game ordinary at best at the time), although I had tried my hand at it a few times. During one of our practice games on ISC (Internet Scrabble Club), Austin Shin, USA Scrabble Grandmaster, World #14, and arguably one of the finest players in the blitz format, said, “*You can be a good blitz player*”. That stayed with me and meant a lot, especially coming from him.

A few months later, the Coco World Blitz Scrabble Championship was announced to be held on Woogles, the newest destination for online Scrabble. The pool of players was frightening, but here was an opportunity to clash against the best in the business. The plethora of world-class players was enough to convince me. However, I could not go unprepared in a field comprising the crème de la crème of the Scrabble world.



The tournament game room

The preparation began – I started practising against HastyBot, Woogles’ Macondo-based AI bot, to improve my thinking speed and sharpen my blitz game. Despite being on the receiving end of annihilation, the learnings outweighed the lack of wins. With each passing day, my confidence soared. I was finally ready to take on the big guns.

The pool of 80 players was divided into eight groups – Aardvark, Buffalo, Chipmunk, Dingo, Emu, Falcon, Giraffe, and Hippo. Every player was assigned a rank based on their WESPA (World English-Language Scrabble Players’ Association) rating. I was seeded seventh in Group Giraffe, which in the Tournament Director’s words was the ‘Group of Death’.

The first round of the tournament involved ‘pool play’ – each player had to compete in a round-robin against every other player in their group. Each fixture in this round was a best-of-nine match, with three minutes per game, one minute of overtime and a ten-point overtime penalty. The winner of a match would be the player

who won five games or more. In case of an unlikely 4.5-4.5 tie, the players would play a tenth game to determine the winner.



A win in the decider against Hubert Wee

Players were ranked within their groups by their match records, with individual game records used as a tie-breaker. Only the top two players from each pool after the completion of pool play advanced to the knockout rounds, a single-elimination bracket over four weeks featuring a round of 16, followed by the quarterfinals, the semifinals, and the final.

The initial few weeks proved more challenging and nervier than I had imagined. I made a few mistakes, but slowly found my feet and got accustomed to playing fast while consistently finding good plays. After the first four rounds, my performance scorecard looked more like a tennis match (6-3, 3-6, 6-3, 6-3). To qualify for the Round of 16, I had to beat at least one of the top two players in my group and defeat everyone else – a mammoth task!

I did not lose hope and fought till the end. Despite losing the two crucial matches that would determine my

qualifying chances, the highlight of my tournament was defeating Singaporean Hubert Wee, World #54, in a thrilling encounter by a margin of 5-4. I was on cloud nine!

Nine weeks later, finishing third in my group and coming tantalisingly close to qualifying for the Round of 16 in a brutally competitive field felt surreal. The practice and perseverance had indeed paid off. Despite not getting the perfect outcome, I enjoyed every moment of the tournament and fell in love with blitz Scrabble.

Endgame Extra: Know the 18 seven-letter words that contain four Es

BEEBEEES
BESEEKE
BETEEME
ELECTEE
ENTETEE
EXEEMED
EXEGETE
FREEBEE
GEECHEE
LEECHEE
PEEBEEN
PEEWEEES
REFEREE
TEEPEES
TEEVEES
VEEPEES
WEEWEED
WEEWEES

Quirky ways

by Radhika Mahalingaiah

The ‘Luck Factor’. Most Scrabble players talk (some within themselves) of how lucky or unlucky they were in tournaments regardless of skill or strategy or word knowledge. Yeah, it is very human to rue the fact that we did not pick the right tiles at the right time. Never mind the millions of permutations and combinations that a bag of 100 tiles throws up.

Even some of the top players put the luck factor anywhere from 10% to 25%, while the percentage increases to more than 50% the newer you are to tournament Scrabble. To even out this luck factor, we usually play 24 games or more in tournaments spread over three or more days.

Even so, we must deal with ‘luck’ game after game. So how do we deal with this unpredictable factor?

Over the past 20-odd years of playing in tournaments, I have noticed players dealing with this ubiquitous factor in their own quirky ways. Here are some you may not have thought of:

Try wearing the same T-shirt that brought you bingo racks. I met a guy at the Causeway Challenge in Malaysia a few years ago who swore by his much-faded T.

Try wearing your lucky charm that has worked in a previous tournament.

Try rattling the tile bag hard, to make the bingo-friendly tiles just float up.

Try using the same pen or pencil for scoring. Once, I saw a guy in a tournament desperately hunting for his lucky pen.

Try picking up tiles with the left hand, if the right one is picking EEIII. Guilty here!

Try picking one tile at a time if it does not work with two or three at a time.

Try invoking the tile fairy before each pick.

Try playing with your particularly lucky rack – lots of people do so.

Try eating chocolates, so the feel-good factor attracts bingo tiles.



If none of the above tricks work, blame it on the day and hope that your luck will turn the next day.

Or you could just start studying word lists and learning strategies and become a diehard Scrabble addict!

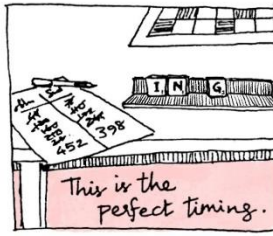
A Scrabble friend used to wear a T-shirt with a lovely message: “Scrabble is my life; the rest is just a game.”

Humour

by Sudharsha

[instagram.com/sudharsha](https://www.instagram.com/sudharsha)

GOD



Endgame Extra: Combine your Scrabble study with Euro 2020 fever

Stems to form bingos:

- AUSTRIA? – AQUARIST, TIMARAUS
- CROATIA? – AROMATIC, RAINCOAT
- DENMARK? – MANDRAKE, UNMARKED
- ENGLAND? – LADENING
- FRANCE? – CANTREF, FANCIER, FURNACE
- POLAND? – DALAPON, PLAFOND, POUNDAL
- RUSSIA? – AURISTS, CUIRASS, RUSSIAS, SARDIUS, SAURIES, SOUARIS
- SWEDEN? – DEEWANS, ENDWISE, ENSEWED, SINEWED, UNSEWED, WEDELNS

Anagrams to form bingos:

- ENGLAND – ENDLANG
- HUNGARY – AHUNGRY

- SCOTLAND – COTLANDS

Valid words: RUSSIA, SPAIN, WALES, TURKEY

Scrab-ducation: Become better at Scrabble

by **Ishika Shivalingaiah and Sanjoy Gupta**

We have all experienced the highs and lows associated with Scrabble victories and losses. Would it not be lovely to have more of the former than the latter? Well, all it takes is some application of the mind towards improving one's game. That is where a Scrabble trainer comes in.

One such endeavour to provide Scrabble training has been initiated on a quarterly basis by the Karnataka State Scrabble Association (KSSA). The team of Sanjoy Gupta, Hema Shah, Pankaj Bolaki, Manju Sood and Ishika Shivalingaiah has seamlessly established training material, puzzles, exercises, and courses customised to cater to different age groups and expertise levels.

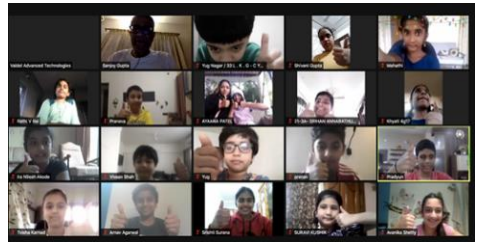
The KSSA has been running Scrabble training courses for both beginners and intermediate level players. Ishika, Training Director at KSSA, says: *"In my opinion, most players operate at 50-60% of their potential. They just need to structure their study and apply a few easy tactics while playing to achieve a much higher win percentage."*

The KSSA ran a four-session training workshop for intermediate level players in September 2020 and a six-session workshop for children in January 2021. Some of the topics covered in the courses were:

- How to learn Scrabble words

- Maximising your score using board opportunities
- Rack balancing to improve chances of making a bingo

These training sessions were online and interactive, with participants trying out what they were taught under the guidance of the instructor.



A screen grab from the beginners' session held by the KSSA in January 2021

The beginners got to learn more about various anagramming techniques, different types of Scrabble plays – through plays, hook plays, extensions, parallel plays, and hot spots – and scoring techniques. In addition, they were introduced to smart study lists and some of the most used but unknown two-letter and three-letter words. Many of them were overwhelmed to learn the likes of XU, ZE, ZO, XI, HAJ, and TWP!

A quick summary of the session for children can be viewed at this link: <https://www.facebook.com/748540547/videos/10164528023060548/>.

The more advanced batch was introduced to the concepts of rack balancing, study tools, 'cardboxes', and synergies to help optimise scores. Plenty of board positions and exercises were run through to imbibe the concepts that were learnt.

A quick summary of the mixed batch session can be viewed at this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/748540547/videos/10164172529945548/>.

Speaking on the importance of Scrabble training, Shubha, mother of 12-year-old Scrabble prodigy Suyash Manchali, says: *"Parents want their kids to develop and grow without compromising on schoolwork. Scrabble fits in nicely in this space, helping kids develop vocabulary, arithmetic skills, problem-solving skills, and even confidence."*

The KSSA is planning to hold more training sessions in the coming months. The training calendar is as follows:

Beginners Scrabble Workshop

(Six sessions of one hour each): July 10-11; July 17-18; July 24-25 - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Fees Rs. 1500/- for the entire course

Intermediate Scrabble Workshop

(Four sessions of two hours each): July 31-August 1; August 7-8 - 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Fees Rs. 2000/- for the entire course

Both batches will culminate with a tournament for the batch students.

(The schedule above is tentative and dates are subject to change. Watch this space for announcements and early bird discount offers: scrabblekssa.wordpress.com.)

You can contact Hema on WhatsApp at 96633 12906 to book your seat, specifying which course interests you.

Endgame Extra: DEILRST?

Words that can be formed if you get a rack of DEILRST and a floater:

+A
DILATERS
LARDIEST
REDTAILS

+B
BRISTLED
DRIBLETS

+D
STRIDDLE
TIDDLERS

+E
RELISTED

+I
REDISTIL

+N
SNIRTLED
TENDRILS
TRINDLES

+O
STOLIDER

+U
DILUTERS
LURIDEST
STUDLIER

Poetry corner

Scrabble

by Vedika Hingorani

Go for the attack,
Or play it safe with the defence;
The crucial decision to be made
quick,
When time is of the essence.

