

Bulletin 7

Friday 16th January

Session Times

	Today
Butler	9am-6pm
Coaching @ Rex	9:00am-9:30am
Side Events @ Rex	9:45am-6pm
BBQ @ Park	6pm
Session Times	Tomorrow
Butler	9am-6pm
Coaching @ Rex	9:00am-9:30am
Side Events @ Rex	9:45am-6pm



Phase 1 (Butler) of the Australian Junior Selection in two thirds complete. At the conclusion of play today the highest ranking pair will qualify to the Australian Junior Team and the lowest 5 pairs will be eliminated. For now, the field is still very close:

Current Standings after Round 12 of 18

Rank	Pair	Imps	VPs	W-D-L
1	PADDY TAYLOR / BERTIE MORGAN	98.00	151.45	8-2-2
2	ADRIAN LE / FLETCHER DAVEY	98.75	149.30	7-1-4
3	DIYA SHAH / DEV SHAH	80.00	146.83	8-0-4
4	TAYDON GOLD / JADE WILKINSON	22.00	128.67	7-1-4
5	HEATH WATKINS / KATE MACDONALD	14.50	124.59	7-0-5
6	REMCO SPENCER / ZAC ROSS	-1.50	120.28	6-0-6
7	ADA SUN / ALEX WU	-29.50	109.94	5-1-6
8	DAVID ZHENG / NOAH KLUGMAN	-65.75	99.19	3-2-7
9	SAMUEL GOSS / ALEX GOSS	-84.00	91.75	3-2-7
10	JESSICA HE / BYRON FRENCH	-132.50	78.00	1-1-10

Trans-Tasman Challenge

4 teams of Australian and New Zealand competed in the Trans-Tasman Challenge. Congratulations to Team NewZealand 1 (**Leon Meier, Ellie Molloy, Tamati Greig, Emma Fitzgerald**) winning on carry forward over Team Australia 1 (**Darren Brake, Alan Stoneham, Aadhi Hariharan, Natalie Newman**). It was a draw in the final!

Qualifying result:

Team	Imps	VPs
New Zealand 1	96	65.39
New Zealand 2	26	46.10
Australia 1	17	43.40
Australia 2	-139	5.11

Final result:

Team	Carryover	Score	Total
New Zealand 1	0.1	9	9.1
Australia 1	0	9	9.0

Opening Lead Quiz

What do you lead from this West hand, given this auction?

West:

♠ K86
♥ AK6
♦ 984
♣ J952

Auction (E/W vul):

North	East	South	West
—	—	1NT	Pass
2C	Pass	2D	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

South shows 15-17, balanced, no 4-card Major.

Answer later in the Bulletin

If you are playing bridge at the Rex, please turn up by 9:30am, play starts at 9:45am.
Lunch will be served on Level 5 for youth players @ Rex.

State Scramble

Four teams competed in a new event called the State Scramble. The “scramble” refers to the fact that not all players are from the state they represent for this event. The format is a round robin and the teams are:

WA	NSWA	ACT	QuACT
Nicola Lachenicht	Hamish Newman	Gwenyth Meadows	Jackson Hodge
Campbell Millar	Samuel Mccallum White	Alexis Wilsmore	Anthony Mills
William Boye Cam	Elijah Guest	Alexander Wilkinson	Reya Shah
Lizzy Brayshaw	Oliver Brayshaw	Aaron Kendal	Ricky Carthew

Results:

Team	Imps	VPs
NSWA	68	49.88
ACT	-22	25.29
QuACT	-17	24.66
WA	-29	20.17

Congratulations to team NSWA (**Hamish Newman, Samuel Mccallum White, Elijah Guest, Oliver Brayshaw**) for winning this inaugural event.



