

## ABF Leadership – Setting the Direction

I hope you all had a wonderful festive season and that you are ready for an exciting year ahead.

2016 saw increased attendance at our tournaments and I would like to thank our Tournament Organisers for this as they put in a huge effort. This year will see new initiatives trialled at the Summer Festival of Bridge, including the ABF Summer School (1300 people participated in this 10 week program over the festive season), the TBIB \$50,000 bridge lottery and the provision of a Technology Assistant to help competitors get the most out of their smart phones at the event. We are delighted that the world class Lavazza and Milner teams will again be attending this year.

The Gold Coast Congress in February also continues to be one of the most popular tournaments with both Australian and overseas players so I hope you include it on your calendar as well. It offers a variety of events for all levels of players so why not give it a go!

2017 will see our international teams representing Australia at the Asia Pacific Bridge Championships in Korea in May and, if successful, in the Zone 7 championships at the WBF World Teams Championships in Lyon, France in August (see page 8 for more details). Our youth teams will be chosen during Youth Week this month. I hope our teams can emulate the success of last year's girls team who achieved our best ever result at a World Youth Teams Championship by reaching the grand final and winning the silver medal.

The International Performance Management Task Force will be working with our teams to help them get the very best out of their performance. I urge you to get behind the teams who represent Australia.

Our strategic priorities work will continue in 2017 as our teaching and marketing programs continue to expand. Following decisions at a workshop with State representatives at the ABF Council mid-term meeting in November we will be looking at new initiatives to provide more support to clubs. Director development is one of our priorities for 2017 and this year we are focussing on some new programs designed to assist club directors in their important role – more information on this soon.

I am delighted to report our membership continues to grow. Like any not-for-profit organisation, our success would not be possible without the overwhelming support of our club administrators, teachers, directors and volunteers. A huge thank you to them for their tireless efforts in making our game such a wonderful and enjoyable activity for everyone. Let's hope that 2017 will see bridge in Australia keep moving forward!

I hope to announce a new ABF Newsletter editor in 2017. We will be aiming to introduce more variety and some new features.

Buckle up for an exciting 2017.

**Bruce Neill**  
**ABF President**



## Inside this Issue

### Feature Stories

Books to help with Hand Evaluation	4
90 Novices in Action at Bathurst	5
ABF Teaching Fellows Announced	7
2017 Team Playoffs	8
Sun, Sand and Knockout Bridge at the GNOT	14
TBIB Tips for Travellers	16
ABF Membership Benefits	19
2016 McCutcheon Results & Other Highlights	20
Changes to ANC Restricted Pairs Subsidy	23
Ballarat Gains Ownership of Clubrooms	24

### Regular Articles

Teacher's Corner - Summer School	6
The Mental Game	16
International Player Task Force News	17
What the heck do I do now?	18
Basic Bridge 101 - The Bridge Professor	23
Bridge Etiquette	24
Bridge into the 21st Century	25
Book Review - Battling the Best	26

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## From the Editor's Desk

*Welcome to the first edition for 2017. Congratulations to our International Team representatives who were successful in the recent playoffs. See page 8 for our full report on all the action from the playoffs and the GNOT.*

*Over 1300 members participated in Summer School and our feature article for teacher's includes some of the interesting findings from the course.*

*Two book reviews are also included as new additions — firstly some recommendations from David Morgan on books to help with hand evaluation, and secondly a review from Paul Lavings on Sartaj Hans' brilliant new book, "Battling the Best". Sartaj is also featured on page 20 as the winner of the 2016 McCutcheon.*

*Thank you to everyone for their kind comments on the last newsletter, and also to all the contributors without whom this newsletter would not be possible. This will be my last edition as editor pro-tem — a new editor will be announced soon!*

## NATIONAL EVENT REVIEWS

The ABF continually reviews its national competitions based on regular feedback and consultation. Details on changes and considerations for the GNOT and the ANC are outlined below:

### Grand National Open Teams

The GNOT remains one of the ABF's longest running and most popular competitions and the ABF is firmly committed to funding national participation on a continuing basis.

In the case of the GNOT Final, the ABF is aware of player concerns about the capacity of the present venue for the National Final and the level of subsidies to players to travel there. Some GNOT regions may also be struggling to maintain the number of teams they have been allocated in the National Final.

In the light of these concerns, the ABF is intending to introduce certain changes to the conditions of competition for the GNOT in 2017:

- Reducing the number of teams in the National Final from 64 to 56. This target may not be completely achieved in 2017 and will depend on discussions with regions.
- Providing players who fly to the National Final with four prepaid air tickets instead of a cash subsidy. This is expected to increase overall subsidies. It will particularly benefit players travelling from the more remote regions, and players who qualify later in the year when airfares are often higher.
- Cash subsidies will continue at current rates for players who do not come by air.
- The competition is only three days, plus the grand final. Historically most teams only have four members. Teams with five or six members will need to arrange among themselves to purchase additional air tickets.

Further details will be released to Regional Coordinators and competitors in due course.

### ANC Strategic Review

The Australian National Championship has been running since 1933, and has a long proud history. At its recent Mid-Term meeting, the ABF Council approved a strategic review of the ANC to see how we might be able to help retain its great status.

Ben Thompson, who many of you will know as an experienced strategic planner, has kindly agreed to undertake this work for us. The work will start shortly, involving wide consultation with the bridge community, and aims to be complete within six months.

# *Tasmanian Festival of Bridge*

## *Wrest Point Hobart*

*16th - 19th March 2017*

TBIB Australian Swiss Pairs Championship

Roger Penny Senior Swiss Pairs

Island Matchpointed Swiss Pairs

TFoB Restricted Pairs

*Plan your Tasmanian holiday now*

Photo courtesy of Sophie Fazackerly



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## Books to Help with Hand Evaluation

by *David Morgan*

One bridge skill that every player can work on by themselves is how to evaluate the strength of a hand. High card points (HCP) are a reasonable guide but even novices quickly learn that some honours are worth way more than their 4-3-2-1 count while others are worthless. Holdings like KJ or KQ, for example, are frequently worth nothing opposite partner's void. Even aces are not worth as much as usual, because they don't help to develop any other tricks in the suit.

There are surprisingly few books that help players improve their hand evaluation. There are two that I would recommend. The Complete Book on Hand Evaluation by Mike Lawrence is easy to read: he has an engaging, conversational style, and uses many example hands to make his points. Look out in particular for his discussion of the box and the shell, two ideas that will help any aspiring player.

If you are an intermediate (or better) player then the best book to read is The Secrets of Winning Bridge by Jeff Rubens. Only the first five chapters discuss hand evaluation but those 70-odd pages are worth their weight in gold. Rubens explains why Qxx Axxx xxx xxx is worth significantly more when partner opens 1♠ than Axx Qxxx xxx xxx. Once you understand the principle of "in-and-out" valuation you will realise how you can bid your hands in ways that will help partner make better decisions.

(Note: Rubens's book was originally published in 1969 and was reissued in 2013. Lawrence's book was published in 1983 and is one of the few books he hasn't revised in recent years. Keep your eyes out for a new edition if you can't find it in your bridge library.)

### *VALE Marion Rice*

The ABF's oldest member, Marion Rice passed away on November, at the age of 107. Marion has been a member of the NSWBA for over 40 years. Her health kept her away from SBC in recent times, but until then Marion played at Goulburn St regularly, including morning and afternoon of our Christmas party last year. Her first congress was at the Carrington Hotel, Katoomba, in the Blue Mountains at the invitation of Paul Lavings and Ron Klinger. Until recently she still played regularly at the Gold Coast Congress and has gone on many Bridge Cruises.



*Friday 28 April to  
Monday 1 May 2017*



## 22nd BARRIER REEF CONGRESS—2017—YEPPOON

*An ABF Approved  
Gold Point Event*

**Information and Entries - see websites:-**

QBA - <http://www.qldbridge.com>

YBC - <http://www.yeppoonbridgeclub.com>

**Queries - Email [brc@yeppoonbridgeclub.com](mailto:brc@yeppoonbridgeclub.com)**

**Phone: Campbell Macrae 0412560190 or 07 49391035**

**Chief Director — Laurie Kelso**

**Chief Scorer — Peter Busch**

**Convenor — Dick Metcalfe**

## 90 Novices in Action at Bathurst!

**1** 3 Year old Morgan Gao and his dad Edward Gow took out the Pairs event at the 2nd annual Central West Novice Tournament (50 MPs and under) held on 29 & 30 October.



L - R: Morgan Gao, Edward Gao presented with Pairs trophy by John Shield and Karin LeRoux

Bathurst & District Bridge Club welcomed 90 novice bridge players from Peninsula, Turramurra, Illawarra, Mollymook, Berry, Blue Mountains, Glenbrook, Great Lakes, Canberra, Cootamundra, Mudgee, Cowra, Orange and Bathurst bridge clubs made up the 40 pairs who competed in three divisions of the tournament on Saturday, while on Sunday 17 teams took part. For many who attended, it was their first taste of a bridge congress—40% of players had less than 10 Masterpoints.

Our youngest player was 13 year old Morgan Gao from Great Lakes Bridge Club who partnered his dad Edward to an overall win in the pairs and also partnered his mum (Delia Dan), dad and Michael Robinson from Turramurra to finish 2nd in the teams event. Pair Gao fought off strong challenges from Marie Pickering and Kay Snowden from Illawarra, Ray Hurst and Heidi Colenbrander from Peninsula and Phil Cummings and Dick Ellis from Bathurst.

The Overall teams event was won by Team Colenbrander from Peninsula (Heidi Colenbrander, Ray Hurst, Marietta Borthwick and Sarah Young) with a strong win over Team Dan (Delia Dan, Morgan and Edward Gao from Central Coast and Michael Robinson from Turramurra), with 3rd overall taken out by Team Hermes from Cootamundra (Caroline Hermes, Heather Last, Barbara Beveridge and Annie MacMaster).

All players, director Ed Barnes and club helpers were treated to fine foods from district suppliers as well as cakes, slices, fruit and cheeses contributed by club members. Many competitors commented "...that was the most friendly welcome, best directing and nicest food and they have experienced when playing bridge", so congratulations to all concerned.

