



Winning teams from the 2023 Perth ANC (SA Open, SA Women, SA Seniors, Vic Youth)





AUGUST 2023

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Front cover image: 2023 ANC winners.
See page 12 for article on the event.

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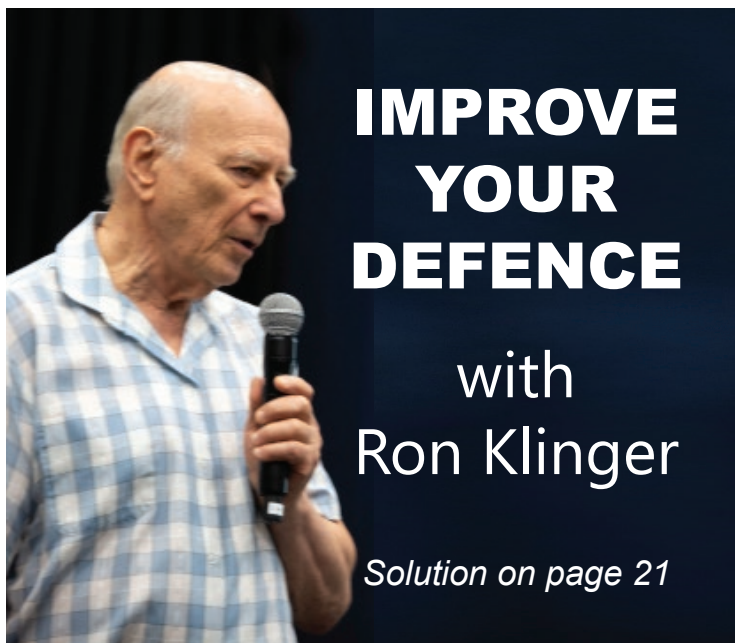
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Teams, South dealer, East-West vulnerable

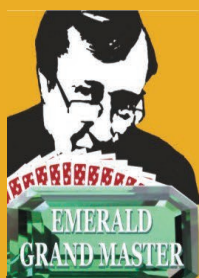
♠ A 10 4
♥ J 8 2
♦ A K 8 2
♣ Q 6 4

♠ J 8 3 2
♥ A 9
♦ 10 4 3
♣ K 9 7 3



WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
pass	3NT	all pass	1NT ¹²⁻¹⁴

West leads the ♠2: four - five - king. Declarer plays the ♦7: four - ace - six (reverse count) and continues with the ♣4: five - jack - king. What should West do at trick 3?



Paul Lavings Bridgegear

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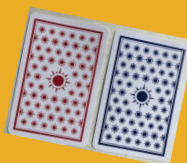
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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Allison Stralow

president@abf.com.au



One of the objectives of the ABF is to sponsor, promote and organise bridge tournaments. After many years of planning, the 84th Australian National Championships were finally held in my home city in July. Congratulations to Robina McConnell and the ANC committee for the many years and hours of work that they have put into the planning and running of this event. I look seeing everyone at the 2024 ANC in Orange, New South Wales.

The virtual presentation of the trophies at the ANC was very well received. The screens ran in the background all evening, allowing players to reflect on past winners. Thank you to the Head of Marketing, Peter Cox for creating the screens. The real trophies will now have a permanent home at ABF Headquarters in Canberra.

A special mention must go to South Australia who dominated the teams' events, winning the Open, Women's and Seniors and were runners up in the Youth. The late David Lusk, who was a stalwart of South Australian bridge and received an OAM in 2015 for his contributions to bridge, would have been very proud of their achievements. The room raised their glasses to David during the presentations.

Bridge players are generally nice people. I know this because I have met many of them. Unfortunately, at the table, the other side of people's natures are often revealed. It is important for us all to remind ourselves that bridge is only a game and that players who behave badly can ruin the enjoyment of others. Bridge is a game that has a clear set of rules/laws that we as bridge players need to abide by. These



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rules/laws are not a secret. We all have access to them, and they ensure that the game is fair for everyone. We are expected to exercise our right to politely call the director if we think a rule or law has been broken. Please do not take it personally if the director is called, and most importantly remember you need a partner and opponents to play bridge.

Congratulations to Sartaj Hans, Andy Hung, Nabil Edgton and Michael Whibley who made the semi-finals of the US Spingold, in Chicago. It is wonderful to see our players succeeding on the world stage.

Currently the Australian U21 and U26 teams are competing at the 18th World Youth Teams Championships in Veldhoven, the Netherlands. I wish them the best of bridge as we follow their progress on 18th World Youth Teams Championships | WBF Championships (worldbridge.org)

The Australian Open, Women's, Seniors and Mixed teams will be competing in the 46th Bridge Teams Championship in Morocco from 20 August to 2 September 2023. In my role as the Chef de Mission, I will be responsible for the day-to-day management of all the teams. I trust this will allow the players and the captains to concentrate on the bridge.

The best of bridge to you all.

If you have any issues you would like to raise with me or the ABF Board, please email

president@abf.com.au



For those bridge players who care about the environment, the ABF's sponsor, PENLINE, makes Reusable Coffee cups and Water Bottles, as part of its "War on Waste". If you are interested in more information, please contact Maryo Derofo by email: maryo@penline.com.au





MARKETING REPORT

with Peter Cox
marketing@abf.com.au



REGISTERED BRIDGE PLAYERS

It is over a year now since we last looked at the statistics for the number of ABF registered players and the volume of bridge played in clubs. In the ABF Newsletter for April 2022 we reported that ABF registered players were down 13.4% from pre-COVID in 2019. Of further concern was that after the improvement in 2021 from the crisis period in 2020 that registered players actually fell by 3.1% in 2022.

ABF Marketing provides at least two pages in the bi-monthly ABF Newsletter of marketing advice for both clubs and congresses. In April 2022 we encouraged clubs to contact absent members personally to return and to plan and start beginners lessons again.

In the August 2022 Marketing column we took a lesson from the cinema experience for providing a PREMIUM SERVICE, and paraphrased this for bridge: "With the world of bridge available from our lounges and bedrooms, clubs need to provide the unique sensory and premium club experience to convince players to continue visiting in person. Clubs and congresses need to work hard on improving their product, facilities, number of sessions, teaching, directing, air conditioning, coffee and food, toilets, transport, parking, social environment and providing a friendly club."

Providing a Premium service does not require expensive spending by the clubs. In the Randwick Bridge Club in Maroubra, Sydney as President I introduced specially-made mini lamingtons for Australia Day, chocolates for Valentines Day and Anzac biscuits for Anzac Day. Not expensive but goodwill gestures to our members. On the administration side I am mentoring two younger players as directors and new club committee members. Hopefully they become office holders in the future, maybe President. We had fewer than ten tables after COVID and are now getting 14-15 tables, one of the largest in Sydney for face-to-face bridge on a Saturday.

ABF Registered Players - End June

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2022/2023		2019/2023		Gr MPs	Share
						Diff	Chge	Diff	Chge		
ACT	924	866	1001	945	932	-13	-1.4%	8	0.9%	13.6%	3.1%
NSW	13760	12900	12000	11113	11074	-39	-0.4%	-2686	-19.5%	-33.2%	36.3%
VIC	5543	4980	5073	4729	4958	229	4.8%	-585	-10.6%	4.4%	16.3%
QLD	7408	7157	6750	6459	6350	-109	-1.7%	-1058	-14.3%	-21.1%	20.8%
SA	2247	2136	2242	2172	2297	125	5.8%	50	2.2%	41.4%	7.5%
WA	4143	3985	3928	3905	3886	-19	-0.5%	-257	-6.2%	-7.9%	12.8%
TAS	863	868	901	828	841	13	1.6%	-22	-2.5%	-0.7%	2.8%
NT	133	131	129	131	132	1	0.8%	-1	-0.8%	-13.3%	0.4%
Total	35021	33023	32024	30282	30470	188	0.6%	-4551	-13.0%	-14.2%	100.0%
Change		-1998	-999	-1742	188						

In 2023, the fall in registered players appears to be turning, though by a very small amount. It differs markedly between states. Victoria leads the way with a 4.8% growth over the same time in 2022. SA has increased, or been uplifted to use the current lingo, by 5.8%, but this is heavily affected by the performance of the online club Stepbridge. NSW has continued to decrease and is down by nearly 20% on 2019 or 2686 players, far more than any other state and more than all the other states combined.

VOLUME OF BRIDGE PLAYED

In the USA and England registered players are actually members of their National Bridge Organisation (NBO) and they count the number of tables played. In Australia, ABF Marketing uses Green Masterpoints as a proxy to measure the volume of bridge played in standard bridge clubs. Red points can also be measured in this way.

The column titled 'Gr MPs Diff' shows that in the Quarter April-June in 2023 this was down 14.2% compared to registered players being down by 13% for the same period. This is actually good news because the volume was down by about 20% in earlier periods so the frequency of play is increasing to near pre-COVID times.

