

BRIDGE PROFILE: TRAIAN CHIRA

This edition's profile is of a person who, nowadays, is not so much a bridge player as an organiser of Bridge Base Online (BBO) coverage within Australia, for the World Bridge Federation and at many other international events. His video footage was also largely responsible for providing the evidence corroborating the cheating allegations against several world-class pairs in late 2015.

Neil Ewart interviewed him for the ABF Newsletter and, hence, the interview is in the third person. Thank you, Neil, for this interesting piece.

Background

Traian Chira (pronounced Try-an Kee-ra) came to Australia from Campina in Romania in the early 1990s after the revolution that saw the overthrow of Communism. His professional life is spent is writing and managing software.

What is your first memory of playing bridge?

Traian comes from a Chess background. He was looking for a pastime in Australia, so went to the VBA in 1993, where he met Dan Hohor, a fellow Romanian. They quickly became friends and bridge partners. Traian called him "The Maestro". As Traian said "I never have read a bridge book in my life. Ever! Dan, however, read books, and played, not like me by the ear, but through knowledge."

Dan, who was the same age as Traian, sadly succumbed to cancer in 2016.

Traian tells a story from Bali in 2013 that he still laughs about. He was doing an interview for Indonesian television and the interviewer asked him who his favourite bridge player in the world was, expecting some name like Meckstroth or Rodwell to be mentioned, but he responded "Dan Hohor". "Who?!!" asked the interviewer.

How did you become involved with bridge software?

In the late 1990s, Fred Gitelman was getting BBO going and, early on, Nick Fahrer got involved in doing some BBO Vugraphs in Australia. Traian saw this and said "Nick, I like this. I want to be an operator". Fred Gitelman showed Traian how to run Vugraphs and he was quickly absorbed by it. "I love kibitzing bridge. For me this was the easiest way to kibitz bridge at a high level."

"I wanted to do this properly, so I started Vugraphing a few matches in Australia. In 2010 I was invited to Philadelphia to a world event as an operator." After the event Maurizio Di Sacco (the WBF Operations Director) called Traian and said "Look, I like you and would like you to run the Vugraphs for me at WBF and EBL (European Bridge League) events."

Lille, in 2012, was the first time where he was in charge of the entire Vugraph operation and this is where he first started to design his software where you could see schedules, player information, and matches "so the spectator had a connection". Whilst he now thinks his efforts there look primitive, the WBF liked it and he has never looked back. As well as working full-time, Traian spends around 6 hours a day on his "hobby", as he calls it.

Did you realise your video footage of events would be used to expose cheats? How did you feel when that happened?

"I decided for Bali in 2013 I would do something for fun. I would bring a camera. Nobody had thought of that before. I was bored, and thought a camera would bring more spectators."

During this event Maurizio asked Traian to move his cameras to a specific match. He didn't know why at the time, and didn't want to. "It's a boring Seniors' match. Nobody will \$%@\$ watch!"

After the event he was packing up and Maurizio asked him for a copy of the video. He wouldn't say why. Two months later Maurizio contacted him and said, "a judge will call you".

Traian's video was instrumental in finding the "coughing German doctors" guilty of using coded coughs to exchange information. The doctors claimed that Traian had doctored his video, but that was quickly dismissed and the doctors received hefty punishments.

Maurizio then asked Traian to arrange for 8 cameras for the 2014 European Championships. Traian says "this is where we caught everybody".

continued on page 2



Bill Gates and Traian Chira at the inaugural Online Bridge World Cup in 2016



Traian's video was used to expose an extraordinary amount of cheating at international events, and resulted in some of the "best" bridge players in the world being found guilty of cheating.

Despite this, he is quite unfazed by the outcomes; he is more interested in making the game more interesting to the spectator!

Since then, his software has become more sophisticated, with much higher resolution providing very good viewing. For future major events, there will be a small tablet computer on each side of the screen that will include a button for calling the Director (so the other side of the screen doesn't know a call has been made) and also one that will be required to be used when taking a toilet break. (A team mate at the other table won't be permitted to leave at the same time.)

Traian didn't set out to make his software a security tool, his primary interest being the viewing, but the WBF saw the power in using it to restrict the chances of cheating, and has worked with Traian to develop his software in this area as well as for our viewing pleasure. In the future, we may even see bidding done on the tablets but Traian draws the line at that. "If they take the actual cards away, I'm outta here!"

What is your most memorable bridge moment?

Ed: I'd expected him to say that meeting Bill Gates was exciting but...

Traian's moments don't come from exciting hands or play like the rest of us of course. They come from moments relating to a Vugraph. His most memorable moment was at Ostend in the 2013 European Championships when short by one operator, Andy Hung volunteered to do two tables simultaneously. Most operators struggle to keep up at one table but not only did Andy manage to operate two computers he also provided commentary! Traian was amazed. "He's the best in the world."

Have you a favourite bridge hand?

In 2003, at the ANC Butler, playing with Dan (Hohor) against Peter Gill and Martin Bloom, the auction went 1NT – 3NT. Peter led a card, and after 10 minutes' thought, Dan turned to Peter and said, "I will squeeze you out of your idle card!" Peter made Dan play it out (he had probably never come across Dan before, since he didn't play much). Dan was right and Peter was eventually squeezed.

Tell us about your favourite international bridge experience.

"Last year in Wroclaw for the first time we had 16 rooms on Vugraph. I arrived in this underground lair where they had 16 rooms. It was unbelievable. It was a memorable moment to have 16 tables on BBO."

When you hear Traian recount these stories the passion in his voice about what he does is quite evident.

What do you still want to achieve in bridge?

"In Canberra each January I try out all my new stuff. This year for the first time we had tablets attached to the table screens. Tablets are my next project. And more and more rooms on Vugraph. In Lyon we will have 24 rooms on Vugraph with the 'Director call' and 'toilet break' buttons fully functional."

What event would you like to be involved with, that you have not already attended?

Traian, apart from his introduction in Philadelphia, has done little in North America. It has been discussed, but the ACBL hasn't been able to provide the wired internet that Traian says is essential for his software to work at an acceptable level.

Talking to Traian was quite uplifting. He has an extraordinary passion for this stuff and gets so excited talking about it. The whole bridge world is so lucky to have him.



*A rare photo of Traian playing bridge.
Now we understand - he doesn't have time!*

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Editor: Barbara Travis

Letters to the Editor /enquiries: editor@abf.com.au



*Grandpa Kevin Douglas
(from Mollymook Bridge Club)
with 4-month-old Austin.
Kevin's nickname is "Poppa 3NT" and
he is already teaching Austin Multi 2s!!*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The ABF Annual General Meeting was held over the weekend of 22nd-23rd April 2017.

The ABF Council, effectively our 'Board of Directors', with appointees from each State and Territory Bridge Association, met to fulfil its legal obligations and to review our strategic activities and current and future plans.

We welcome several new members to the Council:

- Richard Wallis (Queensland), who has also taken over from Keith McDonald as the President of the QBA,
- Christopher Leach (Victoria),
- Robina McConnell (Western Australia), and
- Mairead Kelly (Northern Territory).

In recognition of his outstanding contribution to bridge over at least 30 years, Keith McDonald was appointed to the ABF Committee of Honour. I would personally like to thank Keith for his support and great service to bridge.

Other items of interest were that Rex Hotel was confirmed as the new venue for the 2018 Summer Festival of Bridge, Councillors expressed their appreciation of the increased subsidies for the GNOT, and Council approved further investigation into the possibility of running a World Championship Bridge event in Adelaide in 2021.

Council also workshopped several items including progress with the ANC Strategic Review, and how to provide improved club support and support for directors. More about these items in later issues.

Over the past year, we have been investigating whether a National licence for Pianola would be possible but have established that a single National licence will not benefit clubs. We do still intend to investigate how Pianola might help us build a better technology environment for clubs. This work is moving slowly but past experience shows it is more important to do it correctly than to do it quickly. Clubs are of course free to licence Pianola if they think it suits their needs.

Our game of bridge is governed by the Laws of Duplicate Bridge which are promulgated by the World Bridge Federation (WBF). These Laws were first published in 1928 and have been regularly revised since then. The WBF has announced the 2017 revision of the Laws, and the target date for implementation in Australia is 1st August 2017.

The ABF has appointed Laurie Kelso, who is the Secretary of the WBF Laws Committee, and one of our Senior Directors and National Event Coordinators, to manage the Australian implementation of the new Laws. More detail about the new Laws can be found on Page 9.

Bruce Neill

ENTRIES ARE EVERYTHING

An understanding of entries is important to get the most out of the trick-taking potential of a deal. When teaching declarer play techniques to students, let them see the whole hand on the table, after they've played it, and go through the correct play, card by card. This takes a bit of patience, but it's worth it. When they're making their plan, it's vital to stress the word "Entries", because you can't count tricks as winners if you can't reach the other hand to take them!

Consider the following suit combinations:

| | | |
|--------------|----|--------------|
| HAND 1 | v. | HAND 2 |
| <i>Dummy</i> | | <i>Dummy</i> |
| ♦ A K Q J | | ♦ A K Q J |

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Declarer</i> | <i>Declarer</i> |
| ♦ 3 | ♦ void |

Dummy's high cards in the first layout provide four tricks since the ♦3 in declarer's hand provides a link to the diamonds. In the second layout, there are four potential winners in dummy, but no link card in declarer's hand. The winners are stranded unless there is an entry in some other suit to reach dummy. Sounds simple, but unless students are shown how to think about this, there will be some upsets.

Show them that an entry is not just one card, but two; a link card and the entry itself. You need a card (usually, but not necessarily, a low card) to transport you to the other hand. There are two types of entries, "external" and "internal". External entries are more obvious because these are winners in other suits that will let you gain access to the other hand. An internal entry is one where you need to develop the entry card in the suit itself.

You might think that seeing entries comes naturally, but on the contrary, students need their teachers to carefully show them play techniques.

I was reminded just how important this technique was when I played this hand recently:

| | | |
|--------------|-------------|------------|
| Dealer South | ♠ Q 8 6 4 | |
| Both Vul | ♥ A K 2 | |
| | ♦ J 8 7 5 | |
| | ♣ 8 5 | |
| | | ♠ J 10 3 2 |
| | | ♥ 10 5 3 |
| | | ♦ 9 4 2 |
| | | ♣ K Q 6 |
| | ♠ A K 7 5 | |
| | ♥ Q J 8 7 6 | |
| | ♦ A | |
| | ♣ 9 3 2 | |

| | | | |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| <i>South</i> | <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> |
| 1♥ | 2NT* | 3♦** | Pass |
| 4♥ | All Pass | | |

* 2NT = 5/5 in the minors
** 3♦ = good heart raise

East leads the ♠9. This hand looks easy, with 10 tricks via four spades, five hearts and the ♦A, but you need to consider the opponent's bidding, and the lead, which looks suspiciously like a singleton, since East did not lead one of their minors. Entries become vital here, and the trump suit is famous for providing them, so how would you play the hand?

Win the ♠Q in dummy, and draw the first round of trumps by playing the ♥2 to the ♥Q. Now a trump to the ♥K. West follows twice, so you know their exact shape: 1-2-5-5.

You have good spade pips, the 8-7-6-5, which will allow you to finesse twice, and deprive East of a spade trick, with their ♠J-10-3-2. Play a small spade towards hand (East will play the ♠J, if not, you finesse). Win the ♠K, noticing you were correct in your evaluation of West's lead and 1-2-5-5 shape.

Now you need another entry to North to repeat the spade finesse. You can use your last trump entry - the ♥A! Next, play a low spade towards the ♠K-7, and East is stymied. Whatever they play, cover it, and you have made four spade tricks. Your two entries to dummy were via trumps.

For a great new little book on Entries, contact:
teaching@abf.com.au.

Joan Butts



On Sunday 19 March, Glenbrook Bridge Club continued its tradition of holding a St Patrick's Day bash!! We had 9 tables of dedicated followers who got in the spirit of things by sharing some Guinness and lots of 'green' food which our members brought. Once again, a good time was had by all!!

The results for the Gold Coast Congress were listed in the March edition of the Newsletter. Photos can be found in this edition.

Meanwhile, some of the American visitors to this year's Congress have posted some wonderful publicity about the event on BridgeWinners (www.bridgewinners.com).

JoAnn Sprung, who, with her husband Danny, won the Ivy Dahler Trophy wrote:

It's been a week since our return from Australia and the Gold Coast Tournament. We've been reflecting on our experience and our desire to take that long flight for next year's tournament. Many thanks to Therese Tully and her team who worked to make everyone's experience a pleasure.

We discovered that bridge is thriving in Australia. New clubs are opening, tournaments are growing and everyone seems to be having a blast. What is Australia doing right? Here is a summary of our observations:

Tournaments - They run the events with the precision of a Swiss clockmaker. Players have almost no down time waiting for organizational issues.