Play QI for a measly 11,
Hoping for a master bingo;
Or go all out on the triple,
54 points for QUIPO.

Tick-tock, tick-tock,
Sweat trickles down my forehead;
With just a minute left on my clock,
I'm not sure what I should do to get
ahead.

I close my eyes,
A deep breath I take;
I know I must choose,
The right move to make.

Going with my gut,
I go out with a bang;

Choosing to empty the bag,
I dry myself out to hang.

Now it's up to my opponent,
My fate in another's hands;
I wish I could be relieved,
but my attention this game demands.

With eyes of determination,
And his brain thinking fast;
He makes his move,
The game ends at last.

Managing to snag a bingo,
He gets 82 for REGRETS;
Alas, what a bitter irony it is!
I was wrong to place my bets.

However, it is but a game,
I've played too many to count;
Wins, losses and ties all matter,
Until it's time for the next round!

Scrabble: A synonym of life

by Nikheel Ruparel

Scrabble is somewhat similar to life,
It is like an unpredictable wife;
Situations and tiles that fall your way,
You have to accept and have to play.

With the tiles that are on your rack,
You have to plan your attack;
If you change them, it's sometimes

for the better,
Or else, you can also get an upsetter.

Our future is like the tiles unseen,
So balance your rack in between;
Sometimes you draw a blank, got me?
Or even three Ss, like more sugar in
tea.

I know when there is a bingo in mind,
But the board is blocked, place difficult to find;
Same way in life, when we are all set,
Sometimes it gets too late, and we must forget.

Most important is your game in the end,
Likewise in life, when no chance to amend;
The result is either a draw, win or

loss,
One is the loser, and the other is the boss.

In short, it's a venture of luck and skill,
You have to play patiently, and just chill;
Likewise in life, in this short span of time,
Be a true sport, and be sublime.

An ode to Scrabble

by Meena Kalyan

When you are bored,
Bring out the board;
And the racks, and the bag of tiles,
Or if you prefer, download the ISC files;
Click on the screen, you get an interface,
Choices aplenty of games and pace;
Set your match, play the game,
What's this? Scrabble is the name!!

Oh! you have to make words, just words,
For that, with opponents you cross swords;
Each move fetches you a score,
For a bonus spot you can get more;
A bingo is the icing on the cake,
For that, a seven-letter word you make!
In sword play, you parry and thrust,
In word play, you block or challenge, if you must.

Turn by turn, it goes on,
Till all the tiles are drawn;

Where is the post-game discussion with the food?
About the ones you miss, you often brood;
Gone are the days, when friends you had to greet,
At the start of the clock, them you had to defeat;
A silent hall, players deep in thought,
Prizes to be won, fame and titles to be sought.

In between games, there is a pause,
Then a scramble to look at the draws;
When shall we hear again, the tinkling of tiles?
The exciting high fives, and the welcoming smiles!
Come on friends, let's have our vaccine dose,
Bye Covid! Your time has come to a close!
Hurrah! It's curtains for the pandemic,
Let's say CHEERS to the Wordaholic!

People of Scrabble: Mohan Chunkath

by Ela Ghose

In this edition, we profile one of our top national Scrabblers who first put India on the international Scrabble map: Mohan Chunkath.

Unsurprisingly, the best words to describe Mohan are polysyllabic with more than ten letters: entomologist, etymologist and cruciverbalist. And Scrabbler par excellence. Mohan is the first person to have represented India at the World Scrabble Championships (Melbourne, 1999) where he was ranked a respectable 21st. It was this performance in Melbourne that qualified India to get a second seat. He had been the Indian national champion five times before the likes of Akshay Bhandarkar and Sherwin Rodrigues burst on the scene and has played in six World Championships.

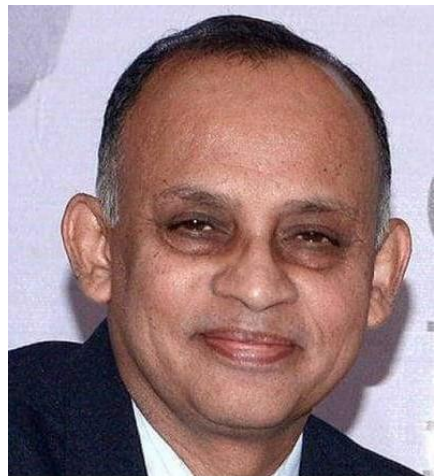


Winning at the National Championship in Mumbai in 2015

Mohan started playing Scrabble when he was about 15, after an aunt gifted him a board. His natural proclivity for anagramming, combined with a love of reading the dictionary, gave him

the erudite distinction of being an etymologist (one who knows the origin of words). In his own words: *“Unlike many children, one of my favourite activities was to randomly read pages from the Chambers Twentieth Century dictionary.”* To date, he is a word nerd!

Around the same time, he developed an interest in cryptic crosswords and began solving cryptic puzzles published in *The Statesman* and *The Indian Express*. Soon he became a complete cruciverbalist, both solving and setting the cryptic puzzles for newspapers such as *The Hindu*, *Business Line* and *Financial Express*.



The dapper bureaucrat

Also around the same time, on a bored Sunday afternoon, he came across a book on paper folding and soon became quite adept at origami.

Although he believes it may have impressed his interviewers sufficiently to get him into the IAS, now he only uses it to entertain children. With the birth of his newest grandchild last year, he is back to folding flowers and frogs.

In between negotiating the intricacies of cryptic clueing, scrabbling and origami, he also found the time to pursue higher studies and trained as a zoologist, specialising in entomology (the study of insects).

As a youngster in the IAS, Mohan went on study leave to Los Angeles to pursue a Masters in Demography. That is where his scrabbling improved by leaps and bounds. Befriended by Roy Kamen, a cab driver and avid Scrabbler, he drove with him to several clubs and tournaments in and around the city. He has also played at tournaments in San Diego and Las Vegas, where he was rolling tiles of a different kind compared to the regular Las Vegas tourist. By the time he got back from the US, he had a NASPA rating of 1600.



Nature Rambles – Mohan’s book of nature photographs

One of his most memorable Scrabble moments was playing HIZONER

over a triple-triple in a friendly game in Los Angeles, for which he scored a whopping 339 points. The H was on the board and also a CHE, which was extended with a Z. According to him, it was “a miracle never to be repeated again!”

Another consequence of his US sojourn was a good exposure to computers. That led to his having every new home computer soon after it was launched and consequently to designing a Scrabble study system for himself based on a Perl script written by John Chew. Although he is used to studying words the traditional way (from the dictionary) and is comfortable with Scrabble tools, he now uses a DOS-based software customised to give him exactly the words he wants to study or revise.



A kirigami model – where cutting is used in addition to folding – made by Mohan

Somewhere along the way, Mohan also took up nature photography. His

love for and knowledge of plants, birds and nature combined with his skill as a photographer led to the publication of Nature Rambles, for which he not only took every photograph but also checked every fact. Converted from a series of blogs as a labour of love, this book can be found at nature-rambles.com. While this is meant for all nature lovers, children enjoy this trove of information most, as it assuages their curiosity about butterflies, insects, and flowers – even those in their own garden. Consider getting a copy for your kids: a free download of pages from the book is available for a sneak peek!

Mohan not only sustained his interest in Scrabble, photography and nature while rising in the Civil Service, but also worked in related areas such as Planning (related to Demography), Environment and Forests (Tamil Nadu), Animal Husbandry and

Computers, and has also been the Chief Secretary of Tamil Nadu.

On his bucket list is to play tournament Scrabble while sailing on a Scrabble cruise (quite common in the US) and also to win a world championship...somewhere.

Now that he has more time on his hands, he is devoted to both studying Scrabble and playing with his grandchildren, who are an interesting Belarussian and Tamilian mix. He has passed on his Scrabble genes to his daughter, who has won the national junior championships (although she quickly gave up playing competitively). Who knows, maybe the third generation will take on his legacy!

Ela Ghose has been profiling Indian Scrabble players on a Facebook group, and kindly agreed to share this profile for Endgame. You can contact her to get added to the group and have a look at her other profiles.

Endgame Extra: Know the 39 seven-letter words having I, N, D, I and A

ABIDING	DIAMINS	IGUANID	PINDARI
ACRIDIN	DIANOIA	INDAMIN	PRIDIAN
AMIDINE	DIARIAN	INDICAN	
AMIDINS	DIAZINE	INDICIA	RAIDING
ANOBIID	DIAZINS	INDUSIA	
AVIDINS	DISDAIN	INEDITA	SIGANID
	DISTAIN	INVALID	SUIDIAN
CONIDIA	DIZAINS	IRIDIAN	
DAINING	GLIADIN	LAIDING	
DENARII	GONIDIA	LIANOID	
DIALING	GRADINI		
DIAMINE	GWINIAD	MAIDING	

Club history: Delhi (SADel)

by Marisha Sharma

In 2004, I was a student at IIT Delhi, and happened to win the Scrabble competition at Rendezvous, the annual festival there. The natural next step was to find a bigger platform to play on. That was when I came across the SAI website and contacted the then Secretary, Sam Joseph. SAI supplied the inspiration to form the Delhi Scrabble Club and supported by sending over a few Scrabble sets and prize money to conduct the first Delhi State Scrabble Championship.



Humble beginnings: The first Delhi State Scrabble Championship in 2005

This first tournament took place in 2005 at Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, Connaught Place, with a humble attendance of 13 players. While on a visit to Delhi, Udayan Grover, from Pune, helped with a one-hour crash course on conducting tournaments. Thus began a journey that is best described in Hindi: "मैं अकेला ही चला था...मगर लोग आते गए और कारवां बनता गया" (translation: I started walking alone, but people kept joining and soon we had

a caravan). One spot prize at the next Delhi tournament for whoever names the poet who wrote these lines!



Delhi's student team at the Deccan Challenge in Hyderabad in 2010

The annual state championship grew gradually in subsequent years, until the journey was joined in by Swati Gupta, who was running a hobby centre in west Delhi circa 2007. Her passion to teach the game to students in a predominantly Hindi-speaking area was inspiring, and not surprisingly, within a year, she had put together a team of students who made their debut at the Deccan Scrabble Challenge 2008 conducted by the Hyderabad Scrabble Players Association, with half of them bagging rank certificates.

