



# NEWSLETTER

## AUSTRALIAN BRIDGE FEDERATION LTD.

Editor: Brad Coles (editor@abf.com.au)

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## 2022 International Team Announcements

Nearly two years ago, our leading players competed during the selection trials for the right to represent Australia at the 45th World Bridge Team Championships, which were scheduled to be held in Salsomaggiore Terme, Italy in mid-2020. Sadly, the pandemic caused the postponement of both the original event and the rescheduled event in 2021 together with all other planned 2021 world bridge events. For our leading players, who look forward to the opportunity to compete against the best at these tournaments, the news was quite devastating. While many have taken the opportunity to contest several online international events, there is no substitute for the excitement of a live international event.

It is therefore terrific news that the twice-rescheduled event is now set to go ahead on 27 March to 9 April. Two years in bridge is a long time and consequently, some changes to the original team line-ups have been ratified by the Board on the recommendation of the Tournament Committee.

The ABF Board congratulate the following teams on their selection and wish them every success in the event.

**SENIORS TEAM:** Peter Buchen npc, George Kozakos, Robert Krochmalik, Paul Lavings, George Smolanko, Stephen Burgess (Gabi Lorentz absent). **OPEN TEAM:** Peter Gill, former team member Michael Courtney, Nabil Edgtton, Sartaj Hans, David Wiltshire npc, Andy Hung; Liam Milne, James Coutts. **WOMEN'S TEAM:** Jessica Brake, Susan Humphries (with former npc Mike Doecke in background); Rena Kaplan, Giselle Mundell, Liz Havas (Diana Smart absent). **MIXED TEAM:** Tania Lloyd, Hugh Grosvenor, Julian Foster npc, Pele Rankin, Trevor Fuller, Stephen Fischer (Leone Fuller absent). Full team photographs by Anne Russell.





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**DEADLINE FOR  
FEBRUARY EDITION**

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ARTICLES: 12 JANUARY**

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**IMPROVE  
YOUR  
DEFENCE**

with  
**Ron Klinger**

*Solution on page 14*

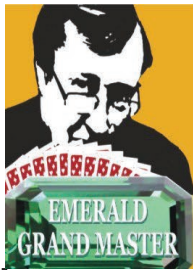
Teams ♠ J 8 3  
 S/Nil ♥ K Q 8 2  
 ♦ Q 7  
 ♣ K 5 3 2

♠ A Q 9 5 4  
 ♥ J 10  
 ♦ A J 10 2  
 ♣ Q 6



WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♦
1♠	2♣	pass	3♣ forcing
pass	3♠ stopper ask	pass	3NT
all pass			

You lead the ♠5: three - seven - ten. Declarer plays the ♦3: two - queen - four (natural count) and continues with the ♣2 to his ace and a club back to dummy. What is your plan of defence?



# Paul Lavings Bridgegear

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## 2022 DAILY BRIDGE CALENDAR

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# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Allison Stralow

[president@abf.com.au](mailto:president@abf.com.au)



The past 12 months have been full of twists, turns and plenty of uncertainty around what events will be cancelled, run online or played face-to-face. With that said, the Australian Bridge Community has successfully weathered a second year of disruption resulting from the COVID 19 pandemic and still managed some significant achievements. One being the BBO revenue of over \$1,000,000 returned to clubs between May 2020 and September 2021.

MyABF celebrates its 1st birthday this month. There have been several updates since the launch and new modules will continue to be developed over the next two years. As the tournament organiser of the Golden West, my experience was very positive and many players expressed the ease of using this system to enter events. With more features being added to support both players and clubs, this system will eventually become a one-stop shop for the ABF, state and territories and affiliated bridge clubs' administrative requirements and for player information.

The ABF 2025 Strategic Refresh continues with a planned completion date of February 2022 at the

Gold Coast. Our principal goal is being stronger when we come out of the pandemic than when we went in. The agility and enthusiasm demonstrated by the Australian Bridge Community during a tough two years has been amazing. The online Australian National Championships and Butler, the variety of online bridge lessons and online marketing workshops are examples of how quickly we have embraced change.

Congratulations to all involved in the running of the successful 2021 online ANC and Butler. Matthew McManus and Ronnie Ng ensured all technical problems were answered and quickly responded to calls. John McIlrath and Bruce Crossman joined Matthew to oversee the Open and Restricted Butlers, which saw a healthy entry of 132 pairs. Well done to the winning Interstate teams and runners-up, and the Butler place getters.

I thank all members of the Board, the ABF Council, committees, and ABF contractors for their contributions in 2021. Without their dedication and hard work, we would not be heading into 2022 in such a strong position.

I'm so happy that face-to-face competitions will resume in 2022. Bridge means so much to so many people and I look forward to seeing my bridge family at the Gold Coast Congress in February. In the meantime, I trust that everyone will have time to enjoy their culture, customs and those special moments with their families and friends during the festive season.

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

[president@abf.com.au](mailto:president@abf.com.au)



# HOW WOULD YOU PLAY?

with  
Barbara  
Travis



*Solutions on page 20*

## QUESTION 1

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

♠ A K 5 3 2  
♥ K 9 7  
♦ 5  
♣ A K 9 5

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♠
pass	2♠	pass	4♠
all pass			

West leads the ♦J. You play low from dummy and West holds the trick. You ruff the diamond continuation and cash the ♠A.

After West discards a low diamond, how would you play?

## QUESTION 2

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

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♣	pass	1♥
pass	2♥	pass	4♥
all pass			

West leads the ♦J - queen - king. East returns the ♦2 - seven - nine - ace.

What is your plan?

## QUESTION 3

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

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♥	pass	2♦
pass	3♦	pass	4♣
pass	4♠	dbl	4NT
pass	5♠	pass	7♦
all pass			

North-South were trailing in a team match, and this was the last board – hence the 'punt'. West leads the ♠10, which you must win with the ♠A. How will you make your thirteenth trick? What is your plan?



# MARKETING REPORT

with Peter Cox  
marketing@abf.com.au



## BRIDGE TV

The ABF is planning a new TV program for Bridge that will regularly present the news from the bridge world, interview leading players and personalities in Australia and internationally, provide experts and teachers analysing hands and improving players' bidding, defence and plays and promote champions.

The objectives of the program include increasing the standard of bridge at all levels in Australia, to assist clubs to grow with teaching and marketing, to use video to attract new and younger players, to create and promote bridge stars and to rebrand bridge as a fun, exciting and mentally healthy activity.

The program will welcome contributions from players, clubs and state bodies.

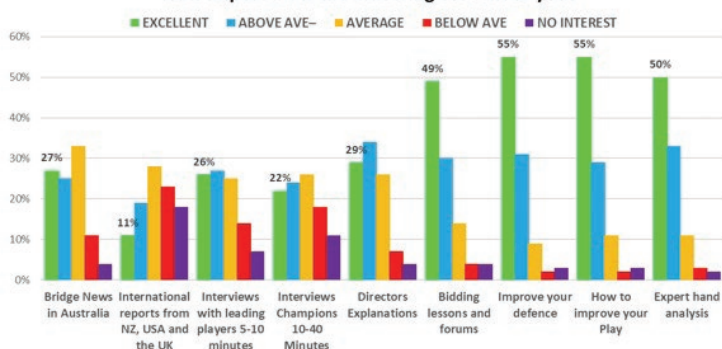
It will be shot on Zoom and smart phones and will be distributed on web sites, YouTube, Facebook and podcasts. Bridge TV will lead the bridge world in engaging with members and promoting our great game.

## Survey Results

The ABF conducted a Bridge TV survey which was a great success with more than 500 respondents giving their views on what they do and don't like.

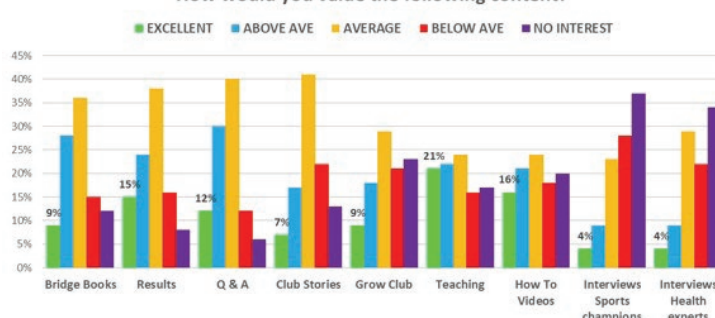
The profile of the respondents was 60% female to 40% male, compared to the total ABF registered players split of 69% to 31%, average age 70.7 years (compared to 74 for the ABF) and only 41% had less than 100 masterpoints (compared with 70% across the ABF). This reflects a skew to more experienced players in the database.

How important is the following content to you?



The respondents gave the highest priority to improving bidding, playing, defence and expert hand analysis. Each had an Average, Above Average and Excellent share of >93%. The importance of directors' explanations was 89% of respondents and Bridge News 85%. Interviews with leading Australian and international players was strongly positive at about 75%.

How would you value the following content?



Other content that was popular included Q&A, with 82% Average to Excellent rating, Book Reviews and Results in the 70s, followed by Teaching and How-To Videos for clubs in the 60s.

## Contributors

The survey asked for expressions of interest from people who would like to contribute to the Bridge TV program, and we got more than 50 responses for a variety of roles.

We already have some experts around the world who are interested in contributing and international bridge journalists are very welcome.

However, we would greatly appreciate more leading Australian players and hand analysis experts to lead the world and set the standard for the show.

