

Summer Festival of Bridge

Wednesday 14 - Sunday 25 January 2026

Daily Bulletin



Sunday 18th January 2026

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Bulletin 4



Kate Macdonald and Heath Watkins won Phase 2A of the Australian Junior Team Selection on Saturday. They are the second pair to qualify for this year's Under 26 team, with a 48-board playoff between Fletcher Davey – Adrian Le and Diya Shah – Dev Shah taking place today to determine the final pair to qualify.

Today's Program

Sunday 18th January

National Women's Teams Finals

At The Canberra Common

9.00am – 6.30pm, 4 x 16-board rounds

National Seniors' Teams Finals

At The Canberra Common

9.00am – 6.30pm, 4 x 16-board rounds

TBIB IMP Swiss Pairs

(Open, U750, U500, U300, U100)

9.45am – 4.00pm, 5 x 9-board rounds

Lunch + Kiosk

Food and beverage is available for purchase onsite. Bridge patrons (not staying at the Rex) are kindly requested not to bring food or beverages purchased elsewhere into the hotel for consumption on the premises.

The kiosk will be staffed from 8:30am to 4pm every day for snacks and light refreshments. Lunch can be pre-ordered from the kiosk or the Swan and King restaurant on level 5. Food is available for purchase from the kiosk at lunch, but pre-orders are strongly recommended.

The Howling Moon rooftop bar on level 6 will be open each day after play.

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System Health Check

Just like a heart health check on your cardiovascular system is important, a bridge system check can also identify problems before it's too late.



What is the meaning of this jump to 4NT in your partnership? Is it a keycard ask or quantitative? Why?

1NT – 2♦

2♥ – 4NT

This system health check is sponsored by the Heart Research Institute. Please support those who support bridge by wearing RED on Tuesday 20th January.



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Results

National Women's Teams Semi-Finals

THOMPSON (Jenny Thompson – Hannah O'Donnell, Linda King – Avril Zets) 166.1 defeated MOTT (Judy Mott – Marcia Scudder, Nazife Bashir – Kinga Moses) 105

TOBIN (Judith Tobin – Karen Creet, Helene Pitt – Ruth Tobin) 108 defeated SMYTH (Felicity Smyth – Sheila Bird, Therese Demarco – Sue Lusk) 94.1

National Seniors' Teams Semi-Finals

KOZAKOS (George Kozakos – Hugh Grosvenor, Maurits van der Vlugt – David Beauchamp, Terry Brown – Ian Thomson) 134.1 def SMOLANKO (George Smolanko – Attilio de Luca, Axel Johannsson – Kate McCallum) 123

DEPASQUALE (Chris Depasquale – Michael Courtney, Peter Gill – David Hudson) 195 defeated EWART (Neil Ewart – Ian Robinson, Pauline Gumby – Warren Lazer, Andy Braithwaite – Arjuna de Livera) 106.1

TBIB Open IMP Swiss Pairs (after 6 of 11 rounds)

1 st	Tim Pan – Lysandra Zheng	94.77 VP
2 nd	Jamie Thompson – Matthew Vadas	85.63 VP
3 rd	Tom Kiss – William Zhang	85.35 VP
4 th	David Wiltshire – Sophie Ashton	85.13 VP
5 th	Kevin Steffensen – Carolyn Miller	84.44 VP

TBIB U750/500 IMP Swiss Pairs (after 6 of 11 rounds)

1 st	Jan Bennett – Derek Bartosh	85.91 VP
2 nd	Felix Shteyman – David Craig	84.53 VP
3 rd	Tamati Greig – Marcus Dudley	81.01 VP
4 th	Sandy Carter – Nerida Gillies	75.06 VP
5 th	Sharyn Dilosa – Roderic Roark	73.26 VP

TBIB U300/100 IMP Swiss Pairs (after 6 of 11 rounds)

1 st	Johnson Wong – Catherine Ng	88.23 VP
2 nd	Paula Corbett – Don Clark	82.73 VP
3 rd	Kenneth Baker – Heather Spencer	79.79 VP
4 th	Divyesh Shah – Rina Shah	76.38 VP
5 th	Prakash Muttuvelu – Craig Curry	75.73 VP

Australian Junior Team Selection Phase 2A

1 st	Kate Macdonald – Heath Watkins	41.44 VP
2 nd	Fletcher Davey – Adrian Le	33.26 VP
3 rd	Diya Shah – Dev Shah	27.80 VP
4 th	Taydon Gold – Jade Wilkinson	23.50 VP

RED DAY

TUESDAY 20 JANUARY

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The Heart Research Institute (HRI) partners with ABF

Much like a game of bridge, strong hearts and sharp minds are built through connection, strategy and care over time. That's why we're delighted to welcome HRI to this year's Festival. Their scientists are dedicated to understanding and preventing cardiovascular disease, the leading cause of death globally, so more Australians can enjoy long, active lives filled with the people and pastimes that they love.

Joining us from 19 - 21 January, HRI will be running a suite of activities that will be sure to keep your hearts happy and your cards in play. HRI will also be providing prizes to the Junior and Senior team champions.

You can get involved by:

- Wearing **RED** on Tuesday 20 January.
- Having a heart health check. HRI will be providing complimentary ECG and blood pressure checks. These 5 minute checks could save your life.
- Attending the complimentary lunch time health information session moderated by ABF member Professor Mathew Vadas.
- Chatting with the HRI team to learn about making a tax-deductible donation or gift that supports their groundbreaking research.