Around 2008, Charles Carneiro also landed in Delhi-NCR and started mentoring the budding youngsters with his vast national & international experience. Thus in 2010, the student team was again in Hyderabad, and ranked well enough to give SAI the confidence to send Tanvi Binani,

Delhi's first student participant, to the World Youth Scrabble Championship (WYSC) 2010 in the Philippines.



Prize distribution at the Landmark Scrabble Championship in 2010 – that's Charles (far right) and Nitya!

Moreover, 2010 was also the year when the Delhi Scrabble Club was formally registered under the Societies Act and renamed as the Scrabble Association of Delhi (SADel). Around the same time, another budding talent, high school student Nitya Chagti, started organising monthly meetups in parks, introducing Scrabblers to a novel but super fun way of playing on grass surrounded by nature and historical monuments!



Monthly open-air meetup amidst history and nature in 2010

Once the path was charted, subsequent WYSC tournaments have

usually had a presence from Delhi in the last decade through Nitya, Vishesh Bhatia, Ahana Goyal, Aadi Goel, Diya Dawara, Mehul Arora, Ekansh Arora and the most well-known of all – Madhav Kamath. SADel activities were now getting coverage on TV and in newspapers and started receiving sponsors. Events were being conducted by Barista, Kotak, Mattel, Times of India, Oxford Bookstore, Landmark, Delhi Haat and Collins.



Scrabble prodigy Madhav Kamath with Nigel Richards in 2019

Schools like Ryan, Apeejay, Springdales, Laurel High and PP International were becoming venue partners, whereas corporates like Jindal Steel, Monnet Ispat, JK Paper, BS Ispat, Collins and Parrot Innovations came in to sponsor and support in different ways, with GAIL being prominent with an annual Scrabble cup in its name for six consecutive years until Covid put a temporary pause in 2020.

SADel was strongly student-centric until about seven years ago, when it saw the entry of adult players, each of them not only playing Scrabble but also playing a significant role in developing the Scrabble community in Delhi. Sunny Bhatia inspired many

on his way to international gaming and conceptualised (and executed) many exciting ideas for gifts for participants at the GAIL Cups over the years. Sudhir Kamath entered along with his sons (Dhruv and the prodigious Madhav) and brother Pramit and became the glue that binds the community together.



Scrabble workshops are conducted in urban villages of the National Capital Region in collaboration with IIT Delhi Alumni Association to help youngsters overcome their hesitation with English

Anuradha Chagti became the pivot around which the annual SAI-rated (also WESPA-rated since 2016) GAIL Cup has been organised since 2014. Charles successfully persuaded international players from several parts of the world to come play in Delhi and brought in other sponsors as well. He also went on to co-organise the WESPAC held in Goa in 2019.

Other torch bearers have been Surbhi Goel, Archana Aggarwal, the late Vandana Grover, Akshay Hiremath, Ela Ghose, Karthik Ganesan, Nures Sayeed, Shalini Sahdev, Siddharth Nithyanand, Sumeet Sachdev, Nitesh Dalal, Shikha Garg, Ruchi Arora, Rashmi Gupta, Mudit Gupta, the

parents & teachers of all our student players, scores of volunteers, and so many more names that cannot be written here, but of those who know that we are thankful to them.



Launching the new year with a tourney on the first day of 2020 with players aged 10 to 65 at Ek Bar, Defence Colony

They train kids, conduct workshops, profile players, arrange tournaments, maintain scores, chaperone the children, collaborate with schools for classes, make resource material, give their (or their spouses') homes, offices and restaurants as venues, maintain the Facebook group, the website at delhiscrabble.org, do the statutory bookkeeping, coordinate with students from SAARC nations for international online tournaments, procure sponsors or be one themselves and of course, play Scrabble!

Needless to say, SAdel has become a beautiful caravan of the most wonderful people, and it shows full signs of growing as a cohesive, interactive, and supportive community where everyone matters!

Introducing the SAI accreditation system

by Rahil Parkar

When it comes to Scrabble, we often draw parallels with another popular mind sport – chess. As we look to improve the outreach of Scrabble, it helps to make the sport more engaging and lucrative for newcomers.

This led to the conceptualisation of a title system for SAI members, which will serve two main purposes. Firstly, it will lend greater credibility to SAI members who are consistent high performers in tournaments. Secondly, it will entice players to participate in tournaments around the country in greater numbers.

The idea was nurtured and developed by Vraj Jain from Mumbai, with assistance from Rahil Parkar and Aditya Iyengar. The chess world was an obvious source of inspiration, but this idea is not wholly new to Scrabble, with Nigeria and the United Kingdom adopting a similar system of titles for top players.

This accreditation system will be backed by the current SAI rating system. The four titles that players can aspire to achieve are as follows, with the highest applicable title taking precedence.

- **Grand Master** – Players consistently rated 1600 and above.
- **National Master** – Players consistently rated 1400 and above.

- **Regional Master** – Players consistently rated 1200 and above.
- **Junior Master** – Players aged under 18 consistently rated 1000 and above.

As Scrabble innately holds an element of luck, the system has been designed to track and award those players who are consistently performing at a high level, and eliminate temporary fluctuations affected by the proverbial tile fairy. To achieve this, the system tracks players' ratings over the last ten major tournaments.

A major tournament is defined as one with 22 or more SAI-rated games (typically a tournament of three days or longer). If a player's updated rating following a major tournament exceeds the threshold set for a particular title, they achieve a norm for that tournament (a positive token of sorts). In order to be eligible for the title, a player must have three norms over the last ten tournaments. An acquired norm expires after ten tournaments, so if players miss too many tournaments, they run the risk of relinquishing their title.

The title held by a player will be displayed alongside their rating on the SAI website; the said changes for this will be reflected from 1st August 2021.

Here is the initial list of title recipients, with the ten major tournaments

starting with the Goa Open held in April 2019 and ending with the Goa V3 tournament held in March 2021.

- **Grand Master** – Sherwin Rodrigues, Udayan Grover, Ranganathan Chakravarthy, Aditya Iyengar
- **National Master** – Mohan Chunkath, Nakul Prabhu, Samrath Singh Bhatia, Varisht Hingorani, Sanjoy Gupta, Rajveer Rawlin, Rahil Parkar, Sunny Bhatia, Douglas Lobo, Manju Sood, Carolann Pais
- **Regional Master** – Mangala Bhandarkar, Hriday Samtani, Bhushan Pradhan,

Sudhir Kamath, Anuj Shetty, Shaikh Ahmed, Amit Sood, Rajeev Menon, Madhav Gopal Kamath, Sridhar Paidikondala, Ishika S, V Ramachandran, Rajiv Antao, R Nalini, Nikheel Ruparel

- **Junior Master** – Vedika Hingorani

Since a large majority of the SAI members are rated in the 800-1100 bracket, a target of 1200 to achieve a Regional Master title is within reach for many more players. We all play Scrabble with a passion, and we believe that this newly introduced accreditation system will lend greater authenticity to our mind sport.

Endgame Extra: Know the 37 seven-letter words containing J, U, N and E

BUNJEES
BUNJIES

CONJURE

DEJEUNE
DISJUNE

INJURED
INJURER
INJURES

JAUNCED
JAUNCES
JAUNSED

JAUNSES
JAUNTED
JAUNTEE
JAUNTIE
JEJUNAL
JEJUNUM
JOUNCED
JOUNCES
JOURNEY
JUNCATE
JUNCOES
JUNGLED
JUNGLES
JUNIPER
JUNKERS

JUNKETS
JUNKIER
JUNKIES
JUNKMEN
JURYMEN
JUVENAL

PUNJIED
PUNJIES

REJOURN

UNJADED

WEEJUNS

Tournament round-up

Rated online tournaments

with inputs from Vimisha Patel and Sudhir Kamath

About rated online tournaments

Online Scrabble tournaments started with a lot of enthusiasm in March 2020, when the nation was first put under lockdown. Throughout the year, there were many fun tourneys with different formats, which kept players entertained, engaged, sane and motivated. A year on, with no respite from Covid-19, it was deemed necessary to bring some relevance to online tournaments.

Thus, it was decided by the SAI Managing Committee to introduce the concept of rated online tournaments with a monitoring system in place (through the OBS Ninja platform) to ensure fair play.

So far, we have seen three rated online tournaments this year: the March Forward Tournament, the May Day Tournament, and the Jeune June Tournament.

About the monitoring system

The system was initially devised by Lukeman Omo-Owolabi from Nigeria. Rahil Parkar, SAI Vice President, put in long hours to study the system and test its feasibility, making a lot of changes to finally decide upon the simplified three-way monitoring system through the OBS Ninja platform.

Under this system, each player needs to share three things to ensure that the norms of fair play are followed:

1. Screen share: The player's entire screen is always visible, and everything on the screen is visible to the designated observer. The player therefore cannot change tabs during a game.
2. Front camera share: This is to be shared from a laptop or the webcam of a desktop. The front camera view catches suspicious movements, if any.
3. Side camera share: This is to be shared from a mobile phone, which captures the full profile, hands, and screen view of the player.

The aforesaid three views are shared using pre-assigned links. All players who have signed up for a rated online tournament get their own unique and confidential links for each of the three views.

The designated observers are each assigned a fixed set of players to observe by the Tournament Director, whom they observe for every game throughout the tournament using the viewing links for the same. All the games are observed live and are also

recorded in case the Tournament Director feels the need to review any incident.

The first tournament to feature this monitoring system was the qualifying tournament to determine the Indian team for the WESPA Youth Cup 2020, conducted on Woogles in January 2021 by Wordaholix and SAI.

March Forward

The first SAI-rated online tournament, christened as the 'March Forward Tournament', was held on ISC from 27th to 28th March 2021. The tournament was directed by Sudhir Kamath. This first-of-its-kind tourney attracted 20 players and featured 15 rounds. Sanjoy Gupta sealed the top spot with a round to spare, followed by youth sensation Madhav Kamath and R Nalini in second and third places. There were also three rating band prizes on offer, which were clinched by Ishika S, Lloyd Pearse and young Triambak Eashwar.

