

Summer Festival of Bridge

Wednesday 14 - Sunday 25 January 2026

Daily Bulletin



Friday 23rd January 2026

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Bulletin 9



In the U750 and Restricted All-Rounder Teams events, Restricted teams took out the top 4 spots! While the results listed in yesterday's bulletin were separated into the two categories for the purpose of the All-Rounder, the prizes actually all went to Restricted teams.

Congratulations to team Moss (left, with David Fryda), Liz Moss, Gwen Riordan, Ann Berry, Bev Furner, who were awarded the U750 Teams prize.

The second-placed team overall, Meares (Nicola Meares, Sharon Michael, Lucy D'Ambrosio, Shannon Queree, right, with David Fryda) won the Restricted Teams prize.

Third place, Watts, received the U750 Teams runner-up award and Koh, in fourth, were the Restricted Teams runners-up. All four of these Restricted teams placed higher than any U750 teams! Well done!



Today's Program

Friday 23rd January

National Open Teams Quarter-Finals

9.00am – 7.30pm, 4 x 16-board rounds

Mixed Matchpoint Swiss Pairs

1.00pm – 6.00pm, 3 x 14-board rounds

SWPT Winners (2000-2025)

John Brockwell

4 wins

Ashley Bach, Sartaj Hans, Andy Hung, Paul Marston

3 wins

Sophie Ashton, Stephen Burgess, Arjuna de Livera, Nabil Edgtton, Peter Gill, Pauline Gumby, Warren Lazer, Gabi Lorentz, Liam Milne, Ervin Otvosi

2 wins

Cezary Balicki, Marek Borewicz, Andy Braithwaite, James Coutts, Ishmael Del'Monte, Bill Jacobs, Avi Kanetkar, Justin Lall, Pablo Lambardi, John Lester, Phil Markey, Bruce Neill, Michal Nowosadski, Jacek Pszczola, Ian Robinson, Jeremi Stepinski, Marek Syzmanowski, Ben Thompson, Matthew Thomson, Justin Williams, Adam Zmudzinski

1 win

David Appleton, Alejandro Bianchedi, Dennis Bilde, George Bilski, Betty Bloom, Steve Bloom, Norberto Bocchi, Richard Brightling, Leandro Burgay, Brad Coles, Vince Demuy, Giorgio Duboin, Adam Edgtton, Espen Erichsen, Neil Ewart, Rodrigo Garcia da Rosa, Wojciech Gawel, Murray Green, Nye Griffiths, Joe Grue, Mike Hughes, Jacek Kalita, Ron Klinger, Siegfried Konig, Hemant Lall, Tony Leibowitz, Agustin Madala, Wally Malaczynski, C Mariani, Barbara McDonald, Justin Mill, Reese Milner, Kim Morrison, Matt Mullamphy, Zolly Nagy, Barry Noble, Tony Nunn, Andrew Peake, Bobby Richman, Jacek Romanski, Nigel Rosendorff, Jerzy Russyan, Alex Smirnov, Tadashi Teramoto, Ian Thomson, Alan Walsh, Michael Whibley, Piotr Wiankowski

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National Day of Mourning

On Thursday morning before play, the ABF acknowledged the National Day of Mourning for the victims of the terrorist attack at Bondi and observed a minute of silence.

President Allison Stralow said:

Before we begin play, I'd like to acknowledge that today is the National Day of Mourning for the victims of the terrorist attack at Bondi.

This tragedy has touched our bridge community directly. We remember Marika Pogany, a much-loved member of the Australian bridge community who lost her life, and we also hold in our thoughts those within our community who may be injured, grieving, or affected through family and friends.

On behalf of the Australian Bridge Federation, we extend our deepest sympathy to all those who lost their lives, to their families and friends, and to everyone affected by this tragic event.

The ABF stands alongside the Jewish community, and with all members of our wider community who are grieving or feeling impacted today.

Thank you everyone, I would like to offer Tony Leibowitz the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Jewish members of our community.

Tony Leibowitz acknowledged and appreciated Allison's words and spoke:

At the outset as someone born Jewish but proudly Australian I am both devastated following the tragedy of December 14th and disappointed that our government and security agencies had been warned countless times that a disaster of this magnitude could and would happen.

As part of a great nation we should respect all citizens and not generalise or stereotype groups, whether they be cultural, religious, minorities simply because of the deeds of a few.

The death of 15 innocent people, going about their day pleasantly and joyfully by 2 deranged fundamentalists will be a blight on the best country in the world and I include myself in this group.

I do not condone bigotry and prejudice whatsoever and while we all get things wrong at times, we can and need to do more to ensure this great country of ours continues to give us the pleasures I was afforded when my family and I were granted Australian citizenship. This disgraceful and disgusting tragedy was an attack on Australian values.

