

# Summer Festival of Bridge

Wednesday 14 - Sunday 25 January 2026

## Daily Bulletin



Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2026

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## Bulletin 10



Ash Bach, Paul Dalley, Kieran Dyke and Tony Nunn won the 2026 South West Pacific Teams. After leading convincingly from round 4 and winning their first six matches by double digits, they narrowly took out the title by 2.16 VP from Chris Depasquale, Michael Courtney, Giselle Mundell and Andrew Peake. Both teams won their quarter-finals and will contest the semi-finals today.

# Today's Program

**Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January**

## National Open Teams Semi-Finals

9.00am – 7.30pm, 4 x 16-board rounds

## Mixed Matchpoint Swiss Pairs

9.45am – 6.00pm, 4 x 14-board rounds

## Results

### National Open Teams Quarter-Finals

DALLEY (Paul Dalley – Tony Nunn, Ash Bach – Kieran Dyke) 142.1 defeated SMITH (Lori Smith – Barbara Travis, Peter Reynolds – Alan Watson) 121

DEPASQUALE (Chris Depasquale – Michael Courtney, Giselle Mundell – Andrew Peake) 206.1

defeated DOECKE (Mike Doecke – Dave Wiltshire – Griff Ware, Tim Pan – Lysandra Zheng) 116

VAN DER VLUGT (Maurits van der Vlugt – Fraser Rew, Matt Mullamphy – Andrew Spooner, Terry Brown – Ian Thomson) 118.1 defeated HAFFER (Joe Haffer – Ella Jacob, George Kozakos – Ben Thompson) 90

MEIER (Leon Meier – Geo Tislevoll, Peter Gill – David Hudson – Michael Smart) 138 defeated BEAUCHAMP (David Beauchamp – Sophie Ashton, Matt McManus – Mike Ware, Peter Newman – Matthew Thomson) 116.1

### National Open Teams Semi-Final Match-Ups

SF 1 DALLEY vs VAN DER VLUGT

SF 2 DEPASQUALE vs MEIER

### Mixed Matchpoint Swiss Pairs (after 3 of 9 rounds)

1 <sup>st</sup>	David Taylor – Jane Lennon	43.49 VP
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Tania Lloyd – Hugh Grosvenor	43.02 VP
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Marnie Leybourne – Trevor Fuller	42.82 VP
4 <sup>th</sup>	Lucy Stevenson – Tamati Greig	41.38 VP
5 <sup>th</sup>	Paula Gregory – Michael Johnstone	40.44 VP

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# National Open Teams Quarter Final Stanza 1

Board 1 offered the opportunity for a huge swing in the Dalley vs Smith quarter-final, to no avail:

Board 1      ♠ AK  
 Dealer N      ♥ 2  
 Vul Nil      ♦ QJ107632  
                  ♣ 1098

♠ 982                      ♠ Q63  
 ♥ A109753            ♥ QJ6  
 ♦ 4                      ♦ AK95  
 ♣ J74                    ♣ KQ3

♠ J10754  
 ♥ K84  
 ♦ 8  
 ♣ A652

West	North	East	South
Nunn	Smith	Dalley	Travis
	1♦	1NT	2♠
2NT *	3♦	Pass	Pass
3♥	3♠	Pass	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

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## ANC 2026 PROGRAM 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



Lori Smith found ♠K lead on which Barbara Travis played ♠J, intending to show an odd number, but Lori understood it as suit preference. If Lori continued ♠A, Barbara would have shown preference for clubs with the ♠4 then given Lori a spade ruff. Unfortunately for the defence, Lori switched right away to a diamond and it was game over.

At the other table, Peter Reynolds and Alan Watson got to a better contract on this layout:

West	North	East	South
Watson	Dyke	Reynolds	Bach
	1♦	1NT	2♠
2NT *	3♦	3NT	All Pass

With ♥K onside, this was unbeatable on any defence.

