



NEWSLETTER

AUSTRALIAN BRIDGE FEDERATION INC.

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

No. 207 February 2021

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ABN 70 053 651 666

ABF PLAYER SURVEY 2020-21

*Thank
you*

I wish to thank the over 2,500 players who responded to the ABF Bridge Player Survey 2020-21.

It is an extraordinary response rate of 25% and is a greater

sample size than national polls like Newspoll or Roy Morgan with sample sizes of 1,500-2,000. The response demonstrates the huge interest and concern that bridge members have for the future of our great game.

We now have the enormous task of analysing the responses by the 2,500 players to 30 questions that can be further sliced with Pivot Tables, creating charts and graphs for each and drawing conclusions. The final question was open ended, asking for any comments, which received about 200 responses which need to be sifted, edited and arranged thematically. A couple of members with data management and statistical expertise have volunteered to assist, but if you have such skills and would like to help please contact me at petercox@ozemail.com.au.

I hope to have a preliminary report for the ABF Management Committee meeting on 24-25 February, but here is an example:

Question: Why Do You Play Bridge?

(Respondents with <50 and >1000 Masterpoints)

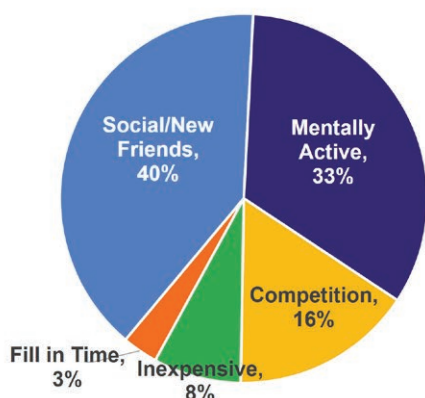
- The Social experience, including to make New Friends, are very important, particularly for the relative beginners with a 40% share of responses but constitute 60% of our members.
- Making New Friends is less important for experienced players with more than 1,000 masterpoints, as they have already made a number of bridge friends over the years.
- Being mentally active is a very important motivation for bridge players of all ranks.
- The competitive element is doubly important for experienced players than beginners.
- The benefit of bridge being inexpensive is relatively low but not inconsequential for an older age group often on fixed incomes.
- A small percentage find bridge a good way to fill in time.

Recommendations

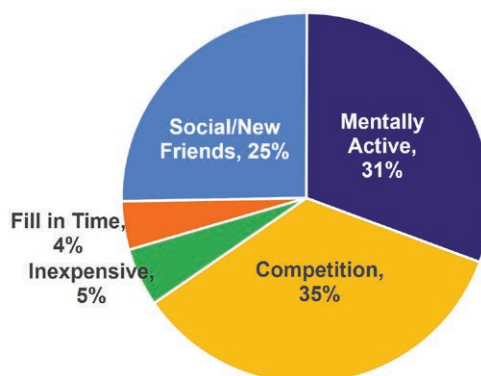
- The provision of a friendly social experience is absolutely essential for both clubs and congresses.
- Promotion of the mental benefits of bridge should be prioritised by clubs to attract beginners.
- Competition is important but particularly for congress organisers to promote quality interesting competitions for all levels.
- Online bridge also needs to provide the best possible social experience with the use of video and audio, such as in Real Bridge, to provide the f2f event experience of communicating with partners and opponents.

Peter Cox

Why Do You Play Bridge?
Respondents with fewer than 50 Masterpoints



Why Do You Play Bridge?
Respondents with greater than 1000 Masterpoints





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ADVERTISING: 15 MARCH
ARTICLES: 12 MARCH

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**IMPROVE
YOUR
DEFENCE**

with
Ron Klinger

Solution on page 17

S/All

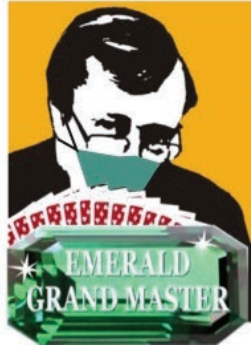
♠ 8 7 6
♥ A K Q 9 4
♦ K 8 4
♣ J 3

N	E
W	S

♠ J
♥ —
♦ A J 9 7 6 3
♣ Q 9 8 7 5 2

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
pass	2♥	2NT	1♠
pass	4♠	all pass	3♠

West leads the ♦10: four from dummy. How should East plan the defence?



Paul Lavings Bridgegear



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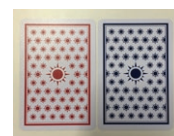
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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Allison Stralow



A Happy New Year to you all from the ABF Management Committee. We spent more time apart than together last year, but we worked in collaboration to keep the bridge community connected and the game of bridge alive. Thank you to everyone who stepped up and helped to confront the extraordinarily difficult circumstances that 2020 presented.

The Lunar New Year that begins on February 12th marks the Year of the Ox. Oxen are known for diligence, dependability, strength and determination, which are all attributes shown by the bridge community in these unusual times. I hope this year brings a combination of good-natured patience and physical stamina to all at the bridge table.

Australian National Championships

In discussion with the ABF, the New South Wales Bridge Association and the Bridge Association of Western Australia have agreed to swap the hosting of the Australian National Championships 2021 and 2023. The Australian National Championships will now be held at the Perth Convention Centre, Western Australia from 10-22 July 2021. The championships will include State and Territory representatives in Open, Youth, Women's and Senior categories and the Butler. The Swan River Swiss Pairs will also be incorporated into this year, and a comprehensive programme will be available soon. The Tournament

Organiser is Robina McConnell and plans are well underway. I will be pleased to welcome you all to my home city so start booking your flights and accommodation.

Australia will begin to rollout a coronavirus vaccine in Australia this month and as the vaccine starts to make inroads against the pandemic, I am optimistic we will all be back to playing face-to-face bridge by July. If one or more States are prevented from physically attending the ANC due to border-closures the ABF is working to enable them to play supervised matches on an online platform, however, the Butler will be entirely face-to-face.

Since January 2020 the ABF Council and Management Committee have held all of our meetings via Zoom. While these meetings have gone well and we have achieved a great deal, I miss the interaction and camaraderie that a face-to-face meeting provides. Like bridge it is much easier to pick up on non-verbal cues and body language face-to-face at the table than online. While digital communication is powerful, I trust it will never replace face-to-face meetings or bridge as the social aspect, which a recent survey of players has highlighted, is of great importance to players. I am really looking forward to the Management Committee's first face-to-face meeting planned for this month.

ABF's new technology platform

MyABF has been launched! More information can be found in this newsletter on page 8. Congratulations to Pauline Gumby and Warren Lazer who made the first live entry to a Congress and to Rakesh Kumar who was the first person to make a paid Congress entry. I can confirm the ABF has engaged a developer to build the next



stage of the Technology Project.

I am pleased to announce that Stephen Fischer has agreed to take on the role as Chair of the Steering Committee that will oversee further development of MyABF.

If you have any feedback on the above change or on any other issues you would like to raise with me or the ABF Management Committee please email

abf.pres@gmail.com



Photo from Tourism Australia



MARKETING REPORT

with Peter Cox



2020

A BRIDGE ODYSSEY

Without doubt, 2020 was a very trying period for everyone in bridge because of COVID-19, with clubs closed for extensive periods, most congresses cancelled and the ABF and state bodies having to rethink how to keep bridge alive. Most beginners' classes, which normally start in February-March, were cancelled and the year's intake of new players drastically reduced. Previous players reactivated were down and players inactivated and deleted were at record highs.

However, the number of ABF registered players as at 31 Dec 2020 was down by only 5.6% or 2,035 from 36,439 in December 2019, to 34,405 in 2020. This included many clubs cleaning out their inactive or deceased members at the end of the Masterpoint year at 31 March 2020 so they were only forwarding to the ABF and state bodies capitation fees for active players.

Our appreciation to the ABF registered players for continuing their support. In light of the impact of COVID-19, the ABF is making a one-off reduction in capitation fees from \$16.10 to \$10 for 2021 to help clubs and their members.

To keep club members playing Bridge the ABF introduced virtual ABF Club Online Games on BBO and an ABF Nationwide Online Pairs events on Sunday afternoons and Friday evenings which has contributed over half a million dollars back to the 64 participating clubs.

However, the reduction in games played in clubs because of COVID resulted in revenue to the ABF for green masterpoints decreasing by -39%, red points -37% and gold points by -55%. This means that club revenues will have fallen by similar percentages for at least green points, hurting many clubs and threatening the viability of some.

Top Ten clubs by increase in members 2012-20

76 clubs gained members in 2020 despite COVID, and 145 clubs grew in the eight-year period 2012 to 2020. Here are the Top Ten clubs by increased members since 2012:

Top Ten Clubs by Increase in Members 2012-2020

1	Joondalup Bridge Club - WA	217
2	South Australian Bridge Association	202
3	Bridge at Beaumont - Adelaide	199
4	North Shore Bridge Club Inc - Syd	183
5	Peninsula Bridge Club - NSW	175
6	Tomaree Bridge Club Inc - Nelson Ba	164
7	Kenmore Bridge Club - Brisbane	163
8	The Quiet Club - MIb	156
9	Bayside Bridge Club - MIb	148
10	KLTC Bridge Club - MIb	147

Joondalup Bridge Club in the growing northern suburbs of Perth is a very active club. It has increased by 217 members to be the highest growth club by members in the period 2012-2020 in Australia.

The South Australian Bridge Association has achieved outstanding growth since 2012 of 202 members. Headquartered at Unley with several satellite clubs it was closed for four months and had to stop three times. They took the opportunity to spend \$60,000 on refurbishments and are about to start a major drive for new members around social and fun.

