

Summer Festival of Bridge

Wednesday 14 - Sunday 25 January 2026

Daily Bulletin



Thursday 22nd January 2026

Editor: Lauren Travis — notbulletin@gmail.com / 0402 614 301

Bulletin 8

The National Restricted All-Rounder and National U750 All-Rounder events wrapped up yesterday. Well done to Phil Clark and Michael Donnelly (left, with ABF Executive Director David Fryda) for winning the Restricted event and Annegrete Kolding and Sachiko Cathcart (right) on their victory in the U750.



These events, new in 2026, pitted pairs against each other across three days of different scoring formats: matchpoint pairs on day 1, IMP pairs on day 2, and teams on day 3. The winners in each category were the pairs who performed best across all three formats.

Today's Program

Thursday 22nd January

South West Pacific Teams

9.45am – 6.30pm, 3 x 20-board rounds

Puzzle from the Open Swiss Pairs

Without either of us doubling the opponents, partner failed to bid the small slam which would have saved 3 IMPs. How is this possible? (Answer on page 28.)

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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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 3♥ bid in your partnership?
Is it forcing or not? Why?**

1♣ – 1♥

3♣ – 3♥

This system health check is sponsored by the Heart Research Institute. Please support those who support bridge by making a donation if you are able to.



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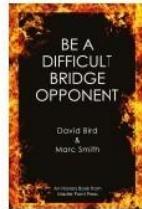
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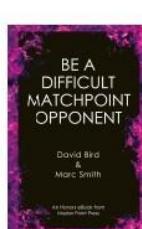
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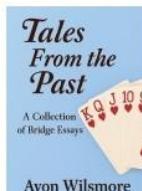
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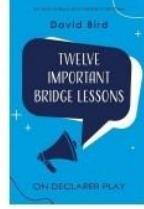
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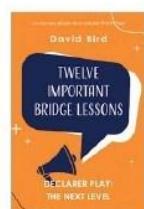
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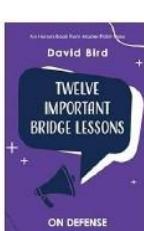
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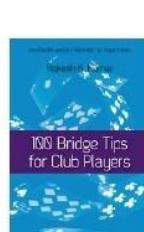
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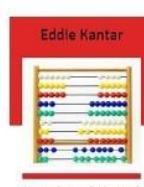
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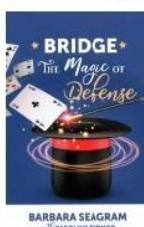
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Results

South West Pacific Teams (after 9 of 12 rounds)

1 st	Dalley	140.53 VP
2 nd	Bauchamp	130.97 VP
3 rd	Depasquale	124.78 VP
4 th	van der Vlugt	124.70 VP
5 th	Jacob	116.63 VP
6 th	Meier	113.93 VP
7 th	Leibowitz	113.91 VP
8 th	Markey	113.37 VP
9 th	Yoshka	113.22 VP
10 th	Doecke	113.12 VP

National Under 750 All-Rounder Teams

1 st	Kolding (Sachiko Cathcart, Annegrete Kolding, Judith Parsons, John Russell)	70.64 VP
2 nd	Cohen (Sue Cohen, Nicolette Bartoli, Neville Hind, Frank Hardiman)	65.90 VP
3 rd	Rymer (Jenny Barnes, Kerry Rymer, Kit Meyers, Fiona Fawcett)	64.45 VP

National Restricted All-Rounder Teams

1 st	Moss (Liz Moss, Gwen Riordan, Ann Berry, Bev Furner)	85.17 VP
2 nd	Meares (Nicola Meares, Sharon Michael, Lucy D'Ambrosio, Shannon Queree)	81.28 VP
3 rd	Watts (Brenda Watts, David Clarkson, Phil Clark, Michael Donnelly)	80.01 VP

National Under 750 All-Rounder

1 st	Sachiko Cathcart – Annegrete Kolding
2 nd	Fiona Fawcett – Jenny Barnes

*Below left: U750 All-Rounder Runners-Up
Fiona Fawcett and Jenny Barnes*

*Below right: Restricted All-Rounder Runners-Up
Brenda Watts and David Clarkson*

1 st	Phil Clark – Michael Donnelly
2 nd	Brenda Watts – David Clarkson





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South West Pacific Teams – Round 7

I'd been looking for an excuse to kibitz Kate Macdonald and Heath Watkins this week, and I found one: they were playing the leading team, Dalley, in match 7.

Kieran Dyke found a phenomenal lead on board 1:

Board 1	♠ 53
Dealer N	♥ K54
Vul Nil	♦ Q106
	♣ QJ954
♠ KJ1084	♠ AQ96
♥ Q7	♥ A63
♦ KJ985	♦ 43
♣ 6	♣ AK102
	♠ 72
	♥ J10982
	♦ A72
	♣ 873



West	North	East	South
Watkins	Bach	Macdonald	Dyke
	Pass	1♣ *	Pass
1♥ (spades)	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣ *	Pass	4♥ *	Pass
4NT *	Pass	5♦ *	Pass
5♥ *	Pass	6♣ *	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

Kieran Dyke

With Heath cueing in clubs, Kate cueing hearts and then Heath keycarding, Kieran knew that Heath held the diamond control in the partnership. Therefore, he led a low diamond through Heath's holding! Kate had little chance of getting this right and put in the Jack, losing to Ash Bach's Queen.

Ash didn't return a diamond right away but she didn't have anywhere to deposit her diamond loser in hand, so she had to go one off.

You might be thinking: 'Lauren, this wasn't the layout! East had three diamonds!' And you would be right. But I was sitting behind Ash and thought 'gee, a diamond away from the Ace would be a great lead here.' Then Kieran did it, and I was excited to have a great hand to write about. As it turned out, Kate always had two diamond losers and Kieran's lead actually did nothing to affect the outcome on the hand. But a girl can dream.

On board 11 Ash seemed to think he'd overbid (by just a little) but everything sat beautifully and he'd actually underbid on the layout.

