

ENDGAME

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SCRABBLE
ASSOCIATION OF INDIA



Ishika Shivalingaiah after her remarkable win at the Pune All-India Open

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- **Ishika prevails in Pune**
- **Irfan's charge towards 773**
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Foreword

Dear Members,

Yet another Scrabble-filled year is gathering steam, and there was no better way to flag it off than the KSSA Indian Open in Bangalore over the Republic Day weekend, which saw close to 140 players indulge in a bountiful Scrabble bonanza. India's premier international tournament lived up to its billing, as did India's foremost Scrabbler Sherwin Rodrigues, who clinched the title after four days of battle in an intense field. Spread across four divisions, the tournament saw participants of various levels and age groups compete under one roof, bound by a singular pursuit.

The third week of March saw the second edition of the Pune All-India Open, at which Ishika Shivalingaiah produced a dominant display to win her first major title. The next three months are set to feature the return of the Goa All-India Open after a gap of four years, followed by the 23rd edition of the National Championship in Mumbai. With new contenders fast emerging to challenge the old guard, these upcoming tournaments promise to headline an exciting summer of Scrabble.

Endgame completed two years on 30th March, and as it enters its third year, here's wholeheartedly thanking everyone who has contributed towards shaping it into the definitive chronicle of Indian Scrabble, capturing the quantifiable (the facts and figures) as well as the unquantifiable (the experiences and memories) aspects of the game in the country. Looking forward to more of the same in the editions to come.

May the words keep flowing!

Best wishes,

Rustom Deboo
Editor



‘Will keep smiling thinking about this win’

*Fresh from her triumph at the Pune All-India Open, which catapulted her into the top five in the all-India rankings just a little over four years after playing her first tournament, **Ishika Shivalingaiah** relives for Endgame a few highlights of a win that reflects her meteoric rise:*

Her feeling at winning the first 12 games in a row... and at being Gibsonised with three games to spare...

Twelve in a row was a streak I had never achieved, and it was the most awesome thing ever – so much so that I began to get used to it and felt miserable about losing the 13th game! I would partly blame myself for that, as I went into it thinking I might lose, as it was too good to be true and luck couldn't side with me for so long.

While I did back myself to come good in this tournament, the sheer thrill of winning it with three rounds to spare was on a different level altogether. It was too exhilarating to sink in at that moment – and it still is! I look at the seasoned players, the world champs, and often wonder how they maintain that calm consistency on their face and be so modest about their wins – now I realise how hard it can be!

But I absolutely keep smiling thinking about this win, and will keep doing so even if I drop on the rating charts over the next few months. Enjoying the ride while it lasts, as someone asked me to! It does make me a bit nervous that expectations would go

up now, but since that isn't going to help much, I guess I'm just trying to bask in the glory for now!

On what clicked for her through the tournament, and the aspects she got right there...

The last few months of study have been focussed towards my goal of learning the top 10,000 highest probable sevens and eights. I'm not certain if that was what helped, but I definitely think it was a much better approach than me spending time learning some of the interesting lower probability sevens during my early days in 2019. I do know that if I need to get to the next level, at some point I'll need to start mastering it all, but this win showed me the importance of getting the high probability lists right.

With Scrabble heavily dependent on memory power and the ability to recall, I have also begun to embrace the power of the subconscious mind, which my husband always preaches. At the same time, I also believe that overconfidence can be your biggest downfall – whether it's looking at just a game in isolation or a tournament. Understanding this fine line has gone a long way in maintaining control and composure during my games.

I would like to share a few stats. I played a total of 50 bingos in 19 games, 37 of which were the high probables (considering all within the top 10,000 sevens and eights) and only 13 were low probables. Of these 13, only one was a studied bingo –

QUIETIVE, while the rest were all common words. As the name itself suggests, higher probability bingos do appear on your rack more often.



Five bingos from Ishika, including the four-timer EVERSION, en route to a 613-370 win over Aditya Iyengar

Of the 37 high probables, only five or six were words I would've known naturally; the rest were among those I have studied over the years. A few examples – THORNSET, ACIERATE, ANTIGENE, FROUNCE, AEMULED, TABRERE, ETATISTE, SEROTINY and even easier ones like SOSATIE and GITANOS, which I would never have known if not for Scrabble.

Did I pick well? Did I get lucky? Well, time will tell. However, longer word plays, better tile turnover, and an optimal rack balance leading to early bingos definitely helped pick the goodies in the bag. I did have an opening blank in two of the 19 games.

Over the course of the tournament, I picked exactly one blank in nine games (two of which were spent in short words in the endgame), both blanks in eight games (in three of those games, I had both blanks together, implying they were used up in a single bingo), and no blanks in two games. However, the three games I lost were the ones where I picked at least one blank. Go figure!

Her most memorable games from the tourney...

I'd like to recall two of my games, both against Aditya Iyengar – I knew facing him would be a task, more so to get over the mental block after being thrashed by him five times last year, including thrice in a row at the GAIL Cup. As it turned out, the first one was a write-off for him. I picked well and cashed in on his rare errors.

The 613-370 scoreline was a huge confidence booster for me given his seeding. This was the last game of the first day, and it felt great to end the day unbeaten in this fashion. I had five bingos, one of which was a double-double, while he had two. Three further plays of close to 50 each sealed the whopping spread.

The second game I played with him was more balanced. It included six bingos (four by me), well distributed heavies, blanks and Ss, a nine-timer, and also a ten-letter word! It all came down to who would bingo first at a crucial stage – if it were me, I would have ended up opening the nine-timer lane when he had a blank and a potential nine-timer, and vice versa,

as the bag looked quite promising. I was lucky that he bingoed first, which opened up the nine-timer for me.



*An epic high scorer – Ishika 561-492
Aditya, with the nine-timer RANGIEST*

We will continue to wonder if his move was the right one, given he had the last blank and there was pretty much just one easy spot left, which I opened up. I think it was the right move, but it came down to fortune favouring me once again with the ALIENOR rack, while he picked the FLXVCUL combination from the bag. The game may have gone either way had we had a balanced set of clunky tiles. The final score was 561-492 in my favour, which was also the highest combined score of the tournament.

Being the top ranked female player in the country, her message for all the women wanting to take up competitive Scrabble and get better at it...

When Karen Richards congratulated me and specifically said that the

Scrabble world needs more women to win major tournaments, I was truly proud and inspired. It's nice to drive home the point for a few women and budding girls out there, that it's not at all impossible. Is it harder? Maybe, as I do believe that it is often all about priorities for most women, and our DNA and culture makes it a challenge to have Scrabble high on that list.

The important thing is, this is not a race where we are competing with our male counterparts. There is not much point in keeping track, but we should celebrate such wins regardless – it is a big deal in some ways. Strive for it, and feel proud when you achieve it!

Endgame Extra: Know Ishika's 50 bingos at the Pune tourney

High probability bingos (37)

ACIERATE, AEMULED, AIRBASE, ALIENORS, ANTIGENE, ATTORNS, BEARING, BARONETS, CLARIES, DOGTAILS, ECHOIER, EMPORIA, ENACTING, ETATISTE, EVERSION, FIGURES, FROISES, FROUNCE, GITANOS, LIATRIS, NAUSEATE, ORBITING, RANDIEST, RANGIEST, RESENTED, ROUTINES, SEALINES, SEMINAR, SEROTINY, SERRANO, SOSATIE, TABRERE, THORNSET, TIERING, TRIGONS, UNWISER, VENTIGE

Low probability bingos (13)

BURSTING, DERAYED, GUTTERS, KITCHENS, OLYMPIAD, OUTLAWS, PALETTES, QUIETIVE, RECHOSE, REPLACE, SPONSOR, SUNDER, UNFILLED

The 773! The 289! ZIPLOCKS!

It was a pleasure putting into the written word the vivid account shared by Irfan Siddiqui for Endgame through voice notes about his incredible, once-in-a-lifetime game at the KSSA Indian Open 2023 in Bangalore (text by Rustom Deboo)

Going into the last game (round 18) of the second day at the KSSA Indian Open 2023, I was not exactly enjoying a good run, having won only four of the eight games played in the day. In just the previous game, I had been soundly beaten by 118 points by the 13-year-old prodigy Suyash Manchali, who I feel displayed not just great improvement in the tournament, but also set an example with his humility, sportsmanship and youthful spirit.

Round 18 saw me pitted against Jayaska Baranage of Sri Lanka. My first rack was a no-brainer – I chose the slightly aggressive ELATION for 66 points at 8F instead of TOENAIL.

Jayaska got back immediately with F(L)OORPAN for 69 (+5) at G7, which I thought was a great find, as on first glance, such a rack would seldom appear to be a bingo-friendly one. While I was reasonably sure of its validity, I gave him the extra five points.

My next rack was AIINOYU. Ideally, you would like to play off a few vowels (including one of the Is) for maintaining rack balance, which was not quite possible here for a good score. Hence, I went for score, getting 33 for YOU at F10.

After Jayaska replied with OH for 24 at E11 (while also creating a tempting spot to place W on the DWS as a front hook to HUP), I spotted the only available bingo, playing MINIA(T)ES for 65 at I3. Likewise, he had a pretty straightforward bingo of his own, hooking ELATION with ALIENOR for 72 at E2 to inch ahead by six points.

My next rack was DEFIJLZ, and I played FJELD at D1, scoring 58 and retaining the Z. Jayaska's MYC at H13 fetched him 39, leaving the scoreline at 222-209 in my favour. My rack at this point was looking nowhere close to what it would soon evolve into. I don't think anyone, with any amount of clairvoyance, would have been able to predict the events arising out of the next couple of moves!

With my rack being CIIKOQZ, opting for the simple QI for 44 at H4 was logical. Even though my rack was far from being bingo-friendly, I knew I would be scoring at least 35 in the next move. With consistent scoring opportunities available, my spirits were high. As Jayaska was to tell me later, his rack was AEIINP? at that stage. As it turned out, he missed PIs(C)INAE with FLOORPANs at 15B, and seemingly overlooked the possibility of (P)RELATION too.

Instead, for some reason, he played PAIN (ironically!) for 24 at J1. I was now leading 266-233. He took a lot of time for this move, which gave me a good opportunity to form and gather the thoughts in my head. My rack

read CIKLOSZ, and much before the P arrived on the board, I had thought about the possibility of ZI(P)LOCKS. But truth be told, I had just been dreaming, not expecting in the slightest for it to become a reality – certainly not in the predestined spot!

I was looking elsewhere on the board, figuring out possibilities of getting a cute 35-pointer. There are times when you expect to an extent, when you yearn for a certain letter, say an N or an R, to float in the way you want.

However, in this instance, I didn't realistically wish for a P at all, given the sheer unlikelihood – it would have been the stuff of the wildest of my dreams! Nevertheless, the stars aligned and I knew my moment had come. As PAIN was being played, I couldn't believe my eyes. With the board still facing towards Jayaska, I plonked ZI(P)LOCKS down on 1H, stretching all the way till 1O.