Results from round 15

1	Sanjoy Gupta	11 ⁽⁺¹⁾	+1137 ⁽⁺¹⁾
2	Madhav Gopal Kamath	10	+515
3	Nalini R	10	+426
4	Ishika S	9	+916
5	Udayan Grover	9	+728
6	Lloyd Pearse	9	+344
7	Samrath Bhatia	9	+325
8	Kala Ganesh	8	+477
9	Sumeet Sachdev	8	+399
10	Rohaina Tanveer	8	-8
11	Devansh Malpani	7	+393
12	Jackson Thomas	7	+159
13	Triambak Eashwar	7	-46
14	Shalini Sahdev	7	-328
15	Yuvraj Dighe	7	-401
16	Vimisha Patel	6	-53
17	Hema Shah	6	-592
18	Vihaan Singhvi	5	-1128
19	Bhavya Todi	4	-1316
20	Mariam Dalal	2 ⁽⁺¹⁾	-1947 ⁽⁺¹⁾

The final standings

This inaugural rated online tournament received a positive response from the players involved. The three-way surveillance system, involving constant observation of the players as well as their game screens by assigned observers, provided an assurance of ethical play and credibility.

May Day

The second rated online tournament, christened as the 'May Day Tournament', was held on Woogles from 1st to 2nd May 2021. The tournament was directed by Rahil Parkar and featured 18 players and 20 rounds. Madhav Kamath emerged victorious with 15 wins, with Samrath Singh Bhatia and Udayan Grover finishing second and third, respectively. The two rating band prizes were won by Kala Ganesh and Amogh Bhamerkar.

May Day Scrabble Tournament

Round 20 Standings

Rank	Won-Lost	Spread	Player	Last Game
1	15-5	+620	Madhav Kamath mglk28 (#3)	W:426-419:#1
2	14-6	+826	Samrath Singh Bhatia sammy2000 (#2)	W:477-328:#4
3	13-7	+5604	Udayan Grover groveringu (#1)	L:419-426:#3
4	12-8	+497	Nalini R nralini (#5)	W:553-453:#7
5	12-8	-154	Amogh Bhamerkar amogh (#17)	W:412-282:#15
6	11-9	+615	Bhushan Pradhan erazer (#4)	L:328-477:#2
7	11-9	-205	Kala Ganesh iyerikala63 (#7)	L:453-553:#5
8	11-9	-365	Shreyas Gupta shreyas3 (#15)	L:282-412:#17
9	10-10	+850	Sumeet Sachdev meetsumeet (#6)	W:507-320:#8
10	10-10	+67	Nikheel Ruparel nikheel (#9)	W:386-351:#18
11	10-10	+18	Arindam Basu Arindam (#8)	L:320-507:#6
12	10-10	-735	Vignesh S vigneshs (#12)	W:388-284:#10
13	9-11	+261	Pramit Rao limerick (#18)	L:351-386:#9
14	9-11	-327	Vimisha Patel vimi212 (#13)	W:383-368:#11
15	8-12	-92	Patrick Pereira PCube (#10)	L:284-388:#12
16	7-13	-459	Lloyd Pearse lloydpearse (#11)	L:368-383:#13
17	7-13	-831	Gaurav Bhargava GeeBee (#14)	W:405-178:#16
18	1-19	-2190	Triambak Eashwar BUCKS (#16)	L:178-405:#14

The final standings

Jeune June

The third rated online tournament, christened as the 'Jeune June Tournament', was held on Woogles from 26th to 27th June 2021. The tournament was organised by Udayan

Grover, directed by Vimisha Patel, and featured 20 players and as many rounds. Rahil Parkar was Gibsonised with a round remaining, while Udayan Grover and Shaila Amalean secured the second and third positions, respectively. The three band prize winners were Amit Sood, Sumeet Sachdev and young Shreyas Gupta.

Results from round 20

1 Rahil Parkar	15 ⁽⁺¹⁾	+717 ⁽⁺¹⁾
2 Udayan Grover	13	+1841
3 Shaila Amalean	13	+699
4 Amit Sood	12	+595
5 Sridhar Paidikondala	12	+415
6 Sumeet Sachdev	12	+208
7 Rohaina Tanveer	11	+377
8 Shaikh Ahmed	10.5	-104
9 Ishika Sivalingaiah	10	+952
10 Madhav Kamath	10 ⁽⁺⁰⁾	+211 ⁽⁺⁰⁾
11 Arindam Basu	10	+114
12 Bhushan Pradhan	10	-189
13 Shreyas Gupta	10	-205
14 R Nalini	9	+20
15 Vimisha Patel	9	-64
16 Meena Kalyan	8	-254
17 Gaurav Bhargava	8	-949
18 Pramit Rao	7.5	-258
19 Vignesh Subramaniam	7	-403
20 Bhavya Todi	2	-3723

The final standings

Vandana Grover Memorial Tournament

by Siddharth Nithyanand

On 7th May 2021, the Scrabble fraternity lost a dear friend, Vandana Grover. In her memory, a special one-day memorial tournament was conducted online on Woogles on 15th May 2021. As many as 91 Scrabblers, ranging from age 7 to 70, participated in the tournament – 28 in Division A, 36 in Division B, and 27 in Division C (Beginners' Division).

The tournament was kickstarted with a short tribute to Vandana, organised

virtually over a Zoom meeting. Over 100 people joined in and Vandana's close Scrabble friends recalled their memories of her. Siddharth Nithyanand, the tournament organiser, explained the rules and shared the list of spot prizes, each of which had a connection to Vandana's life.

There were eight games in all, starting at 2 p.m. and ending at 6 p.m. Rahil Parkar won all eight games to finish first in Division A, with Udayan Grover and Hriday Samtani rounding off the top three. The podium finishers in Division B were Sujana Somasekar, Nikheel Ruparel and Amogh Bhamerkar, while in Division C, they were Vishesh Bhatia, Ganesh Tata and Ahana Goyal.

The spot prizes were as follows:

Round 1 – Highest scoring word starting with the letter V

Round 2 – Highest scoring word having all the three letters C-A-T in any order

Round 3 – Highest scoring word related to books or teaching

Round 4 – Highest scoring word starting with any of these four letters: K-I-N-D

Round 5 – Highest scoring bingo having all the three letters A-R-T in any order

Round 6 – Highest scoring word related to animals or birds

Round 7 – Highest scoring bingo related to trees, plants or nature

Round 8 – Highest scoring word having all the three letters V-A-N in any order

Bonus spot prize (any round) – Highest scoring word having all the letters G-R-O-V-E-R

The winners of the spot prizes (word, player, and score) were as follows:

Division A

1. Visitor - Amit Sood - 73
2. Clat - R Nalini - 22
3. Futures - Rahil Parkar - 78
4. Insider - Amit Sood - 94
5. Stranger - Rehet Bhatia - 77
6. Canaried - Akshay Bhandarkar - 70
7. Ecostate - Sanjoy Gupta - 78
8. Estival - Sanjoy Gupta - 98

Bonus Spot Prize

Governed - Shaila Amalean - 76
Ringdove - Rohaina Tanveer - 62

Division B

1. Venator - Amogh Bhamerkar - 96
2. Octanes - Sneha Thadhani - 78
3. Periods - Sujana Somasekar - 89
4. Denizen - Vimisha Patel - 91
5. Trainee - Aarush Jotwani - 96
6. Cages - Lloyd Pearce - 84
7. Sickled - Sheela Iyer - 99
8. Divan - Neelanjana Bid - 30

Bonus Spot Prize

Groove - Triambak Eashwar - 32

Special Spot Prize

Bandlike - Gaurav Bhargava - 83 (for using all letters of KIND)

Division C

1. Vows - Ahana Goyal - 41
2. Track - Ahana Goyal - 25

3. Brains - Alpana Manchanda - 30
4. Dealing - Vikas Maheshwari - 63, Idoliser - Bhavya Todi - 63
5. Strakes - Arjun Maheshwari - 71, Atropia - Mrinalini Batra - 71
6. Tortoise - Anuradha R - 62
7. Unripely - Bhavya Todi - 78
8. Pavins - Ahana Goyal - 30

Bonus Spot Prize

Groved - Arjun Maheshwari - 32

The tournament concluded with a virtual prize distribution ceremony. All the spot prize winners received Amazon vouchers worth Rs. 500 each.

A nominal registration fee was collected from each participant towards a couple of social causes related to Covid relief, though the participants had a choice to donate more if they wished. The total money collected amounted to more than Rs. 40,000. Several members of the community also sponsored the spot prizes. It was indeed a fitting tribute to Vandana.

ARFS Women's Tourney

by Team ARFS

The Always Ready For Scrabble (ARFS) team of Lloyd Pearce, Kala Ganesh, Rekha Sanzgiri and Savio Rebello organised a women's tournament on Woogles from 1st to 6th June 2021. The tournament featured three divisions – Wonder Women (12 players), Femme Fatale (14 players) and Newbies (seven players).

Selwyn Lobo, an internationally recognised Scrabbler, sponsored the tournament with trophies (a first-

time venture in these times) as well as cash prizes. Selwyn and Lloyd go back 30 years in Scrabble.



Winners of the ARFS Women's Tourney

Rohaina Tanveer, R Nalini, Ishika Shivalingaiah and Sujana Somasekar were the top four finishers respectively in Wonder Women. Asha Kamath, Neelanjana Bid, Rekha Sanzgiri and Srushti Gandhi were the leaders in Female Fatale. Vasudha Mohanka and Bhavya Todi finished first and second respectively in Newbies.

About ARFS

ARFS is a group that is the brainchild of Lloyd Pearse, ably supported by Kala Ganesh, Rekha Sanzgiri and Savio Rebello. Non-stop practice sessions in the form of round-robin tournaments with various aspects of the game being highlighted is the USP of this group of players.

ARFS uses both Woogles and ISC as playing platforms for tournaments and has its Woogles space at woogles.io/club/arfs. We at ARFS are always ready to play Scrabble. To know more, email us at alwaysready-forscrabble@gmail.com.

KSSA Pairs Championship

by Radhika Mahalingaiah

The KSSA conducted this unique tournament on Woogles from 5th to 13th June 2021. Most of the participants enjoyed it immensely, but maybe not the purists! Pankaj Bolaki, in discussion with the KSSA committee, came up with the idea of a football-style group stage and knockout stage with twists thrown in to make the tourney exciting.