All I can ask is that you all speak out to the extent you're comfortable with and ensure our country remains a safe place for you and I.

Today I encourage you to pause, reflect, and stand with the broader Australian community in mourning. Reach out to one another. Hold space for grief, and also for hope.

Thank you for listening. I would now like to invite you to observe a minute's silence in remembrance of the victims.

Thank you to Allison and Tony for sharing their speeches with us. In the other playing area, David Fryda and Martin Bloom spoke on behalf of the ABF and the Jewish members of the bridge community respectively.

Results

South West Pacific Teams

1 st	Dalley (Paul Dalley, Tony Nunn, Kieran Dyke, Ash Bach)	168.57 VP
2 nd	Depasquale (Chris Depasquale, Michael Courtney, Andrew Peake, Giselle Mundell)	166.41 VP
3 rd	van der Vlugt (Maurits van der Vlugt, Fraser Rew, Terry Brown, Ian Thomson, Andrew Spooner, Matt Mullamphy)	163.17 VP
4 th	Beauchamp (David Beauchamp, Sophie Ashton, Mike Ware, Matt McManus, Peter Newman, Matthew Thomson)	158.22 VP
5 th	Smith (Lori Smith, Barbara Travis, Peter Reynolds, Alan Watson)	152.05 VP
6 th	Doecke (Mike Doecke, Dave Wiltshire, Griff Ware, Tim Pan, Lysandra Zheng)	150.71 VP
7 th	Haffer (Joe Haffer, Ella Jacob, George Kozakos, Ben Thompson)	149.77 VP
8 th	Meier (Leon Meier, GeO Tislevoll, Peter Gill, David Hudson, Michael Smart)	147.51 VP

National Open Teams Quarter-Final Match-Ups

- QF 1 Dalley vs Smith
- QF 2 Depasquale vs Doecke
- QF 3 van der Vlugt vs Haffer
- QF 4 Beauchamp vs Meier

It's All in the Game

Greg Quittner

Once in while you'll go down
But it's all in the game
Partner will give you a smile
And do exactly the same.
Yet you both raise a smile
When you win by a mile.
And agree that it's all in the game.

Top right: U750 Teams runners-up, Watts

Right: Restricted Teams runners-up, Koh





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South West Pacific Teams – Round 10

Sartaj Hans and Andy Hung from team Yoshka played against Tim Pan and Lysandra Zheng from the Doecke team in match 10. Both pairs played strong club systems with relays but on board 5 Tim and Lysandra benefited from bidding to game quickly and giving minimal information to their opponents:

Board 5 ♠ A83
 Dealer N ♥ 1052
 Vul NS ♦ 7
 ♣ AK9652

♠ J10974	♠ 65
♥ A93	♥ 874
♦ KJ86	♦ A109543
♣ 10	♣ Q3

♠ KQ2
 ♥ KQJ6
 ♦ Q2
 ♣ J874

West	North	East	South
Hans	Zheng	Hung	Pan
	2♣	Pass	3NT

All Pass

Lysandra's 2♣ showed 6 clubs and an intermediate hand, so Tim jumped straight to 3NT.

With no information on the layout of any suit, Sartaj opted to lead his longest suit: spades. This didn't work when Tim cashed the first nine tricks. On a diamond lead, the defence will take the first seven tricks instead!

On board 14, Andy and Sartaj got a bad result without really seeming to do anything wrong:

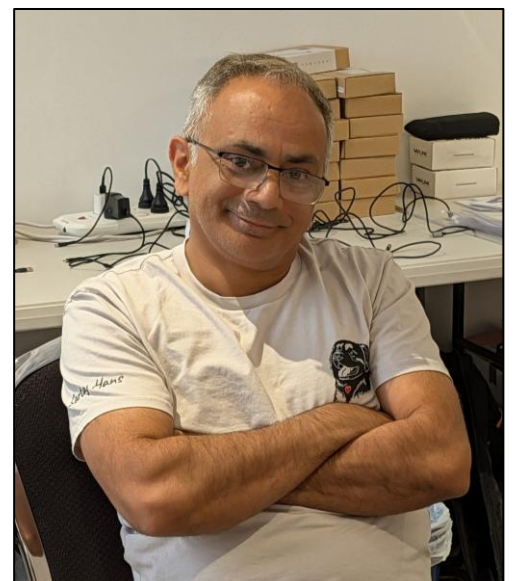
Board 14 ♠ Q984
 Dealer E ♥ 984
 Vul Nil ♦ A7642
 ♣ 2

♠ K106	♠ --
♥ J10752	♥ Q63
♦ KQ9	♦ J1085
♣ Q4	♣ AK10876

♠ AJ7532
 ♥ AK
 ♦ 3
 ♣ J953



Tim Pan



Sartaj Hans

West	North	East	South
Hans	Zheng	Hung	Pan
		2♣	2♠
X	3♠	X	4♠
X	All Pass		

The 2♣ opening by Andy showed 10-15 points with 6+♣. The first two doubles were takeout but the last one was penalty. Sadly for the defence, there was nothing they could do.