Once again the massive input by club members ensured a happy and highly successful weekend. Full results were:

### **PAIRS: 0 to 10 MPs**

1. Christine Yates – Erica Gray (Illawarra)
2. Connie Szency – Graham Jones (Illawarra)

### **PAIRS: 10 to 30 MPs**

1. (and 1st OVERALL): Edward Gao – Morgan Gao (Great Lakes)
2. Philip Cummings – Dick Ellis (Bathurst)

### **PAIRS: 30 to 50 MPs**

1. Marie Pickering – Kay Snowden (Illawarra)
2. Ray Hurst – Heidi Colenbrander (Peninsula)

### **TEAMS: 0 to 10 MPs**

1. Dick Ellis – Geoff Griffin – Anne Elliott – Noel Thomas (Bathurst)

### **TEAMS: 10 to 30 MPs**

1. Delia Dan – Edward Gao – Morgan Gao (Great Lakes) – Michael Robinson (Turramurra)

### **TEAMS: 30 to 50 MPs**

1. (and 1st OVERALL): Heidi Colenbrander – Ray Hurst – Marietta Borthwick – Sarah Young (Peninsula)



L-R: Heidi Colenbrander – Ray Hurst – Marietta Borthwick – Sarah Young

### ***New Name for an Old Club***

Western Suburbs Bridge Club, one of Sydney's oldest bridge clubs, are changing their name to Inner West Bridge Club.

They meet at 12.30 every Saturday at Ashbury Senior Citizens Centre, Princess St Ashbury which is close to Canterbury Race Course.

Parking is free and safe, and refreshments are provided.

Join the club for a stimulating afternoon game where you will be most welcome.

Contact: Peter 02 9569 0931

by Joan Butts

ABF National Teaching Coordinator



**A**re you familiar with the ABF Summer School? It's a new idea to help prepare novice players for the Summer Festival of Bridge in Canberra in January. It is probably a world first, and although I have no documented proof of this, I've never read about anything like this being undertaken before.

The way it works is that for each week of the ten-week course, a lesson on a general topic is released via email, first to teachers, and then, a few days later, to any student who has registered their email address. It's all free and funded by the ABF.

Each lesson consists of notes on the topic; a video with a novice player talking through a hand; four selected hands to play online, with hints for both the bidding and play; a suggestion to join the online conversation by commenting and asking questions; links to more advanced articles; & a voluntary exam.

Summer School Lesson topics are:

- No Trumps
- Opener's & Responder's Rebids
- Major Suit Raises
- Overcalls & Responding to Overcalls
- Doubles & Responding to Doubles
- Strong Hands
- Card Play – Winners & Losers
- Card Play – Techniques to Develop Tricks
- Defence – Opening Leads
- Defence – Signals

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*104 teachers and 1,245  
novice players were  
participating by week 8*

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The response to the ABF Summer School has been amazing with the number of registered teacher and novice players increasing each week. The first lesson was sent to 94 teachers and 909 novice players. By the eighth week there were 104 teachers and 1,245 novice players. Players can register any time and access past lessons at [abfsummerschool.com](http://abfsummerschool.com).

The voluntary exam at the end of each weekly lesson comprised five multiple choice questions. These exams are done online with the answers being collated and available for analysis. This is particularly interesting because the exam answers are yielding information about the way novices are taught in Australian bridge clubs, and how they think. Here are some of the questions, which highlight areas of bidding and play, where novices' answers varied from the expected.

The very first question of the first topic, No Trumps (Lesson 1), gave me a surprise. What do you bid after partner opens a 15 –17 1NT and you hold:

♠ 753 ♥ J84 ♦ K6 ♣ AJ642

The question and breakdown of answers was:

Answer	No	%
2♣	- 42	6.9%
2NT	- 352	57.5%
3♣	- 26	4.2%
3NT	- 203	33.2%
Pass	- 7	1.1%

3NT is the correct answer. However, as you can see from the data, far more novice players chose 2NT. I also received a number of comments on the ABF Education Facebook Page strongly supporting 2NT, and asking why 3NT would be chosen with only 9 points. It was interesting too, and a relief, that only a tiny percentage of players chose 3♣.

This highlights a real problem with teaching methods used to evaluate length (in no trumps as well as in suits) from the outset. Isn't it vital to add for length? After all, aren't five card and longer suits more likely to develop extra tricks than four card suits? I recommend adding a length point for any suit longer than four cards. Most decent student texts infer this even if not directly stating it and I believe it should be made very clear to students from the start of their learning.

The hand in question is worth 10 points, nine in high cards, and one in length for the five card club suit. It's too strong to bid 2NT. Experienced players would bid 3NT in a second, because they've languished too often in the unattractive spot of 2NT, making nine tricks. (Some players avoid 2NT at all costs.) Trying for 3NT and hoping to make tricks with the club suit is a much better goal.

When I set the question it never occurred to me that so many would choose 2NT over 3NT. Are novice players more worried about their playing ability than trying for game? Tell me what you think!

Students deserve to be shown that there are other factors which improve hands, rather than a slavish reliance on high card points. Otherwise how can we expect students to develop judgement?

Some lack of understanding of modern methods showed up in **Major Suit Raises** (Lesson 3) too. After partner has opened 1♥, what is your response holding the following hand?

♠4 ♥QJ863 ♦QJ5 ♣8652

3♥ was chosen by 47.1% of respondents. I would have thought that most students would automatically choose the preemptive jump to 4♥ with five trumps and a singleton which is the modern style.

Then on the very next hand after partner has opened 1♥, holding:

♠4 ♥QJ10 ♦AKJ104 ♣K862

I expected the answer to be almost universally 2♦, forcing, with hearts raised later. But only 45.9% chose this. The concept of jumping to game with only three trumps was selected by 37.8%. This suggests a poor understanding of how to show strong hands with only three card support in the major. I believe this is because teachers emphasise that showing support first is everything, especially in the majors. Are delayed game raises being taught?

Here's one from the Overall lesson (Lesson 4). North opens 1♦ East (your partner) overcalls 1♥ and the next hand passes. What would you bid holding:

♠96 ♥K986 ♦Q8653 ♣96

Almost as many students selected 2♥ as 3♥. I meant the answer to be the weaker preemptive jump to 3♥, showing four trumps. (Did I make the hand too "strong" for a weak jump raise? Someone made this comment, saying that her teacher told her a weak response should be around 4 points, and this hand had too many). I think most students would consider that 3♥ still shows 10 – 12 points, and the 37.8% who selected 2♥ as the answer did so without any doubt about their choice.

Next, on the topic of Doubles (Lesson 5), both sides vulnerable you hold this hand:

♠AK62 ♥KQJ1073 ♦2 ♣A4

What call do you make after the auction begins

1♣ ?

There was not much difference in the answers of 1♥ (37.6%) and Double (40.7%). I'd expected more to select "double", based on the fact that hands at the upper end of overcalls choose double first, to ensure a response from partner, and then bid their own suit next, to show what their hand was all about. Many chose 1♥ here, presumably to show the lovely suit. Which works better?

Other questions also highlighted many areas where newer players selected the incorrect answer. It is not clear to me if this is just inexperience or whether the players need more attention through teaching and lessons.

Detail on all the findings is available on the ABF website, and we will also feature some other hands and responses in the Summer Festival's daily bulletins.

The ABF Summer School has given us much food for thought. I'd love to hear your comments on these findings. email me at: [teaching@abf.com.au](mailto:teaching@abf.com.au)

## ABF Teaching Fellows

The ABF Teachers' Accreditation Program (TAP) was launched in 2011 and continues to be very successful at bringing in new teachers and developing skills of both new and established teachers.

The ABF has now sought to provide recognition and credentials to outstanding teachers who have a long and successful teaching history. These experienced teachers are highly skilled, generally with a distinguished record in high level play, having won national titles and/or represented Australia internationally. They may also have strong coaching skills and will certainly possess the necessary interpersonal and communication skills to teach bridge at all levels.

The ABF has offered one-off recognition to a small number of these very experienced teachers. This new program, acknowledging the contribution through awarding "ABF Honorary Teaching Fellows" complements the current ABF Accreditation program.

The ABF congratulates the following new Honorary Teaching Fellows:

David Beauchamp

Derrick Browne

Joan Butts

Jonathan Free

Jeff Fust

Hugh Grosvenor

Phil Gue

Andy Hung

Bill Jacobs

Ron Klinger

David Lusk

Paul Marston

Andrew Mill

John Newman

John Roberts

Peter Smith

Barbara Travis

Therese Tully

Fiske Warren

Following the announcement of these nominations, a small number of players have subsequently been suggested to the ABF for consideration as teaching fellows. State Associations have been asked to submit any further nominations by February 13th, and any such nominations will be considered at the ABF Management Committee's February meeting.

## 2017 Australian Team Playoffs

### The Open Team - 2nd Time Lucky

B:21 Dlr: W; Vul: EW

By Justin Howard

**2**016 has been a very interesting year for Open Bridge with two Australian Open Teams trials in one calendar year. Playoff 1, held in February saw the final contested between *NUNN*: Tony Nunn–Sartaj Hans, Ben Thompson–Bill Jacobs, Peter Gill–Andrew Peake Vs *LORENTZ* (Stern NPC): Stephen Burgess–Gabi Lorentz, Justin Howard–Peter Hollands, Liam Milne–Nye Griffiths. The *NUNN* team comfortably beat the *LORENTZ* team and qualified to represent Australia in Poland in September earlier this year (narrowly missing out on the finals series).

In the second Playoff in November, the final once again saw *LORENTZ* (Bilski NPC): Gabi Lorentz–Stephen Burgess, Sartaj Hans–Tony Nunn, Liam Milne–Nye Griffiths pitted against the slightly different line-up of *HOLLANDS*: Peter Hollands–Justin Howard, Andrew Peake–Peter Gill, Matthew Thomson–David Beauchamp.

A new format of trialling was on display where you start with the top 8 teams and you play 128 board matches. As there were only 7 teams entered *BILSKI* (team 1) had a bye and then *LAZER* (team 2) was able to pick from teams 5-7, they picked team *GINNAN* (a junior team, well with a few exceptions that will certainly be featuring strongly in the playoffs in years to come). *HOLLANDS* team had second choice and we elected to play *APPLETON* (a mainly Canberra based team of experienced players) and that left *HAFFER* to play *WYER* (a highly volatile match with much interest). All three matches ended with a comfortable win to the *LAZER*, *HOLLANDS* and *HAFFER* teams.

### A big swing board

This hand from the quarter finals (see next column) was the biggest swing board in most matches for the entire event, producing a 15-17 Imps swing in each match with one pair being allowed to play in 6♥x in each match and one pair bidding on to 6♠.

Using very clever methods, our opposition achieved the best result with the use of transfers. This allowed them to keep the opener off lead and thus preventing the opening club lead which will be trumped. At our team-mates table it was very unclear who was pre-empting whom on the auction so very understandably they elected to defend 6♥x which makes due to the perfect fitting hands. This was a well deserved 17 Imps for *APPLETON* for their great methods (even if our team-mates had found 6♠ over 6♥ the East hand would double asking for an unusual lead which would have found our team losing 6 or 10 imps anyway).

