



**CANBERRA
ANC 2026**



4th to 16th July 2026
Welcome Bulletin



Lake Burley Griffin: Photograph: Chris Lokan

Inside this Pre-Event Bulletin

You will find the introductions to the Championships from the ABF and BFACT Presidents, details of the State and Territory teams, some good-to-know administrative things (such as the events timetable, the who's who of making the event happen and keeping it running, and who our sponsors are), and information about the ABF's High Performance Program.

The sections on play and bidding feature the first of Ron Klinger's Real Deal workouts, an article by Bernie Waters on the likely challenges of playing at this level, and a review of the action at last year's ANC in Brisbane.

From the ABF President

On behalf of the Australian Bridge Federation, I would like to welcome all players and officials to the 87th Australian National Championships, held this year at the Canberra Labor Club. Congratulations to the Bridge Federation of the ACT and the organisers Lyn Carter and Cathy Nichols for their time and effort in putting on this tournament.

The Interstate Teams Championship holds a special place in the Australian calendar. It began in 1933 with a match between NSW and Victoria, and over the years has offered people the chance to represent their state and territory for nearly a century.

This year Canberra hosts teams from across the country, from Youth to Seniors, followed by a week of competition for all in the Butler championships. The ANC is a celebration of the game we all love, hard-fought with respect and the spirit that continues to build the bridge community. I wish everyone the best of luck and look forward to seeing many of you at the table.

Stephen Fischer



The National Carillon: Photograph: Rob Lee

From the BFACT President

It gives me great pleasure to welcome players from all over Australia to Canberra for the National Championships. This will be the ninth occasion on which we have hosted the ANC and will also be the 60th anniversary of the first time we had the honour. I hope this will be an ANC to remember and one to be proud of.

As always, my thanks go out to our tireless volunteers without whom such an event would not be possible. This will be the culmination of more than twelve months of preparation and I particularly recognize Cathy Nichols and Lyn Carter, our co-convenors.

I also recognize our sponsors: the ABF, TBIB Insurance, the Mercure and Abode Hotels, Paul Lavings Bridgegear, Australian Bridge Magazine, MBE Printers, and Fixed Income Solutions for their generous support of the ANC, both in cash and kind. Our local bridge clubs and their members, in particular the Canberra Bridge Club, the South Canberra Bridge Club and Monaro Bridge Club, have also supported the event in a variety of ways. Thank you to all. Without you this event would be very different or perhaps not happening at all.

So enjoy the bridge and enjoy Canberra – and let the games begin.

Wendy Boxall



Parliament House: Photograph: Werner Padarin

About the Bulletin

Following the hiatus last year, we are hoping to restore the practice of a Bulletin appearing at regular intervals (hopefully every two days) during the event. However, budget realities do not allow for a paid editor/ writer. We are therefore very dependent on voluntary contributions.

Articles can be emailed to the editor at historian@abf.com.au or left in the Bulletin box at the event. However, ***you can still contribute even if you don't have time to write anything*** - you can just contact the editor by leaving a note, email or text the number that will be at the main desk and he can talk with you and write something up for your clearance.

The style and appearance reflects the fact that, while some still prefer to print out and read the Bulletin in hard copy, the great majority of readers now are likely to read the Bulletin online; and many will be reading on their phones or other small screens. The compromise solution to this has been to continue with the PDF format for easy download, but to use a significantly larger font (and therefore more pages) than previous print-oriented versions and it is a single column style throughout.

Tony Bemrose Insurance Brokers (TBIB)



TBIB has been providing insurance solutions to its clients, Australia wide, for more than 40 years. They are an AFSL Licensed General Insurance Brokerage who offer an unparalleled range of insurance and risk-management services for businesses and individuals. TBIB is a major sponsor of this ANC

TBIB has tailored a comprehensive travel insurance policy especially for ABF members and their families. Tailored for travellers up to the age of 90, with the option to cover a broad range of pre-existing medical conditions to ensure that our clients have the best insurance protection available when they're travelling. Contact TBIB online at ABF Insurance or visit the TBIB stand in the ANC playing room.

The Interstate Teams

Open

QLD	Jim Evans - Pamela Evans, Kim Morrison - Rachel Langdon, Alison Dawson - Ken Dawson, David Smith (NPC)
NSW	Nigel Rosendorff - Peter Buchen, Michael Courtney - James Coutts, David Wiltshire - Bruce Neill, David Fryda (NPC)
ACT	Peter Reynolds - George Kozakos, David Appleton - Brad Coles, Christy Geromboux - Sebastian Yuen, Stephen Fischer (NPC)
VIC	Serhat Ozenir - Chris Hughes, David Beckett - Neil Ewart, Kevin Chan - Simon Henbest, Ben Kingham (NPC)
SA	Kate McCallum - Axel Johannsson, Paul Hudson - Peter Popp , Cathy Chua - Justin Williams, Jon Hunt (NPC)
WA	Chris Mulley - Paul Brayshaw, Pim Birrs - Dave Munro, Karol Miller - Simon Brayshaw, Geoff Pocock (NPC)
TAS	Hugh Grosvenor - Tania Lloyd, Erica McCoull - Jeremy Reid, Julie Rhodes - Hilton Francis
NT	Alexandra Wilson (PC) - Mairead Kelly, Dimitri Hnaris - Luke Black, Caitlin Chisholm - Chris Depasquale