Board 11 ♠ K1098
 Dealer S ♥ K109
 Vul Nil ♦ K1085
 ♣ AQ

 ♠ Q42 ♠ A65
 ♥ J83 ♥ 64
 ♦ AQJ93 ♦ 62
 ♣ K9 ♣ 1076532

♠ J73
 ♥ AQ752
 ♦ 74
 ♣ J84

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Watkins	Bach	Macdonald	Dyke
			Pass
1NT (14-16)	X	2♣	Pass
Pass	X	Pass	3♥
All Pass			



Ash Bach

Let's count all the things that work for declarer in 3♥:

- Hearts 3-2
- ♣K onside and doubleton (sets up the Jack)
- ♠Q onside
- ♦A onside

You really couldn't ask for any more. And you also couldn't bid game based on all of this. I'd be fine with +200.

Heath almost stole the show in 4♥ on board 12 but slightly mistimed it:

Board 12 ♠ K983
 Dealer W ♥ 52
 Vul NS ♦ J108
 ♣ QJ105

 ♠ 7 ♠ AQ62
 ♥ QJ763 ♥ AK10
 ♦ 97542 ♦ 3
 ♣ 84 ♣ A9732

 ♠ J1054
 ♥ 984
 ♦ AKQ6
 ♣ K6



Heath Watkins

West Watkins 2♥	North Bach Pass	East Macdonald 4♥	South Dyke All Pass
-----------------------	-----------------------	-------------------------	---------------------------

2♥ was an aggressive weak 2 in first seat favourable, very normal bidding. Kate's 4♥ was also aggressive but on a non-trump lead the contract was decent.

Ash led ♣Q which was won in dummy. Heath called for dummy's diamond, which Kieran won with the Queen to switch a trump. Heath played another club, again won by Kieran who again played a trump, won in dummy. Heath trumped a club to his hand.

Now he had to ruff a diamond in dummy and ruff another club in hand to establish the fifth club. Then he could draw the last trump before taking the spade finesse – an all-or-nothing approach but worth taking to make game. It had to be in that order or he wouldn't have the re-entry to dummy to enjoy the club winner after drawing the last trump.

Unfortunately, Heath got a few tricks ahead of himself, as we've all done many times, and took the spade finesse after trumping the third club. He could still ruff the clubs good, but he had to use a heart to cross back to dummy so he never got the diamond ruff in, which would have been his tenth trick.

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ROOKIE PAIRS	NOVICE PAIRS	THREE DAY TEAMS		GRADED PAIRS	PRESENTATION DINNER	
		SWISS PAIRS I	SWISS PAIRS II	SWISS PAIRS III	PRESENTATION DRINKS	
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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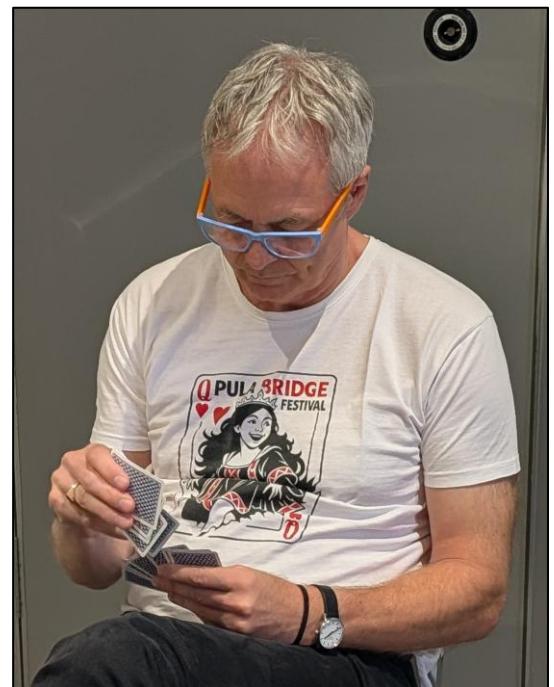
South West Pacific Teams – Round 8

Markey (5th) played van der Vlugt (6th) in round 8 and I was there to see David Appleton – Phil Markey vs Fraser Rew – Maurits van der Vlugt.

On board 1, Fraser and Maurits sneakily/unintentionally right-sided 3NT:

Board 1	♠ 1096
Dealer N	♥ Q6
Vul Nil	♦ J732
	♣ 8762
♠ QJ8	♠ K743
♥ J32	♥ 9754
♦ 94	♦ 1086
♣ KJ954	♣ A3
	♠ A52
	♥ AK108
	♦ AKQ5
	♣ Q10

West	North	East	South
Appleton	van der Vlugt	Markey	Rew
	Pass	2♥ *	X
Pass	2NT *	Pass	3NT
All Pass			



Maurits van der Vlugt

2♥ showed 4+ hearts, 4+ spades and 0-8 points. I'm confident Maurits wasn't intending to declare 3NT when he bid 2NT Lebensohl to show a weak hand, but Fraser was pretty sure it was the right spot.

A few years ago, playing with Phil Markey against Michael Courtney, Michael contrived to be declarer in 3NT after Phil (on his left) had opened the same 2♥. About a month later, he started telling me the story of the hand, only to realise halfway through that I had in fact been his opponent. I'm glad I listened, though: his point was that when one player has shown two suits and the other player might not have had the chance to give a real preference, it's best to keep the bidder on lead as they don't know what their partner has. If you have the bidder's partner on lead, they can usually tell what the right suit is to lead.

Maurits and Fraser applied that advice on this hand (again, unintentionally). Phil was on lead and all he knew was that his partner had passed hearts so obviously didn't mind them too much. He led the 7, covered by the 8 and ducked by David, and Maurits claimed 9 tricks immediately. This is not to say for sure that David would have led a club here – he might have picked ♣Q instead – but he had a lot more of a chance of finding the right lead on this hand.