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TBIB Open Swiss Pairs – Round 1

What better place to start the TBIB Open Swiss Pairs than at table 1 with Liam Milne – Andy Hung facing Marianne Bookallil – Stephen Fischer? Unfortunately, the hands didn't provide much excitement – they waited until round 2. Liam and Andy defended board 1 nicely to defeat 3♥:

Board 1 ♠ K9642

Dealer N ♥ QJ

Vul Nil ♦ KJ4

♣ Q75

♠ A875

♥ 1032

♦ A6

♣ J984

♠ J10

♥ AK964

♦ Q872

♣ 62

♠ Q3

♥ 875

♦ 10953

♣ AK103

West	North	East	South
Fischer	Milne	Bookallil	Hung
	1♠	2♥	X
2♠	Pass	3♥	All Pass



Liam Milne

With his side holding about half the points, Andy Hung found the only winning lead: a trump which went to the 2, Jack and Ace. Marianne got to work setting up dummy's ruff, playing a diamond to the Ace and another diamond, won by Liam, who continued trumps: ♥Q – K – 8 – 3. A low diamond was ruffed in dummy but Marianne lacked an entry to her hand to draw the last trump. She cashed ♠A then played a small spade which Liam won. He exited ♠9, giving Andy a trump promotion along with the two top clubs to beat the contract by one trick.

A Precision auction on board 3 landed Andy in the hot seat, having to make game with a distinct lack of HCP.

Board 3 ♠ QJ53

Dealer S ♥ K7654

Vul EW ♦ 6

♣ A74

♠ 6

♥ Q9832

♦ 983

♣ J932

♠ K97

♥ AJ

♦ AKJ54

♣ Q86

♠ A10842

♥ 10

♦ Q1072

♣ K105









Andy Hung

West	North	East	South
Fischer	Milne	Bookallil	Hung
			1♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Andy's 1♠ opening looks aggressive but as dealer at favourable vulnerability and playing limited openings it's fairly normal. Liam took advantage of the limited nature of Andy's hand, jumping straight to game.

Like board 1, a trump lead is the only way to kill this contract, but Stephen didn't find it, leading a 3rd/low ♥2. Marianne won her Jack then attempted to cash the ♥A which was ruffed. Andy had a bit of work to do – he needed to ruff three diamonds in the dummy and also required the ♠K to be onside in order to make. He played ♦10 to Marianne's Jack, and she led another diamond making dummy ruff. Andy trumped a heart to his hand then a diamond to dummy then cashed ♣A and ♣K. He played ♦Q, ruffed by Stephen and overruffed by dummy, then ♥K, ruffed by Marianne and overruffed by dummy. Down to ♠A10 and a club, he exited the club, forcing whichever opponent won the trick to take the spade finesse for him and gaining 6 well-deserved IMPs.

Celebrity Speaker Series

Week 1 Rex Hotel – 9.00-9.30am Free for National Rookies All-Rounder and National Novice All-Rounder players, \$5 for all other attendees			
Wednesday 14th January Damon Flicker What Will You Do? 	Thursday 15th January Will Jenner-O'Shea Competitive Bidding 	Friday 16th January Laura Ginnan Opening Leads 	
In this practical, hands-on session, Damon puts you in the hot seat and presents real situations where you choose your actions. Compare your decisions with others at the table and see whether you would make the same choices as Damon – and why.	A fresh new approach to When to Compete, and When to Defend. Which contracts should you aim to PLAY and when should you push the opponents out of their contract. Discussion about which cards are better for playing and better for defending.	The opening lead is the defence's first strike and often sets the course of the entire hand. This hands-on session puts cards in your hands, exploring how a well-chosen opening lead can build tricks, apply pressure, and put declarer on the back foot. Discussion will include choosing the right suit, leading with purpose, and using the auction to make that crucial first move count.	
Week 2 Canberra Accommodation Centre – 9.00-9.30am Free for National Restricted All-Rounder and National U750 All-Rounder players, \$5 for all other attendees			
Monday 19th January Andy Hung Defending With or Without Signals 	Tuesday 20th January Will Jenner-O'Shea Tournament Tools 	Wednesday 21st January Laura Ginnan Decision Dynamics 	
Defence can be straightforward when your partner provides a helpful signal, but there are times when partner had no opportunity to give a signal and you must rely on your own judgment. How do the top players still manage to find the winning defence? Join Andy as he shares some of the hidden secrets to improve your defence!	Conventions and Bids you need to be prepared for in Competitions. Defence to 1NT (Strong AND Weak). Defence to Weak Twos. Defence to Multi Twos. How to Handle Strange and Undiscussed situations.	Every hand presents a series of choices that shape the final result. In this hands-on session, Laura guides you through different situations, exploring the options at each turn and putting you in the position to decide what you would do.	

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Jenna and Julian's Tragedy and Triumph

Julian Foster reported on a hand from Match 2 of the Fixed Income Solutions Pairs where he and Jenna Gibbons thought they'd got away with murder only to have their hopes dashed.

Board 15	♠ A1043	
Dealer S	♥ J109852	
Vul NS	♦ 84	
	♣ 2	
♠ Q82		♠ J5
♥ K74		♥ AQ6
♦ AQ1073		♦ K2
♣ Q5		♣ AK8764
	♠ K976	
	♥ 3	
	♦ J965	
	♣ J1093	

Julian and Jenna reached 6NT by West after a 1NT opening. Obviously it's an awful contract – they are off the ♠AK – but they received a heart lead. A moment of joy: there are 12 top tricks outside spades, as long as clubs break. Then the discovery that they don't.

They weren't the only ones. 6NT was reached at five tables and all but one North led a heart.

Jenna played the following hand nicely in Match 5 to secure her contract:

Board 9	♠ AQ64		
Dealer N	♥ AQJ9		
Vul EW	♦ 8		
	♣ AK94		
♠ 7		♠ K853	
♥ K10		♥ 7653	
♦ AKQJ95		♦ 1043	
♣ J1065		♣ 83	
	♠ J1092		
	♥ 842		
	♦ 762		
	♣ Q72		
West	North	East	South
	Foster		Gibbons
	1♣	Pass	1♠ !
2♦	4♦ *	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Julian was excited when Jenna responded 1♠ but after splintering he respected her signoff ("I've seen her responses before"). West led ♦A and switched to a trump, Jenna inserting the Queen to attempt to create trump entries to her hand for later. East won then played a second diamond, tapping dummy.