Sartaj led ♠Q which held, then switched a heart to Tim's Ace. Tim ruffed a club in dummy, crossed back to his ♥K, ruffed another club (Sartaj pitching a low heart), ruffed a heart, and then trumped his final club. ♠Q ran around to the King and Tim claimed the rest of the tricks for +990.

Tim and Lysandra shut Andy and Sartaj out of the auction on board 16:

Board 16 ♠ QJ8764

Dealer W ♥ Q3

Vul EW ♦ 72

♣ QJ10

♠ 952

♥ K954

♦ 1064

♣ A52

♠ A

♥ AJ876

♦ AKQ53

♣ 74

♠ K103

♥ 102

♦ J98

♣ K9863

West	North	East	South
Hans	Zheng	Hung	Pan
Pass	2♠	4♦ *	4♠
X	All Pass		



Andy Hung

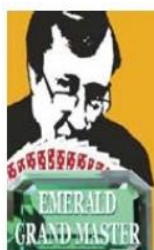
Lysandra opened 2♠ promising a six-card suit, even at favourable vulnerability (second seat). Andy bid Leaping Michaels – 5+ diamonds and 5+ hearts – and Tim made a very aggressive competitive 4♠ bid. Sartaj's double seems normal and Andy didn't really have any more to go on without knowing about a fit from partner so he passed. 4♠X went for 500 when the defence took one spade, two hearts, two diamonds and a club, but with East-West cold for 7♥ this was a terrible result on the hand. Luckily for Andy and Sartaj, they only lost 5 IMPs when Mike Doecke and Dave Wiltshire stopped in 5♥ at the other table.

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South West Pacific Teams – Round 11

In match 11, I watched two of the top four qualifiers play each other – Sophie Ashton and David Beauchamp vs Fraser Rew and Maurits van der Vlugt.

After seeing Fraser's play on board 2, I've got a feeling he's seen Sophie's favourable pre-empts before:

Board 2 ♠ KQ9
 Dealer E ♥ 84
 Vul NS ♦ QJ86
 ♣ 8742

♠ A7543	♠ J
♥ Q1097	♥ 652
♦ K	♦ 109543
♣ AJ3	♣ 10965

♠ 10862
 ♥ AKJ3
 ♦ A72
 ♣ KQ

West	North	East	South
Beauchamp	van der Vlugt	Ashton	Rew
		2♦	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	



Sophie Ashton

Sophie loves a first-seat favourable weak 2 showing a five-card suit and 0-6 points.

David led ♠4 which was won in dummy with the King, Sophie's Jack falling under it. Fraser took the heart finesse, losing to the Queen, and David played another spade, won again in dummy. He played a club to the Queen and Ace and David cleared the spades by cashing the Ace and playing another one. Fraser cashed two rounds of hearts, then since he was stuck in hand, he tried ♦A, felling David's King. Not only did Fraser set up his eighth and ninth tricks, but since Sophie had to discard three times on the spades, she'd ditched a couple of her useless-looking diamonds so ♦8 came good for trick number 10!

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Fraser and Maurits found an interesting way to a good game on board 12:

Board 12 ♠ J76
 Dealer W ♥ 4
 Vul NS ♦ AKQJ743
 ♣ 52

♠ Q3	♠ 1094
♥ AKQ10982	♥ 63
♦ 5	♦ 96
♣ Q63	♣ KJ10974

♠ AK852
 ♥ J75
 ♦ 1082
 ♣ A8

West	North	East	South
Beauchamp	van der Vlugt	Ashton	Rew
1♥	3♥ *	Pass	3♠
4♥	4♠	All Pass	



Fraser Rew

Maurits must have valued his hand pretty highly to bid 3♥ asking for a stopper. Since Fraser didn't have one, he bid 3♠ which was undiscussed but seemed natural. Over David's 4♥, Maurits raised to 4♠. David led ♥A then switched to a club, and Fraser banged down the ♠AK dropping the doubleton Queen, then claimed 12 tricks.

Sophie found an elegant line in 2♦ on board 13:

Board 13 ♠ K963
 Dealer N ♥ A53
 Vul All ♦ 103
 ♣ A1096

♠ A85	♠ Q72
♥ K42	♥ J86
♦ K86	♦ AQ9752
♣ Q743	♣ 5

♠ J104
 ♥ Q1097
 ♦ J4
 ♣ KJ82

West	North	East	South
Beauchamp	van der Vlugt	Ashton	Rew
	Pass	2♦	All Pass

See – Sophie's vulnerable 2♦ openings are way more respectable! ♠J was led to the King, and Maurits switched to a low club to Fraser's King. Fraser tried another club which Sophie ruffed, then she crossed to dummy's ♦K and ruffed

the third club. Now she drew the second round of trumps, cashed ♠Q and ♠A, and played dummy's last club, discarding a heart when Maurits played the Ace.