Phil was the beneficiary of some pressure that was self-inflicted by the defenders on board 4:

Board 4 ♠ Q109
 Dealer W ♥ 95
 Vul All ♦ KJ6
 ♣ 108764

♠ J75432 ♠ A
 ♥ 76 ♥ A1082
 ♦ Q10753 ♦ 92
 ♣ -- ♣ AKQJ32
 ♠ K86
 ♥ KQJ43
 ♦ A84
 ♣ 95

West	North	East	South
Appleton	van der Vlugt	Markey	Rew
3♠	Pass	3NT	All Pass



Fraser Rew

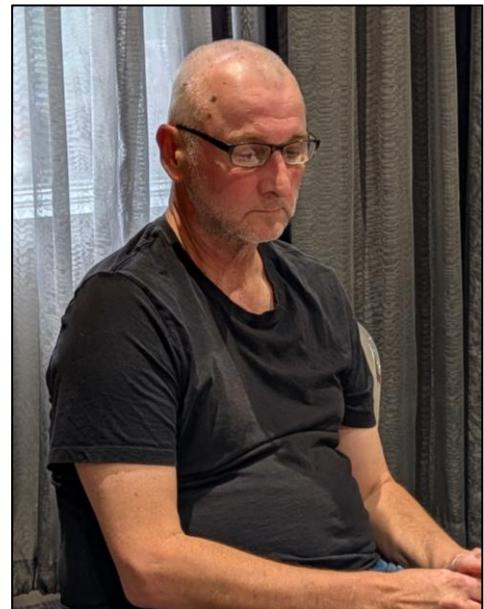
For those unfamiliar with Outback Acol, yes, this is a normal vulnerable 3♠ opening – it might even be considered on the high end of the range since it has some shape.

Fraser led ♥K to 3NT, ducked all around, and continued ♥J which Phil won after seeing the 9 from Maurits. He played another heart back to Fraser, and Maurits had to discard early and without much information. He chose an ill-advised club (his own words).

Now that Phil's clubs were all set up, Fraser had to play a diamond immediately or it was all over. He spent a long time considering his options then switched to a low spade. After winning and playing two rounds of clubs Phil claimed nine tricks, winning 13 IMPs for his efforts.

Much is said about Phil's pre-empting exploits but he does have some tools to help put the brakes on when he feels it's necessary:

Board 15 ♠ AQ
 Dealer S ♥ AJ975
 Vul NS ♦ Q62
 ♣ 954
 ♠ 95432 ♠ KJ76
 ♥ 10864 ♥ K
 ♦ 43 ♦ J105
 ♣ J6 ♣ AKQ103
 ♠ 108
 ♥ Q32
 ♦ AK987
 ♣ 872



Phil Markey

West	North	East	South
Appleton	van der Vlugt	Markey	Rew
			Pass
2♦ * 3♣ *	Pass	2NT * 3♦	Pass All Pass

2♦ showed the majors again, and 2NT asked what kind of hand David had. He said 'bad' which means about 0-4 HCP, and Phil knew to stop in part-score after that.

Nine tricks were cold, ten were impossible, so it was very well judged by the Outback Acol boys on this one.

South West Pacific Teams – Round 9

Inevitably, the time comes for a bulletin writer to watch a pair play a yellow system that the writer barely understands and is worried about trying to explain to the readers in a way that makes any sense at all. For me, that time was match 9. I suppose I didn't have to watch Matt McManus and Mike Ware playing Crunch against Mike Doecke and Dave Wiltshire, but it seemed like a good idea at the time.

Matt and Mike bid a great slam on board 2 with a spicy redouble thrown in for good measure:

Board 2	♠ AK95
Dealer E	♥ AK973
Vul NS	♦ 8
	♣ 863
♠ Q7432	♠ J108
♥ 5	♥ 64
♦ A104	♦ K92
♣ KQ75	♣ J10942
	♠ 6
	♥ QJ1082
	♦ QJ7653
	♣ A

West	North	East	South
Wiltshire	McManus	Doecke	Ware
			Pass
1♠	2NT *	Pass	1♣ *
Pass	4♦ *	Pass	4NT *
Pass	5♦ *	X	XX
Pass	5♣ *	Pass	6♥
All Pass			



Mike Ware

1♣ showed 11-20 HCP and 4+ hearts and 2NT was a game-forcing heart raise. 3♠ was a shortage, 4♦ a cue, and 4NT keycard. Mike Doecke poked his nose in with a cheeky lead-directing double with ♦K92 and Mike Ware tried to have a piece of him. Unfortunately, 5♦ doesn't make, so Matt judged well to get his partnership to 6♥ instead.

Dave led ♦A and switched a spade. Mike played a club to the Ace, ruffed a diamond, drew a round of trumps and ruffed another diamond high. When the ♦K fell, he claimed his contract.

On board 13 Dave and Mike demonstrated how to defend against the Crunch 'fert' opening bid:

Board 13	♠ K6		
Dealer N	♥ 98		
Vul All	♦ K64		
	♣ J108754		
♠ J103	♠ AQ875		
♥ QJ10753	♥ AK6		
♦ --	♦ 973		
♣ AK32	♣ 96		
	♠ 942		
	♥ 42		
	♦ AQJ10852		
	♣ Q		
West	North	East	South
Wiltshire	McManus	Doecke	Ware
	1♥ *	1NT	2♦ *
3♦ *	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		



Dave Wiltshire

In Crunch, 1♥ shows 7-10 HCP and any hand that's not suitable for another bid (e.g. 2M, pre-empt, etc). Dave and Mike had agreed that a 1NT 'overcall' would actually just be their 1NT opening bid – 14-16 HCP and a balanced hand – so Mike Doecke did just that. Mike Ware bid 2♦ showing one major and Dave figured system would be on here so used 3♦ to show a good hand with 5+ hearts, getting to 4♥ easily when his partner was on the same page.

Mike Ware's explanation of his 2♦ bid was "I know your system better than I know mine." With South having shown a major, it's a bit hard to get to the cold slam as E-W can't construct their partner's hand anywhere close to accurately.

With the spade finesse working and both major suits breaking, it's a piece of cake to take all the tricks in hearts.

Mike Doecke faced a problem which I strongly suspect was unique in the field:



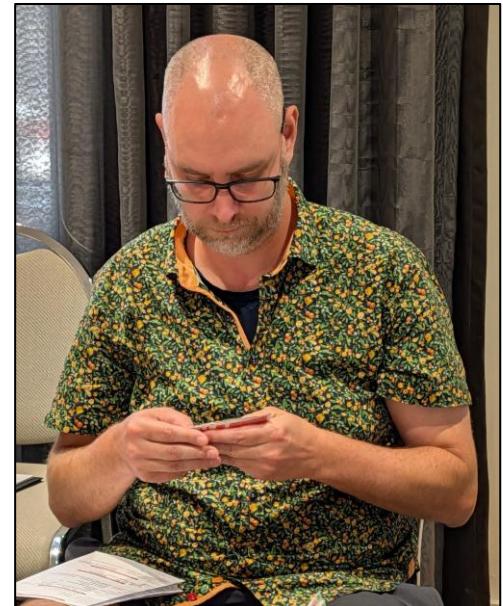
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Board 15	♠ 942
Dealer S	♥ J5
Vul NS	♦ A9854
	♣ Q87
♠ KJ1065	♠ AQ87
♥ 3	♥ AKQ864
♦ Q32	♦ 106
♣ 10653	♣ A

♠ 3
♥ 10972
♦ KJ7
♣ KJ942

West	North	East	South
Wiltshire	McManus	Doecke	Ware
			1♥ *
Pass	Pass	???	