NSW is a very important state because of its large number of bridge players, but its share of registered players has fallen from 39% to 36% in the last four years. Qld share has also fallen marginally but Vic, SA and WA have all increased by small percentages.

LEADERSHIP

It is difficult to know which clubs have followed the ABF marketing advice, and whether this has contributed to your club's performance.

In my more than 40 years of corporate experience, research, writing and commentating it has been my observation that many of the most successful businesses throughout history have been driven by one outstanding leader. Bridge clubs are just a microcosm of society and most successful bridge clubs are driven by strong leadership.

If you have good bridge management success then write to abfmarketing.com.au and tell us your story so we can use it in our marketing column for the benefit of all bridge clubs.

LEAFLETS

You know that we believe that your members are your greatest sales force for attracting new members.

One of the oldest and most successful marketing materials is the humble flyer or leaflet. Some argue that with so much of marketing being online now, and less being inserted in your mail boxes, the leaflets are more likely to be read. Real Estate sales certainly seem to like leaflets to sell high value property.

Previously examples of flyers have always been available on the [Marketing Page](#) of the ABF website. However PDFs have proven difficult to use to provide information on your lessons or clubs on the flyer. Currently you really need a 'PDF editor' and a

person skilled to use it to be able to insert the lesson dates, times, club name, address and contacts.

English Bridge Union Instructions for editing the PDF: Once you have downloaded the PDF, you can edit the document by opening it as a Word document. To do so, open Microsoft Word, go to File - Open and find the downloaded PDF document. Microsoft Word will then make a copy of the PDF as a Word document which you can edit. Click on the blank space. This will show you a new menu. Select Draw Text Box, you can then draw the box for text in the white box. Once you have this you can input your text as you see fit. Save the document once complete and then it will be suitable for printing.

Now, if that seems rather complicated ABF Marketing is experimenting with making flyers for Beginners or Intermediate lessons that are more readily usable and accessible for clubs.

Our graphic artist, Ange Bettess, has provided a basic flyer and if you provide all the information she will insert it into the leaflet. Ange will email it back to you and all you have to do is print out the flyer in your club. If you do not have a colour printer, or you want volume printing, take it to your local instant print shop. A link will be provided on [Marketing Materials](#) page on the ABF Website.



Below are some ideas for where you might like to put the posters and leaflets:

- Sports clubs and associations including: Golf, Bowls, Tennis, Chess, Gyms, Swimming, Social and Community Centres
- Public Noticeboards including Libraries, Schools and church noticeboards
- Fairs, Fetes, Conferences and shop windows

- Local social media groups including Facebook and Instagram
- Waiting Rooms including Hairdressers, Doctors, Dentists and Hospitals
- Your Bridge Club web site.



BridgeTV has had a busy couple of months providing live broadcast commentary on the Victorian Championships, the Australian National Championships from Perth and the NABC 2023 Spingold knockout championships from Chicago in the USA.

The Spingold was very exciting as the Australian Hans team made it all the way from the round of 64 to the semi-finals. The Australian Team was Sartaj Hans - Andy Hung and Nabil Edgtton - Michael Whibley (NZ). This was one of the best efforts ever from an Australian team and hopefully in the future they will make it one more level and win one of the world's major titles.

The semi-final broadcast is available on the [BridgeTV You Tube channel](#), or here is the YouTube video:

<https://youtu.be/F6z4H945C2Y>

Next events coming up are the World Youth Championships from the Netherlands and the World Championships from Morocco.

Check the [BridgeTV.com.au](https://www.bridgetv.com.au) web site for the latest expert tips and videos.

INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CONFERENCE ONLINE

RealBridge and BAMSA (Bridge: A MindSport for All) have arranged a short online conference on 7-8 October 2023 for bridge teachers, coaches and mentors.

The speakers are from around the world. Some material will be pre-recorded and subtitled. The entire conference will be recorded and made available subsequently.

TOPICS

- Information on new approaches to teaching
- Channels, ideas and tools to market the game and the services
- Benefits of providing or earning accreditation
- How teachers can become the best version of themselves through personal development
- Youth players: organisational considerations, successes, issues, attitudes of schools
- Best ways to teach children and youth: practices, techniques, interactions, differences from adult teaching.

Please complete [this form](#) so that we can send you more information about the event, pre-conference material, and joining link. The information we collect from you is solely related to this conference. To contact the event organisers: please email

events@realbridge.online

THREE GENERATIONS

Recently, for the first time in our 50 years of bridge at the Sale Bridge Club, we had three generations of the one family play at the same duplicate session.

Each played with another member of the club in what is quite an unusual occurrence.

Laurie Bjorksten is a long standing club member but in recent years over the pandemic his daughter Wendy Cummings and then her daughter Georgie Cummings attended our bridge education sessions followed by periods of supportive play before joining our duplicate sessions.

We were thrilled to have such an endorsement of the ability of bridge to be enjoyed by all age groups and potentially be played by families at home.

Rob Ziffer



What should I bid?

with Lauren Travis

The best submission for May came from Del Ford. She wins a voucher of \$30, funded by TBIB, toward any purchase made at Paul Lavings Bridgegear or The Bridge Shop.



Hi Lauren,

We're keeping you busy and we greatly appreciate the feedback.

This board was played at Beaumont on Monday 15 May. I sat West, partner East. 11 tricks were made in notrump but 12 are there. How do we find the Club slam?

We played Standard, short club. Gerber is in the System and so is RKCB. As East I would have asked for aces and kings and the answers would suggest 6NT, but there is a club grand slam.

S/NS	♠ J 7 5		
	♥ J 10 9 5 2		
	♦ J 7 5		
	♣ 7 5		
♠ A K 4		♠ Q 9 2	
♥ A K 6 3		♥ 7 4	
♦ 10 9		♦ A K 6 3	
♣ A 8 6 3		♣ K Q 10 9	
	♠ 10 8 6 3		
	♥ Q 8		
	♦ Q 8 4 2		
	♣ J 4 2		
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♣	pass	1♦	pass
2NT	pass	3NT	all pass

Hi Del,

Thanks for sending in another interesting problem.

As East, after my partner showed 18-19 HCP with their 2NT bid, I would definitely be going for slam. Minor suit slams are a lot trickier to bid than majors, because it's tougher to find a fit at a lower level, set trumps and keycard like you might in hearts or spades – especially when you have two balanced hands opposite each other.

The trick here is using the 5NT bid (which I'm sure wouldn't have been on your or your partner's radar, and fair enough). Many partnerships play a jump to 5NT as 'pick a slam', i.e. you know that you want to play in a small slam, but aren't sure which strain would be best. The idea is that partner can bid the lowest suit they're happy to play in (holding 4+

cards), and then you'll pass if you're happy with it or bid another suit as an offer to partner, with the fallback position of 6NT if you don't discover a fit.

In this case, your partner would bid 6♣ on their four-card suit, and you'd pass as you have found a fit. If they had, for example, a 4-4-2-3, they would bid 6♥ and you would correct to 6NT with confidence that you're not missing a fit in a minor.

If you do agree to play 5NT as 'pick a slam', note that it should be a jump to 5NT, and if used in a 4NT/RKCB auction it should retain its usual meaning as a king ask. It should only be 'pick a slam' if you haven't agreed a trump suit. More information and helpful examples can be found on several websites.

Keep the submissions coming!

Lauren



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TONY BEMROSE INSURANCE BROKERS

The best submission for June came from Lillian Haagensen. She wins a voucher of \$30, funded by TBIB, toward any purchase made at Paul Lavings Bridgegear or The Bridge Shop.

Hi Lauren,

South realised it could be a transfer to spades from North but thought it had been interrupted by West's bid of 2♦ so left it at 2♥.

Was this correct bidding or should a) North have bid 2♠, leaving it for South to raise if possible OR b) North have bid 2♥ indicating a transfer to spades and South responding by bidding 2♠?

Hi Lillian,

Thanks for writing in. This is a great question because it's something that can come up frequently – whenever the opponents interfere over your 1NT opening or overcall.

In general, it's best to play 'system off' when this happens. Without having discussed it with my partner, I would have done what South did and passed. I will add that West's 2♦ bid is absolutely wild and I wouldn't recommend it!

After the opponents bid over your 1NT opening or overcall, most people go back to basic, first principles, natural responses. Two-level bids are natural and non-forcing, and three-level bids are natural and forcing. Therefore, with North's hand I would bid 2♠ to play there. If North had a game-forcing hand they could bid 3♠ to show five spades, and allow South to choose between 3NT and 4♠ depending on their fit. A double would be takeout with some decent points and very likely both majors, asking partner to bid a four-card major if they have one.