Please contact me at petercox@abf.com.au or call or text me on +61 413 676 326.

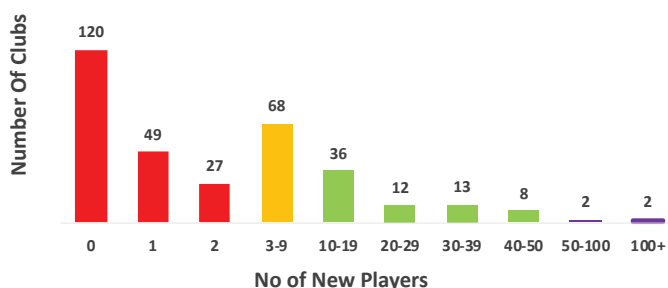
## Beginners Courses 2022

As we are all aware COVID-19 caused the closure of clubs in some states for long periods in 2020-21 and the cancellation of many beginners courses. It is now time to set the dates for beginners courses at the start of 2022 and to start promoting them.

However, we need to deal with a problem for many of the smaller clubs, which is the difficulty of attracting enough beginners to make up a class, and

particularly sufficient numbers to run a supervised session where they can practice their new game and progress to the Open club game.

**New Players by Clubs  
1 Jan-25 Nov 2021**



The "New Players by Club" data provided by the Masterpoint Centre defines "New ABF Registered Players" as not including reactivated previous members. This shows that 120 clubs (36%) had no "New Players" in 2021 up to 25 November and another 76 clubs only had one or two players. This means that 60% of clubs did not produce enough new registered players to make up a table each. Further, another 20% had 3-9 New Players. Now before you blame COVID, the total number of new players in 2021 will be down about 10% on the 2019 pre-COVID year, and 36% up on the disastrous 2020.

However, the figures are a little misleading for a number of reasons. The blue chart shows the top 20 clubs in Australia ranked by new players in 2021 up until 25 November. The stand out winner was the Canberra Bridge Club with about 1,000 members but they probably gained about 130 of the 165 new members from a privately owned non-affiliated club closing and the players moving to other Canberra clubs in particular the CBC.

In second place was the SA Bridge Association with nearly 1,000 members, and led by the President Adel Abdelhamid, very aggressively marketed beginners courses in a highly competitive market and acquired over 100 new players. Adelaide did have the advantage of only being closed for a few weeks during COVID and bridge in clubs was largely as normal.

Barbara Travis, a long time leading player with many national titles to her credit, has built up her club in Adelaide, Bridge at Beaumont, from scratch to 278 members in four years.

The North Shore Bridge Club, the largest in Australia with about 1560 members, created an outstanding Online Sessions business on RealBridge which negatively affected some of the other clubs in the Sydney market. The NSBC also offered cheaper memberships for online players who came from around NSW and other states to join. This was despite los-

ing their headquarters at Willoughby and struggling to find a satisfactory new location until recently.

In Tasmania, Sue Falkingham has been building new members particularly through beginners classes and they now have 477 members.

**Ranked by Number of New Players 2021 (1 Jan-25 Nov 2021)**

Club Name	2019	2020	Nov-21
1 Canberra Bridge Club (Club Closure)	33	28	165
2 SA Bridge Assoc.	108	54	102
3 North Shore Bridge Club Inc	98	84	69
4 Bridge at Beaumont	15	13	59
5 Tasmanian Bridge Association	52	53	49
6 NSBC@Lindfield	26	5	46
7 Glenelg Contract Bridge Club Inc	10	35	46
8 Noosa Bridge Club Inc	11	2	45
9 Toowong Bridge Club Inc	33	20	44
10 Trumps Bridge Centre	53	45	42
11 Mandurah Bridge Club Inc	12	13	41
12 West Australian Bridge Club	45	28	39
13 Queensland Contract Bridge Club	25	10	37
14 Bayside Bridge Club	10	14	37
15 Undercroft Bridge Club Inc	23	21	37
16 Sydney Bridge Centre	94	11	36
17 South Perth Bridge Club	25	7	35
18 Peninsula Bridge Club - NSW	34	29	34
19 Northern Suburbs Bridge Club Inc	45	42	34
20 Waverley Bridge Club Inc	39	19	33

## Online Teaching

The success of Paul Marston's online beginners classes where he has taught over 1,000 new players in the last year has shown that online teaching can be very effective.

The North Shore Bridge Club taught their first online course late this year and had to limit numbers to 130 whilst they gained experience in teaching and administering the large group. I believe they intend to run another online beginners course in the New Year.

With 80% of clubs producing less than ten members a year and 60% with less than three new players it is both too expensive and wasteful to run national advertising campaigns. Many hobbies and activities have boomed online during COVID and some bridge may be better being taught by online clubs for many people in regional, rural and even metropolitan areas.

Online teaching requires considerable work in preparing teaching materials and videos, the mastery of using BBO/RealBridge or other platforms for preparing hands, the ability to share screens and breakout rooms in Zoom, the team needed to conduct online supervised play, and the provision of online practice sessions. This results in needing expert teachers with considerable resources to teach large audiences which is not possible for most clubs. However, beginners can be taught and play in supervised games online against other people with similar progress and then be fed into their local clubs to play face to face.

# MYABF UPDATE

## with Julian Foster

julian.foster@abf.com.au



### Year 1 – some stats

As we approach the first year of My ABF's existence (the first release was launched in December 2020) here are some overall stats about the system so far:

Registered users	4,149
Teammates (see notes later)	1,358
Congresses	103
Events	216
Entries	4,937
Players entering	12,020
Emails sent	71,786
Helpdesk Tickets (since 9 August 2021)	374

### YOUR PROFILE PAGE

There are several important things in your profile page which you get to via the person icon in the top right of your screen on a computer (or via the account menu on a tablet/phone).

A screenshot of the My ABF profile page. The page is titled 'Hi Julian' and shows a user profile for Julian Foster (518891). The profile includes fields for Email address, Mobile Number, First Name, Last Name, Date of Birth, and BBO Username. There are buttons for 'UPDATE PROFILE' and 'CANCEL'. A 'Covid Certification' section is also visible, stating that all ABF face-to-face national events require proof of a COVID-19 vaccination. The page also features a 'About You' section with a profile picture and a 'TBA' bio.

Remember this is YOUR personal account (linked to your ABF number). So you can add and edit your email address, mobile, name, date of birth and BBO username. To update the personal information, change what you want and click "Update Profile" to save it. Your COVID vaccination certification is just below this section.

### DATE OF BIRTH

The date of birth field is not currently a compulsory field. Be aware, however, that it is used to determine youth discounts. Some player seem to have put the current year as their year of birth which has caused them to be given a youth discount! This has caused headaches for players and tournament organisers in sorting out the additional amounts to be paid (yes they are checking!)

There were plans for My ABF to be used to automatically validate players' eligibility to play in

age-limited events (i.e. youth and seniors). At the moment, though, this isn't possible because not enough players have input the date or they have input a nonsense date (either deliberately or by accident). Please either input an accurate date of birth or don't input one at all.

### TEAMMATES

This is a very useful section where you can identify people that you regularly play with – as partners or teammates.

A screenshot of the 'Team Mates' section in the My ABF system. The section is titled 'Team Mates' and has a subtitle: 'Add people you play with regularly to make it easier to enter events together. They need to be signed up to this system first.' Below this is a table with columns for Name, Status, and Actions. The table lists three team mates: Alan Admin, Betty Bunting, and Mark Guthrie, all with a status of 'Team mate - basic'. Each row has two action buttons: a blue button with a dollar sign and a red button with a trash icon. At the bottom of the table is a green button labeled 'ADD TEAM MATE'.

There are two levels of Teammate and they do very different things:

### TEAMMATE – BASIC

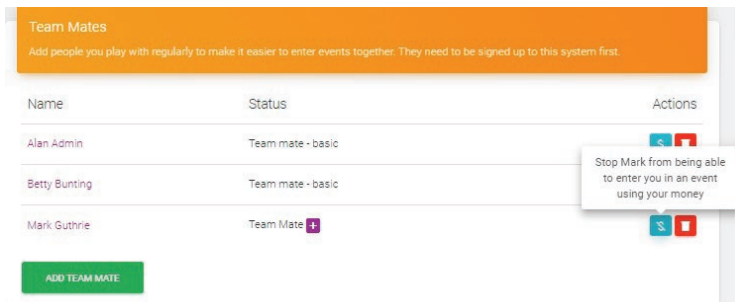
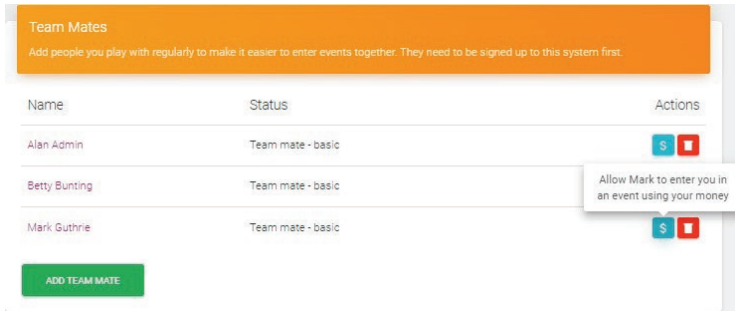
This is the most useful. In the above example I have three people set up. What this does is cause those peoples' names to appear in my dropdown list of players when I make an entry (they won't appear if they are already entered with someone else). This lets you quickly add them into your entries without needing to search for them each time.