I literally went numb as I placed the tiles. When I was about to press the clock, I had a moment of panic as I doubted whether I had put the word correctly. I turned the board around to my side, had a look at the surreal play, and only after I was assured, did I finally press the clock. He held, but it was more out of desperation. As for the points, I just couldn't calculate as my brain was frozen, and I had to multiply the numbers on a piece of paper like a kid.

Twenty-six times nine plus 50, plus five. Once I managed to overcome the initial shock, I assured myself that 289 was indeed what I got for the

move, which rocketed my score straight to a hefty 550. To be honest, I was not thinking of a high game at this point, even though there were a good chunk of unseen tiles, including both the blanks. For whatever reason, I didn't anticipate to reach the score I finally amassed. I was still absorbing the nine-timer, as this sort had been a personal dream for a long time.

Prior to this, I don't think I had ever crossed even 160 for a nine-timer, whether in a tournament game or in a friendly. Incidentally, the evening before, while discussing high games with my friend and fellow Scrabbler Danish Shahna, I had mentioned that while I had crossed 600 in a game a fair number of times, I had not come close to touching the mark of 700 yet.

Coming back to the game, Jayaska chose to play (S)EAGIRTS* on O1 next. I put him on hold, recollecting instantly that at least one of the words in the AEGIRTS rack doesn't take an S at the back. As I had rightly expected, the word came off (much to his surprise, which was fair enough, as SEAGIRT doesn't look like a word that won't be having a plural – but the fact is that it is an adjective), and it was a proud moment for me in the game. Many years back, Selwyn Lobo had told me about the importance of knowing whether a word takes an S or not, and I strongly advocate the same.

I cashed in more with U(N)DULATE for 66 at L7 to carry my score past 600. Admittedly, I was more excited at the spread I would get, rather than the score itself. Jayaska bingoed with (S)ERInGAS for 77 on O1, after which

I took advantage of the HUP spot on the board to make WAGE for 42 at D12, my rack being ADEEGNW and my intention being maximising the score with a semblance of balance. Also, the possibility of UNDULATED made me retain the D.

Trailing by 353, Jayaska opened the board with BAR(F) for 27 at 1A. My rack of DDEENOS at that point looked quite promising and I realised another bingo at this point could possibly give me a shot at 800! I hooked UNDULATE with DONE on 15L, which gave me a handy 38 after being challenged to bolster my score to 701.

Following his VIB(E) for 15A for 27, I utilised the X that I had just drawn for T(EL)EX for 40 at 3C and he inched past 400 with REWTH for 39 at M3. My last rack of DEERSTV yielded two bingos, but neither were playable. I settled for (JA)DE for 32 at 2D, bringing my final score to 773.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
1	B	A	R	F				Z	I	P	L	O	C	K	S
2				J	A	D	E		A						E
3			T	E	L	E	X		M	I			R		R
4				L	I			Q	I	N			E		I
5				D	E			I	N				W		n
6					N				I				T		G
7						O		F		A			U	H	A
8					R	E	L	A	T	I	O	N			S
9						O		E			D				
10						Y	O		S			U			
11						O	O	R						l	
12				W	H	U	P						A		
13				A				A	M				T		
14				G				N	Y			T	E	G	U
15	V	I	B	E				C					D	O	N

The final board: 773-436

Jayaska went out with TEGU for 17 at 14K, and with 16 off my rack, finished at 436. The combined total was a whopping 1209, a mere five points less than the record for a senior WESPA-rated tournament game.

After Quackling this game, I realised that I had played a near perfect game, which only enhanced my joy. The only sub-optimal play was the last one, where R(E)VE on 2F instead would have given me a higher spread. Given that I had nearly 17 minutes still remaining, I should have looked harder to spot the optimal play. Nevertheless, I felt proud that I had played a mathematically correct game – something that I always strive for – and that for me was the biggest takeaway from this incredible contest, making it the best game of my life.

A lot of things conspired together in my favour in this game – none more so than the rather confounding play of PAIN. But then, that is the beauty of Scrabble – kudos to Jayaska for graciously taking it on the chin with a smile. As I conclude this summary, I would sincerely like to thank all those who shared in my happiness by congratulating me and sending their good wishes – you know who you are!

The aggregate of 1209 between Irfan and Jayaska is the second highest in a senior WESPA-rated game, behind 1213 between David Webb (711) and Bob Violet (502) at the 2019 Malta Open. Irfan's 773 is the second best score at a WESPA-rated tournament played in India, just behind 775 by Gitonga Nderitu at WESPAC 2019.

A few boards from the KSSA Indian Open

by Rajveer Rawlin

Here are a few of my game boards from the recent KSSA Indian Open:



My opening game, against India's best – missed DENTIST with a blank in the first move, and YETTIES in the next. Soon found myself down by 100, but came back with ANTISERA, TWIGLETS, and QIGONG to secure an unlikely 453-398 win (above).



The next game was dominated by my opponent, who had the excellent plays of AXILLAE and OTTOMAN for an easy 535-378 win (above).

Up against one of India's young guns, I built a good lead and clinched it with FOREHAND, 431-382 (below).



A game in which I lead throughout; two satisfying plays of SIMILOR and QUERIDAS saw me through 433-394 (above).



A very close encounter, with my suboptimal play of US/JAGS instead of QUAY/US costing me the game 373-375 (above).



I was pretty lucky in this one, having started with AZURITE for 107. Kept

up the lead throughout, eventually winning 532-400 (above).

Got a bit greedy in this one trying a four-timer; had OPER* challenged off even as FARRENS was valid. Trailed by a bingo, but came back well with STEARINE, ABOIDEAU, and SEAMIER to take it 448-382 (below).



Overall, it was a decent tournament for me after a hiatus, as I went 9-4 in my last 13 games to finish 13th in the top division – though I had a chance to finish in the top ten had I won my final game.

Rajveer Rawlin writes about the latest Scrabble news, games, puzzles and tournament buzz on his blog Scrabbling Away, which can be visited by competitive players and budding enthusiasts alike at the following link:
rajveerscrabble.blogspot.com/

As good as my words... a trip down memory lane!

by Neha Maheshwari

Scrabble is my first love, the one which is here to stay forever. Growing up, my life revolved around the game. My brother Vivek and I were once gifted a rotating Scrabble set from relatives who were visiting us from the USA. The grey Scrabble board, slender blue tile racks and the dark brown wooden tiles – we just could not stop staring at it. We were hooked to it from the word go!



A scoresheet from a childhood game, with my cherished board in the background

I grew up in the busiest part of Calcutta without much access to outdoor sports or public parks. We remained indoors after school and grew up with neighbours who were

like family. On late nights after 10 p.m., when the rest of the city slept, four of us – my brother, neighbours (Anshuman and Aditya Singh) and I took out our Scrabble set and played till the wee hours of the day. We did this day in and day out, for months and years.

When I did go to sleep, I remember dreaming of Scrabble boards and words. There were no phones back then – we kept a dictionary handy to check up the challenges. We kept a tally of the wins and played revenge matches when two players tied. On days when we played too much, our brains just froze and refused to work, but we kept on playing nonetheless.



Joys of Scrabble: A sketch by my brother Vivek Bihani, depicting our childhood Scrabble sessions

It felt sacrilegious to stop, until the time one of us could barely keep their eyes open or dozed off. I remember my brother challenging TWO in one such drowsy game. What a laugh we had on it! On some days we had another neighbourhood friend for company, who didn't like to play at all, but kept scores for us. He regaled us with jokes and cribbed when we started each new game, yet stayed on till the time we played.



From the archives: A report on the 2008 Statesman Scrabble Championship

The Statesman, a Calcutta-based newspaper, held an annual Scrabble tournament named the Statesman Scrabble Championship. It was held for about five or six years, and I played in it each year without fail. My friends from school and their siblings (who in turn brought their friends) participated as well. The Statesman gave out these amazing T-shirts with

the tagline 'Be as good as your words' and free food to all the participants.

The Statesman Championship was akin to a big fun fiesta lasting for three days, and I felt more than a tinge of sadness when it was stopped. In one of the editions, I met Ms. Flower Silliman, an octogenarian Jewish lady. She lived right across the street from my office. I worked half days on Saturdays, and on many such Saturdays after work, I excitedly crossed the street and went to her place, where we played game after game of Scrabble and munched on the amazing cookies she used to bake.



More from the archives: A report on the 2009 Statesman Scrabble Championship, capturing the enthusiasm of players across various age groups

I remain crazy as ever about Scrabble. My heart does a happy dance each time my kids pester me to play a few rounds of the game with them. And, that grey rotating Scrabble board, which witnessed a great part of my childhood and my life in Calcutta, remains my most prized possession till date.

A decade of delight

by Hriday Samtani

In tournament halls I entered, ten
years ago,
A world of words, a Scrabble family to
know.
Through ups and downs, through joy
and strife,
My love for the game grew, a passion
for life.



My Scrabble family, my saviours, my
guide,
They pulled me from darkness, one
tile at a time.
With each game won, my confidence
grew,
My demons faced, my fears subdued.



*The stuff dreams are made of – facing off
with the legendary Nigel Richards in 2019*

I've made dear friends, a gift beyond
measure,
A bond that's strong, a friendship to
treasure.
We've sat for hours, staring at the
board,
Always striving for the perfect word.

Two thousand nineteen, a year to
remember,
In Bengaluru, I fulfilled a dream to
endeavour.
Against Nigel Richards, a legend of
the game,
A gruelling match that lit my spirit
aflake.



*Engrossed in battle at the WESPAC
Indian Open in Goa in 2019 –
an enthralling experience*

The taste of triumph may have slipped away,
But the memories are etched, forever to stay.
For dreams are spun of moments such as these,
Of pushing boundaries and facing challenges with ease.

While the battle's fierce, we share the same ground,
Each match a homecoming, no rival to be found.
Our spirits unyielding, we play with all our might,
Comrades in arms, never giving up the fight.



Receiving the trophy for the inaugural Vandana Grover Memorial online tournament in March 2023 – a win to cherish for a lifetime

In my free time, I organised quizzes galore,
Giving back to the game I loved, and much more.
For nothing compares to the joy I feel inside,
When I see youngsters blossom, and their confidence glide.

And in the Vandana Grover memorial tourney,
I emerged victorious, my win sweet as honey.
A journey of self-discovery, a triumph over doubt,
My Scrabble adventure, a magical route.



With fellow players from the Mumbai Scrabble Club – a happy tribe

As I embrace the future with open arms,
Ready to face its challenges and charms.
A decade of Scrabble, memories galore,
I'm ready for more, for what's in store.