Mike Doecke



Poor Mike had to decide whether to defend 1♥ or try to bid 3NT or 4♣ with his partner! 1♥ didn't promise any hearts – just 7-10 points – and Matt's pass also didn't promise any hearts, just no 5-card suit that he wanted to bid. At favourable vulnerability, Mike was persuaded to defend. His side can make 4♥: in other words, they took 10 defensive tricks for +400, but they lost IMPs because 4♣ is cold for 11. How unfair!



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A Comedy of Errors

Fraser Rew provided this anecdote which begins with an excellent deceptive play – perhaps too excellent.

M6 B7	♠ AJ
Dealer S	♥ AK87
Vul All	♦ 1094
	♣ 8642
♠ 964	♠ K82
♥ 102	♥ Q963
♦ Q6	♦ AK53
♣ KJ10973	♣ A5
	♠ Q10753
	♥ J54
	♦ J872
	♣ Q

West	North	East	South
Rew	E Jacob	van der Vlugt	Haffer
			2♦ *
Pass	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Joe Haffer's 2♦ opening bid showed 4+ diamonds and 4+ spades. 3NT looks to be a pretty good contract as long as declarer can avoid losing too many tricks in the majors.

Given that Maurits van der Vlugt had shown stoppers in both his suits, Joe Haffer led ♥4. Ella won it with the Ace! She played ♠A followed by ♠J, ducked by Maurits (his first mistake). Adding to her tricky play of ♥A at trick one, Ella switched back to a low heart, and Maurits knew for sure that Joe held the king, so he played low, finessing the Jack (his second mistake, but understandable). Joe, on lead having taken four tricks, was also taken in by Ella's play so didn't continue hearts (a fatal error). 3NT made 9 tricks and Maurits and Fraser won 10 IMPs.



Ella Jacob

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From the 2025 Archives: Grand Play

Peter Gill

After Round 6 of the 2025 South West Pacific Teams Championship, Board 11 was much discussed.

Mimi Packer and Jon Free from Perth bid to the good 7♥ grand slam with this 2/1 GF auction.

Dealer S	♠ 987
Nil Vul	♥ T754
	♦ 96
	♣ 6542
♠ 63	♠ AK92
♥ AQ982	♥ K63
♦ J5	♦ AKQT74
♣ KQ93	♣ --
♠ QJT4	
♥ J	
♦ 832	
♣ AJT87	

West	East
<i>Mimi</i>	<i>Jon</i>
1♥	2♦
3♠	3♥
4♥	4♣
5♣	5NT
7♥	

4♥ denied the ability to make a non-serious Ace cue bid, 4♣ was Kickback RKCB and 5♣ showed one keycard for hearts.

♠9 was led. Mimi Packer won ♠A and played a low heart to the jack and ace.

If ♥J was from J10 doubleton or J10x, declarer has to play a heart to the king next.

But there are several reasons to trust that ♥J is a singleton - with J10 doubleton South might have played the ten, and with J10x South might well play low, not realising that playing the jack gives declarer a problem.

Accordingly, Mimi Packer ran ♥9, then played a heart to the king, ♠K, and a spade ruff to get to hand to draw the last trump and score up plus 1510. Well played. Seven of the other nine declarers in 7♥ went down.

The play of 6♥ is interesting. On a spade lead, declarer might play a low heart. When ♥J appears, ducking is a cool play (if ♠A is played next, declarer can ruff and lead ♥K, overtaking safely with ♥A if East follows suit). Another option is to win ♥J with ♥A and adopt Mimi's line of running ♥9 for the finesse. Of the 55 declarers in 6♥, 34 went down and 21 made, mostly on spade or diamond leads.

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Bits and Pieces

Barbara Travis

How often do you know all the honour cards in declarer's hand the minute you see dummy?

South West Pacific Teams, Match 7

Board 1, Dealer North, Nil vulnerable

The auction had been:

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1NT (15-17)	Pass
2♥	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♥	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♣	Pass
5♦	Pass	6♣	All Pass

You are sitting South, and lead the ♥J:

Dummy

♠ K J 10 8 4

♥ Q 7

♦ K J 9 8 5

♣ 6

♠ 7 2

♥ J 10 9 8 2

♦ A 7

♣ 8 7 3 2

Declarer had shown a maximum with four spades, then showed three key cards, the ♠Q and ♠K.

Having seen dummy, do the counting – three aces = 12 HCP, the ♠Q and ♠K are another 5 HCP; that's declarer's 17 HCP. Declarer will fail if they mispick diamonds or whenever they hold 3 diamonds.

Declarer held a 4-3-3-3 and, given the above information, you don't need to see all the spot cards.

In due course, 6♠ failed.

Remember to count.

Here's another example, this time from Match 7:

See Paul Lavings for all
your bridge gear needs



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

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

East led the ♣3 – 6 – 8 - Q. Declarer now led a spade to the queen and ace. West led the ♥9, ducked all round, then the jack was overtaken by East with the queen, and another club was led to the 10 and jack. West led a small club and the scene was now set for declarer; she ruffed high and East discarded a spade. A spade was led to dummy – East playing the jack and dummy winning the queen. Have you been counting?

If East's spade carding is to be trusted, West holds four spades, three hearts (support double), five clubs (known) so one trump. You can continue trumping, hoping East's four diamonds include the ♦9.

Club ruffed high, heart ruffed with the ♦7, spade ruffed high, heart ruffed with the 8 – West cannot over-trump. You ruff the last spade with your ♦A and you've made 4 diamonds in hand, 1 club trick, 1 spade trick and 3 diamonds in dummy (2 being ruffs). Poor East under-ruffs three times!