Jenna needed to establish heart tricks but didn't want to burn her ♣Q entry to hand and couldn't afford to play another trump and expose a diamond loser, so she exited ♥Q. If the opponents win and play diamonds she can ruff high, and on any other continuation she can win, draw trumps and claim.

Of course, with ♥K being doubleton onside, Jenna could have made 11 tricks by taking just one heart finesse, and she might have done so on Wednesday or Thursday, but this was a safer play at IMPs.

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4-16 July 2026

Sat 4 July	Sun 5 July	Mon 6 July	Tue 7 July	Wed 18 July	Thu 9 July	Fri 10 July
	INTERSTATE CAPTAINS MTG	INTERSTATE TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP (Final rounds start on Thu evening)				
WELCOME SWISS PAIRS		AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY CLUB TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP			AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY PAIRS CHAMPIONSHIP	
ROOKIE PAIRS	NOVICE PAIRS	THREE DAY TEAMS			GRADED PAIRS	INTERSTATE PAIRS CH'SHIP
		SWISS PAIRS I	SWISS PAIRS II	SWISS PAIRS III		
		PRESENTATION DINNER				

Sat 11 July	Sun 12 July	Mon 13 July	Tue 14 July	Wed 15 July	Thu 16 July
OPEN BUTLER STAGE 1		OPEN BUTLER STAGE 2		OPEN BUTLER STAGE 3	
RESTRICTED BUTLER		MIXED BUTLER STAGE 1		MIXED BUTLER STAGE 2	
INTRO TO IMP SCORING	MATCHPOINT PAIRS	SWISS PAIRS A		SWISS PAIRS B	
				PRESENTATION DRINKS	

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Inviting all **Youth Bridge players** to join Canberra Bridge Club's Wednesday night session on **January 21. 5-7 Duff Pl, Deakin.**

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Pizza starts at 6:30, Session starts at 7:15

Let Suz know if you're interested – 0474 946 029

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TBIB Open Swiss Pairs – Round 2

If you approach table 32 of a Swiss Pairs event, you wouldn't usually expect to find dozens of Australian national championships between the four players. Andy Hung, Liam Milne, Phil Markey and Andrew Spooner have countless titles and years of international representation under their belts.

On board 11, the auction went:

West	North	East	South
Milne	Markey	Hung	Spooner
	1♠	Pass	2♣ *
Pass	2♦ *	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

2♣ was a three-way bid: GF with clubs, balanced GF, or limit raise or better in spades. Phil's 2♦ showed a non-minimum (which in his system Outback Acol means about 11+) and Andrew's 2NT clarified that he had a balanced GF hand (including hands with longer diamonds than clubs).

What would you lead holding:

♠ 108
♥ J983
♦ 94
♣ KQ1075

If you chose ♣K, congratulations, you led the same thing as Liam Milne and you lose 11 IMPs on this hand. The full hand:

Board 13	♠ A9764	
Dealer N	♥ K7	
Vul All	♦ Q63	
	♣ AJ2	
♠ 108		♠ K532
♥ J983		♥ Q6542
♦ 94		♦ KJ7
♣ KQ1075		♣ 3
	♠ QJ	
	♥ A10	
	♦ A10852	
	♣ 9864	



Andrew Spooner

Andrew won the club lead in dummy and played a low spade to his Queen. A diamond followed, to the Queen and King, and Andy switched to a low heart which was won in dummy. Andrew successfully finessed the ♦J then cashed the rest of his diamonds before playing a club towards dummy, which Liam won to continue hearts. Andrew ended up with ten tricks: two spades, two hearts, four diamonds and two clubs.

Almost all the pairs that made 3NT right-sided it to receive a club lead from West rather than the obvious heart from East.

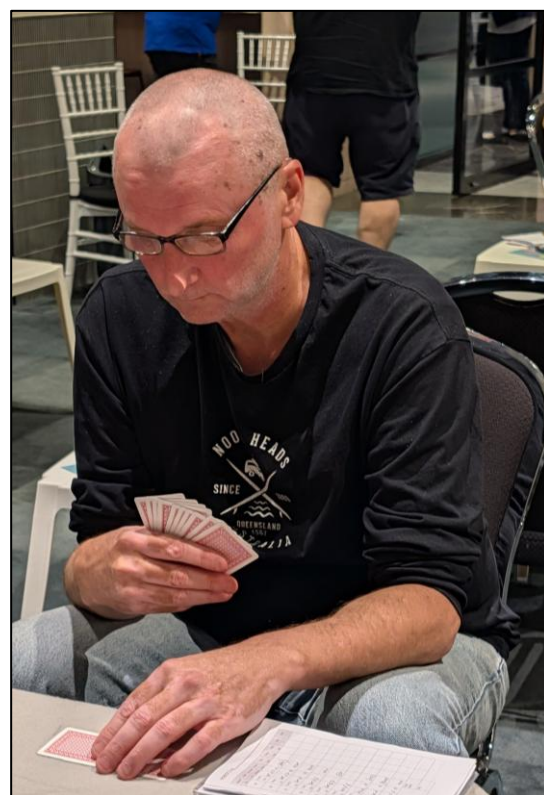
How often do you bid the trump suit for the first time at the 6-level? Phil and Andrew's auction was disrupted by Liam and Andy on this hand but they were undeterred and found the best spot thanks to a nice 5NT 'pick a slam' bid by Andrew:

Board 15 ♠ KQ43
 Dealer S ♥ AQ865
 Vul Nil ♦ 72
 ♣ 75

♠ 98	♠ 62
♥ J	♥ 1097432
♦ AQJ108643	♦ K5
♣ J8	♣ 942

♠ AJ1075
 ♥ K
 ♦ 9
 ♣ AKQ1063

West	North	East	South
Milne	Markey	Hung	Spooner
			1♣
4♦	X	5♦	5NT *
Pass	6♥	Pass	6♣
All Pass			



Phil Markey

Phil got to use an Outback Acol exclusive bid on board 17 and actually had the 'good' option when his partner invited!