B positive: My experience at the KSSA Indian Open

by Arindam Basu

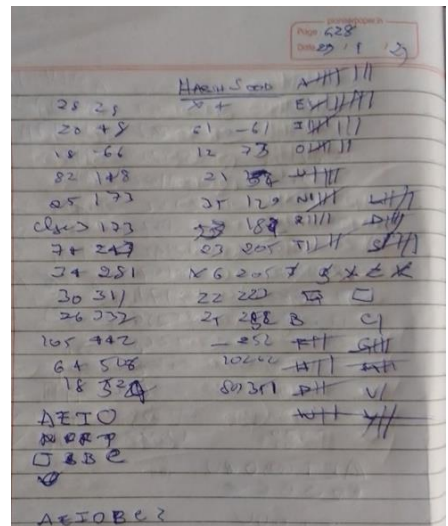
While winning my first tournament at the KSSA Indian Open (Division B) in Bengaluru was an intensely happy experience because I finally won a title in my 15th attempt, I was not surprised by a few mixed reactions from other players in the circuit, since they had assumed I would play up in Division A.

I did once cross the 1200 rating barrier, in the same city in January 2019 in what was my ninth tourney, but playing in the gruelling Division A in two successive tournaments – one each in Bengaluru and Delhi – later that year had brought me down to *terra firma* and below 1100.

While word knowledge and board strategy are clear differentiators between the two divisions, I was reminded of my lack of discipline in more fundamental aspects of the game, such as time management and tile tracking, and making sub-optimal plays including phoneys. In my experience, Division A ruthlessly punishes such fundamental errors.

Moreover, the pandemic had also forced me to take a hiatus of nearly three years from in-person tourneys. Therefore, reappearing in Division B of the GAIL Cup in Delhi last year and at the KSSA Indian Open this year was as much an exercise in getting reacquainted as it was in inculcating the discipline back in place.

To improve my time management and tile tracking, I started practising with my own scoresheet, which I successfully used for the first time at the KSSA Indian Open. It's kind of short, requiring lesser strokes of the pen and has a good visual appeal. The one from the 28th round on the final day is in the picture below. I use tally marks against letters (on the right side) that have been played, putting the set of vowels on top, the set of multi-point consonants at the bottom, and the power tiles and remaining letters in between.



As it happened, my opponent Harsh Sood went out with a golden bingo, AEROBIC, even though I ended up winning 524-351 (the board is in the picture below). I had the word written

down at the bottom of my scoresheet and had put his score down as well, while he was still contemplating the bingo. All of this was carried out within the stipulated time for the game – this disciplined approach towards time management was satisfying, to say the least.

But that necessarily didn't completely eliminate my penchant for phoneying (though reduced heavily) and going unchallenged.

To end this piece, I have two short quiz questions for readers who have read thus far.



Firstly, which is the only phoney on the board?

Secondly, my scoresheet isn't my original idea at all. I saw it at WESPAC 2019 at the table of which famous player?

(for answers, see the bottom of this page)

Endgame Extra: Know the 50 sevens and eights starting or ending with TIME

TIMEOUS, TIMEOUT,
TIMEBOMB, TIMECARD,
TIMELESS, TIMELIER, TIMELINE,
TIMEOUTS, TIMEPASS,
TIMEWORK, TIMEWORN

AIRTIME, ANYTIME, BEDTIME,
BIGTIME, CENTIME, DAYTIME,
LAYTIME, MISTIME, ONETIME,
PASTIME, RAGTIME, SEPTIME,

TEATIME, WARTIME,
CALLTIME, CHOWTIME,
DOWNTIME, FACETIME,
FLEXTIME, FORETIME,
GOODTIME, HALFTIME,
LIFETIME, LONGTIME,
MARITIME, MEALTIME,
MEANTIME, NOONTIME,
OVERTIME, PLAYTIME,
REALTIME, SEEDTIME,
SHIPTIME, SHOWTIME,
SOMETIME, TALKTIME,
TERMTIME, XENOTIME,
ZONETIME

Answer 1: *Keano* (only OAKEN is valid with these letters). It was my opening move for 28 points, which went unchallenged. To quote Mario Puzo in *The Godfather*... "*behind every fortune there is a crime*". Sorry, Harsh.

Answer 2: *Nigel Richards*. Saw it at his board in Goa. Nigel of course has the letters A to Z written vertically and alphabetically on the right side. I tweaked that to suit my positioning of letters in the order of vowels, power tiles and consonants. Thanx, Nigel.

Sri Lankan spark at the KSSA Indian Open



The Sri Lankan contingent at the KSSA Indian Open 2023 in Bangalore comprised nine players across three divisions: Jayaska Baranage, Shaila Amalean and Priya Fernando played in Division A; Farida Akbarally, Kumari Goonasekara, Wimal Fernando, Hema Abeyasinghe and Zora Wahab in Division B, and Percy Fernando in Division C.

‘Felt so much at home’

The tournament was organised so well and it was very smooth sailing. We felt so much at home with all the participants and the organisers. We were nine of us from Sri Lanka, and maybe next time we shall have more. The food was superb and the variety well thought of. Personally, I was happy with my performance at the tourney as I took home two medals!

~ **Farida Akbarally**

‘A super tournament’

It was a very well-organised tourney – the food was great, the players were friendly and the level of Scrabble very high. It was my first time playing in Division B, and I was happy to win a band prize. What was disappointing for me was that I had to really fight

for the games I won, winning by only a few points, while the games I lost were by big margins, giving me a very large negative spread. Anyway, better luck next time! Overall, it was a super tournament.

~ **Kumari Goonasekara**



The Sri Lankan presence at the KSSA Indian Open (left to right): Shaila Amalean, Wimal Fernando, Jayaska Baranage, Farida Akbarally, Hema Abeyasinghe, Percy Fernando, Kumari Goonasekara, Zora Wahab, and Priya Fernando

‘Fantastic journey of Scrabble’

I was an absolute novice coming into the KSSA Indian Open. I was awestruck at the level of Scrabble, and wondered if I had made the correct decision by taking part in the tournament. Despite that, it was a game-changer for me – a fantastic journey of Scrabble! The tiles are still ringing in my ears. Hope to see you next year as well!

~ **Zora Wahab**



Wearing her passion for Scrabble: Farida Akbarally at the KSSA Indian Open

‘Enjoyed the tournament’

I enjoyed winning a few games against higher ranked players and losing many games to lower ranked players in equal measure. It was a lot of fun, and I enjoyed the tournament greatly. Hope to be there for the next edition too.

~ Wimal Fernando

‘My favourite tournament’

I have played in many international tournaments, but my favourite tournament has to be the Bangalore tournament. I cannot wait to return next year – for the games as well as the shopping!

~ Priya Fernando



Jayaska Baranage, who finished ninth in Division A, in action at the tournament

‘The tournament has grown’

The annual Bengaluru international tournament has always been my favourite tournament, so it was only right that it had to be the first one I played after a four-year hiatus. I must say the tournament has grown in every way – more players, more divisions, more diversity, a much better venue, great food, and superb organising. Moreover, it’s definitely a great magnet for those contemplating ‘retirement’ from the game!

~ Shaila Amalean

Endgame Extra: Know the 12 sevens containing the letters I, S, L, A, N, D

ALDRINS, DENIALS, DOLINAS,
DUALINS, INLANDS, ISLANDS,
LADINGS, LADINOS, LIGANDS,
SNAILED, SUNDIAL, TINDALS

Bangalore buzz: My first Scrabble tourney!

by Sameena Talwar

I had my first taste of a competitive Scrabble tournament in January, when I played at the KSSA Indian Open in Bangalore. Being a beginner, I competed in the one-day Division D (Enthusiast Division). It was a lot of fun, and yet a challenge – the sheer anticipation of competing and playing a game you love can be immensely exhilarating, and so it proved for me.

Playing in a tournament setting was a totally different experience, in stark contrast to playing for fun at home. I realised there are official rules to be followed! Time management was the most challenging task for me – I went overtime by 18 minutes in my first match and handed over 180 points on a silver platter to my opponent. To my relief, I finished the following matches within the stipulated time.



Poring over the list of two-letter words that players in the Enthusiast Division were provided with – tense, yet fun!

Another challenge I faced was focus. Concentrating on the game and thinking about the best moves can be mentally demanding in a tournament. I would like to imagine that this only

gets easier over time, by playing more and more competitive games.

But my goal was to have fun and to enjoy the novel experience, and I did exactly that, because regardless of the outcome, simply being involved in something you enjoy is enriching. I also developed a sense of community and friendship with the other players, as we bonded over our shared passion for Scrabble.



A group picture along with other female participants across all four divisions

I was fortunate to get a bye in the last round, which ensured I broke even with three wins and three losses – I was particularly glad that I was able to adapt and keep pace with the clock after the catastrophe of the first game! This gave me the satisfaction of knowing that I already got to learn so much in a span of just five games.

While it was short and sweet, the experience of my first ever Scrabble tournament will always be close to my heart. Needless to say, I'm already looking forward to the next one!

Horses for courses Scrabblers for platforms

by Rahil Parkar

Virat Kohli is among the legends of Indian cricket, having scored runs in all conditions. A quick analysis of his Test numbers reveals a formidable average of 60.06 while playing in India, but a less impressive average of 41.48 while playing overseas. It can undoubtedly be said that the former Indian skipper is a different beast when he is batting on home soil.

In tennis, Rafael Nadal is the undisputed king of the clay court, winning a record-breaking 14 French Open titles while only managing two titles playing on the grass at Wimbledon. On the other hand, Roger Federer showed his best on grass, winning an impressive eight Wimbledon titles, but managed to claim the French Open title only once.

This phenomenon of players performing significantly better in specific conditions can be observed across sports. Even in mind sports like chess, players have shown strength in specific formats. As the pandemic reared its ugly head, Scrabblers were forced online to feed their undying addiction for the word game. Few tournament regulars had engaged in competitive Scrabble in the online mode until then. For some, it came as a surprise to see certain players who languished mid-table at live tournaments suddenly perform at a new level altogether when playing online tournaments.

Over the years, hardcore football aficionados have pored over stats and player styles to determine what makes Cristiano Ronaldo score more goals in the Champions League as compared to his peers. Likewise, it merits an inquest into a similar age-old question in Scrabble – what makes certain players phony with stem racks in live tournaments, but lay down the most improbable of bingos with assured swagger when playing online?

Let us look at the different factors that make online Scrabble different from the live version. Playing with physical tiles and a board affords players a different tactile experience as compared to a keyboard or mobile screen. In this age of technology, every person, young or old, is glued to some device for at least a few hours a day. Could it perhaps be this level of comfort (or addiction) to technology that brings out the best in them?

Another plus of technology is the automated move score calculation and score keeping, which affords players extra time to focus on the all-important words and not the trivial addition and multiplication of pesky numbers. Players also need not bother with the task of tile tracking, where errors leading to blunders in the endgame are not uncommon during live play. With such menial tasks handled by the computer, players are only concerned with seven

tiles and the board, leading to increased focus that can help them recall a word they may have come across just once in the past.