A screenshot of the 'Enter Event' page in the My ABF system. The page is titled 'Enter Event' and shows a specific event: 'Pairs in JF Test Congress' on 'Saturday 1st Jan 2022 12:38pm'. The page has a purple header. Below the header is a table with columns for Player, Payment Method, Play Now, and Pending. The table shows a single entry for Julian Foster with a payment method of 'My Bridge Credits' and a value of '20 credits'. There is a dropdown menu for 'Player' with a search box and a list of names: Julian Foster, TBA, Mark Guthrie, Alan Admin, and Betty Bunting. The total value is '20 credits'. At the bottom of the page are two green buttons: 'ENTER EVENT' and 'VIEW EVENT INFO'.



## TEAMMATE – PLUS

This is a higher level status which you turn on using the blue \$ icon. Tips appear when you hover over the icons to explain what they do.



Making someone a TeamMate + authorises that person to put an entry in for you and charge your entry fee directly to YOUR account.

Having changed Mark into a Teammate +, if he now logs in and includes me in an entry a new Payment option "Their Bridge Credits" appears against my name (provided there is enough credit in my account to pay for my share of the entry):



This means that when he finalises this entry, he will pay for his own share (shown by the "Pay Now" column) but my account will be directly charged for my share (hence why that appears in the "Pending" column – it's not something he will pay). That is only possible because I gave him permission in my profile to do this.

Teammate + can be a convenient way to have each player pay directly for their share without needing to transfer funds between them. But to use it reliably you need to have a balance regularly in the system (next time I'll talk about easy ways to do that).

## What's coming next?

The most recent work on My ABF has aimed to improve the entry process for players, and to make lives easier for tournament organisers and scorers. The 2022 Gold Coast congress is now taking entries and this will be the largest congress run through My ABF so far. We have therefore been doing some work behind the scenes to ensure the higher volumes of entries can be handled adequately (e.g. sending emails out to entrants, sending event entry lists to the scorers). Besides that the next major development stages (between now and early 2022) are:

1. Offering the ability, if they and their clubs wish, for players to use bridge credits to pay for club sessions as well as congresses.
2. A club administration portal to allow nominated club administrators to control access to various areas relevant to your club.
3. An ability for a club to manage a list of members. This will be required if a club wishes to offer the bridge credit payment option for their sessions (because members almost always pay different table money to visitors).
4. Linking to existing scoring providers to display personalised results in your dashboard.

*Julian Foster, My ABF Project Manager*



*Winners of the 2021 Grand National Open Teams: Peter Jeffery, Yumin Li, Wayne Zhu, Yixiang Zhang (Wei Zhang absent)*



# YOUTH BRIDGE NEWS

with  
Rebecca O'Reilly

## FIRST-TIMERS AT THE INTERSTATE YOUTH TEAMS

November 8-12 saw the interstate teams kick off, after being postponed from July. As a result of the date changes, Queensland lost a couple of its more experienced youth players, but three intrepid younger souls stepped into the breach, including a nine-year-old and two others who have only been playing for around 12 months. All three defied their inexperience, acquitting themselves admirably, and look set to play for many more years.

One of the first timers on the Queensland youth team was Kate. Having recently seen a 5-4-3-1 hand open 1NT, she was curious about just how kosher such bidding was. I briefly explained that people had different approaches, and to go and experiment and see what happened. I also pointed out that having partner transfer into your singleton is usually not ideal.

On her 4th board of the event, she picked up:

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

Sensing the occasion, she opened 1NT with rosy-eyed optimism. However, it quickly deflated as her partner, Zac, transferred to spades and then raised to 4♠! The roller coaster wasn't finished; after what felt like a disaster auction, Zac lowered the anxiety somewhat when he tabled his eight-card spade suit.

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

♠ K 3  
♥ Q J 4 3 2  
♦ 8 2  
♣ 9 8 3 2

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

♠ A 10 9 7 6 5 4 2  
♥ 7 5  
♦ 6 4  
♣ Q

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
David	Kate	Fletcher	Zac
pass	1NT	pass	2♥
dbl	2♠	pass	4♠
all pass			

Gathering her thoughts, Kate won the ♦K lead, and ran the ♠Q to West's king. Winning West's ♥Q switch correctly with the ace, Kate played a club, won by East, who cashed a diamond and exited with a heart. Among newer players, decisions like which suit to ruff back to dummy is often overlooked. Here, any suit would have been fine with West unable to overruff, but Kate chose the best option, clubs. Drawing the trumps, she chalked up ten tricks for a push. This kind of calm decision making was on show all event, helping Queensland into third place.

Kate, sitting East on the following hand, also won her first beer card after South faced a discard problem:

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

With eight cards remaining, Kate led a heart off dummy (West), and North rose with the king. How-

ever, after North tried to cash two spades, South was unsure whether Kate's last card was a diamond or a heart. On the run of clubs, no doubt anxious not to jettison the ace of hearts, the fateful ♦Q was let go, and the ♦7 scored. Zac was so excited he immediately took a screenshot of the moment, but that enthusiasm has waned as he (still) faces the prospect of paying up.

All in all, it was a pleasure for me to captain the team for the first time. Thanks to Matt and Ronnie for their incredible work organising and directing the event, and congratulations to Victoria, the winning youth team.

## Tasmania return to the Interstate Youth Teams

The Interstate Youth Teams has lacked Tasmanian youth players for ages, since the good results of the Tasmanian youth teams of the 1990s, one of whom (Mark Abraham) went on the play for Australia. This year Tasmania fielded an inexperienced team, with their six players having masterpoint tallies of 0.00, 0.00, 0.00, 0.09, 2.08 and 11.60, up against current National Youth Team members such as David Gue (494.88 MP) and Jamie Thompson (1946.20 MP). Winless after nine rounds, Tasmania fielded their most experienced lineup in Round 10.

Board 19 ♠ A Q J 6 5 4 2  
 S/EW ♥ 10  
 ♦ A 2  
 ♣ 7 5 4  
 ♠ K 10 8 3  
 ♥ K 3 2  
 ♦ Q 8 6 3  
 ♣ 9 6  
 ♠ 9 7  
 ♥ A J 7 5  
 ♦ J 10 5  
 ♣ K Q 8 2  
 ♠ —  
 ♥ Q 9 8 6 4  
 ♦ K 9 7 4  
 ♣ A J 10 3

WEST Jeremy	NORTH David	EAST Imogen	SOUTH Anne
	1♠	dbl	2♥
pass	4♠	pass	pass
dbl	all pass		

David Gue for SA opened 1♠ on the North cards. Imogen Siberry for Tasmania in the East seat made an aggressive but intelligent takeout double. David's partner Anne Davey responded 2♥ as South, and David's 4♠ was passed to Jeremy Reid (West) who boldly doubled for penalty.

Imogen led ♦J to the ace. David, warned about the bad spade break by the double, decided to ruff hearts in hand, to try to make as many of his little trumps as he could. So ♥10 lost to the king. Back came a heart, ruffed. A club went to the queen and ace, Jeremy playing ♣9. David ruffed another heart and played a diamond to the king, then a diamond ruffed. So far so good for declarer, but the roof was about to cave in for him.

Another club went to Imogen's king, as Jeremy completed his high-low signal in clubs. Imogen gave Jeremy a club ruff and Jeremy played his last diamond and the ♠6 was overruffed by the ♠7. Declarer's last three cards were the ♠AQJ, so the defence put declarer in with the ♠J. At Trick 12 David Gue had to lead from his ♠AQ to Jeremy's ♠K10. Down two, a well-earned 300 to Tasmania.

This was a 5-imp gain for Tasmania, who went on to win the match by 9imps.



Peter Gill

# BIDDING JUDGEMENT

with Paul Marston



Paul Marston has long been in demand as a bridge teacher. In 2015 he presented a course in Perth to 224 people. Peter Smith, who organised the course, said, "I believe this is the highest attendance ever for bridge lessons in Australia." He has long been the go-to teacher in the Eastern Suburbs of Sydney. In February 2020 he presented a beginner course in Double Bay to a sold-out audience of 138, all coming from word of mouth. There was no advertising.

Today he is presenting the second of three articles taken from the Bidding Judgement course.

## JUDGING SLAM IN A SUIT

In the previous issue, we looked at judging hands in no-trumps. Now it is time to look at judging hands in a suit.

How do you judge when to bid slam in a suit? 33 TP is the yardstick, right? (TP stands for total points – the sum of your high card points and shortage points – 1 for a doubleton, 3 for a singleton and 5 for a void.)

Yes, 33 TP is the yardstick, but it is not the whole story. Now you also need be concerned about how your honours mesh with partner.

### The Golden Rule of Duplication

This rule is central to all judgement in a suit contract. The rule states that strength opposite shortage is wasted.

Partner opens 1♠, which of these two hands would you rather hold?

HAND 1  
♠ A 7 6 5  
♥ 8 7 3  
♦ A K Q  
♣ 8 7 6

HAND 2  
♠ A 7 6 5  
♥ K Q J  
♦ 8 7 3  
♣ 8 7 6

Choosing Hand 1 is a no-brainer — 13 HCP v 10 HCP. But what if you knew partner was short in diamonds?

Intuitively, you may see no problem with Hand 1. You might even like the idea of being able to discard anything on the diamonds. But intuition is not always a reliable guide. The truth is the diamond shortage is bad news.