Barbara Travis, a leading player, President of the SABF and a regular contributor to this Newsletter, started Bridge at Beaumont in the inner Adelaide suburbs in 2019 and has quickly built it into a 200 member club.

... continued on next page

The NSBC is a very established club and the largest in Australia but has still managed to grow its members by 183 in the highly competitive Sydney bridge market.

Peninsula Bridge Club has concentrated on teaching and serving the Northern Beaches of Sydney and grown membership by 175 to 535 since 2012.

Tomaree was formed in 2016 from the amalgamation of the Nelson Bay and Port Stephens bridge clubs.

Kenmore in the Brisbane suburbs has grown from 184 members in 2012 to 347 in 2020 in restricted premises but driven by a strong management team.

Sue Kelso directs at a number of Melbourne private clubs including The Royal South Yarra, the MCC and the Alexandra Club which has recently affiliated with the VBA. Sue formed The Quiet Club in May 2020 to enable the members of golf clubs and their friends to play in a virtual ABF Club which has quickly grown to 156 members.

Another Melbourne bridge club is the Kooyong Lawn Tennis Club which has grown from 111 members in 2012 to 258 in 2020.

Jan Clyne has built the Bayside Bridge Club in Melbourne's beachside suburbs from 93 members in 2012 to 241 in 2020.

The common factor with these most successful clubs is being led by driven individuals or highly functioning committees.

Players by States

The chart "ABF Registered Players by States 2012-2020" shows that every state except Tasmania had reduced ABF registered players in 2020. The largest falls were Victoria -9.3%, NSW -7.7% and the ACT -5.8%. Victoria suffered the worst of the pandemic with lockdowns and clubs being closed for a large proportion of the year, NSW and the ACT with restrictions. SA, WA and Qld were relatively COVID-free and clubs were open for far more of the year and hence lower falls in registered players.

From a peak in registered players in 2015 the only two states that have increased in the five years to 2020 are SA and Tasmania, whilst NSW is down by -11% and QLD by -7%. The good news in 2020 is that 11 new clubs were registered and five clubs closed.

Top 20 clubs

In 2020, 235 of the 340 active clubs, or 76%, had a decline in ABF registered players. In the eight-year period from 2012 to 2020 nearly 60% of the clubs actually declined in numbers of ABF registered players. If we take out the disastrous 2020 year and only measure from 2012 to 2019, still slightly more clubs declined in numbers than increased, and a number closed over that period. Here are the top 20 clubs by ABF registered players.

Top 20 Clubs by ABF Registered Players in 2020						
	2020	2019-20		2012-20		
		No	%	No	%	
1 North Shore Bridge Club Inc	1,610	-36	-2%	137	9%	
2 South Australian Bridge Association	1,034	-148	-13%	202	24%	
3 West Australian Bridge Club	928	-28	-3%	-55	-6%	
4 NSWBA/Sydney Bridge Centre	705	-141	-17%	17	2%	
5 Waverley Bridge Club Inc	688	-105	-13%	-106	-13%	
6 Toowong Bridge Club Inc	664	-42	-6%	-145	-18%	
7 Trumps Bridge Centre	658	-60	-8%	-203	-24%	
8 Canberra Bridge Club Inc	655	-23	-3%	50	8%	
9 Northern Suburbs Bridge Club Inc	576	14	2%	-54	-9%	
10 Peninsula Bridge Club - NSW	535	-51	-9%	175	49%	
11 Surfers Paradise Bridge Club Inc	459	-36	-7%	-119	-21%	
12 Tasmanian Bridge Association	443	29	7%	134	43%	
13 South Perth Bridge Club	373	-16	-4%	-22	-6%	
14 Undercroft Bridge Club Inc	368	-16	-4%	-39	-10%	
15 Turrumurra Bridge Club	366	-32	-8%	-27	-7%	
16 Queensland Contract Bridge Club	365	-27	-7%	-43	-11%	
17 Sunshine Coast Contract Bridge Club	361	-7	-2%	2	1%	
18 Gold Coast Bridge Club	353	19	6%	39	12%	
19 Kenmore Bridge Club	347	-18	-5%	163	89%	
20 Noosa Bridge Club Inc	318	-17	-5%	-8	-2%	
Total	11,806	-724	-6%	106	1%	

Seventeen of the Top 20 clubs lost registered players during COVID and in total the Top 20 clubs lost about 6% of members. Only Northern Suburbs in Queensland, the Tasmania Bridge Association and the Gold Coast Bridge Club gained members. Both the TBA and the Gold Coast also grew compared

ABF Registered Players by States 2012-2020												
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2019/20
												No % Chg
ACT	802	823	902	910	933	961	966	1,001	995	969	913	-56 -5.8%
NSW	13,838	13,699	14,022	14,524	14,775	14,833	14,619	14,550	14,353	14,263	13,169	-1,094 -7.7%
VIC	5,161	5,078	5,237	5,599	5,516	5,521	5,676	5,709	5,759	5,807	5,266	-541 -9.3%
QLD	7,277	7,486	7,645	7,892	8,031	8,000	7,934	7,810	7,735	7,683	7,476	-207 -2.7%
SA	1,584	1,657	1,693	1,864	1,959	2,068	2,116	2,144	2,475	2,342	2,302	-40 -1.7%
WA	4,158	4,233	4,272	4,351	4,389	4,351	4,396	4,317	4,294	4,299	4,195	-104 -2.4%
TAS	758	788	809	825	865	875	870	863	872	920	932	12 1.3%
NT	171	177	185	189	182	166	149	149	145	156	151	-5 -3.2%
Total	33,749	33,941	34,765	36,154	36,650	36,775	36,726	36,543	36,628	36,439	34,404	-2,035 -5.6%
Growth - No		192	824	1,389	496	125	-49	-183	85	-189	-2,035	
- %		0.6%	2.4%	4.0%	1.4%	0.3%	-0.1%	-0.5%	0.2%	-0.5%	-5.6%	

to 2012, but only half of the top 20 clubs have now grown over that period.

The North Shore Bridge Club in Sydney tops the list again with two venues at Willoughby and Lindfield and a combined 1610 registered players. From early in the COVID period they had highly successful online games run by Mike Prescott where members played for free but were asked for donations. In the latter period they switched over to playing regular games and competitions on Real Bridge and paid table money. Members were down by only -36 or -2% but since 2012 they have grown by 137 members or 9%.

The South Australian Bridge Association was again in second place with 1,034 members down by 148 or -13%.

Western Australia had the least problems from COVID with clubs only being closed for about three months. Green Points issued are down by only -7% for the October-December 2020 period compared to the national average of -40%. The West Australian Bridge Club is the third largest bridge club in Australia with 928 members and was only marginally down in 2020 but -6% below the 2012 membership.

The NSWBA/Sydney Bridge Centre lost 141 members or -17% being closed for much of the period. It is now highly active with f2f bridge and promoting Online club games and congresses on Real Bridge

which with video and audio largely replicates the experience of playing at the table.

As you can see from the chart, many of the traditional major clubs in Australia were badly affected by COVID and over a third were already in decline by 2019 before COVID. If you would like to know the membership performance of your club for the period 2012-2020 I will provide you with the numbers.

Conclusion

2020 is a wake-up call to all clubs large and small that concerted action needs to be taken to get players back into clubs and playing more often. As only about one third played online of the 36,000 ABF registered players, this leaves two thirds not playing bridge for long periods. Immunisation in the longer period will enable some players to return, but a significant number may be lost to bridge.

Please take advantage of the assistance provided by the ABF to provide a free Club Management Workshop for your club on Zoom. I have lectured to many industry conferences over the years and consulted to corporations and government bodies so be responsible and take advantage of the offer even if you only get one idea out of the session. Contact me on 0413 676 326 or at

petercox@ozemail.com.au

AROUND THE CLUBS

Ian Robinson inducted as an honorary Life Member at the Canberra Bridge Club

Ian Robinson has been an active member of the Canberra Bridge Club (CBC) for nearly 40 years. During that time he has served the club as a committee member, director, manager, teacher and highly successful representative player.

Ian has served on the management committee in several capacities, as President (1984-1987), Tournament Secretary (1997, 2008, 2015-2016) and Vice President (2017-2020). He was also Tournament Secretary for the ACT Bridge Association in 1984 and part of 1986. Ian is currently the CBC's Vice President and Chief Director.

Ian was the club's Manager and Chief Director from 1989 to 1993. During that time not only did our club prosper and grow in membership but there was a rapid expansion in the growth of country congresses in the region. Ian's style, enthusiasm and efficiency as director of many of these congresses made a significant contribution to this development.

Ian returned in a voluntary capacity to the role of Chief Director after Sean Mullamphy's illness in 2017. Of particular note is the way Ian reshaped the role to suit the needs of the time. While the club had a management structure that was serving the club well, Ian addressed the need for more directors to fill the gap created by Sean's retirement by identifying and encouraging several suitable club members to train and join the club's directing staff. This development has put the club in a much more flexible position than before.

From his earliest connection with CBC and up to the present, Ian has proved himself as a first-rate teacher, both of beginners and more advanced players. He was particularly active in this role during his earlier time as Manager and Chief Director.

Ian has performed all these roles with diligence, integrity and great enthusiasm, and always with the best interests of the Canberra Bridge Club and its members. He has promoted the game in many ways, including by his support for younger players, beginners, and those wanting to advance in the game. In recent years, with membership of bridge clubs declining all over the world, Ian continues to look for ways to attract new players to bridge and to our club.

We believe that an award of Honorary Life Membership would be a fitting recognition of Ian's service to CBC and its members.