It's not applicable on this deal but you could also look into the Lebensohl convention, where North's

W/Nil		♠ Q 8 7 5 2	
		♥ 10 5 2	
		♦ A 10 9	
		♣ 10 2	
♠ A J 6			♠ 10 3
♥ A 8 7			♥ Q J 9 6 3
♦ J 8 6 4			♦ 5 2
♣ K J 6			♣ 7 5 4 3
		♠ K 9 4	
		♥ K 4	
		♦ K Q 7 3	
		♣ A Q 9 8	
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♦	pass	pass	1NT
2♦	2♥	all pass	

2NT would force South to bid 3♣, over which North can bid naturally. This can help your partnership compete when the opponents overcall and responder has a distributional hand but not enough points to make a game-forcing three-level response (e.g. a hand that would have transferred to a minor).

As a side note, a common approach is that when the auction begins 1x - Pass - Pass, the fourth seat 1NT overcall is weaker than a direct 1NT overcall – often 11-14 HCP (although I prefer 13-16 HCP). This is useful to support your partnership to get into the auction when the second player (who passed over the opening bid) had a hand with some HCP but an unsuitable shape for an overcall or takeout double. With a strong NT hand, you can double initially then rebid 1NT (or support partner's suit if you have a fit).

Keep up the good work!

Lauren

Len Dixon's bridge column

Readers of "The Canberra Times" should have noticed that Len's bridge column of 55 years has been discontinued. This is the same fate that has befallen several special interest groups including chess and angling.

Since 1968, Len (aged 101) has written the bridge column in The Canberra Times, which has highlighted ACT players and their achievements and publicised ACT events.

Len's family have created a website "Bridge Notes with Len" where he can continue to entertain his readers and provide support to Canberra bridge with fortnightly online columns. Please subscribe if you'd like to support his work.

<https://www.lendixonbridge.com/>

MYABF UPDATE

with Julian Foster

myABF Project Manager
julian.foster@abf.com.au

myABF continues to grow. At the time of writing there are now 14,219 users. Of those 8,551 are "registered" and 5,668 are "unregistered". It's perhaps worth explaining what that means.

A registered user is someone who has themselves signed up for a myABF account.

An unregistered user is someone who has not got their own account but has been added to the system by a club as a member.

Clubs can now upload their member list (from the Masterpoint Centre or other external records). This allows them to send communications to their members, or to allow the system to calculate the right table money for players attending club sessions when myABF is being used for that (see below). In future, clubs will also be able to fully manage their members, including issuing annual membership renewals and tracking payments.

There are several reasons to be registered:

- To have your own profile so that you control what personal information is in the system
- To be able to enter events directly
- To have a bridge credits account and make online payments
- To be able to view forum posts and club session results via your dashboard
- To be able to receive email notifications from your club or event organisers for the events you have entered.

Bridge credits can be more than you think!

Many people are still unsure what bridge credits are; or are uncomfortable with the concept. In short, bridge credits are purely dollars sitting in an online account a player can hold with the ABF. They can then be used to pay for bridge activities booked via myABF. Until fairly recently that has only been for congress entries but, if your club offers the facility, it's now also possible to use them to pay for club sessions. With money in your account, you can just turn up and play and the table fees are automatically taken from your account (the club uploads a list of the players at the session). It's a lot more convenient than messing around with cash or vouchers or paying small amounts of table money via EFTPOS



(which costs your club higher transaction fees). You can also set up "auto top-up" where you authorise a top-up payment to be taken from your card when the account balance drops below \$20 (very similar to public transport cards).

Just to clarify once again – the ABF never stores, or even sees, your card details. Every online payment is handled via Stripe, one of the largest online payment providers in the world. If you want to know more, see the frequently asked questions on the myABF Resources pages in the main ABF website here:

[www.abf.com.au/member-services/
my-abf-resources/](http://www.abf.com.au/member-services/my-abf-resources/)

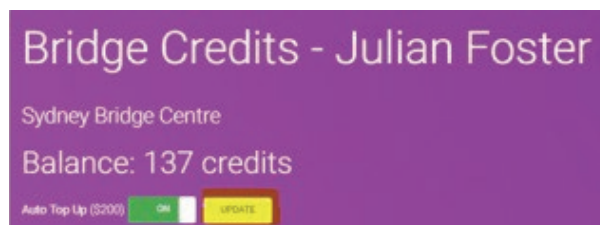
But bridge credits have other possibilities! Here's an extract from my own bridge credits account:

	Date	Type	Description	Credits In	Credits Out	Balance
1	22 Apr 2023	Member Transfer	Tennis		50.00	570.00
1	19 Apr 2023	Member Transfer	ANOT Accom	555.00		620.00

Neither of these items are payments in myABF for a congress entry, they are transfers to and from other people – in one case nothing to do with bridge at all! Because we all use credits regularly for entering events, we just transfer them to each other to pay for things just like we would with regular money. Much easier! When you transfer credits to someone else the transaction (with the description) is visible in both your statements and an email notification is also sent to both parties.

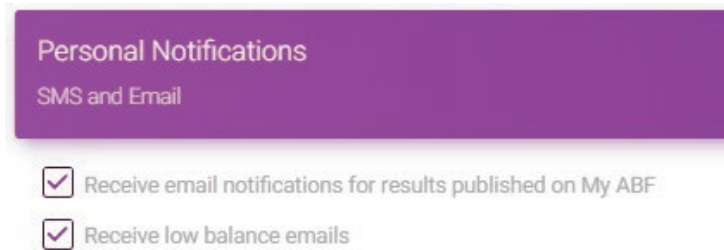
Changing card details

I am sometimes asked how people update the card they have set up for auto top-up – or change the amount they want the system to top up. It's done via the header of your statement - there's an Update button next to the auto top-up switch. That lets you update either the card or the amount.



SMS – clarification of settings

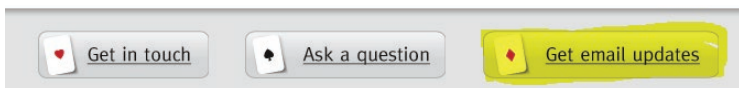
In your myABF settings page you have these options:



There has been some (understandable) confusion about these. The first of these settings is NOT, as many people assume, anything to do with SMS notification of results or draws at tournaments. It is to do with clubs publishing their duplicate pairs results on myABF and players receiving an email notification of those results. Players have the choice here to opt out of receiving such emails if they wish.

At the moment there is no longer any setting in myABF directly related to receiving SMS for tournaments (yes, the title in the above settings page needs changing to remove "SMS"). That's because, as explained in the last newsletter's article, things are still in flux and it's likely future notifications of tournament results and draws will instead be delivered via a mobile app (details to come).

It's possible your congress may still be using the old SMS notification system, but that's nothing to do with myABF. You actually sign up for that via the form at the bottom of the main ABF webpage:



Here's a direct link as well:

www.abfevents.com.au/forms/signup/

Note that this system was only ever a prototype and behind the scenes is quite rudimentary. It is therefore going to be turned off – probably within the next couple of months.

MAINLY FOR CLUBS

BECOMING ACTIVE IN myABF

All clubs have now been set up in myABF but many are not yet active. To become active a club needs to have an administrator who sees their Club Admin menus and can control who else should have access. Just let us know who you want that to be and your club can be ready to go in a matter of seconds!

CLUB WORKSHOPS

In June I was in Perth for two workshops with clubs, showing them the options now available for use of myABF. For one of these we had a Zoom meeting running so clubs from outside the Perth area could also participate.

I was also in Adelaide for a similar workshop on 30 July. It's likely the same will happen in other states too. Come along and learn more!

VIEWING YOUR BRIDGE CREDITS STATEMENT

The latest changes made to myABF allow clubs a lot more flexibility when looking at their own bridge credits statements. Date ranges, filter by transaction types (Sessions, Congresses, Events, etc) are all now available as well as a new Excel download. This should make it easier to identify what is making up your club's balance should you need to.



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SIGNAL FAILURE

Brad Coles

Three signalling problems from the finals of the Australian National Championships in Perth

The penultimate 12-board stanza of the ANC Final delivered these three boards with a common theme:

Board 5	♠ K 9 2	
N/NS	♥ A Q 10 9 8 4	
	♦ J 10 3	
	♣ Q	
♠ J 6 5 4		♠ Q 3
♥ K		♥ 7 3
♦ 9 5		♦ A K 6 4 2
♣ J 10 9 7 6 5		♣ K 8 4 3
	♠ A 10 8 7	
	♥ J 6 5 2	
	♦ Q 8 7	
	♣ A 2	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Travis	Appleton	Markey	Coles
	2♦ ¹	dbl	4♦ ²
pass	4♥	all pass	

1. 10-12 or 17+, single-suited good major suit.
2. Putting the doubler on lead, to lead away from strength.

Our auction was unique, as always, but most other tables reached the same contract in a more standard auction. All eight Easts led the ♦K, but only half of them found the diamond continuation and the ruff.