At different live tournaments, the chairs or seats vary in style and comfort, ranging from the classic plastic chairs in traditional clubs to the silk-wrapped cushioned chairs at posh hotel venues. But almost everyone has their favourite chair at home, where they love to sit or slouch when engaged in work or leisure. Much like Sheldon from Big Bang Theory, they find themselves most comfortable when they are in their 'spot'. Does this added level of comfort help these players spot the best plays more often when online?

Temperature is often a significant factor in sporting performance. The high summer heat in Qatar forced the organisers to move the FIFA World Cup to a winter schedule. In the Scrabble world, different cities have their slots more or less fixed, meaning that players have to deal with a range of temperatures. The likes of Mumbai and Goa can have humid outdoor venues, while hotel venues can sometimes reimagine Scrabblers as DiCaprio from The Revenant, forcing them to wrap themselves in any layer they can lay their hands on to survive the biting cold. Playing at home grants players the luxury of setting the thermostat to suit their body temperatures. It could be argued that the optimum mercury levels help players retain their focus for intense online Scrabble games.

Scrabble is a mind sport, where seasoned players ooze grace, calmness and composure. But there is one aspect of the live game that can certainly be disturbing. Many tournament players have formed a (superstitious?) habit of loudly jangling tiles, shuffling them over and over until they fish one out, believing this ritual can help them conjure up extra blanks from the bag. Add to that the menace of players talking loudly when announcing scores or indulging in post-game analysis, and it is easy to see why tournaments can raise the decibels to unhealthy levels. Playing in the comfort of one's own home ensures that the sweet silence is only interrupted by the melodious chirps of the computer informing that a play has been made. Is this probably another factor that can aid players reach the furthest depths of their memory to find mesmerising words?

India is unique in its level of diversity, with languages and cuisines changing drastically from one city to another. Live tournament organisers always strive to showcase the best food their city has to offer. Being able to experience the different flavours across the country is more enjoyable when you are on vacation, but can upset the delicate balance of your gut when forced upon you in the midst of heated Scrabble games. When you are accustomed to a steady diet of curd rice and pickle, a change to schetzwan noodles and red thai curry can wreak havoc in the intestines. In most sports, players preparing for big games tend to focus intensely on optimal nutrition in the lead-up.

Having full control over every aspect of their diet during an online tournament could enable players to channel their best consistently.

Anatidaephobia is a word used to describe the fear that somewhere, somehow, a duck is always watching you. An interesting change can be observed when players play in monitored tournaments, with their advantage seemingly diminished when they have a pair of eyes watching their every move. Live tournaments also suffer from this same problem where players sometimes stare at the rack on a different player's table to kill time. During live or monitored online tournaments, the hanging threat of post-game mockery for 'missing an easy bingo' can perhaps cause players to shift out of their most competitive state of mind. The freedom from this psychological pressure might be a factor to consider for understanding their higher level of play otherwise.

Family plays a crucial role in our lives, more so in the Indian context. When playing live Scrabble tournaments, players have to block out significant parts of a weekend to participate. This is exacerbated further when they need to travel outside of their hometown to play in tournaments, missing their near and dear ones for days on end. When playing online, the flexibility of being able to check in on one's parents, or play ludo with their little kids, or just help their spouse with household chores, can reduce the mental stress. Perhaps it is worth considering that

this social comfort could be another reason to boost online performance.

On the flipside, a lot of players love live tournaments as they get to meet Scrabble friends and engage in parties and gatherings in the evenings. Getting swept up in the camaraderie can perhaps take the competitive edge off in live tournament settings. Maybe when the opponent is only reduced to a player handle on the online platform, it allows players to truly embody the spirit of 'play the board, not the opponent'.

Some bona fide top players who have claimed success in national and international tournaments complain that the online format does not suit them. They claim that factors like distractions from phones, general household activity or family members sometimes take their focus away from the game. Others claim that they have grown up playing the physical game and they just cannot get accustomed to the online game. This group of online underperformers has vocally expressed their discontent and given an insight into why their game often suffers online. Conversely, the online overperformers are unassuming, as they bask in the glory of victory, seldom sharing the reasons behind their improved gameplay.

Online Scrabble is still relatively nascent and it may take a lot more research of players and their playing styles to truly figure out what brings out the X factor in online play for some. Until then, we can only cheer on as they reach dizzying new heights in online Scrabble.

The tones and tunes of Scrabble

by Rustom Deboo

Here are 30 musical bingos to help you hit the right notes in your next tournament:

ANDANTE – a moderately slow musical passage

BACHATA – a style of Bolero music originating in the Dominican Republic

BHANGRA – a form of popular Punjabi dance music

BOOGALOO – a genre of Latin American music from the 1960s

CARILLON – a small instrument furnished with bells, properly tuned

CHACONNE – the music for a slow, stately dance in triple time of the 1700s

CHANTEY – a sailor's song



Dulcimer

CZARDAS – the music for an intricate Hungarian dance

DULCIMER – a stringed instrument

EUPHONIC – pleasing to the ear

FANTASIA – a free-form musical composition

FERMATA – the sustaining of a musical note, chord, or rest beyond its written time value

FORZANDO – the playing of a tone or chord with sudden force, also FORZATO, SFORZANDO and SFORZATO

GAMELAN – a type of Indonesian orchestra



Marimba

JONGLEUR – a medieval musician

KITHARA – an ancient stringed instrument, also CITHARA

KLEZMER – a Jewish folk musician

MADRIGAL – a short lyric poem

MARIACHI – a Mexican musical band

MARIMBA – a percussion instrument

ORATORIO – a form of extended musical composition

OSTINATO – a constantly recurring musical phrase



Piccolo

PICCOLO – a small, shrill flute

RHAPSODY – an instrumental composition in irregular form

SOLFEGE – a type of singing exercise

STROPHIC – of a song, composed so that every stanza is set to the same music

SUBTONIC – the note immediately below the upper note of a musical scale



Trombone

TROMBONE – a large brass wind instrument

TWEEDLE – to perform casually on a musical instrument

VIBRATO – a tremulous or pulsating musical effect

Continuing with the theme... here's a melodious board having all 100 tiles:



The 34 sevens having M, U, S, I, C:

CAESIUM, CERIUMS, CESIUMS,
CONIUMS, CORIUMS, CRINUMS,
CRISSUM, CUBISMS, CULTISM,
CUMBIAS, CUMMINS, CURIUMS,
DICTUMS, ECHIUMS, ISCHIUM,
LEUCISM, MISCUED, MISCUES,
MISCUTS, MISLUCK, MUCOIDS,
MUNDICS, MURICES, MUSCIDS,
MUSCOID, MUSICAL, MUSICKS,
NICKUMS, NINCUMS, PUMICES,
STICKUM, UMIACKS, UNICOMS,
VISCUMS

The 23 sevens having L, Y, R, I, C:

ACRIDLY, ACRYLIC, CHARILY,
CILIARY, CLARIFY, CLARITY,
CLAYIER, CLERISY, CORNILY,
CRAZILY, CRINKLY, CRISPLY,
CRUSILY, CURLILY, LYRICAL,
LYRICON, PRICILY, PRICKLY,
PYLORIC, ROCKILY, SCARILY,
TRICKILY, VICARLY

About the Goa All-India Open

with inputs from Rajiv Antao

The Goa All-India Open 2023 is set to be played from 21st to 23rd April at Terminal Banquets in Panaji, thus marking the return of the tournament to the Indian Scrabble calendar after a gap of four years. This will be the 17th edition, with the previous 16 editions having been conducted in consecutive years since its inception in 2004 until 2019.

The inaugural Goa tournament was held at the Padre Conceicao College of Engineering, Verna as part of the Silver Jubilee celebrations of Agnel Ashram in 2004 – the same year when the Scrabble Association of Goa was established – and was won by Ranganathan Chakravarthy. The most number of titles for a player is four by Sherwin Rodrigues (in 2005, 2008, 2017 and 2019), followed by three by Ranganathan, who added the 2014 and 2017 titles to his initial win.

The Goa tournament has always been one of the most popular of the major tournaments in India – regularly seeing over 50 participants from all over the country – and has been rated by WESPA since the 2017 edition.



Douglas Lobo (left) against Sherwin Rodrigues at the 2009 Goa Open



The podium at the 2017 Goa Open: Sherwin Rodrigues (centre), Udayan Grover (second from left) and Ranganathan Chakravarthy (second from right)

Goa Open winners over the years	
Year	Winner
2004	Ranganathan Chakravarthy
2005	Sherwin Rodrigues
2006	Udayan Grover
2007	Nakul Prabhu
2008	Sherwin Rodrigues
2009	Varisht Hingorani
2010	Mohan Chunkath
2011	Nakul Prabhu
2012	Akshay Bhandarkar
2013	Akshay Bhandarkar
2014	Ranganathan Chakravarthy
2015	Ralph Lobo
2016	Ranganathan Chakravarthy
2017	Sherwin Rodrigues
2018	Udayan Grover
2019	Sherwin Rodrigues

Tournament round-up

KSSA Indian Open, Bangalore

by Monica Agarwala

The much-awaited KSSA Indian Open International Scrabble Championship, sponsored by Mu Sigma, was held from 26th to 29th January 2023 on the tenth floor of the Aviator building of the Mu Sigma campus, set amidst a bustling Technology Park in Bangalore. The view from the tenth floor was indeed breathtaking!

KSSA is extremely grateful to Mu Sigma for their support in making this event a tremendous success. Their volunteers worked very hard and were present all day. Also, a special thanks to our Tournament Directors Ashok Bhandarkar, Rex D'Souza, Selwyn Lobo, and Sudhir Kamath, who played important roles in monitoring the four divisions during the entire tournament.

This tournament, which has been taking place in Bangalore since 2005, was bigger, better and more brilliant in terms of participation, prize money, food and not to forget, the loads of goodies that everyone received along with customised pens with each player's name written on it.

There were close to 140 participants, not only from India, but also from countries such as the USA, Canada, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, the Netherlands, Bahrain and Kuwait. The fact that players came from around the globe to

participate in the KSSA Indian Open shows that it is currently the biggest Scrabble tournament in India.



The coveted trophies on offer at the KSSA Indian Open 2023

Players from diverse backgrounds and all age groups gathered on the first day. One could see the broad smiles, radiance and happiness on everybody's faces. Many players who had played online were meeting face to face for the first time, and the atmosphere was full of excitement. There were 16 participants who were under 18 years and 44 participants who were over 65 years.

Whether you were a beginner or a serious Scrabble player, KSSA gave a chance to everyone to pit their wits across the board. There were four divisions, and the registered players were segregated according to their SAI and WESPA ratings. However, one could play a higher division if one wanted to.

Division D – the Enthusiast Division – provided an opportunity for the

newbies to shed their inhibitions, come forward and participate in an unrated tournament, and get the hang of playing a tourney and develop confidence as well. They learned how to use the timer and calculate scores like the pros.

After days of playing games and fighting it out, the players needed some sort of recreation to refresh their minds. Keeping that in mind, KSSA organised a party on 28th January at Red Rhino, Whitefield, with the theme being retro. Another major attraction of this tournament was the photo booth at the venue, where the participants enjoyed being photographed along with their friends making all kinds of funny poses and facial expressions.