♠ K432  
 ♥ Q  
 ♦ AK72  
 ♣ 9543  
  
 ♠ A7  
 ♥ JT7632  
 ♦ Q9653  
 ♣ -  
  
 ♠ QJT986  
 ♥ -  
 ♦ J84  
 ♣ AQJ6

North	East	South	West
<i>Appleton</i>	<i>Howard</i>	<i>Reynolds</i>	<i>Hollands</i>
			1♥
X	4♣ <sup>1</sup>	4♥ <sup>2</sup>	5♥
X	P	6♥ <sup>3</sup>	P
6♠	P	P	P

1 - Void in Clubs + Heart fit

2 - Transfer to spades

3 - Re-transfer to spades

This brought us to the Semi-Finals. *BILSKI* was able to pick their opponents (as the team with the most playoff points) and selected *HAFFER* which left *HOLLANDS* to face *LAZER*. These two matches were very close at half-time with both *HOLLANDS* and *BILSKI* leading by 20 Imps. In the *HOLLANDS* match the lead was pushed out to 130 Imps in the end with *HOLLANDS* winning all 4 of the final segments on the second day. The *BILSKI* match looked like it was going to come down to the wire with the scores being 205 (*BILSKI*) – 178 (*HAFFER*) with 2 segments to go. However the *HAFFER* team found their hard work undone with a 79-15 7th segment. They conceded the final match leading to a *BILSKI*–*HOLLANDS* Final.

### A good defensive hand from the Semi-Finals.

On Board 31, the bidding was:

<i>Howard (N)</i>	<i>Neill (E)</i>	<i>Hollands (S)</i>	<i>Kanetkar(W)</i>
	1♦ <sup>1</sup>	P	1♠
2♥	3♠	4♥	
4♠	5♥	X	All pass

1 - Always unbalanced unless 18-19 balanced

After this auction, South leads the ♠K and you can see the hand at top of the next column. This was not really the dummy I was after, knowing that partner has an unbalanced hand with a shortage (now this must be in hearts) this means that partner must have all their points in spades and they must also have one ace if not two (normally for their bidding they should have two aces looking at that dummy). What are you going to do?

B:31 Dlr: S; Vul: NS

♠ AT864  
♥ K54  
♦ T2  
♣ 865

♠ 9  
♥ QJ6  
♦ K7643  
♣ KQ32

Howard found the killing defence on the hand which was to overtake his partners ♠K and return another spade which West is forced to trump. This now means that when Hollands gets in with his ace he can play another spade at which point the west hand will have to trump again and Howard's ♥K will score as they cannot finesse it twice. This defence lead to one down and 11 Imps to the Hollands team. The Full deal shown below (there is no entry to the West hand to get the ♦K to throw off the 3rd spade).

B:31 Dlr: S; Vul: NS

♠ AT864  
♥ K54  
♦ T2  
♣ 865

♠ 9  
♥ QJ6  
♦ K7643  
♣ KQ32

♠ J32  
♥ AT9832  
♦ A  
♣ JT4

♠ KQ75  
♥ 7  
♦ QJ985  
♣ A97

Normally both North and South should have more for this bidding (both players were too aggressive) so therefore being Vulnerable against Not Vulnerable N/S have the agreement if they bid a game with the intention of making they must either double the opposition or bid more. Therefore Hollands doubled 5♥ and with a bit of forward thinking the N/S side found the correct defence to defeat it.

### The finals:

After tough bridge over 4 days for the *HOLLANDS* team, and 2 days for the *BILSKI* team, they found themselves in a 128 board match to see who will represent Australia for 2017.

The first 2 sets were all about slam swings which went a bit each way, with the result after two sets being *HOLLANDS* 54 – *BILSKI* 51. Here is a hand played wonderfully by Andrew Peake in the first set.

The final contract ended up in 6♦ played by South. This looks to be very easy on a major suit lead by West or if the ♦K was onside. However Liam Milne found the great lead of the 7♦. Peake tried to take

the Diamond finesse and when that did not work he really had to guess a lot of things right at this point, He could choose to take the Heart finesse or the spade finesse or play for both finesses to fail and play for the squeeze. Peake decided that Liam would have likely found a lead if he had only one of the honours so that meant that he played for Liam to have none of the honours or both. At this point he ran all his trumps and clubs and found west in the position where he could not keep all his hearts and spades and made his 12 tricks, a very well played hand and big swing as the other table found themselves in 4♠ so was 10 Imps in rather than 11 Imps out. (Yes on perfect defence East can keep onto the 843 of spades and that will end the squeeze but very hard to see that your 8 might be a trick on trick 13).

B:14 Dlr: E; Vul: none

♠ A52  
♥ 3  
♦ AJT42  
♣ KQ96

♠ QT96  
♥ KJ74  
♦ 97  
♣ 542

♠ 843  
♥ T9862  
♦ K65  
♣ T7

♠ KJ7  
♥ AQ5  
♦ Q83  
♣ AJ83

After 64 Boards at the end of Day 1 the *HOLLANDS* team were ahead 113–104 with more slams featuring in the swings.

Set 5 was very close with Hollands adding another 6 Imps to the total. It was set 6 that was the big swing of the Match with *HOLLANDS* gaining 30 Imps with a 41–11 segment. This had the scores being *HOLLANDS* 192 – *BILSKI* 147 with 32 boards to go.

We were starting to see a win in our sights but both Howard–Hollands and Beauchamp–Thomson were starting to tire leading to a very poor match at both tables in set 7. However with a bit of luck (a grand slam failing due to mirrored hand shapes) and a misguess on another hand the *HOLLANDS* team only conceded 7 Imps in the set leading to the final set with the scores at *HOLLANDS* 226 – *BILSKI* 188.

It was a bit of a fight within our team as to who was actually going to play the last set. Gill–Peake were certainly going to play as they had been the leading pair for the whole event. Both remaining pairs wanted to sit out but it was Howard–Hollands who were elected to play (probably because as the youth pair on the team you do as you're told).

### A bad trump split had spectators on their toes

It started off poorly for the *HOLLANDS* team with the first two boards losing 15 Imps of their lead. Here is

the very first hand where Howard–Hollands found themselves in trouble with a bad trump split.

B:31 Dlr: S; Vul: NS

♠ 9765 ♥ AKQJ3 ♦ 97 ♣ T5  ♠ 32 ♥ - ♦ KQT8654 ♣ 8432	♠ AKT8 ♥ T2 ♦ 32 ♣ KQJ96	♠ QJ4 ♥ 987654 ♦ AJ ♣ A7
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North	East	South	West
Hollands	Hans	Hollands	Nunn
1♥	P	2♣*	4♦
P	P	4♥	X
	P	P	P

\* = Game Forcing with one of three options; 1. Balanced, 2. 3 card support any, 3. Clubs

With the horrible trump division of 6-0 this contract was doomed to failure (with an even trump split or even 4-2 4♥ is the contract most likely to succeed) however on this hand it was 2 off doubled and with the other table selling out correctly to 4♦ this was 9 Imps out and the pressure was starting to build (Can we really lose this lead?).

With 8 boards played in the final set the margin was down to a mere 16 Imps and all the pressure was on the HOLLANDS team to hold off the charging storm from the quality players on the other team. However with a final charge also comes risks and with Griffiths–Milne bidding a slam off two aces and Howard–Hollands avoiding this slam it brought the margin back to 28 Imps and the sighs of relief started to set in. Howard–Hollands had nearly an hour to wait but with a strong finish they were confident they had done enough to hold off the BILSKI team's charge and with the final 8 boards netting 31-0 for the HOLLANDS team it was a comfortable win in the end with the final results being HOLLANDS 271 – BILSKI 224.

It was a really great final and I would particularly like to thank the whole of the BILSKI team, they are all good friends and fierce competitors and were amazing sports at the end with us all sharing a drink together. We look forward to representing Australia in 2017 and a big thank you to my team who have guided Peter Hollands–Justin Howard into their first open team playoff win.

Howard, Hollands, Griffiths, Nunn and Milne are proof that the recent efforts being made by so many

people in Youth Bridge are not a waste of time and worth every bit of support we can all manage.



L - R: Justin Howard, Peter Hollands, David Beauchamp, Matthew Thomson, Andrew Peake, Peter Gill

### The Seniors – Established Partnerships Triumph by Peter Buchen

In the semis KANETKAR (Avi Kanetkar–Bruce Neill, Peter Buchen–Terry Brown, Pauline Gumby–Warren Lazer) defeated DE LUCA (Atillo De Luca–David Lusk, Peter Chan–Chris Hughes, Roger Januszke–John Zollo) 216–166 while LILLEY (David Lilley–Zolly Nagy, Simon Hinge–George Smolanko, Bill Haughie–Robbie Van Riel) defeated LORENTZ (Gaby Lorentz–Stephen Burgess, Paul Lavings–Robert Krochmalik, Ron Klinger–Jonathon Free) 206–176.

So it would be KANETKAR with three regular partnerships versus LILLEY with only one (Lilley–Nagy) to meet in the 96 board final. LILLEY won the first two sets to be up 31 Imps but KANETKAR rallied to win the last four sets over their tiring opponents to claim the title by 199–132. They will be off to Seoul in May 2017 to represent the Australian Seniors team in the Asia-Pacific championships and to Lyon in August for the World Bridge championships.

### Doubling for leads, leading pairs into trouble

A couple of deals from the final illustrate the risks—rewards of doubling a Stayman or transfer response to a strong 1NT opening.

♠ 10642 ♥ J7642 ♦ Q974 ♣ -  ♠ AK8 ♥ Q108 ♦ AJ53 ♣ Q5	♠ 10642 ♥ J7642 ♦ Q974 ♣ -  ♠ Q93 ♥ A3 ♦ K6 ♣ KJ10982	♠ J75 ♥ J75 ♦ 1082 ♣ A643
--	---	------------------------------------

It is worthwhile having firm agreements with respect to what a Pass and a re-double mean in these auctions.

After West (Smolanko) opened 1NT, the pair's system agreement required East (Hinge) to bid 2♣ to start an invitational sequence. South (Brown) doubled that and West Passed. East interpreted that Pass as an offer to play which he of course accepted. Unfortunately, North-South were able to defeat that contract by one trick for +200 and with 1NT making three in the other room, *KANETKAR* collected 8 Imps on the deal.

Then on this hand below

♠ Q104 ♥ A ♦ AQ985 ♣ K1093	♠ 8762 ♥ Q62 ♦ - ♣ Q98652	♠ AK93 ♥ J93 ♦ KJ7643 ♣ -
♠ J5 ♥ K108754 ♦ 102 ♣ AJ7		

North (Kanetkar) opened an off-shape 1NT and South (Neill) transferred to Hearts via a bid of two Diamonds. West (Van Riel) doubled that and North expressed an opinion with a re-double. South did very well to respect that opinion as any number of Hearts will go down on the defensive cross-ruff.