Phil Markey led the ♦K, Lauren Travis followed with the five (reverse count), and declarer falsecarded with the ten. The killing defence is to continue with the ace and a diamond ruff, but Markey switched to a trump and 4♥ made.

Assuming Lauren did have the ♦3, her possible three-card holdings were ♦953 and ♦J53, but from either of these she would have played a higher card, not the five. In any case, if Lauren had three, continuing with the ♦A would be no worse than the actual trump switch. Likewise, ♦J953 is not consistent with the count card, although some other partnerships (not this one) have an agreement to always play high from four when dummy has queen-third.

So what went wrong? The real story is that Phil forgot to look at dummy's pip until it was too late. Some players would simply ask, "Can I see that trick

again?" making the opponents the villains if they say no. Phil took the honourable path of quietly accepting his error, and he placed partner with ♦J975! Even then, he was very close to cashing the ace anyway, as he correctly suspected that a doubleton might be his only chance to beat the contract (unlike other tables, our North had promised six trumps).

So, what went wrong at the other tables?

At our other table, my teammate Sebastian Yuen got it right after declarer falsecarded with the jack. Similarly, Zoli Nagy in the Seniors found the ruff after a jack from declarer, and in the Youth both Jamie Simpson and Alex Goss found the winning defence.

At the other Seniors table, and at both tables in the Women's final, East failed to find the diamond continuation (in one case, after the ♦3 from declarer).

That was a relatively easy problem – in fact, the falsecards should actually have simplified the defence, in a way. If declarer wants to pretend to hold a singleton, the ♦3 is the best chance, allowing West to unambiguously show an even number. Playing the ten or the jack rules out both a three-card and a four-card holding with West, clearly marking West with a doubleton. West would never play the five from ♦953, ♦J53 or ♦J953.

Two boards later, West faced a tougher problem that five of the six players failed to solve:

Board 7	♠ Q J 6 2	
S/All	♥ K Q J 2	
	♦ 8 3	
	♣ K J 9	
♠ A K 7 4		♠ 8
♥ 3		♥ 10 9 5
♦ Q 9		♦ A J 10 7 6 5
♣ Q 10 8 5 4 3		♣ 7 6 2
	♠ 10 9 5 3	
	♥ A 8 7 6 4	
	♦ K 4 2	
	♣ A	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Travis	Appleton	Markey	Coles
2♣	2NT raise	3♦	1♠ ^{9-12, canape}
all pass			4♠

We were the only pair to play in 4♠, which seems to be a better spot than 4♥. Sadly for me, despite East's lead-directing 3♦ bid, Lauren had a clear heart lead. She ultimately put her partner in with a diamond and received a heart ruff for one off.

Most other tables played in 4♥, which seems to have a simpler path to one off:

WEST Geromboux	NORTH De Livera	EAST Yuen	SOUTH Croft
2♣	3♣	pass	1♥
all pass			4♥

At our teammates' table, Christy Geromboux led the ♠K, playing reverse count. Declarer, Nic Croft, falsecarded with the ♠9. Unable to read the singleton, Christy switched to a club, hoping for a club ruff (bare ace with partner) or a misguess (♣Ax).

In the Women's final (one pair playing reverse attitude, the other playing reverse count), declarer Kim Frazer also played the ♠9, and West also switched. At the other table, declarer did not falsecard, but West switched to a club anyway for a flat 620.

In the Seniors final (also reverse attitude), declarer Andrew Eddie made a milder falsecard with the ♠5, and West switched to a trump. (At the other table East 'saved' in 5♣ for -800.)

Only one player, George Bartley in the Youth, found the spade ruff. His opponent played ♠5 at trick one. The difference between this board and the previous one, is that here the falsecard of the nine was believable. On Board 5, declarer wanted to portray his ♦J103 as a singleton, but he didn't have the pips to do that. Concealing the ♦3 just made West's doubleton look like a three-card suit, and an impossible one at that. On Board 7, declarer was able to conceal both of the low pips, turning a singleton eight into a possible 8-5-3. Playing the five was less effective, as there is no holding where that can be a true card (with ♠983, ♠1083, or ♠10983, East would never play an ambiguous eight).

Some players are in the habit of falsecarding randomly in these situations, but a useful principle is to falsecard using the opponents' attitude methods. For example:

♥ 9 3 2	
♥ K Q 10 8	♥ 6 5
♥ A J 7 4	

Playing reverse signals (low encourage) West leads the king and East discourages with the six. I've seen a declarer falsecard with the seven in this position, but that just makes East's six look higher and more discouraging. South's correct play is to 'encourage' with the four, portraying East with ♥J76.

If the opponents were playing natural signals, you would mimic them: play high to encourage a lead. In the above example, East discourages with the five. Now it is correct for South to falsecard, 'encouraging' with the seven and portraying East with ♥J54.

On my final exhibit, this rule will not work, because declarer doesn't hold any card low enough to convey a convincing encouraging signal:

Board 10	♠ 4 3	
E/All	♥ A Q 8 7 5	
	♦ K 10 9 7 5	
	♣ 7	
♠ A Q 10 2		♠ K 5
♥ K 9 6 4		♥ J 10
♦ J 3		♦ 6 2
♣ A Q 2		♣ J 10 9 8 6 5 4
	♠ J 9 8 7 6	
	♥ 3 2	
	♦ A Q 8 4	
	♣ K 3	

WEST Travis	NORTH Appleton	EAST Markey	SOUTH Coles
3NT	all pass	3♣	pass

Unsurprisingly, no other table played in 3NT, so a lot of imps were on the line here. David Appleton decided to have two bites at beating the contract. He started with the ♥A, planning to switch to diamonds if I discouraged. I did my best, playing a high-discourage ♥3, declarer following with the six.

At first I didn't see the point in Lauren's concealment of the four, as the six is a transparent falsecard (David knows I would never play an ambiguous three if I also held both the four and the two).

However, if Lauren had 'encouraged' with the four, she would have been relying on David's fear that it was a falsecard from ♥942 or similar. She wanted to pretend she held the two; with that in mind, the ♥6 allowed her to play into the illusion, making it totally clear to declarer that she really was falsecarding.

Reading declarer's holding as ♥962, David continued with a low heart. Declarer ran the ♣J and claimed 12 tricks, collecting 13 imps and completing the South Australian recovery from a 42-imp deficit.

Congratulations to the South Australians (Nic Croft, Arjuna De Livera, Phil Markey, Lauren Travis, David Parrott, George Smolanko). The four sessions that we played against Phil and Lauren were the highlight of the week for me, and it was no surprise to learn that they also won the award for best pair on datum (and went on to finish second in the Butler Pairs, behind Chris Depasquale and Michael Courtney).

South Australia also won the Women's (Therese Demarco, Felicity Smyth, Alison Fallon, Pam Morgan-King, Ingrid Cooke, Anne Harris) and Seniors (Russel Harms, Zolly Nagy, Andrew Eddie, Kevin Lange, David Cherry, Lori Smith), and made the final of the Youth (losing to the Victorian team of Damon Flicker, Seb Wright, Alex Goss, Simon Pui, Taydon Gold, Matthew Sieredzinski). The four South Australian teams dedicated their excellent result to David Lusk, who passed away shortly before the event.

Bringing new youth players into bridge

by Nico Ranson

Recently, Australian bridge has had a big success in luring unwary youths into playing bridge at the Illawarra Bridge Congress retreat. This event was to be my proof of concept of how to get new youth players addicted to the class A illicit material that is bridge. After its success, we hope to establish and grow this event as an annual feature of the youth calendar, and to expand to have similar events in each state. I have been asked to share my largely unsubstantiated opinions on the subject of youth bridge so that similar events can be boldly and thoroughly plagiarised like an undergraduate maths assignment at 11:45pm on the due date.



Personally, I decided to run this event as a slight remuneration to youth bridge while I enjoyed a hard-earned period of unemployment after my PhD. Starting at 18, and well before I had proven myself, youth bridge organisations were quick to grant me a whirlwind of national and international travel representing NSW and Australia. Thanks to this, I now have a host of unbelievable memories travelling overseas with friends, competing live at the highest level, and even have some conversation pieces to counterbalance my bridge rants at parties. The best way that I or my peers can give back to the incredible bridge community that has brought us so far is to bring new youth players into the game and pass on these opportunities that most don't know they have.

For quite a while now a group of youth players has been developing in Sydney based on the idea that even an absolute novice can have a good time at bridge if we're at a pub and surrounded by the circus that is the youth bridge scene. The idea to host a weekend retreat to play in the Illawarra Bridge Congress was an extension of this idea. Over the weekend of 16-18 June, 28 youth bridge players and a few guardians waltzed into the Bulli Beach tourist park to spend two festive nights in cheap, beachfront cabins. To bring in so many youth players, the weekend had to be:

1. All expenses paid, so that even university students that have traded in their mattresses for noodles could attend. This included covering guardian's attendance and organising private cabins for families;
2. Minimal commitment, so that all people had to do was say "oh ok, FINE", and they were registered for the event. This included taking care of the accommodation, food and drinks, and entries to the event. Players could also play in a single day or as parts of large teams where they could swap out for a rest;





3. Fun! Bridge had to sneakily feature in the weekend, and not be the entire focus. New players, particularly novices, are not keen to spend two days in a darkened room getting thrashed at bridge. We also had games, parties, frigid winter swims, cafe breakfasts, barbeques, and so on.