A total of 48 players first formed 24 pairs (the choice of pairing was left to the players). Three such pairs (one top, middle and lower rated pair each) formed a team, leading to eight teams of six players each. These teams were formed following a virtual 'bidding' session: Pairwise, Quokkas, Marimbass, Kindness, Papavers, Vizlas, Smasheroos, and Brouhaha.

Team Quokkas, the smiling marsupials comprising Manju Sood, Ishika S, Abhijit Shilotri, Archana Aggarwal, Sneha Thadhani and Neelanjana Bid, beat Smasheroos, comprising Sujana Somasekar, yours truly, Suyash Manchali, Sushanto B, Meena Kalyan and Hema Shah, by one game in the final.

The aim of the tourney was to integrate the various strata of ratings and help players improve their game. There were individual games, where similarly rated players played, as well as paired games. All in all, the tournament created great bonhomie among the players. The Smasheroos continue to play paired games every day and have been enjoying them thoroughly!

Game annotation

by **Udayan Grover**

Ranganathan Chakravarthy (ranga)
v Sherwin Rodrigues (Whiners),
Double Round Robin Tournament
on Woogles, 5th June 2021



NAME, RACK, PLAY, SCORE/TOTAL

1. R: AILOSUW – WAI (H7) 12/12

I prefer WAUL at 8H for the rack leave of ISO over SOUL. WAULS (8D) for 24 is also an option if one does not mind burning the S for 12 points more, although IO is a poor leave.

1. S: EEEFHQV – FIQH (9G) 33/33

Easily the candidate play here.

2. R: DGLOOSU – DUOLOGS (K3) 88/100

Ranga instantly spots the mid to low probability bingo to draw first blood; a fine spot.

2. S: AEEEEOV – Exch. AEEEEOV 0/33

Sherwin prefers to exchange all but an E from this vowel-heavy rack instead of playing EAVE (10D) for 20; I may have taken the score.

3. R: EIILNPU – PENI (10F) 35/135

Ranga finds the highest scoring play from this rack. Although the leave is ordinary, the score justifies it. The same tiles can be used to play PEIN (L4), albeit for nine points less.

3. S: ABEEGIJ – JAG (11E) 33/66

I do not dig this play much as it has a vowel-heavy leave and prefer playing GADJE (3I) for a point less. BEIGE (L1) for 33 is another interesting option retaining the J for insurance, but the idea here should be to bingo as soon as possible and J hinders that.

4. R: CEILOPU – UPKOILED (3D) 65/200

Ranga's rack leave of ILU yields a bonus and he plays one of the two eights on offer (the other being CLUPEOID in the same spot for two points more), taking a handsome lead over his opponent.

4. S: BEEIIRX – BIER (4A) 22/88

I am surprised at Sherwin not playing the X; it is likely that he hung on to it hoping to maximise it in the subsequent turn. I would go for IBEX (2A) here for 35 holding IRE. True, it opens a 9x lane, but I reckon such a play is well within Sherwin's arc. If not that, I would opt for URBEX (4K)

for 44 despite its dismal leave, as he needs the score. If he wants to hold on to the X, I prefer GIBER (8K) for 27 using the same tiles, scoring five points more and opening the board.

**5. R: EEHMNRZ – RHIME (H1)
39/239**

RHIME is an excellent play as it both scores well and keeps the Z, which has great scoring potential. Other notable options are ZEIN (H1) for 42 and CHEZ (F3) for 38.

5. S: EEIIKTX – ILEX (I2) 29/117
I prefer BIKIE (A4) for 33 to ILEX as it scores four more with a slightly better rack leave, opens a new bingo lane, and also keeps the R in row 1 intact. ILEX though seems next best as it plays off the duplicates along with the X and keeps a balanced rack.

**6. R: EILNRWZ – BEZIL (A4)
48/287**

Ranga keeps chipping away with high scores to maintain his lead. He misses the lovely WHIZ (2G) for 75 at a trickily concealed spot on the board. BENZIL for 51 at the same spot as BEZIL is marginally better.

**6. S: CDEIKST – STICKED (11I)
90/207**

Sherwin finally draws into a high-scoring bingo of his own and plonks it down to narrow the margin and stay afloat. FECS/STICKED (12G) is safer and plays for merely two points less, but it seems that Sherwin sees the merit in aggression with both blanks yet unseen.

**7. R: DNNRRTW – TWIN (B2)
16/303**

Ranga opts to play off three tiles from this all-consonant rack instead of changing. There are plays at 2G that score decently but only use two tiles. Although TWIN turns over three tiles, I may consider changing most of my rack hoping to draw into a blank or an S.

**7. S: AAENTY? – ASYNDETA (O7)
86/293**

Sherwin picks the first blank and plays the only available eight in column O to come within ten points of Ranga. The two playable sevens on his rack (ABEYANT and ANALYTE at B8) score much lesser for 74. Here, I expect both players to be conscious of the fact that the bingo is already a plural and does not take an S.

**8. R: DNNORRS – DEN (J2)
25/328**

DEN scores decently and retains his only vowel. The only plays that score more require him to play his S in row 12, which is perhaps not ideal.

**8. S: EGINTVY – VINT (13L)
14/307**

A surprisingly low-scoring play. I may play VITEX (5E) for 30 or VLY (6J) for 17 keeping the friendly five-letter set of TINGE, given that rows B and N are available to bingo at. It is quite likely that he has held on to the Y hoping to hit ZYGA/TWINY (6A). EY-ING (N11) with three overlaps for 29 is another decent play, keeping VET.

**9. R: ANOORRS – ROARS (12C)
32/360**

Ranga picks one of three top-scoring moves at the same spot (the other two being ROONS, which I think is

slightly better, and ROANS). One must note that a blank and an S are still unseen and turning over tiles seems the right thing to do.

9. S: EFGLSTY – TEF (13B) 21/328

Sherwin now trails by 53 going into pre-endgame and must find a way to bridge the gap. TEF neither scores well nor does much to the board, but maybe he is still eyeing the Y play, and funnily does not draw an A despite five of them unseen to him. FY (13D) and FLEY (13A) are also decent while creating a lane in row 14. It is a tradeoff between balancing for a bingo and hitting a 40-odd Y score, and one must take a call accordingly.

10. R: ABENOOT – BATOON (N2) 22/382

Ranga does well to close down column N and turn over six tiles. BOOT and BOET at 14A score a few more but keep the dangerous column N open, which seems unnecessary.

10. S: AGLSUVY – ZYGA (6A) 44/372

Sherwin finally picks the coveted A to put down ZYGA and almost catch up with Ranga. ZYGAL is also fair, but it may be more prudent to hang on to the L to hook it later in the quest for more score in column E.

11. R: EOORRTU – ROTOR (O1) 29/411

Ranga boldly empties the bag, thus also taking the highest available score. I like ROTO/TORO at the same spot, keeping a tile in the bag. If one assumes that the opponent is not bin-going, it is important to play in

column O as Sherwin may have a high-scoring four-letter or five-letter play of his own, thus threatening the lead.

11. S: AELMSUV – LUV (E6) 24/396

This is a tight spot for Sherwin, as he trails by 39 and needs to outscore Ranga by going out in two turns; I do not see a winning sequence of plays for him. The simulator suggests PSALM (E3) scoring an imposing 43, but it is a tough find and EUV will not finish. Sherwin does well to play LUV, thus keeping a decent out play.

12. R: ADEEIU? – SUID (L4) 27/438

Good spotting by Ranga to find the optimal play, thus ensuring himself of the win.

12. S: AEMS – SAME (9A) 26/422 +6 (AEE) 428

ULVAS (E5) for 34 followed by EM (14B) for 17 was the other series of moves available, scoring a total of 51. Assuming Sherwin saw SUID coming, it turns out that he needed to go out in two moves needing 61 (including countback) to pip Ranga, but it was not to be, and he falls short by ten points.

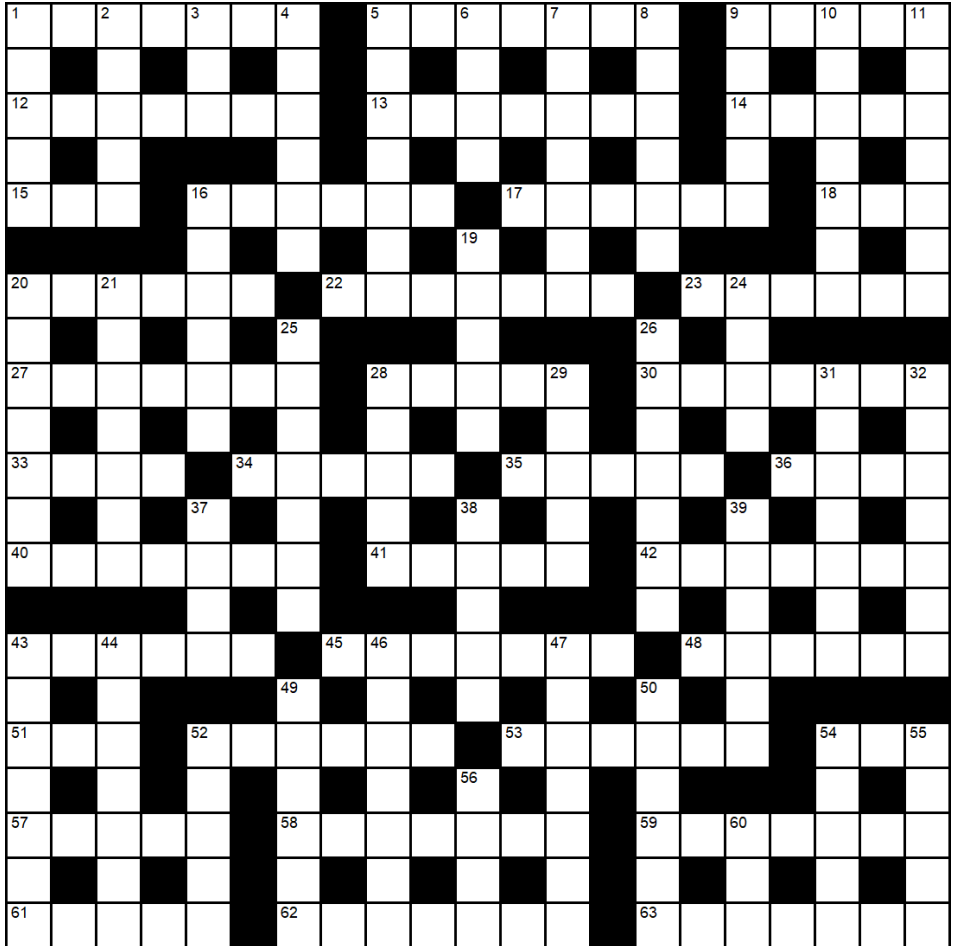
Although I disagreed with some of the moves either side, it was an interesting game, with Sherwin having the tougher choices to make. He was playing catch-up all through and did well to recover, only to fall painfully short. Ranga's spotting was commendable, and he found the optimal plays on most occasions.