A few people have asked me how we bid to 6♥ on this hand from Match 9:

♠ A K 9 5
 ♥ A K 9 7 3
 ♦ 8
 ♣ 8 6 3

♠ 6
 ♥ Q J 10 8 2
 ♦ Q J 7 6 5 3
 ♣ A

My personal view of 5-6 hands are that I'm happy to reverse when I have only four losers, but I'm not keen on reversing with more losers. So I opened this South hand 1♥ (I've previously seen such hands opened 1♦ and the opponents' bidding of spades can preempt you too high to find a 5-3 heart fit). This worked a treat with partner's hand:

West	North	East	South
			1♥
1♠	2♠ *	Pass	4♥
Pass	4♠ (cue)	Pass	5♣ (cue)
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

Systemically, Lori Smith's hand was too good for a splinter, so she started with a cue raise. My South hand now improved, so I jumped to game, and was compelled to cooperate with her cue bidding. Lori drew an additional inference from my cuebid of 5♣ – I did not hold a diamond control or I would have bid 4NT myself – hence the jump to 6♥.

West led the ♣K, won with the Ace. I exited with a diamond, won with the 10. West tried to cash the ♣Q, ruffed low. I cashed the ♣A-K and claimed on a high cross-ruff, which was a slightly different way to make a slam contract.

David Beauchamp would have been appalled had he been near our table on this hand. He advocates that one should never bid 5-over-5.

Match 5

Board 5, Dealer North, NS Vulnerable

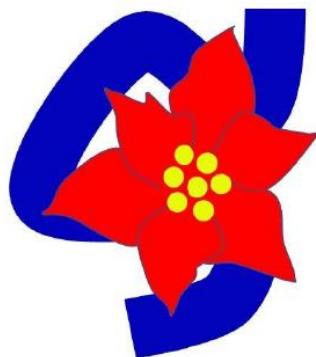
♠ A Q 9 8 6 2	
♥ K 8 4	
♦ 7 5 4	
♣ 10	
♠ --	♠ 10 7
♥ Q 9 6 2	♥ A J 10 7 5
♦ Q 10 2	♦ 8 6
♣ K Q 9 7 6 5	♣ A J 8 3
♠ K J 6 4 3	
♥ 3	
♦ A K J 9 3	
♣ 4 2	

West	North	East	South
	2♠ (8-11)	Pass	4♠
5♣	Pass	Pass	5♦ *
Pass	Pass	6♣	Double
All Pass			

West's 'save' was making, but 5♣ was going down one trick given the diamond position. The 5♦ bid was lead-directing, telling North to lead a diamond rather than a spade. On this hand it didn't matter but, rather than just bidding 5♣, help partner with their opening lead decisions. If West had held a 0-4-2-7, we need the diamond lead to defeat 6♣.

Partner dutifully led a diamond and we took the contract one off.

This hand was a 'failure' for the Multi 2♦ opening bid. At the other table, North opened 2♦ and South bid a pass/correct 2♥. When West entered the auction with 3♣, North was silenced and East simply raised to 5♣, making. North-South never managed to bid spades with an 11-card fit!



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Barbara's Daily Column: Avoiding Heart Break

Barbara Travis

This is a hand that Lauren and I played in 2011.

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

West	North	East	South
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
3♠ (1)	Double	4♣ (2)	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♠ (3)	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

- (1) Splinter, spade shortage, 4+ hearts, game values
- (2) 1st or 2nd round cue bid
- (3) 2 key cards + ♥Q

South led a spade to North's Ace, and North returned a club, won with the Ace. This was an excellent contract, so Lauren thought about what could go wrong. The only concern was if trumps broke 4-0. She was missing the J-10-6-4, which meant that she could only deal with four hearts in North's hand. (If South held all four hearts she always had a heart loser. Check it for yourself.)

Therefore, Lauren led a heart to the Ace first and noted, with a smile and nod to me (leaving me puzzled), the South showed out. She could now finesse North's ♥J-10-6-4, because she had kept the 'double tenace' intact. She led another heart and North split her honours, so then Lauren took the safest re-entry to dummy, a spade ruff, to finesse in hearts again, making her 12 tricks.

Lauren had been learning about the various card combinations, such as this one, so was particularly excited to have utilised her knowledge at the table, when it mattered.

[As it happened, North had a diamond void. If she had played Lightner doubles, she could have doubled 6♥ to ask for the lead of dummy's first-bid suit – defeating the contract anyway.]

Knowing your safety plays (or card combinations) is very important, especially at Teams (where safety comes first, as I keep mentioning).

Here are a couple of other examples:

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

South is playing in 4♥, with West leading the ♠10 to his partner's Queen and your Ace.

You have a diamond loser and spade loser, so have to ensure that you have no more than one loser in trumps. It should be time to allow for bad breaks!

Cashing the ♥A and ♥K will be wrong if East has four hearts, ♥Q-J-x-x. [If West has ♥Q-J-x-x, you will go down regardless.] However, this holding is not one where you lead the ♥10, finessing, on the first round. Then if hearts are 4-1 with East, but West has a singleton honour, you will lose to the singleton honour, and still have another heart loser.

The safety play on this combination is to cash one top heart first. If both players play a low heart, then you cross to dummy and lead the ♥10, finessing – which will pick up the ♥Q-J-x-x should East hold it. If West plays an honour, then you should just cash the other top heart, because either West has ♥Q-J doubleton, or East has four hearts with one honour, so you just have one losing heart.

Here's the full hand, so you can check for yourself.

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

Finally, we played this hand in 6NT, by South, but in 6♠ the same principle would apply. You have 9 winners outside the spades, so have to ensure only one spade loser.

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

At Pairs you would probably play ‘with the field’, cashing the ♠K, then finessing the Jack. However, this was a teams match, so ensuring your 12 tricks was the priority. If you cash the King, then finesse the Jack, you will go down when East has ♠Q-10-x-x. Is there a safety play that is 100% for 4 tricks, if spades are 4-1?

Yes – though it is not one that would automatically occur to you at the table, and it’s worth laying out these cards, then placing the various spade combinations with both East and West.

The ‘correct’ line is to cash the Ace first (the honour in the short hand), then cross to South to lead a spade towards dummy’s Jack, covering whatever card West plays. If West has Q-10-x-x, you either win the Jack, or the play of the Queen makes both the Jack and King into winners to ensure 4 spade tricks. On the other hand, if West shows out, you play the Jack, and East wins the Queen. However, now you can win the next trick in dummy to lead a spade towards your ♠K-9-8, finessing East’s ♠10.