Board 17 ♠ AQ94
 Dealer N ♥ K32
 Vul Nil ♦ J5
 ♣ A973

♠ 3	♠ J52
♥ AJ96	♥ Q754
♦ Q64	♦ K9872
♣ K10542	♣ 6

♠ K10876
 ♥ 108
 ♦ A103
 ♣ QJ8

West	North	East	South
Milne	Markey	Hung	Spooner
	1♣ *	1♦	1♥ (spades)
X	2♠ *	3♥	X
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Phil's 1♣ opening showed either 14+ HCP balanced or 9+ HCP with clubs. After Andrew's transfer, Phil bid 2♠ which is 9-10 with 3 or 4 spades, or 14-16 balanced with 4 spades. It's not always easy to diagnose which hand partner has, but here Andrew was able to make an invitational double of 3♥ which Phil accepted with his strong hand. With ♥A onside he easily made 10 tricks.

With almost all the hands going the way of North-South, and Phil and Andrew making the most of it, the IMPs only flowed in one direction providing Phil and Andrew with a 20-0 win.

TBIB Open Swiss Pairs – Round 3

Liz Adams started match 3 with a bang.

Board 21 ♠ 876
 Dealer N ♥ 1086
 Vul NS ♦ 862
 ♣ QJ85

♠ 92	♠ AQJ
♥ 43	♥ QJ92
♦ KJ10	♦ Q743
♣ K109742	♣ A3

♠ K10543
 ♥ AK75
 ♦ A95
 ♣ 6

West	North	East	South
Jacob	Gue	Adams	Tomlin
	Pass	1NT	2♣ *
3NT	All Pass		



Liz Adams

After Josh Tomlin showed both majors over Liz's 15-17 point 1NT opening, Nick Jacob didn't care: he bid 3NT.

Josh led ♠4 which was won with Liz's Queen. She played ♣A and a club to the King, getting the bad news when Josh discarded the ♠5. Having to switch gears, she moved on to hearts: 3 – 8 – Queen – King. Josh switched to a passive diamond, won in dummy with the King, but Liz played the hand perfectly: ♦J around to the Ace, with Josh exiting a diamond back to dummy. Now Liz called for a heart, putting in the nine, and Josh won the Ace. He played a heart back to Liz's Jack, and she cashed ♦Q before exiting her last heart and forcing Josh to lead into her ♠AJ. Well planned and well executed!

She followed up her great play on board 24 with a fearless auction:

Board 24 ♠ 1073
 Dealer W ♥ KQ9743
 Vul Nil ♦ 62
 ♣ 109

♠ AK2	♠ QJ9654
♥ J1085	♥ A6
♦ J105	♦ AQ73
♣ AK8	♣ 4

♠ 8
 ♥ 2
 ♦ K984
 ♣ QJ76532

West	North	East	South
Jacob	Gue	Adams	Tomlin
1NT	2♦ *	4♦ *	Pass
4♥ *	Pass	4NT *	Pass
5♥	Pass	6♠	All Pass

Liz showed the correct amount of regard for David Gue's 2♦ overcall, showing a single-suited major. She bid 4♦ as a transfer to 4♠, but Nick presumably wasn't sure what style of Texas transfer they were playing so bid 4♥. When Liz keycarded, he still didn't know what trumps were so showed only two keycards – possibly luckily as they may have ended up in the unmakeable grand slam if he'd shown three!

David Gue committed a serious crime against bridge on board 19 but unfortunately wasn't punished for it. The bridge gods will come for you later in the week, mate.

Board 19 ♠ QJ865
 Dealer S ♥ KQ7
 Vul EW ♦ K76
 ♣ J9

♠ 9432	♠ 10
♥ 4	♥ AJ108632
♦ QJ942	♦ 1053
♣ K63	♣ 108

♠ AK7
 ♥ 95
 ♦ A8
 ♣ AQ7542



David Gue

West	North	East	South
Jacob	Gue	Adams	Tomlin
			1♣
Pass	1♥ (spades)	2♥	X *
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Josh showed 3-card spade support then his 3♥ was a general force showing a good hand and they got to the excellent contract of 4♠.

Liz Adams led ♣10 which dummy won with the Ace. David drew trumps in four rounds then played ♣J. When Liz's ♣8 appeared, he could safely overtake with the Queen to set up the club suit, but he had pre-determined that clubs were 4-1 and quickly called for a low card without thinking, and when Nick ducked, the club suit was dead with only one entry to dummy. Luckily for David, he had lots of other goodies, so he ended up losing two hearts and a diamond to still make his contract.

Please don't be like David. Watch the pips and unblock your suits.

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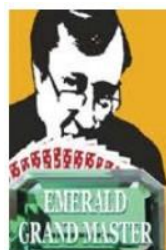
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National Women's Teams Semi-Finals

Thompson vs Mott

Thompson got off to a fast start, with a 52-IMP lead after the first 16-board stanza. Accurate slam bidding on this deal accounted for 12 of those IMPs:

Board 13 ♠ 10542

Dealer N ♥ 876

Vul All ♦ K852

♣ 109

♠ AJ6

♥ KJ4

♦ 93

♣ KQ863

♠ KQ73

♥ AQ95

♦ Q

♣ AJ72

♠ 98

♥ 1032

♦ AJ10764

♣ 54

West

North

East

South

King

Moses

Zets

Bashar

Pass

1♣

Pass

2♣ *

Pass

3♦ *

Pass

3♠ *

Pass

4♣ *

Pass

4NT *

Pass

6♣

All Pass



Linda King

Avril Zets and Linda King had a descriptive auction to get to 6♣. 2♣ was an inverted minor raise, 3♦ a splinter, and 3♠ perhaps a cuebid. Avril bid 4♣ to ask for keycards, Linda showed two with the queen, and Avril knew exactly where to play. After a spade lead, she won, drew trumps and claimed 13 tricks. At the other table, the opponents bid 1♣ - 3NT which made all the tricks on a spade lead but would have been an absolute disaster if North led a diamond!