Puzzles and quizzes

SAI Crossword #002 (JQXZ words)

by Mohan Chunkath

Solve the clues to complete the grid. Each answer contains either J, Q, X or Z



Across

- 1 Saudi Arabian monetary units (7)
- 5 Old Turkish footguard (7)
- 9 Fix something in a different fashion (5)
- 12 Appended (7)
- 13 Projecting spouts (7)
- 14 A hoe (5)
- 15 A dinner jacket (3)
- 16 Sounding like a duck (6)
- 17 Confused states (6)
- 18 Describing certain dyes containing nitrogen (3)
- 20 French infantry man wearing Arab dress (6)
- 22 Obliquely (7)
- 23 Between (6)
- 27 Offspring of a male zebra and a female horse (7)
- 28 A crown of rock on a mountain top (5)
- 30 To throw out again forcibly (7)
- 33 A malignant female water sprite (4)
- 34 Korean verse forms (5)
- 35 Dog breed with long hair (5)
- 36 Star Wars character (4)
- 40 African antelopes (7)
- 41 Describing a delicate blue colour (5)
- 42 A maximum or minimum of a mathematical function (7)
- 43 Conceited person (6)

- 45 One who appends (7)
- 48 Crustacean larval stages (6)
- 51 A state of confusion (3)
- 52 A kind of clam (6)
- 53 A fine soft woollen fabric (6)
- 54 Combine together (3)
- 57 Not! (5)
- 58 One skilled in Japanese unarmed combat (7)
- 59 Remits a tax (7)
- 61 To feed on growing grass (5)
- 62 A Jewish prayer book (7)
- 63 Persons communicating on smartphones (7)

Down

- 1 Fourth part of a gallon (5)
- 2 To repair again (5)
- 3 Hamstring (3)
- 4 Maize porridges (6)
- 5 Unit of radio emission strength (7)
- 6 A type of fascist (4)
- 7 An extremely large unspecified number (7)
- 8 Audaciously bordering on the unseemly (6)
- 9 Sovereignties (5)
- 10 A kind of Dacca muslin (7)
- 11 A hard brown Norwegian cheese (7)
- 16 Soft underlayer of hair on the musk ox (6)
- 19 Piped background music (5)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 20 Grass genus (7) | 43 Spending time aimlessly (7) |
| 21 Removed from a rectangular container (7) | 44 Plant with bright yellow or orange flowers (7) |
| 24 Three in cards or dice (4) | 46 Pertaining to a narrow inlet of the sea (7) |
| 25 Most like wax (7) | 47 One who demands (7) |
| 26 To bend or contort (7) | 49 A spiny desert tree (6) |
| 28 Middle Eastern title of respect (5) | 50 A type of stroke in croquet (6) |
| 29 Body governing a federation of Serbian villages (5) | 52 To quit (5) |
| 31 One versed in the science of interpretation (7) | 54 Denoting a type of bicycle frame (5) |
| 32 A gypsy (7) | 55 Porticos used by ancient Greek athletes for doing exercises (5) |
| 37 South African flowering plant (4) | 56 Misery (4) |
| 38 A head covering (5) | 60 A unit of linear density of yarn (3) |
| 39 Univalent chemical radical (6) | |
-

Mixed anagrams – Animals and birds

by Rustom Deboo

Below are ten anagrams, each of which has the name of an animal and a bird jumbled in it. The point value for each is mentioned in brackets, with the total value of the set being 20. You can send in your answers to indianscrabble@gmail.com by 31st July 2021. One entry scoring full points will win a cash prize of Rs. 500 in a lucky draw.

Congrats to Romilla Thakur for winning the lucky draw prize for the mixed anagrams quiz featured in the March 2021 edition.

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1) IGNORE A LOAN PACK (2) | 7) SHARP BOAT RENTALS (2) |
| 2) PUNGENT HEEL PAIN (1) | 8) DRAG THE TIRE RAMPS (1) |
| 3) GOALIE HELPING TENANT (3) | 9) PHONE A FRISKED GIRL (3) |
| 4) NAMING NATURAL GOOF (2) | 10) THEME SONG ON A SOAP (2) |
| 5) CHIPS IN COURT ROPE (1) | |
| 6) DROP LIKE A LOWER COG (3) | |
-

Find the best play

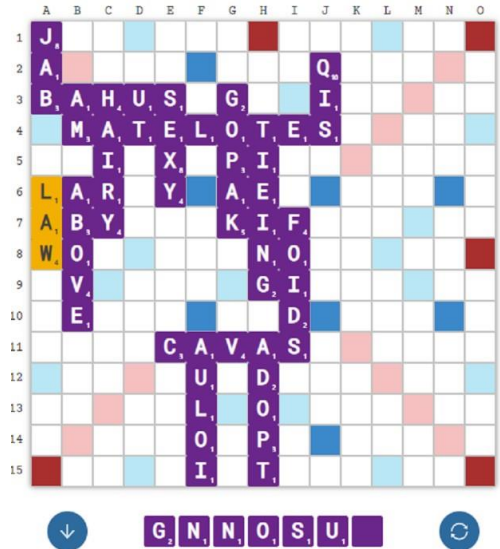
by Hriday Samtani

Find the best/highest-scoring play on offer in each of the board situations below:

1)



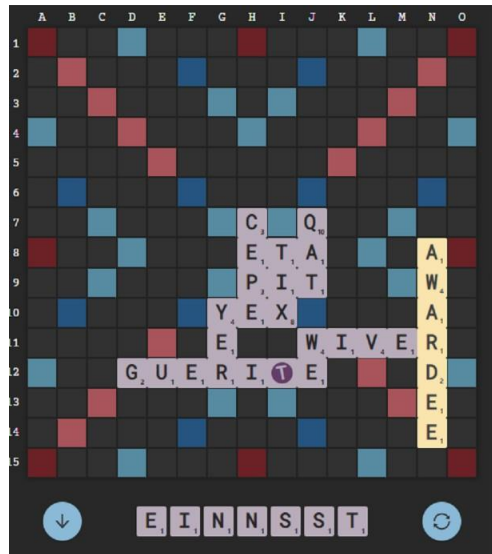
2)



3)



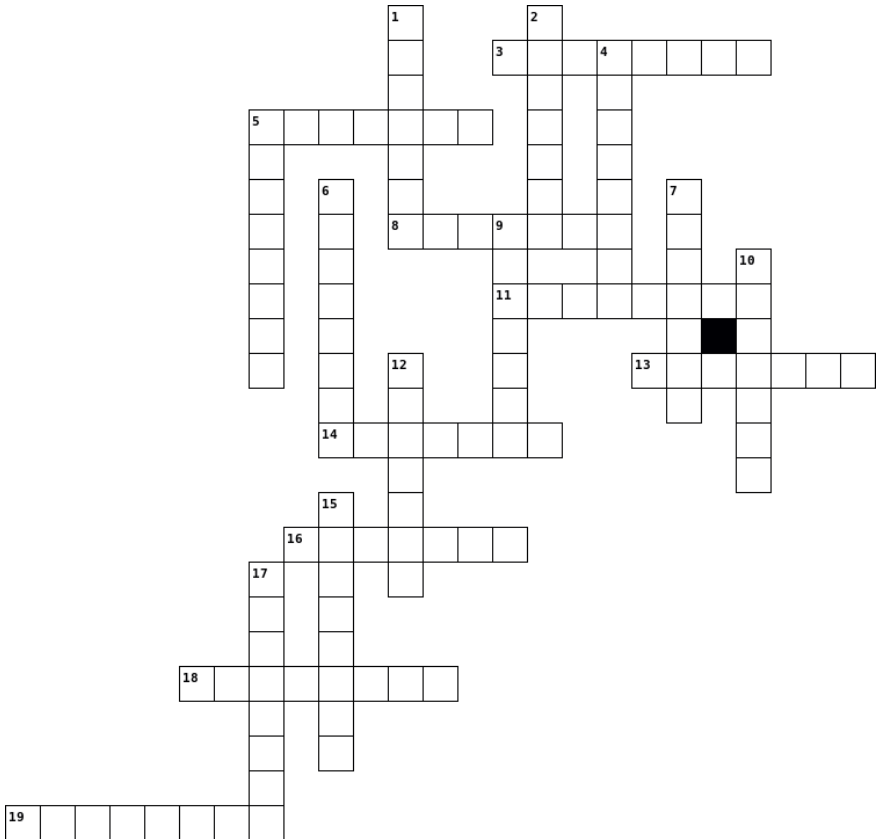
4)



Anagram criss-cross

by Rustom Deboo

The answer to each clue given below is the anagram of the clue, valid in Scrabble:



Across

- 3) CRIMPER
- 5) MEGARON
- 8) TOTALED
- 11) MANURING
- 13) AILMENT
- 14) MOORMEN
- 16) BOLTING
- 18) INCISURE
- 19) DELIMITS

Down

- 1) LENTORS
- 2) COOLANT
- 4) TAILORED
- 5) MARTINIS
- 6) IMPILORES
- 7) OVARIAL
- 9) HURRIED
- 10) AGEMATE
- 12) UNSPENT
- 15) PROCLAIM
- 17) MISHEARS

Coming soon: MyWord.live

by Charles Carneiro



A few Scrabble lovers have been working on a collaborative, web-based project over the last few months. It is not meant to replace anything that already exists but intends to work with individuals and associations and bring everything together where it would make sense. Called *MyWord.live*, it is a live, free-to-access and ad-free platform with resources, games, puzzles, guides, training and live contests for trivia and English-language word-game lovers everywhere and anytime!