Bridgemates are used for every event. All team matches are assigned as soon as the last table is finished. No big assignment boards and waiting forever. During the next round they hand out sheets with the prior round scores, VPs, and Butler ratings for both pairs.

Little downtime! There are no smoking breaks. There are no play-throughs. After the first weekend all events were daylight.

Easy to navigate - One thing I really loved is that you keep the same home table for the entire event. Just the cross-overs change.

Room for experimentation and fun - "Play what you like, this is Australia" is the answer I received when I asked if we could play Multi (which virtually everyone plays). Did this slow the game down? No, because there are no defenses to read.

Streamlined - No stop cards or mandatory pauses. Alert procedures are fairly straightforward. No doubles, cue bids or natural bids are alertable. If you want to know – ask.

Duplicated boards across the field for all events, including Swisses.

Swiss Pairs with Barometer scoring. Play as pairs but run like a team game, playing a long match against one other pair. It is IMPed against the field but converted to VPs minimizing the randomness found in IMP pairs.



JoAnn and Danny Sprung, winners Ivy Dahler Trophy

Fewer events and they are huge. It's nice to play in a really large event.

Pleasant environment - Yep, everyone wants to win but that doesn't mean they can't be nice. Everyone introduced themselves and welcomed us.

Accommodations for players - There was a list of approximately a dozen options on the tournament web site. Some had discounts and there was a wide range of pricing options.

Hospitality - As internationals we were treated to special hospitality which was lovely. They also had a theme day, a Trivia Night with dinner, and a kick-ass dinner dance. Boy, those Aussies can party.

Zero Tolerance - They may not call it that but they mean it. I heard about a particularly cranky complainer who was booted from a prior tournament and told never to return.

Masterpoints - Yep, they have them but they don't emphasize them. You won't find a list of the masterpoints won in the daily Bulletin. They emphasize the fun of the game.

This post has generated many comments, amongst them one from Roger Lee (whose team won the Gold Coast Open Teams this year):

I went down to Gold Coast last year sort of on a lark, and returned this year to spend time with my friends and enjoy the weather.

1) The Gold Coast tournament is the best run tournament that I've ever played in, period. Rounds start on time, all the results and information that you want are available immediately on the best results page I've ever seen (I'm told an ABF national director coded it in his spare time), and the board movement is really clever and keeps things timely (very few caddies/boards needed for hundreds of tables playing the same boards simultaneously).

2) It's the best location that I've ever seen for a bridge tournament, no close second. Amazing and affordable lodging (luxury apartments are the norm, nicer than any NABC hotel at half the price), you're steps to the beach, great Convention Center that's easy to get to, tons of good restaurants (cheap ones too, if you want that), and it happens during the Australian summer so the weather is perfect while the US is half frozen over.

3) Australians want the game to be fun. TDs don't hover around waiting to award penalties, you almost never hear of people abusing UI (*unauthorised information*), and people are very forthcoming about explaining their bids and unusual systems. In the US, it's a minor miracle to combine serious bridge with a fun atmosphere, but it just feels so effortless at the Gold Coast Congress.

I definitely recommend that any bridge players looking for a vacation who want to visit Australia give it a try next February.

CARD PLAY TIP

If you are not good at counting your losers, then count your winners instead. Think about how you can create extra tricks. Don't immediately draw trumps. Check whether you have an outside suit where you need to create winners or whether you may be able to do some trumping (of losers) with the short trump suit (usually in dummy).

Justin Mill (formerly Howard) won the Gold Coast Pairs with Tony Nunn. He has written a short report, emphasising some key elements for success at Match Point Pairs.

The Gold Coast Congress is one of the biggest and best events on the calendar, and that is due to the brilliant organisation and hard work by all the organisers. In my opinion, the best thing about the Gold Coast is that it is about the Restricted events just as much as the Open events. Anyone can come along and enjoy themselves whether they have been playing for 6 weeks or 60 years.

Before I get to the Open Pairs I want to congratulate the winners in the other categories:

- Novices:** **Derek Poulton - Nick Walsh**
- Restricted:** **Jessica Chew - Rez Karim**
- Intermediate:** **Jan and Peter Randall**
- Seniors:** **Robert Krochmalik - Paul Lavings**

The pairs events are all named in honour of Bobby Richman, one of Australia's greatest players and one of the kindest people I have had the privilege of calling friend. Bobby was not only a top player, but his generosity towards everyone, wit and humour are things to which we should all aspire.

This year I had the great honour of winning the Open Pairs playing with, in my opinion, Australia's best player, Tony Nunn. This was my second win in the event (after winning in 2014 with Ishmael Del'Monte) and Tony's first.

The 2017 field was packed to the rafters with top pairs from all around the world, such as previous winners Howard Melbourne and Barbara Travis (2016), Neville Francis and Magnus Moren (2015), as well as top pairs from America, Russia, Lithuania and Poland.

After two rounds of the finals, Ron Klinger and Matthew Mullamphy were leading the event (thanks to a second round 69% session!) followed by David Lilley and Zolly Nagy. Behind them were several pairs including Tony Nunn and me, Barbara Travis and Howard Melbourne and JoAnn and Danny Sprung, all almost equal.



*Justin Mill & Tony Nunn,
winners Gold Coast Open Pairs*

This left 27 final boards (9 rounds of 3 boards), although this is an interesting hand from the first session:

Session 1 (Final)
Board 7, All Vul

- ♠ 10
- ♥ A K 6 4
- ♦ J 9 7 6
- ♣ A J 5 4

(bear in mind, it is Match Point Pairs)

You are sitting in first seat, with all vulnerable.

You have a few choices of openings – you can open 1♣ (playing short club), however, if you open 1♣ you will not have a good bid if your partner responds 1♠. If you open 1♦, should partner bid 1♠, you can rebid 2♣ without this being a reverse bid. When you have a 4-4-4-1 distribution with a shortage in a major, it is better to open with 1♦ to allow yourself a rebid. Here is the auction at our table:

| West | North | East | You | |
|------|-------|------|------|------------------------|
| | | | 1♦ | |
| 1♥ | X * | 2♥ | Pass | * X = showing 4 spades |
| Pass | X | Pass | ? | |

This now leads you to the problem of your third bid. At your second opportunity, there is no need to bid as you are minimum and partner can always choose to bid if they want to. But when partner re-opens with a second double, asking you to bid, what are you going to do?

The options are 3♣ trying to find a minor suit fit, 2NT trying to play no-trumps, or Pass. Remember, everyone is vulnerable and with everyone bidding the chances of a game are slim. This means that if you can beat 2♥ by one trick you are better off passing at Match Points (it is a very tough choice in teams, since the risk of the opposition making is too high).

When you Pass, you find that the opposition are in a 4-3 fit, with the overcaller trying to get partner off to a heart lead against the final contract. However, when 2♥ X became the final contract this was doomed for two off and 500 to us for a top.

The full deal:

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♠ A 9 3 2 ♥ 9 3 ♦ A 4 3 ♣ Q 9 8 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♠ J 8 7 6 ♥ 7 5 2 ♦ 5 ♣ K 10 7 6 3 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♠ K Q 5 4 ♥ Q J 10 8 ♦ K Q 10 8 2 ♣ void | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♠ 10 ♥ A K 6 4 ♦ J 9 7 6 ♣ A J 5 4 |

The second hand is a problem that we all continually face.

Your hand is:

- ♠ J 9 4
- ♥ A K
- ♦ Q J 8 3 2
- ♣ Q 8 5

The auction starts as follows:

| You | North | East | South | |
|-------|-------|------|-------|------------------------------|
| 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ | X | |
| Pass* | 1NT | 2♣ | Pass | * Pass = nothing more to say |
| | | | ? | |

What should you do now? Do you Pass partner in 2♣ with three or return to partner's major with only two? This is where you must be careful to realise the difference between contested auctions and uncontested auctions.

In an uncontested auction, responder will typically bid their longest suit first and if they elect to bid the major before the minor they are deciding not to show the minor. When you are in a competitive auction, you don't want to sell out to 1NT, so you are going to introduce your second suit.

GNOT REGIONAL COORDINATORS & QUALIFYING PLAYERS:

REGISTRATION AND SUBSIDY ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE GRAND NATIONAL OPEN TEAMS FINAL, TWEED HEADS, 24-26 NOVEMBER 2017

Having longer hearts than clubs, partner should simply start with a double of 1NT to allow opener to bid a suit if they have one (they should never bid spades as the opposition have already implied holding the suit). So, when partner bids 2♣ in this competitive situation, they have longer clubs; this will be a hand with 5 or 6 clubs and 4 or 5 hearts. On the hand, partner held 5 clubs and 4 hearts so returning to hearts found you in a 4-2 fit.

If it was a non-competitive auction, then you should return to your partner's first bid suit as they can have 5-6 cards in their first bid suit just as easily as they can have 5 in their second suit (a 4-3 fit with trumps diving poorly is usually a much trickier contract than a 5-2 fit with trumps dividing poorly).

In the final session, it was close all the way, with the outcome being decided by less than one top between 1st and 3rd. In 1st place were Tony Nunn and me, 2nd went to Matthew Mullamphy and Ron Klinger, and close behind in 3rd place were Zolly Nagy and David Lilley.

Here is one board on which Tony found a clever play. He played in 2♠ on the following auction:

| West | North | East | South | |
|------|-------|------|-------|--------------------------|
| Pass | 1♥ | 1♠ | X | |
| 2♥* | Pass | 2♣ | Pass | * 2♥ = 8+ HCP, 3+ spades |
| Pass | Pass | | | |

South leads the ♥10.

Hearts is the relevant suit:

Dummy
♥ K 9 8 2

Declarer
♥ J 5 4

You know that North can take the ♥A and ♥Q and then give South a ruff. This means that you need to make it as discouraging as possible for North to keep playing hearts. You should play the ♥K from the dummy and throw the ♥J underneath the ♥A. Playing the ♥J should not work [*since South did not support his partner, and also because everyone knows you know North has the ♥A from the lead*] but, on the hand, it stopped the opposition giving their partner a ruff and that, in turn, gave us a top.

I would like to thank all the organisers and officials who make the Gold Coast such a wonderful event. I would also like to thank everyone who attended. It is you who make the event what it is and we are all looking forward to coming back in 2018, to compete against the world's best again.

A Bobby Richman story: Bobby was participating in the Commonwealth Nations Bridge in Manchester, where he was staying at the Village with all the other athletes. One morning he came down to the buffet breakfast and piled his plate high with all the foods he loved. One of the other athletes walked past, took one look at Bobby and stopped in his tracks. Quizzically he asked, "What sport are you competing in?" Bobby replied without pause, "High jump".

Justin Mill (formerly Howard)

[Ed: The final was close until the last three rounds (9 boards). Justin and Tony then had two exceptional rounds to secure the title.]

As foreshadowed in previous announcements, the ABF is changing the registration and subsidy arrangements for the 2017 Grand National Teams National Final.

60 teams will qualify for the GNOT National Final from regions across the country. Of these teams, 44 contain players who would normally expect to fly to the Gold Coast. The remaining 16 teams contain players from areas much closer to Tweed Heads, who would normally expect to use ground transport.

For the 44 teams expected to fly, the ABF has made arrangements through its travel manager, Corporate Traveller, to pre-purchase four return economy air tickets for each team, thereby guaranteeing return flights for all those players irrespective of when your team qualifies. The date and times of these tickets have been purchased to arrive in the Gold Coast (or Brisbane) on Thursday 23 November 2017 and depart after the third day of competition. For most this means a flight out on Sunday 26 November but for some it may mean a flight out on Monday 27 November.

For the remaining 16 teams, ground transport cash subsidies will continue to be given at previous levels.

WHAT REGIONAL COORDINATORS SHOULD DO

- Promote these new arrangements amongst their regions and clubs holding qualifying events
- As soon as teams qualify, email the following details to the GNOT National Coordinator, Ray Ellaway: ray.ellaway@abf.com.au
 - * nominated team captain
 - * email contact for each player
 - * ABF numbers

• Advise players to expect an email from Ray Ellaway/Corporate Traveller asking them to register online for their air tickets or ground transport cash subsidies.

WHAT ALL PLAYERS SHOULD DO

• Once players receive their email from Ray Ellaway/Corporate Traveller, promptly follow the instructions in that email and visit the event registration website to register their personal details, select their flights (44 teams) or register for the ground transport cash subsidy.

• Further details of what to do if you need to change your pre-purchased flight is contained on the registration website. Flight changes may incur some additional costs to the traveller.