Sherwin Rodrigues (centre, in blue), winner of Division A, along with other podium finishers from all divisions

The third day of the tournament was the ‘Sari Day’ when most of the women dressed up in saris. The last day was themed as ‘The sea of red’, when people dressed up vibrantly in various shades of red. They painted the town red in the true sense!

There were cash prizes for the top 15 positions in Divisions A and B, and the top ten positions in Division C.

There were loads of other prizes up for grabs, such as the podium prizes, spot prizes, band prizes and bingo prizes, in addition to prizes for the most promising woman players, most promising veteran players, and most promising under-18 players. These prizes ensured that a large number of people had an opportunity to win.

The most electrifying point of the tournament came in the Round 18 (the very last round on the second day) game between Irfan Siddiqui and Jayaska Baranage, who amassed a combined score of 1209. Irfan’s gargantuan 773 included a nine-timer ZIPLOCKS for an astonishing 289.

While Divisions A and B featured 33 rounds each spread across four days, the two-day Division C saw 15 games and the one-day Division D six games. The names of the winners were announced amidst thunderous applause – the following players secured the top three places in their respective divisions: Sherwin Rodrigues, Udayan Grover, and Charles Carneiro in Division A; Arindam Basu, Danish Shahna, and Siddharth Nithyanand in Division B, and Aarush Jotwani, Ishika Poddar, and Kaveri Warriar in Division C. Both Sherwin and Arindam were Gibsonised with three rounds to play.

All good things must come to an end, and so did our tournament. Goodbyes were said with promises to return the next year, and new friendships were

formed. People were happy to carry home boxes of pedas (Indian sweets) with them.

The tournament itself was great, but the icing on the cake was when the numerous notes of thanks and appreciation started pouring in, as players acknowledged that it had been an immensely well-organised and enjoyable tournament. Detailed statistics, pictures, and quotes can be accessed from the KSSA website: scrabblekssa.wordpress.com

The KSSA Committee involved in the organisation of the tournament comprised Suchindra Potnis, Sujana Somasekar, Ishika Shivalingaiah, Radhika Mahalingaiah, Pankaj Bolaki, Monica Agarwala and Sushanto Bhattacharya.



Irfan Siddiqui with the board from his Round 18 game with Jayaska Baranage, which he won 773-436 courtesy a nine-timer ZIPLOCKS for 289 points

Final standings – Division A

	Player	Wins	Spread
1	Sherwin Rodrigues	26	1767
2	Udayan Grover	21.5	1284
3	Charles Carneiro	20	914
4	Rahil Parkar	20	869
5	Madhav Kamath	20	243
6	Aditya Iyengar	19.5	819
7	Puneet Sharma	19	1324
8	Rasheed Balogun	19	765
9	Jayaska Baranage	19	222
10	Suyash Manchali	19	-56
11	Sam Kantimathi	18.5	-231
12	Marlon Prudencio	18	1172
13	Rajveer Rawlin	18	127
14	Ishika Shivalingaiah	18	-250
15	Sunny Bhatia	18	-374
16	Irfan Siddiqui	17	949
17	A Krishnan	17	401
18	Rajeev Menon	17	268
19	Sujana Somasekar	17	-639
20	Anand Buddhdev	16	332
21	Samrath Bhatia	16	239
22	Shaila Amalean	16	-15
23	Rohaina Tanveer	16	-103
24	Shubha S	16	-740
25	Amit Sood	15	46
26	Nidhi Singhvi	15	15
27	Sanjay Bijlani	15	-719
28	Rustom Deboo	14.5	-73
29	Bhushan Pradhan	14	-257
30	Shaikh Ahmed	14	-862
31	Priya Fernando	14	-1665
32	Prithwiraj Mukherjee	13	-819
33	Mangala Bhandarkar	13	-857
34	Pankaj Bolaki	13	-1274
35	Yvonne Lobo	12	-1172

High game: Irfan Siddiqui 773

Final standings – Division B

	Player	Wins	Spread
1	Arindam Basu	26	2558
2	Danish Shahna	22	1149
3	Siddharth Nithyanand	21	1547
4	Vignesh S	21	633
5	Rajiv Antao	20	1076
6	Asha Kamath	20	662
7	Farida Akbarally	20	332
8	Jyoti Budhia	20	28
9	R Nalini	19.5	564

ENDGAME – March 2023

10	Sushanto B	19	782	2	Ishika Poddar	11	786
11	Harsh Sood	19	394	3	Kaveri Warriar	10.5	187
12	Srikrishnan TK	19	153	4	Monica Agarwala	10	417
13	Abhijit Shilotri	19	-65	5	Ahana Goyal	9	429
14	Vimisha Patel	18.5	859	6	Neelanjana Bid	9	383
15	Patrick Pereira	18	886	7	Vihaan Singhvi	8.5	114
16	Lennie D'Souza	18	747	8	Suhaas Khandelwal	8	399
17	Abid Hussain	18	726	9	Dhruv Kamath	8	297
18	Rajnikant Singh	18	283	10	Manisha Mohite	8	44
19	Ronilla Kataria	18	-47	11	Susheela K	8	-230
20	Aaradhya Srivastava	18	-254	12	Mohit Goyal	8	-397
21	Jacky Fernandes	17.5	1065	13	Mehjabeen P	7	-1
22	Anthony Gomes	17.5	212	14	Percy Fernando	7	-68
23	Archana Aggarwal	17.5	-111	15	Gaurika Chaudhari	7	-287
24	Dipankar Chatterjee	17	657	16	Shiv Talwar	7	-508
25	Neeta Bhatia	17	171	17	Ezhilan Nanmaran	6.5	-224
26	Harvinderjit Bhatia	17	100	18	Kalpna Sastry	6	-154
27	Saraswathi R	17	31	19	Mohd. Mohiuddin	5.5	-249
28	Hyder Quraishi	17	-388	20	Sukanya Baba	5	-338
29	Kumari Goonasekara	17	-464	21	Ramapriya J	5	-1064
30	Wimal Fernando	16	478	High game: Aarush Jotwani 544			
31	Hema Abeyasinghe	16	206	Final standings – Division D			
32	Mayank Khandelwal	16	28	Player	Wins	Spread	
33	Daiwik Bansal	16	-72	1	Pranav Ramkumar	6	1263
34	Samarth Manchali	16	-196	2	Harsha Gudisa	5	653
35	Zeenath Ariff	16	-240	3	Chandru Bolaki	5	389
36	Ritu Chadha	16	-620	4	Nirupama S	5	247
37	Swagat Nukala	15.5	-484	5	Meena Chinnappa	4	522
38	Gaurav Bhargava	15.5	-918	6	Rama Gomatam	4	517
39	Abdul Waheed	15	371	7	Bhanumati Ganesh	4	308
40	Arvind Lath	15	-166	8	Samaira Jotwani	4	180
41	Shalini Sahdev	15	-243	9	Ikksheta Sharma	4	95
42	Sonal Merchant	15	-327	10	Pranav Sarthavalli	4	-333
43	Jayashree Nagaraj	15	-416	11	Raeya D	3	515
44	Raman Viswanathan	15	-834	12	Naman Bansal	3	131
45	Aruna Grover	14.5	-1111	13	Shivalingaiah	3	124
46	Siddarth Raman	14	-252	14	Sneha Goswami	3	53
47	Nikheel Ruparel	14	-354	15	Sameena Talwar	3	-34
48	Hema Shah	14	-655	16	Abhishek N	3	-78
49	Madhulekha B	14	-673	17	Sanoja Thiyagarajah	2	97
50	Karan Khanna	13	157	18	Hiranmayi Ragam	2	-43
51	Joe Rodrigues	13	-847	19	Philomena Pereira	2	-232
52	Ganesh Ram	13	-878	20	Sivarajani V	2	-338
53	Dhaval Rathod	13	-1167	21	Shaurya Bhasin	2	-420
54	Joanna Moss	12	-611	22	Sameen K	2	-423
55	Zora Wahab	7	-2656	23	Akash A	1	-599
				24	Yathish Dhavala	1	-391
				25	Arnika Ezhilan	1	-1097
				26	Kishan K	0	-906

High game: Karan Khanna 673

Final standings – Division C

Player	Wins	Spread
1 Aarush Jotwani	11	1214

High game: Pranav Ramkumar 683

Kaizen All-India Open, Pune

by Udayan Grover

It was a bunch of enthusiasts from ten cities who convened in Pune to partake in the second season of the Kaizen All-India Open over the third weekend of March. It was heartening to see a few familiar faces from the previous edition in addition to those having their first brush with this tournament.

It was good to return to the familiar confines of the Hotel Parc Estique, and they were able to replicate a pleasant experience for all the participants. The tourney was ably directed by the ever-affable Ashok Bhandarkar, assisted with generous contributions by Vimisha Patel in overseeing the draws.

The roster was a mid-heavy field that promised unexpected match-ups and several upsets, and that's exactly how the tournament unfolded. Day 1 was dominated by seventh seed Ishika Shivalingaiah, the eventual winner, who led the charge by winning 12 games on the trot and didn't concede a loss until after lunch on Day 2.

Post-sundown meet-ups were the perfect opportunity to unwind and catch up with friends from the Scrabble circuit. The evenings were replete with frenzied banter, poker, great camaraderie, and fun galore.

It was Amit Sood who came into his own on Day 2, winning 9.5 out of 11 games to climb to the second spot – just behind Ishika, who held the fort

at the top. Then there were the usual suspects like Aditya Iyengar, Sunny Bhatia, Sudhir Kamath, Sanjoy Gupta and Madhav Gopal Kamath, who continued to occupy the top tables.



The podium at the Pune All-India Open

While the first 18 games followed the lagged Australian draw, the last seven games on Day 3 predictably used the King of the Hill pairing system, which affords contenders the chance to face each other and vie for top honours.

Table 1 on the last day saw Ishika square off against Amit four times in a row, at the end of which she found herself Gibsonised to be crowned champion with three games to spare, leaving the field wide open for the others to stage a comeback. Going into the last game and with a podium finish firmly in sight was a four-way contest between Amit, myself, Aditya and Sunny. I managed to overcome Amit by the slightest of margins to

finish runner-up while Aditya held his nerve to pip Sunny for third place.

We handed out a total of 12 spot prizes and three band prizes, while cash prizes were awarded to the top ten finishers. The event was made possible due to the patronage of Kaizen Institute, our title sponsor for the second year in succession. It was a terrific weekend of Scrabble and more with the coterie, and here's awaiting the next one!