The vision of MyWord.live is...

- 1)** That mind sports like Scrabble, Boggle and word-based trivia games reach the same levels of respect, recognition and success as chess and poker.
- 2)** That everyone in the ecosystem works together towards a common purpose rather than independently or counter-productively.
- 3)** To unleash the full potential of these games to improve language, communication, and analytic, risk-

management and decision-making skills among school-aged kids, employees in organisations and individuals around the world.

All proceeds from this project, raised through sponsors, will be used to fund prizes (for both contributors and participants), the running development of the site and future mind-related games including a section for local tournaments.

How can you help?

A password to the site will be shared among the Scrabble community in mid-July. We would love to have your feedback but more importantly, we would love to have you as a contributor. When the site gets launched to the world at large in August, we hope that you will become a part of it, actively contribute to it and promote it.

The target is to get 100+ contributors to collectively engage as many of the ten million+ word lovers out there.

SAI round-up

- **Rated online tournaments in May and June**

Following the success of the inaugural rated online tournament held on ISC in March, two further such tournaments were held in May and June respectively

on Woogles. Details about these rated tournaments can be found on page 24.

- **Introduction of rating system for online tournaments**

With the advent of the rated online tournaments, a new SAI online rating system, separate from the existing official SAI rating system for in-person tournaments, was devised by Rajiv Antao, SAI Secretary.

As stated in the email sent by Rajiv Antao to the SAI members on 13th June 2021, the question of whether it would have been fair to merge the ratings for online tournaments with the official SAI ratings was considered and put forth for feedback to the SAI members.

Based on the feedback from the members, it was thought prudent to keep the online ratings separate for the time being, considering the variables in an online game compared to an in-person game, notwithstanding the assurance of fair play offered by the monitoring system through OBS Ninja.

The online ratings can be viewed on the SAI website at indianscrabble.com/online-ratings.

- **SAI club room on Woogles**

With more and more players and tournament organisers starting to prefer the Woogles platform due to reasons of convenience, it was decided to create a SAI club room on Woogles with a view to encourage regular games between SAI members. The SAI club room can be accessed at woogles.io/club/sai.

- **SAI accreditation system**

The SAI accreditation system, which envisages awarding titles to consistent performers in rated tournaments, is an idea developed by Vraj Jain, with assistance from Rahil Parkar and Aditya Iyengar. A detailed article on the system can be found on page 22.

New members

The following members were welcomed into SAI in the last three months:

1. **Prerna Pandey** (Bangalore) is originally from Lucknow and currently an IT professional in Bangalore. She has always liked playing Scrabble since she was a child. She got further glued

to Scrabble during the multiple lockdowns and has been loving every moment of it.

2. **Vihaan Singhvi** (Jaipur) is ten years old and decided to give online Scrabble a try during the lockdown last year, encouraged by his aunt and well-known Scrabbler Nidhi Singhvi. He got hooked to the game quickly, showing great initiative to learn and remember new words and observe games.
3. **Shaheer Farooq** (Bangalore)
4. **Amrita Dasgupta** (Gurgaon) likes to create stories with places, spaces, images, and words. An architect, visual designer, and educator, she is also a hugger of people and trees and loves to cook, travel and read. She started playing Scrabble with her grandfather and mother when she was six years old and is learning to juggle the pros and cons of recreational and competitive Scrabble.
5. **Bhawani Cheerath** (Trivandrum) is a freelance journalist and bilingual translator who was introduced to Scrabble as a schoolgirl on rainy days when playing outdoors was not possible. As

luck would have it, the Scrabble board became a permanent fixture in her house after marriage. She became familiar with online Scrabble during the lockdown and has taken the baby steps with a lot of handholding from Hema Shah and Archana Aggarwal.

6. **KT Rajagopalan** (Trivandrum) has been a banker by profession for 32 years. His hobbies include quizzing, reading, writing, playing chess and Scrabble, and solving puzzles. He has been playing Scrabble for five decades, but for better vocabulary than for scores. He is part of a small group of like-minded senior citizens in his city, who, until Covid intervened, used to meet every Friday evening for games.
7. **Shaila Amalean** (Colombo, Sri Lanka) is a homemaker and has been playing Scrabble for the past 36 years. She has represented Sri Lanka at the World Scrabble Championship three times. She stopped playing in 2017, but recently resumed playing casually again and is thoroughly enjoying the online lockdown tournaments organised by SAI and ARFS.

In memoriam

Vandana Grover was a much-admired economics teacher at Loreto Convent in Delhi and an integral part of the Scrabble Association of Delhi NCR.



‘Compassionate and thoughtful’

With long, flowing silver-grey tresses and large eyes with a hint of mischief, Vandana had a dreamy quality about her. She also had a sharp, agile mind and was a wonderful raconteur, particularly when it came to stories about animals. Above all, she was kind.

Compassionate and thoughtful, Vandana always found something good about everyone and was generous in both her assessments and action.

Her love of animals was intense: she adored her five cats and knew their moods, temperaments, likes, and dislikes. She loved trees and plants, and her spirit thrived when she was in beautiful, natural spaces.

Noise, arguments, and stress were anathema to her spirit. She sought and actively embodied serenity, kindness, love, peace, harmony, and beauty. The world is a darker place without her light. Shine on, Vandana. You are deeply missed.

(by Ela Ghose)

‘A lover of animals’

I first met Vandana a couple of years ago and true to her persona, she took me in her fold effortlessly. Never did I feel like a new member of the Scrabble group in her presence. We often played on weekends, and she would always give me a tip or two or teach me a new word.

Between our online games we always had some conversation and if she won by a whisker, the love and warmth of her disposition would pour out of that mundane electronic medium and reach your heart.

Her love of animals always amazed me. I asked her once why she would have five cats as pets, and she replied: *“Do you know that cats absorb the negative energies of human beings?”*

One does not come across people like her often. She was a precious jewel, and her aura diffused all over.

(by Shalini Sahdev)

‘A real bibliophile’

I first got to know Vandana a few years ago through our shared passion for Scrabble. What struck me about her the first time I met her was her warmth, the aura of genuine goodness that she seemed to possess, her great diction, and her brilliant command over the English language. A bunch of us Scrabble enthusiasts – Vandana, Ela, Shalini, Siddharth, and I – would meet over weekends in Gurgaon to play the game we loved.

I discovered that Vandana was a real bibliophile. Her favourite author was Daphne du Maurier. She even went to Cornwall in England for a holiday to see what kind of life her favourite author lived. Seeing Vandana’s passion for reading, I invited her to join the book club in my Gurgaon condominium, The Icon. She readily agreed.

Vandana was extremely encouraging when I launched my debut book. She took the time out to read it, gave an incredibly positive review, discussed the book with me at length, and was encouraging in every way possible!

It is indeed a huge loss for me, for the entire Scrabble community in Delhi NCR and India, and for all the people whose lives she touched with her genuine goodness! With a heavy heart, but with a smile on my face, I will always remember this dear friend who brought so much happiness, calmness, and warmth into our lives!

(by Akshay Hiremath)

‘A source of motivation’

I became friends with Vandana in 2019 when I joined the Gurgaon Scrabble group. These Scrabble sessions were always lively and fun with Vandana around. In my initial days of Scrabble, she coached me with tips, constantly pushed me to learn the twos and threes, and practise the common bingos. She rooted for my victory in every tournament and was a constant source of motivation.

Vandana was among the kindest persons that I have come across in my life. She appreciated life, the company of friends and found immense joy in the smallest of things. She could not participate in the 2019 GAIL Cup, but dropped by on the last day to meet everyone. She was thrilled when she got to play a game with Sherwin (who was already Gibsonised); it made her day. On another occasion, she was overjoyed to receive a dartboard as a surprise gift from Sunny for showing improvement in a tournament.

The best times that we spent together were during our trip to Lonavala for WSL 2019. She was initially unsure of joining for the tournament because of a commitment at school, but to my utter joy, she was able to join us at the last minute and also found a spot for herself in the same team as mine.

She introduced me to Vincent van Gogh’s paintings and Russian art. I am glad that earlier this year, we exchanged gifts via courier for our birthdays and did not wait for the pandemic to get over, because that is when I had my last conversation with

her. She gifted me diaries with van Gogh paintings on the covers.

My memories of Vandana are etched forever. Being friends with her, I learnt to celebrate the little things in life, spreading positivity and love.

(by Siddharth Nithyanand)

‘Generous with her words’

Vandana was one of the nicest and kindest persons I had the privilege of knowing, and a dear friend ever since we first met and played against each other at the GAIL Cup, Delhi in 2018.

In that first game, I played DIA-LECTS through a C, which made the difference in a close encounter. Since then, she always remembered this word whenever the possibility of a C bingo arose during our games.

In November 2019, we happened to be in the same team at the WSL in Lonavala, and it was a highly memorable and enjoyable experience.

We easily connected over many enriching conversations, and she was always generous with her words. She will be cherished and remembered as a compassionate and largehearted person by everyone who had the pleasure of knowing her.

(by Rustom Deboo)

Mazhar Qureshi was a long-time Scrabbler and a regular participant at tournaments across the country.



‘A philosopher and a guide’

I knew Mazhar since 1981. Not only were we colleagues, working for Saudi Aramco, but also good friends. I was just a couple of days senior to him in Saudi Aramco. The day he joined; we instantly struck an excellent rapport.

He was a philosopher and guide to me, and also my Scrabble guru. When I showed an inclination to learn Scrabble, he invited me to his residence and explained the rules of the game. We started playing, and for the next three months, he used to beat me in three games every day and bid adieu with an invitation to come back the following day for more games.

His domination in our games was the talk of the town – mutual friends and Scrabble enthusiasts would chuckle and have a hearty laugh, enquiring about how many games I lost that day. But gradually, I picked up the game, and now, the Scrabble enthusiasts would not miss an opportunity to poke fun at Mazhar, saying that ‘how come the student beat the guru’.

It was with a sincere and broad smile that Mazhar used to acknowledge my improvement and victories, and tell the others: *“Kya kare yaaro, kabhi kabhi shagird ustad se aage nikal jata hai”* (What can you do friends, sometimes a student surpasses and outwits the master).

This was one of the greatest compliments any mentee could receive from his mentor. That was Mazhar – an extraordinary person, many things moulded in one. He was also a gourmet par excellence. I will always remember and cherish the bygone good old days spent together.