Margaret Kyburz, Canberra Bridge Club

THE ABF'S NEW TECHNOLOGY PLATFORM



Julian Foster

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

The ABF's new technology platform My ABF went live on 24 December. Many thanks to the team of volunteers who helped us out for two weeks of extensive testing earlier in December. We received a lot of good feedback and the software improved significantly as a result.

What does My ABF do?

PLAYERS

It gives you a personal ABF account you can log in to. Over time this will grow to be your main online interaction for all your bridge activities:

- Manage your personal details
- View your masterpoints
- View, enter, and pay for bridge events
- See announcements from the ABF, your State and your Club.
- Participate in bridge discussion forums
- Run a "Bridge Credits" account with the ABF which you can put money into to pay for your bridge entries
- View your results



CLUBS, STATE BODIES & TOURNAMENT ORGANISERS

It allows you to list a bridge event and accept online entries and payments:

- Generate a webpage listing for your event.
- Manage online entries from players.
- Manage payments (online and offline) from players. Online payments are made via the ABF "Bridge credits" system which removes the need to set up your own facility to accept online payments. Entry fees are credited to the club's own "Bridge Credits" account which are then reimbursed to the club from the ABF (less a 2% charge for transaction fees).

What is available today?

PLAYERS

- Sign up and manage your profile. This will make entering a lot of bridge events much easier than it is today.
- View your masterpoints.
- Run a "Bridge Credits" account with the ABF.
- Enter and pay online for bridge congresses listed on My ABF (National, State and Club).
- See announcements from the ABF.
- Participate in Australian bridge discussion forums.

CLUBS, STATE BODIES & TOURNAMENT ORGANISERS

- List a bridge congress (face to face or online) and take online entries and payments from players. The ABF now has a common merchant facility that any club can make use of – there is no need to set up your own facility to accept online card payments.

We are looking for clubs to run some initial events through the system. We can help you with all aspects initially – setting up and listing the event, managing the entries and the payments. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact Julian Foster at

julian.foster@abf.com.au

What does it cost?

There is no charge to players or clubs for the system (it is managed and maintained by the ABF). The only charge is for credit card transaction costs when used for bridge tournaments. These charges are borne by the tournaments (as they are today). As a player if your entry fee is, say, \$40 that is what you pay – not \$40 plus a transaction fee.

What is still to come?

The next major release is planned for the second half of 2021. This will aim to extend the use of Bridge Credits to regular club duplicate sessions and other common bridge payments (e.g. membership). That means a club will be able to accept online payment for all common bridge related items and effectively become cashless.

We will also be aiming to display bridge results by integrating with existing scoring programs.

Subsequent releases will involve a My ABF scoring module and rolling in ABF Masterpoint Centre functionality to the platform.

How do I sign up?

Either go to

www.myabf.com.au

or on the main ABF website click the "My ABF" link on the right hand side.

This will take you to a new page. Select "Sign up" at the top right to register for the system.

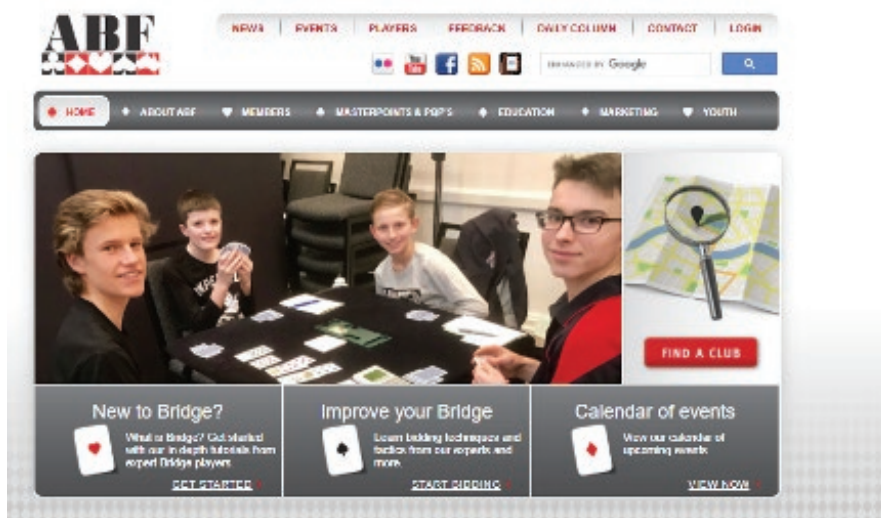
Register using your ABF number and an email address. You will receive an email to confirm your account. After you have registered you will be able to use the "Log In" link at the top right to access the system.

The first time you log in, you will be taken to your profile page to complete basic details. Then you will be taken to your Dashboard which is effectively your "home page".

Where can I get more information?

There are assorted videos on this YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZPuvivkdbzl4kg-cwxQuNQ>



These currently cover:

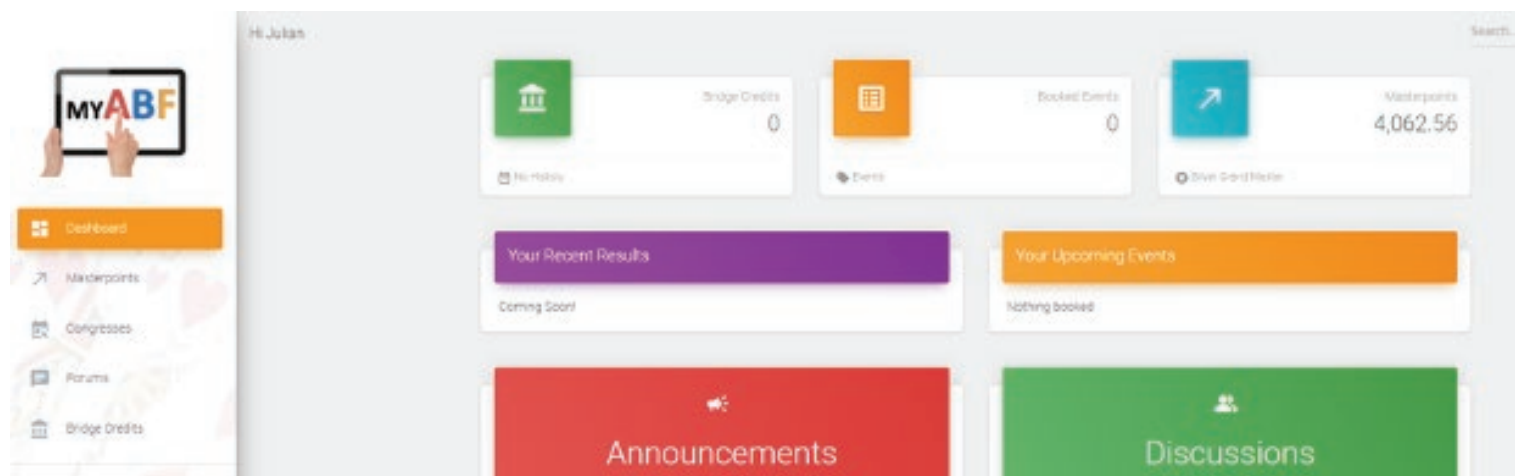
- signing up
- an overview of the system
- functions for players when entering and paying for congresses
- functions for tournament organisers.

The ABF technology strategy can be found here:

<https://www.abf.com.au/about-abf/abf-technology-strategy/>

A background information pack is available here:

<https://www.abf.com.au/abf-technology-june-2020/>





YOUTH BRIDGE NEWS

with
Leigh and Bianca Gold

LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

After a year of lockdowns and limited opportunity to play competitive bridge, there was finally some light at the end of the tunnel for our Juniors. Over the last few months, many state associations recommenced competitions either online or at the clubrooms. While I'm sure a few would be rusty after a year off, a few have already got runs on the board.



In South Australia, Nicolas Croft, Arjuna de Livera, Howard Melbourne, Bertie Morgan and Barbara Travis combined to finish 2nd in the state teams. Here is a hand Bertie played recently from the South Australian Board-a-Match (see deal at top of next column).

NS had reached 1NT by North, and Bertie was on lead. ♠K was lead asking for count from partner who contributed the 4♠. Bertie decided to play a mind game with declarer and followed up with the ♠10! Declarer, placing West with either Axx or Qxx, decided to duck in order in block the suit (or potentially doubleton honour with west). Now Bertie could run the suit and hope for a win on the board.



Bertie Morgan, 2nd place in the SA State Teams

♠ 7 6

♥ A K 8 5

♦ A 4 3

♣ A 10 8 5

♠ 9 4 3

♥ Q 10 9 4

♦ Q 6 5 2

♣ J 3

♠ A K Q 10

♥ J 3

♦ 10 8 7

♣ K 7 6 2

♠ J 8 5 2

♥ 7 6 2

♦ K J 9

♣ Q 9 4

Other good results at the time of writing:

NSW Interstate selection, stage 1: John McMahon - Charles McMahon are currently running 4th in the NS direction, while Lara Topper and Jacob Rose who are both under 18, are also competing in this high powered event.

ACT Presidents Plate: Andrew Spooner and Joshua Tomlin finished 5th, only losing one match against the runners up.

VIC Fred Habgood Matchpointed Swiss Pairs: Danni Fuller and Damon Flicker are running 6th.

Encouraging new players

Are you thinking about running an event to encourage new youth players?