PLEASE NOTE:

Players from the 44 teams with pre-purchased air tickets **should not** purchase their own air tickets (or use loyalty points) expecting reimbursement, as the ABF will not be doing this.

| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| ADVERTISING DEADLINE FOR JULY: | 20TH JUNE 2017 |
| COPY DEADLINE FOR JULY EDITION: | 24TH JUNE 2017 |

THE NEW LAWS ARE COMING

The new 2017 Laws of Duplicate Bridge come into effect for Australia and New Zealand on **1st August 2017**.

As a direct consequence of this there will be updated versions of the ABF Tournament Regulations which also take effect at the same time.

The only exception to this implementation date is where an event commences a day or two earlier and continues on through 1st August without any break of days, i.e. an event starting on the 31st July, finishing on 1st August will be played entirely under the old Laws.

Electronic versions of the new laws in different formats are available from the World Bridge Federation web site:

<http://www.worldbridge.org/rules-regulations/2017-laws-of-duplicate-bridge/>

Most bridge book suppliers should have stocks of the new law book available as of now. Those of you who have already purchased a copy (either as a soft or hardcover) should be aware that although the new code was promulgated by the WBF in March, the old 2007 code will remain in effect within Australia until the beginning of August.

Over the next few editions of the ABF Newsletter I will be covering some of the more important/interesting changes to specific laws. In the meantime if you direct regularly at a club, then you might wish to ask your State Association about the various Directing Seminars that are being planned for the coming months.

Alternatively, you could have a look on the web at one of the documents that display both the old and new laws side-by-side for comparative purposes.

There are now fewer automatic penalties (rectifications) and Directors have been given greater discretionary powers (in order to achieve more equitable 'bridge' results). While the material effect of many of the laws is unchanged, the actual wording and sentence structure has been reworked with a view to increased clarity. Although the main impact of the new laws will be felt by Directors, here a few preliminary items of player interest:

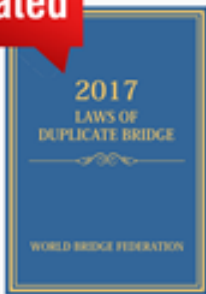
- Dummy will now be permitted to prevent any player (previously it was just declarer) from committing an irregularity.
- When a player has given wrong information about a partnership agreement and becomes aware of it during the auction, he is no longer obliged to rectify it immediately, but may instead wait until the auction is completed.
- When a player makes a claim or concession, that player is now required to face his hand and both sides (all four players) may now agree to continue play, rather than summon the Director. However, if they do agree to play on, then the table result will stand. Alternatively if they elect to call the Director then all play ceases and the claim is adjudicated as per the current laws.

More next issue...

Laurie Kelso

DIRECTOR'S ESSENTIALS

updated



2017 Laws of Duplicate Bridge

Effective in Australia from Aug 1, 2017

Paperback - \$24.95 Hardcover - \$29.95

(discounts for bulk purchases)

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| Director is Called (2017 edition) | \$10.95 |
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| Bridge Director's Handbook of Movements and Scoring | \$12.95 |
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The 2017 Gold Coast Congress was held from 18th to 26th February in Broadbeach, Queensland. Favoured teams this year included 2014 champions and perennial finalists BROWN, defending titleholders KANETKAR, and my 2nd-seeded team HUNG, with several others having a good chance, such as Lithuanian visitors VAINIKONIS and Chinese crack squad ZHOU.

HUNG (Andy Hung- Kornél Lázár, Michael Whibley-Roger Lee, Liam Milne-Nye Griffiths, Daniel Braun NPC) started well against three lower-seeded teams, reaching the top of the leader-board after three rounds, a position we did not yield for the rest of the event. This hand helped:

Playing 'standard' Weak Twos, what would you open the following hand as dealer with both sides vulnerable?

♠ A Q 10 7 6 3
♥ 10 6
♦ K 8 6 2
♣ 5

At our home table, our opponent opened 2♠. This caught responder with

♠ 9
♥ A Q 2
♦ A Q 9 5 4 3
♣ A 9 2

and, after agonised consideration, responder passed. This is a reasonable decision: the singleton spade is poor for the hand's strength, and if partner is likewise short in diamonds, the misfit will not likely be a success in 3NT. 2♠ made in comfort (+170) but was not the optimal contract.

At the other table, teammates Andy Hung and Hungarian Kornél Lázár showed how to bid the hand. Dealer's hand is right on points and spades for a Weak Two, but in terms of playing strength, the hand is a reasonable opening one-bid with 6-4 shape and nice texture. Andy Hung opened 1♠ and the auction continued:

| Hung | Lázár | |
|------|-------|-----------------------------------|
| 1♠ | 2♦ | |
| 3♦ | 3♥ | 3♥ = probing for 3NT or a cue bid |
| 3♠ | 4♦ | 4♦ = RKCB for diamonds |
| 4NT | 5♥ | 4NT = 2 key cards, no ♦Q |
| 6♦ | Pass | 5♥ = interested in grand slam |

6♦ is a fantastic contract with only 25 HCPs, but an excellent fit. The 9-count opener makes for a very suitable dummy. This nice slam made for 15 IMPs to the good guys in Match 5, which was virtually a draw aside from this board.



Gold Coast Open Teams winners: (L to R): Michael Whibley, Liam Milne (front), Nye Griffiths, Daniel Braun NPC (front), Roger Lee, Andy Hung, Kornél Lázár

Sometimes you know your opponent is 'doing something', but this doesn't mean you know what, exactly. Play this hand with me and you will see what I mean:

Dummy

♠ K 8
♥ A K 6 4 2
♦ 9 2
♣ Q 10 7 4

You

♠ A J 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ 10 7
♦ A J 7
♣ void

After your RHO opens 3♣ at favourable vulnerability, you overcall 4♠. LHO bids 5♣ and partner doubles, but you pull to 5♠ and partner, impressed with your bidding thus far, raises to 6♠. LHO leads the ♣ 2. Plan the play.

After ruffing the opening lead, playing to ruff a diamond in the short trump hand is a much better chance than setting up the hearts, which requires both spades and hearts to split. Let's say you play Ace and another diamond. LHO wins the ♦10 and innocently (and quickly) continues with the ♦K. What's going on? It looks like LHO might have a plan. Are diamonds 6-2? Is there an over-ruff coming on this trick? What do you do?

I admit that I was taken in here. LHO's eagerness to continue diamonds and go along with my plan convinced me something was afoot. I ruffed with the ♠ K to prevent an over-ruff, but RHO worryingly followed suit. When I finessed the ♠J, LHO was there with the ♠ Q and I was one down for a huge swing out, for this was the full hand (*hand rotated*):

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

I was right about something being afoot, but missed the alternative scenario that existed here – the fake trump promotion! Well done to Ron Klinger for seeing my potential problem if he continued diamonds. My line of play could have been correct (imagine Ron with ♠ 9 ♥ QJ5 ♦ KQ10863 ♣ K62), but was firmly against the odds compared with ruffing low. To make this sort of mistake takes some serious over-thinking – not recommended!

This hand was one of the team's few stumbles as we cruised through the qualifying, leading to the comfortable position of being more than a match ahead of second place with a round to go. HUNG finished with another win to end with 192.46 VPs, an average of just under 16VPs per match and a new record in the 20-VP scale era. BROWN had a good win in the last round to sneak in to fifth place.

The top two qualifiers (HUNG and ZIGGY) sat out Friday morning while VAINIKONIS got the best of HAUGHIE and top seeds BROWN ousted defending champions KANETKAR.

Given the option of choosing our semi-final opponents, we made the somewhat controversial choice to play the number one seeds BROWN, a rematch of the 2012 Gold Coast final.

In the third quarter of a close semi-final, I was in the unusual position of knowing partner's exact shape before a card had been played. Try it out for yourself. With all vul, you hold:

♠ Q 6
♥ A 9 7 6 2
♦ 10 4 2
♣ A 10 8

and hear this auction:

| | | | |
|------|---------|------|-----|
| LHO | Partner | RHO | You |
| | 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ |
| Pass | 1♠ | Pass | 1NT |
| Pass | 2♣ | 2♦ | ? |

1♦ = Precision, 11-15 HCP, 2+diamonds

2♣ = 5 clubs + 4 spades

What do you bid now? Pass looked normal to me at first glance. We don't have much of a fit, but perhaps we can consider competing to 3♣, which should have a play. What does partner have? Well, with 4-2-2-5 shape, partner might well have passed 1NT rather than bid 2♣, and with 4-3-1-5, partner would have opened something else. Likewise, partner can't have 6 clubs, for he would have opened 2♣. So, it looks very likely that partner Nye Griffiths is looking at a 4-1-3-5 shape. Worked it out yet?

Realising we had a killing defence available, I doubled 2♦ for penalty! We can lead the ♥A, give partner a ruff, back to our ♣A for another heart ruff, and we still have most of our high cards intact to start building up the vulnerable doubled undertricks. This is exactly what happened, as the full hand was (*hand rotated*):

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

After Hugh McGann's 2♦ X went down two for +500 on the last board of the quarter, the 9 IMP gain meant the score was 55.1-52 to HUNG with one more set to play. Nye and I sat out the last quarter. With two big swings in, one a 3NT versus 4-Major choice of games that went our way, and the other a declarer play mis-guess by Thomson, our boys closed out the match 79.1-63. Had Matthew Thomson guessed correctly in his 4♣ contract in the final segment, he would have gained 4 IMPs rather than losing 12, and our team would have won by the more modest margin of the carry-forward... 0.1 IMPs!

In the other semi-final, visitors VAINIKONIS defeated ZIGGY 86-54, so we would play the Lithuanian squad over a full day on Saturday. The final of the 2017 Gold Coast Open Teams ended up being an anti-climax after the tough semi-final matchups. After building a 32-IMP lead in the first quarter, HUNG showed no mercy in the second set, winning the set 62-2 to lead by more than 90 IMPs at half-time. This hand from the second set bloodbath shows the difference in styles between the two teams:

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

| | | | |
|----------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Olanski | Milne | V Vainikonis | Griffiths |
| | 1♣ (16+, any) | Pass | 1♦ (0-7 HCP) |
| Pass | 1♥ | Pass | 1NT |
| Pass | 2♣ | Pass | 2♥ |
| All Pass | | | |

After a diamond lead to my Ace, I played a trump, but Olanski ducked. When I continued with another trump, Olanski shifted to spades, and Vainikonis continued the suit. To avoid going down 200 I had to give up on making the contract, instead pitching two clubs on the spades. The defence took 2 hearts, 3 spades and a club for one down.

At the other table:

| | | | |
|------|---------------|---------|--------------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Lee | Krasnoselskiy | Whibley | E Vainikonis |
| | 1♥ | 1♠ | Pass |
| 4♣ | All Pass | | |

What could be simpler? The "WhibLee" partnership cruised to their cold game, spurred on by Whibley's 1♠ overcall. At favourable vulnerability, every member on my team would overcall this hand – there is so much gain and so little to lose. With the ♠J coming down, there wasn't much to the play, and another 8 IMPs rolled in for HUNG. More proof that bridge is a bidder's game.

A further 26 IMPs added in the third quarter led to a gracious concession from VAINIKONIS, and HUNG were crowned 2017 Gold Coast Open Teams champions.

It is likely that having a six-man team gave HUNG an edge in the final against the four-handed VAINIKONIS. Not only did having three pairs give our team flexibility in the match and the ability to rest any pair as needed, all three pairs on the team were less fatigued than our opponents, who were all playing their eighth consecutive full day of bridge. Having Daniel Braun along as NPC also meant that the stress of choosing line-ups was off our shoulders, leaving us free to focus on getting the job done at the table. Our opponents played at a noticeably lower standard than they had in the qualifying, and we met them at just the right time in the event.

Despite having several Australian representatives on our team, none of our team was in fact born here, and we also had a Hungarian (Lázár), a Kiwi (Whibley) and an American (Lee), playing against a Lithuanian/Russian/Polish team in the final! This demonstrates that the Gold Coast Congress is truly one of the big draw cards on the Australian bridge calendar for overseas visitors. With the focus of the tournament organisers firmly focused on player enjoyment, I expect the event to go from strength to strength in years to come.

Liam Milne

LOVING THE GOLD COAST - THE INTERMEDIATE TEAMS

This is the sweet story behind the winning Intermediate Team at the Gold Coast Congress.

I've played at the Gold Coast Congress for the last ten years and absolutely love it.

Eight years ago John Rogers and I met at the GCC whilst playing against each other. He had been widowed for some years and my husband had died three years previously.

A bit of table chit chat led to a dinner date back in Sydney and, as we had many shared interests in addition to bridge, we felt very lucky to have met each other. Four years ago we got married.

Last year we attended the Darwin Congress (Territory Gold) and, in the same sort of serendipitous manner that brought John and me together, we met a couple of Territorians at the bridge table. We enjoyed each other's company and the four of us decided to play here at the Gold Coast Congress.