There was more slam success when both tables bid to 6♥ after a multi 2♦ opening on board 5:

Board 5 ♠ Q632

Dealer N ♥ J53

Vul NS ♦ 632

♣ 1063

♠ AK8

♥ A9

♦ AKJ75

♣ A95

♠ 10

♥ KQ10874

♦ 109

♣ Q742

♠ J9754

♥ 62

♦ Q84

♣ KJ8

West	North	East	South
King	Moses	Zets	Bashar
	Pass	2♦ *	Pass
2NT *	Pass	3♠ *	Pass
4♣ *	Pass	4♦ *	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

Unfortunately explanations aren't available from this table but 2NT must have asked about Avril's hand with 3♠ showing a maximum with hearts. it's possible 4♣ was keycard and 4♦ showed one. Linda didn't need the ♥Q to be confident bidding 6, and thought 7♥ wasn't really going to have much chance (although it does make).

At the other table:

West	North	East	South
Mott	O'Donnell	Scudder	Thompson
	Pass	2♦ *	Pass
2NT *	Pass	3♠ *	Pass
4♠ *	Pass	5♣ *	Pass
5♦ *	Pass	6♥	All Pass

This table did have explanations available on Vugraph – Marcia Scudder showed a maximum with hearts, Judy Mott's 4♠ was Kickback, and Marcia showed one keycard. 5♦ asked for the ♥Q and 6♥ showed the Queen but no Kings.

At one table the diamonds were ruffed out and at the other the finesse was taken, but since they were 3-3 with the Queen onside the result was the same: 13 tricks for +1010.

Smyth vs Tobin

Continuing on the slam theme, Tobin extended their advantage over Smyth in the third stanza by handling this misfit very well:

Board 13 ♠ AKQJ104
 Dealer N ♥ 7
 Vul All ♦ 9
 ♣ A10853

♠ 98763 ♠ --
 ♥ Q109 ♥ K652
 ♦ 106 ♦ J7532
 ♣ J96 ♣ KQ42

♠ 52
 ♥ AJ843
 ♦ AKQ84
 ♣ 7

West	North	East	South
Demarco	J Tobin	Lusk	Creet
	1♠	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♣	Pass	5♠
Pass	6♣	All Pass	



Judith Tobin

The other table had a mostly similar auction but South stopped in 4♠ over North's 4♣. Karen Creet's 5♠ bid is great – provided partner has enough power in the spade suit, the rest of the South hand is absolute gold. Indeed it was in the play, with ruffing power and entries, and partner had just enough top spades to be able to deal with the 5-0 split.

Smyth came back in the final stanza, bringing the margin down to about 2 IMPs with a series of partscore and game swings. The biggest was courtesy of a sacrifice by Therese Demarco and Sue Lusk:

Board 19 ♠ 10
 Dealer S ♥ K10875
 Vul EW ♦ KQ7
 ♣ Q875

♠ AJ85	♠ Q9742
♥ QJ6	♥ 4
♦ 109	♦ AJ6542
♣ J642	♣ A

♠ K63
 ♥ A932
 ♦ 83
 ♣ K1093

West	North	East	South
Pitt	Demarco	R Tobin	Lusk
			Pass
Pass	1♥	2♥ *	4♥
4♠	5♥	All Pass	



Therese Demarco

With such a contested auction, it must have been unclear to Ruth Tobin and Helene Pitt whether they were being robbed or this was bid to make, so neither of them doubled 5♥. The defence went ♣A, spade to the Ace, and a diamond to the Ace, taking away the opportunity for East to get a club ruff. With one heart to lose, the contract went down two.

Felicity Smyth approached the East hand slightly differently:

West	North	East	South
Bird	J Tobin	Smyth	Creet
			Pass
Pass	2♥	3♦	4♥
Pass	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Karen Creet cashed ♥A then switched to ♣10 which Felicity won with the Ace. She ran her ♠Q, pinning the ten, then drew two more rounds of trumps. With both diamond honours onside she simply had to lose one more trick and made 11. Combined with her teammates' heroics, this created an 11 IMP gain and kept the match alive.

Despite fighting hard, Smyth couldn't quite do enough so Tobin will face Thompson in the National Women's Teams Final today across four stanzas.



Felicity Smyth

National Seniors' Teams Semi-Finals

Kozakos vs Smolanko

Board 5 was a grand affair at both tables in this match. While the competitors in the Women's field seemed to prefer showing the East hand as a weak 2, George Kozakos and George Smolanko both had an eye on the favourable vulnerability.

Board 5 ♠ Q632

Dealer N ♥ J53

Vul NS ♦ 632

♣ 1063

♠ AK8

♥ A9

♦ AKJ75

♣ A95

♠ 10

♥ KQ10874

♦ 109

♣ Q742

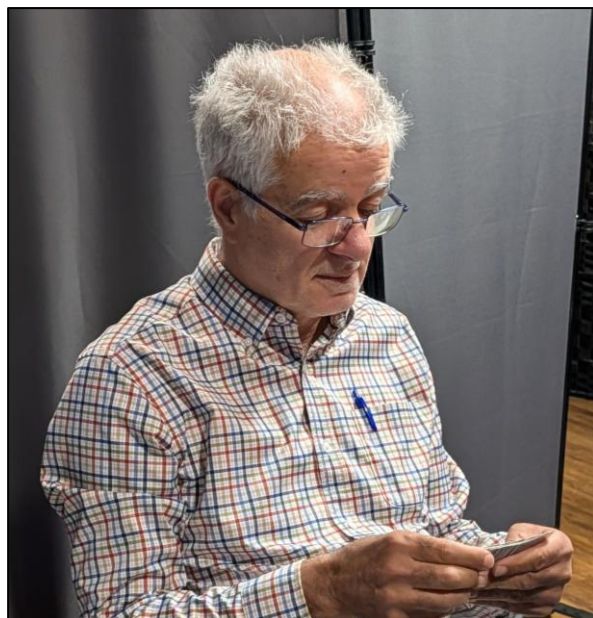
♠ J9754

♥ 62

♦ Q84

♣ KJ8

West	North	East	South
Grosvenor	McCallum	Kozakos	Johannsson
	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♣ *	Pass	4♠ *	Pass
7♥	All Pass		



Attilio De Luca

Hugh Grosvenor was not mucking around. He asked for keycards with 4♣ and when George showed one and the ♥Q, he was off to grand.