Final standings

Player	Wins	Spread
1 Ishika Shivalingaiah	19 (+3)	1908
2 Udayan Grover	17	1361
3 Aditya Iyengar	16	1109
4 Amit Sood	15.5	446
5 Sunny Bhatia	15	519
6 Madhav Kamath	14.5	1062
7 Pankaj Bolaki	14.5	499
8 Sanjoy Gupta	14.5	180
9 Mangala Bhandarkar	13 (+1)	678
10 Shaik Ahmed	13 (+1)	203
11 Douglas Lobo	13 (+1)	-62
12 Sudhir Kamath	14	-238
13 Kala Ganesh	13	302
14 Rajiv Antao	12 (+1)	268
15 Suchindra Potnis	13	-62
16 Bhushan Pradhan	12 (+1)	-500
17 Vignesh S	12 (+1)	-560
18 Virendra Braganza	11 (+1)	76
19 Arindam Basu	11 (+1)	-215
20 Ritu Chadha	11 (+1)	-525
21 Danish Shahna	10 (+1)	140
22 Vimisha Patel	10 (+1)	67
23 Asha Kamath	10 (+1)	-380
24 Kedarnath Awati	10 (+1)	-854
25 Mayank Khandelwal	9 (+1)	-620
26 Aruna Grover	9 (+1)	-979
27 Harvinderjit Bhatia	8 (+1)	-614
28 Gaurav Bhargava	8 (+1)	-972
29 Laura Braganza	2 (+5)	-2237

High game: Kala Ganesh 633

Bye treatment explained in brackets

Barking Women's Tourney

by Kala Ganesh

To celebrate the special occasion of International Women's Day, Ritu Chadha, who has a warm, friendly, amiable, and charming demeanour, graciously organised a one-day rated tournament for female Scrabblers at The Bark in Lonavala on 6th March 2023. This was the second edition of the tourney, with the first having been held last year at the same venue.

Ritu, being the brilliant organiser and effective communicator she is, had planned it all to perfection and to the tiniest detail. She was assisted in her efforts by Vimisha Patel who took the lead in organising the games and doubled as the Tournament Director. Sixteen of us assembled on 5th March to celebrate Women's Day with great pomp and enthusiasm.

The splendid welcome spread as high tea was the ice breaker. Some of us were seeing each other for the first time. From 6 p.m. on 5th March, we were transported to a different world as we played Antakshari, Pictionary, and a hilarious word link game with a taboo of M words, and ended with a fashion show where the women dressed up as famous personalities, shedding all their inhibitions and fears.

After the fashion show, Ishika taught us the steps of the song 'Tum Tum' from the movie Enemy – we tried to groove to the music according to our flexibility and agility, given most of us were 60-plus. But it was uproarious

fun! This was followed by a delicious dinner with gastronomic delights.



Some of the participants at the Barking Women's Tourney

The day swiftly passed and by the time we hit the bed it was half past one. Ritu in her Bappi Lahiri avatar stole the show and was unanimously judged as the winner of the fashion show. The second prize went to Ishika for her Priyanka Chopra act and third place to Sonal Merchant for playing Mary Poppins. It was certainly a mind-boggling way to celebrate International Women's Day.

The next day, 6th March, was the Scrabble tournament, featuring 14 players and eight rounds. The queen of the tournament was Mangala Bhandarkar, who won seven out of eight games. Sujana Somasekar and Radhika Mahalingaiah rounded off the top three. Although the number had increased compared to last year, we still would like more women to come forward and participate in the tournament.

Ritu made for the perfect hostess, cheerfully handling disgruntled guests. No registration amount was

taken for the tourney, and the food was mouth-watering. The taste of the strawberry mousse particularly lingers in our memory.

The prizes were thoughtful and awesome – there were five spot prizes, while Meena Kalyan got a special prize for making the bingo MANLESS in a manless tourney! The generosity of Ritu was matched by many who gifted us embroidered fabrics, jewellery, cosmetics and sweets. The prizes were sponsored by Ritu, yours truly, and Mehjabeen Peeradina.

A special mention must be made of Radhika, Ishika and Sujana, who came all the way from Bangalore to participate in the tournament.

The day ended by bidding adieu to all my dear friends and returning to the normal routine, carrying with me a lot of nostalgic memories.

Final standings

	Player	Wins	Spread
1	Mangala Bhandarkar	7	1083
2	Sujana Somasekar	5	840
3	Radhika M	5	27
4	Ishika Shivalingaiah	5	-55
5	Vimisha Patel	5	-64
6	Kala Ganesh	4.5	72
7	Caryl Gonsalvez	4	-110
8	Ritu Chadha	4	-185
9	Rekha Sanzgiri	4	-372
10	Meena Kalyan	3.5	-127
11	Sonal Merchant	3	-97
12	Neena Shahani	3	-550
13	Aruna Grover	2	135
14	Mehjabeen P	1	-597

High game: Mangala Bhandarkar 639

IIT Delhi Open

by Madhav Gopal Kamath

The recently concluded IIT Delhi Open, an unrated tournament held as part of Rendezvous, the IIT Delhi festival, was one to remember – not just for the fun and the memorable games, but also for bringing Scrabble to new players, who, hopefully, will retain their love for the game and join the tournament circuit.

There were 24 participants, of whom half were IIT natives. Although there were some initial doubts about the challenge rules and penalties, these were quickly resolved and for the most part, the tournament went off without a hitch. Credit is due to Parth Singhal, the main organiser from the college. Thanks to the fest, there were multiple places to get some fresh air and food. There was a general air of it being in a carnival, which only helped the wonderful atmosphere.

My first game was against Manit Arora, a young ten-year-old Scrabbler from Chandigarh who had played at the GAIL Cup in Delhi last year as well as the Asia Cup Youth Scrabble Championship. Although he led for large parts of the game, I eventually won through a combination of good tiles and luck.

In my second game, I was drawn against veteran Sunny Bhatia. However, I was unable to play the game as I had to attend an online class. He magnanimously offered me a draw. We had a rematch in the penultimate match, with the winner

moving into a strong position to take home the trophy.

It was a close, unbelievably tense match that went down to the wire, with me prevailing owing to the penalty points he gave me by running almost three minutes overtime. This set me up for what was essentially a winner-takes-all against my father, Sudhir Kamath. This match, however, was somewhat of an anti-climax as I won by a large margin. I finally came out on top with six and a half wins from my seven games.



Participants at the IIT Delhi Open

Second place went to Sunny, who I feel deserved to win the tournament, as he only finished second due to the draw he offered me early on. Sudhir, Archana Aggarwal, and Neelanjana Bid finished third, fourth and fifth respectively.

The IIT students showed themselves to be able to hold their own, with Amogh Sharma playing highly impressively to finish seventh with a 4-3 record. Mehul Bose also did well to finish ninth. Andy Pakdee, a Thai Scrabbler who was travelling in India, finished in eighth place. Manit faced a

number of tough opponents and was unlucky not to finish in the top ten.

I would love to see this tournament become a yearly fixture, and perhaps even expand to become a two-dayer or three-dayer in the manner of the IIT Bombay tournament.

Final standings

	Player	Wins	Spread
1	Madhav Kamath	6.5	608
2	Sunny Bhatia	5.5	621
3	Sudhir Kamath	5	450
4	Archana Aggarwal	5	399
5	Neelanjana Bid	5	285
6	Ela Ghose	5	235
7	Amogh Sharma	4	412
8	Andy Pakdee	4	285
9	Mehul Bose	4	37
10	Mudit Gupta	4	-64
11	Akshay Hiremath	4	-115
12	Vaani Shah	4	-142
13	Manit Arora	3	24
14	Arvasu Kulkarni	3	-13
15	Pranjali Gupta	3	-30
16	Mohit Arora	3	-133
17	Adnaan Mansoor	3	-222
18	Snigdhyut Dash	3	-284
19	Naynika Poddar	2	-32
20	Saumya Srivastava	2	-341
21	Sanchita Bid	2	-344
22	Prabhjit Singh	0	-890

Vandana Grover Memorial Online Tournament

by Akshay Hiremath

The Vandana Grover Memorial Tournament was held online in early March 2023, with its virtual prize distribution ceremony taking place on 12th March – a very significant date, because it was Vandana’s birth anniversary.

Vandana was an avid Scrabble player, a passionate reader, a cat lover, an art lover, and an Economics teacher based in Gurgaon. She tragically passed away from Covid in May 2021, leaving a huge void for her family, friends and the Scrabble fraternity. Her kind and gentle mannerisms endeared her to everyone who crossed her path!

The tournament was organised by a group of Scrabblers who were close to Vandana – Sudhir Kamath, Ela Ghose, Shalini Sahdev, Rustom Deboo, Siddharth Nithyanand, Archana Aggarwal, and yours truly. It had a great turnout, with a total of 58 participants across various age groups – 42 participants in Division A and 16 in Division B. Vandana’s husband Rajiv and their daughter Paritosh designed a rotating trophy in her memory, to be awarded to the winner of Division A.

I had the pleasure of being the Master of Ceremonies for the prize ceremony on 12th March. About 25 people logged in for the online event. Paritosh was there, representing Vandana’s family. People reflected on their memories of Vandana, and the spot prize winners and overall winners were announced. The spot prizes were given for words made in the following categories relevant to Vandana and her life:

- i) Highest scoring V word
- ii) Highest scoring CAT word
- iii) Highest scoring word related to books or teaching

- iv) Highest scoring K word (K for kitty)
- v) Highest scoring ART word
- vi) Highest scoring word related to animals
- vii) Highest scoring word related to nature
- viii) Highest scoring VAN word



The rotating trophy for the Vandana Grover Memorial Online Tournament

After the end of 14 rounds, Hriday Samtani emerged as the winner – narrowly edging out A. Krishnan on spread – to claim the trophy, while Mohit Arora topped Division B. Hriday made the beautiful gesture of giving his prize money to Vandana's favourite charity. Mohit did the same, as did some of the spot prize winners.

It was indeed a fitting ending to a great tournament played in the memory of a wonderful human being!

Top half finishers – Division A

	Player	Wins	Spread
1	Hriday Samtani	13	1393
2	A Krishnan	13	1376
3	Shaik Ahmed	12	1470
4	Sanjoy Gupta	11	1308
5	Arindam Basu	11	1160
6	Rahil Parker	10	927
7	Harsh Sood	10	580
8	Shaila Amalean	10	524
9	Neelanjana Bid	10	480
10	Sudhir Kamath	9	524
11	Rajiv Antao	9	508
12	R Nalini	9	365
13	Sumet Sachdev	8	722
14	Lloyd Pearse	8	234
15	Sunny Bhatia	8	172
16	Jackson Thomas	8	81
17	Shalini Sahdev	8	-85
18	Pankaj Bolaki	8	-172
19	Rohaina Tanveer	7	513
20	Sridhar Paidikondala	7	325
21	Rehet Singh Bhatia	7	-120

Top half finishers – Division B

	Player	Wins	Spread
1	Mohit Arora	11	1826
2	Manit Arora	11	1742
3	Shiv Talwar	10	1345
4	Viral Kansara	10	981
5	Meghali Das	9.5	1215
6	Vasudha Mohanka	9	947
7	Bhawani Cheerath	9	496
8	Mehjabeen P	8.5	492

Scrabble around the world

Here is a round-up of some of the key WESPA-rated tournaments and Scrabble happenings from around the world in the past three months:



Sri Lanka

The Sri Lanka Scrabble League held two legs of the Sri Lanka Scrabbler of the Year tournament in the first quarter of 2023, featuring 18 rounds each. The first leg in January (55 players) was won by young Adheesha Dissanayake, while the second leg in March (32 players) saw another youth player, Hivin Dilmith, as the winner.