Trans-Tasman Challenge & State Scramble in progress

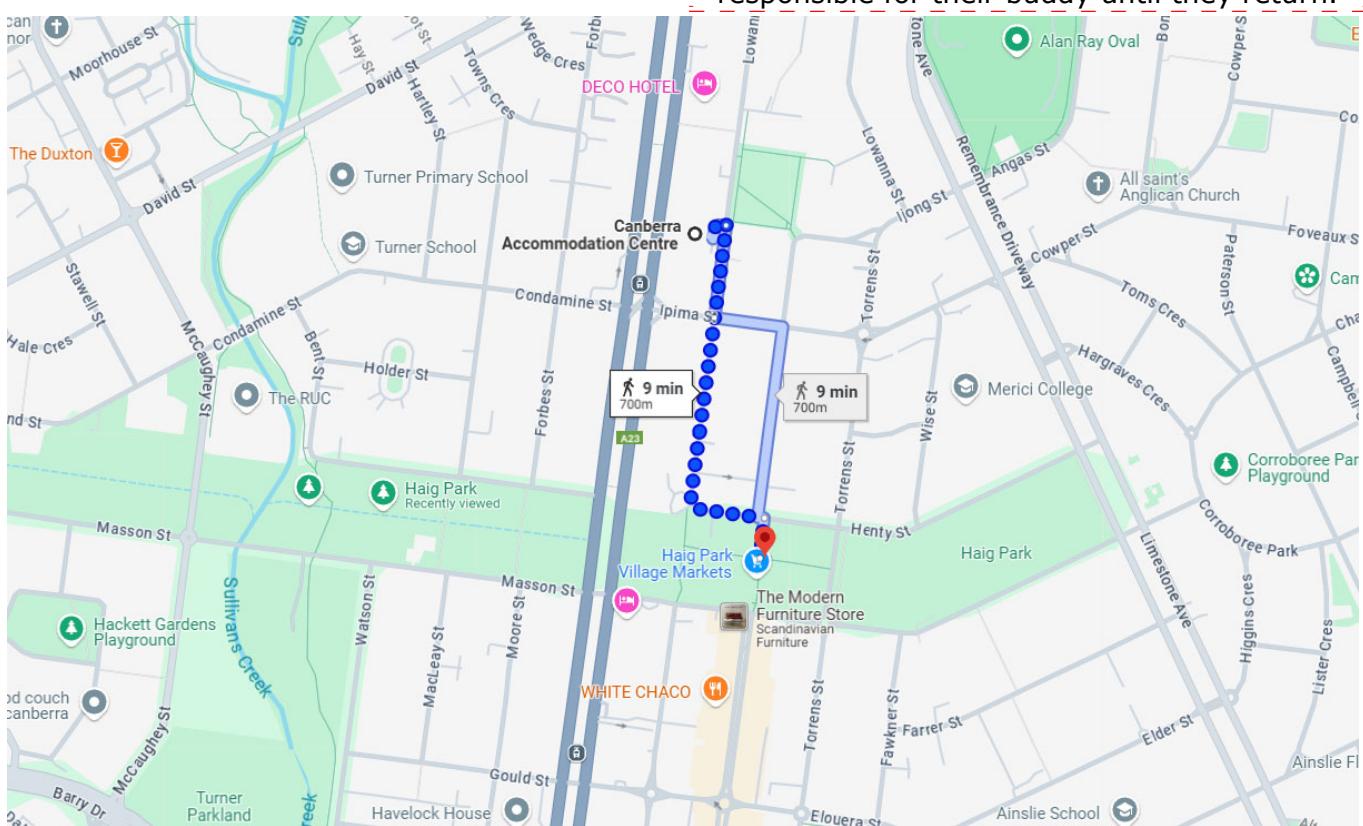
Crazy Pairs Results

Crazy Pairs 2026			
North-South		East-West	
Place	%	Place	%
1 DIYA SHAH - HEATH WATKINS	71.43%	1 DEV SHAH - NOAH KLUGMAN	65.77%
2 ANDREW SPOONER - LEON MEIER	56.55%	2 JESSIE PELENATO - TAMATI GREIG	64.88%
3 ZAC ROSS - GEORGE BARTLEY	55.06%	3 NATALIE NEWMAN - ALAN STONEHAM	64.58%
4 MARCUS DUDLEY - JEREMY FRASER-HOSKIN	54.76%	4 JEREMY REID - LEIGH MATHESON	58.93%
5 ANTHONY MILLS - JACKSON HODGE	54.17%	5 ALEX MEYER - JACK JAMES	57.14%
6 JADE WILKINSON - ZARA CHOWDHURY	53.87%	6 REMCO SPENCER - FLETCHER DAVEY	55.95%
7 ELLIE MOLLOY - EMMA FITZGERALD	51.79%	7 GRACE WANG - MATTHEW SIEREDZINSKI	48.21%
8 AADHI HARIHARAN - ASHLEY MATHESON	49.70%	8 ELIJAH GUEST - OLIVER BRAYSHAW	45.24%
9 TAYDON GOLD - DAVID ZHENG	45.24%	9 KATE MACDONALD - SAMUEL GOSS	43.75%
10 DAMON FLICKER - HAMISH NEWMAN	42.86%	10 RICKY CARTHEW - GEORGE ZIHAO WANG	41.37%
11 ALEX GOSS - BYRON FRENCH	42.26%	11 NICOLA LACHENICHT - LIZZY BRAYSHAW	38.10%
12 JASSY CARTHEW - CAMPBELL MILLAR	39.58%	12 JEREMY LIN - ALEXANDRA MILLS	37.20%
13 SEBASTIAN REDIN - JESSICA HE	32.74%	13 NATALEE WHITE - ALEXIS WILSMORE	28.87%

BBQ (subject to weather)

At the conclusion of play today (approx. 6pm) there will be our traditional BBQ at the park.

Note to all walking from Canberra Accommodation Centre to Haig Park – The buddy system applies: Everyone will be responsible for their buddy until they return.



The smallest gift that made the biggest difference (by Zac Ross)

This hand was played in Match 10 of the Youth Teams event:

Both Vul	♦ A9872
Dlr: East	♥ QT
	♦ 95
Zac	♣ J864
♠ 43	Remco
♥ A5	♦ KQ65
♦ AKJ43	♥ J9872
♣ KQT7	♦ QT7
	♣ A
6NT, E	♦ JT
Lead: SJ	♥ K643
	♦ 862
	♣ 9532



South	West	North	East
—	—	—	1H
Pass	2D	Pass	2S
Pass	3C	Pass	3NT