Attilio De Luca did a little more exploring to end up in the same spot:

West	North	East	South
De Luca	Beauchamp	Smolanko	van der Vlugt
	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♠ *	Pass	5♣ *	Pass
5♦ *	Pass	5♠ *	Pass
7♥	All Pass		

If I played Kickback in this position I'd be sweating on partner's response, hoping they didn't forget and pass. Thankfully, Attilio and George were on the same page, and George showed one keycard then confirmed the trump queen when asked.

Each of the Georges took a different line, but it was impossible not to make 13 tricks on this layout.

With the match in the balance toward the end of the fourth stanza, Kozakos led by 1.1 IMPs before gaining a game swing on board 30.

Board 30 ♠ 76
Dealer E ♥ 4
Vul Nil ♦ KQJ105
♣ AJ1087

♠ AQ10932
♥ KQ10
♦ 97
♣ 32

♠ KJ8
♥ A987
♦ 83
♣ Q965

♠ 54
♥ J6532
♦ A642
♣ K4



Axel Johannsson

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West	North	East	South
Grosvenor	McCallum	Kozakos	Johannsson
		Pass	2♦ *
2♠	3♦	3♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Axel Johannsson's 2♦ opening showed 3-9 HCP and a 5-card major. Kate McCallum led ♦K against 4♠ and when that held she continued with ♦10, perhaps trying to give suit preference to Axel. He overtook but must not have understood the signal, switching to a heart which gave away the contract. Even if Axel had played a trump, Hugh Grosvenor would have picked the heart position due to the opening bid, so Axel had to swing the club at trick 3.

West	North	East	South
De Luca	Beauchamp	Smolanko	van der Vlugt
		Pass	Pass
1♠	2♦	3♦ *	4♦
4♠	All Pass		

At this table, South had more information regarding North's strength so could possibly see that he didn't need to defend so aggressively. The defence started similarly: ♦K which held, then Beauchamp played ♦J, overtaken by Maurits who elected to switch to trumps. Attilio had far less information about the distribution than his counterpart at the other table and therefore didn't get the hearts right, so was unable to ditch a club and had to go one off.

Ewart vs Depasquale

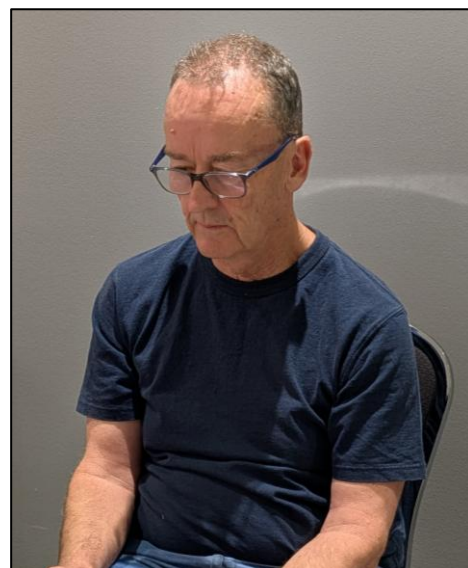
Stanza 3 in this match saw 96 IMPs exchanged in 16 boards! It was fearless bidding to game by David Hudson and Peter Gill on a number of hands that meant the IMPs mostly flowed in their direction.

Board 4 ♠ K864
 Dealer N ♥ K64
 Vul Nil ♦ QJ7
 ♣ J64

♠ J103	♠ Q752
♥ 9752	♥ AQJ3
♦ 8	♦ A103
♣ AQ982	♣ K7

♠ A9
♥ 108
♦ K96542
♣ 1053

West	North	East	South
Hudson	de Livera	Gill	Braithwaite
Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass
3♣ *	Pass	3♦ *	Pass
3♠ *	Pass	4♥	All Pass



David Hudson

Peter Gill's 1NT opening showed 15-17 HCP, but David Hudson must be a fan of Peter's cardplay – he committed to game right from the start. His 3♣ asked for a 5-card major, which Peter denied with 3♦, then David showed four hearts and Peter confirmed the fit.

Andy Braithwaite led a low diamond around to the Jack and Ace, then Peter ruffed a diamond in dummy before taking a heart finesse. When that worked, Peter didn't want to rely on clubs breaking so he began setting up spades, playing a low one to dummy's Jack and Arjuna De Livera's King. Arjuna continued diamonds, ruffed in dummy, and Peter played another spade to the Queen and Ace. Andy switched to a club which Peter won in his hand to play another spade which Andy ruffed. Another club was played, won in dummy, the third club was cashed for a spade pitch, and Peter took the heart finesse again to win the last three tricks and make 4♥. When the other room stopped at the 2-level that was worth 9 IMPs.