We had no real expectations, other than to have a great time. However, it proved to be a very successful team and we qualified first in the Intermediate Teams [Ed: and went on to win the Final].

The four of us are really really excited to have done so well. The Gold Coast Congress is very special to John and me as it is, in effect, our anniversary, but now with Sue and Ken we will be coming back every year as a team and as friends. Bridge can be very kind.

Margaret Rogers (formerly Partridge)



Ken & Sue Moffitt, Margaret & John Rogers, winners of the Gold Coast Intermediate Teams



A GRAND TIME AT THE GOLD COAST - THE RESTRICTED TEAMS

I want to include all categories of players, and this hand is worthy of the ABF Newsletter.

Round 5, Board 3 was a hand where North-South held 19 HCP opposite 17 HCP.

♠ A 9 4 2
♥ 6 5
♦ A K J
♣ A Q J 2

♠ J 6
♥ J 9 8 2
♦ Q 4 2
♣ 10 6 5 3

♠ 10 7 5 3
♥ 10 4
♦ 10 8 5
♣ 9 8 7 4

♠ K Q 8
♥ A K Q 7 3
♦ 9 7 6 3
♣ K

This hand was brought to my attention by Sully Detmold (Adelaide) who played with Wardie Adamson (Victor Harbor), in the Restricted Teams [with team-mates Sally Macdonald (Lucindale) and Helen McBride (Kingston)]. Wardie, South, was one of the four declarers in the Restricted to make 7NT.

She thought she had relied on the diamond finesse at the end, but, in fact, had executed the automatic show-up squeeze on West during the play. With 12 top tricks, it is just a matter of timing the play of the various suits.

She won the club lead with the ♣K, then crossed to the ♦K to cash the other three club winners (discarding one heart and

two diamonds). The next step was to check the spade break, to ensure that there was an entry to the South hand in case the diamond finesse was needed.

As it happened, the third spade left West in a no-win situation; if they discarded a heart, the suit provided the extra winner, and if they discarded a diamond, the finesse showed up. At the table, West discarded a diamond.

Declarer didn't know this, so when the spades failed to break, she tried the heart suit, discarding the losing spade from dummy. (At this stage, there cannot be a squeeze on East because they are discarding after dummy.)

And finally, the diamond was led towards dummy's ♦AJ and West had to play their now-singleton ♦Q.

Across the five teams' events, there were 482 teams. How many declarers who were in grand slams succeeded? Only 36! 23 (out of 42) in the Open Teams, 4 (out of 12 who bid it) in the Seniors', 4 (out of 11) in the Intermediate, 4 (out of 14) in the Restricted, and 1 (out of 2) in the Novice Teams.

Mind you, some were in 7♥ and 7♠ which cannot succeed. Interestingly both 7♣ and 7♦ can make.

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SERES-McMAHON PAIRS

The Gold Coast Congress is not the biggest tournament in the world but it's certainly the best.

This has not come about by accident. There have been 56 GCCs and Tony Jackman (1986-2004) and Therese Tully (2005-2017) together have convened more than half of them. Both are innovators extraordinaire. One of the dozens of Jackman innovations was his decision to attract northern hemisphere players, especially the English and the Irish, to the Gold Coast. Besides her masterminding the move from Surfers Paradise to Broadbeach, one of the scores of Tully innovations was the decision to name major GCC events in honour of great players. So, when a Swiss Matchpoint Pairs was added to the GCC schedule, it was named for Tim Seres and Mary McMahon who, as a partnership, won 12 Gold Coast Teams and 5 Gold Coast Pairs Championships.

Placings in the inaugural Seres-McMahon Swiss Matchpoint Pairs were:

- 1st John Brockwell (Canberra) & Kevin Tant (Mollymook)
- 2nd Eric Kuo & Ho Yee So (China)
- 3rd Peter Grant & Tony Marinos (Canberra).

Success at Matchpoints is very much a matter of being in the right place at the right time. For example:

Dealer North ♠ 5 2
 Nil Vul ♥ 5
 ♦ 9 7 6 3 ♣ K Q J 9 6 2

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

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

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------|-------|------|----------|
| Brockwell | | Tant | |
| | 3♣ | Pass | Pass |
| 3♥ | Pass | 4♥ | All Pass |

Declarer won the club lead, finessed in spades, drew two rounds of trumps finishing in dummy, and repeated the spade finesse. With everything friendly, that was 10 tricks. South did not cover the second spade. Had she done so, dummy's third trump was available to take care of the fourth round of spades. Astoundingly, that was worth 100%. 4♥ was played 8 times at the other 31 tables and went down on each occasion. See what I mean – right place, right time. [Ed: I think John is being rather humble. Clearly others failed to take the double spade finesse, or perhaps did not have the pre-emptive club opening.]

During the event, Kevin and I were the fortunate beneficiaries of a Jackman innovation – we got to play 8 boards against great English players Sally Brock and Barry Myers. Sally has won 5 World and 5 European Championships and Barry has twice represented England in the Camrose Trophy. They were engaging and entertaining opponents, and it was a privilege to meet them. Tony Jackman himself has played in every GCC since its inception in 1962. He has not been well lately so it was a delight that he made a cameo appearance in the Teams Championship and played a round with favourite partner Meta Goodman.

John Brockwell

TASMANIAN FoB RESULTS

THE ISLAND MATCHPOINT SWISS PAIRS (12 pairs)

- 1st Marlene Watts - Michael Prescott
- 2nd Sue Ingham - Michael Courtney
- 3rd Chris Depasquale - Erika Pärn

TfOB RESTRICTED PAIRS (0-300 MPs) (50 pairs)

- 1st David Marshall - Leigh Wade
- 2nd Clare Stratton - Jenni Turner
- 3rd Annie Bartlett - Jana Vernon

ROGER PENNY SENIOR SWISS PAIRS (80 pairs)

- 1st Pauline Gumbly - Warren Lazer
- 2nd Jeanette Reitzer - Terry Brown
- 3rd Bruce Neill - Avi Kanetkar

AUSTRALIAN SWISS PAIRS (140 pairs)

- 1st Bruce Neill - Avi Kanetkar
- 2nd Ann Paton - Hugh Grosvenor
- 3rd Kae French - Geoffrey Johnson



Marlene Watts and Michael Prescott, winners of the Island Matchpoint Pairs



David Marshall and Leigh Wade winners TfOB Restricted Pairs

HOW YOUTH PLAYERS 'PLAY'

Johnno Newman writes: My dad, Ernie Newman, wrote this article about the Youth Weekend, held Friday 10th March to Sunday 12th March, as part of the Batemans Bay Congress.

What do 20-25 year olds get up to in the course of a weekend away on the picturesque South Coast at the Batemans Bay Congress? Sex? Drugs? Rock 'n' Roll? You're dreaming!

They joke and play logic games on Friday night, play bridge all day Saturday, play logic-based games on Saturday night, more bridge on Sunday and, on the way back to Sydney, they swap animated tales of creative bidding - heroic pre-empts and venomous penalty doubles. None of this surprised me as I had mentored youth players before, but the last part of the trip did. While Ailsa Peacock slept, all I heard for 2 hours was:

"E4 and check."
 "Rook to F3."
 "Really? Hmmm."
 "Bishop to A2."
 "You sure?"
 "I am. Can't you see what's coming?"

I couldn't see anything. This was blindfold chess. John McMahon, our driver, got us back safely and managed to win a tense battle with Matt Smith. Wow! No wonder they're knave whisperers at the bridge table.

Ernie Newman

GIVING SUIT PREFERENCE WITH YOUR TRUMPS

It is remarkable that Stephen Lester wrote this article for Australian Bridge more than 20 years ago, and people are only just starting to defend using suit preference signals on trumps.

Whenever I play with somebody experienced enough to be able to handle giving signals during defence, I suggest to them that we give suit preference in the trump suit. The normally accepted principle of signalling high-low when following to trumps (that is, unimportant spot cards!) is to indicate that a defensive ruff could be looming.

To my mind, a much more effective practice is to give suit preference with the trump cards you play. Thus, if you play the 8, then the 6, and then the 2, when following to trumps, you are signalling heavily for a switch to the highest side-suit. If you play the 2, the 6, then the 8, you are showing interest in a switch to the lowest side-suit. The 6, then the 8, then the 2 shows no preference for a switch, and would normally imply interest in the suit initially led, or that your holdings in the other two suits are roughly equal. This in itself often allows partner to make valuable inferences.

"How did I know to switch to diamonds and not clubs?" the frustrated redhead in the West seat asked, after South had scored up 11 tricks in spades.

♠ A K 4 2
♥ A 8 4 3
♦ Q 6 5
♣ 10 4

♠ 9 8
♥ Q J 10
♦ J 3 2
♣ K 8 6 5 2

♠ 10 7 6
♥ 9 7 5
♦ K 10 9 4
♣ J 7 3

♠ Q J 5 3
♥ K 6 2
♦ A 8 7
♣ A Q 9

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|----------|-------|
| | | | 1NT |
| Pass | 2♣ | Pass | 2♠ |
| Pass | 4♣ | All Pass | |

West led ♥Q against 4♣.

South won the ♥K in hand, drew three rounds of trumps (East following up-the-line), and played a heart to the Ace and another heart, putting West back on lead.



*Devi Thillainathan & Ian Sobey
1st NS Thursday Rookie Pairs*

Not wanting to open a can of worms by switching to a diamond from her Jack-high holding, she shifted to a club. This ran around to the Jack and Queen, and declarer had 11 tricks – she lost only one heart and one diamond (one went away on dummy's heart winner).

If, however, East had been able to show her interest in diamonds (the higher of the two outside suits) by playing the 9, 7, then 5 of trumps, the defence would actually have been able to defeat the game. West would have to switch to the ♦J, which leaves declarer without recourse. If she covers, the defenders continue the suit. If she ducks the Jack and wins the Ace, West gets in with the ♣K to lead another diamond through dummy's holding.

More normal defence from West, on receiving the information that East wants a diamond switch, would be a low diamond (showing an honour in the suit). Declarer can counter this defence – she plays low from dummy and East inserts the ♦9, but declarer ducks, and East is end-played. A club switch is the best the defence can do. South probably finesses the ♣Q. West wins the ♣K and continues with the ♦J (or small). Now declarer can win the ♦A, cash the ♣A and ruff a club to dummy. The heart winner provides a parking place for the losing diamond and 10 tricks are made.

This deal shows just how fascinating – and skilful – defence can be.

If you can defend as well as the suggested line, please don't enter any events that I am playing in!

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2017 Bridge Holidays
With Ron & Suzie Klinger



Tangalooma
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Holiday Bridge
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Tel: (02) 9958-5589
email: suzie@ronklingerbridge.com



*Rick Webster & Robert Olander
1st Wednesday 0-50 MP Pairs*

"The greatest danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that our aim is too low and we reach it." Michelangelo

APBF, Seoul, Korea

In late May, our international teams will be heading to Seoul, Korea for the Asia Pacific Bridge Federation (APBF) Championships. Whilst being our regional championship, the APBF is also the qualifying event for the Bermuda Bowl and the Venice Cup for the Open and Women's teams respectively, and as such is a particularly important date for these two teams who need to win qualification in order to play in the World Championships in Lyon, France in August.

Australia is sending five teams to the APBF, plus an additional self-funding Senior team. The teams are likely to face quite stiff competition from some of the teams in our region, and in particular China and Japan have been formidable opponents for our teams in the past. Our Women, Youth, Girls and some Seniors will be gathering in Sydney in May for a two-day training camp to help with their preparation.

You can follow the progress of our teams via the link on the ABF website or via this link: <https://tinyurl.com/kkgxwcb>, and if you would like to send a message of support you can do this by emailing teamoz@abf.com.au.

International Team Coach

The ABF frequently appoints a "coach" to international teams. At times an international team has a member whose spouse has travelled with them, at their own cost. Unless the individual has an official title, they are not permitted in parts of the playing venue. A way around this is to appoint the person as a 'coach' which allows entry to the playing area; however, the individuals are usually more of a gopher, helping the team by doing useful things, and generally being a team supporter. For the APBF, Liam Milne has been appointed by the ABF as a REAL coach for the Junior and Girls' teams. The ABF is trialling a travelling coach to Korea for the younger teams because we believe they will benefit enormously from an official coach's experience and advice. Naturally, Liam might end up doing some gopher work as well, but his primary role will be to help our Junior and Girls teams get the most out of this experience by assisting with preparation, and with support and guidance at the event.