Safety plays in suits are extremely challenging to remember, and reading about them doesn’t seem to lock them into your memory bank. Play these hands out for yourself and acquire improved mastery.

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.

HRI – Peripheral Artery Disease

From the [Heart Research Institute](#)

What is peripheral artery disease?

Peripheral artery disease (PAD), also known as peripheral vascular disease and peripheral arterial disease, is a type of cardiovascular disease in which the narrowing of arteries results in reduced blood flow to a body part outside of the heart or brain.

PAD can happen in any blood vessel, but it mainly occurs in the arteries leading to the legs and feet.

What causes peripheral artery disease?

PAD is often the result of atherosclerosis. This is when plaques that are made up of fat, cholesterol, calcium and other substances build up in the walls of the arteries. Over time, these atherosclerotic plaques harden and narrow the opening of the arteries, restricting blood flow. If these plaques break open, they can form a blood clot (thrombosis) and further block blood flow.

Having PAD may indicate that there is more widespread atherosclerosis in the body. If atherosclerosis affects arteries to the brain, there is risk of a stroke. If it affects arteries to the heart, there is risk of a heart attack.

Less common causes of PAD include infection or inflammation of a blood vessel, injury to the affected limb, and irregularly shaped muscles or ligaments in the limb.

Peripheral artery disease symptoms

The symptoms of PAD will depend on which body part is affected, and in some cases, there are only mild or no symptoms until the disease is advanced. Symptoms may include:

- ♥ intermittent or irregular pain during activity and rest
- ♥ numbness, coldness or pins and needles in the affected body part
- ♥ blue- or purple-tinged skin
- ♥ sores or ulcers in the affected body part that do not heal
- ♥ blackened areas of skin or loss of skin (gangrene).

The impact of peripheral artery disease

PAD affects almost one in every five Australians. Approximately 50 per cent of people with PAD show no symptoms, leading to under-diagnosis and under-treatment.

While PAD is not immediately life threatening, someone with PAD is up to six times more likely to have a heart attack or stroke.

In addition, the reduced blood flow to the limbs can lead to the limb developing gangrene, where it starts to decay and die. There is no cure for gangrene. The only treatment option is to amputate the affected limb to prevent the gangrene from spreading further in the body.

Shockingly, every three hours in Australia, one person has an arm or leg amputated due to PAD.

Risk factors for peripheral artery disease

Some risk factors for PAD can be controlled. Simple lifestyle changes can help to manage these factors, as well as PAD itself after diagnosis.

- ♥ Diabetes: This is the most significant risk factor for PAD. Diabetes can be managed through diet and a healthy lifestyle in some cases.
- ♥ Smoking: Smoking is another significant risk factor. It damages the blood vessels, affecting blood flow and making blockages more common.
- ♥ High blood pressure: High blood pressure can speed up atherosclerosis, but it can be managed through dietary changes such as lowering salt intake. Medications are also available.
- ♥ High cholesterol: High levels of the “bad” (LDL) cholesterol can contribute to the build-up of atherosclerotic plaque in the arteries. High cholesterol can be managed through medication and dietary changes.
- ♥ Obesity and being overweight: This can increase the risk of several health problems, including other PAD risk factors like high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Eating a heart-healthy diet and regular physical activity can help to maintain a healthy weight.
- ♥ Inactivity: Leading a sedentary lifestyle can increase the risk of other PAD risk factors like high blood pressure and cholesterol levels, as well as contribute to being an unhealthy weight. It’s also important to stay active after a diagnosis of PAD.

The risk factors for PAD that cannot be controlled include increasing age, and a medical or family history of cardiovascular disease.

How is peripheral artery disease diagnosed?

If you have symptoms of PAD, it is important to see your doctor. Your doctor will take a full medical history and will usually perform a physical exam to evaluate the skin condition and other factors to determine the risk of PAD. If the risk of PAD seems likely, other tests may be conducted.

- ♥ Ankle brachial index (ABI): This non-invasive test compares blood pressure in the ankles and lower legs to blood pressure in the arms.
- ♥ Ultrasound or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans: These will be used to check blood flow and identify blocked blood vessels.
- ♥ Angiogram: A contrast dye is injected into the blood vessels that will show up on an X-ray, which can help identify blocked vessels.
- ♥ Blood tests: Risk factors for PAD like diabetes and high cholesterol can be identified in this way.

How to prevent peripheral artery disease

If you are at risk of PAD, managing your risk factors can help to prevent it developing.

- ♥ Eat a heart-healthy, nutritious diet to help reach and maintain a healthy weight.

- ♥ Exercise regularly, in consultation with your doctor if you are just starting out. Experts recommend at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise on most days of the week.
- ♥ Manage stress levels by making time for self-care and getting plenty of sleep.
- ♥ Manage other health conditions that increase your PAD risk, like diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol.
- ♥ Quit smoking if you smoke.

How to avoid complications from peripheral artery disease

To avoid complications from PAD, take good care of your legs and feet.

- ♥ Check the feet every day for sores, cuts, blisters, rashes, pain or other signs that may indicate a foot issue or injury.
- ♥ Keep toenails trimmed straight across and with the edges filed, to avoid ingrown toenails that can cause infections.
- ♥ Always wear shoes and socks, even indoors, to avoid cuts and abrasions.
- ♥ Ensure that shoes and socks fit well to prevent blisters.
- ♥ Keep the skin soft with regular moisturisation, but avoid using moisturiser between the toes.

Peripheral artery disease treatment

If left untreated, PAD can lead to debilitating consequences and possible amputation of the affected limb. Treatment for PAD will depend on the severity of the condition and can range from lifestyle changes to medicine and surgery. In some cases, symptoms can be managed to help prevent the PAD from worsening.

- ♥ Lifestyle changes that could help include quitting smoking, eating a heart-healthy diet and exercising regularly.
- ♥ Medications are available that can help control blood pressure and control cholesterol levels if they are high, and control blood sugar levels if diabetes is a factor.
- ♥ Medications are also available that can improve blood flow, help prevent or dissolve blood clots, and help prevent serious complications from PAD.
- ♥ Surgical procedures, such as angioplasty and the insertion of a stent inside the narrowed blood vessel, can help widen the blood vessel and improve blood flow.
- ♥ Surgery to bypass the blocked arteries and restore blood flow to the affected limb may be necessary in severe cases of PAD. If PAD has led to a limb developing gangrene, the only treatment option is to amputate the limb to prevent the gangrene from spreading in the body.