♠ 9		
♥ A53		
♦ --		
♣ --		
♠ --		♠ --
♥ K42		♥ J8
♦ 8		♦ Q9
♣ --		♣
♠ --		
♥ Q1097		
♦ --		
♣ --		



Maurits van der Vlugt

Maurits had to either lead a spade to give Sophie a ruff and discard or play a heart, promoting dummy's ♥K. All that for an overtrick in 2♦!

South West Pacific Teams – Round 12

The last match of the SWPT is always exciting – some teams locked in, others vying for a place in the finals – and I decided to watch the 11th and 12th placed teams, Haffer and Leibowitz, assuming one of them would end up qualifying.

On board 2 Ella Jacob picked up the most perfect garbage Stayman hand I've seen in a long time:

Board 2	♠ 8763	
Dealer E	♥ AJ86	
Vul NS	♦ K9652	
	♣ --	
♠ AKJ4		♠ Q109
♥ K943		♥ 75
♦ J10		♦ A874
♣ 965		♣ QJ87
	♠ 52	
	♥ Q102	
	♦ Q3	
	♣ AK10432	

West	North	East	South
Vadas	E Jacob	Thompson	Haffer
		Pass	1NT (9-13)
Pass	2♣ *	Pass	2♦ *
All Pass			



Ella Jacob

Matthew Vadas led ♠A then switched to ♦J to Jamie Thompson's Ace. Jamie played another diamond which Joe Haffer won with his Queen. Joe cashed ♣AK, pitching two spades, then led ♥Q, covered by the King and won with the Ace. He drew the last two trumps then claimed ten tricks when the heart position was exposed by discards.

Jamie was unstoppable with his nine-card suit on board 9:

Board 9	♠ Q10763		
Dealer N	♥ KJ		
Vul EW	♦ KQ5		
	♣ 764		
♠ K9852		♠ J	
♥ 2		♥ AQ9876543	
♦ A1072		♦ J4	
♣ J109		♣ A	
	♠ A4		
	♥ 10		
	♦ 9863		
	♣ KQ8532		
West	North	East	South
Vadas	E Jacob	Thompson	Haffer
	1NT	4♥	5♣
Pass	Pass	5♥	All Pass

Ella wheeled out the Outback Acol 1NT opening (9-13 HCP). Jamie bid 4♥ then 5♥, knowing that 9-card suits should be trumps. He bought an amazing dummy – the diamond entry allowed him to finesse the heart and make his contract.

Jamie made a play that delighted me and frustrated Ella in equal measures on board 17:

Board 17	♠ KQ94		
Dealer N	♥ A1073		
Vul Nil	♦ Q9		
	♣ A95		
♠ 873		♠ 105	
♥ QJ9865		♥ K4	
♦ K8		♦ J107653	
♣ 76		♣ Q104	
	♠ AJ62		
	♥ 2		
	♦ A42		
	♣ KJ832		



Jamie Thompson

West	North	East	South
Vadas	E Jacob	Thompson	Haffer
	1♣ *	Pass	1♥ (spades)
Pass	1♠ *	Pass	2NT *
Pass	3♠ *	Pass	4NT *
Pass	5♣ *	Pass	6♠
All Pass			

Outback Acol requires a 1♠ rebid with 16-17 points and 4 spades – Ella, not being super confident with the system, bid it here too. Joe's 2NT showed five clubs and promised further description, Ella bid 3♠ clarifying her hand type (1♠ could have been any 14-17 balanced hand), and Joe keycarded then bid slam.

On the surface, this slam looks easy: spades break 3-2 and so do clubs, with the ♣Q onside. But Ella didn't know all that and Jamie took it upon himself to make her think things weren't working so well.

He led ♦J – 2 – K – 9. Matthew returned a heart to Ella's Ace. She cashed ♣A and Jamie dropped his Queen under it, faking a singleton. Ella got spooked and thought she needed to ruff some hearts in dummy now since clubs wouldn't set up easily! She trumped one heart, crossed to ♦Q and trumped another heart (and Jamie discarded ♣10 to let her know he'd tricked her). Then she had to draw trumps but didn't have any entries to her hand outside spades, so had to hope they were 3-2 since she'd need to overtake. When they did, her contract made, but not without a scare.