Board 6 was peculiar – in the Dalley vs Smith match, both pairs from the Smith team played in 4m. Barbara and Lori made an overtrick in 4♣, and Peter and Alan made 4♦. In Depasquale vs Doecke, there was a game swing instead:

Board 6	♠ 10983	
Dealer E	♥ K106	
Vul EW	♦ 4	
	♣ J6543	
♠ KJ42		♠ Q765
♥ J93		♥ A752
♦ AJ10973		♦ K82
♣ --		♣ Q8
	♠ A	
	♥ Q84	
	♦ Q65	
	♣ AK10972	

West	North	East	South
Wiltshire	Depasquale	Doecke	Courtney
		1♣ (2+)	3♣
3♦	4♣	All Pass	

Michael Courtney luckily had a natural 3♣ bid available over the short club opening but was unable to find game after his partner simply raised to 4. Tim Pan and Lysandra Zheng had a slightly more scientific auction:

West	North	East	South
Mundell	Zheng	Peake	Pan
		Pass	1♣ (14+)
1♦	Pass (0-5)	2♦	3♣
Pass	3♦ *	X	XX (half stopper)
Pass	5♣	All Pass	

Well done to Tim and Lysandra who were the only pair on Vugraph to bid to the cold game (although Peter Gill and David Hudson from the Meier team got to 5♣X making).





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# National Open Teams Quarter Final Stanza 2

This stanza was absolutely wild in the Depasquale vs Doecke match, with 141 IMPs exchanged in just 16 boards! On every single board, at least one of the tables was in game or higher, resulting in game swings, slam swings and lots of doubled contracts. On board 17, Griff Ware succeeded with a light but powerful penalty double:

Board 17      ♠ AKJ87

Dealer N      ♥ A64

Vul Nil      ♦ 85

♣ K102

♠ 964

♥ J87

♦ J103

♣ AQ75

♠ 3

♥ K95

♦ AKQ974

♣ 843

♠ Q1052

♥ Q1032

♦ 62

♣ J96

West	North	East	South
Wiltshire	Peake	Ware	Mundell
	1NT	X	All Pass



Griff Ware

Griff didn't have a challenging lead problem here. He cashed six rounds of diamonds and Andrew Peake was under some pressure, having to make four discards from his hand. He bared his ♠K so it fell under the Ace, then Dave Wiltshire cashed the Queen for two off – not that it mattered since if Andrew kept two clubs the opponents could just lead a heart to set up a trick or two there.

At the other table Lysandra Zheng and Tim Pan had a strong club auction to 4♠ which went down one, so team Doecke gained 6 IMPs.

Ella Jacob and Joe Haffer bid to 3♠ by North on board 17, and Ella found a great play to guard against the clubs not sitting nicely. Her opponent cashed ♦A-K then switched to ♥5, won in dummy with the Queen. Ella drew three rounds of trumps ending in dummy, cashed ♥A and played another heart. East hadn't unblocked ♥K so was on lead and endplayed, having to play a club around to her King or give away a ruff and discard. Even better, then 13<sup>th</sup> heart had come good so Ella could throw her other club away.

Stanza 2 between Dalley and Smith was a bit more subdued, with only 73 IMPs flying between the two teams. On board 21, Smith gained a game swing when Peter Reynolds and Alan Watson bid aggressively to 3NT then picked the cards perfectly:

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Board 21      ♠ 6532  
 Dealer N      ♥ Q9  
 Vul NS      ♦ K43  
              ♣ KQJ10

♠ J10	♠ AQ8
♥ AKJ8762	♥ 43
♦ Q7	♦ J1062
♣ A9	♣ 8754

♠ K974  
 ♥ 105  
 ♦ A985  
 ♣ 632

West	North	East	South
Watson	Nunn	Reynolds	Dalley
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♥	Pass	1NT	Pass
3♥	Pass	3NT	All Pass



Alan Watson

Paul Dalley led ♠7 which was won with Alan's Jack. Peter immediately cashed Alan's top two hearts, felling the Queen, and claimed 10 tricks.