Pass	6NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1H showed 5+, 2D game forcing, 2S showing a 54, 3C fourth suit waiting, 3NT to play and feeling a bit excited (we were joking around at the table). I punted a gloriously terrible 6NT (not even a quantitative invite!) Notice how we can only make 11... yeah bad bid. Nevertheless, as dummy came down Remco knuckled down for a fight instead of punching me in the face. The lead was the jack of spades which went small, ace and small. This gave Remco 11 top tricks and the contract is now ice cold – our opponents had given Remco the gift he needed.

Cashing diamonds, Remco watched North's discards like a hawk, but it was all over on the first club pitch as he now has 12 top tricks. North's QT in hearts is their downfall. If hearts are pitched, South's King gets hooked. If clubs are pitched the Jack will drop. And if spades are pitched, Remco can set up his last small spade. Incredible play was required and incredible play was delivered.

Editor's note: this type of play (squeezing an opponent with a finesse threat) is called a Guard Squeeze. And it's incredibly rare. This would be the end position:

♠ 98		
♥ Q		
♦ —		
Zac	♣ J864	Remco
♠ —	♦ Q6	
♥ A5	♥ J987	
♦ A	♦ —	
♣ KQT7	♣ A	
	♠ —	
	♥ K64	
	♦ —	
	♣ 9532	

When West cashes the last diamond, North is Guard Squeezed. A spade or a club discard establishes a 12th trick for declarer. Whereas discarding the HQ allows declarer to cross to hand with the CA to run the HJ.



Zac Ross (left) acting as self-appointed non-playing-non-captain for the ACT and Qld teams in the State Scramble event.



Reya's (almost) "beer" card

Special mention to 9-year-old Reya, who scored the D7 on the *first* round of diamonds. Whilst technically not a "beer card", this feat surely occurs less often and is more impressive.