Singapore

The Jurong Green CC Open Scrabble Championship 2023 was the first WESPA-rated tournament to be played in Singapore in more than three years. Played from 18th to 19th March, the tournament comprised 20 players and was won by Singapore's highest rated Scrabbler Toh Weibin, who won 12 out of his 16 games with a spread of 950.

Nigeria

The 2023 Nigeria National Scrabble Championship, held in the third week of March and featuring 60 players, was won by Eta Karo in a thrilling finish. With the final round (Round 28) game between him and Enoch Nwali (who finished second with 19 wins) being the title decider, he won 401-390 to end on top with 20 wins.

Endgame Extra: A 'catch-72' board



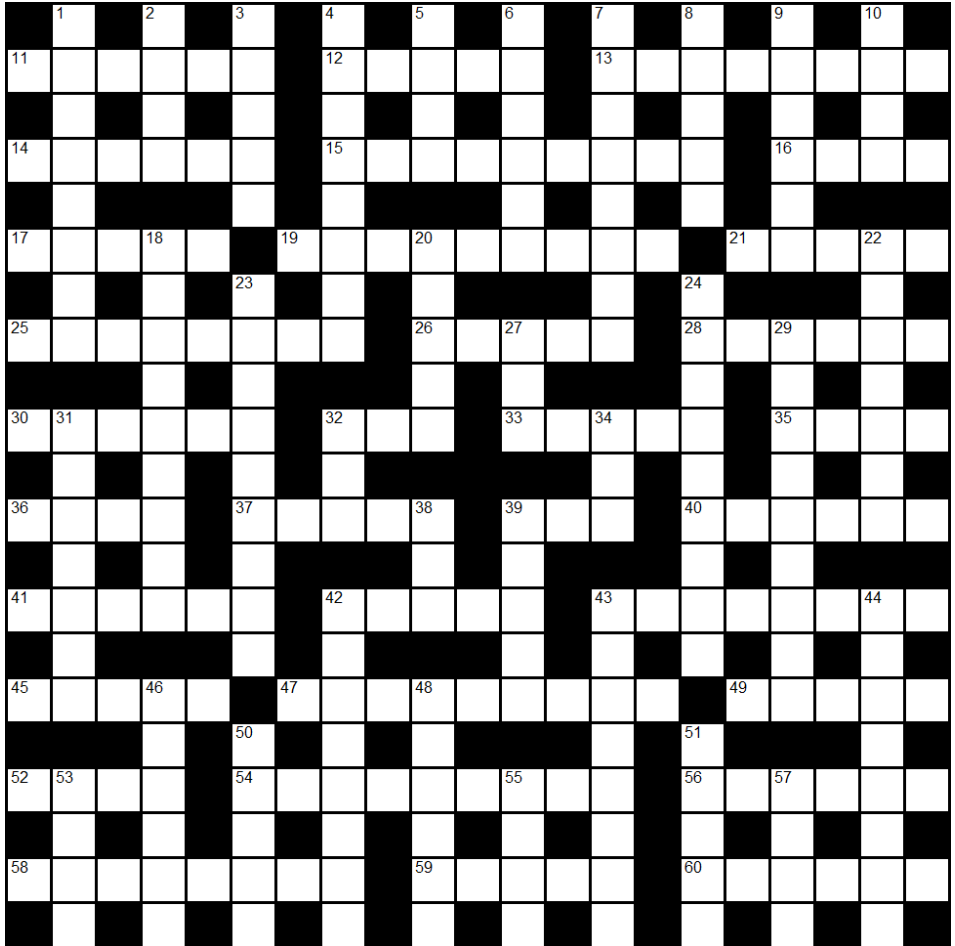
The board above (picture courtesy: Marlon Prudencio) is from a game between Marlon Prudencio and Nidhi Singhvi at the Wordsack X one-dayer held in Singapore on 1st April. Nidhi started off with a run of four bingos in her first four moves, each of which amazingly scored 72 points. Marlon fought back to win 511-439 (by 72 points, incidentally) after having lost his previous game... by 72 points!

Puzzles and quizzes

SAI Crossword #009

by Mohan Chunkath

Each clue has one anagram that has to be entered into the grid



Across

- 11** REGALE (6)
- 12** AROID (5)
- 13** RIVALISE (8)
- 14** CISTED (6)
- 15** RESPLICED (9)
- 16** RENS (4)
- 17** STAYS (5)
- 19** ATTRITION (9)
- 21** POLYP (5)
- 25** CHOREMEN (8)
- 26** GYANS (5)
- 28** EMEROD (6)
- 30** TESTON (6)
- 32** AGE (3)
- 33** OWLET (5)
- 35** CERO (4)
- 36** WALD (4)
- 37** PAGED (5)
- 39** SIB (3)
- 40** TRIALS (6)
- 41** INKIER (6)
- 42** CAULD (5)
- 43** PASSBAND (8)
- 45** DOOBS (5)
- 47** SYMPHILES (9)
- 49** MISDO (5)
- 52** RAGA (4)
- 54** INTERCUTS (9)
- 56** JINKER (6)

58 CAMELOID (8)

59 AINGA (5)

60 GAMMAS (6)

Down

- 1** WASHLAND (8)
- 2** CREM (4)
- 3** EASES (5)
- 4** PEARLING (8)
- 5** GEED (4)
- 6** TOGGLE (6)
- 7** VORTICES (8)
- 8** BREED (5)
- 9** DOABLE (6)
- 10** RINK (4)
- 18** HOVELLERS (9)
- 20** ONERY (5)
- 22** PERORAL (7)
- 23** GASTERING (9)
- 24** GLUTAMINE (9)
- 27** TUN (3)
- 29** SPANCELED (9)
- 31** SWEARDS (7)
- 32** PIG (3)
- 34** SAW (3)
- 38** COD (3)
- 39** LAMBY (5)
- 42** MONDAINE (8)
- 43** SIBLINGS (8)
- 44** SAINTESS (8)

46 BARONY (6)

53 LENG (4)

48 HIATUS (6)

55 ORRA (4)

50 SUITE (5)

57 GRIG (4)

51 EMOJI (5)

Anagram quiz – Proper and common

by Rustom Deboo

In this quiz, each question has two clues, the first for a word that is a proper noun (invalid in Scrabble) and the second for a common word (may or may not be a noun, valid in Scrabble) that is an anagram of the proper noun. You can send in your answers to indianscrabble@gmail.com by 15th May 2023. One entry getting all answers right will win a cash prize of Rs. 500 in a lucky draw.

Congrats to Kala Ganesh for winning the lucky draw prize for the quiz featured in the December 2022 edition.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) i. Surname of a legendary singer
ii. A cupboard for vessels | 6) i. Name of a former prime minister of an Asian country
ii. A creeping plant |
| 2) i. A city in Asia
ii. A type of antelope | 7) i. An electronics brand
ii. Green colour mixtures |
| 3) i. Surname of a Bollywood actor
ii. A type of navigational system | 8) i. Surname of a former cricketer
ii. To become dull |
| 4) i. An automobile brand
ii. A blacksmith | 9) i. Surname of a famous author
ii. The buttocks |
| 5) i. Surname of a tennis great
ii. An ancient stringed instrument | 10) i. A clothing brand
ii. A crystalline compound |

Find the best play

by Hriday Samtani

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





3

Identify the creature

by Shubha Shivashankar

The objective of this quiz is to replace the numbers with letters corresponding to their point value in Scrabble in order to get a valid word. For example, 10-4-10-10-4-4-1 would correspond to ZYZZYVA. Each of the words mean a creature, with the hint given in brackets.

- 1) 1-4-1-8 (Feline)
- 2) 3-1-4-3-1 (Rodent)
- 3) 1-5-1-3-1 (Mammal)
- 4) 3-1-3-1-4 (Bird)
- 5) 1-1-3-1-3-1 (Mammal)
- 6) 4-1-1-1-1-3 (Vulpine)
- 7) 3-1-4-1-1-1 (Canine)



- 8) 1-3-3-1-1-1 (Antelope)
- 9) 3-1-3-1-10-1-1 (Arboreal)
- 10) 1-1-1-2-4-1-1-5 (Mammal)

SAI round-up

- **Expression of interest for participation at WESPAC 2023**

An invitation to all SAI member players seeking expression of interest for participation at the WESPA Championship 2023, to be played in Las Vegas from 22nd to 26th July, was sent out on 7th February. The announcement stated that since it is possible that India may not fill its assigned quota of seven seats, there would be no set selection criteria and any player with a WESPA rating of 1300 or above would be eligible. If the number of applicants happens to exceed the quota, an appropriate selection process will be duly followed.

- **SAI General Body Meeting to be held on 28th May 2023**

The Management Committee of SAI has decided to hold a General Body Meeting of the members of SAI on 28th May 2023. The GBM will be held online from 11 a.m. to 12 noon. This meeting is an endeavour to reach out to and connect with the SAI members, apprise them of key happenings and issues, and obtain their feedback

and suggestions considering the common objective of the development of Indian Scrabble.

- **Endgame completes two years**

Endgame, the SAI quarterly magazine, has completed two years since its first edition was brought out on 30th March 2021. Another eight editions and more than 400 pages later, Endgame is now established as the official periodical of all things Scrabble in India.

New members

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

1. **Ikksheta Sharma**
(Bangalore)
2. **Sandhya Mundra**
(Kolkata)
3. **Debashish Dasgupta**
(Pune) has always been passionate about writing and reading. He keeps writing on various topics of interest, and finds reading a good book a pleasure. He gets fascinated with new words,

which played a part in his recent attraction towards Scrabble. Having played informally with family and friends so far, he is looking forward to the exciting prospect of playing it at the competitive level. Otherwise, he is a finance and accounts professional, doing his own consulting assignments.

4. **Lalita Marathe** (Pune) was introduced to Scrabble by her father. Being a German translator and trainer by profession, she is naturally drawn towards words. She has keenly started to learn the ropes of competitive Scrabble, which she realises is vastly different from playing the game as a hobby. Going forward, she aims to contribute as a Scrabble coach or work with a hobby group, and would also like to conduct workshops on Scrabble to create more awareness about the game. According to her, Scrabble is an engaging activity that uses the brain to the optimum.

5. **Manjiri Dhamankar** (Pune) is a multilingual anchor and compere, a language trainer, and a certified mental health professional. She has authored five books and

translated more than 15 books. She used to play Scrabble in childhood, and though she did not pursue it much, she credits it for improving her English. She is very happy to reconnect with Scrabble, and though it might take her a while to get into competitive mode, she is presently enjoying the game.