South played the hand competently to score five trumps, two Hearts and a Spade for +760 and 11 Imps when East-West (Lazer-Gumby) were two down in 3♠ in the other room. In hindsight, East might have demurred after the re-double and run to 2♠, and who knows what might have happened then.



L-R: Avi Kanetkar, Warren Lazer, Bruce Neill, Pauline Gumby, Terry Brown, Peter Buchen

## The Women's Team - A Close Battle to the End.

by Barbara Travis

The Women's Playoffs only had 6 teams enter, so 'seeding' (Playoff Qualifying Points) was all important given that the top two teams would have byes to the Semi-Finals. With the format being 128-board knockout matches to be played over two days, it proved a distinct advantage to have the weekend 'off', with both finalists having had the byes. Our team used this time to practise together, and are very grateful to those who assisted us to warm up.

The knockout format has a lot to recommend it, though it was a very gruelling event, with our days starting around 9am (departing for the venue), play being from 10am to 7.45pm, and getting home after 8pm. There were six days of bridge, starting with Quarter Finals for Teams 3-6, with the winners then meeting the top two seeds in Semi-Finals which were rather one-sided matches, and ending with a two-day Final which was between: *TRAVIS*, Candice Ginsberg-Barbara Travis, Margaret Bourke-Sue Lusk, Marianne Bookallil-Jodi Tutty v. *HOWARD*, Paula McLeish-Diana Smart, Elizabeth Havas-Cathy Mill, Nevena Djurovic-Rena Kaplan, Justin Howard (NPC).

Sometimes one has to think about the potential to be end-played. From the Semi-Final:

♠ QJ4 ♥ K73 ♦ K2 ♣ AK532	♠ 1095 ♥ QJ62 ♦ J6 ♣ Q964	♠ AK86 ♥ 985 ♦ Q854 ♣ 87
	♠ 732 ♥ A104 ♦ A10974 ♣ J10	

Candice Ginsberg played in 3NT from West, on the ♠10 lead. Her best chance was to hope the club suit behaved, so she won the ♠Q then led ♣A, ♣K and a small club. North won the third round and switched to the ♦J which ran to her ♦K but left her in some trouble if she continued clubs, because North could lead more diamond through the ♦Q (and Candice couldn't see the diamond break). So now Candice tried 'Plan B', which was to end-play South.

She led the rest of the spades, South discarding ♥4. Now she had 4 spade tricks, 2 club tricks and 1 diamond trick. She led a heart towards her ♥K and South erred by ducking. Candice's ♥K won and she exited a heart to South's ♥A which was now singleton. That meant that South had to lead diamonds, for Candice's ninth trick.

South should have won the ♥A on the first round, so she could exit the ♥10 to Candice's ♥K. However, Candice could still prevail by leading another diamond to the ♦8 end-playing South in diamonds for her game-going trick.

South had to perceive the potential end-play much earlier and keep all her hearts, leaving her with exit cards in order to avoid an embarrassing end position. Was this possible to do? I would answer "Yes", but in order to succeed, she would have had to count declarer's points as well. Our 1NT opening bid shows 14-16 HCP, so she could have counted the ♣A, ♣K, ♦K, ♠Q and ♠J... meaning that Candice held the ♥K at best! Don't forget to keep counting, especially when you know how many HCP declarer can hold.

### Re-evaluating your two-suited hand

Responding to partner's two-suited bids is something that many people find challenging. One has to learn to let go of HCP and think about how the hands fit together, given that responder already knows about at least 10 cards in their partner's hand. You hold:

♠ 9 ♥ AJ1087 ♦ 1092 ♣ K962

1♦                    2♦                    X                    ??

2♦ shows at least 5/5 in the Majors, and the double says your RHO is interested in doubling at least one of the Majors – clearly spades. Is your hand good or bad given those considerations?

I think this hand qualifies as an automatic 4♥ bid. You know you have a 5-5 heart fit, and RHO must have good spades which you can trump, since they can't be doubling based on hearts. Furthermore, if RHO has spades, partner may well have a minor card. Even if 4♥ doesn't make, the opponents probably have a good fit in diamonds.

When our opponent just bid 3♥, leaving partner to decide, the auction was passed out. Partner held:

♠ 87632 ♥ KQ543 ♦ – ♣ A43

10 tricks in hearts is easy, with 11 tricks being available if you trump the spades good.

### Changing your plan as play proceeds

Here's a hand from the Final where your original plan has to change rapidly (see top of next column):

Sitting South, Sue Lusk was declarer in 3NT, having received the lead of ♥6. She won in hand with the ♥K to tackle the diamond suit. When she led the ♦2 towards dummy, West showed out. Given that East held all the diamonds, including all the critical spot cards, Sue needed to change her approach immediately. She won the ♦K and started on clubs. That

gave her eight tricks, so she knew she needed the ♠A onside, and played accordingly, for her 9 tricks.

♠ K75		
♥ AQ4		
♦ K10953		
♣ 52		
♠ A82		♠ QJ64
♥ 108765		♥ 9
♦ -		♦ QJ876
♣ 108743		♣ A96
	♠ 1093	
	♥ KJ32	
	♦ A42	
	♣ KQJ	

At our table the play started the same way, but when Candice (West) showed out, declarer ducked a diamond to my hand. I switched to a small spade which Candice won with the ♠A, returning a spade and dooming the contract to one off.

Paula McLeish played this hand from the Final as declarer in 4♠ really nicely against us.

	♠ AKJ97	
	♥ 65	
	♦ Q984	
	♣ J5	
♠ 5		♠ Q842
♥ 873		♥ KJ94
♦ KJ1072		♦ 653
♣ A1082		♣ K9
	♠ 1063	
	♥ AQ102	
	♦ A	
	♣ Q7643	

I led the ♥4. She took a significant amount of time planning the hand at trick 1, and I just watched her play the hand perfectly. At trick 1 she finessed the HQ (she worked out she didn't need the double finesse), then cashed the ♦A and ♥A. A heart was trumped to hand so she could trump a diamond. Another heart was trumped, with a second diamond being trumped in dummy. At this stage Paula had taken the first seven tricks and still held ♠AKJ in hand, plus losers!

She exited with a club which Candice won with the ♣A. I was already in trouble, being down to 4 spades and the ♣K. Candice led a spade through which Paula won with the ♠A, exiting with another club to my ♣K. I had to lead a spade into her spade tenace so she had 10 tricks. (Even a diamond exit leaves me powerless because I held too many trumps in the end-position and would always have to lead into her ♠KJ.)

### A super auction to slam gained valuable imps

Marianne Bookallil-Jodi Tutty (TRAVIS team) bid two slams in succession during Session 5 of the final. I

particularly liked their auction on this hand shown below:

<i>NORTH</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
Marianne	Jodi
K109	AJ754
AQJ8	K7432
J106	void
K85	A97

1♣	1♠
1NT	2♦ <sup>1</sup>
2♥ <sup>2</sup>	4♦ <sup>3</sup>
4♠ <sup>4</sup>	5♣ <sup>4</sup>
6♣ <sup>4</sup>	6♥

- 1 - artificial and game forcing,
- 2 - 4 hearts.
- 3 - splinter, agreeing hearts and asking for cue-bids.
- 4 - 1st or 2nd round control

Both hands gained us slam swings, turning the momentum back our way, and we led 192.1 to 150 IMPs with 48 boards remaining. With one set (16 boards) remaining TRAVIS led by 34.1 IMPs and we found in this set that the hands were a lot quieter than some of the earlier boards we had dealt with.

### Partnership agreements are critical at times

This hand relied on partnership discussion:

♠ A6	♠ 1032	♠ 984
♥ KQ76	♥ J92	♥ A
♦ 108	♦ KQ97	♦ AJ6532
♣ Q10642	♣ J83	♣ AK7
	♠ KQJ75	
	♥ 108543	
	♦ 4	
	♣ 95	

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
C Ginsberg	C Mill	B Travis	E Havas
		1♦	2♦ <sup>1</sup>
X <sup>2</sup>	Pass <sup>3</sup>	Pass <sup>4</sup>	2♠
Pass <sup>5</sup>	Pass	3♦ <sup>6</sup>	Pass
3♠ <sup>7</sup>	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Most of this auction ended up being artificial:

- 1 - Michael's Cue Bid showing at least 5/5 in the Majors.
- 2 - Willingness to double at least one of the Majors.
- 3 - Equal length in the Majors - you choose partner
- 4 - Non-minimum opening hand.
- 5 - Holding hearts since double would be penalty
- 6 - Long suit - a mild underbid.
- 7 - Showing stopper (system agreement)

I already knew West held hearts from the earlier auction. That meant that she wanted me to bid 3NT, especially if I held some partial spade stopper such as Jxx or Qxx. 3NT had 10 tricks when the club suit

broke, whereas at the other table our Sue Lusk and Margi Bourke escaped for down one in 2♠X.

The final result was TRAVIS 285.1 IMPs defeated HOWARD 253 IMPs. The events will start in Seoul, Korea for the Asia Pacific Championships in May 2017, and culminate at the Venice Cup (World Championships) in Lyon, France in August.

Many thanks to David Appleton for unexpectedly but willingly taking on the role of captaining/guiding us through the Playoffs. Jane Rasmussen from the ABF organised a very smoothly-run event, directed calmly and efficiently by Matthew McManus.

Regarding the new format, I'd have to say that I would prefer three 20-board sessions per day, leading to 120-board knockout matches over two days. That would mean we would have 8 boards less per match, and about two hours' time saving per day. It would be a far less exhausting format, over the full six days. I'm sure other participants will have varied opinions.

Peter Reynolds has since been ratified as our Non-Playing Captain for both international events.

This will be Marianne Bookallil and Jodi Tutty's international debut, so it was a very exciting win for us all. Marianne and Jodi have spent most of their bridge lives playing Open bridge, which was demonstrated in the general toughness they displayed throughout the Playoffs. Our national Women's events have been struggling with entries in recent times, and this event suffered the same fate. To compete satisfactorily on the international stage, our Women really need to compete primarily in Open events, which provide us with much tougher competition. I do hope the ABF will find a satisfactory solution to this dilemma in the near future.



L-R: Candice Ginsberg, Sue Lusk, Barbara Travis, Jodi Tutty, Margaret Bourke, Marianne Bookallil David Appleton (Acting Captain) centre at back

# Sand, Sun and Knockout Bridge

The 2016 GNOT

by Liam Milne

In the last week of November, 64 teams from across Australia travelled to sunny Tweed Heads (NSW) to contest the Grand National Open Teams Final. Unlike most of the major teams events on the calendar, the GNOT is not open entry into the final; rather, teams qualify from regions around the country in preliminary knockout rounds.