Elijah's ~~beer~~ coke card

E/W Vul ♠ T3
 Dlr: ♥ J852
 South ♦ AQ6
 ♣ KT64
 ♠ K86
 ♥ AK6
 ♦ 984
 ♣ J952

N
W
E
S

♠ J9754
 ♥ T43
 ♦ T5
 ♣ Q83

♠ AQ2
 ♥ Q97
 ♦ KJ732
 ♣ A7

South	West	North	East
1NT	Pass	2C	Pass
2D	Pass	3C	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

This deal came up during the State Scramble event. 12-year-old Elijah Guest managed to preserve the D7 until the last trick to make his contract.



Well done Elijah.

Rectifying the Count (by Heath Watkins)

This hand was played in Match 10 of the Youth Teams event:

E/W Vul	♠ AT75	South	West	North	East
Dlr:	♥ AKQ9	—	—	—	Pass
East	♦ A74	Pass	2S*	Dble	Pass
	♣ Q3	Pass	2NT**	3NT	Pass

♠ QJ842	♠ K9	*2S = Spades and a minor		
♥ T7	♥ J654	2NT =		
♦ J8	♦ KT96	Lebensohl (weak hand response)		
♣ K987	♣ JT6			
	♠ 63			
Lead:	♥ 832			
S4	♦ Q532			
	♣ A542			

Heath ducked the first two tricks, East winning the S9 and SK. The DT switch was taken in hand with the DQ and Heath played a club, ducked to the CQ. With 8 top tricks, a squeeze was in order.

♠ AT	♠ —
♥ AKQ9	♥ J654
♦ A7	♦ K96
♣ 3	♣ JT
♠ QJ8	♠ —
♥ T7	♥ 832
♦ J	♦ 532
♣ K98	♣ A54

Needing to lose two more tricks to rectify the count, Heath started with a low diamond away from Ax. East won and returned a diamond. Needing to lose one more trick, he now led a low spade away from Ax. West won and returned the suit. These cards were left:

♠ —	♠ —
♥ AKQ9	♥ J654
♦ —	♦ 9
♣ 3	♣ —
♠ —	♠ —
♥ T7	♥ 83
♦ —	♦ 5
♣ K98	♣ A5
♠ —	
♥ 83	
♦ 5	
♣ A5	

A club to the Ace now forced East to give Heath his ninth trick in one of the red suits.

Anthony's beer card

Anthony unblocked a beer card nicely on this deal:

BOARD 26			
BD: 26	♠ 9 ♥ KJ9753 ♦ 852 ♣ J73		Dlr: E Vul: ALL
♠ AK74		♠ Q65	
♥ T		♥ A84	
♦ AT94		♦ KQ73	
♣ QT62		♣ AK9	
	♠ JT832		
	♥ Q62		
	♦ J6		
	♣ 854		

Anthony played in 3NT from the East seat after a routine auction. When he cashed two spades and found the break, he realised he could make 12 tricks and no more. So he ducked a heart! He won the return and cashed all the winners outside of diamonds. On last 4 tricks he played the D3 to the DA, the DT to the DK and the DQ unblocking the D9. This enabled him to win trick 13 with the D7, as dummy followed with the D4.



That's one crazy auction. What the...



1 Major, 3 minors



A break between sets



Paddy pretending to read up on bridge to be able to explain partnership defensive carding agreements to the opponents

ABF Youth Awards

The ABF Youth Awards celebrate excellence, commitment, sportsmanship and contribution in Australian youth bridge. There are four major awards presented each year at the Australian Youth Bridge Championships:

- Andrew Reiner Trophy
- Helman-Klinger Achievement Award
- Helman-Klinger Masterpoint Award
- Hills-Hurley Trophy

Andrew Reiner Trophy: George Bartley and Bertie Morgan

The Andrew Reiner Trophy is awarded to the best performed pair in the primary target international event, taking account of performance in the event itself, commitment and preparation and contribution to team success.