Kim Frazer

**The Northern Territory Bridge Association
will be hosting the...**

Territory Gold Bridge Festival

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*Avi Kanetkar, Steve Weil (TBIB) and Bruce Neill,
winners of the TFoB Australian Swiss Pairs*

Noosa Bridge Week 2017

Sunday 15 to Saturday 21 October

Four seminal lessons, two fun & friendly events



JOIN PAUL MARSTON, PETER BUSCH AND ANNE WEBER for a week to remember. The venue for all the bridge is the Tewantin Bowls Club, right next door to the Ivory Palms Resort.

Paul presents the lessons and Peter runs the bridge while Anne makes sure that everyone is getting the best out of their holiday. The bridge is played in a fun and friendly atmosphere with players from all around the country. Good partners available. Only one 22-board duplicate session per day, leaving plenty of time to enjoy everything Noosa has to offer.

Noosa lessons are different

The lessons are a major part of the bridge week. The aim is to raise your bridge to a new level. This is done by focussing on core topics that enhance understanding rather than the latest gadgets, which might come and go.

The training starts long before you reach Noosa. You will receive a lesson-primer and video setting out what you are going to learn and why it will make a big difference to your game. This helps you to grasp the key points more quickly when they are presented in Noosa.

Then lesson 5 is all about reinforcement. First a summary of the key points then you play 8 deals illustrating those key points followed by a board by board discussion.

Timetable

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Saturday 14 | 2pm on - Ivory Palms check in |
| Sunday 15 | 10am - 12pm Lesson 1 1:45pm - 4:30pm, Sun Pairs 1 4:45pm - 5:45pm, Finger food dinner party |
| Monday 16 | 10am - 12pm, Lesson 2 1:45pm - 4:30pm, Sun Pairs 2 |
| Tuesday 17 | 10am - 12pm, Lesson 3 1:45pm - 4:30pm, Sun Pairs final 5pm BBQ dinner with barefoot bowls |
| Wednesday 18 | 11am - Talking point - cue bidding 1:45pm - 4:30pm Ivory Pairs 1 |
| Thursday 19 | 10am - 12pm, Lesson 4 1:45pm - 4:30pm, Ivory Pairs 2 |
| Friday 20 | 10am - 12:45pm, Ivory Pairs final 1pm - Prize giving lunch |
| Saturday 21 | 10am - 12pm, Lesson 5 <i>Thanks for coming – safe journey home</i> |

Feedback from 2016

Last year 78 people completed a survey. 67% said the bridge week was excellent and 31% said it was good. And 98% said their bridge had improved as a result of the lessons.

Lesson program

Lesson 1 – When to push - when to pass, at the 2 & 3 level

When both sides are bidding, your aim is to play 2 & defend 3. Learn two strategies that will help you to achieve this.

Lesson 2 – The opening lead against suit contracts

Learn the priority of choosing which suit to lead, including trumps.

Lesson 3 – When to push - when to pass, at game level

Learn when to compete at the four and five level. This includes sacrificing against the opponents' game.

Lesson 4 – Entries & communication in a suit contract

Learn techniques for preserving and creating entries. as declarer.

Lesson 5 – Putting it all together

Play 8 deals based on the lessons then a board by board discussion.



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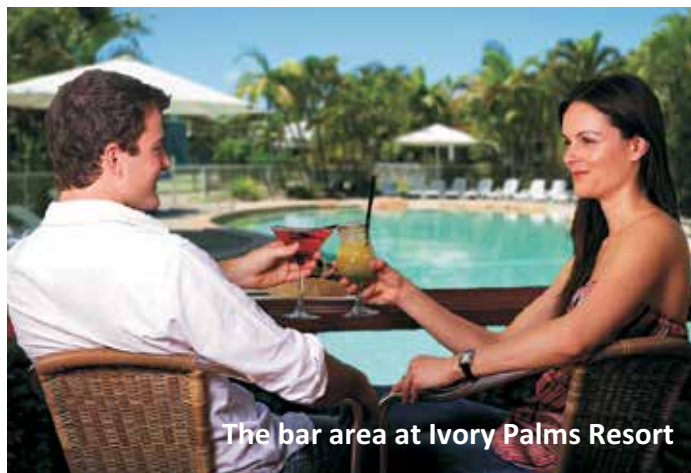
Luxury one bedroom unit

Two share \$880 pp, single \$1299

These charges cover 7 night's accommodation (in Saturday 14, out Saturday 21) and everything listed in the timetable.

Charges without accommodation

The charge without accommodation is \$435. This covers everything listed in the timetable (including the three meals).



The bar area at Ivory Palms Resort

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Or phone 02 9327-4599 or email frontdesk@grandslam.com.au

This article comes from the Daily Bulletin at the 2016 New Zealand National Bridge Congress, but features Australians or regular visitors to our shores. I think it is a hand worth thinking about for all those who aspire to defend more successfully.

Sometimes you receive a defence that is so beautiful, you just have to say, "Too good." Peter Gill was left thinking this after a board defended by James Coutts. He would have been delighted to learn that his team-mate, Brad Coles, replicated the defence at the other table against Nye Griffiths.

| | | | |
|---------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| | ♠ K 8 7 6 4 | | |
| | ♥ 9 7 4 2 | | |
| | ♦ 6 | | |
| | ♣ K 10 2 | | |
| ♠ A Q | | ♠ J 9 5 3 | |
| ♥ Q 5 | | ♥ J 8 | |
| ♦ J 5 3 | | ♦ K Q 9 7 2 | |
| ♣ Q J 9 8 4 3 | | ♣ A 7 | |
| | ♠ 10 2 | | |
| | ♥ A K 10 6 3 | | |
| | ♦ A 10 8 4 | | |
| | ♣ 6 5 | | |
| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
| 2♣ | 3♥ | 1♦ All Pass | 1♥ |

After a brief but lively auction, Peter was grateful to see Martin Bloom, North, put down a great dummy for his competitive raise. Both Wests began with the ♣Q and both declarers ducked this in dummy. Now James Coutts and Brad Coles paused for thought.

Looking at all four hands, it seems trivial to make nine tricks. Sharp defence holds declarer to his contract: a club to the ♠A, a spade to the ♣A, and a club ruffed with the ♥J to effect a trump promotion.

But the Wests weren't trying to hold the contract to nine tricks. They found the only card to give declarer a problem: the ♠Q!

After much consideration, the declarers ducked, whereupon the ♠A was cashed, the ♣A put East on lead, and the spade return promoted the ♥Q. The +50 that East-West scored may not have been enough to win any IMPs, but it was a successful and imaginative defence. Well done, James and Brad.

CARD PLAY TIP

If you want an opponent to cover an honour lead from your hand, as declarer, lead the higher of your touching honours. If you want an opponent to duck the first round, lead the lower of your two honours on the initial lead.

MAKING PRACTICAL BIDS

One of the most useful tactics to develop at Duplicate Bridge (Pairs) is to take a practical approach. In the face of awkward situations, you will often have to make the most practical bid, because otherwise you will get a dismal score. Here's a classic situation:

You hold:

| |
|----------------|
| ♠ 6 |
| ♥ A 10 2 |
| ♦ K Q J 10 4 2 |
| ♣ A J 3 |

Your RHO opens 3♥ and it's your bid. Think about your options before making your bid:

- The very short-sighted player will look at his 15 HCP and double. (This is wrong; what are you going to bid if your partner responds 3♠ or 4♠?)
- The short-sighted player will bid 4♦ with a shrug, hoping for the best.
- The practical player will bid 3NT. (This won't work all the time, but it's the most sensible action under pressure.)

The majority of players bid 4♦ on this hand, and partner raised to game. Only 10 tricks were makeable on the hand, but they were the same 10 tricks available in 3NT. The full deal:

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

In many situations, there is no ideal bid to make.

On this hand, however, it must be obvious that partner will respond in spades if you make a take-out double (4♣ being the recommended bid with the North hand if South doubles 3♥.) With the above hand, you have a hole in spades, and only a single heart stopper. However, a nine-trick game is always easier if partner turns up with their expected 7-8 HCP (expected after a pre-empt).

If you are doubled in 3NT, you can always retreat to 4♦. However, in the long run, in awkward situations, particularly after a pre-empt makes your life difficult, making the most practical and positive bid will pay off.



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THE THIRD MAN

In each question, the bidding has been 1NT - 3NT, All Pass. Your opening lead and the play to trick 1 is given. Is it safe to lead the suit again when you come on lead?

1. Dummy
8 6 2

West
J 7 5 4 3

You, West, lead the 4 - 2 - 10 - Ace.
What is the complete layout of this suit?

Answer:

These are two of the basic principles for third hand:
(a) If dummy has no high card, third player plays high.
(b) In playing third-hand-high, play the cheapest of equally high cards. Thus, when playing third-hand-high, the King denies the Queen, the Queen denies the Jack, the Jack denies the 10, the 10 denies the 9, and so on.
Here if the 10 is East's high card, South must have the Ace, King and Queen. As the 10 denies the 9, South has A-K-Q-9 and East's 10 is singleton. South always has three tricks. When you come on lead later, you must not lead the suit again, or else South makes four tricks.

2. Dummy
8 6 2

West
Q 7 5 4 3

You, West, lead the 4 - 2 - 10 - Ace.
What is the complete layout of this suit?

Answer:

With K-10, partner would have played the King, not the 10. Therefore, South has the King. The 10 denies the 9 and so South has A-K-9.
What about the Jack? With A-K-J-9, South would have won trick 1 with the Jack, not the Ace. Therefore, East has the Jack and the layout of the suit is:

| | | |
|-----------|----------|------|
| | Dummy | |
| | 8 6 2 | |
| West | | East |
| Q 7 5 4 3 | | J 10 |
| | Declarer | |
| | A K 9 | |

When you regain the lead, it is safe and can be desirable to continue with a low card. East's Jack will dislodge the King (or win the trick).



*Ivy Dahler Restricted Pairs winners:
Jack Luke-Paredi (left) & Andrew Gosney (right)*

3. Dummy
8 6 2

West
K 7 5 4 3

You, West, lead the 4 - 2 - 10 - Ace.
What is the complete layout of this suit?

Answer:

Declarer would have won with the Jack or Queen, not the Ace, if declarer had either of those honours. Therefore, East played the 10 as the cheapest card from the Q-J-10 sequence. As the 10 denies the 9, the complete layout looks like this:

| | | |
|-----------|----------|--------|
| | Dummy | |
| | 8 6 2 | |
| West | | East |
| K 7 5 4 3 | | Q J 10 |
| | Declarer | |
| | A 9 | |

When you regain the lead, you can cash the King or play a low card to give East the lead.

4. Dummy
8 6 2

West
K 7 5 4 3

You, West, lead the 4 - 2 - Jack - Queen.
Which cards can you place?

Answer:

With A-J, partner should have played the Ace, not the Jack. Therefore, South has the Ace. The Jack denies the 10 and so South has A-Q-10. South already has two tricks in the suit. If you play it again later, South will have three tricks. The position of the nine is not known. If the bidding had been 1NT : 2C, 2D (no major) : 3NT and your lead was in a major suit, then declarer has denied a 4-card major so you would know that the layout of the suit would be:

| | | |
|-----------|----------|------|
| | Dummy | |
| | 8 6 2 | |
| West | | East |
| K 7 5 4 3 | | J 9 |
| | Declarer | |
| | A Q 10 | |

Ron Klinger



*Stars and Stripes
(theme day) at
the Gold Coast:
Peter & Jan Randall,
Ken Cupples and
Adrian Lohman*

COUP 2: THE BATH COUP

Reproduced with the permission of Brian Senior (England).

The Bath Coup is a very common manoeuvre. It is a ducking play which enables declarer to keep control of a key suit. The coup dates back to the days of whist and is named after the city of Bath, a hotbed of whist back in the days when everyone in society played the game.

Dealer South

| | |
|-----------|--|
| ♠ 6 4 | |
| ♥ Q 10 9 | |
| ♦ 8 7 6 3 | |
| ♣ A Q 4 2 | |

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

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

| | | | |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | | 1♣ |
| 1♠ | 2♣ | Pass | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |

West leads the ♠K. If declarer wins immediately, he will be defeated.

Having won the spade he will take the club finesse. East will win the ♣K, push a spade through the remaining Jack doubleton, and West will take four spade winners for down one.

Look at the difference if declarer allows the ♠K to hold the first trick. What is West to do? If he plays a second spade into the Ace-Jack, declarer gets a second spade winner and still has a secure stopper. If he switches, declarer has control of the other suits. He can concede the club trick quite safely in either case.

Ducking with AJx in this position is the Bath Coup. Although the above is what people normally mean when they refer to a Bath Coup, it would also be possible to duck with Ace to three in dummy and Jack to three in hand, leaving what is known in the trade as a split tenace. In the example above, it was easy to see the danger because West had overcalled 1♣, but the ducking play would still have been correct even had the opposition not been involved in the auction. It might not prove to be necessary, but the coup cannot do any harm and will still be essential if spades divide 5-3 (or 6-2) – so why take the risk?