The format is also unusual – knockout matches from the very start of the event (with a repechage Swiss from Round 2 onwards), rather than the usual Swiss qualification rounds. This usually creates some excitement and a few 'upsets' in early rounds. 2016 did not disappoint, with 9th seeded SYDNEY 5 being knocked out by 41st seeds CENTRAL INLAND in round two, and 13th seeds PERTH 2 staging a four-IMP win over 4th seeds SYDNEY 3 in round three.

## Timing which suit to play?

As always, there were a few hands with instructive themes. Try this hand from the fourth round of knockout matches:

♠ 8743  
♥ JT743  
♦ 43  
♣ AK

♠ T  
♥ KQ65  
♦ A  
♣ QT97643

At favourable vulnerability, you open 2♣ (Precision, 6+ clubs) and partner responds 2♦ inquiry. East overcalls 4♦ and you venture 4♥, buying a very good dummy on the diamond lead to the ♦8 and your ♦A.

Seeing no issues, you lead the ♥Q from your hand, which wins. Do you see any problems?

On this type of hand, with good trumps and a useful side suit, a frequent idea to keep in mind is "side suit first": nurture your source of tricks to ensure that the side suit doesn't get lost.

With this hand, if you play a second trump next, the difference is two tricks. West wins the ♥A as East shows out, and can simply return their third heart. You try the clubs, but they break 4-0, and you are short of the entries to both establish then run the suit. East is 4=1=8=0; down one.

In our match, declarer played a club at trick 3 to ensure the contract. In the other room, the contract was 4♥ doubled, but declarer didn't find the side suit safety play: 11 IMPs to SYDNEY 2, rather than 6 the

other way (an early club play leads to an overtrick, only losing a heart and a spade).

After the first five knockout rounds and repechage finals were over, four semi-finalists were left. SYDNEY 2 beat BRISBANE 1 while SYDNEY 1 defeated AD-ELAIDE 2, both by large margins, so the final was an all-Sydney affair. Adelaide teams frequently make the GNOT final, and this was the first time Adelaide did not appear in the grand final since 2012.

## Reducing the Opponent's ruffing power!

You might have heard the advice "lead trumps against doubled part-scores". This is usually sound advice: if you have doubled the opponents at a low-level, your side frequently has the balance of strength, so cutting down the opponents' ruffing power is a good strategy.

Who do you think should double 3♥ on the hand shown below?

♠ 952		
♥ JT875		
♦ KQJ4		
♣ J		
♠ K763		♠ JT84
♥ A94		♥ KQ
♦ 872		♦ AT65
♣ A72		♣ Q63
	♠ AQ	
	♥ 632	
	♦ 93	
	♣ KT9854	

Ashton (W)	Buchen (N)	Gosney (E)	Brown (S)
			Pass
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣	Dbl	Rdbl	3♣
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
Pass	Rdbl	Pass	3♥
All pass			

Between them, East-West have the strength and the trumps to double any three-level contract, but with East and West only able to see thirteen cards each, 3♥ was passed out. Some might find a double based on 'the sound of the auction', but this can sometimes lead to disaster.

Playing in her first national teams final, Sophie Ashton realised that perhaps 3♥ should have been doubled. So she heeded the advice above and instead of leading the partnership suit, led a low trump!

After two rounds of trumps, Gosney played a spade through to the ♠Q and K. Ashton cashed the ♥A and played another spade. Declarer could only make two trumps, a spade and two diamonds for down four; +400 and 6 IMPs to SYDNEY 2 when ♠3 was made by East in the other room. A spade lead would have led to 3♥ going down only one or two tricks.

## Slams always bring excitement to the table

One of the more exciting bidding hands was also from the second set of the GNOT final. In fourth seat at favourable vulnerability, you pick up:

♠KQT ♥Void ♦AQT8542 ♣KT6

After two passes, RHO opens 1♥. You bid 2♦, and LHO bids 4♦, a splinter showing good support for hearts and short diamonds. Partner doubles, and RHO passes (alerted as "encouraging").

Let's say you try a 4♥ cue-bid to show your high playing strength hand. LHO bids 5♥, passed back to you. Try again?

At the table, David Beauchamp bid 6♦ after this start to the auction. After two passes, Tony Nunn bids 6♥ on your right. Any more? At the table, everyone passed so 6♥ was the final contract. The full hand:

	♠ 84	
	♥ K86432	
	♦	
♠ KQT	♣ QJ987	♠ J762
♥		♥ 75
♦ AQT8542		♦ K63
♣ KT6	♠ A953	♣ 5432
	♥ AQJT9	
	♦ J97	
	♣ A	

On the ♦A lead, Nunn avoided playing any trumps, guaranteeing the contract on a cross-ruff line. At the other table, Buchen as North opened a multi 2♦ and Brown responded 4♥ (pass or correct). Ashton bid 5♦, but passed out Buchen's 5♥ bid; -650 and 13 IMPs to SYDNEY 2.

Having established a 33 IMP cushion in the first set, SYDNEY 2 (Sartaj Hans, Tony Nunn, Sophie Ashton, Paul Gosney, Nye Griffiths, Liam Milne) never lost the lead, running out winners 127-64. Congratulations go especially to Sophie for her first national win in an open teams event.

If you are thinking of contesting the GNOT in 2017, I encourage you to give it a try. Your regional qualifying event will also be run as a knockout event, giving you and your team a chance to try something different from the usual matchpoint pairs or Swiss teams. And if you make the national final, I guarantee you will have an enjoyable time in Tweed Heads next November. If you are knocked out before the semi-finals, there is a popular GNOT Swiss Pairs event run in conjunction with the teams.



L-R: Tony Nunn, Nye Griffiths, Liam Milne, Sophie Ashton, Sartaj Hans, Paul Gosney & holding pride of place in the centre - Baby Sasha (Sartaj & Sophie's daughter)



The GNOT trophy for the best Country Team was awarded to Geelong. L-R: Arthur Robbins, Deni Newland, Doug Newlands and Gary Ridgway.



The GNOT Swiss Pairs on Sunday was won by Terry Strong & Jill Magee who have recently moved to Queensland.

## TBIB Tips for Travellers

### 1. CHECK YOUR PASSPORT AND APPLY FOR ANY NECESSARY VISAS.

Ensure your Passport is still current and check to see if you require a Visa to enter the country.

### 2. GET VACCINATED AND STOCK UP ON MEDICINE.

Speak to your Doctor to make sure you obtain any recommended vaccinations and also have enough of your medication for the trip. Check with your Doctor to ensure that your medications are lawful to carry at your intended destination

### 3. CHECK FOR TRAVEL WARNINGS/ ADVISORIES AND REGISTER YOUR TRIP.

Visit the Smart Traveller website [www.smart-traveller.gov.au](http://www.smart-traveller.gov.au) for up to date travel warnings. Also take time to register your trip, as this may assist in locating you in an emergency.

### 4. PREPARE YOUR FINANCES.

Make sure you sufficient funds available in the currency of the country you visiting. Advise your bank of your travel arrangements so they can keep track of transactions.

### 5. MAKE COPIES OF TRAVEL DOCUMENTS.

Copy your travel documents and keep the copy separate to the originals.

### 6. OBTAIN AN INTERNATIONAL DRIVING PERMIT.

If you intend driving overseas, check to see if you need an international permit.

### 7. TRAVEL INSURANCE

Make sure your travel insurance offers the cover you need, including cover for the part of the world you are travelling to, unlimited medical cover, the need for pre-existing medical conditions to be covered and that you have cover to refund your money refunded if your trip has to be cancelled, postponed, or cut short for any number of reasons.



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## The Mental Game

### *Dealing with distractions from the opponents*

*by Kim Frazer*

As the tennis season approached in the Australian summer, it brought to mind various matches I have watched over the years, both in Australia and from overseas tournaments, where a lesser ranked player will find themselves holding a winning position against a more highly fancied opponent. It is heartbreaking to then see the lower ranks player fail as nerves, expectations or simply lack of confidence overcomes them. One might say the better player managed to find a way to win on the day, but how much did the lesser player contribute to this win? How much did they let the circumstances of the moment impact upon their performance? How often do we as players lose to another due to personality factors, or to pre-conceived perceptions regarding these players, whether it is their playing record or other factors.



Our self-talk, that little voice inside your head, often creates doubts about our ability to perform in certain situations. However doubts are not always created by our own experience or from believing that an opponent is better ranked than us, or has a great playing record against us. Some doubts can come from a casual comment from partner or a previous encounter with an opponent.

This brought to mind two situations of a slightly different type from my own experience. The first was from several years ago when my partner and I were drawn to play against a player who had a reputation for being quite garrulous at the table—so much so, that his opponents often found the constant rambling off-putting, and many didn't play at their best against him. Anyone who has played against me knows I am not the quietest person at the table either, so when my partner told me about him, my response was 'no worries - he's met his match'. And so in the match as he carried on with his rambling at the table, I countered with my own share of rambling right back at him, and we went on to defeat the pair in that event. I have a good playing record against this player, since I refuse to allow his tactics to distract me.

Not everyone can cope with the ramblings so a good tactic I have seen some players use when asking the players to desist from talking hasn't worked, is to simply put their cards on the table and wait until the distracting player stops talking. Ensuring you have your own tactic to deal with these players is very important for your performance.

The second situation concerned a partner of mine who had a poor set against a player and commented afterwards that the player was a person they particularly disliked playing against. How much did the distraction represented by the dislike of playing against this person influence my partner's

performance? How often do we allow an opponent to create a negative mindset, or to distract us at the table.

These types of distraction are quite common, and less experienced players often allow relatively minor things to distract their focus. After all, it is hard enough to play well, remember all your system agreements, count the cards during play, and work out how to declare/defend the hand without distractions adding to the difficulty. Even experienced players will sometimes have problems in these and similar types of circumstances.

Whilst these and situations like them can prey on your mind, particularly if you lose to the players involved, you can use some basic methods to ensure you perform at your best, and avoid letting your previous experience distract you from the task at hand. In my view, using a cue-word to get you focussing on the hand, and off the opponent is one tactic you could employ. (See *ABF Newsletter November 2015 on Maintaining Focus*)

Managing your approach to matches against players who annoy or distract you is extremely important to ensure you perform at your best. Keeping your mind focussed on the match at hand, the cards and the contract you are in or defending, and off things like the player who talks too much or the pair/player you personally don't like will help ensure you achieve your goals at the bridge table — whatever they might be.

## IPTF News

Many players will be aware of the formation of the International Player Performance Task Force (IPTF). In this regular column, I will be keeping everyone up to date with news and information - both for current national team members, and aspirants.