George Bartley and Bertie Morgan are deserving recipients of this award in 2025. Both are experienced Australian representatives, having played on Under 21 teams before moving up to the Under 26 category in 2024. George and Bertie had little time to prepare as a partnership, with the composition of the team changing just a few months before the World Championships in Italy. Despite this, they recorded the Under 26 team's most consistent results, especially against strong opposition. Both players also made an important contribution to the team's positive atmosphere throughout the event.



Helman-Klinger Achievement Award: Heath Watkins

This award is presented each year to the Australian Youth Bridge Player whose ability, achievements, sportsmanship, attitude, contribution and commitment during the calendar year are most deserving.

Heath has shown exceptional development and contribution throughout the year. He advanced quickly to become one of Australia's leading youth competitors. Heath won the 2025 youth team trials and represented Australia for the first time at the World Youth Championships in Italy. With his partner Matt Sieredzinski, he finished 8th in the Victorian Festival of Bridge Open Pairs. He and Kate Macdonald reached the quarter-finals of the SNOT Open Teams Plate. And he consistently achieved strong results at Victorian congresses.

You would have seen Heath at almost every national event on the calendar in 2025. He practices hard, analyses boards, and works to improve his game. Additional, Heath has put in the effort to play with a number of partners and



is eager to play with and learn from more experienced players.

Heath is known for his positive table manner, ethical play and being enjoyable to partner or oppose. He regularly attends Victorian youth nights and supports and encourages less experienced youth players.

Helmen-Klinger Masterpoint Award: Heath Watkins

This award is given to the Australian Youth Player who earns the most masterpoints in the calendar year (excluding players who have already won this award).

Heath Watkins won the Helman-Klinger Masterpoint Award with 196.53 MPs in 2025. While Kate Macdonald earned 199.25 MPS, she was ineligible as she has won the award in a previous year. Special mentions to Kate Macdonald for winning the Life Master McCutcheon, Alex Goss for taking out the Bronze National Master McCutcheon, Lauren Morgan for placing 2nd in the National Master category, Anne Davey for placing 3rd in the Bronze State Master category, and Duncan Lai for placing 2nd in the State Master behind Heath in 1st place.

Hills-Hurley Trophy: Kate Macdonald and Zac Ross

This trophy, donated by Richard Hills and Steve Hurley, is to encourage talented young bridge players in forming long-standing partnerships and reward successful pairs which have developed a well-organised partnership to harness their full potential.

In 2021 Zac and Kate were both very new to bridge, and they looked across the table at the empty bridge club that was Qld youth nights, and realised their destiny must lay ahead together. They quickly took to club play and formed a partnership for the ANC that year.

It was then that the competitive bridge bug really bit them and they went from strength to strength, playing in congresses, winning the Gold Cost novice pairs in 2023, and playing ANCs and youth weeks. They brought an enthusiastic and supportive attitude to their play together, along with their questionable assortment of matching Hawaiian shirts and KFC bucket headwear.

At the 2025 youth week selection trials they jumped like Mario over each collapsing ledge and were eventually rewarded with their first taste of international play as a pair. Their partnership has shown how invaluable it is to stay positive, patient and persistent whether results are good or bad.

They have each put significant work into forming new youth partnerships recently, and both partnerships have prospered early on, in no small part due to the same traits that Kate and Zac learnt and developed together.

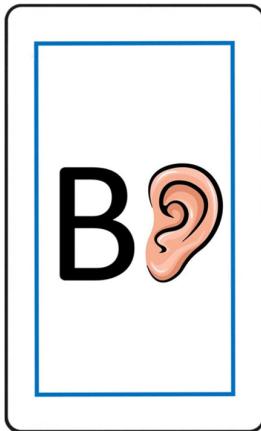
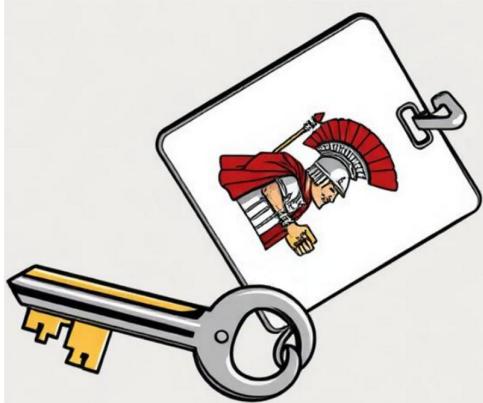