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

EAST (HAND 1)  
♠ A 7 6 5  
♥ 8 7 3  
♦ A K Q  
♣ 8 7 6

You can throw three hearts on the diamonds and lose a heart and a club, or you can throw two hearts and a club and lose two hearts. The most you can make is 11 tricks. The problem is duplication. The diamond strength and the void are both doing the same job.

Now consider Hand 2, where the strength is opposite length:

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

EAST (HAND 2)  
♠ A 7 6 5  
♥ K Q J  
♦ 8 7 3  
♣ 8 7 6

This time you draw trumps and run the hearts, pitching two clubs from dummy. Later you will ruff the losing club. Nothing can stop you making all 13 tricks.

Think about that!

The 10 HCP hand makes all 13 tricks, while the 13 HCP hand can never make more than 11 tricks. Such is the wastage when strength faces shortage.

Another example:

WEST  
♠ K J 10 9 8 7 3  
♥ A K  
♦ A 4  
♣ A 3

EAST  
♠ A Q 5 4  
♥ 9 7 6 5  
♦ 8  
♣ 9 8 7 2

12 tricks in spades is laydown. You just ruff the low diamond in dummy. It is the same if you move the king of hearts to the club suit. But there is no chance of 12 tricks if you move the king to diamonds where it is opposite shortage:

WEST  
♠ K J 10 9 8 7 3  
♥ A 3  
♦ A K  
♣ A 3

EAST  
♠ A Q 5 4  
♥ 9 7 6 5  
♦ 8  
♣ 9 8 7 2

Now you have losers in hearts and clubs, and nothing can be done.

So, when you are contemplating slam in a suit, it is very helpful to know about partner's short suit. One way to find out is Splinter Bids.

### Splinter bids

Partner opens 1♥, a response of 3♠, 4♣ or 4♦ is a splinter.

Partner opens 1♠, a response of 4♣, 4♦ or 4♥ is a splinter.

A splinter bid shows four-card support for opener's major, 10-13 HCP, and a singleton or void in the bid suit.

WEST	EAST	EAST'S HAND
1♠	?	♠ K 9 8 5 ♥ A 10 3 ♦ 8 ♣ K J 7 3 2

Bid 4♦, showing the fit and pinpointing the shortage. Now partner knows to discount any values in diamonds.

### When you know partner's shortage

When you know partner's short suit, revalue your hand discounting any honours in partner's short suit, apart from the ace, which is revalued at just 2 points.

Then add partner's minimum HCP. If the total comes to 26, you have a green light for slam.

WEST'S HAND	WEST	EAST
♠ A Q 9 6 4 ♥ 7 ♦ J 6 3 ♣ A K Q 5	1♠ ?	4♦

Bid 4NT, Blackwood. Your hand is worth 18 TP (ignoring the ♦J). Adding 10 HCP from partner gives you a total of 28 slam points. All that remains is to check that partner has two key cards. The two hands:

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

6♠ is an excellent contract. But the location of East's shortage is critical. If you reverse East's minor suit cards, 10 tricks is the limit – you lose the first three diamonds. But in this case, East responds 4♣, and now the West hand is revalued at 12 TP. This makes it clear for West to sign off in 4♠.

One final example:

WEST'S HAND	WEST	EAST
♠ A 4 ♥ K Q J 7 5 4 ♦ A 4 ♣ 9 7 6	1♥ ?	4♣

Bid 4NT. With nothing wasted in clubs, your hand is still worth 16 TP. With 10 HCP from partner, you are in the slam zone. Use Blackwood to check that partner has an ace.

Putting the two hands together:

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

With no wastage in clubs, 6♥ is essentially laydown.

Note that if you reverse West's minors, slam has no play. In fact, two off is quite likely. But in this case, West would know to sign off in game. The West hand is only worth 13 TP, leaving the partnership three points short of the required 26.

Since knowledge of partner's shortage is so important in any slam decision, advanced partnerships find many ways to share this information.

For example, the Jacoby 2NT. In reply to an opening bid of 1♥ or 1♠, 2NT is a game forcing raise of partner's major. Then the opener shows any shortage.

Also, if you follow the Two-over-One style, as you really should, you have far more ways to show a shortage. When someone responds with a two-over-one, the bidding is forcing to game, so you do not have to jump to show strength. Such jumps can therefore be used as splinters.

WEST'S HAND	WEST	EAST
♠ A J 8 7 4 ♥ 7 ♦ Q 8 6 ♣ A J 8 5	1♠ ?	2♣

Bid 3♥, showing pretty much this hand. Now partner will be perfectly placed to judge what to do. For example:

WEST	EAST	EAST'S HAND
1♠ 3♥	2♣ ?	♠ 5 ♥ K Q J 9 ♦ K 5 3 ♣ K 9 7 3 2

Bid 3NT. No chance of 26 slam points.

WEST	EAST	EAST'S HAND
1♠ 3♥	2♣ ?	♠ 5 ♥ 10 7 3 ♦ A K 7 ♣ K Q 10 7 3 2

Bid 4NT. We have 26 slam points.

The decision to use Blackwood is clear. All we need from partner is two aces. But what happens when it is not so clear? Do we gamble on slam or meekly sign off?

The answer is neither. We bring partner back into the discussion by making a control bid.

I will cover this in the next issue when I present the third and final column in this bidding judgement series.

For a more complete discussion about judging suit slams, go to Chapter 11 of the new 6th edition of *The Language of Bidding*.

Available from *The Bridge Shop* (phone 02 9967 0644)  
or *Paul Lavings Bridgegear* (phone 02 4295 0870),  
or from *Paul Marston's secure store*

<https://bridgelounge.online/books/>

# IMPROVE YOUR DEFENCE

with Ron Klinger

*Solution to problem on page 2*



## THE WEAKEST THINK

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♠	2♣	pass	1♦
pass	3♠ <sup>stopper ask</sup>	pass	3♣ <sup>forcing</sup>
all pass			3NT

West led the ♠5 against 3NT. Declarer played low in dummy and captured the ♠7 with the ♠10. He had five other tricks on top and could set up another in diamonds. He therefore played a diamond at trick two. West played the ♦2 and dummy's ♦Q won.

As long as the clubs behaved, an extra trick was available there. South continued with the ♣2 to his ace, West playing the ♣6, and followed with the ♣4. When West produced the ♣Q, declarer ducked in dummy. With South's spades and diamonds safe

from attack as long as West was on lead, South was able to make 3NT.

A spade or a diamond would give declarer an extra trick at once. Suppose West exits safely, for the moment, with the ♥J. Declarer cashes the clubs and the heart winners to reach this ending:

	♠ J 8	
	♥ 8	
	♦ 7	
	♣ —	
♠ A Q		♠ 9
♥ —		♥ 9
♦ A J		♦ 8 6
♣ —		♣ —
	♠ K 10	
	♥ —	
	♦ K 9	
	♣ —	

If West bares either ace, South plays that suit (and it is not hard to read the ending after the 1♠ overcall) and if West keeps two cards in spades and in diamonds, either suit will endplay West to produce the ninth trick.

That was +400 and 4 imps to North-South as the datum was North-South 250. 3NT was made four times and failed twice. The other result was 3♣ by North for +110.

What West needed to do was ditch the ♣Q when declarer played the ♣2 to the ♣A. Now South cannot set up a third club trick without letting East in and 3NT would be defeated.



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# ONLINE INTERSTATE TEAMS

Kim Frazer

## *Is this the future of bridge?*

The Australian National Championships (ANC) was recently held online on the RealBridge platform. The ANC is one of our oldest events and normally rotates around the states over an 8-year cycle. In recent times, the Northern Territory has sadly lacked the resources to act as host and so the ANC has reverted to a seven-year cycle. It was therefore wonderful to see an Open team from the NT participating in this year's event. This then begs the question – would transitioning the ANC teams to an online format be good for the future of the interstate bridge teams event? This article explores some of the pros and cons that might be derived were the ANC teams to move to an online format.

## **The Case Against**

There are several reasons why players would hate to see this change brought in. Part of what we love about bridge is the opportunity for social interaction with team-mates and opponents. There is nothing like going out for dinner after a game of bridge and having a vigorous debate about whether you ought to have bid that slam or taken that finesse. It is also impossible with the current technology for the whole team of six players plus captain to 'meet' at the table during the event so score-ups and pre/post team discussion is always excluding two of the team. This tends to diminish the 'team culture'. Bridge administrators would also lose the opportunity to interact with their counterparts from other states.

Playing online doesn't provide quite the same perspective for a player as a live event. It is much easier to see if someone is getting a bit rattled in a face-to-face setting. In short – players don't see online bridge as 'the real thing'. Playing at home can also be filled with distractions. Everything from a family member speaking to you in the middle of hand to the dog barking to be fed. Even the neighbours sometimes get in on the act with the noisy lawnmower making it hard to hear explanations.

Another aspect that is against the online world is unfamiliarity with technology. Some players just struggle with it. They may not have the most appropriate computer setup. Their internet speed isn't fast enough causing lag and dropouts to become a big issue. These problems detract from the overall enjoyment of the game for all participants involved. One of my regular partners suffers internet dropouts every time someone in the family starts up the microwave.

Then there is the 'C' word. Undoubtedly in the online world it is much easier for players to give in to temptation when memory fails and sneak a peek at their system card or notes, not to mention more egregious forms of unethical behaviour which have been reported in various exposés over the past two years.