### *High Performance Page on ABF Website*

We have set up a page on the ABF website which will have news and other information for our national team members and aspirants. At the moment the link is called "high performance", and you will find it on the Player Page of the ABF website. High Performance was the best name we could come up with, but if you have a better suggestion, please let us know - we will consider all ideas on merit.

### *Team Announcements at SFOB*

At the 2017 Summer Festival Of Bridge, we will be announcing our international team members at the start of the South West Pacific Teams match (January 16th). We hope those of you who are lucky enough to play against one of our international team representatives for 2017 will enjoy the experience.

*Kim Frazer, Chair IPTF*



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- ♥ All breakfasts and dinners (Russia cuisine!) with non-alcoholic drinks (except for one night where you are free to roam around)
- ♥ All tours (private)
- ♥ All bridge activities (professional seminars with extensive bridge notes, duplicate bridge, and hand analysis discussion)

**There is an early bird discount!**

## What the heck do I do now?

'What the heck do I do now?' is an alternative slant on 'what should I bid?'. Our Brain's Trust will tell you what they would have done in the same situation - whether it is a bid out of turn; unauthorised information or other situations that arise. Once again the Brain's Trust this month is:

Bill Jacobs — A member of Australia's Open Team at the 2016 World Championships; and,

Matthew McManus — Director Extraordinaire; he also plays bridge!

**M**any players think that because partner has paused for thought and then passed, they are now unable to make a bid. Under the laws this is not entirely correct. Provided your hand justifies your bid, you are perfectly entitled to take an action. If and when the opponents appeal citing your use of the unauthorised information provided by your partner's hesitation, your decision will then be reviewed by the director, who may also choose to take a poll of players who are your peers before ruling if the action you took is not clear cut.

**Law 73C** covers unauthorised information "the player must carefully avoid taking any advantage from that unauthorised information".

This next hand was played in a tournament overseas, and features this very issue. I asked our brains trust to consider their bid both without and with the hesitation:

NS Vul/EW Not Vul; Dealer East:

West	North	East	South
		3♣	Pass <sup>1</sup>
5♣	?		
1 - Slow			

The bidding has come around to you sitting North and you hold:

♠ AKQ42 ♥ 62 ♦ AQJ72 ♣ 10

### What call would you make without the slow pass?

MM: I would double. Bidding a suit at the 5 level, while it could be right, is too much a shot in the dark. Partner will only pull if he has good reason, so I will be content to pass the potentially uncomfortable 5♥ if that is what he chooses. If he happened to bid 5♦ or 5♠, I would still also pass.

BJ: Pass is out of the question with such a powerful hand. I see three possible actions: 5NT (presumably a two suiter), 5♠ (speaks for itself) and double. The double should just show high-card strength, telling partner that West is sacrificing, not bidding to make.

Giving it a more specific meaning (like "penalties" or "takeout") is the wrong approach.

5NT is a shot in the dark regarding level. 5♠ is a shot in the dark regarding suit. Double is what's left: it is clearly the best choice.

A key principle here (which should also apply after a 5♣ opening bid) is that if partner removes the double, he is bidding to make his contract, not running due to weakness. With a weak hand and a long suit, he should just pass, hoping the doubler has enough strength to beat 5♣.

So if partner bids 5♥ here, a possible scenario, he has length in hearts (at least 5+, probably 6+) and some high cards. I would react to that by bidding 5NT (pick-a-slam), and live happily ever after.

### What call would you make now that partner has paused for thought and passed?

MM: I still double. I think that taking some action is clear-cut, so the unauthorised information from partner's break in tempo is not relevant. If partner does pull the double, then the unauthorised information will definitely lead me to think that slam is a very good chance. Therefore, taking any further action in the auction is just not on.

BJ: Well, is pass truly out of the question? Because if it's not, then I should make that call. That is the ethical thing to do, and whatever the outcome, it has the huge benefit of making you feel good about yourself.

In most hesitation situations that I come across, the pass (i.e. the bid not suggested by the unauthorised information) is a logical choice, and should be made. People argue: "I was always, always, going to bid: the hesitation had no effect." But their subconscious was in there pitching.

But you've finally done it with this one. I'll stick with the view that pass is impossible, and make the double regardless.

The full hand was:

♠ AKQ42		
♥ 62		
♦ AQJ72		
♣ 10		
♠ J107	♠ 853	
♥ K94	♥ Q	
♦ K53	♦ 106	
♣ A943	♣ KQJ8752	
	♠ 96	
	♥ AJ108753	
	♦ 984	
	♣ 6	

Email your submissions for 'What the heck do I do now?' to: [editor@abf.com.au](mailto:editor@abf.com.au).

## It's membership renewal time!

As it is that time of year when we need to renew our membership it is perhaps worth highlighting how your ABF affiliation fee aids in the important work our National body carries out to keep our sport thriving in Australia.

Apart from setting the strategic direction for Australian bridge, this includes:

- producing the bi-monthly ABF Newsletter (available on-line and in hard copy to clubs);
- running the ABF Masterpoint scheme;
- providing a subscription to the Australian Bridge magazine for every affiliated club;
- running the Summer Festival of Bridge and GNOT finals;
- providing teaching and promotion grants to State and Territory Associations;
- conducting free teacher training and continuing professional development workshops for bridge teachers around Australia;
- providing bridge teachers with information and support via the ABF website and a monthly bridge teachers' newsletter;
- conducting the ABF Summer School for newer players;
- providing marketing advice, assistance and promotional material to interested clubs;
- issuing a monthly Marketing Update to Club Administrators;
- conducting marketing workshops for interested regions;
- administering the James O'Sullivan trust fund;
- selecting and coaching National teams;
- arranging nationwide public and management liability insurance cover for all clubs (*cost is passed to the States*);
- arranging nationwide protection of **all** of the voluntary workers who provide services to their State bodies, clubs and tournaments;
- issuing all new members with an 'Information Kit for New Members' upon sign-up.

In addition, our National sponsors provide you with some exciting products and services which can provide you with financial benefits. Check out the ABF website (look under Membership Benefits) for more information.



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For expert advice and assistance with all your insurance needs contact Tony Bemrose Insurance Brokers on (07) 3252 5254 or email [abf@tbib.com.au](mailto:abf@tbib.com.au).



**Tony Bemrose  
Insurance Brokers**



TFE Hotels offers discounted accommodation in Australia, New Zealand and parts of Europe. Check out their offers on the ABF website – look under membership benefits.

## 2016 McCutcheon Results



### *Sartaj Hans - 2016 McCutcheon Winner*

**S**artaj Hans, whose book "Battling the Best" is reviewed on page 26 showed us he is one of our best ever players by taking out the 2016 McCutcheon Award for the top masterpoint winner for the year.

Finishing with a score of 502.83, Sartaj finished with ahead of Pauline Gumby on 492.49 and Warren Lazer on 485.84.

Sartaj's results in 2016 are most impressive, although there must also be a tinge of disappointment given the number of runner-up places in the year. His results include winning the Open Teams at the Spring Festival in Sydney; winning the GNOT at Tweed Heads; winning the Autumn Nationals in Adelaide; runner up in the Open Butler Pairs at the ANC; Runner up in the Victor Champion Cup; and runner up in the Open Team playoff.

Sartaj (with partner Sophie Ashton) also became a father this year to baby Sasha. Anyone who has played against Sartaj will recognise what a wonderful player he is — congratulations Sartaj!

The top Ten placings in all categories are detailed below. Well done to all who topped their category.

#### *All Ranks*

1	Hans, Sartaj	502.83
2	Gumby, Pauline	492.49
3	Lazer, Warren	485.84
4	Francis, Neville	476.61
5	Newman, John	447.73
6	Neill, Bruce	440.85
7	Milne, Liam	437.38
8	Kanetkar, Avinash	423.94
9	Brown, Terry	408.04
10	Nunn, Tony	406.72

#### *Silver Grand & Above*

1	Hans, Sartaj	502.83
2	Gumby, Pauline	492.49
3	Lazer, Warren	485.84
4	Francis, Neville	476.61
5	Neill, Bruce	440.85
6	Kanetkar, Avinash	423.94
7	Brown, Terry	408.04
8	Nunn, Tony	406.72
9	Kozakos, George	395.11
10	Gill, Peter	394.14

#### *Grand*

1	Milne, Liam	437.38
2	Griffiths, Nye	387.34
3	Wood, Viv	354.07
4	Melbourne, Howard	352.58
5	Hollands, Peter	324.95
6	Harley, Dee	270.50
7	Doecke, Mike	245.81
8	Douglas, Richard	237.91
9	Carter, Malcolm	236.82
10	Jenner-O'Shea, William	236.42

#### *Gold Life*

1	Newman, John	447.73
2	Perrin, Murray	251.30
3	Dawson, Alison	237.27
4	Brown, Vanessa	224.69
5	Lisle, Vicky	195.50
6	Vearing, Frank	187.22
7	Assaee, Bijan	176.82
8	Fox, Richard	175.77
9	Gehrke, Dorothy	148.50
10	Ginnan, Laura	145.62

#### *Silver Life*

1	Vadas, Mathew	208.08
2	St Clair, Anna	193.85
3	Thompson, Jamie	178.35
4	Ozenir, Serhat	153.92
5	Barbour, Jean	147.07
6	Yang, John	146.42
7	Ridley, Timothy	141.79
8	Williams, Stephen	141.65
9	Cooper, Renee	133.91
10	Sheedy, Terrence	132.80

#### *Bronze Life*

1	Wilson, Deana	246.88
2	Ashton, Sophie	185.96
3	Reynolds, Jane	178.38
4	Li, Eileen	166.50
5	Nicholson, Greg	159.30
6	Gosney, Gregory	135.48
7	Morin, Cassie	111.18
8	Hudson, David	110.50
9	Zhang, Victor	101.61
10	Gammon, Susanne	100.38

#### *Life*

1	Braun, Daniel	156.14
2	Hyland, Annette	131.73
3	Plunkett, Margaret	122.34
4	Sklarz, Jo	119.49
5	Senior, Cecile	105.79
6	Heywood, Jo-Anne	104.22
7	Fletcher, Trevor	95.62
8	Kent, Barbara	95.60
9	Gilbert, Max	92.76
10	Gilbert, Kathy	90.15

#### *\*\* National*

1	Fleet, Helen	89.96
2	Clark, Robyn	87.44
3	Murtagh, Ross	71.87
4	Hapek, Sue	71.20
5	Neild, Ruth	70.02
6	Arendts, Helen	68.62
7	Wilkinson, Robert	64.51
8	Sleat, Pat	64.30
9	Ladner, Peggy	63.11
10	Jonsberg, Arne	62.88