The Australian youth officers together with the ABF have conducted numerous "Bring your grandchild to bridge" days. While we had to put these on hold during the pandemic, we are looking at resuming these sessions across Australia. We are happy to talk with any club or association who would also like to host one in their clubrooms. On the next page, we have some suggestions for how to make a successful day:

Some facts to consider when running your “Bring Your Grandchild To Bridge” Day

1. The younger players: We would encourage any player who is at school. YES... as young as 5!
Why? The day isn't just about Bridge, it is about having fun, spending time with grandparents and enjoying cards. Most extracurricular activities are decided by age 6.

2. The older players: Get a good feel for the age variety when signing them up. This will allow your teacher to plan better for the day knowing what the ranges of ages / experience are. You are considered Youth until the age of 26! However, for grandkids over 18 you might want to consider a separate session.

3. Name Tags: it is just good practice and will really help out the teacher.

4. Week Day in Holidays: family dynamics have changed, grandparents are taking on more family responsibility particularly during holidays when parents can't get leave from work. Also, for families that live away from grandparents, school holidays is a lovely time to take a holiday. After a number of surveys we have run a successful day on a week day of school holidays and would encourage clubs to use this as a starting point.

5. Saving money: We recommend fun activities to break up the card play and lesson if you are running a full day – especially if you have a young crowd.

- To save money, why not ask children under 13 to bring a cling wrap / alfoil box? Then they can wrap them (so spikes don't get them) then colour in and turn into a card holder?
- You can ask grandparents to bring allergy-free food to save on catering
- You can run the session yourselves if you have a teacher in the club with a current working with children certification.

6. Cost: Our recommendation is to charge (most holiday activities are a lot more money).

- \$20 for 1 child (includes lunch)
- \$35 for 2 children (includes lunch)
- \$50 for 3 children (includes lunch)

7. Time: We recommend a simple format if you are able to have the whole day.

Example format:

10am	Introduction, ice breakers, what is AKQJ10 (number order)
10:30am	Trick taking game – no bidding
11:00am	Two-Player Bridge Basic bidding – say what suit you have (choose trumps)
11:20am	Morning tea
11:45am	Split into two groups if enough (younger / older) Make your card holder for those who need (aimed at younger age group) Introduce Majors / Minors, no fit notrump
12:15pm	Recap morning session; what is after lunch
12:20pm	LUNCH (be aware of allergies)
1pm	Game / burn off energy from lunch
1:10pm	Build on two-player Basic bridge with four players
1:40pm	Mini tournament with travellers on the back (if you have at least three full tables)
2:15pm	Toilet / snack break
2:30pm	Complete mini-tournament
2:50pm	Snacks while giving out attendance certificates
3pm	Conclude day: “if you enjoyed this you can do formal lessons”

Please contact Bianca 0412 120 600 or Leigh 0400 081 710 for more information.

‘It’s Like Playing With Kobe’

An Unlikely Intergenerational Bridge Team

Some of the world’s best bridge players are in their 70s. They joined a teenagers’ team for an online tournament. ABBY ELLIN reports (reprinted from the New York Times).

One afternoon during the height of coronavirus lockdowns, 16-year-old Finn Kolesnik found himself in a cold sweat. He was on the phone with Bob Hamman, 82, one of the greatest bridge players ever.

Kolesnik wanted to know if, um, maybe Hamman and his longtime bridge partner, Peter Weichsel, 77, would join his team for this year’s North American Online Bridge Championships Premier Knockout, being held from July 23 to Aug. 2?

“Who’s better to play with than the historically best player of all time?” said Kolesnik, a high school junior in Ventura, Calif., who learned bridge from his parents when he was 13.

Though Kolesnik casually knew Hamman through his father, who also plays bridge, he thought the request was a long shot. Both Hamman and Weichsel are Grand Life Masters and in the Bridge Hall of Fame. Kolesnik had only been playing three years, but Hamman responded quickly: He was in, and thrilled that teenagers were even interested in the game. “There’s not enough young people playing,” he said.

The unlikely group, which included Kolesnik’s bridge partner, 20-year-old Jacob Freeman, recruited Bart Bramley, 72, and Kit Woolsey, 76, to round out the team of six.

“It’s the greatest game ever invented,” said Bramley, who has been playing since he was 5 and is also a Hall of Famer. “I saw my father playing in the living room with three other guys. I didn’t know what they were doing, but I knew I wanted to do it.”



*Finn Kolesnik, left, and Jacob Freeman are among the youngest players on the bridge circuit.
Photo by Jonathon Steinberg.*

And so, a group that included among the oldest and youngest bridge players were trying to win a national bridge title. It most likely wouldn’t have happened without the coronavirus.

“Players of the level of Hamman partnering up with young folks in a major event like that is not something I ever recall seeing,” said Greg Coles, the director of operations for the American Contract Bridge League, a membership organization. “It’s like playing with Kobe or Michael Jordan.”

Like just about everything else, bridge underwent a major shift when the pandemic began. In-person events and tournaments were canceled and this year’s world championship was rescheduled for late 2021.

The bridge community followed the rest of the globe and pivoted online. Within the space of a few weeks, bridgebase.com, the virtual platform on which most people play, grew from nearly 10,000 players at one time to 50,000. Funbridge, another online provider, reports more than 2 million players regularly, five times the rate before the pandemic.

Many professional players, including Hamman and Weichsel, had to shift to playing online for the first time themselves.

The average age of the ACBL's 167,000 members hovers around 73, as the league is filled mostly with players who learned in the 1950s, '60s and '70s. As that cohort got older, they continued to fill the halls of bridge clubs around the country. But younger people weren't exactly racing to learn a game associated with their grandparents or great-grandparents.

Not all of the older players were welcoming either. As one of the youngest players on the circuit – he learned at 6-years-old – Freeman, who grew up in Toronto and is now in his third year of business school, noticed that sometimes the old guard was displeased when he won. "I said to my dad, 'They were so rude!'" Freeman recalled. "My dad was like, 'That means you've made it.'"

The ACBL has been trying to change the perception of bridge as a game for older people. There are national and international youth championships, online youth events and new bridge clubs on college campuses like Georgetown and the University of Minnesota.

"I'm seeing more younger people reaching out for something intellectually stimulating because they can't go do the things they used to do," said Patty Tucker, an Atlanta-based bridge teacher who coaches the Georgia Tech bridge club. "Bridge is a very intricate, strategic, intellectual game. It's fun, but there are lots of levels to it and I think they relish that."

Reese Koppel, 21, has been playing at the Louisiana Bridge Association in New Orleans since he was 11 years old. The older players treated him "like Elvis," he said. "They saw me as a savior of the game."

"This game taught me so much – people skills, compassion, emotional endurance, and an appreciation

for the older generation," said Koppel, who founded Yale's 40-member bridge club and works as a product manager at an app called Tricky Bridge. "It's not the cards you have, but it's how you play them. Everyone's going to pick up the same cards as you. It's how you react to that sort of adversity."

Adversity was in no short supply on Aug. 2, the last game of the summer tournament. Players were scattered throughout Michigan, California, Texas, Canada, and Norway, where it was 4 a.m. Team Kolesnik was getting pummeled. The score going into the fourth quarter was 85 to 113, the equivalent of being 20 points down in the N.B.A. finals with roughly five minutes remaining.

"We were just stuck," Hamman said. The other team "had almost an insurmountable lead, with six hands to go."

Somehow, they caught up and by the end of the night, the score had evened at 113-113. But after eight hours of playing, everyone was exhausted.

"Although sedentary, bridge is surprisingly grueling because of the mental energy and concentration required," Weichsel said from his home in Southern California.

No one wanted to admit defeat. After a lengthy discussion with the tournament directors, the two teams shared the title.

Kolesnik and his unlikely team will aim for another victory at the next Knockout tournament, Nov. 27 through Dec. 6.

"One of the things I always liked about bridge was getting to hang out with people of all ages, which when I started out meant older people," Bramley said. "Now that I'm on the other end, I still love it for the same reason."



Photo by Francesca Canali/ACBL



A GAME AT THE (virtual) CLUB

with
**Barbara
Travis**

There were a series of interesting declarer play hands in this session.

♠ 10 3
♥ J 7 5 4 3 2
♦ A 3
♣ A 6 2

♠ Q J 5 2
♥ 10 9
♦ Q 10 9 7
♣ 10 9 4

♠ A K 9 4
♥ K Q 8
♦ J 6 4 2
♣ J 5

♠ 8 7 6
♥ A 6
♦ K 8 5
♣ K Q 8 7 3

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
2♦	3♣	1♦ all pass	2♣

I may have bid 2♥ on North's hand, being willing to revert to 3♣ if partner lacked support, but I have no problem with this auction. (The sixth heart makes the suit perfectly biddable.)

Sitting West, I led the ♥10; given the poor nature of my hand, I was hoping to find something moderately useful in partner's hand. Trick 1: ♥10 - jack - queen - ace.

Declarer now led the ♣K and ♣A, then realised she wanted to ruff a diamond in dummy. She now led the ♦A, then back to the ♦K, then ruffed a diamond

with dummy's last trump. Her problem was that she had no way back to hand to draw my remaining trump. She should have taken the diamond ruff first, as recommended whenever I nag (teach) about 'Have you got a job for dummy's trumps?'

She was in dummy, and now partner could win the heart exit, we could then cash three spades ending in East's hand, and the next heart through promoted my ♣10 into a winner. Of course, this defence required precise timing – cashing the spades first; if not, declarer can discard a spade on the third heart, and she can then trump the third spade instead since I have to follow suit.

♠ K J 6 2
♥ A Q 8 6 4 2
♦ J 5
♣ K

♠ 7 4
♥ 10 5
♦ 9 7 4 3
♣ A 9 7 6 4

♠ Q 10 8
♥ J 9 7 3
♦ A Q 10
♣ J 5 2

♠ A 9 5 3
♥ K
♦ K 8 6 2
♣ Q 10 8 3

North played in 4♠ and East led the ♣2 - 8 - ace - king. I led a diamond back to partner's ace, just in case we needed to cash out. Partner led the ♦Q - king - four - jack.