David and Peter bid 'em up again on board 12 while the other room again stopped conservatively:

Board 12 ♠ J1083
 Dealer W ♥ 97543
 Vul NS ♦ --
 ♣ 10864

♠ AK	♠ 762
♥ QJ62	♥ A
♦ AKQ9	♦ J87542
♣ Q72	♣ A95

♠ Q954
 ♥ K108
 ♦ 1063
 ♣ KJ3

West	North	East	South
Hudson	De Livera	Gill	Braithwaite
2NT	Pass	4♠ *	Pass
5♣ *	Pass	5♠ *	Pass
5NT	Pass	6♦	All Pass



Peter Gill

David's 2NT opening showed 20-21 HCP and Peter's 4♠ was a transfer to diamonds. I've always played this as a slam try so I can't imagine having partner transfer to my AKQx suit! David was obviously very keen on diamonds so keycarded with 5♣, Peter showed two, and David confirmed all the keycards. With nothing extra to show, Peter signed off in 6♦.

Peter found a nice line to guarantee the contract. On a trump lead, he drew all three rounds then played a heart to the Ace, spade to the King, heart ruff and spade back to the Ace. He ran ♥J, pitching a club, and when South won he claimed, throwing dummy's other small club on the established heart.

In the other room, Pauline Gumby took a less rosy view of the East cards. When her partner opened 2NT, she bid 3♣ to enquire about a 5-card major which he denied, then signed off in 3NT. The torrent of IMPs continued in Depasquale's favour and the margin was almost insurmountable three-quarters of the way through the match.



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Barbara's Daily Column: Leads, Leads, Leads

Barbara Travis

The auction:

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♥
All Pass			

You are West, on lead:

♠ A Q 10 6
♥ 7 3
♦ K Q J 4
♣ J 8 7

You should lead a heart, without any thought. Those diamonds can wait.

The reason you should lead a heart is in the auction. North has given false preference, choosing hearts ahead of spades. You already knew from the 1NT response that North was short in spades, but the pass of 2♥ reveals either a singleton or void in spades with three or four hearts. You want to limit dummy's ability to trump spades. When you think about it, your spades give you this information too (but you don't need good spades to lead a trump here; your partner may be holding the good spades instead).

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

If you lead a heart, your partner's Queen forces declarer's Ace. Declarer will probably cross to dummy with a club to the King, then lead a spade towards hand. You win the spade lead and lead a second heart. Partner wins the ♥K and continues your good work by leading a third heart. Now declarer has no ruffs available in dummy. They will make 3 hearts, 1 diamond and 2 clubs: down 2.

On the other hand, if you lead a diamond, declarer will make a lot of extra trump tricks. They win the ♦A and lead a spade, which you win. You probably realise you should have led a heart, so switch to trumps now, but it's too late.

Declarer wins the Ace, then trumps a spade in dummy. A diamond is ruffed in hand, and another spade is trumped in dummy (dummy now has no more trumps). Another diamond is trumped in hand, then the ♠A and ♠K are cashed. That is already 8 tricks, and declarer can lead another diamond from dummy, eloping with the ♥J (if East trumps with the ♥K, the Jack becomes a winner; if East discards, declarer's ♥J can be used), for 9 tricks.

One of the hugely successful lead rules is to lead a trump when opener has bid two suits and responder leaves them in the second-bid suit.

Other classic examples for such a trump lead are auctions such as:

Example 1

West	North	East	South
	2♥ (1)	Pass	2NT (asks minor)
Pass	3♦	All Pass	

(1) Weak hand with 5 hearts + 4+ minor

South has denied any interest in hearts and has asked North to bid their minor. Lead a trump to stop the heart ruffs.

Example 2

West	North	East	South
	1♥	2♥ (1)	Pass
3♣ (2)	Pass	3♦ All Pass	

(1) Michaels Cue Bid showing 5 spades + 5+ minor

(2) Pass or correct – to find partner's minor suit

West has shown no interest in spades, but is keen to play in the minor. Lead a trump to stop any spade ruffs.

Example 3

West	North	East	South
1NT	2NT (1)	Pass	3♦
All Pass			

(1) North's 2NT overcall showed at least 5-5 in the minors

South's 3♦ response showed far more interest in diamonds than clubs. It is best to lead a diamond, to prevent club ruffs. (If South had bid 3♣ there is less inference about the length of the suits, but a club lead will still be best more often than not.)

Example Hand

What would you do in this situation? You are West and on lead against South's 4♠:

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

You hold:

♠ K J 5 4
♥ Q 8 7 6 5
♦ 3
♣ A 6 5

Did you lead the ♦3? If so, the contract will make.

♠ Q 7 6
♥ A 9 4
♦ 5 4
♣ 10 9 8 7 6

♠ K J 5 4
♥ Q 8 7 6 5
♦ 3
♣ A 6 5

♠ 8
♥ K 10 3 2
♦ K 8 7 6 2
♣ J 3 2

♠ A 10 9 3 2
♥ J
♦ A Q J 10 9
♣ K Q

Partner will, in all likelihood, read your lead as a length card and play their ♦K, establishing declarer's suit. Declarer will lose 2 spades and the ♣A, making 10 tricks.

When you hold four decent trumps, you are supposed to lead your long suit. The recommended lead on this hand is the ♥6. Now you will gain trump control of the hand. Declarer wins the ♥A, then tries a diamond finesse. However, having no re-entry to dummy to establish the suit, they will have problems from this point onwards.

When you regain the lead, you continue with your heart attack. Once declarer has trumped once, you have equal trump length. The contract will fail – usually by one trick. (By the way, if they try the spade finesse instead, the hand really disintegrates for declarer.)

Barbara Travis wrote a weekly column for subscribers in 2021. She has kindly offered for them to be reprinted in these bulletins. For more information, see Barbara's website www.bridgeatbeaumont.com.

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Australia's Bridge Day Out

Lauren Travis

Bridge Australia Foundation's inaugural Bridge Day Out was held in September 2025. Over 40 clubs across Australia participated in the day, with funds raised to support a nationwide Bridge in Schools program. An additional feature of the day was a Zoom session hosted by Pete Hollands, with guest analysis from Sophie Ashton, Mike Doecke, Renee Cooper and Liam Milne. The hands written up in this series are from the [highlights video on YouTube](#).