#### *\* National*

1	Stead, Chris	215.11
2	Upsall, Denis	149.22
3	Symons, Faye	148.63
4	Carson, Graham	111.61
5	McAuliffe, Michael	106.28
6	Dunbar, Jarrad	104.42
7	Moore, Rose	104.20
8	van Bakel, William	91.86
9	Packer, Mimi	88.35
10	Varga, Sandor	85.39

**National**

1	Smith, Matthew	216.63
2	Bishop, Bill	150.18
3	Li, Yumin	129.96
4	Munro, Tim	124.35
5	Brahma, Gwyneira	107.59
6	Rayani, Parveen	90.20
7	Pearson, Terry	88.06
8	Ji, Xue Kui	82.39
9	Wills, Sheila	80.76
10	Larter, Chris	74.50

**\*State**

1	Jeppesen, Fay	126.15
2	Leach, Christopher	123.41
3	Zhang, Ming	115.46
4	Chew, Jessica	104.51
5	Broome, Martin	103.80
6	Broome, Valerie	91.55
7	Christie, Angeline	79.98
8	Rayani, Jamaluddin	78.77
9	Billingham, Sylvia	76.12
10	Hoschke, Ian	68.23

**State**

1	McMahon, Charles	142.73
2	Ding, Chen	120.35
3	Rich, Rachel	78.24
4	Zulfiqar, Firdous	76.59
5	Peacock, Ailsa	75.73
6	Bentley, Roy	75.42
7	Clarke, Peter	73.67
8	Beeby, Jane	70.92
9	Tjahja, Albert	67.17
10	Thyer, Stephen	66.96

**\*Regional**

1	Sims, Alan	45.92
2	Lee, Esther	43.82
3	Grech, Norman	41.40
4	McConnell, Peter	36.20
5	Sadler, Faye	35.03
6	Langley, Rhonda	34.45
7	Kendell, Kevin	30.88
8	Gibb, Mike	30.47
9	Hartel, Ingrid	29.81
10	Speare, Frank	27.33

**Regional**

1	Dempster, Colin	63.35
2	Biscoe, Jane	50.87
3	Love, Leonie	49.14
4	Van Kruistum, Simon	44.81
5	Renaud, Tanya	44.08
6	King, Suzanne	40.09
7	Budgeon, Janine	38.72
8	Spence, Leonie	38.45
9	Campbell, Maria	38.30
10	Bourke, Colleen	38.15

**\*\* Local**

1	McMahon, John	104.79
2	Baker, Ann	78.27
3	Payne, Colin	60.41
4	Cahill, Ken	45.03
5	Canaris, Helena	44.70
6	Hazra, Hasan	41.91
7	Seed, Tony	37.45
8	Russell, John	36.24
9	Beeby, Philip	36.04
10	Atkin, Lynda	36.03

**\*Local**

1	McMahon, John	104.79
2	Baker, Ann	78.27
3	Payne, Colin	60.41
4	Cahill, Ken	45.03
5	Canaris, Helena	44.70
6	Hazra, Hasan	41.91
7	Seed, Tony	37.45
8	Russell, John	36.24
9	Beeby, Philip	36.04
10	Atkin, Lynda	36.03

**Local**

1	Sunderasan, Lakshmi	108.70
2	Sylvester, Elisabeth	91.69
3	Rogers, John	82.39
4	Roberts, Wing	77.72
5	Brooks, Bevin	62.60
6	Luke-Paredi, Jack	49.37
7	Colenbrander, Heidi	43.64
8	Levy, Richard	39.75
9	Miller, Stephen Lawrence	39.39
10	O'Connell, Nicky	39.35

**Club**

1	Smith, Lori	69.06
2	Langdon, Rachel	56.68
3	Jacobs, Natasha	55.10
4	Kim, Gan Woo	37.70
5	Hurst, Ray	35.43
6	Bartley, George	31.14
7	Borthwick, Marieta	31.11
8	Gibbards, Deborah	29.80
9	Gibbards, Gary	29.20
10	Walsh, Nicholas	29.06

**Graduate**

1	Phillips, Alex	55.27
2	Besprosvan, Eduardo	38.77
3	Gao, Morgan	38.75
4	Basile, Lisa	29.97
5	Brady, Christine	23.11
6	Hardwick, Clive	21.87
7	Thorne, Jennifer	20.24
8	Dan, Delia	19.35
9	Hansen, Judith Mary	19.31
10	Driver, Paul	18.67

**Most Improved Players for  
2016**

Chen, Kaiping	5,414
Sunderasan, Lakshmi	4,677
Van Weeren, Hans	4,486
Sylvester, Elisabeth	4,373
England, Clyde	4,359
McMahon, Charles	4,333
Smith, Matthew	4,202
Rogers, John	4,147
Wanigaratne, Abigail	4,058
Roberts, Wing	3,915
McMahon, John	3,846
Stead, Chris	3,811
Smith, Lori	3,781
Ding, Chen	3,778
Jeppesen, Fay	3,729
Zarnowski, Alex	3,715
Zhang, Ming	3,556
Baker, Ann	3,511
Phillips, Alex	3,511
Brooks, Bevin	3,495
Plumb, Jan	3,490
Plumb, Donald	3,487
Leach, Christopher	3,481
Langdon, Rachel	3,426
Spelman, Richard	3,389
Bishop, Bill	3,362
Gluck, Sylvia	3,319
Jacobs, Natasha	3,276
Wilson, Deana	3,203
Cooke, Ingrid	3,184
Li, Yumin	3,164
Newman, John	3,153
Upsall, Denis	3,117
Munro, Tim	3,044
Chew, Jessica	3,002
Broome, Martin	2,935
Luke-Paredi, Jack	2,928
Payne, Colin	2,921
Zhao, Kimberley	2,912
Rich, Rachel	2,899
Karim, Rezaul	2,899
Broome, Valerie	2,887
Zulfiqar, Firdous	2,871
Clarke, Peter	2,848
Peacock, Ailsa	2,810
Brahma, Gwyneira	2,800
Symons, Faye	2,775
Gao, Morgan	2,748
Besprosvan, Eduardo	2,743
Colenbrander, Heidi	2,736

The ABF formula for  
Most Improved Player = (Points  
This Year \* 10000)/(Total Points +  
100)

Source: ABF Masterpoint Centre [www.abfmasterpontos.com.au](http://www.abfmasterpontos.com.au)

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BYRON @ BYRON  
May 26 - 29, 2017

Relax and rejuvenate in between bridge games in an intimate resort set amongst a 45 acre subtropical rainforest.

\$1400 single  
\$990 twin per person  
\$90 day rate for locals



### SYDNEY

INTERCONTINENTAL DOUBLE BAY  
July 6 - 9, 2017

Located in the leafy Eastern Suburbs village of Double Bay, this bridge holiday is a definite highlight of the year.

\$1460 single  
\$990 twin per person  
\$90 day rate for locals



### FIJI

INTERCONTINENTAL FIJI  
September 15 - 21, 2017

Enjoy a six-night tropical break. Offering world class dining and authentic Fijian hospitality, this is a beautiful bridge holiday.

\$3150 single  
\$2000 twin per person

## Basic Bridge 101

After the Thursday night bridge session at our local club, some of us stay back for a social drink and a quick discussion of some of the hands. On this particular night, Sarah asked me what happened at my table on board 16:

Dealer: West, Vul: EW

♠ Q876	
♥ 9876	
♦ A2	
♣ K102	
♠ A5	♠ 3
♥ AKQ10	♥ 432
♦ K543	♦ 109876
♣ 987	♣ Q654
♠ KJ10942	
♥ J5	
♦ QJ	
♣ AJ3	

I said that I sat West and I opened a 15-17 1NT; South bid 2♠ and that became the final contract and declarer made ten tricks.

Sarah said that after West opened a 15-17 1NT, it was passed around to her sitting South and she bid 2♣ but my husband, Derek, bid 4♠ after a bit of thought.

I stated that you both did well to get to game with such limited values. So you got a good result then. No said Sarah, I went one off unfortunately. So I asked her how the play went. Sarah said that West cashed the A♥ and the K♥ and then she ruffed the Q♥ with the 2♠.

She then led the 4♣, 5♣, Q♣, 3♣. Then 6♣, East played a red card she thinks, J♠, A♠. West then led 10♥, 6♥, a club she thinks, and she ruffed with the 9♠. She played another round of spades just in case there were any lurkers. She said it is my Irish background to be sure, to be sure.

She then led the Q♦ and, when West played the K♦, she had no losers in that suit. So far so good, now she had to find the Q♣. With North having the 10♣ and her the J♣, she could finesse either way. Naturally, she played for the 1NT opener to hold this card. Therefore, she led the 3♣, then 7♣ and she played the 10♣ and East produced the Q♣. The result was one down. The famed luck of the Irish is not always true she lamented. She pointed out to Derek that if he had a small ♣ rather than the 10♣, then she would have little choice but to finesse East for the Q♣.

I said that luck does play a part in bridge for sure but sometimes we can make our own luck. Have you seen 'Sesame Street' I asked?

Well of course she replied, when we wanted some quiet time, we would put it on and the kids enjoyed Big Bird and friends.

One of the characters was 'The Count' and perhaps he could help? West had shown the A♥, K♥, Q♥, A♠ and the K♦ and that is 4+3+2+4+3 points or 16 points. West opened a 15-17 1NT, so who has the Q♣?

Derek, we are going home to watch 'Sesame Street' before next Thursday night said Sarah.

*The Bridge Professor*

## ABF Announces Changes to ANC Restricted Pairs Subsidy

The ABF has announced the following changes to the policy for the subsidies for the ANC Restricted Pairs Butler to apply from the 2017 ANC in Canberra.

The subsidy was introduced when the ANC was held in Perth, the most expensive destination. For future ANCs the subsidy policy is being changed so that the subsidy will be more aligned with the distance to be traveled.

The ABF has reviewed the subsidies it gives to TWO restricted pairs from each State and Territory (except the host state) and has determined that it is more equitable to provide the per pair subsidy in the form of:

- two return air tickets from their nearest capital/regional city to Canberra **OR**
- a capped car allowance of 30 cents per kilometre with a maximum round trip of 1400 kilometres or \$420 per pair. **PLUS**
- a shared accommodation/per diem allowance of \$500. **PLUS**
- their entry fee to the ANC Restricted Butler Pairs event in Canberra on 22 and 23 July 2017.