Declarer did not realise that this hand, with 4-4 trumps, is not one on which you start trumping. It is about making the hearts into winners. At trick four, she trumped a diamond, and now the hand fell apart when the spade finesse failed. She had shortened her trumps, which should have been the entries to the wonderful heart suit. That 'job for trumps' applies when you do not have a good suit; this hand has a good outside heart suit.

At trick 4, you should cash the ♥K. You can't really afford to be forced to trump diamonds, so it is then best to continue with the ♠A and a spade to the king. Once spades are 3-2, you just continue leading your hearts from the top – lead the ♥A and discard a diamond, ♥Q and discard the last diamond, then trump the hearts good. You just have one spade to lose.

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
3♦	3♥	pass	4♥
all pass			

North's 3♥ was mildly adventurous but understandable with the seven-card suit. (We don't normally preempt against a preempt, the overall being a decent hand.) South could have responded with 4♦, showing a good hand for the raise to 4♥, and the same contract would have been reached.

East led the ♦4, won with the ace. She trumped a diamond (good play!), then cashed the ♥A and led back to dummy's king, drawing trumps. A diamond was led and ruffed, then a club led towards dummy. Partner returned the ♣Q - king - ten - jack. A club was now ruffed to hand, leaving these cards:

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

Declarer had to tackle the spade suit for one winner. Back we go to my favourite topic – counting. There were two ways my hand could be counted: (a) I had to have two spades, since I had shown up with two hearts, two clubs and seven diamonds (East showed out on the third round), (b) I had ♦K-J (marked), and ♥Q-J (known). Therefore, I did not have the ♠A.

This basically meant that declarer had mistimed the hand. It would have been better to be in dummy to lead a spade towards her king. When East wins the ace, she either gives a ruff and discard by leading a club or has to help out in the spade suit. If the ♠Q is cashed, dummy's jack becomes a winner. However, if a small spade is led, you can play ANY card from dummy – trying the jack is best though. When West wins, they are endplayed into leading a diamond, giving a ruff and discard anyway!

What was the solution? Lead the ♠K from hand, creating the same end position on East. Our declarer, however, tried leading a small spade towards dummy at the position shown above. When West played low, she guessed to play the jack, guessing wrongly. Now she had three spade losers because my spade return finessed her king. She'd done very well to eliminate the hand, but just had to stop and count the hand at the critical moment, something that is not done often enough!

www.bridgewithbarbara.com



cup2go

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





TEACHING TIPS with Ian Dalziel

Class photos

Many people who learn to play bridge at a class will remember their classmates for the rest of their lives, hence the importance of a class photograph. As well as reminding you of the friends you made, it is good to be able to show the picture to your family. The picture can be e-mailed to everyone in the class along with a 'name plan', very useful if you aren't too good at remembering names. People can print it or view it on their laptop, tablet or smartphone. The photo can be published on the club or county web site, which might encourage others to take up the game. Friends and acquaintances, who may be more experienced players, may recognise someone and can then mentor them, at least on their first club visit.

Be assured, these class photos really are very much appreciated. Although I have been teaching bridge full time for 38 years, I have taken photos only recently, but I wish I had done so from the start.

Modern cameras can produce quite good photos even if you are unskilled as a photographer. Since everyone, including the teacher, will need to be in the photo, it can be taken by the husband or wife of a class member; they will usually bring their own camera. I have, however, bought a tripod (£10-£15 from Amazon) so that I can take the photos and be in them myself. I get everyone positioned with a space for me in the centre and use the camera timer to give me time to get in the shot. My camera normally takes 10 shots at five-second intervals – that way, you get a least one photograph where no one has their eyes closed.

You need three rows for a class of 20-24. The bottom row sit cross-legged on the floor, the middle row are seated and the back row standing. This way, no one gets hidden by someone else's head. If you have a really big class, you can have another row at the back standing on stools or chairs. It is best if you don't need a flash as that can cause red eye, but that will depend on the lighting. Do make sure everyone is smiling when the camera is about to shoot.

There is lots of laughter when we take the photos. At my classes, they draw for partners and tables so in a few weeks everyone knows everyone. If your class self-selects their tables, you might not get the same camaraderie in the photo.

Try and take the photo when a near full turnout is expected, otherwise add individual photos on the name plan when you email the main photo.

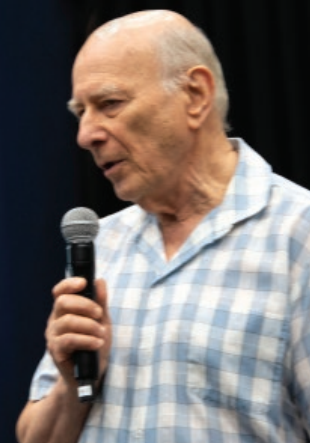
I either email the 'best photo' or send them all and let each person choose the one they think is best. The photos will be 4-8 MB and therefore too big for e-mailing so I reduce them to 200 KB before sending; that's good enough for most people, but I always offer a full size photo by request, especially if they want to print it.



IMPROVE YOUR DEFENCE

with Ron Klinger

Solution to problem on page 2



THE BRIDGE BUNGEE-JUMP

From an international team event on BBO:

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

At one table it went:

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

Lead: ♥K. Declarer ruffed in dummy and then played ♦A, diamond ruff and a spade to the jack and king. South cashed the ♣A, good, but then shifted to the ♥J, not so good. The heart was ruffed and another diamond ruffed with the ♣K. A spade was ruffed in dummy and when the ♣Q drew the missing trumps, declarer had eleven tricks.

After the ♥K lead, declarer can always succeed as the cards lie: ruff the lead, ♦A, diamond ruff, heart ruff, diamond ruff, ♣K. It is often best to lead a trump against a sacrifice. To defeat 5♣ a club lead and a club back would have done the job. As the play went, a second club at trick six would also have been enough. Still, even +200 would have been little reward, given what happened at the other table (see auction to 6NT at the top of the next column).

Don't you just hate it when they stop in game, you sacrifice and they then bid to a slam which you can beat, so you double and they run to a slam you cannot beat? It's the bridge equivalent of a bungee-jump. There was no way to stop twelve tricks. 6NT doubled was worth +1230 and +18 imps.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♠
pass	2♥	2NT	dbl
3♣	3♠	pass	4♣ ¹
dbl	pass	pass	rdbl ²
pass	4♦ ¹	pass	4♠
pass	pass	5♣	pass
pass	5♥	pass	6♠
pass	pass	dbl	pass
pass	6NT	dbl	all pass

1. Cuebid with spades trumps.

2. Shows ♣A, keep cue-bidding, please.

Had 5♣ gone down at the other table, the loss would still have been 14 imps. Had East sold out to 4♠ and North-South make it, then the loss, with 5♣ making, would have been 15 imps. To do well on the board, 5♣ needed to be defeated and 4♠ also defeated.

There was a double-figure swing in the other match, too:

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

Lead: ♦10.

East took the ♦A and switched to the ♣9. South won, drew trumps and soon had twelve tricks for +480.

At the other table this was the auction, as in the problem:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♠
pass	2♥	2NT	3♠
pass	4♠	all pass	

Lead: ♦10.

With such strong hearts in dummy, there is little hope of defeating 4♠ unless the ♦10 is a singleton. East took the ♦A and returned the ♦J. West ruffed and played a heart for East to ruff. The next diamond ruff took the contract one down.

BRIDGE INTO THE 21st CENTURY

by Paul Lavings



YOU OPEN 1♦ AND PARTNER REPLIES 1NT

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

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

SOLUTIONS

1. Pass. The 1NT response denies a four-card major so partner will have a maximum of six cards in the majors and thus a minimum of seven cards in the minors. So opponents could even have a 5-4 fit in hearts or spades and they must have at least an eight-card spade fit.

Your best shot seems to be to pass 1NT and hope opps do not back into the auction and find their major suit fit. If opps can make 110 or 140 then -100, two down for you, should be a good score at Pairs. If you bid 2♣ you will alert opps to the fact they have at least one eight-card major-suit fit.

2. 2♣. You know opponents have at least a nine-card spade suit so you can be pretty sure the hand sitting over you will find a balancing bid. Thus you are better off to show your clubs and hope that in the ensuing partscore battle your side will be able to outbid or out-think the opps.

3. Pass. I never rebid a five-card suit when responder replies to my opening bid at the one-level. And it pays off big-time when you know for sure opener always has 6+ in their rebid suit and you are able to judge what to do with much greater accuracy.

4. 2NT. Perhaps you think you should bid 3NT but 18+6=24 and maybe you don't quite have the power

between you to make nine tricks. When you think about it, a raise to 2NT will generally be a balanced hand, so figures to be 18-19 balanced.

5. 3NT. This time you have an excellent 19 HCP with cards working together and lots of 10s and 9s. Also you have two four-card suits for extra tricks, rather than a 4-3-3-3.

6. 2♠. Even though partner wouldn't dream of suppressing a four-card major over your 1♣ or 1♦ opening, bidding 2♠ is the best way of exploring for the best contract. To bid 2NT or 3NT with a singleton major is a risk you don't need to take. You don't want to fail in a silly 3NT when 5♣ or 5♦ makes.

If responder bids 2NT, showing stoppers in the unbid suits, you can venture 3NT on the basis of your running tricks in diamonds and ♠AK.