♠8 Away From Glory

Peter Newman rued a missed opportunity in match 10 of the SWPT on Thursday. Playing against Michael Courtney, he held ♠A9432 ♥A ♦Q942 ♣Q109. His partner opened 1♦ and Michael overcalled 5♥. Wanting to beat Michael at his game, Peter decided not to double but instead bid 6♦, eschewing his 5-card spade suit. Chris Depasquale, on Peter's left, doubled, and when that was passed around to him Peter decided to run to 6♠.

Board 9	♠ K865	
Dealer N	♥ 54	
Vul EW	♦ K875	
	♣ K53	
♠ A9432		♠ J107
♥ A		♥ K10
♦ Q942		♦ AJ1063
♣ Q109		♣ A76
	♠ Q	
	♥ QJ987632	
	♦ --	
	♣ J842	

When Chris didn't lead a diamond to give Michael a ruff at trick 1, instead leading a heart, Peter would have been cold if he'd held ♠8. He cashed ♠A then played another spade and Chris won and put Peter back in dummy. If he could overtake the spade, draw trumps and finesse the diamonds he would've been home. Alas, no ♠8 so 6♠ went one off.



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Tripping at the Final Hurdle

Barbara Travis

I'm presenting this hand as a single dummy problem (i.e. the two hands you can see when declarer):

SWPT Match 11

Board 2, Dealer East, NS Vulnerable

♠ K Q 9
♥ 8 4
♦ Q J 8 6
♣ 8 7 4 2

♠ 10 8 6 2
♥ A K J 3
♦ A 7 2
♣ K Q

West	North	East	South
Nunn	Smith	Dalley	Travis
		3♦ *	3NT

All Pass

Tony Nunn alerted 3♦ as showing any weak hand with 5 diamonds (given the vulnerability).

The lead was an attitude lead of the ♠4. If Tony held the ♠A and ♠J, I only had two winners anyway, so I flew the ♠K and was gratified to see the Jack from Paul Dalley.

I cogitated over whether to finesse in diamonds or whether to cash the ♦A, but I wasn't too keen on a club lead should East hold the ♦K so I finally decided, at trick two, to lead the ♦Q, finessing – to Tony's ♦K. Whoops!

Tony continued with the ♠A and another, which I won in dummy, as Paul threw the ♥6 (if high it was discouraging) and a diamond. I now knew that West, Tony, held five spades and one diamond, and it seemed likely that he held four hearts and three clubs. My first objective was to reduce his hand to only two clubs, so I cashed the ♦Q on which he threw a club, then the ♦A on which he discarded a spade. Mission accomplished – so I thought. I led a club to my King and Tony's Ace. Tony returned his ♣J, which I won to cash the last spade, with Paul discarding the ♥2.

Now I cashed the ♥A, to ensure that Paul could not gain the lead if he held a heart intermediate. Being the master that he is, Tony was on top of my plan to endplay him, and he threw the ♥9 under my ♥A. I took my eye off the ball – hence the title of the article – and left the ♥8 in dummy. So when I exited with the small heart, Tony ducked! I won the ♥8 in dummy and Paul suddenly woke from his slumber to claim the last two tricks.

At school, I was never very good at the hurdles.

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**BREAKING GROUND.
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Legends of Australian Bridge: Tim Seres

Peter Gill

This is the final instalment of my often-personal recollections of five legendary bridge players from Australia. I accept that some parts of the articles are as much about me as they are about the legendary player. Thanks to my niece Lauren Travis for editing and improving my drafts.

Tim Seres was unarguably Australia's greatest player in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s.

Like all the legendary players I've profiled, Tim was a superb card player who liked fairly basic bidding. He arrived from Hungary in 1947 after his parents had been killed by the Germans in WW2. This instalment is more about me than about Tim, but here we go...

In the 1970s, Monday night at the NSWBA in Elizabeth St was the big night with about 80 tables including all the superstar players. Tim was permanently seated by the Director Richard Grenside at Table 1 South. I kibitzed Tim a lot at the pairs duplicate games. One benefit was that Tim played so fast that a 2-board round would finish about 5 minutes early. To fill in those 5 minutes, Tim often gave me tips. One time, I asked Tim if playing super-fast came naturally to him. Not at all. Tim explained that within a day of arriving in Australia, he got a factory job but assembly line work wasn't his cup of tea, and his personality wasn't suited to becoming a business tycoon unlike many other new arrivals in Australia from Europe.

He was playing bridge six nights a week, and he realised that to make a good income, he'd better become a big winner at rubber bridge for money. At such games, the faster Tim played, the more hands played in the allotted time, thus the more money he won.

So, at the duplicate bridge games with less at stake than the money games, Tim told me he played as fast as he possibly could for a year, until playing really fast became second nature.