Lastly there is opening ceremony and no 'victory ceremony' or live acknowledgement of the winners. Virtual toasts just don't have the same impact. The lack of atmosphere can make the event seem somehow less important than a 'live' version of the same thing.

## **The Case For**

Moving the ANC teams online will immediately reduce the costs of participation for both the ABF and the states. There will be fewer overheads as the costs of items such as venue hire and board dealing would disappear. This change could encourage more team entries, particularly from the smaller states as well as provide the opportunity for a Mixed Team to be incorporated in the regular program. This could free up funds for other purposes such as the growth and development of youth bridge; coaching for more advanced players or other activities which our peak bodies struggle to fund.

In the world of lockdowns, moving online would provide assurance that the event will always be going ahead and those of us who have accrued airline credits or loss of accommodation deposits in the past two years will appreciate how reassuring that is.

Many players have often chosen to head home after the teams stating that the ANC (ANC Teams + Butler) is too long, and they elect to choose between the two events. Some discussion has been held over the years about splitting the event. Moving the teams online but holding the Butler as a face-to-face event would address this issue and may reinvigorate both events.

When playing online, there is no doubt that the environment can be more comfortable. Your own chair, your own food and drink, your own heating adjusted to just the way you like it, and no queuing for the bathroom are all big pluses, as are the savings in travel time and costs.

Online also has the advantage that it is impossible to revoke, make an insufficient bid or foul a board. Play is faster as there is no delay for hand sorting, board passing or scoring. All of that is automatically done for you. Finally, the kibitzing option on RealBridge, albeit delayed, gave spectators the opportunity to hop into any match to watch how players were faring. Those of us who enjoyed the very close final contests found this particularly exciting.

## **Would a hybrid model work?**

Perhaps a solution is to consider a hybrid approach where teams in each state gather in a central location in their own state but contest the event online. This could address many of the issues raised in the discussion above, but would this be the best outcome for Teams bridge as a whole? Email your thoughts to

[secretary@abf.com.au](mailto:secretary@abf.com.au)

# THE PERILS OF ONLINE BRIDGE

Peter Gill

## A further look at the effect of playing the ANC Interstate Teams online

The Interstate Teams was held online on RealBridge in screen mode. An online survey by the ABF earlier this year showed that only 15% of respondents had used RealBridge, and only 18% had heard of RealBridge. Board 42 in the Women's Teams on Monday showed that adjusting to the the online process is not easy.

Round 3	♠ J 6 5 4	
Board 42	♥ J 8 7	
E/All	♦ Q 10	
	♣ Q 6 5 4	
♠ 2		♠ A 10 9 8 3
♥ K Q 10 4 2		♥ 9
♦ K J 8 6 3		♦ A 9 4 2
♣ 9 2		♣ A K 7
	♠ K Q 7	
	♥ A 6 5 3	
	♦ 7 5	
	♣ J 10 8 3	

East opened 1♠, South passed, West responded 1NT and East rebid 2♦ at the first four tables. What should West rebid?

For Western Australia, West took a very pessimistic view to pass 2♦, missing slam, but picking up 8 imps! At the other table, West for NSW raised to 3♦ and East tried 3NT.

Declarer in 3NT ducked the first club then won the second club. The percentage play in diamonds with nine cards missing the queen is to play for the drop, but declarer played ♦A then finessed ♦J. North continued clubs. Declarer had only eight tricks, and needed ♥J onside. So ♥9 was run, unlucky – minus two, minus 200, 8 imps to WA.

The Victorian West raised 2♦ to 3♦ – a conservative view, with 4♦ being a possible raise. 3♦ made 11 tricks. When 2♦ was raised to 3♦, Therese de Marco for SA in the East seat evaluated her aces and kings accurately, with the ace of spades likely to be opposite a shortage. Therese did bid 5♦, making six for 620 and 10 imps to SA. Would anyone be able to bid and make 6♦?

In the Tasmania vs Queensland match, RealBridge became Surreal Bridge. Both Easts opened 1♠, pass by South, but BOTH Wests thought it was South who opened 1♠. So both Wests "overcalled" 2♠ (Michaels cue bid to show five hearts and a five-card minor), and both Wests alerted 2♠, because Screen Mode involves alerting your own bids!

East, looking at a raise from partner, made a game try. Online, East cannot see partner's Alert. The Tasmanian East chose 3♠ as the game try, all pass.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1♠	pass
2♠ <sup>1</sup>	pass	3♠	all pass

1. Intended and alerted as 5-5 hearts and a minor.

This made ten tricks with good declarer play.

The Queensland East chose 3♦ as the game try, and the following auction ensued:

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

West bid 3♥, and East tried to sign off in 3♠, being minimum for her game try. 4♦ by West. East, slightly bewildered by such bidding by a partner who could raise to only 2♠ earlier, signed off in 4♠ in the expected 5-3 spade fit. West tried 5♦. East signed off again in 5♠, and West persisted with 6♦. So the slam was biddable after all!

♥A was led, and declarer played diamonds correctly, for +1370 and 15 imps to Queensland.

The other events were playing different hands, so they missed all the excitement.

Here is another hand from the event which raises questions about whether being online makes concentrating more difficult:

Round 12	♠ 6 4	
Board 40	♥ J 6 2	
W/Nil	♦ K Q 9 2	
	♣ Q 9 6 2	
♠ A K 8		♠ J 9 7 5 2
♥ —		♥ A 10 5 3
♦ A J 10 8 7 6 4		♦ 5
♣ A K 5		♣ J 10 8
	♠ Q 10 3	
	♥ K Q 9 8 7 4	
	♦ 3	
	♣ 7 4 3	



The aim this time is to reach 4♠ in the eight-card fit with 25 HCP and good shape. The eight tables in the Open instead played in eight different contracts. The other fields (Women, Seniors and Youth) played different boards from the Open, so we can't compare with them.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♦	pass	1♠	2♥

Four Wests opened 1♦. North passed. East responded 1♠. At two tables, South overcalled 2♥. West for WA was playing Support Doubles, so he could have doubled to show exactly three spades, then made strong noises, settling in 4♠. He instead bid 3♥, doubled by North. East, Val Bilstoft, did very well to deduce from North's double that partner seemed to have short hearts, so bidding 3♠ would work better than bidding 3NT. West raised 3♠ directly to 6♠.

Val Bilstoft did very well to make 6♠. ♥K was led. Val ruffed in dummy and followed the approved procedure of Setting Up The Side Suit First (Terry Brown invented the acronym SUSS1 for this often-missed technique). Accordingly, Val at Trick 2 played ace and another diamond, ruffed with ♠2 and overruffed with ♠3. The overruff suited declarer's plan just fine.

South now had to decide whether to play partner for ♥A or ♣Q. If ♥A, he has to continue hearts. If ♣Q, he has to switch to a club to remove a vital club entry to the long diamonds. Alas for South, North had doubled 3♥, which might suggest ♥A (not today, though). So South misguessed, playing a heart. Val Bilstoft knew exactly what to do now. Win ♥A, pitching the small club from dummy. Then ♠AK to draw the trumps. Ruff a diamond. club to ace, ruff the diamonds good by ruffing another diamond, with ♣K the vital entry to dummy. Making six, a magnificent plus 980.

If Val Bilstoft had discarded a club from dummy at Trick 1 and won ♥A, 6♠ can be made, but it's tricky. The only opening lead which defeats 6♠ is a club at Trick 1, removing a vital late entry to the eventual diamond winners.

An interesting idea is for South to discard a heart at Trick 3, not overruffing the ♠2. The subsequent play is complex, but 6♠ should then go down. If he's not on play at Trick 3, South doesn't have to guess what to do next!

At the other table which began with the above auction, West did not play support doubles. So he too bid 3♥, his partner bid 3NT, West bid 4♦, then a later keycard ask of 4♠ seems to have had a wrong response (5♦ to show one, but maybe should have been 5♣). 6♦ doubled down three was the outcome. On a good day in 6♦ on a friendly heart lead, ♣Q is onside and so is ♦Qx or ♦Kx, but today was not a good day for NSW.

For SA, Arjuna Delivera had a very tough rebid after

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♦	pass	1♠	pass

He chose 3♦ which became the final contract, losing 13 imps to WA's 980.

For NT, Grace Saunders elected to respond 1♥ to 1♦, bidding her shorter major. Luke Black rebid 3NT and North led a club to the jack. A diamond to the ten and queen was followed by another club to the king. On ace and another diamond, South discarded ♥4 (low encouraging). Last chance for North to switch to hearts, but North continued clubs. Nine tricks, 400 to NT. At the other table Tasmania opened 2♣ and reached 3NT by East, which had no chance on ♥K lead, drifting down four. 12 imps to NT.

Four Wests opened 2♣, perhaps to avoid the horrid rebid problems if you open 1♦. All four got bad scores. Three of them never bid spades at all, ending in 3NT down four, 5♦ down two and 5♦ down two. One did bid spades and reached 6♠ by East, but Chris Hughes found the devastating lead of ♣7 and down three was the outcome, though down two was achievable.

Sure, Val Bilstoft shone, but it seems that a high error rate occurs in online bridge. Does it? If so, why? One purpose of this article is my conclusion, which is:

For all bridge players except youths and computer workers who are used to being online, concentration errors are more likely online than face-to-face.

In particular, North allowed Luke to make 3NT probably because his partner's encouraging heart discard failed to register online. This seems to happen a lot online – paying attention to the other players' action is harder. Or the case of the two women who both thought their opponent not their partner had opened 1♠ – this doesn't happen as often face-to-face. And knowing that you have one keycard but making the wrong response is more likely online too.