Brian Senior

MY FAVOURITE HAND

RON KLINGER

THRUST AND PARRY

Ron Klinger won the Bols Brilliancy Prize in 1976, and, not surprisingly, considers this his favourite hand. The hand occurred during the 1976 World Team Olympiad when Australia played against USA, the winning team.

| | | |
|--|------------------|--|
| | Paul Soloway | |
| | ♠ 2 | |
| | ♥ 9 5 | |
| | ♦ A Q 10 8 6 3 2 | |
| | ♣ K 8 5 | |

| | |
|-------------|------------------|
| Ron Klinger | Les Longhurst |
| ♠ 7 4 | ♠ A K J 10 8 6 3 |
| ♥ K 8 4 3 | ♥ 7 |
| ♦ K 5 | ♦ 7 4 |
| ♣ A 7 4 3 2 | ♣ J 9 6 |

| |
|----------------|
| Ira Rubin |
| ♠ Q 9 5 |
| ♥ A Q J 10 6 2 |
| ♦ J 9 |
| ♣ Q 10 |

| | | | |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Pass | Pass | 3♠ | 4♥ |
| All Pass | | | |

West led a spade, with East winning. He returned a trump to reduce dummy's scope to trump spades. Rubin made his first good play by playing the ♥Q. He wanted to be in his hand if West ducked. And Klinger did duck. If he had taken the ♥K the contract would have made easily by drawing trumps. Thrust and parry.

Rubin now ruffed a spade, removing West's remaining card in that suit, and led to the ♣Q. (Finessing the ♣10 would have brought home the contract, but that was hard to judge.)

Klinger took the ♣A and returned a club, won with the ♣K in dummy. Now a club was ruffed, and the ♥A and ♥J were led. Klinger won the ♥K and (in the diagram position) found the only play to defeat the contract – a most unusual one:

| | |
|--------------|--|
| ♠ -- | |
| ♥ -- | |
| ♦ A Q 10 8 6 | |
| ♣ -- | |

| | |
|-------|----------|
| ♠ -- | ♠ A J 10 |
| ♥ 8 | ♥ -- |
| ♦ K 5 | ♦ 7 4 |
| ♣ 7 4 | ♣ -- |

| |
|--------|
| ♠ Q |
| ♥ 10 6 |
| ♦ J 9 |
| ♣ -- |

He found the counter-thrust of leading the ♦K. Touche.

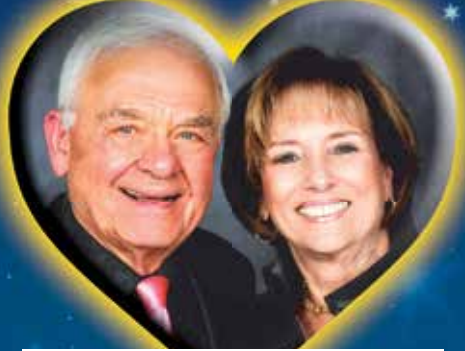
This ruined South's communications. The only way to reach his hand to draw the last trump was with a diamond, and that would leave him with a losing spade. After any other return, South would have been able to draw the last trump and use the diamonds to discard his spade loser.



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PANAMA PASSAGE

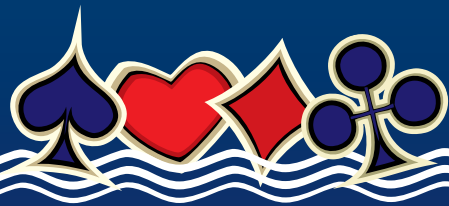
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IT'S A FUNNY GAME

From Australian Bridge, February 1992.

Many years ago, English bridge author, Derek Rimmington recounted the following tale:

During a large European tournament, South picked up the following hand:

♠ K Q 10 7 2
♥ A
♦ A K 8 3
♣ 10 6 4

He opened 1♠, and was delighted to hear partner jump-shift in diamonds. After raising diamonds and having partner support spades, he resorted to Blackwood. With the double fit and all four aces and kings, he bid 7♠. West led the ♠3 and partner tabled the following dummy:

♠ K Q 10 7 2
♥ A
♦ A K 8 3
♣ 10 6 4

Yes, they certainly were using duplicated hands in this event. Confident that the Ace of trumps was not missing, declarer, maintaining a straight face, began to play the hand.

Dummy's ♠K won the first trick as East also played the ♠3. Declarer led the ♠2 to his own ♠K, as both poker-faced defenders contributed the ♠9. A further round of trumps proved unnecessary, both opponents discarding a heart. Declarer then played off four diamond honours.

Finally, after eight tricks, the Director was summoned. Unable to separate the two Aces of hearts, declarer needed a ruling as to which hand he was in! Yes, somehow the board contained two South and two East hands.

Please feel free to submit your favourite funny bridge stories.



Tuesday Rookie Pairs winners:

LEFT photo: Stephen Miller - Jonathan Silberberg (1st EW)
RIGHT photo: Jennifer Finnigan - Mary Simon (1st NS)

THE MOST EXPENSIVE SWING

Barry Rigal reported this hand from the 2017 Gold Coast Congress in the Daily Bulletin.

It is rare to make a 25 IMP Director call, but this deal certainly was worth all that and more. Let me give you the circumstances, before I tell you more.

Good news: you are in a grand slam and the opponents haven't doubled. Bad news, they lead an ace in a suit in which you have a singleton. Good news: the lead is out of turn! Do you call the Director or accept the lead?

Before I give you the denouement, here is what happened to Sue and Garry Hollands on the same hand in the Open Teams.

| | | | |
|---------|----------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | Sue | | Gary |
| | | 1♦ | Pass |
| 3NT (!) | All Pass | | |

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

The defenders took their seven spades and only two of their three heart tricks so declarer 'escaped' for down 5.

Meanwhile in the other room where their team-mates, Molly O'Donohue and Philip Thompson, were East-West, this is what happened.

| | | | |
|--------|----------|-------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Philip | | Molly | |
| | | 1♦ | Pass |
| 2♣ | 2♠ | 3♦ | 4♣ |
| 5♣ | 5♠ | Pass | Pass |
| 6♣ | 6♠ | Pass | Pass |
| 7♣ | All Pass | | |

North knew a spade wasn't standing up, so tried leading the singleton diamond (surely the ♦A cannot run away). In any event while a heart lead might have been the killer for one side or the other, it wasn't found. So O'Donohue wrapped up 13 tricks.

Back to our Director call, where our players are veiled in the gauze of anonymity that only a wilfully forgetful TD can provide. He was summoned to the table to see this auction:

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | 1♦ | 1♠ |
| 2♣ | 4♠ | 5♦ | Pass |
| 6♣ | 6♠ | Pass | Pass |
| 7♣ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

North led the ♠A out of turn. East, rejecting Goldwater's Rule ("if they don't know whose lead it is they are probably leading the wrong thing"), triumphantly banned the spade lead and South led ♥A to cash out for down two.

DUCK SEASON OR WABBIT SEASON? by Chris Depasquale

This article is about when you should duck and when you should win, and why.

In No Trump contracts declarer often has a crucial decision at trick one: whether to grab the first trick or "duck" the trick, "holding up" a stopper in the suit until that suit is exhausted in one of the defenders' hands, breaking the defenders communication in that suit.

Because tempo is often very important in NT contracts such decisions can be quite difficult. So, let us start with an easy one. As South, I opened 1NT (10-12 HCP) and Dimitri Hnaris raised to game. My opponent led the ♠3 (4th highest leads).

♠ A 6 5
♥ 5 4
♦ A 9 8 5
♣ A Q 8 5

♠ 10 8 2
♥ Q J
♦ Q J 4 2
♣ K J 10 3

There is no point holding up in spades because the hearts are wide open, so you win the ♠A and cash four rounds of clubs ending in hand. West discards two hearts on the clubs, and East also pitches a heart on the last round. You advance the ♦Q and this brings the ♦6 on your left and the ♦3 on your right. Now what?

West started with 2 clubs and 4 spades and presumably no more than 4 hearts (with 5+ hearts she would have preferred a heart lead against our 1NT – 3 NT bidding) so you must lead the ♦J and pin East's doubleton ♦10. This worked for +400 and 7 imps our way. Score one for Wabbits [Ed: *and the ability to count an opponent's hand*].

A couple of boards later in the same match another duck or win decision came up, this time in a 1NT contract, on the lead of the ♣ 3 with this layout:

♠ Q 10 7 4 2
♥ 10 7
♦ A K 9 3
♣ A 4

♠ J 3
♥ A K 5 2
♦ 8 7 6
♣ 10 9 8 5

It is fair to assume that West would lead an honour from K-Q-J-x-(x) so there is no point playing small from dummy at trick 1. If the clubs are 4-3 they will always get their 3 tricks in the suit whatever you do. If they are 5-2, however, rising with the Ace from A-x opposite 10-9-x x (or even four to the 9) can create a blockage in their suit. So I won the Ace at trick 1 and led a small spade from the table, drawing the ♠6 from East, the ♠J from me and West won with the ♠A. With no further outside entry, she tried a club honour, bringing down East's now singleton ♣J, and seven tricks rolled home for declarer even without the spades breaking; declarer will always make 1 spade, 2 hearts, 2 diamonds and 2 clubs.

A brief conversation took place after the hand:

RHO to LHO: Why did you cash that club at trick 3? You know I have the Jack; otherwise declarer would play low from dummy at trick 1.

Me: In the text-books, East always rises with the ♠K at trick 2 to cash his club honour while West still has an entry...

[As it turns out, such a play by East, while solving the blockage in clubs, would not defeat the contract. East held ♠K-9-x-x, so rising with his honour and cashing a club nets only 6 tricks for the defence (2 spades and 4 clubs) after which declarer will make the red suit Aces and Kings, and two spade tricks to go with the ♠A he took at trick 1.]

The discussion does make it clear that defenders also have their duck-or-win decisions in the early stages of a No Trump contract. Here is an example from the Island Matchpoint Pairs at the 2017 Tasmanian Bridge Festival. This is my hand in the East position (hands rearranged for convenience) with declarer playing in his 1NT opening bid (15-17). My partner Erika Pärn led the ♠4 (4th highest) and dummy put down a useful 7 HCP hand.

Dummy

♠ Q 10 5
♥ A 10 6 4
♦ J 8 3
♣ 8 5 4

Me

♠ A 8 2
♥ 9 7 5 3
♦ A 9 5
♣ K 10 9

The ♠10 was played from dummy and I have my first duck-or-win decision to take. It is clear that, even if partner's suit is as good as K-J-9-4-3, dummy stops the suit. Will partner certainly have an outside entry? Partner's hand can be as weak as 5 points (17 for declarer, 11 for me and 7 in the dummy) so there is no certainty, but if her spade suit is Jack-high there is every chance of finding a minor suit entry to her hand to cash established spades. For now I ducked, saving my ♠A for later, while declarer contributed the ♠9.

At this point, declarer led the ♦3 from dummy. It was possible that partner had an honour in this suit but there was no time to find out. I rose with the ♦A, cashed my ♠A (felling declarer's ♠K) and played a third round of the suit to dummy's ♠Q while declarer shed a club. Now declarer led the ♦J from dummy, finessing when I played low and West won the ♦Q and cashed two more spade tricks, holding the contract to 8 tricks and an equal top for us. At half the other tables where the final contract was 1NT, 10 tricks rolled in, since declarer was able to knock out West's ♦Q before spades were set up when East took the ♠A at trick 1. This was the full deal:

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

If East wins the first spade and plays another, South will win, cash the ♥K-Q and lead a diamond. West can win that and clear the spade suit but when East wins the ♦A he has no

more spades to lead and West has no immediate entry to the suit. If West tries to maintain her entry by ducking that first diamond lead East will have to win with the ♦A over the ♦J, and now there is no secret about the location of the ♦Q! When East knocks out dummy's ♠Q declarer will play a diamond to the ♦K, dropping the now singleton ♦Q.

On board 2 of the final round of the Island Matchpoint Pairs the entire field played 3NT. Try it from my opponent's seat, South, on my lead of the ♠Q.

♠ 9 5 4
♥ K 6 2
♦ Q 9 6 3
♣ A 10 8

♠ A K 2
♥ Q 10 4
♦ K 4 2
♣ K Q J 2

Declarer won the opening spade lead and led a small heart towards dummy. The ♥K was beaten by East's ♥A and a spade came back. This time she ducked but it was too late. West won the second spade and played a third round. Later, West won the ♦A and two more spade tricks to defeat the contract.

The main danger to the contract was losing the red Aces and three spade tricks. If West started with 5 spades and both red Aces there was nothing declarer could do, but whenever the red Aces were split, a hold-up play would ensure against losing three spade tricks when spades divide 5-2.