Board 10 ♠ Q105
Dealer E ♥ J7
All Vul ♦ J94
 ♣ 97653

♠ 3 ♠ AK976
♥ Q8643 ♥ K10
♦ K10873 ♦ AQ62
♣ K8 ♣ QJ

 ♠ J842
 ♥ A952
 ♦ 5
 ♣ A1042

Our question asker was curious about the best bid by East after this start to the auction:

West	North	East	South
		1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	?	

East's choice on this hand will have a huge influence on the final contract. Pete Hollands noted that East knows they want to be in game, even with only 6-9 HCP opposite. It is important to remember, as well, that 1NT doesn't say much about West's shape – only that they don't have spade support. Other than that, it is simply limiting their hand. That means, depending on West's shape, there are still multiple games open to EW.

One bid that Pete immediately ruled out was 2♦, which would be non-forcing. He suggested that 3♦ (game-forcing) or 3NT would be East's best options, and Mike Doecke also suggested 2NT (showing 18-19 and asking partner to further describe their hand). Mike pointed out that the distribution of points in East's hand is more suitable for no-trumps as they have plenty in their doubletons. If their hand was more pure with points in their long suits, that would suggest a suit contract would work better.

If East were to bid 3♦, West would probably get very excited as they now have a 9+ card fit with a useful shortage and a maximum hand. Since 3♦ is game-forcing, the principle of fast arrival would apply, so a jump to 5♦ would be the weakest option and 4♦ would show a hand like this one, which with the good diamond fit is now better than the initial 1NT response showed.

Another consideration is the form of scoring that you're playing. Given that Australia's Bridge Day Out used matchpoint scoring, I would do my best to play in 3NT as it's a higher-scoring contract (if it makes). Unfortunately,

on this board, North is on lead and has a clear club lead. However, if the North and South hands were swapped, they may lead hearts which would allow the contract to make with ease. At IMPs, it may be worth exploring to find a diamond fit as 5♦ could be a safer contract (as it is on this hand).

The 2026 Bridge Day Out will be held on 28 July. Please see the [Bridge Australia Foundation](#) website for more details closer to the date.

Kate's Way #4

Kate McCallum

Originally published in [Bridging NSW](#) by Bridge NSW, November 2025

PHILOSOPHY: GET IN AND GET OUT EARLY.

I love to bid! Fortunately for me, an aggressive bidding style is winning bridge. And it goes hand-in-hand with our basic philosophy, which is to present the opponents with a problem anytime we judge it's relatively safe to do so.

"Aggressive" sounds so unpleasant - we like to call it "GET IN AND GET OUT EARLY." That means, when in doubt, bid.

Whatever you want to call it, when you have something to say, it's a good bidding strategy to get it out of your system on the first round of bidding. You find your fits immediately and get out low if you don't have one. When you do find a fit, you can compete aggressively and hopefully give your opponents a problem. If you don't bid, you don't find your fits - and the opportunity to give them a problem is lost.

An essential part of the "get in and get out" strategy is to bid the full value of your hand early. If you never underbid, partner knows that you won't have extras lurking in reserve. He will play you for a minimum, and not hang you for bidding - that's what allows an aggressive style to work so well.

Therefore, I don't like to pass and await developments unless it's the only way to handle a hand. It should be rare to pass a good hand on the first round, unless you have a clear follow-up plan. I prefer to get my message across immediately before we are left without enough bidding room to make a cooperative decision.

Here's a decision my partner had a few days ago where the "Get in and Get Out" approach scored a huge win.

♠ 5
♥ 43
♦ AJ985432
♣ 97

At IMP scoring, Vul against Non-Vul, his RHO opened 1♠. He took a quick glance and saw 8 diamonds and bid 2♦ without much thought. He never really looked at his little 5-count. Points don't take tricks. 8-card suits are supposed to be trumps. It may go badly sometimes, but the suit length will usually protect you. He considered 3♦, but at unfavourable vulnerability he thought a tiny bit of caution might be in order. As it happens, we were in big trouble — they could have doubled 2♦ for +800 but look what happened.

The bidding continued:

1♠	2♦	P	P
3♣	P	3♥	P
4♣	P	4♥	

Whew! We escaped. They couldn't quite manage the play in 4♥ and we emerged +50. Much better than the -800 we were headed for. But the really good news came from the other table. The South player didn't want to overcall Vulnerable at the 2-level with only 5 hcp, so he passed. Now he heard 2♥ from his LHO. The bidding proceeded as follows:

1♠	P	2♥	P
3♣	P	3♥	P
P	?		

When 3♥ was passed around to him, never having bid his 8-card suit, South belatedly recalled that he had been taught that an 8-card suit should be trumps. So he balanced with 4♦! The entire deal was:

♠ KQ8743	
♥ K97	
♦ --	
♣ KJT8	
♠ J	♠ AT962
♥ QJT865	♥ A2
♦ KQT7	♦ 6
♣ 54	♣ AQ632
♠ 5	
♥ 43	
♦ AJ985432	
♣ 97	

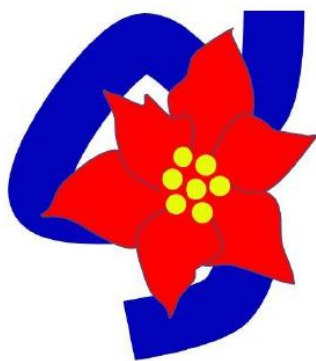
West was delighted to double 4♦, and when the smoke cleared declarer was -1400! +17 IMPs for our side. A big bonus for simply getting it out of your system on the first round.

"Our biggest regrets are not for the things we did but for the things we didn't do." Mark Twain

Share Your Stories

I am always happy to receive stories to publish in the bulletin. Whether you or your partner (or an opponent) found a great bid or play, or you'd just like to share a funny story from the table, feel free to send it through to notbulletin@gmail.com. To submit a hand in detail, you can also [use our online form](#) to ensure you provide all relevant information. Alternatively, feel free to approach me in or around the playing area and tell your story in person.





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