Say I'm playing a bridge hand face-to-face and South orders a coffee, which arrives while we're playing the hand. The opponent searches for \$4.50 to pay the person who delivers the coffee. My experience from years of observation is that the chance of the very next card played by South – after the distraction of paying for the coffee – being an error is at least five times higher than normal.

When you play RealBridge, I think that such distractions, with three pictures of players to look at and the like, are more prevalent than when we play bridge face-to-face, so the error rate is higher. Not for everyone – just for most of us. Something to keep in mind.

# Justin Lall Memorial Declarer Play of the Year

*Sartaj Hans wins major award at the annual IBPA awards  
(reprinted from the IBPA Bulletin, July 2019)*

## THE ASIA PACIFIC OPEN TEAMS

by Ron Klinger



The 2019 Asia Pacific Bridge Federation Championships were held in Singapore from June 11-20. The Australian Open Team did rather well on this problem deal from their match against China Hong Kong:

Round 22 ♠ J 6 4 2  
N/Nil ♥ K 10 9 5  
♦ A 8 5 2  
♣ Q

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

♠ A Q  
♥ Q J 4 3  
♦ K 9 6 4  
♣ A 6 4

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Hung		Edgton	
pass	pass	pass	1NT
pass	2♣	2♦	2♥
pass	4♥	all pass	

With Australia East-West and China Hong Kong North-South, Andy Hung (West) led the ♣3 to the queen, king and ace. Declarer ruffed a club, finessed the ♠Q, ruffed his last club and played the ♥K: eight - three - two and the ♥9: ♦3 - ♥4 - ♥A. Hung continued with clubs and had trump control. The result was one down, East-West plus 50.

At the other table...

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	Gill		Hans
pass	pass	pass	1NT
pass	2♣	pass	2♥
pass	4♥	all pass	

West led the jack of clubs: queen - king - ace. Sartaj Hans (South) also ruffed a club, led a spade to his queen and ruffed his last club. However, when the king of hearts held, Hans continued with a diamond from dummy. East followed with the ten, Hans played his king and West ruffed in. West cashed the ace of hearts and led another club for Hans to ruff, East discarding a diamond on the heart and a spade on the club. These cards remained:

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

When South played the ♥Q to draw West's last trump and discarded the ♠6 from dummy, East was squeezed in an odd way. While East was considering his discard, Hans claimed, stating, "If you ditch a diamond, I shall play the ♦A and another diamond. If

you pitch a spade, I'll cash the ♠A and then endplay you with the ♦9." When Hans discarded a spade from the dummy, he was left with just one threat suit, diamonds. However, East still had two material suits and had to unguard one of them. That was ten tricks, plus 420 and 10 imps to Australia.

Additionally, had declarer discarded a diamond on the ♥Q, East would still have been squeezed, but in that situation, it would have been a criss-cross squeeze without the count, another oddity. A diamond discard would have allowed Hans to set up his fourth diamond as a winner, with the ♠A as an entry, while a spade discard would have meant that the ace of that suit would then have dropped the king. The ♦A would have been the entry for the established ♠J. In either case, it was very nice card-reading, a very-well-played deal and an elegant ending.

Why did Sartaj Hans play as he did? The natural move, after the ♥K held the trick, was to continue hearts. That would have succeeded if hearts had been 3-2; if they'd been 4-1 and diamonds 3-2, Hans would still have been alright. However, after South had opened 1NT, West, his screenmate, had thought for some time before passing. Hans commented: "Since West held at most the ♥A, ♦QJ and the ♣J in high-cards, a 5-4-2-2 or a 5-4-3-1 shape would not have warranted such a pause. He must have had six clubs and four hearts for the hesitation. The absence of a singleton diamond lead suggested to me that he was 3-4-0-6. To cater for my legitimate make when he had 2-4-1-6 shape, I led a diamond to my king. If both opponents had followed, I'd need to have continued with the ♠A and then another diamond through West before playing any more trumps."

I had watched the play on BBO and the next day I asked Hans, "Would you have played the ♦9 if West had played low on the ♦2 from dummy?" He replied: "Not sure what I would have done. There was some chance LHO had a singleton queen or jack that he did not elect to lead. Playing the ♦9 would have worked very well on the actual deal (if East had not split) as I could then have neutralised his trumps, whatever defence he chose. In practice, however, players always split the queen-jack-ten, so perhaps the discussion is academic." East's rising with a diamond honour on the ♦2 from dummy was not fatal to the defence. However, after West ruffed South's king and cashed the ♥A, a spade shift instead of a club would have laid declarer low.

In the Open Series, there were eleven declarers in 4♥, but just two of them were successful. The Asia

Pacific Bridge Federation Championships also determined the teams which qualified for the 2019 World Championships in Wuhan, China. They were:  
Open: Singapore, Indonesia and China Hong Kong  
Women: Chinese Taipei, Japan and China Hong Kong  
Mixed: Chinese Taipei, Thailand and Indonesia  
Seniors: Indonesia, Chinese Taipei and Japan.

China, as host nation, will also represent Zone 6 in Wuhan in all four categories.

### Other Shortlisted Candidates

- Richard Pavlicek, reported by Jing Liu
- Chris Willenken, reported by Jan Jansma
- Michael Whibley, reported by J.J. Wang
- Tor Eivind Grude, reported by Knut Kjmmsrod
- Jeff Meckstroth, reported by John Carruthers
- Hugh McGann, reported by Katie Thorpe
- Cedric Lorenzini, reported by John Carruthers



*The 2019 Australian Open Team (Sartaj Hans, Andy Hung, Nabil Edgton, Peter Gill) featured on the cover of the December 2018 issue of Australian Bridge Magazine*

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# HOW WOULD YOU PLAY?

with Barbara Travis

*Solutions to problems on page 5*

## HAND 1

You are playing in 4♠, South. West leads the ♦J. You play low from dummy and West holds the trick. You ruff the diamond continuation and cash the ♠A. West discards a low diamond.

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

You can still make the contract as long as East has at least three cards in each red suit and two or three clubs.

Play a heart to dummy's ace, then ruff dummy's last diamond. Now you cash the ♣A followed by the ♥K. Ruff the third heart in dummy, then lead a club to the jack and king. This is the end-position:

♠ — ♥ J 9 ♦ 9 ♣ Q	♠ J 8 ♥ — ♦ — ♣ 10 7
♠ — ♥ J 9 ♦ 9 ♣ Q	♠ Q 10 9 ♥ — ♦ A ♣ —
♠ — ♥ J 9 ♦ 9 ♣ Q	♠ K 5 ♥ — ♦ — ♣ 9 5

You can exit with a club to West's queen, and East can discard his diamond. East will have to trump whatever is led next, but will now be trapped with the lead, having to lead a spade from the Q-10. North will win the ♠J and South then wins the ♠K.

Another example of not panicking, focusing instead on how the contract can make.



## HAND 2

You are playing in 4♥, South, with no opposition bidding.

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

West leads the ♦J - queen - king. East returns the ♦2 - seven - nine - ace.

You should start by leading a low heart to the queen and West's ace. West tries to cash the ♦10 but you ruff, then draw trumps with the ♥J and ♥K, West following.

You lead a spade to the queen and West's king. West leads another diamond, ruffed in dummy, as East follows.

The contract now seems to hinge on finding the ♣Q. However, before any crucial decision is made, you should gather as much information as possible about the defenders' hands. Lead the ♠A and ♠J. West shows out on the third spade, and you discard a club from dummy.

You should now be able to count West's hand shape: three hearts, four diamonds, two spades, leaving West with four clubs. Just cash the ♣K, removing East's singleton club, and then finesse the next round of clubs.

Count, count, count.

**HAND 3**

♠ A 5 4 2

♥ J 10 9 7 4

♦ Q 7 3

♣ A

♠ 10 9 6

♥ K Q 6 5

♦ 5 4

♣ 10 9 8 7

♠ K Q J 8

♥ 8 3 2

♦ 2

♣ J 6 5 4 2

♠ 7 3

♥ A

♦ A K J 10 9 8 6

♣ K Q 3

You are playing in 7♦, South, with East having doubled North's 4♠ cuebid.

West leads the ♠10, which you must win with the ♠A. How will you make your thirteenth trick?

The only hope for a thirteenth trick is for hearts to break 4-3, with the long heart able to be estab-

lished. For this to work, you require four entries to dummy: three to ruff hearts, then one to reach the long heart winner. The opening lead has removed one entry, so you must find an alternative.

At Trick 2, lead a heart to the ace. Next, you lead the ♦6 to the ♦7 in dummy, then ruff a heart. Now you can lead a trump to the queen, ruffing another heart, watching to check that the suit is divided 4-3. Your next step is to cross to dummy's ♣A to ruff the fourth round of hearts, establishing the ♥J as a winner.

Your final entry comes from trumping your ♣Q, and you can now discard your remaining spade on the heart winner.

Don't forget to look at 5-1 fits when in trump contracts. They can provide a long suit winner if you have both enough trumps and enough entries!

# Around The Clubs

## Ruby Anniversary at the Ballina Bridge Club

October marked the Ruby Anniversary of the Ballina Bridge Club, 40 years since a small group of bridge players met at a home in East Ballina and decided to set up a club. The Club's celebration included a recognition and toasting of the Club's Life Members, and the launch of a book written by member Robert Eldridge, *The History of the Ballina Bridge Club*.