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West	North	East	South
Dyke	Smith	Bach	Travis
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♥	X	1NT	Pass
3♥	Pass	All Pass	

After a similar start to the auction – although North made a takeout double of 1♥ – Ash Bach passed 3♥. Lori Smith led ♣K to Kieran Dyke’s Ace, then Kieran cashed one heart before taking the losing spade finesse. Barbara Travis cashed ♦A then played a club to Lori’s 10 which was followed by ♦K, the defence having now taken four tricks. Presumably playing Lori not to have passed an 11-count as dealer, when Kieran won the diamond continuation in dummy he finessed the heart, losing to Lori’s Queen and going one off.

Fraser Rew got to the lofty heights of 5♠ on board 24 but backed up his bidding with some classy declarer play after a favourable lead:

Board 24      ♠ AK87  
Dealer W      ♥ 104  
Vul Nil      ♦ Q9864  
                ♣ J8

♠ J6	♠ 92
♥ AQJ73	♥ K98652
♦ J	♦ AK105
♣ 107642	♣ 5

♠ Q10543  
♥ --  
♦ 732  
♣ AKQ93

West	North	East	South
Kozakos	van der Vlugt	Thompson	Rew
Pass	1♦	1♥	1♠
4♥	Pass	Pass	X
Pass	4♠	5♥	X
Pass	5♠	All Pass	



Fraser Rew

George Kozakos led ♥A, ruffed by Fraser. He drew trumps, ruffed dummy’s second heart and planned to discard three diamonds on clubs, which didn’t work when the clubs broke 5-1. A change of plans: Fraser still threw two diamonds on top clubs, then ruffed his last club and exited a low diamond from Qxx having eliminated the other suits. George hadn’t had the opportunity to discard at all so still had his ♦J, meaning Ben Thompson had to win with his ♦A or K to prevent Ben being endplayed – but by doing so, he himself would be endplayed!

At the other table, after a similar auction to 4♠, Terry Brown as East bid 5♦ rather than 5♥ to get his partner off to the right lead.



Maurits van der Vlugt was impressed by George's lead on board 26:

Board 26      ♠ KJ10  
 Dealer E      ♥ A8  
 Vul All      ♦ K85  
                  ♣ AJ973

♠ 974	♠ --
♥ KJ107	♥ 965432
♦ A92	♦ 107643
♣ Q62	♣ K4

♠ AQ86532  
 ♥ Q  
 ♦ QJ  
 ♣ 1085

West	North	East	South
Kozakos	van der Vlugt	Thompson	Rew
		2♥	2♠
3♥	4♥ *	Pass	4♠
Pass	4NT *	Pass	5♣ *
Pass	5♦ *	Pass	6♠
All Pass			



*Ben Thompson*

Maurits pointed out that 6♠ looks pretty good on the expected heart lead – run it around to the Queen, discard a club on ♥A, and pitch another club after setting up the diamonds... except that George led ♥K, so there was nothing declarer could do to make.

Andrew Peake found a killer lead on board 31 of Depasquale vs Doecke:

Board 31      ♠ A92  
 Dealer S      ♥ 9  
 Vul NS      ♦ A6543  
                  ♣ A853

♠ K76	♠ J84
♥ AKJ102	♥ Q8543
♦ K9	♦ QJ107
♣ J42	♣ Q

♠ Q1053  
 ♥ 76  
 ♦ 82  
 ♣ K10976

West	North	East	South
Wiltshire	Peake	Ware	Mundell
			Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣ *	Pass
2♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

Looking at this hand, the temptation is to lead either a trump or ♦A. All seven other Norths picked one of those two cards. But Andrew found the ♠2 lead. This was ducked in dummy, Giselle Mundell played ♠10 and Dave Wiltshire won the King. He immediately played ♦K to set that suit up, but Andrew was onto him: ♠A, ♣A and a small spade to Giselle's Queen made them the only pair to defeat 4♥.