7. 2♠. The choice is between reversing to 2♠ or jumping to 3♣. 2♠ seems far more sensible. If responder continues with 2NT you can now show your clubs and pinpoint your heart shortage. Surely you will get to the best contract after describing your hand so clearly.

8. 3♣. Only 16 HCP but great shape and rich in controls. Responder could hold many hands with only 6 or 7 HCP where slam is cold. Here are a few:

♠ J 8 7 ♥ 6 5 4 ♦ Q 3 ♣ A 7 6 5 3

Bid 4♣ over 3♣, stronger than 5♣.

♠ 10 8 7 ♥ 6 5 4 ♦ Q J 5 4 ♣ A 7 6

Bid 3♦ over 3♣ and then bid 4♣ over partner's 3♥ cue.

9. 2♣. You have a great hand but there is a wide range of possibilities in the contracts your side might make. Perhaps you make 6♣ opposite

♠ 9 8 7 ♥ A 5 2 ♦ 6 3 ♣ K Q 9 8 5

or you only make a partscore like 3♣ opposite

♠ Q 8 3 ♥ K Q 6 ♦ 7 5 3 ♣ 9 8 5 2 .

10. 2♥. Peter Gill tells me that 70-80% of players in the world open these hands 1♥ and that most modern teachers, including Will Jenner-O'Shea, teach to open 1♥.

I will stick to opening my long suit as the best start to reaching the best contract, plus better minor where 1♣ is 3+ rather than 2+ (opening with your shortest suit).

Of course bridge writers are like dieticians who recommend only the diet they like and that suits them.

paul@bridgegear.com

HOW WOULD YOU PLAY?

with
Barbara
Travis



Solutions on page 21

QUESTION 1

♠ Q J 4
♥ Q 10 4
♦ K 7 3
♣ A 7 6 2

♠ A 10 8 6 5 3
♥ K
♦ A J 4
♣ J 9 5

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♣	pass	1♠
2♥	pass	pass	3♥ ^{GF}
pass	3♠	pass	4♠
all pass			

West leads the ♦5, which goes to East's queen and your ace. How will you play?

QUESTION 2

♠ K 9 4 2
♥ J 8 3 2
♦ K
♣ Q 10 7 2

♠ A 5
♥ A 7 6 4
♦ A 8 6 5 4 2
♣ 8

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

West leads the ♣K, then switches to the ♠6. You win with the ♠A and cash the ♥A, as West drops the ♥Q.

How will you play?

QUESTION 3

♠ K 8
♥ A K 10 7
♦ A K 3
♣ Q J 10 9

♠ 7 6 4
♥ Q 4
♦ Q 9 4 2
♣ A 5 3 2

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			pass
pass	1♣	pass	1NT
pass	3NT	all pass	

West leads the ♠5 and you win the ♠K in dummy, East playing the ♠J (showing the ten).

How would you play?

WORKSHOPS WITH WILL

with William Jenner-O'Shea

TO TRANSFER, OR NOT

Here is an interesting hand, where responder to a strong 1NT opening (15-17) needs to decide what to do.

Your partner opens 1NT and this is your hand:

(You)
 ♠ Q J 3
 ♥ K J 8 6 4 3
 ♦ Q 7
 ♣ Q 7

What do you bid? And if you chose to transfer to hearts by bidding 2♦, what do you do next after partner completes the transfer by bidding 2♥.

When any player has a six-card suit, and their partner shows a balanced hand, usually by opening or rebidding notrumps, then you can assume a fit, and bid accordingly. You should bid to 4♥. You know that your team has the points for game, and you know that there is a heart fit. Almost always, playing the major as trumps is as good, or better than, playing in notrumps.

The most common way that this hand would be bid:

WEST	PARTNER	EAST	YOU
	1NT	pass	2♦ transfer
pass	2♥	pass	4♥
all pass			

Your 2♦ is a transfer to hearts. Partner bids 2♥, and you raise to 4♥. There is a well-known idea that it is desirable for the stronger hand to be the declarer, which is one of the benefits of transfers. There is one other option on this hand, which is to simply bid 4♥ directly over the 1NT opening, which shows a six-card suit and points for game. You might choose to be the declarer on this hand, since you have some fragile holdings in the minors, which might be better if you are the declarer.



Making the stronger hand be the declarer is a good idea in general, but sometimes the weaker hand would prefer to be declarer. An example of this is when you have a suit like ♦K3 or ♣AQ, which is better being declarer, rather than being put down in the dummy.

With two doubleton queens, I would rather play this hand, so I would bid 4♥.

However you bid to 4♥, here are both hands together, and the opponents lead the ♠9. Plan the play.

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

There are potentially three losers, the ♥A, ♦K and ♣K. The trap on this hand is that the lead looks like a singleton spade. The lead of the ♠9 is not from a sequence, or from a good suit, and your team has a lot of spades. It is likely that the lead is a singleton or perhaps a doubleton. The best play is to draw trumps immediately. If you can draw the four outstanding trumps, you will lose the ace, but if you don't lose any others, then you can easily make 4♥. In fact, once trumps have been drawn, you can perhaps use the long spade to discard a losing club or diamond and maybe make 11 tricks.

Can the defenders stop you? Perhaps! If the opening leader did actually lead a singleton, then their partner might be able to deliver a spade ruff. If they have the ♥A, then they must take it on the first round of trumps. Sometimes players hold back an ace, but if your partner has led a singleton, then it is very important that you win immediately, so that you can lead a spade back for them to trump *before their trumps have been drawn*. The defenders should ask themselves what they think partner's opening lead is from. If it is not from a sequence or a good long suit, then it might be a shortage, and you should defend accordingly.

HOW WOULD YOU PLAY?

with Barbara Travis

Solutions to problems on page 19

HAND 1

♠ Q J 4
♥ Q 10 4
♦ K 7 3
♣ A 7 6 2

♠ K 7 6
♥ A J 8 7 6 3
♦ 5
♣ K 10 8

♠ 9
♥ 9 5 2
♦ Q 10 9 8 6 2
♣ Q 4 3

♠ A 10 8 6 5 3
♥ K
♦ A J 4
♣ J 9 5

South plays in 4♠ after West has overcalled 2♥ – marking most of the HCP on your left.

West leads the ♦5, which goes to East's queen and your ace. How will you play?

The diamond lead may well be a singleton, given the heart overcall. How will you draw trumps and deal with the potential club losers.

At trick 2, you should lead the ♥K. West wins the ace and switches to the ♣8. You must win the ♣A, discard one club on the ♥Q, then continue with the ♥10. When East plays low, discard your remaining club. You have just performed a Scissors Coup, cutting the communications between the defenders. There is no longer any way for West to score the diamond ruff.

You simply lose two hearts and the ♠K, ensuring your contract.

HAND 2

♠ K 9 4 2
♥ J 8 3 2
♦ K
♣ Q 10 7 2

♠ 7 6 3
♥ Q
♦ Q J 7
♣ A K J 9 6 4

♠ Q J 10 8
♥ K 10 9 5
♦ 10 9 3
♣ 5 3

♠ A 5
♥ A 7 6 4
♦ A 8 6 5 4 2
♣ 8

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

West leads the ♣K, then switches to the ♠6. You win with the ♠A and cash the ♥A, as West drops the ♥Q.

How will you play?

This hand was played by Cathy Chua in the 1991 "Men's Pairs".

Chua decided to believe that the ♥Q was an honest card – a singleton – and embarked on cross-ruff lines.

She played a spade to the king and ruffed a spade, then led to dummy's ♦K and ruffed another spade. She now cashed the ♦A and ruffed a diamond, followed by a club ruff. (Nine tricks, so far.)

East was now reduced to the ♥K109 and had to ruff the diamond lead, then concede a trick to dummy's ♥J8.

HAND 3

♠ K 8
♥ A K 10 7
♦ A K 3
♣ Q J 10 9

♠ A Q 9 5 2
♥ 8 6 5
♦ 8 7 6
♣ K 8

♠ J 10 3
♥ J 9 3 2
♦ J 10 5
♣ 7 6 4

♠ 7 6 4
♥ Q 4
♦ Q 9 4 2
♣ A 5 3 2

West leads the ♠5 against South's 3NT, and you win the ♠K in dummy, East playing the ♠J (showing the 10). How would you play?

The club finesse would be necessary if you are in 6NT, but it is not correct in 3NT.

It is better to test as many suits as possible first and, bearing in mind the entry position (you want to be in dummy if neither red suit behaves), you should test the diamonds first, then the hearts.

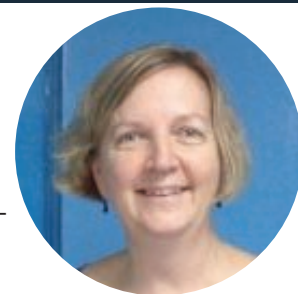
On this hand, the diamonds break 3-3 so you have four diamond tricks. The ♥J does not fall, but you have nine tricks – one spade, three hearts, four diamonds, one club.

If the diamonds don't break, you have nine tricks if the ♥J falls.

If neither the diamonds nor the hearts behave, then you should try the club finesse.

In this way, you test all your chances before committing to the finesse.

(At the table, declarer tried the club finesse at trick two and went down quickly.)



PRIORITIES

by
Dennis Zines



After East has opened 1♣, showing 2+ clubs, you bid 1NT and via a Stayman auction, partner shows faith in your declarer play by raising you to 4♠. Can you reward his optimism?

West leads ♦8, and this is what you see.

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

Since East did not open 1NT, you notionally assign him about 11-13 points, leaving West with about 3-5 points. Hoping for a 3-2 break in trumps, you can expect good chances for only two losers there. A bright spot is your heart pips, which should generate at least two winners with only one loser via two finesses. If all of this succeeds, then you will have the desired ten tricks.