If the first spade is ducked and the suit continued at trick 2, declarer will win and play the heart. If East wins the ♥A there are just two possibilities: (a) East has no more spades to lead, in which case declarer will be able to establish her tricks while still holding a spade stopper; or (b) West has a third spade, meaning the suit is divided 4-3, in which case the defence will get no more than 2 spade tricks and the red Aces – so 9 tricks are certain. This one was definitely duck season!

On board 6 of the same match declarer faced another duck-or-win decision at the start of her 3NT contract. These were the hands with the ♠9 led by West, after East has found a couple of spade bids during the auction:

♠ J 10 5
♥ A 10 6 5 4
♦ A K Q 6
♣ 4

♠ A 7
♥ J
♦ J 10 9
♣ A Q J 8 7 3 2

Declarer played the ♠10 from dummy, covered by the ♠Q, and ducked. Unless she can find precisely ♣K-x in the East hand she will lose the lead while establishing the long suit, and almost certainly to West: with East having 6 or 7 spades, it is likely West has the preponderance of the defenders' clubs. The risk associated with winning the first spade is that West will have another spade to lead through dummy upon gaining the lead in clubs. East continued spades, knocking out the Ace, and showed up with a singleton ♣K, meaning West had a fourth-round stopper with the ♠10. Declarer settled for nine tricks in all: four diamonds, three clubs and the major suit Aces.

Although the contract made this way for a score of +600 that did not do so well in the matchpoints department, as the most common contract was 5♣ by South making 12 tricks: 6 clubs, 4 diamonds, and the major suit aces for +620.

(After drawing three rounds of trumps, declarers were able to discard a spade loser on diamonds before West could ruff in.) 10 tricks in 3NT would have been +630 for a clear top. Declarer has a path to 10 sure tricks (unless East holds K-x-x/x in clubs in addition to the long spades; a low probability) by ducking the opening spade lead in BOTH dummy AND hand.

Follow the play: On the ♠9 lead the ♠5 is played from dummy. If East plays a spade honour you can win that and still have a stopper with the ♠J-10 in dummy equals against East's remaining spade honour. If East plays low, you let the ♠9 win. West might have a second spade to lead but will certainly not have a third one when getting the lead later in clubs. On the actual layout, West did not have a second spade to lead. This was the full hand:

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

If trick 1 goes: ♠ 9, 5, 2, 7, the best West can do is switch to a heart at trick 2. Dummy will play small and East can win the ♥K and clear the spade suit, but declarer will lose only one more trick.

The ♠A is taken at trick 3 and declarer crosses in diamonds to lead a club from dummy. West will win the fourth round of clubs but that is the third and final trick for the defence.

It is worth mentioning, by the way, that on the actual layout after East covers dummy's ♠10 at trick 1, South could take with the ♠A, cross to dummy in diamonds and lead a club, **ducking the trick** when the ♠K appears. That would leave East on lead so dummy's ♠J-5 remains a stopper, and the clubs are now set to run. The risk with this line is, of course where West has the ♣K and a second spade to push through dummy.

So, what do we learn from all this?

1. There is no point holding up an Ace in a NT contract when another suit is wide open against you (hand number 1 above);
2. With A-x opposite 10-x-x-x or even 9-x-x-x, it is a mistake to hold up the Ace; taking that card on the first trick in the suit will often create a troublesome blockage for the opponents (hand number 2 above);
3. Defenders as well as declarers can hold up Aces to good effect (hand number 3 above);
4. When there is no damaging switch, the defenders can make it is usually worthwhile to hold up on the first round even with two stoppers in the suit, in case the suit breaks 5-2 (hand number 4 above);
5. When planning your declarer play, take clues from the bidding! When taking into account East's spade bids (on hand number 5 above) it is likely that West started with only one spade, and certain he did not own more than two; and
6. These are issues worthy of study and understanding because they come up often.

Chris DePasquale (Darwin)

WEAK AT THE KNEES

Hi there,

I would appreciate your comments on these hands. Neither result could have been described as 'outstanding'! In both cases, I seem to have got the bidding wrong with my 6 card Major.

6 card Major #1

I held:

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

Glenda opened 1♦ and I decided to respond 1♠. The next thing Glenda bid was 3NT which we agree as showing something like a poor Acol 2 in diamonds (you know, about 8 playing tricks but not 20 points). I might have panicked just a little and bid 4♣. Anyhow Glenda's hand was:

- ♠ void
- ♥ K Q 5
- ♦ A K Q J 9 2
- ♣ A 10 8 2

4♣ went down. A lot of people made 3NT.

6 card Major #2

This time I had:

- ♠ K 4 2
- ♥ A Q 10 8 3 2
- ♦ 8 6 5
- ♣ 4

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|----------------|
| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
| | <i>Me</i> | | <i>Partner</i> |
| | | Pass | 1♦ |
| Pass | 1♥ | Pass | 1♣ |
| Pass | 2♥ | All Pass | |

Partner held:

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



Gold Coast Novice Teams winners:
L to R: Unis Suliman, Steven Parkes, Peter Taylor,
with Allan Byrnes (front)



Peter and Jan Randell,
winners of the Intermediate Pairs



Arvind & Geeta Bhasin,
1st in Sunday Rookie Pairs (NS)
& Thursday Rookie Pairs (EW)

The heart finesse didn't work but the ♦K was in the right place so I made 11 tricks. Should I have bid 3♥ or something?

Someone said that we should use Weak Jump Shifts. Is that a good idea?

Your niece,
Cathy XX

Greetings Cathy,

You have raised the possibility of adopting Weak Jump Shifts over minor suit openings (and perhaps 2♠ over 1♥). Traditionally, these responses show 4-7 HCP and a six card suit with some promise about quality.

If you wish to adopt this idea, you don't have to keep playing the method, if it proves to be unsuited to your partnership or style. It has certainly gained favour amongst bridge players over the last few years or so. Having understood that, try to remember that there is only a loose connection between popular fashion and good technique.

Certainly, the two hands you have mentioned would have been ideal for Weak Jump Shift response structure. On your first example, you could have bid 2♠ as responder and then found the winning action of passing 3NT, content that you had given a good description of your hand.

Although the second example is not suitable for a Weak Jump Shift, it illustrates a secondary benefit. Having failed to respond with 2♥, your 6 card rebid now suggests a hand closer to 8 or 9 points. This is a little more specific than 'non-forcing'. Whether your partner would have tried for game is still a moot point as the hand obviously played better than the bidding would have suggested.

If a bidding idea is not abhorrent and it's easy enough to use, give it a try for a while and discard it if it proves not to suit. Half the fun of the game is about trying new ideas.

Love,
David

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OPENING LEADS

You are on lead after the following auction:

1♣ Pass 1♥ Pass
1NT Pass 3NT Pass

♠ A K 9 6 2
♥ 9 7 4
♦ 3
♣ J 10 7 5

At the table, the defender led the ♠A.

Against a suit contract this is the recommended lead. You will get a signal from your partner and have some idea of what to do next having seen dummy. Leads against suits differ from leads against NT contracts. This is simply because against a suit contract you can only hope to take 2 or 3 tricks in spades, whereas against a NT contract you want to take as many tricks as possible in the spade suit – 4 or 5 tricks.

So against NT contracts, particularly on hands where you have no outside entry, you should lead the Ace (or an honour) when you have three honours in the suit, with at least two touching. On this hand you only have only two spade honours so you should revert to leading your fourth-highest spade, the ♠6.

If partner has the ♠Q you should make 5 tricks, and if the opponents have the ♠Q you hope for 4 tricks, assuming partner can return a spade if they win the lead.

Look what happened on the lead of ♠A:

♠ A K 9 6 2
♥ 9 7 4
♦ 3
♣ J 10 7 5

♠ J 4 3
♥ A Q
♦ A 9 8 2
♣ Q 8 6 2

♠ 8 7 5
♥ K J 10 8 3
♦ K Q 6
♣ A 4

♠ Q 10
♥ 6 5 2
♦ J 10 7 5 4
♣ K 9 3

After the ♠A lead and then the ♠K, which dropped South's ♠Q, declarer's ♠J not only became a winner, but it also became an extra trick. Later in the play, South suffered discard problems and was squeezed out of the long diamond or the ♣K, and declarer made 11 tricks.

On the lead of the ♠6, the defence takes the first 5 tricks.

As mentioned above, this fourth-highest lead only applies against NT contracts when you do not have 3 top honours (including the 10 and sometimes even the 9). Against suit contracts, partner can trump the third round, so you lead the ♠A (partner should signal encouragement) and then the ♠K and, even though you have dropped partner's ♠Q, partner can trump the third round lead.

Barbara Travis



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*Counting is all-important to your game, as you will see.
This article is modified from Australian Bridge, April 1997.*

Why Count?

On many hands, trying to count the defenders' hands is crucial. It is a central thread of good card play because the more you know about how the cards, the better your decisions will be.

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

South opened 1NT and North raised directly to 6NT.

After the lead of ♦J, South had to find the ♠Q to make his contract. With no knowledge about the distribution of the East-West cards, this is a 50-50 guess. The odds will alter if the exact distribution of the spade suit is known. Declarer will place the Queen with the player who started with more spades.

With this in mind, declarer ran the hearts, then ducked a club (always a loser). After winning the diamond return, South played off his minor winners. This revealed that West had started with 5 diamonds, 5 clubs and 2 hearts, leaving him with only one spade. Consequently, declarer played a spade to the ♠A, removing West's spade, and then finessed East's ♠Q on the way back.

Any Counting helps

Sometimes you may not be able to get a complete count of a deal but even a partial count can swing the odds in favour of a specific line:

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>♠ 6 5 3 ♥ Q 4 3 ♦ K 10 9 8 6 2 ♣ 7</p> | <p>♠ 9 8 4 ♥ 9 8 7 6 5 2 ♦ void ♣ Q J 10 3</p> | <p>♠ A Q 10 7 3 ♥ 10 ♦ Q 7 3 ♣ A 9 4 2</p> |
| | | <p>♠ K J ♥ A K J ♦ A J 5 4 ♣ K 8 6 5</p> |

South opened 2NT and North raised to 3NT.

Declarer took the ♠7 lead with the ♠J, and had to judge which defender, if any, might hold three diamonds. The heart suit offered a safe way of discovering more about the defenders' hands. South cashed his three heart winners, revealing the 1-6 break.

East's ♠4 at the first trick suggested three spades, meaning that nine of his cards were known. (In addition, if he held three diamonds, that gave him one club, meaning that West would hold seven clubs, and, together with spade length, a likely bid over 2NT.)

Once you know the full distribution of one or more suits, you can apply the idea of "Vacant Spaces". Simply put, the chance of a particular player holding a specific card is proportional to the number of unknown, or vacant, places in his hand.

Declarer reasoned that West had seven vacant spaces in his hand, whereas East only had four vacant spaces for the ♦Q. South needed no further help on how to proceed. He started diamonds by playing the ♦A, was then able to finesse, and so had 10 tricks.

Help from the Bidding

You can often get help for counting from the bidding. Remember, competitive auctions always provide information about the opponents' hands.

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

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|----------|-------|
| 1♠ | Pass | Pass | 1NT |
| 2♣ | 3NT | All Pass | |

West bid twice opposite a passing partner, suggesting at least 10 cards in the black suits. So, South had to determine only three further cards to gain a complete count of all the hands.

Declarer took the ♠7 lead with the ♠10, then played the ♣Q. West won with the ♣K and exited with another spade. Dummy won the ♠J and, when East discarded a heart, South mentally noted that spades were 6-1.

Pursuing the plan to develop a club trick, declarer played another club. East's diamond discard was not a great surprise, confirming the club suit as 5-1. 11 of West's cards were now known. West won the club and returned the suit, East discarding another heart.

Declarer continued by cashing one top diamond and one top heart. When West followed to both, his original distribution was known to have been 6-1-1-5. It also meant that East had started with a 1-6-5-1 hand shape.

The position now was:

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>♠ K 9 8 5 ♥ void ♦ void ♣ 9 4</p> | <p>♠ A ♥ A 9 ♦ J 6 4 ♣ void</p> | <p>♠ void ♥ J 10 7 ♦ Q 10 8 ♣ void</p> |
| | <p>♠ Q ♥ 8 5 ♦ K 2 ♣ 8</p> | |

Declarer cashed the ♠A, forcing a heart discard from East. Now he was able to continue with the ♥A and another heart, end-playing East to lead away from the ♦Q for the ninth trick. [Ed: Many end plays are the result of counting.]