He was a multi-faceted and an exceptionally talented friend with a robust personality, and above all, an extremely caring and generous soul. He will be dearly missed by the Scrabble community.

(by Abid Hussain)

Shafique Ahmed was a Scrabblor from Chittagong, Bangladesh, and a regular fixture at the annual international tournament in Bangalore.



‘A true gentleman’

Shafique was a true gentleman and a great enthusiast of Scrabble. About 30 years ago, I was not aware of online games on ISC. He was the one who created my ISC account and coined the handle that I am using.

His passion was so great that he travelled to attend several iGate (later Capgemini) tournaments in Bangalore. He hardly won any prize money but winning or losing was not his concern. He always had a smile on his face even while losing and believed that one should not get too excited in victory and not lose heart in defeat.

Indeed, we lost a great enthusiast and ambassador of Scrabble.

(by Abid Hussain)

‘A source of inspiration’

I remember Shafique as a highly enthusiastic and genial Scrabble player who travelled from Bangladesh to Bangalore to participate in tournaments year after year.

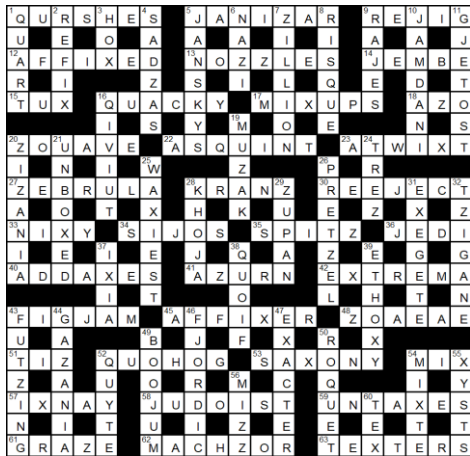
We used to discuss at length about Scrabble in Bangladesh and other matters. He was a source of inspiration to many youths in Bangladesh.

The last time we met in January 2018, he had invited me to visit his country for tourism and also to have a few games of Scrabble. Unfortunately, that chance never came! He will be sorely missed, especially during the Bangalore tournaments.

(by Cecil Fernandes)

Solutions to puzzles and quizzes

SAI Crossword #002



Find the best play

1



Three best moves:

1F – DEIONI(Z)e(D) – 107

1F – DeIONI(Z)E(D) – 107

06 – IONIZED – 84

2



Three best moves:

15A – NONGU(I)l(T)S – 83

15A – GUNpO(I)N(T)S – 77

9D – IOUN(GI)NGS – 61

3



Three best moves:

O1 – ElUCI(DATES) – 45 (MV)

N2 – ErUVIM – 33 (C)

15F – CIVE – 32 (MU?)

4



Three best moves:

O8 – SENNITS – 107

O5 – SINNETS – 96

15H – SINNETS – 86

Anagram Criss-cross

Across:

3) SCRIMPER, 5) MARENGO,
8) TOADLET, 11) UNARMING,
13) ALIMENT, 14) MONOMER,
16) BILTONG, 18) SCIURINE,
19) LIMITEDS

Down:

1) LORNEST, 2) OCTANOL,
4) IDOLATER, 5) MISTRAIN,
6) PELORISM, 7) VARIOLA,
9) DHURRIE, 10) AGAMETE,
12) PUNNETS, 15) PICLORAM,
17) MARISHES

Endgame Extra: Know about the World Championships of Scrabble

- The first World Scrabble Championship (WSC) for English-language Scrabble was held in London in 1991, featuring 48 players. It was played every two years until 2013 before becoming an annual affair in 2014. The first player to represent India at the WSC was Mohan Chunkath in the 1999 edition in Melbourne, where he finished 21st out of 98 players. In 2007, the WSC was played in India, at the Taj President Hotel in Mumbai.
- In addition to the WSC, a WESPA Championship (WESPAC) has been organised every two years since 2015. India's Akshay Bhandarkar, representing Bahrain, won the 2017 edition in Nairobi, while the 2019 edition was hosted by India, at the Peddem Sports Complex in Goa.
- Not surprisingly, Nigel Richards, the GOAT (Greatest of All Time) of Scrabble, has been the most successful player at the WSC. The New Zealander has won the title a record five times (2007, 2011, 2013, 2018 and 2019), and the WESPAC in 2019 as well. He has also won the French World Championships multiple times, despite not speaking French!

Ratings

Below are the SAI top 80 as on 30th June 2021. To view the full rankings, please visit indianscrabble.com.

	Name	Club	Rating	Games
1	Sherwin Rodrigues	MUM	1869	1540
2	Eeshan Malhotra	MUM	1809	451
3	Akshay Bhandarkar	OSI	1806	540
	Irfan Siddiqui	OS	1743	314
4	Goutham Jayaraman	OSI	1732	461
5	Ralph Lobo	OSI	1695	218
6	Udayan Grover	PUN	1682	1878
7	Mohan Chunkath	CHN	1681	1086
8	Nakul Prabhu	MUM	1673	1526
9	Ranganathan Chakrav	CHN	1648	935
10	Aditya Iyengar	PUN	1637	522
11	Varisht Hingorani	MUM	1601	1197
12	Sanjoy Gupta	BLR	1597	1261
13	Samrath Singh Bhatia	MUM	1596	832
14	Charles Carneiro	OSI	1587	787
15	Rajveer Rawlin	BLR	1572	494
16	Nidhi Singhvi	OSI	1558	950
17	Prashanth Seetharam	OSI	1552	369
	Puneet Sharma	OS	1549	170
18	Mohsin Ahmed	BLR	1537	264
	Michael Tang	OS	1534	434
19	Rahil Parkar	MUM	1521	561
20	Douglas Lobo	GOA	1510	1397
21	Sunny Bhatia	DEL	1497	984
22	Irineu Gonsalves	GOA	1495	998
23	A Krishnan	CHN	1464	513
24	Manju Sood	BLR	1428	829
25	Jose de Abreu	MUM	1426	931
26	Selwyn Lobo	OSI	1420	251
27	Mangala Bhandarkar	PUN	1419	1490
28	Vraj Jain	MUM	1411	568
29	Pramit Kamath	DEL	1394	473
30	Hriday Samtani	MUM	1392	503
31	Sudhir Kamath	DEL	1391	891
32	Carolann Pais	MUM	1387	1592
33	Bhushan Pradhan	MUM	1382	1766
34	Yash Potnis	BLR	1360	529
35	Anuj Shetty	BLR	1356	284
36	Shaik Ahmed	HYD	1350	1694
37	Mehul Arora	DEL	1332	264
38	Amit Sood	PUN	1328	368
39	Madhav Gopal Kamath	DEL	1327	508
40	Rajeev Menon	HYD	1324	701
41	Sanjay Bijlani	MUM	1292	510
	Rohaina Tanveer	OS	1288	520
42	Cecil Fernandes	OSI	1275	464

	Name	Club	Rating	Games
43	Ishika S	BLR	1272	191
44	Dipankar Chatterjee	BLR	1268	509
45	Pankaj Bolaki	BLR	1256	223
46	Sridhar Paidikondala	HYD	1243	793
47	Lennie D'Souza	BLR	1236	1189
48	Vedika Hingorani	MUM	1229	589
49	V Ramachandran	MUM	1194	1281
50	Neelam Agrawal	BLR	1186	306
51	Kala Ganesh	MUM	1185	1101
52	Rajiv Antao	GOA	1183	993
53	Radhika Mahalingaiah	BLR	1180	875
54	Sumeet Sachdev	MUM	1179	469
55	R Nalini	BLR	1172	876
56	Nupur Sood	BLR	1171	557
57	Rehet Singh Bhatia	MUM	1166	839
58	Brian D'Souza	MUM	1151	210
59	Meena Bakhr	PUN	1147	350
60	Suchindra Potnis	BLR	1136	328
61	Marie Fernandes	OSI	1132	512
62	Siddarth Raman	BLR	1123	388
63	Rustom Deboo	MUM	1122	356
64	Arindam Basu	KOL	1118	350
65	Abid Hussain	BLR	1110	252
66	Krtin Juneja	MUM	1107	426
67	Karthik Ganesan	DEL	1100	185
68	Shubha S	BLR	1093	251
69	Mazhar Qureshi	MUM	1092	472
70	Hyder Quraishi	HYD	1085	1346
71	PC Jose	MUM	1074	1383
72	Alan DeMello	MUM	1060	154
73	Nikheel Ruparel	MUM	1059	929
74	Hemanth Achaya	BLR	1058	267
75	Nitya Chagti	DEL	1054	123
76	Priya Karkhanis	PUN	1050	597
77	Jacky Fernandes	GOA	1040	957
78	Sujana Somasekar	BLR	1040	276
79	Suyash Manchali	BLR	1036	198
80	Joe Rodrigues	GOA	1031	976

Key:

BLR – Bangalore (KSSA)

CHN – Chennai

DEL – Delhi

GOA – Goa

HYD – Hyderabad

KOL – Kolkata

MUM – Mumbai

PUN – Pune

OSI – Indian national residing overseas

OS – Overseas foreign player (no rank)

Erratum (March 2021): The club for Irineu Gonsalves was incorrectly mentioned as DEL instead of GOA



ENDGAME

Let us know your feedback

What did you like about this edition of Endgame? What would you like to see more of in future editions? Would you like to contribute content for the next edition? Do you have any suggestions for improvement? We await your valuable feedback and submissions, which you can send across to indianscrabble@gmail.com.

About SAI

The Scrabble Association of India (SAI) is the apex governing body for Scrabble players in India and oversees the organisation and conduct of several tournaments in the country. It maintains a tournament rating system for every SAI-rated tournament and accords a SAI rating to all its members. It is affiliated to the WESPA (World English-Language Scrabble Players Association), the global body that oversees the competitive English-language Scrabble scene throughout the world.

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If you are a Scrabble enthusiast or know someone who is, we welcome you to join SAI. Becoming a SAI member is easy. All you need to do is visit the SAI website and apply for membership at indianscrabble.com/join-us/. You can either become a life member or an annual member. We invite Scrabble lovers of all ages to join us.

Contact us

For details about Indian Scrabble, you can visit our website at indianscrabble.com.

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