Since the first heart finesse could result in West being on lead on the first heart, it becomes imperative that you start on hearts immediately. This will be explained more fully later.

So, you win the ♦Q with East playing the ♦J. The ♥2 to the ♥8 results in West winning with the ♥K. You are now reasonably confident that East has the balance of the outstanding points. West now leads the ♦3 which you win in in hand with ♦A with East playing the ♦10.

You lead a small spade to the ♠K. East wins with the ace and has no good answer. Assume he plays ♠Q and a third spade, which you must win in hand. You can now go to dummy with the ♦K for a club finesse, followed by a club ruff giving you the extra entry for the second heart finesse.

The full deal is shown below:

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

Any other exit by East after winning the ♠A leads to the same ten tricks.

Look what happens if you miss the immediate heart play at trick two and start on trumps. East wins the first spade and plays a second diamond. A second trump is won by East who now skewers you with a low heart. You can no longer let West win because East will get a diamond ruff. And rising with the ♥A will lead to two heart losers.

The bidding gave you lots of clues and you just had to get your priorities right to ensure partner's continued faith in you.



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BRIDGE & SCIENCE

Marek Malysa, Gdansk

This article and introduction was reprinted from the IBPA Bulletin:

“Dr. Malysa is a retired Mathematics professor from Gdansk University, Chair of the WBF Bridge and Science Committee, organiser of the 2016 World Bridge Games in Wroclaw, an author, a bridge teaching programme developer, the organiser of several scientific conferences and a Polish Bridge Union vice-president.”

Some time ago, the WBF established a Bridge & Science Committee in order to obtain serious scientific results and to use them in the promotion of our game. It wasn't unique, since scientific research had already been established: Samantha Punch of the University of Sterling had created the Sociology of Bridge, with its own Ph.D. programme; Véronique Ventos, with NukkAI, is exploring Artificial Intelligence to be used in bridge; and the first and second International Scientific Conferences dedicated to our game took place in Poland (while the next one was in Croatia).

Following twenty-year-old data from the University of California, Berkeley, about the health advantages of playing bridge, academics from Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun (Poland) started research on how playing bridge can delay the onset of dementia and, particularly, Alzheimer's Disease. Despite some problems caused by COVID-19, we completed our pilot research in two Welfare Houses and, on this basis, we shall start the main research soon.

The main question is, can playing bridge prevent or even reverse dementia? We all know that playing bridge keeps us in fine mental shape (the premise is that Cognitive Reserve – defined as the mind's resistance to brain damage – increases when we play bridge) but strong scientific proof is needed. M.C. Diamond's report tells us that playing bridge lowers the chance of Alzheimer's by as much as 75%. In my opinion, that's an underestimate.

To test all that, we tried to teach bridge to patients of the Alzheimer's Centre in Warsaw, all of them diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease (in their case,

Mild Cognitive Impairment). They were brought by their families to the Centre and taken back home each working day. The patients had three hours of bridge lessons a week. Initially, they couldn't count to ten and keep their cards properly arranged but, after six months, it wasn't a problem for them any more. They played bridge – simplified – with no bidding, but taking tricks, counting to 13 and 40. This was a huge, very pleasant, surprise for all of the bridge experts and the Alzheimer's Centre staff. MCI patients were actually able to learn a brand new skill!

Our research group also had other kinds of therapy like dancing, dog therapy, while a control group also had the other therapies but had no bridge lessons at all. After one year, the loss of cognitive ability in the bridge group was more than two times lower than that in the control group. That is impressive but, unluckily, statistically not significant enough. So deeper and wider research, in terms of evaluating methods, is needed.

That's why the non-profit foundation Bridge to the People

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/BridgetothePeople/reviews/>

will continue financing research and searching for sources of financing. More about them, and how to donate, can be found on their web page:

www.bridgetothepeople.eu

Their first research report from the pilot stage can be found at

<http://www.worldbridge.org/2020/06/18/bridge-and-dementia-prevention/>

The foundation, together with Gdansk Medical University, will soon start research on Playing Bridge and the Immune System. We are seeking funds for this as well.

How this kind of promotional message works was observed in Poland within my program BRIDGE60+. Using a dementia prevention slogan, I recruited 310 clubs (created in the program) containing thousands of elderly people, giving them a chance to avoid social isolation and build the cognitive reserve necessary to avoid or at least delay the onset of dementia.

All of this shows that whenever serious scientific research results are ready, we (WBF, EBL and other bridge organizations) will have in our hands strong promotional arguments that playing bridge carries additional values worth sponsoring.

ELITE BRIDGE PLAYERS: SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

Reprinted from the IBPA Bulletin. A practical summary of the paper: Punch S, and Snellgrove, M (2020) 'Playing your Life: Developing Strategies and Managing Impressions in the Game of Bridge', Sociological Research Online

The full paper can be found at

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1360780420973043>

Introduction

This is a practical summary of the paper 'Playing your Life: Developing Strategies and Managing Impressions in the Game of Bridge'. It is intended for players, teachers, organisers and policymakers. As well as having a practical application, this summary illustrates the ways in which academic research can be used to provide evidence for the skills required to play bridge at an elite level. Feedback and comments on this summary are welcome – please send to:

bamsa@stir.ac.uk

Summary

This academic paper focuses on the highest level of competitive bridge. It analyses the dynamics of the game and the skills that elite players need in order successfully to manage interactions at the bridge table.

By analysing the experiences of world class players, the paper demonstrates that bridge is a challenging, multi-faceted and fascinating game. The findings reveal that playing bridge at the highest level requires an ability to read people and scenarios strategically, to respond with discipline to changing and sometimes demoralising situations, and to nurture a trusting and supportively silent relationship (at the table) with one's partner. The research provides

evidence that skills such as strategic planning, flexibility in problem-solving, concentration and focus can be developed at the bridge table. There is also some evidence that some elite players have applied these skills to other areas of their life.

The elite game of bridge requires an ability to read people and cards strategically, careful management of impressions and gameworthiness through preparation and planning, managing mistakes and supportive silence. Though these skills are learned during the course of everyday life, there is evidence that elite players test, practise and negotiate these interaction skills at the bridge table.

The findings are based on an analysis of transcripts of interviews with 52 elite bridge players mainly from the USA and UK carried out by Professor Samantha Punch and the Bridge: A Mind Sport for All (BAMSA) team at the University of Stirling.

Findings

The views and experiences of elite players, as revealed in the research data, demonstrate the extraordinary complexity of the mindsport bridge and the skills necessary to become a top player. The general consensus among the elite players was, for example, that certain skills are essential for tournament success and can be learned or enhanced through play.

READING PEOPLE AND PLAY STRATEGICALLY:

By closely observing card play and body language, the best players learn to anticipate and often predict the cards their opponents hold and how they might play them. Thoughtful and logical analysis of situations at the table enables players not only to assess the best course of action to achieve their own objectives, but also to find ways to scupper their opponents' plans. Accurately reading a situation involves piecing together several pieces of information, in the same way that a detective follows a trail of clues to solve a mystery.

RESPONDING WITH DISCIPLINE:

Bridge is a game of mistakes and learning from errors is an important part of becoming a better player. In addition to reading people strategically, successful players respond to events in a disciplined manner and manage the impressions they give off. They learn to anticipate possible reactions and problems that might occur and to prepare accordingly. If (and when) things go wrong, bridge is a game that requires supportive silence in the face of mistakes, and a calm demeanour in the face of difficulties.

DEVELOPING TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS:

Bridge involves playing in a partnership. Building a strong partnership takes time and effort. It requires empathy and understanding and an ability to support one's partner through mistakes made by both parties. Bridge teaches the value of loyalty, cooperation and mutually supportive relationships. Bridge is a game that requires an unspoken communication in which messages are conveyed through bids made and cards played according to agreed systems. Partnerships develop these methods of communication through practice, discussion and preparation. Practice, practice and more practice is a key element of becoming an elite player in order to avoid mistakes and engage in supportive silence.

Applying the findings to practice

As some of the interviewees pointed out, the skills that can be learned at the bridge table can be an advantage in other areas of business, personal and social life.

THE EDUCATIONAL POTENTIAL OF BRIDGE:

An ability to weigh up different options and to calculate risk and probability, to make logical assessments of a situation and to plan accordingly are aspects of playing bridge at the highest level. In addition to analytical thinking, elite players learn and practice interpersonal skills, resilience and emotion-

al self-control. They put personal feelings aside in order to get the best for the partnership, and they keep calm in the face of setbacks (their own mistakes and their partner's). Bridge encourages concentration, requiring players to remain focused and not to let distractions affect one's play. That these skills can be learned and practised at the bridge table suggests the educational potential for teaching bridge in schools.

Key quote

"Elite bridge players are displaying the capacity to make crucial gameplay decisions based on incomplete information whilst judging their partner's card play and opponents' impressions correctly (and incorrectly). At the same time, they need to be able to control their irritation with their own failings or those of their partner so as not to give their opponents an advantage through a verbal outburst, whilst also changing game-plans based on the ever-evolving card game.

These skills arguably build resilience as players learn to engage with opponents and cope with losing or try to recover when game plans do not go well. Through partnership interaction, bridge players develop coping strategies as well as cultivate skills of empathy and co-operation." (Punch and Snellgrove, 2020: 16).

Findings worthy of further research

This paper focuses on the skill set of a typical elite bridge player. A further study of the experiences of players at different levels of tournament bridge might establish the extent to which these skills are common to other types of players.