How is HRI fighting peripheral artery disease?

HRI is tackling the urgent problem of cardiovascular diseases and heart conditions such as PAD from a broad range of research angles.

Our Vascular Complications Group is investigating angiogenesis, the development of new blood vessels from pre-existing vessels, and how to stimulate blood vessel growth in diabetics with PAD as a potential therapy. The Group is also examining the sex-dependent changes in PAD, as women with PAD have worse outcomes than men for reasons currently unknown.

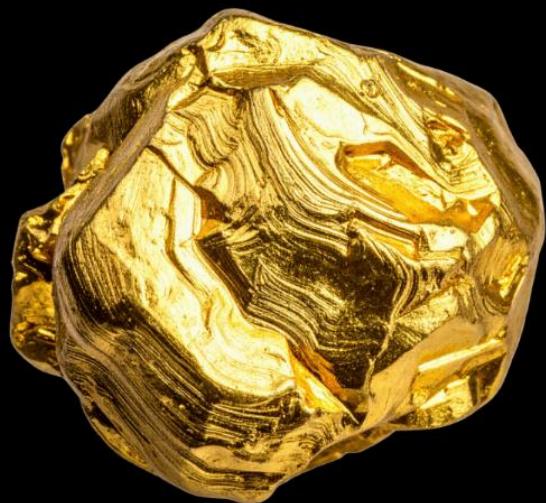
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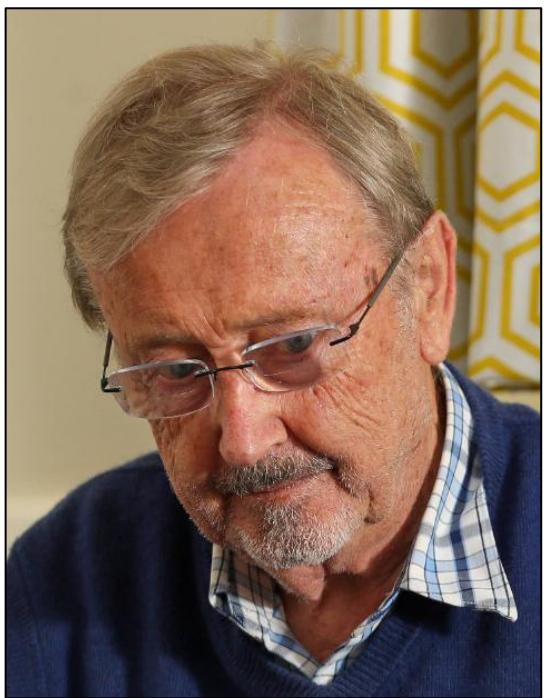


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Legends of Australian Bridge: Paul Lavings

Peter Gill



When I started playing bridge in the 1970s, I asked lots of top players who would take the mantle from the aging Tim Seres as Australia's greatest player. Everyone replied – Paul Lavings. Some of you might think that never happened, but a strong case can be made that it did happen but nobody noticed!

Why wouldn't we notice? Bridge is a partnership game. We notice success by partnerships, but Paul played for decades almost exclusively with clients as his bridge partners. Another reason is that Paul is quiet and doesn't promote himself.

Continuing on from our Michael Courtney article a couple of days ago, Michael Courtney had just arrived in Sydney from Perth because playing bridge for money didn't exist in Perth but did in Sydney. Michael once wrote an almost-true article in which (according to my version from my faulty memory) the then guru of Sydney bridge - Paul Lavings

- sat newly arrived young Michael on his knee and told Michael to tell Paul the three golden rules of Competitive Bidding. Michael confessed that he didn't know what they were. Paul explained that he couldn't possibly win unless he followed the three golden rules, which were, and still are:

1. Bid your hand.
2. Never bid your hand twice.
3. Always raise as high as possible as soon as possible.

Michael's long lost article then gave examples of how, decades later, many of Australia's top players seem to have forgotten or disregarded the three golden rules, to their detriment.

At the US Nationals about 20 years ago, a world class American player said to me that he'd just played a long match against an Aussie player named Paul Lavings who seemed to be one of the world's best players, but he'd only ever heard of Paul as a bridge book seller. I explained to him that he's right - Paul is one of the world's best players, but he doesn't get the credit he deserves. Bridge expertise can be rather anonymous. Tim Seres was truly great but it helped Tim's reputation that Tim's bridge partners Dick Cummings and Denis Howard wrote up Tim's exploits so often. My reputation bloomed when I played with Ron Klinger because Ron wrote up my good hands. C'est la vie.

In February 2004, Paul was declaring a 4♥ contract. His trump suit was

K3
Q98762

Paul led the 2 to dummy's king which won. Paul led the 3 from dummy to the ten. expecting the trumps to be either:

- Ax on his left and J10x on his right, or
- AJx on his left and 10x on his right.

Paul ducked $\heartsuit 10$, hoping his LHO's $\heartsuit A$ would fall. The same declarer play that all experts including me would have done.

But Paul's LHO discarded! Sheila Thompson on his right had ducked the king from AJ10x, apparently by accident. Paul was suddenly stranded with 3 trump losers instead of 2 trump losers. If Sheila had won $\heartsuit K$ with $\heartsuit A$, Paul would have later finessed $\heartsuit 9$ as a safety play to hold his trump losers to two.

Paul recovered in the play to lead from dummy at Trick 12 through Sheila's AJ into his Q9, a splendid Trump Coup to make 4 \heartsuit . Paul sent the hand to Ron Klinger who wrote it up in the Sydney Morning Herald column of 4 February 2004. Paul Lavings had observed and forwarded to Ron the new idea of ducking smoothly with AJ10x over a king or queen in order to gain a trick, when declarer assumes your partner has the ace.

I saw the SMH column. At the time, I was reading a book by Tim Bourke that recommended that when you're defending and declarer stops to think, you should fill in your spare tine by guessing declarer's shape and which card declarer will play next.

A few weeks later, Richard Jedrychowski on my left declared 3NT. He won the opening lead in his hand and stopped to think for two minutes. I had ♣AJ105, which reminded me of the new idea Paul Lavings had discovered.