I was such a slow player that in late 1982 a Sun Herald bridge column by Dick Cummings bemoaned the slowness of a few of the young players of the time. The hand in that column, played well by me, took 19 minutes to play! So, in 1983, I decided to follow Tim's lead and play as fast as possible in all but the most important games. At the end of 1983, Devis Howard wrote in his bridge column that Peter Gill must be the most improved player in Australia. In 1984, I made my debut in the Australian Open team. Being able to play both fast and slow has its benefits.

Five Aussie players were famous overseas in the 1960s and 1970s - Tim Seres and, to a lesser extent, Dick Cummings, Roelof Smilde, Denis Howard and Don Evans. One new arrival from Europe told me he decided to change his name to Mark Sarris so that when he travelled overseas, he could go to a bridge club anywhere in the world, introduce himself as Mr Sarris (sounds like Seres) from Australia, and the red carpet would be rolled out mistakenly for the apparently great man.

In those early days, I played the Monday night Teams events with my sister Barbara Travis (nee Gill) and my brother John Gill at the other table. They brought back amazing results against the superstars, especially Don Evans, who they played regularly. My sibling teammates' results against the quiet, pleasant Tim Seres were similarly awesome.

Barbara later told me about a conversation she had with Tim. On Monday nights Tim routinely overbid by one trick against everyone except the superstars, because it worked. Tim explained that when John and teenager Barbara arrived

at his table, they looked so young that he decided to overbid by two tricks. It took him a while to realise that bidding normally was the required strategy against Barbara and John.

Tim's demeanour at the table was delightful, never ever criticising his partner. The Teams of Three congress started up in the 1970s, where three normal players team up with an expert as their captain. Tim was stationed South at Table 1 as usual. Tim told me that three lovely ladies joined his team. At lunchtime, Tim overheard them ask their three friends what sort of Captain they'd drawn.

"He must be one of the greatest players ever," the other three gushed about their captain who had been called in when 80 teams entered and they had only 75 captains. "On every single hand, he tells us all these things we've done wrongly, so he must know everything there is to know about bridge. And what's your captain like?"

"He's a darling old gentleman named Tim, but he obviously can't play bridge for peanuts because he doesn't tell us anything at the end of each hand," was the reply. When Tim told me this, I asked if the other expert's advice would be mostly wrong. Tim reminded me that, though almost all of what he told them would be wrong, we shouldn't say things like that because it's not nice. Tim, ever the gentleman, concluded our conversation by suggesting that the Teams of Three was not exactly his cup of tea.

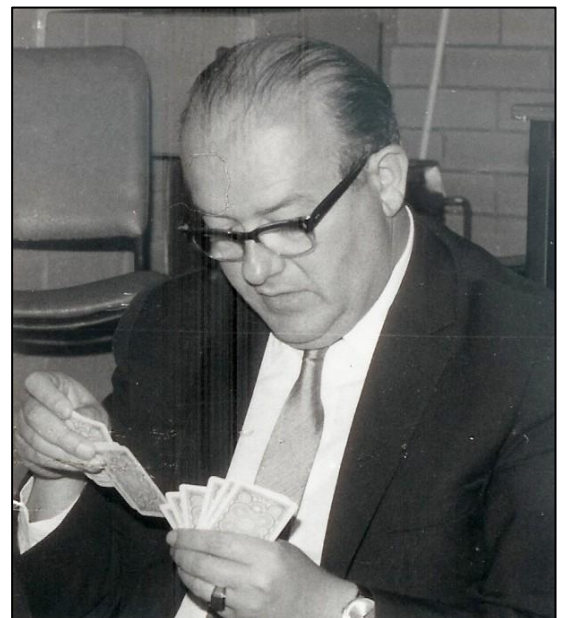
Bridge experts so often can be anonymous or unrecognised.

Michael Courtney wrote 5 or 6 bridge books in the 1980s and 1990s. Thirty years ago, he published one, called Play Cards with Tim Seres. It received favourable reviews, with most reviewers describing the book as a homage to Tim's genius. Financially the book was unsuccessful, so Michael's other books haven't been published. Each chapter has a theme that exemplifies Tim's genius, e.g. Deception, The Accumulation of Advantages, Trump Control and Trump Conversion. One day Michael asked me what the main theme of the book was. I guessed - a homage to Tim? No. A collection of amazing Tim hands? No.

Michael explained to me that the main purpose of the book was that everyone calls Tim a genius, but actually, genius was just the result of Tim's endless hard work away from the table, studying certain aspects of the game, which appeared in each chapter. Tim had spent his spare time studying up possible card combinations for falsecards etc, and such hard work led to Tim finding plays at the table which people described as genius. Subsequently, several non-bridge writers such as Malcolm Gladwell (in Outliers) have followed in Courtney's footsteps by delving into the origins of genius, but, despite me not noticing it until it was pointed out to me, it's there, although not explicitly explained to the reader, in Courtney's book... genius is the result of hard work and study.