## National Open Teams Quarter Final Stanza 3

The Smith team staged a comeback in the third stanza, whittling away Dalley's lead starting with board 2:

Board 2      ♠ J2  
 Dealer E      ♥ K105  
 Vul NS      ♦ J9643  
                  ♣ 632

♠ 9765	♠ Q843
♥ A876	♥ QJ43
♦ K2	♦ Q5
♣ Q98	♣ J107

♠ AK10  
 ♥ 92  
 ♦ A1087  
 ♣ AK54

West	North	East	South
Watson	Nunn	Reynolds	Dalley
		Pass	2♦ *

All Pass

Paul Dalley's 2♦ showed 18-19 balanced and Tony Nunn thought that was quite high enough. On this layout and with a 9-card fit, it turned out NS could make 11 tricks in diamonds (especially on a spade lead from Alan Watson).

Barbara Travis and Lori Smith judged the hand a bit differently:

West	North	East	South
Bach	Smith	Dyke	Travis
		Pass	1♦
Pass	3♦ (weak)	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♦	Pass	5♦
All Pass			



Barbara Travis

Once Barbara had shown a spade stopper, one might argue that Lori should have bid 3NT. Since hearts break 4-4, this would be a fine contract. When they ended up in 5♦ instead, Ash Bach underled his Ace of hearts, knowing that Barbara had denied a stopper there. Sadly for him, his partner held the Jack along with the Queen, so Barbara's only hope was to hop up with the King and play for diamonds 2-2. When all that worked, along with the spade finesse, she notched up 11 tricks and 10 much-needed IMPs in the plus column.

Giselle Mundell and Andrew Peake were the only pair in the quarter-finals to find slam on board 11, increasing their team's lead:

Board 11      ♠ A876

Dealer S      ♥ A82

Vul Nil      ♦ QJ97

♣ 63

♠ J54

♠ 10932

♥ Q53

♥ K9764

♦ A63

♦ 52

♣ 9752

♣ Q4

♠ KQ

♥ J10

♦ K1084

♣ AKJ108

West	North	East	South
Zheng	Peake	Pan	Mundell

			1♣
Pass	1♥ (spades)	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♠ *
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠ *
Pass	4NT *	Pass	5♥ *
Pass	6♦	All Pass	



Giselle Mundell

I wouldn't feel good about this on a heart lead which exposes a second loser and removes the entry to dummy for a heart discard on ♠A, but with the Ace of trumps in the hand with long clubs and East holding four spades, it makes even on the best lead for the defence. When West led a trump, Giselle had no trouble making.

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On board 12, Lori found a neat play at trick 1 to beat 2♥ and gain a partscore swing:

Board 12      ♠ A93  
 Dealer W      ♥ K5  
 Vul NS      ♦ J107  
                  ♣ Q9732

♠ 7654	♠ J108
♥ 10943	♥ AQJ6
♦ 6	♦ K98
♣ KJ106	♣ A54

♠ KQ2  
 ♥ 862  
 ♦ AQ5432  
 ♣ 8

West	North	East	South
Bach	Smith	Dyke	Travis
Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣ *	Pass	2♥	All Pass



Lori Smith

Barbara naturally led her singleton club which picked up the suit for declarer. The best play is probably to win the King in dummy in order to finesse ♥K, but when Kieran called for the Jack, Lori made sure he got stuck in hand by covering and forcing him to win the Ace. He could still salvage the contract by playing ♦K out of hand, forcing Barbara to win and starving Lori of an entry to give Barbara a second club ruff. When he instead led ♦9 at trick 2, Barbara happily ducked so Lori won and led ♣9 signalling for a spade back after the ruff. One diamond winner, three top spades and two club ruffs meant the contract went down one.