4. Well balanced. It was important to put new and slightly intimidated players with fun and patient experienced (not necessarily good) players to help them along the way.

With these features sorted, it was a lot easier to employ my host of bullying and intimidation practices to get attendees. Sadly, I initially limited the number of possible attendees to 28 per day, thinking this was ambitious and unlikely to be reached. I was wrong. Of the total of 31 different youth players that attended, eight were absolute beginners who got a new ABF number. I believe seven of these players are now

full-time, skin-scratching, hopeless addicts. We had a further six players with under 30 masterpoints, and crucially we had the delightful Flynn, 12 and Marlowe, 13 (pictured) as well as the merciless Duncan, 16 and Adrian, 17 (all of whom we will soon see on the NSW youth team), and even my own beleaguered wife.

All this for a total cost of \$3400, and a further \$2000 for youth entries to the event, \$1000 of which was donated by West Illawarra to the Illawarra Bridge Association (IBA). I was delighted by the level of support I received from various bridge organisations and particularly from Marie Pickering at the IBA, who even helped organise a five-minute slot on the local radio for me to spread the good word. This all helped build a beyond sell-out event, with 68 pairs and 32 teams (the congress had to be expanded to allow more players). We have received extremely positive feedback from the youth attendees who are now looking forward to the annual Illawarra bridge & beach weekend.



One of the things that most kept me playing bridge was the community it brought with it. No matter if I was playing in Tamworth, Amsterdam, Seoul, or even the mighty Hamilton, NZ, there was always that same crowd of fun, inclusive, and slightly mad bridge players that made every event memorable. I believe having events like this one in the middle of the calendar year where players are able to see their retinue of bridge friends will be a major draw for keeping new players in the game. And, if they love it, they'll try to convince their friends along too. Learning bridge is a major commitment, so we need to make the benefits stand out to youth players who have the whole world trying to capture their attention. This is how a lot of sports try to bring in players, and it's well past time that bridge was counted as a sport, for my resumé if nothing else.

In my eyes, it would not be too difficult to host a similar event in each state that already has a decent base of youth players. It also helps to choose a medium-sized tournament in an accessible town in its off season that is not far from a major city. This makes it easy to get to but still a weekend away, a lot cheaper to host, and

usually features less competitively-minded bridge players willing to deal with the gut-wrenching datums that youth players are famous for setting. A good example location would be Geelong, Victoria's slightly misguided answer to Wollongong.

In the meantime, we will continue to build bridge's image as an excellent way to have a good time for youth players, and are scheming to expand into university clubs. There's funding available to anyone who is willing to expand youth bridge, and the heavenly bridge bodies that be want it to be used. Just talk to your local club, state body, or the ABF, and let the scheming begin.



SUMMER

NABC

Brad Coles

The Australian / New Zealand team of Sartaj Hans - Andy Hung and Nabil Edgtton - Michael Whibley had another success at the North American nationals last month, beating several top international teams in the Spingold. These teams included the current USA national team, Spector (John Hurd, John Kranyak, Gavin Wolpert, Warren Spector, Kevin Bathurst and Vincent Demuy).

I liked this thoughtful play from Michael Whibley in the round of 16 match against Spector:

Board 21	♠ 6 5	
N/NS	♥ A K J	
	♦ A J 10	
	♣ J 9 8 7 4	
♠ K J		♠ 7 3
♥ 5 4 2		♥ Q 10 9 7 6 3
♦ K 7 6 5 3		♦ Q 9 8
♣ 10 5 2		♣ Q 3
	♠ A Q 10 9 8 4 2	
	♥ 8	
	♦ 4 2	
	♣ A K 6	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Hans	Hurd	Hung	Bathurst
	1NT	pass	2♥
pass	2♠	pass	4♥
pass	4♠	all pass	

East led the ♣Q, simplifying the play. Declarer cashed the trump ace and claimed 12 tricks. Whibley had a tougher job at the other table:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Demuy	Whibley	Kranyak	Edgtton
	1NT	pass	2♥
pass	2♠	pass	3♥
pass	3♠	pass	4♦
pass	4♥	pass	4NT
pass	5♥	pass	6♠
all pass			

Here East led a trump, declarer rising with dummy's ace and seeing the jack fall. Declarer can now see eleven tricks, and the twelfth can come from either a doubleton club queen or a heart finesse. The problem: if declarer attempts to draw trumps, West will win the trump king and return a heart. Now declarer will be forced to decide how to play the hearts, before finding out how the clubs are falling.

Members of the Spingold semi-finalist
Hans team, Andy Hung and Nabil Edgtton



Whibley found a smart but simple solution: he cashed the ace-king of clubs before drawing trumps! When the queen dropped, he was able to force out the trump king and then claim the slam. If the ♣Q had not fallen, he would have immediately played a heart to the jack, throwing his two losers on the ♥AK.

Cashing the ace-king in your eight-card suit before drawing trumps is not usually a recommended play, but on this occasion Whibley had the situation under control. The fall of the trump jack at trick one marked West with either a singleton jack or, more likely, king-jack doubleton. In either case, there was no need to worry about West ruffing the king of clubs. Meanwhile, if East had held a singleton club and two small trumps, he probably would have led the singleton. Whibley was confident that if his ♣K was in danger of being ruffed, it would be ruffed with the king of trumps.

The team played well throughout this match, and were 16 imps up with four boards to play. They extended the lead here:

Board 27	♠ 10 4 3
S/Nil	♥ 4 2
	♦ A J 9 5
	♣ 7 5 4 3

♠ A J 6 2
♥ 5 3
♦ Q 2
♣ K J 9 8 6

♠ Q 8 7
♥ K J 7 6
♦ 8 7 6 4 3
♣ 2

♠ K 9 5
♥ A Q 10 9 8
♦ K 10
♣ A Q 10

WEST Hans	NORTH Hurd	EAST Hung	SOUTH Bathurst
			1♥
pass	1NT	pass	2NT
all pass			

East led the ♦7 and declarer correctly rose with the king to keep communications fluid. He continued the suit, cashing four tricks when the queen appeared. In hand for the only time, he played a heart to the queen and cashed the ace. West was now down to only black cards, so declarer played ace and another club, putting West on lead for a spade away from the ace. (In practice West declined to win the second club, letting South's ♣Q win the eighth trick.)

At the other table, once again Whibley had the tougher assignment:

WEST Demuy	NORTH Whibley	EAST Kranyak	SOUTH Edgton
			1♥
pass	1NT	pass	2♣ ¹
pass	2♥ ²	pass	3NT
all pass			

1. Gazzilli.

2. Heart tolerance, 5-7 HCP.

East led the ♠7, and West erred by playing low. While this would have allowed the suit to run quickly if East had led from Q1087, I doubt that West was expecting that to happen – declarer would surely have covered with dummy's nine on that layout. More likely he was just hoping to keep communications open and take three spades later in the play.

Whibley won with the ♠10 and put the extra entry to good use by finessing dummy's ♥8. He then led the ♦10, presumably planning to overtake with the ♦J for another heart finesse, but Demuy smartly blocked the suit by putting in the ♦Q, forcing Whibley to win with the ace and leaving his diamond winners stranded.

Whibley took another heart finesse, unblocked the ♦K, and cashed ace and another heart. With six tricks already taken, and the long heart now established, East was on lead in this position:

♠ 4 3	
♥ —	
♦ J 9	
♣ 7 5	
♠ A J 2	♠ Q 8
♥ —	♥ —
♦ —	♦ 7 6 4
♣ K J 8	♣ 2
♠ K 9	
♥ 10	
♦ —	
♣ A Q 10	

East led a spade, and West got his three spade tricks, but then had to lead a club into the ace-queen. The fifth heart was the ninth trick.

A club exit from East would have fared no better, as declarer would have had a choice of winning options; most likely he would let West win the jack, receiving a ninth trick in whichever suit West returned.

Making 3NT was worth 7 imps, extending the lead to a decisive 23 imps, ultimately winning 138-125.

The team went on to eliminate another world-class team in the quarter-final, before a narrow loss in the semi-final. The semi-final was the team's tenth consecutive day of play, with all four players having played throughout (all other teams in the round of 16 were playing as six-person teams).

While it is reasonably rare for Australian players to reach this level in a major NABC event, this was Andy Hung's second consecutive appearance in the semi-final of the Spingold. He reached the same point with Liam Milne as part of the Bramley team last year.