The skills of observation, deduction and strategic planning have an application far beyond the bridge table. Further research into transferrable skills might cast light on the extent to which these skills can be transferred from the bridge table to everyday life.

This paper has touched on the skills required for bridge players competing at an elite level. Some of these skills are relevant to business, family and social life but further research is needed to see the ways in which bridge can enhance a variety of life skills.

BAMSA Project Lead: Professor Samantha Punch

bamsa@stir.ac.uk

The Inaugural 2020 Sydney Spring Nationals Online Pairs



by Kim Frazer

Fifty-four pairs contested the Open category of the Sydney Spring National Online Pairs event held on the weekend of 12-13 December.

The winners, Nicky Strasser & George Bilski, led after day one and maintained that position to the end, winning by a comfortable margin.

The battle for second place was much more exciting, with several pairs in contention going into the final round. The runners up Arjuna de Livera - George Kozakos, were matched against Jamie Ebery - Kim Frazer in a tight contest (won by Ebery - Frazer), while third place-getters Julian Foster - Jenna Gibbons moved up from 10th to 3rd with a decisive win over Tony Liebowitz - Paul Gosney.

The tournament was played on the newly developed 'Real Bridge' platform which affords players the opportunity to see partner and the opponents. Players alert their own bids and provide explanations. Real Bridge offers participants the closest thing to live bridge without being at the actual table. In some ways the experience is superior, however on the day of this event I did have some internet dropouts which slowed things down. Nevertheless, this is an exciting way forward for bridge and provides a great alternative to playing in person at the club. I can easily see this type of technology providing a resurgence in youth bridge participation.

In the de Livera - Kozakos vs Ebery - Frazer match-up, the final round threw up a bevy of exciting boards including three slams which delivered large

swings. De Livera - Kozakos play a standard system with transfers over 1♣ while Ebery - Frazer play Polish club with relays.

The first slam went to de Livera - Kozakos when holding the NS cards. They scored 94% by bidding and making 6♠ on this hand:

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

WEST Frazer	NORTH de Livera	EAST Ebery	SOUTH Kozakos
		pass	1♥
pass	1♠	pass	4♦
pass	4NT	pass	5♦
pass	5NT	pass	6♠
all pass			

On lead Ebery chose the ♣K, won by dummy's ace with all following. Declarer now exited the ♣9 pitching a losing heart from hand and won by East's ♣Q. Ebery continued with a low heart won by dummy's



Spring National Online Pairs champions
George Bilski and Nicky Strasser. Click [here](#) for full results.

ace with declarer continuing with a low heart ruffed in hand, followed by a diamond ruff in dummy and another low heart ruffed in hand. With the hearts and clubs in hand now high, declarer simply drew trumps ending in dummy and claimed.

They followed this up a few boards later with another 94% for bidding and making 6NT from South on this board:

Board 46	♠ A Q 5 3		
E/Nil	♥ A J 3 2		
	♦ A K J 7 6		
	♣ —		
♠ 2		♠ J 9 8 7 4	
♥ Q 10 7 5 4		♥ 6	
♦ 5 3		♦ Q 9 8 2	
♣ K J 10 3 2		♣ 9 7 4	
	♠ K 10 6		
	♥ K 9 8		
	♦ 10 4		
	♣ A Q 8 6 5		

WEST Frazer	NORTH de Livera	EAST Ebery	SOUTH Kozakos
pass	1♠ ¹	pass	1♣
pass	2♦ ²	pass	1NT
pass	6NT	all pass	3♣

1. Transfer to 1NT or game force with diamonds.
2. Diamond game force.

While slam will always make from South, the lead of the five of hearts from West helped declarer determine the heart situation, with a diamond through dummy's known suit perhaps the best lead. Kozakos made no mistake in the play, winning in hand with the ♥9 and continuing a low diamond to the jack

losing to Ebery's queen, who made life difficult for declarer by exiting ♣7 and putting declarer to an immediate guess. Declarer rose ♣A, cashed the ♦10 and played three rounds of spades ending in dummy. He cashed all the diamonds and played a heart to declarer's king. When East showed out, declarer could claim.

The final board of the match produced this gem of a board where Ebery - Frazer had a lengthy auction to reach and make the grand slam in spades. The hand is laydown and scored 83% for Ebery - Frazer.

Board 50	♠ J 6		
E/NS	♥ J 3 2		
	♦ Q 7 6		
	♣ Q 8 7 4 2		
♠ Q 10 8 7 5 4 2		♠ A K	
♥ Q 9 6		♥ A K 7 5	
♦ A 3		♦ K J 10 9 8 4	
♣ 9		♣ A	
	♠ 9 3		
	♥ 10 8 4		
	♦ 5 2		
	♣ K J 10 6 5 3		

WEST Frazer	NORTH de Livera	EAST Ebery	SOUTH Kozakos
1♠ natural, 9+	pass	1♣ ⁰⁺	pass
2♥ 5+ spades	pass	2♣ relay	pass
2NT one-suited	pass	2♠ relay	pass
3♦ 7321 or 7222	pass	3♣ relay	dbl
3NT minimum	pass	3♠ keycard	pass
4♥ 1 or 4	pass	4♣ still keycard	pass
5NT SQ, no kings	pass	4NT queen ask	pass
6♠ DQ or DAK	pass	6♦ diamond ask	pass
		7♠	all pass

The 6♠ was an error, which made no sense to partner after I had denied a king, so he opted for 7♠ instead of 7NT.

It is unusual for the pair on the wrong side of two slams to win the match, but Matchpoint Pairs is a strange beast and it isn't about the tops or bottoms as much as scoring well on multiple boards. In addition to the final board's result, Ebery - Frazer had scored well enough on several other boards to negate the losses from the two slams and just pip De Livera - Kozakos in an entertaining battle. Unfortunately, it left us less than two points behind second overall and was not enough to gain a placing in what was a thoroughly enjoyable weekend of bridge.

A further 15 pairs contested the restricted section of the same event with Richard Carter - Jay Novak winning comfortably from John Russell & Judith Parsons.

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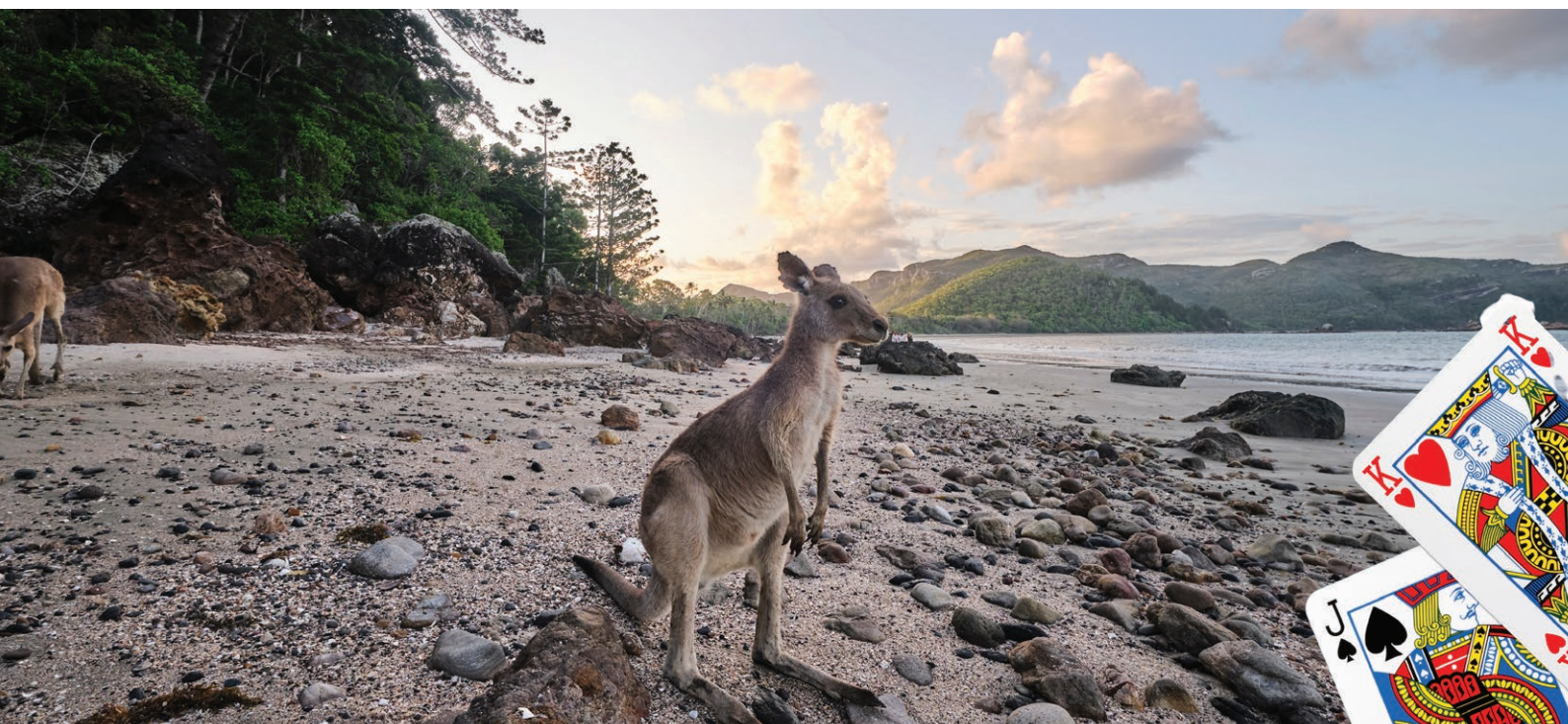


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