## 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 2♠ bid in your partnership?**

**Is it a strong hand? Does it show both minors? Why?**

**1♥ – 1NT**

**2♥ – 2♠**

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# National Open Teams Quarter Final Stanza 4

The closest match going into the final stanza was Dalley vs Smith, with the latter leading the top qualifiers by just 4.9 IMPs. Paul Dalley struck on the third board to change the lead for the final time:

Board 19 ♠ J1062

Dealer S ♥ 742

Vul EW ♦ AQ2

♣ Q53

♠ K8753

♥ A3

♦ K95

♣ 1096

♠ A4

♥ QJ10865

♦ 104

♣ AJ8

♠ Q9

♥ K9

♦ J8763

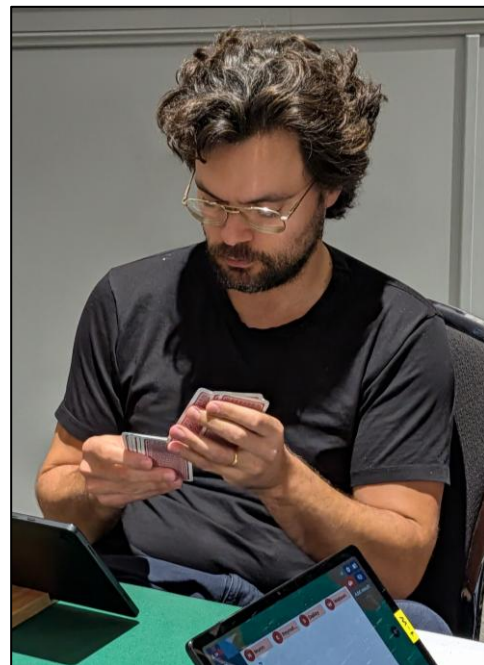
♣ K742

West	North	East	South
Watson	Nunn	Reynolds	Dalley

Pass

2♠ \* Pass 3♥ Pass

4♥ All Pass



Paul Dalley

Alan Watson's 2♠ showed 8-10 with exactly five spades, and E-W ended up in the best contract.

At the other table, also defending 4♥, Barbara Travis as South led a diamond though the King so declarer knew he couldn't afford a heart loser. Paul got off to a different start - ♣4 to the Queen and Ace – so Peter Reynolds had more options. At trick 2 he played ♥10 out of hand and Paul instantly covered. This excellent play gave Peter a losing option: to play Paul for singleton ♥K and take a heart finesse on the way back. He took the bait and finessed, then Paul led a diamond back. The defence took the same two diamonds and club that everyone else got, but with the bonus heart trick that Paul created, they shot the contract.

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# A Play I've Only Read About Before

Barbara Travis

National Open Teams Quarter Final, Stanza 3, Board 9, Dealer North, EW Vulnerable

	♠ 6 3		
	♥ K J 7 2		
	♦ Q 6 5		
	♣ A J 8 2		
♠ A 9 5 2		♠ --	
♥ Q 3		♥ A 10 9 8 5 4	
♦ A 10 7		♦ K 9 8 3	
♣ 7 5 4 3		♣ Q 10 9	
	♠ K Q J 10 8 7 4		
	♥ 6		
	♦ J 4 2		
	♣ K 6		
West	North	East	South
	Pass	2♥	2♠
3♥	3NT	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

West led the ♥Q – K – A – 6. Not knowing which suit to return, East led the ♥8 - ♦2 - ♥3 – J.

Logic dictates that I should lead to my ♣K and finesse the Jack on the way back, hoping to throw a second diamond loser, but I overlooked this necessary play (which led to three down at the other table), instead leading a spade. East discarded a nebulous heart – ♠10 – A. Perhaps West should have ducked for a round, hoping for a more useful discard from partner, and I'd have been down two tricks (with a trump promotion occurring).

Opting for the safest exit, West led a club – 2 – 9 – K. Only now did it occur to me that I had prospects even if East held a diamond honour and the ♠Q. Six more rounds of trumps led to this position:

	♠ --		
	♥ --		
	♦ Q		
	♣ A J		
♠ --		♠ --	
♥ --		♥ 10	
♦ A 10		♦ K	
♣ 7		♣ Q 10	
	♠ --		
	♥ --		
	♦ J 4		
	♣ 6		

East still has to find a discard on the last spade. It isn't evident but he has to throw his ♥10, then his partner can win ♦A to lead a club through dummy. When he discarded his ♦K, which seems the more 'obvious' play, I was able to lead a club to dummy's Ace, then exit my ♦Q to West. West had only a small diamond left, giving me access to my ♦J which had been promoted.