Puzzle Corner

Can you work out the following puzzles (solutions next bulletin):

DIB

P



Answers to yesterday's puzzles:

- Getting up at the break of dawn
- Receding hairline
- Hijinks
- A round of drinks on the house

Opening Lead Quiz

by Leigh Matheson

Today's hand comes from Match 9 of the Butler stage of the Australian Junior selection event:

E/W Vul ♠ T3
 Dlr: South ♦ J852
 ♦ AQ6
 ♣ KT64

♠ K86 ♠ J9754
 ♥ AK6 ♥ T43
 ♦ 984 ♦ T5
 ♣ J952 ♣ Q83

N
W
E
S

♠ AQ2 ♠ AQ2
 ♥ Q97 ♥ Q97
 ♦ KJ732 ♦ KJ732
 ♣ A7 ♣ A7

South	West	North	East
1NT	Pass	2C	Pass
2D	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Should we lead 4th from our longest suit or does a high heart look appealing? Let's see what a simulation of 5000 hands says:

Lead card	% defeat	Ave tricks	Score
HA/HK	32.42%	4.01	10
D8	20.44%	3.58	3
C2	18.40%	3.46	2
S6	15.48%	3.37	0

This was the most clearcut simulation of the week. A top heart lead is the best lead by a huge margin. Why? Firstly, with declarer denying a Major suit, we should be inclined to lead one. Dummy won't have a 5 hearts and declarer won't have 4, so partner must have a minimum of 3 cards. There is no similar guarantee with the minor suits – in the extreme case, it's entirely possible partner has a void in clubs!

Hearts is also a more likely source of tricks. If we only find partner with the HQTxxx, we will beat the contract with a heart lead. A club lead, on the other hand, requires a lot more from partner to take the contract down.

Finally, the top heart lead is quite safe. Even if declarer has the HQ, partner will discourage and it will often not cost a trick. A club lead needs to find partner with multiple honours just to avoid giving away a trick.

2026 Program

Date	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Saturday 10th		Youth Pairs Qualifying (1pm – 7:30pm approx.)	Goulash Bridge
Sunday 11th	Youth Pairs Final (10:00am – 6:30pm approx.)		Scavenger Hunt
Monday 12th	Youth Teams Day 1/2 (10:00am – 6:30pm approx.)		Emma's Bridge
Tuesday 13th	Youth Teams Day 2/2 (10:00am – 6:30pm approx.)		Cliff Wake & Speedball Bridge
Wednesday 14th	Butler Stage 1 (9am – 6:30pm) Coaching (9:30am – 10:00am) Consolation (10:00am – 6:30pm)		Dinner out & Games / Trivia
Thursday 15th	Butler Stage 1 (9am – 6:30pm) Coaching (9:00am – 9:30am) Consolation (10:00am – 6:30pm)		Crazy Pairs
Friday 16th	Butler Stage 1 (9am – 6:30pm) Coaching (9:00am – 9:30am) Side Event – SFOB Open Pairs or U100MP Teams		BBQ / end of week presentations (6pm)
Saturday 17th	Butler Stage 2A (Times TBA) Side Event – SFOB Weekend Pairs		Butler Stage 2A (Times TBA)
Sunday 18th	Butler Stage 2B (Times TBA) Side Event – SFOB Weekend Pairs		Butler Stage 2B (Times TBA)

(Note: if an event time changes there will be an announcement and update of future bulletin programs)

Under-25 Junior Team Selection Format (unchanged from last year):

After 3 days of the Australian Junior Butler, the top pair will automatically qualify for the Australian Junior Team. The next 4 pairs will contest Stage 2A on Saturday 17th. At the end of Saturday, the top pair will join the Australian Junior Team and the bottom pair will be eliminated. On Sunday 18th the final two remaining pairs will fight it out in Stage 2B for the final spot on the Australian Junior Team.