Providing a unique insight into the workings of a totally volunteer organisation it is dedicated to members who worked tirelessly – and at times against the odds – to build their own clubroom and buy the land upon which it is built. It is a demonstration of a local organisation working with local government, local businesses and community.

Ballina has grown to be one of the largest and strongest bridge clubs in Regional Australia, with in excess of 300 active members. The history is an impressive 250-page high quality book with many photographs of the development of the club from 1981 until today.

Anyone wishing to purchase a copy can do so by contacting the Ballina Bridge Club on (02) 6681 5533 or [bbclub@internode.on.net](mailto:bbclub@internode.on.net). The history costs \$15 plus postage.



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](mailto:maryo@penline.com.au)



Andy Bowles



## When dummy goes down

Thank you to Andy Bowles of RealBridge for guest-writing the ABF Education column for this issue. Joan Butts will return with her regular column in the February issue.

The moment when you first see dummy is a key point in a bridge hand. You go from having only limited, generalised information to having lots of very specific information. Assimilating all that information is one of the most useful skills for your pupils to acquire.

It helps to have a routine to run through every time you see dummy, before you play to Trick One. For the player in third seat, it should be something like this:

### Points

- How many points do you have?
- How many points does dummy have?
- How many points has declarer shown?
- How many points has partner shown, or denied? Sometimes partner didn't open the bidding, or didn't respond to your opening bid, so you know his upper limit.
- How many points does partner have? This will be a range, but it's best to assume that declarer has a minimum. That's usually the most likely, and it also gives you the best chance to beat the contract.

### Lead

- What has partner led from?
  - What does this tell us about other suits?
- Examples:
- If he leads a four-card suit against 1NT-3NT, he probably doesn't have a five-card suit somewhere else.
  - If he doesn't lead the suit that we bid, he probably has the ace.
  - If he preempted and then led his own suit, he probably doesn't have a singleton in a side suit (he might have a singleton trump).

### Shape

- How many cards does declarer have in the suit led?
- How many cards does declarer have in the suits he bid?
- What shapes can he be in the other suits? Remember to cross-check against what you worked out from the lead.

### Contract

- Is it a normal contract?
- Is it a good contract?
- To beat it, what do you need partner to have?

### Planning

At the beginning of the defence, you don't usually know how the whole hand will play out. But you can think about what he might do on the next few tricks. Will you have any early decisions to make? If so, make them now. For example:

- What will you play to Trick One, if dummy plays low, or if dummy plays high?
- If declarer leads a spade from dummy, will you play your ace?
- If declarer leads the jack of trumps, will you cover?

### And Finally

When you've done all this thinking, the next thing to do is play to Trick One. There's an easy trap to fall into here: you do your thinking, play smoothly to Trick One, turn the cards over, and then realise you didn't look at declarer's card. Oops!

Once you've finished your analysis, get back into the present.

\* \* \* \* \*

That's a lot for an improving player to think about. Nobody does all of this straight away, and obviously we wouldn't teach all of this from the start. But this is a theme that you can keep coming back to as your students improve, adding a bit more to think about each time.

# 2021 Grand National Novice Pairs

Laura Ginnan

*A new ABF-licensed gold masterpoint event*

The Inaugural Grand National Novice Pairs (GNNP) event is now underway! The in-club qualifying heats were held from 15-21 November, and 131 partnerships have qualified to contest the online semi-finals using the 100% Australian made, owned, and operated *Real Deal Bridge*.

As the GNNP Tournament Organiser for the event I have had the pleasure working with so many wonderful club administrators who go above and beyond to ensure that everyone in their club has a fantastic day. I have enjoyed my discussions with the club contacts about how bridge can be furthered for up-and-coming players. One theme that continually pops up is the idea that players aren't necessarily interested in national competition play. One organiser told me about how they didn't have a choice in the matter when they were improving; they were simply told they were playing, thrown into a car and dragged off to their first national event. Another said that they weren't going to tell the players, and they were just going to play the event as their normal game and then surprise them afterwards because players might be scared off if they knew!

It seems newer players have the idea that going to the Summer Festival, Gold Coast or any other national is something that the 'good players do'. As a player who has contested these events from when I could barely follow suit, through to making appearances in the finals, I can attest that the events are much more fun and do more for your game when you are learning. The immersive experience allows the opportunity to solidify concepts, meet wonderful people, and to experience a different social nature of the game. It's a beautiful thing to see restaurant staff regularly need to add on an extra table for a dinner booking because players have run into someone on the walk there, or



Northern Bridge Club watching the post-game analysis

enjoyed the company of their last round opposition so much that they invited them out to dinner!

In the coming years I hope that the GNNP will help to bridge the divide and provide a calm and comfortable pathway to introduce newer players to national competition, but I also hope that experienced players will take an active role in helping to break down the barriers. This could be as simple as suggesting to a player that they attend an event, sharing your scoop on where to stay and inviting them out for a meal while they are there.

The GNNP also aims to break down the barriers of the skill divide, and allows participants access to expert players with video analysis of the deals. A number of top players have contributed their time and expertise to ensure that the event is a fantastic training tool for participants: a big thank you to Renee Cooper, Mike Doecke, Bill Jacobs, Justin Mill, Nye Griffiths, David Beauchamp, Mary Elson, Liam Milne, Phil Markey, Jodi Tutty, Andy Hung, Susan Humphries, Pele Rankin, Max Henbest and the yet to be divulged National Final analyst!

In the next Newsletter we will have a full recap of the event, but you can keep up to date with the progression of the finals or review the analysis of the boards at

[www.realdealbridge.com/gnnp-2021](http://www.realdealbridge.com/gnnp-2021)

The following video link also provides some highlights for the analysis of the qualifying sessions:

[youtu.be/IBPfdGc7guY](https://youtu.be/IBPfdGc7guY)

## UPCOMING AUSTRALIA-WIDE PAIRS EVENTS FOR 2022

The 2021 Australia-Wide Open Pairs and Australia-Wide Restricted Pairs have been postponed to 25-31 January 2022, due to the COVID lockdowns in 2021. The 2022 Australia-Wide Novice Pairs will be 25-31 May as usual.

These events are played every year in 100 clubs around Australia. Contact your local club for details, or you can contact the event organisers directly by emailing

[mail@australianbridge.com](mailto:mail@australianbridge.com)

# What Really Happened?

Chris DePasquale



*Two different ways to score 400 in the Dick Cummings Pairs*

Firstly, heartiest congratulations to James Coutts and Liam Milne who chopped us up in the Dick Cummings Pairs at the Sydney Spring Nationals and dominated the event. These were the leading final scores (ten rounds, Matchpoints converted to Victory Points):

- 1 James Coutts - Liam Milne 146.96
- 2 Chris DePasquale - Michael Courtney 137.65
- 3 Daniel Mao - Ming Zhang 129.31
- 4 Lakshmi Sunderasan - Fraser Rew 127.85

Mystery surrounds one deal in the match between the tournament winners and the runners-up. All I can tell you for now is that the final contract was 3NT (possibly redoubled) and North-South ended up scoring +400 on the board. This was the deal with EW vulnerable and South the dealer.

<p>♠ K 10 6 ♥ K J 9 6 4 ♦ K J ♣ Q 8 6</p> <p>♠ A Q J 9 4 3 ♥ Q 10 8 ♦ A 3 ♣ J 4</p>	<p>♠ 8 7 ♥ 3 2 ♦ 7 4 ♣ A K 10 7 5 3 2</p> <p>♠ 5 2 ♥ A 7 5 ♦ Q 10 9 8 6 5 2 ♣ 9</p>
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## Scenario 1

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
3♠	3NT	all pass	3♦

The bidding is straightforward and obvious. With stoppers everywhere and two diamond honours North punts 3NT, and East is on opening lead.

From East's point of view North's bid might be based on the ♠AQ and seven running diamonds. Meanwhile EW might be able to cash the first seven tricks in clubs. So, East started with a club honour, West dropped the jack and declarer played the six.

Presumably West would play the jack (denying the queen) from a three-card holding also (and it could be singleton, too), so East tries the second club winner, fetching the four and eight, with a spade pitched from dummy.

Now East still has a problem. Unless partner has a diamond stopper declarer must be home with seven diamonds, the ♣Q and the ♥A, in addition to whatever spade tricks he holds, so East must rely on West to have a diamond stopper. If West began with a plausible

♠ A J 10 9 x x    ♥ K J x    ♦ A x    ♣ J x

(consistent with all the bidding and play to date) then only a heart switch at Trick 3 will beat the contract! And if West's hearts are ♥KQ8 (or better) then dummy's entry to the diamonds can be eliminated entirely (win the first heart and continue with the second honour, and a third round if necessary) while West retains the diamond stopper. Then the contract will go down by several tricks.

So, East tried a heart which went to the queen and king. The ♦K was led and ducked, followed by the jack overtaken with the queen. West won the ♦A, cashed the ♠A, and declarer claimed the remainder. 3NT making nine tricks: +400 to NS.