Endgame Extra: A Holi theme board using all tiles



A 'colourful' board for the occasion of Holi, created by Rustom Deboo

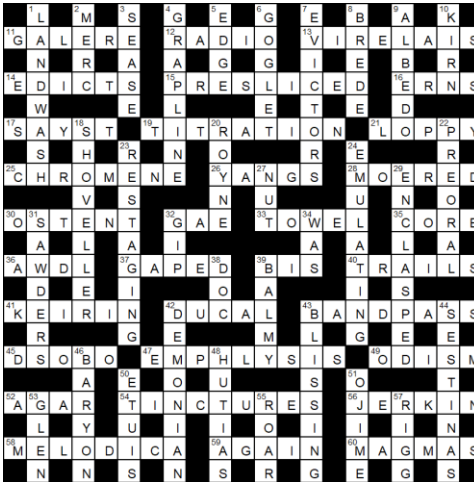
Know the 16 sevens in ORANGE?

ACROGEN, BEGROAN,
CORNAGE, GROANED,
GROANER, KARENGO,
MARENGO, MEGARON,
NEGATOR, ONAGERS,
ORANGER, ORANGES,
ORANGEY, OREGANO,
ORIGANE, WAGONER

Solutions to puzzles and quizzes

SAI Crossword #009

2



Three best moves:

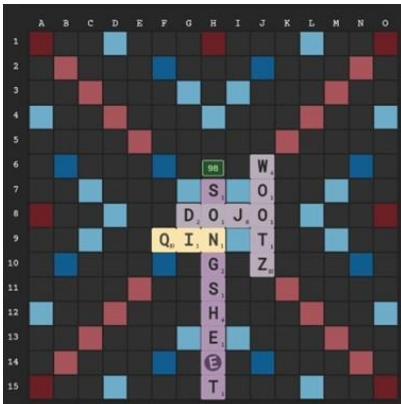
C7 – UXO(R)IOUS – 82

C10 – (R)OUX – 22 (OSU?)

15H – OXO – 33 (SUU?)

Find the best play

1



Three best moves:

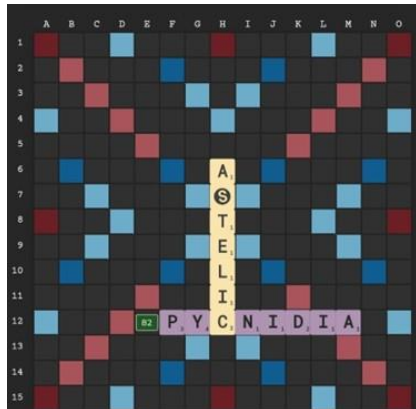
H7 – S(ON)GSHeET /

S(ON)GSHeET – 98

K6 – EHS – 29 (GST?)

K10 – ETHS – 25 (GS?)

3



Three best moves:

12F – PY(C)NIDIA – 82

G9 – YAP – 27 (DIIN)

12H – (C)YANID – 24 (IP)

Identify the creature

- 1) LYNX, 2) COYPU, 3) OKAPI,
- 4) MACAW, 5) ALPACA,
- 6) FENNEC, 7) COYOTE,
- 8) IMPALA, 9) MACAQUE,
- 10) AARDVARK

Endgame Extra: With this being the ninth edition of Endgame, here are a few handy nine-related sevens and eights

NINTH?? (16)

HANTING, HENTING, HINTING,
HUNTING, NINTHLY, NITHING,
NOTHING, TANGHIN, TANNISH,
THINNED, THINNER, THIONIN,
TINHORN, TONNISH, UNTHINK,
XANTHIN

NINER?? (88)

AGINNER, ANEURIN, BONNIER,
CANNIER, CERNING, CINERIN,
DERNING, DINNERS, DUNNIER,
EARNING, EINKORN, ENDIRON,
ENDRINS, ENGINER, ENGRAIN,
ENPRINT, ENRINGS, ENRIVEN,
ENTRAIN, ENURING, ENVIRON,
FENNIER, FERNING, FINNERS,
FINNIER, FUNNIER, GERNING,
GINNERS, GINNERY, GINNIER,
GRANNIE, GRINNED, GRINNER,
HENNIER, INFERNO, INGENER,
INNERLY, INNERVE, INSANER,
INSNARE, INTERNE, INTERNS,
INTONER, INURNED, IRONMEN,
KERNING, NARCEIN, NARDINE,
NEARING, NEGRONI, NERINES,
NERVINE, NERVING, NEURINE,
NOINTER, NOUNIER, ONLINER,

PANNIER, PERNING, PINNERS,
PUNNIER, REINING, RENDING,
RENNING, RENNINS, RENTING,
RENYING, REUNION, RINGENT,
RINGMEN, RONNIES, RUNNIER,
SINNERS, SKINNER, SPINNER,
SUNNIER, TERNING, TERNION,
THINNER, TINNERS, TINNIER,
TRANNIE, UNREINS, UNRISEN,
UNRIVEN, VINTNER, WENNIER,
WINNERS

NONETS? (18)

BONNETS, CONSENT, INTONES,
NEKTONS, NEUSTON, NEWTONS,
NOCENTS, PONENTS, SONNETS,
STONERN, STONNED, STONNES,
SYNTONE, TENDONS, TENSION,
TENSONS, TENZONS, TONNERS

ENNEAD? (5)

ADENINE, ANNEXED, ENNEADS,
HENNAED, TENENDA

ENNEAD?? (28)

ADENINES, ANDESINE,
ANNEALED, BANNERED,
CAYENNED, DECENNIA,
DEMANNED, ENDANGER,
ENHANCED, ENNEADIC,
ENPLANNED, ENRANGED,
ENRANKED, ENSNARED,
JANNEYED, MANNERED,
MENHADEN, NEATENED,
PENANCED, PENNATED,
REMANDED, TENANTED,
TENDANCE, UNANELED,
UNEARNED, UNWEANED,
UNYEANED, VENDAGE

Ratings

Below are the SAI official ratings (top 80) as on 31st March 2023. Please visit indianscrabble.com for the full rankings.

	Name	Club	Rating	Games
1	Sherwin Rodrigues	MUM	1872	1652
2	Akshay Bhandarkar	OSI	1836	587
3	Aditya Iyengar	PUN	1643	686
4	Udayan Grover	PUN	1621	2180
5	Ishika Shivalingaiah	BLR	1599	431
6	Rahil Parkar	MUM	1580	674
7	Charles Carneiro	OSI	1571	845
8	Prashanth Seetharam	OSI	1564	384
9	Sunny Bhatia	DEL	1562	1272
10	Mohan Chunkath	CHN	1554	1144
	Puneet Sharma	OS	1553	202
	Irfan Siddiqui	OS	1535	380
11	Varisht Hingorani	MUM	1527	1271
12	Suyash Manchali	BLR	1501	279
13	Madhav Gopal Kamath	DEL	1490	730
14	Hriday Samtani	MUM	1481	642
15	Rajveer Rawlin	BLR	1477	574
16	A Krishnan	CHN	1476	568
17	Samrath Singh Bhatia	MUM	1463	1036
18	Sanjoy Gupta	BLR	1456	1474
19	Douglas Lobo	GOA	1455	1421
	Shaila Amalean	OS	1443	307
20	Selwyn Lobo	OSI	1432	301
21	Nidhi Singhvi	OSI	1431	982
22	Sudhir Kamath	DEL	1412	1104
23	Amit Sood	PUN	1410	522
24	Vraj Jain	MUM	1391	593
25	Pramit Rao	MUM	1382	89
	Rohaina Tanveer	OS	1343	552
26	Sujana Somasekar	BLR	1328	586
27	Anuj Shetty	BLR	1328	341
28	Sumeet Sachdev	MUM	1323	559
29	Rustom Deboo	MUM	1311	607
30	Rajeev Menon	HYD	1288	865
31	Sanjay Bijlani	MUM	1284	632
32	Shaik Ahmed	HYD	1283	1954
33	Manju Sood	BLR	1280	912
34	Yash Potnis	BLR	1277	562
35	Pankaj Bolaki	BLR	1263	400
36	Mangala Bhandarkar	PUN	1260	1731
37	Shubha Shivashankar	BLR	1247	331
	Supriya Devnani	OS	1242	106
38	Ekansh Arora	DEL	1234	193
39	Pramit Kamath	DEL	1227	523
40	Sridhar Paidikondala	HYD	1217	940
41	Kala Ganesh	MUM	1211	1409
42	Prithwiraj Mukherjee	BLR	1209	297

	Name	Club	Rating	Games
43	Suchindra Potnis	BLR	1205	475
44	Bhushan Pradhan	MUM	1204	2015
45	Arindam Basu	KOL	1184	454
46	Vignesh S	BLR	1176	395
47	Rajiv Antao	GOA	1165	1050
48	Shreyas Gupta	DEL	1155	89
49	Karthik Ganesan	DEL	1154	210
50	Rehet Singh Bhatia	MUM	1153	965
51	V Ramachandran	MUM	1150	1370
52	R Nalini	BLR	1145	956
53	Siddharth Nithyanand	DEL	1128	342
54	Jyoti Budhia	CHN	1120	81
55	Radhika Mahalingaiah	BLR	1109	942
56	Danish Shahna	BLR	1103	659
57	Alan De Mello	MUM	1103	195
58	Rajnikant Singh	KOL	1101	289
59	Amogh Bhamerker	GUJ	1095	80
60	Abhijit Shilotri	BLR	1088	725
61	Aaradhya Srivastava	MUM	1087	74
62	Archana Aggarwal	DEL	1081	608
63	Srikrishnan TK	BLR	1074	65
64	Harsh Sood	BLR	1068	183
65	Lennie D'Souza	BLR	1057	1254
66	Brian D'Souza	MUM	1055	235
67	Abid Hussain	BLR	1041	432
68	Asha Kamath	KER	1036	770
69	Dipankar Chatterjee	BLR	1032	665
70	Sushanto B	DEL	1032	478
71	PC Jose	MUM	1030	1408
72	Meena Bakhru	PUN	1027	380
73	Neeta Bhatia	MUM	1026	412
74	Yuvraj Dighe	GUJ	1021	46
75	Hemanth Achaya	BLR	1013	299
76	Sneha Thadhani	GUJ	1005	152
77	Virendra Braganza	PUN	996	486
78	Savio Rebello	GOA	994	241
79	Vimisha Patel	GUJ	983	582
80	Jacky Fernandes	GOA	975	1022

BLR – Bangalore (KSSA)

CHN – Chennai

DEL – Delhi

GOA – Goa

GUJ – Gujarat (Vadodara)

HYD – Hyderabad

KER – Kerala

KOL – Kolkata

MUM – Mumbai

PUN – Pune

OSI – Indian national residing overseas

OS – Overseas foreign player (no rank)



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.

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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.

For general inquiries about anything related to Indian Scrabble and feedback and submissions for Endgame, you can reach out to us at indianscrabble@gmail.com.

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