WBF Grand Master

Congratulations to Mike Cornell on becoming the first World Grand Master from New Zealand and from Zone 7.

In a representative career spanning more than 40 years, Mike's stand-out tournament (so far!) has been the 2016 World Bridge Games in Wroclaw. He and long-time partner Ash Bach made the quarter-finals of the Open Teams, and then stormed home with a spectacular 75.4% in the last ten-board segment of the Open Pairs to tie for first.

By winning the Zone 7 Playoff just completed in Hong Kong, Mike gathered the last 0.5 Placing Points he needed to gain the WBF's highest title.



Anna Gudge, WBF

The VCC on track at The Valley

Kim Frazer

In 2023, the Victor Champion Cup was held for the first time at the Moonee Valley Racing Club. Melbourne turned on spectacular winter weather with sunny days and cool nights. The new venue offered a bright playing area, and in addition to the lunches that could be ordered each day, an ample choice of eateries were available nearby for lunch and dinner for those who wanted to venture out for a short walk. With Quest apartments directly opposite the venue and other accommodation including an excellent hotel a short walk away, players had the choice of staying nearby, or choosing a city location and taking a tram, train or uber to the venue. As a local I made a number of restaurant recommendations, which were well received by those who gave them a try.

The bridge action kicked off on Thursday/Friday with the Pairs events held over 8 x 14-board rounds. The Open Wally Scott event was won by Dominik Kwok and Bijan Assaee, who proved too consistent in the end to win by a 10 VP margin. The Jim and Norma Borin Mixed Pairs went to Sydney pair Giselle Mundell and Andrew Peake, who had a comprehensive victory, while the Victor Muntz Restricted Pairs went to local Moonee Valley husband and wife Lynda and Philip Young (pictured) who came from behind with a solid win in the final round for a narrow victory.



The Victor Champion Cup Open teams saw pre-tournament favourites' Milne (Sartaj Hans, Andy Hung, Liam Milne, James Coutts) finish as runners-up to the Spooner team: Andrew Spooner - Ian Thomson (pictured above in play against Open Pairs runners-up Josh Tomlin and David Gue) and Matt Mullamphy - Ron Klinger. Spooner were victorious in every match and led almost from start to finish.

The field were treated to some fabulous deals including this one from the second round which threw up a wild array of results – everything from 5♣ doubled by South for -800 to 3♣ doubled by South making 10 for 570. However, most tables played in 4♥ (or 5♥ doubled and undoubled) for a variety of results.

♠ K Q J 7 5	
♥ Q 5	
♦ 8 6 5 2	
♣ 7 3	
♠ —	♠ A 9 8 6 4 3
♥ 8 6 4	♥ A J 10 9 7 2
♦ A Q J 10 4 3	♦ 7
♣ Q 9 6 5	♣ —
♠ 10 2	
♥ K 3	
♦ K 9	
♣ A K J 10 8 4 2	

At our table the auction was:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	2♠	4♥	5♣
5♥	pass	pass	dbl
all pass			

2♠ was a mini weak two, which is increasing in popularity at favourable vulnerability and is certainly a destructive bid for the opponents to handle, particularly on hands like this one.

I think the double from South pushed my partner into thinking the heart layout was different, and he took the wrong line for two off.

For our champions, this board from the penultimate round produced a double game swing with NS playing in 4♠ making and EW playing in 4♥ making:

♠ A K Q 9 6 2	
♥ —	
♦ K 7 5 2	
♣ J 8 6	
♠ J 10	♠ 8 5 4 3
♥ 9 8 2	♥ A K J 7 6 5 4
♦ A 10 9	♦ 3
♣ A 10 5 3 2	♣ 4
♠ 7	
♥ Q 10 3	
♦ Q J 8 6 4	
♣ K Q 9 7	

While 4♠ can be beaten by leading either singleton for a ruff, it is hard for East to avoid leading a top heart to take a look at the table and get a signal from partner.

RESULTS

Open Teams: Andrew Spooner - Ian Thomson, Matt Mullamphy - Ron Klinger

Open Pairs: 1 Bijan Assaee - Dominic Kwok, 2 David Gue - Josh Tomlin, 3 Malcolm Carter - Bernard Waters

Mixed Swiss Pairs: 1 Andrew Peake - Giselle Mundell, 2 Vanessa Brown - Will Jenner-O'Shea, 3 Christy Geromboux - Sebastian Yuen

Restricted Swiss Pairs: 1 Lynda & Philip Young, 2 Sean Xie - Bei Tang, 3 Francis Rose - Viv Dacey

DISCOVERED GEM

Dennis Zines

At nil vulnerable with East the dealer, you hold as South:

♠ Q 10 7 ♥ Q 8 5 ♦ 10 3 ♣ A 10 9 3 2

After two passes, West opens 1♥ and partner doubles. East bids 2♥ and you come alive with a 3♣ bid. West bids 4♥ and while your partner possibly should have considered a penalty double, he instead opts for a 5♣ bid which East doubles. West leads the ♥A and this what you see:

♠ A J 5 3
♥ 4
♦ K Q J 9 8
♣ Q J 5

♠ Q 10 7
♥ Q 8 5
♦ 10 3
♣ A 10 9 3 2

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		pass	pass
1♥	dbl	2♥	3♣
4♥	5♣	dbl	all pass

East discourages the heart lead, so West tries a low spade which you run to the ♠Q, East playing the ♠9. You try a diamond to the ♦8 which East wins immediately to push through a heart which you ruff in dummy with the ♣5. The ♣Q is led, and all follow small. The ♣J follows which also wins but West shows out.

This now becomes a textbook deal. You need to execute a coup against East's ♣K and ♣8. For this to work you need to reduce your trumps to the same length and this is accomplished by ruffing the third diamond (with West showing out). A spade to the ♠J wins with the two diamonds following. A heart is pitched on the first diamond but the fifth and last diamond squashes East. If he ruffs, you over ruff, draw his last trump and finally score the ♠A.

If he pitches his spade, so do you, leaving you in dummy to complete the trump coup.

Here is the full deal:

♠ A J 5 3	
♥ 4	
♦ K Q J 9 8	
♣ Q J 5	
♠ K 8 4 2	♠ 9 6
♥ A K J 7 6 3	♥ 10 9 2
♦ 4 2	♦ A 7 6 5
♣ 7	♣ K 8 6 4
♠ Q 10 7	
♥ Q 8 5	
♦ 10 3	
♣ A 10 9 3 2	

Well, despite partner's failing to double 4♥ and potentially picking up 500 (three light), you have converted that into a plus 550. What fun.

Notice that this ending can be achieved even if East ducks the first diamond.

Sydney Spring Nationals



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IMPROVE YOUR DEFENCE

with Ron Klinger

Solution to problem on page 2

HEART FAILURE

Teams, South dealer, East-West vulnerable

♠ A 10 4
♥ J 8 2
♦ A K 8 2
♣ Q 6 4

♠ J 8 3 2
♥ A 9
♦ 10 4 3
♣ K 9 7 3



WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
pass	3NT	all pass	1NT ¹²⁻¹⁴

West leads the ♠2: four - five - king. Declarer plays the ♦7: four - ace - six (reverse count) and continues with the ♣4: five - jack - king. What should West do at trick 3?

The deal arose in an Asia-Pacific Open Teams.

S/EW	♠ A 10 4	♥ J 8 2	♦ A K 8 2	♣ Q 6 4
♠ J 8 3 2	♠ 7 6 5	♥ K Q 10 5 4 3	♦ J 6	♣ 10 5
♥ A 9	♥ 7 6	♦ Q 9 7 5	♠ K Q 9	♥ A J 8 2
♦ 10 4 3	♦ A J 8 2			
♣ K 9 7 3				

After South 1NT, North 3NT, all pass, West led the ♠2. Declarer played low from dummy, five from East and South took the ♠K. A diamond to the ace was followed by the ♣4: five - jack - king.

From trick 1 East is known not to have the ♠9 and West can place South with ♠K-Q-9. With spades futile, dummy so strong in diamonds and declarer tackling clubs, where can the defence find four more tricks to defeat 3NT? West can almost see

nine tricks for declarer: three spades, four diamonds and two clubs. Is it far-fetched for West to switch to ♥A and another heart?

In fact West continued spades and South had nine tricks for +400. At the other table, after the same auction, West led the ♥A. The defence took the first six tricks for +100 and +11 imps.

In another match North-South diagnosed the problem in the heart suit.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♦
pass	2♦ ¹	pass	2♠ ²
pass	3♣ ²	pass	3♦ ³
pass	3♠	pass	4♣
pass	4♦	pass	5♦
all pass			

1. 10+ points, forcing.
2. Stopper for 3NT.
3. Not forcing.