## Scenario 2

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
3NT!	dbl	rdbl	3♦
			all pass

After South's preemptive opening West can overcall in spades. But, just as the good poker players do before committing chips to the pot, West glanced to his left and saw a player bursting with desire to enter the bidding. Could he be thwarted? The long spade suit can take tricks in notrumps, and there will be plenty of hands where only nine tricks can be made in either strain. Give East a holding like

♠ K x x    ♥ A x x x    ♦ x x    ♣ A x x x



and 3NT has nine top tricks, but 4♠ is problematic at best. Furthermore, if both 3NT and 4♠ are making, North-South will be less inclined to sacrifice in 5♦ against 3NT. Even three down doubled in 5♦ (+500) would score less than a vulnerable game (+600/620) so preventing that sacrifice might unlock many matchpoints. So West overcalled 3NT!

With stoppers in all four suits and an obvious diamond lead, North had what looks like a straightforward double. If the 3NT overcall was based on AKJ10xxx clubs and a couple of aces outside, West would be disappointed. The diamond lead and continuation would set up partner's suit, the ♣Q would stop the run of that suit, and partner would signal his entry to run the rest of the diamonds.

With seven tricks of his own to contribute to the 3NT contract, East did not want partner to run anywhere with what was either a long cashing major with a diamond stopper, or a rock-crusher hand. The club finesse (if one was required) looked like a certainty on the bidding. Even if 7♣ was making, that would score "only" 2140, whereas "only" 12 tricks in 3NT redoubled would be 2200. What could go wrong?

Somewhat perturbed by the turn of events, North must have wondered how dreadful South's diamond



suit was. In any event he decided to abandon Plan A (the king of diamonds lead); perhaps later declarer would finesse his partner for that card, which might be crucial. So, North led his fourth-best heart. South won the ace and returned the suit, and the defence racked up the first five tricks. As East expected, the club finesse worked, and declarer took the last eight tricks. One down redoubled, vulnerable resulted in a score of +400 NS.

One of these two scenarios actually happened. Which do you think is more likely? Vote now at #NFI #ABF #WhatReallyHappened?

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Proceeds will support the ABF Foundation, established in 2020, to assist participants of all skill levels to enjoy and promote our fascinating game. The Foundation hopes to provide scholarships, promote regional bridge and bridge for youth right through to the retirement community; indeed, it will support any activity that is considered positive for the future of bridge.

Enquiries to: [foundation@abf.com.au](mailto:foundation@abf.com.au) or [proam@abffoundation.org.au](mailto:proam@abffoundation.org.au)

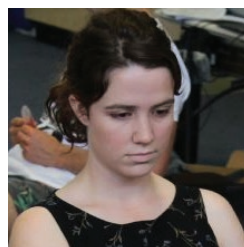
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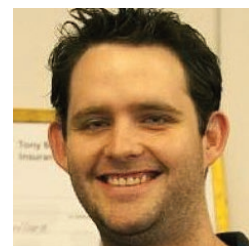
Ishmael Del'Monte



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# WORKSHOPS WITH WILL

## with William Jenner-O'Shea

### SECOND-ROUND BIDDING TIPS

Most players have a great understanding of opening and responding, and usually opener's rebid is quite straightforward. From the second round onwards, sometimes players get a little less certain about what to bid.

Here is an example auction. Your partner opens 1♣ (could show two, three or four cards in clubs, depending on your system). You respond 1♠, showing 4+ spades and typically 6+ points (as an aside, I recommend responding if you have an ace, even with no other high-card points). Partner rebids 2♣, showing at least five clubs, usually six, and suggests an unbalanced hand.

Here is your hand. What do you do?

♠ Q 8 7 4 3    ♥ A J 9 2    ♦ 8 4    ♣ 3 2

There's a chance that you have a heart fit, since 2♥ would have been a reverse for partner. There's also a chance that you have a spade fit, since partner only knows that you have four cards there. Less experienced players would bid 2♥ here, but it's a risky choice. A new suit by responder is forcing, and at the two-level, you need to have around 10+ points – you are often forcing partner to 2NT or the three-level. The best call is a Pass. Partner has less than 16 points since they didn't jump. **Stopping low when you have no chance of game is usually best.**

Here is another hand, and another auction.

♠ A J 9 2    ♥ K J 7 6 2    ♦ —    ♣ J 7 6 3

Partner opens 1♦ and you respond 1♥. Partner rebids 2♦. Now what?

This time the rebid is guaranteeing six cards, since if partner had a balanced hand, or a second suit, they could easily bid it. You do have the 10 points previously discussed, but this hand has a few flaws.



Partner doesn't have a spade fit, since with four spades a simple 1♠ rebid would have been good, even with six great diamonds. There is no reason to bid 2♠ here. The other contract worth considering is notrumps, you do have stoppers everywhere. The catch in notrumps is your diamond void. It will be difficult to establish the diamonds and to get the lead to partner's hand. Shortage in partner's suit is not good, and makes the hand hard to declare. 2NT by responder should be invitational, around 11-12 points. Maybe 10 HCP is enough, but not with this hand. Game is unlikely.

I recommend passing this hand in 2♦. **Downgrade hands with a shortage in partner's suit (perhaps deduct a point or two).**

One last tricky bidding problem:

♠ A Q J 8 4 3    ♥ Q 3 2    ♦ K Q 7    ♣ 2

Partner opens 1♣ and you respond 1♠. Partner rebids 2♣, now what?

The one bid that you must not make is 2♠. Bidding an 'old' suit (clubs or spades have already been bid) is not forcing, and risks missing a game. You might consider jumping to 3♠, showing 6+ spades. You and your partner might need a discussion about whether this is just an invitation (say 10 or 11 points) or forcing to game. Partner might have no spades, so 4♠ might be the wrong contract.

The expert choice on this hand is a sneaky 2♦ bid – it is a new suit, so it is forcing. Partner will expect 5+♠, and 4+♦, but probably won't get too confused or enthusiastic about a minor suit. Showing your strong diamonds allows partner to investigate spades or notrumps. You can bid 3♠ next if you want to keep looking for the best contract. The same rules of bidding apply to the second round of bidding as the first round. 1NT shows 6-10, 2NT is invitational, 3NT is game. Old suits are non-forcing and new suits are forcing.

# BRIDGE INTO THE 21st CENTURY

by Paul Lavings, paul@bridgegear.com



## PARTNER OPENS 1♦ AND REBIDS 2♦

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♦	pass	1♠	pass
2♦	pass	?	

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

## SOLUTIONS

1. Pass. How many diamonds does the 2♦ rebid show? In my partnerships it is ALWAYS 6+, but for some it can be a five-card suit. If 2♦ can be a five-card suit then responder must guess here whether to pass or bid 2♥. If 2♦ shows 6+ diamonds, then opener is better off to pass and hope to make 2♦, quite possibly the last makeable contract.

Instead of rebidding 2♦ with a five-card suit, I recommend rebidding 1NT on 1-3-5-4, 2-2-5-4, 1-4-4-4, and even 0-4-5-4. Why is bidding 1NT so much better than rebidding a five-card minor?

- 1NT scores better than any other contract
- 1NT may or may not be the best contract but is the most difficult against which to defend, opponents often give up halfway through
- The two-way checkback mechanism over the 1NT rebid works extremely well
- Responder may have to pass your five-card minor with a singleton
- When rebidding your minor shows 6+ the hand is much easier to judge.

**On the next nine questions, assume 2♦ shows 6+ and enjoy the difference.**

2. Pass. This could be a considerable misfit so my guess would be to pass and hope to make 2♦. If you bid 3♣ over 2♦ remember that even if 3♣ happens to be the best spot your 3♣ bid is forcing.

On every deal, your side will have either two seven-card fits or one eight-card fit. My guess is your two seven-card fits are in spades and clubs but it could even be diamonds and hearts or clubs if opener has seven diamonds.

3. 2NT. Natural and non-forcing. If opener continues on to 3NT with extras you expect to make the contract. Your good intermediates figure to make quite a difference in the play.

4. 2♥. You want to go to game but don't want to bid 3NT with an unstopped suit. Hence you bid a three-card suit where you have a stopper.

You should now be able to cope with any continuation to reach the best contract.

At this point in the auction responder will frequently bid a three-card suit simply to create a force and show location of strength.

5. 3♦. You want to invite game but still end up in 3♦ if opener has a minimum. If opener accepts your invitation by continuing with 3♥ over your 3♦ then you can bid 3NT.

6. 2♠. This hand is from a Bidding Forum problem in the August 2021 edition of Australian Bridge Magazine. From 18 panellists 11 bid 2♠, five bid 3♦, and there was one vote each for 3♠ and pass. The 2♠ bidders pointed out that 4♠ was the most likely game contract, however in the hand from which the problem came 3NT and 5♦ were the only making games.

Note how much easier the bidding is when 2♦ shows 6+ diamonds and likewise that 2♠ shows 6+ spades.

7. Pass. With your anaemic spade suit you could easily have four or even five losers in spades, whereas 2♦ figures to play well in the known 6-2 fit.

If opponents now balance with 2♥ or double you can introduce your spades, implying a weak six-card suit.

8. 3♠. Invitational with 6+ spades, looks just right. If you want to force to game with 6+ spades you need to bid another suit first.

9. 4♠. You want to be in 4♠, no more and no less, so just bid 4♠. With your one-loser seven-card spade suit you should be able to knock out ♠K and get back in and draw the outstanding trumps with a minimum of fuss.

10. 4♦. Minorwood, in the modern style, asking for keycards. Despite only 10 HCP you have at least a 6-4 diamond fit and a source of tricks with your spade suit. If opener shows two keycards bid 6♦ and if opener shows three keycards bid 7♦. You have at least 10 diamonds between you so you don't need ♦Q (a 3-0 break is only 22%).



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