# 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](mailto: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: Turkish Delight

Barbara Travis

♠ A Q 5			
♥ K 8 7			
♦ A K			
♣ 9 8 6 4 2			
♠ void	♠ K 8 2		
♥ Q J 10 3 2	♥ A 9 5 4		
♦ Q 7 5 4 2	♦ J 10 8 6		
♣ K 5 3	♣ Q 7		
♠ J 10 9 7 6 4 3			
♥ 6			
♦ 9 3			
♣ A J 10			
West	North	East	South
			3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

This hand comes from the World Championships in Istanbul in 2004.

West's lead was commonly the ♥Q. The Guadeloupe declarer covered the Queen with the King, East winning the Ace. The Italian East now found a stunning switch – the ♣Q – and declarer could no longer make the contract. If he ducked the ♣Q, he had 2 club losers. If he won the ♣Q, when East won the ♠K, he could lead across to his partner's ♣K, defeating the contract with a club ruff.

Declarer's error was covering the ♥Q at trick 1. He was happy to have a heart continuation, whereas the club switch proved fatal.

Giorgio Duboin, from the victorious Italian team, did duck the heart at trick 1, and ruffed the heart continuation. He led a spade, winning the Ace when West showed out, and exiting with a spade. In due course, he drew the last trump, then used dummy's diamond entries to double finesse the clubs. When the club honours were split, his contract was safe.



The Bulletin Editors wrote this up as a well-played hand so, in due course, I put in my two bob's worth. This resulted in an article, written by Ron Klinger, titled "Outplaying a world champion". If only I could be more consistent at finding "brilliant" plays.

The problem with Duboin's line was that, if the ♠K-Q-x had been offside, he would have gone down, although, admittedly, a double finesse is a 75% line.

Here is my 'far superior line', missed by the Editors (and Duboin, the world champion).

I ducked the ♥Q lead and ruffed the second heart lead with the ♠9. Trying to allow for the ♠K to be with East and both club honours potentially being offside (West), I chose to eliminate the red suits before leading trumps. At trick 3, I led a diamond to dummy's ♦K, cashed the ♦A, then ruffed dummy's last heart.

Now I led the ♠J, planning to finesse (and then the ♠A-Q would have been the two entries for the double club finesse). When West showed out, I stopped and recalculated. Having worked out the options, I now played the Queen from dummy. When East won the King, she could either return a spade to dummy (which would provide me with a second entry to dummy) or lead a club.

Assuming a spade was returned, I could win in dummy, then lead a club myself, finessing. When West won the King, she would be end-played – leading a club would pick up the suit for me, and leading a red card would allow me to trump in dummy, discarding a club from hand.

If, instead, a club was returned, I could either win the Queen with my Ace, or duck a small club to West's King, which would result in the same end-play on West.

I specifically played the ♠Q, because it meant that I would have a trump left in dummy, even after a spade return. Also, if East had ducked the ♠Q, I could lead the club myself, finessing, and again end-playing West. If I had won the ♠A, then exited with a spade, a spade return from East would clear North's last trump, and I'd have failed if both club honours were off-side (because now West could exit with a red card).

Try the hand for yourself, given this layout:

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

Here's a hand with a different declarer play issue.

You have to make 3NT from the South seat, after a “3rd and 5th highest” ♠2 lead, and East playing ♣8 under dummy’s Ace. (3rds and 5ths mean that with an odd number of cards you lead your lowest card – 3rd, or 5th, or even 7th. With an even number of cards you lead your 3rd highest. Actually, it is a better method than 4th highest leads, because you often can work out the length in partner’s hand more quickly. Another story!)