Lead: ♥A. There was good news and bad news. The good news is that North-South avoided 3NT. The bad news is that while 3NT might make on misdefence, 5♦ has no chance as the cards lie. Declarer always has a club loser and when the defence took the first two heart tricks and East played a third heart, the defence came to a trump trick, too.

At the other table:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♦
pass	1♥	pass	1NT
pass	3NT	all pass	

North's psychic 1♥ bid made it impossible for West to find the ♥A lead. Declarer won the ♠2 lead in dummy and immediately played a club to the jack. West took the king and continued spades. Nine tricks, +400 and +11 imps.

Should West find the heart switch here? Dummy's paltry hearts should be a big clue, and if East was able give a discouraging signal in spades that would help, too. Notice that a count signal in spades is of absolutely no use.

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A GAME AT THE CLUB

Barbara Travis

www.bridgeatbeaumont.com

You are East, playing in 4♥:

♠ K 8 3
♥ 9 7 4
♦ K Q 2
♣ A Q 9 3

♠ 6 5
♥ K Q J 3 2
♦ A 4 3
♣ K J 2

♠ K 10 9 5 3
♥ J 2
♦ A Q J 7
♣ 7 6

South leads the ♠J through dummy's king. You lose two spades and trump the third round. What next? Obviously you just need to draw trumps, since you have no losers outside of the trump suit. However, you should still allow for trumps to be 4-1. You can only manage 4-1 trumps if North holds A-x-x-x; if South holds A-10-x-x he has two more trump tricks (unless North has singleton ♥A). What does this mean? It means that you should lead trumps from dummy towards your K-Q-J.

Cross to dummy with the ♦Q and lead a trump. North plays low and your Jack wins. Now you must cross to dummy again – perhaps with a club – to lead hearts again. North plays low again and your queen wins, but South discards. That leaves North with the ♥A-10 still, so you must cross to dummy once more (use a diamond, your shorter suit), to lead a third heart. North is skewered. He can win his ♥A. You'll still go down if he has more spades, because a spade continuation will remove your last trump from hand, but you will make in all other scenarios.

I'm not sure how often I can recommend playing Splinter bids (showing support, game values and a singleton or void in the suit bid). Here's another example. You hold:

♠ A J 7 6 4
♥ A Q 8 7 5 4
♦ K 6
♣ —

You open 1♥, planning to reverse given the extra strength of your 5-6 hand shape. To your surprise, partner responds 1♠. You need to be able to jump to 4♣, a splinter bid. Now partner, holding:

♠ Q 9 5 2
♥ A 8 7 5 3
♦ K 8
♣ K 10

♠ A J 8 3
♥ K J
♦ A 9 6 3 2
♣ 7 4

WEST
1♥
2NT
4♠

EAST
2♦
3♠
Pass

must appreciate that you have shown four-card spade support, five hearts, a singleton or void in clubs, and enough values for game (with those points not being in clubs). They can use RKCB and you should reach 6♠ easily.

Here's another bidding hand:

♠ Q 9 5 2
♥ A 8 7 5 3
♦ K 8
♣ K 10

You open 1♥ and partner responds 2♦. What is your rebid?

If you rebid 2♠, you are reversing (bidding beyond your barrier), establishing a game-forcing auction opposite your partner's two-level response. (By the way, if you play two-over-one game forcing, unless you have agreed otherwise, the same principle applies!)

So, you should rebid 2NT, 12-14 HCP, balanced hand (no other bid available). If your partner has four spades, they should have the values to reverse themselves – which is game forcing when done by responder. On the actual hand, responder will bid 3♠ and you raise to 4♠.

How would you and your partner bid the following hands, East dealer?

♠ A 7 4	♠ Q 5 2
♥ 8	♥ A 6 4
♦ Q 8 6	♦ A K 10 9
♣ A Q 10 7 6 3	♣ K J 5

East opens 1NT, 15-17 HCP. What now?

If you play 2♠ as a transfer to a minor (weak), then you can't use that. You should probably just jump to 3NT and hope for the best. Of course, you will be very wrong when East holds ♥Q-x-x and the opponents take 5-6 heart tricks!

If you are now familiar and comfortable with your minor transfer, you should adopt four-suit transfers, with 2♠ being a transfer to clubs and 2NT being a transfer to diamonds. You will have to modify your usage of Stayman to include the balanced invitation-al hands (not necessarily holding a four-card major), but the gains outweigh that 'loss'. With a four-card major and a long minor, you can use Stayman. Then, if opener has not got your major, you can bid your long minor at the three-level. You have plenty of options. Here is how I would bid this hand, using four-suit transfers:

WEST

2♠ clubs
 3♥ heart shortage
 4♠ cue bid
 5♠ two key cards, ♣Q
 6♣ no king

EAST

1NT
 3♣ slam interest
 4NT
 5NT grand slam try

That is an disciplined auction to an excellent slam. And, if opener had held three little hearts, you will reach 5♣ or 6♣ (depending on their hand), instead of a ridiculous 3NT contract.

We'll finish with an opening lead problem. What would you lead against 3NT (no Stayman), holding:

♠ K Q 9 3 2
 ♥ 9 4 2
 ♦ J 6 3
 ♣ 5 2

I would lead the ♠3. Usually, leading an honour promises 3 honours. The problem with leading the ♠K is that, if partner holds A-x, you have blocked the suit. Similarly, if partner holds J-x, declarer can duck the first round, and when partner's jack appears on the second round, they duck again – and the suit cannot be returned. (On the hand, your partner held J-x, so the latter happened.)



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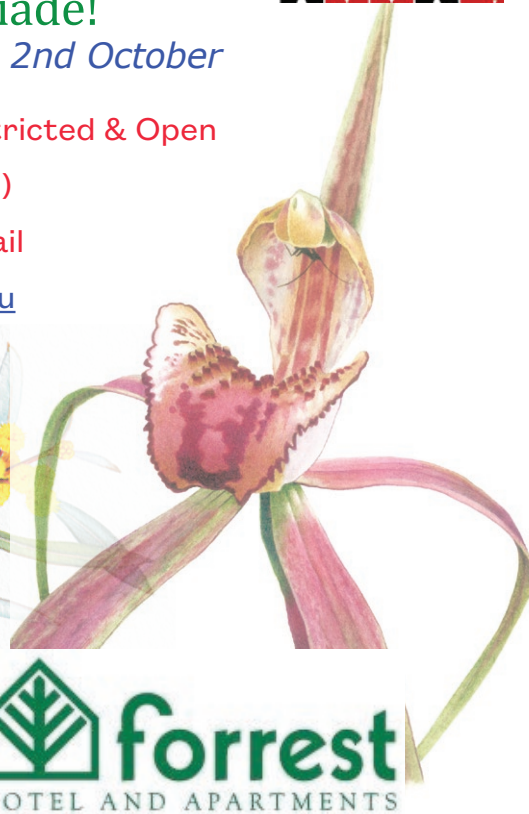
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Allison_Stralow@yahoo.com

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BRIDGE INTO THE 21st CENTURY

by Paul Lavings, paul@bridgegear.com



PARTNER OVERCALLS 2♣

What would you call on the following hands, nil vulnerable:

WEST (1♠)	NORTH 2♣	EAST (pass)	SOUTH ?
1. ♠ 3 2	♥ K 9 6 5	♦ K J 7 2	♣ A 6 3
2. ♠ 9 4	♥ A 10 9 7 4	♦ K J 4	♣ A K 2
3. ♠ 6 2	♥ Q 9 7 6 2	♦ Q 8 2	♣ K 9 6
4. ♠ 8 7	♥ 9 7 5	♦ J 10 7 6 5 3 2	♣ 5
5. ♠ 7 5	♥ 8 6 5 2	♦ K J 6 7	♣ J 8 7
6. ♠ K Q 10	♥ Q 8	♦ 10 9 6 5 2	♣ K 9 5
7. ♠ A K 10	♥ 7 6 4	♦ 10 8 5 2	♣ A Q 2
8. ♠ 8 4	♥ 10 7 6 4	♦ K 7 5	♣ A J 7 6
9. ♠ 4	♥ 10 9 8 5 2	♦ 4	♣ Q J 9 7 6 5
10. ♠ 2	♥ 9 8 4	♦ K 7 6 4 3	♣ K 8 7 6

SOLUTIONS

1. 2♠. You are too strong to make a "courtesy" raise to 3♣ showing 6-10 HCP, so make a cuebid of the opponent's suit, showing extra values while saving valuable space.

The first priority over the cuebid is to show a stopper in opponent's suit with 2NT. Over 2NT you would show a minimum cuebid by bidding 3♣ and giving partner the chance to pass and play at a low level if they are also minimum.

Partnerships are recommended to discuss how weak or strong a 2♣ overcall might be. Could it be 12 points balanced, or should it be a better hand? How strong should you be before you double and then show your clubs later?