### Terms and conditions:

1. Air tickets will be purchased by the ABF, not the travellers. Travellers will be asked for their preferred travel dates.
2. The total subsidy (excluding entry fee) per pair is capped at a maximum of \$2,000+ GST. If the airfares cost more than \$2,200 then no further subsidy will be paid.
3. Any flight changes made after the booking is confirmed will be at the travellers cost not the ABF.
4. If a pair withdraws from the event for whatever reason, any cancellation charges will be borne by the traveller not the ABF.
5. Car and accommodation allowances will be paid at the ANC on 22 July 2017.
6. States and Territories must advise winning pairs immediately of these subsidy terms and conditions, and ask them to contact Roy Nixon at [roy.nixon@live.com.au](mailto:roy.nixon@live.com.au) as soon as possible after they receive this advice.

## Ballarat Gains Ownership of its Clubrooms

from Richard Giles

In what has been a 20-year process spanning five treasurers, Ballarat Bridge Club recently celebrated taking ownership of their clubrooms. In his speech to the members, President Richard Giles, stated "Our biggest highlight and one for special Celebration tonight is that the FINAL PAYMENT on our Building was made by Carol recently".

Richard has only been a member for a short period and President for an even shorter period, and he paid credit for this achievement to the members for turning up every week and to the Club leaders who elected to guide the Club over the years that has enabled the generation and management of the Club resources to the point where the Club now owns its building. The Club has been fortunate in that over twenty years the Treasurers have been Shirley, Lorna, Tim, Linda and now Carol (all pictured right with Richard far left). Lorna made the first payment on the building and Carol the final payment this week.

Richard stated "being the treasurer is not an easy task and is the least popular of all volunteer positions. No one volunteers to be treasurer. So thank you to our past Treasurers and well done."

Other highlights have been the Ballarat Festival of Bridge, Our Annual Congress in September and this year the visit to Canberra for Canberra in Bloom Bridge Congress.



## Bridge Etiquette – Tempo at the Table

Charles Goren advises we "Acquire the habit of playing smoothly and in tempo. Avoid mannerisms, sighs, grimaces, meaningful eye contact, and phrases such as I guess I need to pass!"

Some bridge players are quite slow at the table. They deliberate for what seems like an eternity before making a simple raise of partner's opening. They always write the contract down on their score sheet, and enter it into the bridgemate before putting their hand down as dummy. They hold the card vertically on the table for 20 - 30 seconds before playing it. Whilst this can slow down play unnecessarily, at times the complexity of a hand gives the bidding/defending side or declarer much to think about and a fair amount of time might be required to determine the correct call to make on the hand, or the correct card to play. The players have the right to think.

If you are playing an opponent who has paused for thought, it is not appropriate to hurry them up by saying "it's your bid". They are allowed to

think. In fact trying to hurry them up interrupts their thought and—you guessed it—makes them slower!

Avoid hesitations by being consistent and deliberate in your bidding. A hesitation followed by a pass places an extra burden on partner to justify continuing with the bidding as this may have communicated information to one's partner (see "*What the Heck do I do Now*" on page 18 for more on this).

If you have a difficult decision you have a right to think but partner cannot take advantage of the knowledge that you had a problem. So if your partner takes time to bid / bids out of tempo and then passes, you should pass too unless that action would be totally illogical considering your hand.

Finally if the opponents are inordinately slow, your best option is to call the director and make him/her aware of it. You may be entitled to recourse in the event of an unfinished round.

*Adapted from Charles Goren on Etiquette*

## Bridge into the 21st Century

### Test Your Trump Suit Technique

**W**hat is the best play on the following trump suits? There are no entry problems, so you may play from either hand at any point:



DEC (S)	DUMMY
1. AJ765	K9432
2. AJ986543	Q2
3. J6432	AK975
4. A108542	Q97
5. KJ98543	2
6. AK72	10983
7. KJ42	A1075
8. AK73	9652
9. J9843	A2
10. K108764	A3

1) The secret to suit combinations and card play in general is to work from how many cards are missing. In this layout three cards are missing so only a 3-0 break concerns you. If Q108 lay over the Jack a trick must be lost so you should cash the King first in case the three missing cards are under the Jack.

For experienced players this is an easy question but I often see it misplayed by inexperienced or sleepy players. For those who played the Ace first this is an excellent suit combination to study and understand.

2) Run the Queen. Did you count that only three cards are missing in the suit? Because of this the singleton King will not trouble you as the suit will then be breaking 2-1.

You should lead the Queen first to guard against K107 with East. If West shows out after Q-K-A you then return to hand and finesse against the ten next round to lose no tricks in the suit.

3) Lead the Jack and when West follows with 8 or 10 put up the Ace. Because only three cards are missing the singleton Queen is of no concern but holding Q108 West might mistakenly cover with the queen. It costs you nothing to start with the Jack to tempt an error, if you put no pressure on the opponents then they will make very few errors indeed.

4) Play low towards Q97 and when West plays low play the 9. Running the queen and then later the 9 is 76% to lose just one trick while playing the ace first and then low to the Q9 is a 76.5% chance to lose one trick while you have the chance of losing no tricks if East has the singleton king.

If you play low to the 9 first and this loses to the jack run the queen back for a finesse against the king.

This line improves your chances to 80.43%. If you assume West will play the king from king-doubleton on the first round, and 99% of players would, low to the 9 first improves your chances to 93.75%, only losing when West holds K73 and East the bare jack. Thank you to Wally Malaczynski and his friends in Poland for this one.

5) If the suit breaks 3-2 it is a straight guess whether to play towards the South hand and play the nine, jack or king. However when you examine the 4-1 breaks the best play is low to the king, since this loses two tricks instead of three if the king drops the singleton queen (or 10) offside. Now you are able to force out the other two honours, and still draw the last outstanding trump with the 8 and lose two tricks in the suit instead of three. What a difference that 8 makes

6) When opponents held this suit recently declarer cashed the ace and king. East's QJ64 sitting under AK72 suddenly became two tricks instead of none. In with the lead, East drew trumps and cashed two tricks in a long suit to defeat the contract.

Queen-jack onside is a substantial 25% chance, so declarer should first run the 10. If that loses to an honour, only three cards are now outstanding, so cash the ace. If both opponents follow draw the one outstanding trump. If West shows out return to hand, and pick up the suit by finessing through East.

7) Play the King and then run the Jack. That 7 is a big card and gives you two extra chances to take four tricks in the suit when it breaks 4-1, the singleton 8 and singleton 9 in East:

A1075	A1075
Q963            8	Q863            9
KJ42	KJ42

If West covers the jack with the queen and East shows out come back to hand and take a second finesse to make four tricks in the suit.

8) Run the nine. When this hand came up in the 2011 VCC in Melbourne I ran the 9 and the suit was:

AK73
QJ104            8
9652

If the five outstanding cards divide 3-2 then nothing matters but if they divide 4-1 then only the situation above matters. Was this terribly clever? No, I had just finished reading Barry Rigal's excellent book on technique, "Breaking the Bridge Rules", where I came across this suit combination. The only thing it proves is that reading bridge books really can improve your results.

9) Run the Jack. If the six missing cards break 3-3 then two tricks must always be lost. When you

examine the more likely 4-2 breaks (4-2=48%, 3-3=36%), leading the Jack first holds you to two losers in the suit when West holds Qx or Kx, so is the correct play when the suit includes the 8.

If the play goes J-Q-A-5 how should you continue:

```

      2
    6      Q107
      9843
  
```

When you play the two and East plays the seven should you rise 8 or 9 or duck? West could have started with K5, K6, K7, K10 or KQ so rising works 3 times out of 5.

What a difference the eight (and seven) makes! With J9543 opposite A2 (or J6543) the only 4-2 combination that makes any difference is when West holds doubleton 10 (KQ doubleton takes care of itself). The

correct play is therefore ace and another, and when East plays low play the jack!

10) Run the ten. It's not so easy to see the correct answer to this old chestnut. The 3-2 breaks are irrelevant, so, let's look at the 4-1 breaks. If East has singleton Q or J then two tricks must be lost, but what if East has the bare 9? Now, leading the 10 smotheres the nine. And if West covers the 10 with an honour, be it singleton or otherwise, just play back to the 8 to guarantee only one loser in the suit:

```

      A3
    QJ52      9
      K108764
  
```

*Paul Lavings*

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## Battling the Best: A new book from Sartaj Hans

(Bridge Winners Press, Printed in Australia, 2016, soft cover, 209 pages) \$32.95 post-free

Battling the Best is the story of Sartaj Hans and Peter Gill doing battle with the world's best at the 2014 three-day Reisinger, the main event at the third of the three annual national US events. There is action aplenty and the hands are instructive and exciting.

But there is much more, with discussions on coping with a disaster, staying focused and taking time to plan the play or defence. Sartaj also treats the reader to his thoughts on the recent cheating scandals and various ethical situations top players face at the table. Nor does the author shy away from discussing his own errors when there is a valuable lesson to be learned.

Of the many great deals in the book this hand played by Peter Gill in the 2012 Reisinger stands out:

*Dealer: North, Vul: Nil*

<p>♠ 862 ♥ K42 ♦ K1052 ♣ K32</p>	<p>♠ K7 ♥ 75 ♦ AJ876 ♣ A654</p>	<p>♠ AQJ43 ♥ J ♦ Q93 ♣ J987</p>	
	<p>♠ 1095 ♥ AQ109863 ♦ 4 ♣ Q10</p>		
<i>WEST</i> <i>Stansby</i>	<i>NORTH</i> <i>Hans</i>	<i>EAST</i> <i>Bramley</i>	<i>SOUTH</i> <i>Gill</i>
2♠ All pass	1♦ Dble	1♠ Pass	2♥ 4♥

The ♠8 was led to ♠J and East returned ♥J. Gill won ♥A and it seems natural now to play another spade hoping to ruff the third spade in dummy. Seeing further into the hand Gill played ♦A and ruffed a diamond before playing a second spade. The position now was:

```

      ♠ -
      ♥ 7
      ♦ J87
      ♣ A654
  
```

<p>♠ 6 ♥ K4 ♦ K10 ♣ K32</p>	<p>♠ 10 ♥ Q10986 ♦ - ♣ Q10</p>	<p>♠ Q43 ♥ - ♦ Q ♣ J987</p>
---	--	---

There was no winning continuation for East, a club or a diamond was out and a third round of spades would allow declarer to ruff in dummy, ruff another diamond and drive out HK and later squeeze West in clubs and diamonds. Seeing all this East returned ♣7 but Gill simply inserted the 10.

Hans and Gill play Meckstroth-Rodwell style Precision and there are many valuable system discussions and comparisons of methods along the way. An excellent read not only for seasoned players but also for the lesser player who is interested to see how the expert mind operates.

*Reviewed by Paul Lavings*

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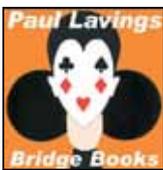
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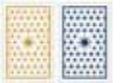
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