The clubs were:

	Q863
97	AJ105
	K42

I filled in the two minutes by guessing declarer's most likely shape (accurately, as it turned out), deducing that Richard would probably play a club to dummy's queen next. I recalled Paul's tip about ducking from my AJ10x holding, but had no idea if this was a good time to duck ♣Q. Just as I had that thought, Richard led club two, Martin Bloom played ♣7 and the queen was played from dummy, I played ♣5 smoothly in tempo, having no idea if it was a good play or bad play. Richard continued with ♣3, ♣10, ♣4 ... Richard was hoping Martin had A7 and I had J1095 in clubs. I cashed three club tricks and we were the only pair to defeat 3NT.

For this play, Martin and I won the 2004 Best Defended Hand in the whole world award. Some people thought I was a genius to invent the play but all I'd done was to copy Paul Lavings, the person who'd discovered the idea that ducking with AJ10x can be a good play. None of this background material has ever been written up anywhere before.

Nowadays I feel a bit like I was AI (Artificial Intelligence), regurgitating or copying the Master. The 2004 article can be found on page 6 of the Nov 2004 ABF Newsletter at <https://abfevents.com.au/newsletter/Nov04.pdf>.

My memory of all this was jogged when I received Australian Bridge magazine's August 2025 edition. That story is in tomorrow's instalment, the last in this series of my recollections about various legendary players.

Puzzle from the Open Swiss Pairs: Answer

We were in 5♣XX down two for -600. If partner had converted to 6♣X, we would have been down three and scored only -500!

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](#).

How should North bid this 17-point hand over a 1♦ opening on their right?

Board 7	♠ K8
Dealer S	♥ KJ982
All Vul	♦ KJ
	♣ AQ103
♠ AQJ9	♠ 107652
♥ Q4	♥ A65
♦ 107654	♦ A83
♣ K7	♣ 92
	♠ 43
	♥ 1073
	♦ Q92
	♣ J8654

West	North	East	South
			Pass
1♦	?		

Pete Hollands and Liam Milne discussed the merits of three options: overcalling 1NT, overcalling 1♥, and doubling then bidding hearts. Liam said the decision really comes down to personal preference but that in his experience, 1♥ works better than 1NT because the 5-card major can't be found. Other points he made against 1NT are that the diamond stopper is quite tenuous – there is no hold-up available with just KJ doubleton – and that partner may transfer to spades and leave you there, which would not be ideal.

After ruling out 1NT, the decision was between bidding 1♥ directly or making a “big double” then bidding hearts. Liam said that a simple 1♥ overcall will work when anyone bids as you can then bid clubs next or double the opponents’ bid. It could end sadly if everyone passes, but it’s quite likely that someone will bid on this hand since you have short spades. On the other hand, doubling then bidding would show the HCP strength of the hand, but it isn’t that strong – you’re not close to having game in your own hand, so if you were left in 1♥ it’s probably not disastrous. Liam believes that in general, it’s better to overcall rather than double then bid, unless your hand is overwhelmingly strong. Pete agreed with Liam – he rarely makes a power double unless he has a very strong hand – and asked whether North would be willing to bid 3♥ if the auction came back to them at that level, for example if East bid 1♣ and West raised. That would be a very unilateral bid, whereas Liam pointed out that the auction could go:

West	North	East	South
			Pass
1♦	1♥	1♠	Pass

2♠ 3♣ Pass

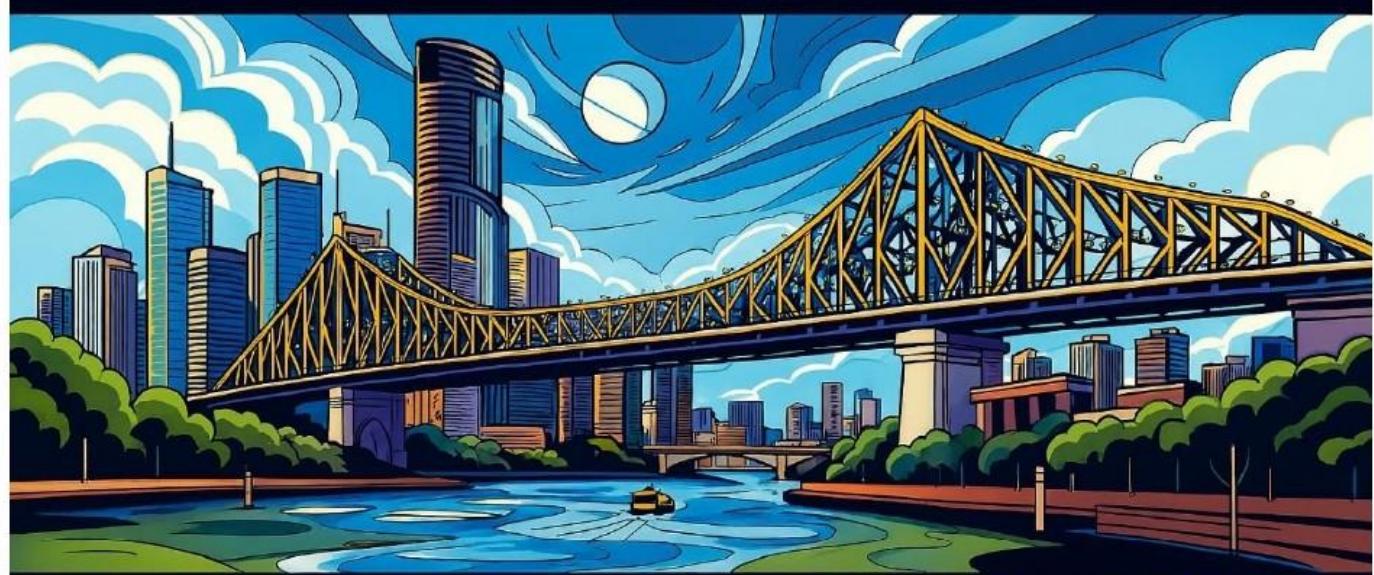
which would allow South to make the call about which of North's suits should be trumps.

While power doubles are a useful tool, Liam said their best use is usually with big balanced hands, too strong to overcall 1NT. They should be used more sparingly with distributions such as this one, so 1♥ was the winning bid according to Pete and Liam on this occasion.

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.

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