I observe that the top Australian players have become very conservative with their 2♣ and 2♦ overcalls. They are wary of this sequence where the opponent sitting over the overcall passes opener's takeout double and the final contract is 2♣ doubled or 2♦ doubled:

WEST (1♠) (dbl)	NORTH 2♣ all pass	EAST (pass)	SOUTH pass
-----------------------	-------------------------	----------------	---------------

The penalty pass would show at least four good clubs, perhaps five and penalties of 500, 800 and 1100 are not uncommon after a two-level overcall. Top experts are always on the lookout for penalty situations.

2. 2♥. Don't be concerned that partner might pass your 2♥ since a new suit in response to a two-level overcall is forcing for one round in virtually all partnerships. You have a super hand and if your partner signs off in 3♣ you should continue with 3♠ asking for a spade stopper.

3. 3♣. Your hand is not good enough to mention the hearts so just be satisfied with a raise to 3♣ showing around 6-10 HCP. Best not to get partner too excited.

4. Pass. You want to play in diamonds rather than clubs but to bid 2♦ now would show a much better hand. Bide your time and when you bid 2♦ later it will be a rescue from clubs and not a forward-going move. Perhaps the bidding will proceed as in Question 1 and now you can rescue to 2♦:

WEST (1♠) (dbl)	NORTH 2♣ pass	EAST (pass) (pass)	SOUTH pass 2♦
-----------------------	---------------------	--------------------------	---------------------

5. Pass. To bid 3♣ here only helps opponents gauge the club situation. You are too weak for a raise, plus you don't want partner to lead a club from the ace or king.

6. 2NT. Natural and non-forcing, suggesting at least two clubs. Even though you don't have a stopper in either red suit you do have two stoppers in their suit and a club fit. If partner bids 3♣, suggesting a weaker overcall with a six-card suit you will pass.

7. 3NT. You don't have outside stoppers but you do have two spade stoppers and two top club honours, which suggests partner may well have at least a six-card club suit. 3NT won't always work well but it's difficult to find an alternative.

8. 3♣. You have an extra club and quite an attractive hand but you aren't strong enough to cue bid so just content yourself with a single raise. If partner continues over your 3♣ now you have a maximum and will bid to game.

9. 5♣. With your two singletons it shouldn't be too expensive if you get doubled in 5♣ and on a good day your partner will come home with 11 tricks. You have wild shape and a trickless hand so take away as much space as you can from the opponents as quickly as possible.

10. This is a key sequence. 4♣ is preemptive in nature but it also says "Bid 5♣ if you want to". This way the partnership can co-operate to decide whether to sacrifice in 5♣, rather than leaving it to just one partner to decide. And keep in mind, sometimes your hands fit well and you make 5♣.

David Lusk

It is with an enormous sense of sadness that I am writing about David Lusk, who passed away on Friday 7 July. David was a part of the South Australian and national bridge scene for as long as any of the current crop of bridge players can remember.

Aside from his bridge successes, David's contribution to bridge was immense, both at the local and national level. He was a member of the ABF and also the national Youth Coordinator for many years. David and Sue – his wife and international player – established the ABF Newsletter in 1994 and continuing as co-editors until 2006. At the State level, he was on the Committee for several years and served a three-year term as President of the SA Bridge Association (when it was both the State body and also a Club). Subsequently, he became the Club teacher, from 1987 to 2014, teaching and mentoring so many of the current group of players. He was also heavily invested in youth bridge in SA, running regular sessions to encourage and mentor so many of our younger players, such as Justin Williams, Nic Croft, Andrew Peake (now in Sydney), Kieran Dyke (now in England), to name just a few. In addition to all that, he was the bridge journalist for the Sunday Mail from 1991 until recently.

For his dedication and contribution to our game, he was awarded the Order of Australia Medal in 2015, one of a handful of bridge players to receive such acknowledgement.

He was no slouch at the game either. He represented South Australia in the Interstate Open Teams 17 times as a player, twice as non-playing captain; his first representative year was 1969, and his first of four wins came in 1971. The Interstate Seniors Teams was another of his regular stints; nine representative efforts and two wins.



Locally, he won our State Teams Championships five times spanning 1972 and 2018. He loved being involved in top level bridge, winning the State Pairs four times, twice with Sue, and the Open Pairs three times.

National titles include the VCC in 1990 and 2006, the GNOT in 1994 (and several 2nd placings), plus several Seniors titles – the Gold Coast Seniors Teams in 2007 and 2008, the National Seniors Teams in 2006 and 2009, the ANOT Seniors Pairs in 2013.

David played bridge to the end, even playing in the State Teams Championships the night before his death.

He was a much appreciated friend to so many, and will be much missed in our bridge scene. I'm sure bridge players far and wide, not just in SA and Australia, would want to send their condolences to his wife Sue, and his daughter Jennifer and her family.

There is to be a wake held at the clubrooms of the SA Bridge Association on Sunday 20 August from 2pm. There will be a Zoom link (available in due course), so attend if you can and raise a glass of good red wine or single malt whisky to David.

Barbara Travis

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The convenors of the 2023 Spring National Teams have scrapped the National Women's Teams from the second week and replaced it with a National Mixed Teams. The Linda Stern Trophy will be awarded to the highest-placed women's team competing in the Spring National Open Teams (first week).

If women bridge players wish to see the return of the Spring National Women's Teams, they need to enter as many women's teams as possible in the Spring National Open Teams.

The convenors also scrapped the Bobby Evans National Seniors' Teams, but they reinstated it after several senior players protested.

To see the Seniors' Teams continue in the Spring Nationals, there will need to be a significant number of entries this year.

Ron Klinger



WORKSHOPS WITH WILL

with William Jenner-O'Shea

SLAM BIDDING – ROMAN KEYCARD 14/30

This month's face-to-face workshop was focussing on strong hands and slam bidding. We went through the concept of using Keycard to help in slam bidding, and also the bids leading up to the potential slam.

One of the example hands featured a few discussion points about valuing shortage, and showing your strength.

You have this hand as opener:

♠ K Q J 7 ♥ 5 4 3 2 ♦ A K J 7 ♣ 5

You open 1♦. Your partner responds 1♥. What do you rebid?

With your small singleton, you should upgrade your hand, and jump rebid 3♥. This shows around 15-17 total points. Having low trumps can be a problem, but it is usually fine if your partner bids the suit first. They often have the big ones!

Let's swap seats and see what responder should bid next. Now sitting in your partner's seat, you hold

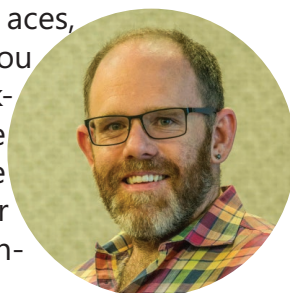
♠ A 5 ♥ Q J 10 9 8 7 ♦ Q 4 ♣ A K 3

Partner opened 1♦ and you responded 1♥. Note that since 1♥ is a new suit, it is forcing, and shows 6+ points, but is unlimited. There is no reason to jump to 2♥, but some people do make this mistake. You have 16 HCP, and a fit, and a couple of doubletons. You also have six hearts, when partner only thinks that you have four, so you have two extra trumps. Your hand is quite powerful.

When partner opened, you assumed that they had 12 points, but 12 points is not enough for slam opposite this hand. When they jump rebid, showing extra points, now the hand is worth investigating a slam. It is only after partner jump rebids that you should investigate further, which is why they needed the extra bidding space.

Since you think there is a slam, and have established a fit, you should go 4NT asking for keycards.

There are five keycards, the four aces, and the king of trumps. When you use Keycard instead of Blackwood, you need to learn the answers, since they are a little more involved than regular Blackwood, and sometimes confusing.



Partner responds 5♣. I recommend that this shows one or four of the keycards. They would show three or zero with a 5♦ response. Some people swap the meaning of those two bids for no good reason. More Australian players play 14/30 than the other way around, and coincidentally 1430 is the score you get for making 6♥ or 6♠ when you are vulnerable.

You need four out of the five keycards to bid a small slam. The purpose of using keycard is not to push you into a slam, it is to keep you out of a slam when you are missing two keycards. The opener showed one keycard, and responder only has two keycards, which is only three out of the five. Not enough. The 4NT bidder signs off at 5♥.

Opener	Responder
♠ K Q J 7	♠ A 5
♥ 5 4 3 2	♥ Q J 10 9 8 7
♦ A K J 7	♦ Q 4
♣ 5	♣ A K 3

When this hand was played in the lesson, there was an instructive tip for the defenders. A club was led against 5♥. Declarer wins the ♣A and leads the ♥Q. The next defender to play had the ♥K6. While they might not get another chance to win their king, playing the king proved fatal when their partner had to play their singleton ace on top of it. A good tip is to think that if the opponents use Keycard, then stop below a slam, they are probably missing two keycards, so you know if partner has one or not. If declarer actually had a heart suit of ♥AQJ1087, then they probably would have gone to dummy and tried to finesse.

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