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

The lead (being the ♠2) meant that West held five clubs. Recognising this sort of information is vital to the play of many hands. I didn’t want East to be able to lead clubs through my hand, so I immediately led a diamond to the ♦10 and West’s Jack.

I knew I had no quick entry to dummy, but even if I’d led the ♦A, ♦K then another, I had the same problem. So, I needed the ♥K with West, and I also needed diamonds to break. Furthermore, I hoped that West didn’t continue with clubs (hence the need to keep East from the lead).

West exited with a small heart, which I had to win with my Ace, to keep my entry to dummy. Next I unblocked the ♦K and led a small heart towards dummy’s Queen. When West played low smoothly, I had to play the ♥Q and hope. When that worked, I had 10 tricks.

After the event, there was much discussion about how you can still make the contract if West continues clubs at trick 3. The solution was a double dummy play, though reasonable. Win the ♠Q, cash the ♦K, then cash the ♠A and ♠K (hoping for West to have a doubleton spade). You can then exit with a club, letting West cash his three club tricks (or however many remain), before she has to lead from the ♥K, giving you the entry to dummy without conceding five tricks.

I’m glad I didn’t have to find that end-play!

But, once again, what started life as a horrid-looking contract, having lost dummy’s re-entry at trick 1, became playable with a little forward-planning.

*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](http://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](#).

This deal proved awkward for many pairs, with 7♣, 7♠ and 7NT all cold but challenging to find. Pete Hollands said many pairs may not even make it to small slam.

Board 14 ♠ 952

Dealer E ♥ K

Nil Vul ♦ 1095432

♣ 954

♠ AQJ87

♠ K103

♥ 64

♥ AQ873

♦ --

♦ A87

♣ KQ10763

♣ A2

♠ 64

♥ J10952

♦ KQJ6

♣ J8

Liam Milne thought this was a prime example of the HCP system being flawed – EW only have 29 HCP between them but a huge amount of power through their long suits, shapely hands and sharp cards, and both hands are worth more than their HCP.

East holds a 5-card major, three aces, and no 'flaws' (singleton kings, short honours, weak long suits) so Liam would consider this hand to be in the 18-19 range. Pete agreed that HCP aren't a perfect measure of hand strength and there are lots of ways to evaluate, including the Kaplan and Rubens system. Although this hand is balanced with 17 HCP, it's not a good fit for a strong 1NT opening. Liam's rule of thumb for evaluating hands with 5+ card suits is to add an extra point for the fifth card, another one for the sixth, and so on. That simple trick makes this hand worth 18, so it should be upgraded and opened 1♥.

West has only 12 HCP, but this is not a normal minimum opening hand. A typical 12-count will have 7 losers, and this one only has four (one spade, two hearts and one club), so is incredibly strong. The 6-5 shape is also a huge asset, and the void is in the unbid suit, rather than partner's long suit. Liam would respond 2♣ – he says that with a strong hand, you should bid your suits in the right order, i.e. longest suit first.

Over 1♥-2♣, East may rebid 3NT showing 18-19 HCP and a 5332 shape. Liam said that "the more space you take up, the more descriptive your bid should be", so 3NT would definitely deny any other 4-card suits or a sixth heart.



At this point, West would probably curse East for taking up so much space in one fell swoop. A 4♠ bid would show 5 spades and 6 clubs, because East has already denied 4 spades, and we've bid our suits in the right order so the clubs must be longer than the spades. However, Liam pointed out that 4♠ is probably not forcing and West knows their hand is strong enough in combination with partner's points that slam will be making. It's quite old-fashioned but 5♠ would be a great choice: showing the 5-6 with a slam-going hand, and giving partner choice between clubs and spades.

This is the full suggested auction:

West	North	East	South
		1♥	Pass
2♣	Pass	3NT	Pass
5♠	Pass	6♠	All Pass

The 2026 Bridge Day Out will be held on 28 July. Please see the [Bridge Australia Foundation](https://www.bridgeaustraliafoundation.org.au/) website for more details closer to the date.

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