Tim Seres and Michael Courtney are the only two bridge players I know who've played over a million bridge hands. Their "genius" backs up another Gladwell theory about 10,000 hours of practice.

Tim Seres once said: "Most top bridge players have mathematical ability. They don't need it. I can tell when it is about 60 to 40 in my favour. I know the percentages by feel. The feeling of the table is much more important than the mathematical chances. To read the people is more important. I know when to play the unexpected card to put you on the spot."



There's so much to bridge. If you want another article about Intuition and bridge featuring some of these Legends in next year's Summer Festival bulletins, please let the Editor know and it will be written.

From 1974 to 1994, a Dutch company Bols Liqueur sponsored the Bols Bridge Tips, which can be found at <https://www.haroldschogger.com/bols1.htm>. I'd always revered Tim Seres' famous tip which can be found by scrolling down that page, marvelling at one hand in particular.

Declarer has AKQx in dummy opposite 9xx. When declarer cashes the ace and king, an opponent drops the ten and jack, so you cross back to the nine, but declarer's attempts to get to dummy's queen all fail, so declarer never gets back to the queen.

The twist is that the defender has J10x and the suit broke 3-3, so if the false cards of the ten and jack weren't played, declarer would have no problem making four tricks instead of three tricks from that suit.

Then I read the "50 Years Ago" section in Australian Bridge magazine – a magazine worth subscribing to – at page 29 in AB's June 2025 edition. Bols asked the world's best players – Seres, Reese, Garozzo, Hamman, Belladonna and a few others – to submit a tip, with US\$1000 prizemoney. Tim asked Paul Lavings to keep an eye out for a suitable hand and tip.

Paul was watching Luc Turschwell, who coincidentally was my brother's boss at recently-closed Cafe Le Monde when John moved to Noosa forty years ago. Luc threw the ten and jack in the suit I've described, but in a different hand where it didn't matter. Paul's fertile mind noticed the possibility of this being a good play so Paul and Tim devised a hand where dropping the J10 was magical. Tim's Bols Bridge Tip, called "Give Declarer Enough Rope", originated from Paul Lavings, just like my best defended hand in the world. Lightning does strike twice.

So not only had Paul Lavings anonymously been responsible for my most famous hand, but he'd also been responsible for Tim's famous Bols Bridge Tip. My main point behind this series of five articles was to rectify the historical record.

Another important consideration is that all five of these legendary players have the most incredible concentration at the table, never missing a beat, especially Stephen Burgess.

In conclusion, how can the reader improve your game via advice from these legends?

I recommend reading the articles by Paul Lavings and Barbara Travis in that red and white ABF Newsletter. At least now you know a bit about the authors of those good articles. It's hard to find material written by some of the legends, but Kate McCallum who has only just become an Australian but has long fitted the second word of the "Australian Legends" moniker, has a short but great column in Bridge NSW's new regular newsletter. And it's also worth reading anything by Ron Klinger, another Australian Legend whom we couldn't fit into the available space in these bulletins.

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.



Barbara's Daily Column: Playing It Safe

Barbara Travis

One of the things I have emphasised so far is that when you need a card (or cards) to be in a particular hand, you assume it is, and then you also place other cards accordingly. On the other hand, when a contract looks easy, you have to allow for bad breaks and work out how to allow for them.

♠ 6 3
♥ 9 4
♦ 7 2
♣ A K J 8 6 3 2

♠ A K 7
♥ A 8 5 3 2
♦ A Q 4
♣ 7 4

West	North	East	South
	3♣	Pass	3NT

All Pass

West leads the ♠4 to the Queen and your King. How should you play the clubs?

Bid on Stability.

Preserve capital & invest in high-income producing assets.



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If you needed seven tricks from clubs, that would be a different matter. Your best chance then is to cash the Ace and King, with a first round finesse of the ♠J a close second chance. But if you have no need for seven tricks (let's say you are playing teams), you need to guarantee at least five for your contract. This is a sure thing, as long as West follows to the first club when you lead them. (Bear in mind, if East has all four clubs your contract is in trouble.)

You simply duck! If clubs are 2-2 or 3-1, the remaining clubs will fall under the Ace and King on the next two rounds. However, if clubs break 4-0 (with East having all four), you will notice East's first-round discard. Now you just finesse the ♠J on the second round and make six club tricks.

Funnily enough, if West plays the ♣Q on your first club lead, you should also duck – if you think West knows about safety plays. The Queen would be a sensational card when holding Q-10-9-5, because declarer's reflex would be to win, and down goes the contract.