Deductions from the Defenders' Play

Sometimes you can make a deduction about suit length from the lead and use it in conjunction with information gained later in the play:

♠ K 10 2
♥ K
♦ J 10 4 2
♣ K J 10 8 4

♠ J 9 6 3
♥ Q 9 3 2
♦ 5
♣ Q 7 6 5

♠ A Q 7 4
♥ A 8 5
♦ K Q 9 6
♣ 3 2

♠ 8 2
♥ J 10 7 6 4
♦ A 8 7 2
♣ A 9

Against South's 3NT, West led the ♥2 to the ♥K, allowing declarer to place four hearts on his left and five on his right. East won the ♦J with the ♦A, to lead the ♥J. South won the ♥A, then played a diamond to the ♦10. The 1-4 diamond break marked five cards on his left, compared with nine on his right (or eight vacant spaces to the LHO, and four with RHO.) [Ed: Another thing to think about is that RHO is now quite likely to be a 4-4-1-4 based on the opening lead of the ♥2.]

Therefore, declarer continued with the ♠A, then a spade to dummy's ♠10. When that held, he had nine tricks.

Putting it all together

Sometimes counting will enable you to make an 'impossible' contract.

♠ A 6 5 4
♥ A 10
♦ 10 9 8 7 3 2
♣ 2

♠ J 9 8
♥ K 5 3
♦ J 2
♣ Q 9 8 7 3

♠ 3
♥ Q J 9 8 7 4
♦ 4
♣ A K J 5 4

♠ K Q 10 7 2
♥ 6 2
♦ A K Q 5
♣ 10 6



Jessica Chew & Rez Karim (who also won the Restricted Pairs) and team-mates Yuning Zheng & Zhongjie Ziao, winners of the Gold Coast Restricted Teams

| | | | |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| 2♠ | 3♥ | 1♠ | 2♥ |
| All Pass | | 3♠ | 4♥ |

West led the ♦J, then shifted to a trump. When the ♥10 held, declarer paused to review the information available from the bidding and lead. The opening bid promised five spades so spades were probably 3-5. The ♦J lead placed the remaining diamond honours with East, at least four cards in total. So, declarer could already place nine cards in the East hand.

South saw that his main chance was to strip the West hand and force a lead into his club tenace.

The first step was to ruff a diamond, West following. Next came the ♠A and a spade ruff. Finally declarer played the ♣A and ruffed a club in dummy, and was able to ruff another spade, stripping West of spades and diamonds. Now he could lead the ♥Q to West's ♥K, in this situation:

♠ void
♥ 5
♦ void
♣ Q 9 8

♠ void
♥ J
♦ void
♣ K J 5

West could exit with his remaining trump to declarer's ♥J, but South could counter by leading the ♣5 back knowing that West would have to win it (East had already shown up with a 5-2-4-2 shape). West had to win, then concede the last two tricks to the ♣K-J, so the contract made.

Conclusion

Counting and reconstructing the unseen hands are essential parts of good play.

Tim Bourke



Linda Norman and Wendy Gibson, who won the Weekend Matchpoint Swiss Pairs (0-500 MPs) and the Ivy Dahler Swiss Pairs (Intermediate)

ROGER PENNY SWISS PAIRS by Warren Lazer

A report from the Seniors' Swiss Pairs in Tasmania.

Pauline Gumby and I have travelled to Hobart on many occasions for the Australian Swiss Pairs. Our results have been very consistent over the years - never within sight of the top tables - maybe the picturesque view from the playing room at Wrest Point Casino is too distracting. Having now become eligible to play the Seniors' circuit, we hoped we would have better luck in the Roger Penny Swiss Pairs.

Slams hands were critical in many of the matches, so they will be the main focus of this article. Board 2 in Match 1 seemed tailor-made for our 1NT structure.

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

| | |
|---|--|
| West <i>Lazer</i> 2♦ 3♣ 4♦ 6♦ | East <i>Gumby</i> 1NT 2♥ 3♦ 5♣ |
|---|--|

1NT = 14-16 HCP

2♥ = not 4 card heart support

3♣ = transfer to diamonds

3♦ = 4 card diamond support

4♦ = Minorwood (RKCB for diamonds)

5♣ = good hand (the ♥K is huge), 2 key cards, no ♦Q

(Average: 710 EW)

Bruce Neill and Kim Morrison were seeded first and we were second. We both had 20-0 wins in the first round and met each other at table 2 in Match 2. Our 7 IMP loss (7.37 - 12.63 VPs) was no disaster, but meant we would now have to fight our way back from Table 9.

Our next slam pick-up was Board 13 in Match 4.

| | |
|---|---|
| North ♠ A 9 6 4 ♥ 10 9 4 ♦ A 9 5 ♣ J 6 5 | South ♠ K Q J 10 3 ♥ A Q J 6 ♦ K Q ♣ A 4 |
|---|---|

Does the South hand qualify for a game force? We have quite high standards and it's not clear cut, but since as little as Jxx in diamonds and four small spades in partner's hand will give reasonable chances of making game, I decided on an upgrade.

| | |
|---|--|
| North <i>Gumby</i> 2♦ 3♣ 4♦ 4NT 5♦ 6♣ | South <i>Lazer</i> 2♣ 2♠ 4♣ 4♥ 5♣ 5♠ |
|---|--|

2♣ = Game force, and 2♦ = waiting

3♣ = support + good hand

4♣ = cue, 4♦ = cue, 4♥ = cue

4NT = RKCB, 5♣ = 3 key cards

5♦ = Queen ask, 5♠ = ♠Q

Having high standards made it easy for Pauline to value our combined assets - my 10 tricks plus her 2 Aces = slam. Clearly if her two Aces were enough for a grand slam I would have taken control after her 4♦ cue to check on the number of aces she held. +1430 was worth 10 IMPs. (Average: 960 NS)

There was a critical defence against the wrong slam on board 2 in Match 5.

| | |
|---|---|
| Dlr E NS Vul ♠ J 10 ♥ K 10 4 3 ♦ 8 7 4 2 ♣ A 10 4 | ♠ 8 ♥ Q 2 ♦ A K Q J 10 5 ♣ J 7 5 3 ♠ A K Q 9 7 4 3 ♥ A J 9 7 ♦ 6 ♣ Q South 1♠ 2♥ 3♠ 6♠ |
|---|---|

| | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| North ♠ 6 5 2 ♥ 8 6 5 ♦ 9 3 ♣ K 9 8 6 2 | North 2♦ 3♣ 3NT |
|--|---------------------------------|

6♦ is cold, but, not unreasonably, the opponents landed in the inferior 6♠ slam. I cashed the ♣A at trick 1 and Pauline played an encouraging ♣2. The clue to finding the right continuation is declarer's 2♥ bid. You know the ♥K is the setting trick, so switch to a diamond to cut declarer off from his source of tricks before trumps are drawn. This is wrong only if declarer has an 8-4-0-1 shape. Declarer won the diamond and ran the ♥Q to my ♥K. A trump switch now meant I would score my ♥10 as well. +200 was worth 14 IMPs. (Average 860 NS)

After 4 rounds, Neill-Morrison were fifth and we were sixth and thereafter a slow progression ensued. After Match 5 they were third, we were fourth. After Round 6 they were second, we were third. After the next match, they were 1st, we were 2nd. In round 8 we lost by 11 IMPs and they lost by 3 - we were still running first and second, but the field was closing on us. With one round to play Neill-Morrison were leading on 112.75, we were 2nd on 109.02, and Brown-Reitzer had moved into 3rd on 106.24.

Our 17 IMP (15.50 - 4.50 VP) win gave us a final total of 124.52 to win the event by 0.35 VPs (approximately one overtrick over the course of 108 deals), from Brown-Reitzer who had a 29 IMP win to finish on 124.17. Neill-Morrison suffered a 2 IMP loss to finish on 121.94 VPs, in third place.

And for those who are wondering if we maintained our record in the ASP.. Yes, we did. During the event, we bid two superb slams that went down due to horrendous breaks, which meant we dropped to 101st at one stage. We fought back to 14th place. Here's hoping for better luck next year!



Warren Lazer

IN DEFENCE OF THE MULTI 2♦

Let's say your partnership plays 2♦, 2♥ and 2♠ as Weak Twos, 6-10 HCP and a 6-card suit. My guess is that this would be the most popular Opening 2-bid structure.

Now let's look at something a little more dynamic. My recommendation would be the Multi 2♦, with Muiderberg Twos: 2♥ and 2♠ showing a 5-card Major with 4+ cards in a minor (less than opening hand).

Weak 2♥ and 2♠ have a number of advantages over the Multi 2♦, the most important being you don't have to sort out what your suit is. 2♥ - 4♥ and 2♠ - 4♠ are clearly better than first having to find out what partner's suit is when they open a Multi 2♦.

On the other hand, the opponents often have to wait for a round of bidding before they can bid over a Multi 2♦.

Let's say your RHO opens 2♦ (Multi) and you hold ♠ A K J 4, ♥ 2, ♦ K 7 6 5, ♣ Q 9 8 5.

The popular approach would be to wait until opponents bid hearts and then double for takeout. The problem is the bidding could well be up to 4♥ when it comes back around to you.

The major advantage of the Multi 2♦ is that the strong hand gets to be declarer in game or slam:

Dealer South ♠ K 10 9 6
NS Vul ♥ A Q J 10 8 4 2
 ♦ void
 ♣ K 6

♠ A Q J 8 7 5
♥ 9
♦ 8 5 3
♣ 10 8 5

6♣ always makes if North is declarer, since the ♠K is protected from attack at trick one and declarer has lots of entries to ruff out the hearts. Playing Multi 2♦, North asks what opener's suit is with 2NT, and opener replies 3♣ with hearts and 3♦ with spades. This way North is declarer in 6♣. Even for game contracts, it is much better for the strong hand to be declarer.

Most experts nowadays have abandoned the strong option, 20-22 balanced, in the Multi 2D. Responder is then free to make pass or correct bids that take up valuable space from the opponents. Let's say partner opens a Multi 2♦ and you hold

♠ A 6 4, ♥ A 7 6 5, ♦ 2, ♣ 8 7 6 5 2.

With 9 trumps you want to be at the 3-level and with 10 trumps at the 4-level, so you reply 3♣: Pass with spades or correct to 4♥ with hearts. Perfect.

The advantage of including 20-22 HCP, balanced, in the Multi 2♦ is that an opening 2NT can now be used to show at least 5-5 in the minors with 6-10 HCP. [Ed: The disadvantage is that the opposition now have more take-out bids available over your 2NT opening bid – namely Double, 3♣ and 3♦ - giving them more precision and bidding space.]

Responding to the Multi 2♦ can be tricky. For a quiz on this go to the ABF site online www.abf.com.au, go to ABF Newsletter, click on Archives and then go to the September 2002 issue, page 18.

The Muiderberg 2♥ and 2♠ opening bids showing 5 Major and 4+ minor, 6-10 HCP, can shut the opposition out completely. This deal is from the 2008 World Championship, Netherlands versus Mexico:

Dealer West ♠ A K J
EW Vul ♥ K 2
 ♦ A J 9 7 6
 ♣ J 10 2

♠ 3
♥ A J 8 5 3
♦ 8 5
♣ K 9 6 4 3

♠ 10 9 8 7 4 2
♥ Q 9 6 4
♦ 10
♣ A 8

♠ Q 6 5
♥ 10 7
♦ K Q 4 3 2
♣ Q 7 5

| | | | |
|----------|---------|------|----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | Bertens | | Bakkeren |
| Pass | 1NT | Pass | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |

| | | | |
|----------|--------|---------|--------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Westra | | Ramondt | |
| 2♥ | Double | 4♥ | Double |
| All Pass | | | |

The 2♥ opening stole the pot when both 3NT and 4♥ proved unbeatable and the double game swing earned 15 IMPs.

Some partnerships play the 2♥ and 2♠ to show at least 5/5 but that is too restrictive and 5/4 is 6 times more frequent. Something like ♠ A K 10 9 5, ♥ 5 4, ♦ Q 10 6 5, ♣ 6 3 would be a sound 2♠ opening when vulnerable.

The main focus should be the length in the other major; the shorter you are, then the more likely the opponents are to have a good fit there and for your 2♥ or 2♠ opening to cause them discomfort. So, with a singleton or void in the other major you should lower your suit quality requirements since your aim is more obstructive than constructive.

The length of your fit is the critical factor in pre-emptive situations yet many experts are more than happy to open a weak 2♥ or 2♠, or even a Multi 2♦ with a 5 card suit. With the Multi 2♦ and Muiderberg Twos the length of opener's suit is fixed and responder can judge with confidence when to sacrifice or the exact level to pre-empt.



Paul Lavings



Kevin Wang & Hannah Zhang, winners Monday Butler Swiss Pairs (0-500 MPs)



Maha Hoenig & Nadya Tuxworth, winners Monday Butler Swiss (Open)

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