There are many standard safety plays when holding particular suit combinations. The more that you know about them, the better, because it is really hard to work them out at the table. However, safety plays are not just about playing a single suit; very often, it is about the whole hand.

Here is an example of what I mean:

♠ 7 4
♥ K 9 5 4
♦ J 10 4 2
♣ A K Q

♠ A Q 2
♥ A J 6 3
♦ A K Q
♣ J 10 4

West	North	East	South
			2NT
Pass	6NT	All Pass	

(Note: The play on this hand is no different if you are playing in 6♥.)

North leads the ♦9, a passive lead.

You would look at this heart suit and think, "There's a safety play to ensure three heart tricks." It is one of the standard safety plays: you cash the Ace, then lead low towards the K-9. If West plays an honour (the 10), you win the King and now your Jack and 9 are equals against the Queen, so you can establish the third trick. If West plays low, you put in the 9, and either you win the trick (if West started with Q-10-x-x) or else the suit is breaking 3-2. If West shows out, you win the King and lead back towards your Jack.

If you held the ♠K, instead of the ♠Q, that would be the correct play, because you only need three heart tricks.

On the actual hand, three heart tricks may not be enough, because you may have only one spade trick. So, the 'secret' to this hand is to cross to dummy with a club and take an immediate spade finesse. If it wins, you can take your safety

play in hearts, as explained earlier. But if the spade finesse loses, you will need four heart tricks, so you should lead low to the Jack on the first round – not even cashing the King first. You will then make four tricks when hearts are 3-2 with East holding the Queen, but also when East has the singleton Queen. (If you think about the singleton Queen, you will see why you cannot cash the King first.)

Good safety play involves not just knowing your suit combinations, but thinking about the whole hand not just a single suit in isolation. That means you may have to find out about other suits before playing the critical suit!

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.

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 a cue raise? Does it show spades? Why?**

1♣ (2NT - ♦+♥) 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.



**BREAKING GROUND.
HEALING HEARTS.**

Please Be Considerate

- ♥ Value your partner/s
- ♥ Be polite to other competitors and tournament officials
- ♥ Greet your opponents as they arrive at the table
- ♥ Introduce yourself to people you don't know
- ♥ Be on time
- ♥ Thank your opponents at the end of the round/match
- ♥ Explain your system clearly and simply, if asked
- ♥ Acknowledge good play by your opponents
- ♥ Don't discuss hands until the break
- ♥ Be understanding of newer players
- ♥ Respect our directors
- ♥ Report poor behaviour to the Recorder

2026 VICTORIAN
FESTIVAL
 OF BRIDGE

♠♥♦♣

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 Mixed
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Victor Champion
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 5.30pm finish on
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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 1 ♠ AJ103
 Dealer N ♥ K
 Nil Vul ♦ A8
 ♣ AQ9543

♠ --	♠ K965
♥ J9765	♥ A103
♦ KQ74	♦ 652
♣ K1086	♣ J72

♠ Q8742
 ♥ Q842
 ♦ J1093
 ♣ --

The question was the best line of play in 4♠, which is easy to reach on this auction (as discussed in Bulletin 7):

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

Pete Hollands, Liam Milne and Kim Frazer discussed how they'd play the hand, with Pete noting that the 4-0 trump break makes the hand more challenging and lots of players would go down.

A common lead from West would be the ♦K, top of their sequence, which would be won in dummy with the Ace. A cross-ruff line looks appealing here, and South can also try to set up some tricks in red suits, so they should probably play the ♥K at trick 2. (In all likelihood, when EW win a trick they will play the other red suit, so a second diamond at this point could work too.) East is likely to return a diamond to West's Queen.

What can West do now? Nothing stands out – the ♣AQ is sitting over their King, a heart switch could be deadly if South holds the ♥Q-10, and they hold no trumps, so another diamond looks like the best option. Liam identified that a diamond continuation is strategic too – with two rounds gone, there are only five diamonds remaining and West holds two of those. If declarer also has two, that means after this round partner will be void in diamonds and may be able to overruff dummy.

	♠ AJ103	
	♥ --	
	♦ --	
	♣ AQ954	
♠ --		♠ K965
♥ J976		♥ 103
♦ 7		♦ --
♣ K1086		♣ J72
	♠ Q8742	
	♥ Q84	
	♦ J	
	♣ --	

At this point, it looks normal for declarer to draw trumps (finessing West for the King), discard one of their low hearts on the ♣A and ruff the other one, then the rest of their hand is high. However, when West shows out, South needs to consider whether they should win the Ace or lose to the King now. If dummy's Jack is inserted, East can win but what damage can they do? A club switch will take the finesse for declarer. A trump back can be won in South, a heart ruffed, ♣A cashed and trumps drawn. A heart return allows the same line to be followed. Therefore, it's safe to take the finesse, even though it's known to be losing.

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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