Women

QLD	Annette Corkhill - Wendy Gibson, Meta Goodman - Ivy Luck, Jan Malinas - Sarah Strickland, Sue O'Brien (NPC)
NSW	Judy Mott - Cathryn Herden, Nazife Bashar - Kinga Moses, Sally Clarke - Sharon Mayo, John McIlrath (NPC)
ACT	Judith Tobin - Adrienne Stephens, Julia Hoffman - Pam Crichton, Wendy Boxall - Jodi Tutty (PC)
VIC	Kitty Muntz - Kim Frazer, Jenny Thompson - Diana Smart, Franci Halmos - Bertha Dembo, Ben Kingham (NPC)
SA	Sue Lusk - Therese De Marco , Linda Babiszewski - Wendy Hooper, Sheila Bird - Felicity Smyth, Jon Hunt (NPC)
WA	Jane Reynolds - Viv Wood, Cassie Morin - Cynthia Belonogoff, Kimberly Zhao - Dianne Dwyer, Allison Stralow (NPC)
TAS	Pam Murphy - Barbara Giizel, Maggie Crawford - Julia Corr, Mardi Grosvenor - Annie Bartlett

Seniors

QLD	Pele Rankin - Paul Hooykaas, John Morris - Neven Burica, Therese Tully - Richard Ward (PC)
NSW	Pauline Gumby - Warren Lazer, Martin Bloom - Peter Gill, Ted Griffin - Mike Hughes, Bob Sebesfi (NPC)
ACT	Michael Smart - David Hudson, Rob Hurst - Desmond Manderson, Richard Brightling - Christopher Quail, David Hoffman (NPC)
VIC	Thilak Ranasinghe - Gordon McRobert, Wayne Leppard - Nick Walsh, Dee Harley - Stephen Weisz, Andrew Macready-Bryan (NPC)
SA	David Anderson (PC) - Chris Lorimer, Kevin Lange - Phil Gallasch, Zoli Nagy - Russel Harms
WA	Lilia Male - Beata Bieganski, Trevor Fuller - Val Biltoft, Tom Lemann - Vinod Nasta
TAS	David Marshall - Merryl Darby, Felicity Wivell - Catherine Elliott, Pam Lidl - Fiona Hickey

Youth

QLD	Anthony Mills - Paddy Taylor, Remco Spencer - Zac Ross, Alexandra Mills - Kate Macdonald, Paul Gosney (NPC)
NSW	Aadhi Hariharan - Adrian Le, Natalie Newman - Ida Andersen, Shannon Ooi - David Zheng, Mitch Dowling (NPC)
ACT	Byron French - Jess He, Alexis Wilsmore - Jade Wilkinson, Dev Shah - Diya Shah, Max Ashurst (NPC)
VIC	Seb Wright, Alex Goss, Heath Watkins, Matthew Sieredzinski, Sam Goss, Taydon Gold, Phil Young (NPC)
SA	Gilbert Morgan - Gregor Forster-Rohal, Anne Davey - Fletcher Davey, Sebastian Redin - Louis Kent, Jarrad Dunbar (NPC)
WA	Sean Elliott – Dean Mainstone, Elijah Guest – Oliver Brayshaw, Alec Vanyai – Lizzy Brayshaw, Campbell Millar (NPC)

Congress Events

Saturday 4 July pm and Sunday 5 July **Australian Bridge Magazine Welcome Swiss Pairs.** (<300, <1000, Open). Sat 1.30 – 16.45; Sun 9.30 – 16.45
Rookie Pairs (<15) Sat 1.30 – 16.45
Novice Pairs (<100) Sun 9.30 – 16.45

Monday 6 July to Wednesday 8 July **Canberra Bridge Club 3-Day Teams** (<300, Open) Mon 11.45 - 18.45; Tues-Wed 9.45 – 18.45
One Day Swiss Pairs (3 one day events) Mon-Wed 9.30-18.45
Sean Mullamphy Australian Country Clubs Teams Championship Mon 11.45 - 18.45; Tues-Wed 9.45 – 18.45
Len Dixon Memorial Pairs 1st session Tues 19.00-22.00

Thursday 9 July to Friday 10 July **Monaro/South Canberra Graded Matchpoint Pairs** (<15, <100, <300, Open) Thurs 9.30-5.30
Country Pairs Championship Thu-Fri 9.30 – 17.30
Interstate Pairs Championship Fri 9.30 – 17.30

Saturday 11 July to Sunday 12 July **Open Butler Stage 1** Sat-Sun 9.30 – 17.15
Restricted Butler Pairs Sat-Sun 9.30 – 17.15
Novice Swiss Pairs (<100) Sat 9.30 – 17.15

Monday 13 July to Tuesday 14 July **Open Butler Stage 2** Mon-Tues 9.30 – 18.00
Mixed Butler Stage 1 Mon-Tues 9.30 – 18.00
Swiss Pairs A Mon-Tues 9.30 – 18.00
Len Dixon Memorial Pairs 2nd session Tues 19.00– 22.00

Wednesday 15 July to Thursday 16 July **Open Butler Stage 3** Wed 9.30 – 18.00; Thu 9.30 – 16.45
Mixed Butler Stage 2 Wed 9.30 – 18.00; Thu 9.30 – 16.45
Swiss Pairs B Wed 9.30 – 18.00; Thu 9.30 – 16.45

Play Officials

**Chief
Tournament
Director** Laurie Kelso

Chief Scorer Peter Busch

Directors Ronnie Ng; Ian Lisle (week 1); Bruce Crossman (Fri 10th); Bricet Klören (weekend); Sebastian Yuen (wk 2)

Floor Manager Malcolm Carter

Reviewers Matthew McManus, Chris Mulley

**Review
Consultants** Kim Morrison, Sebastian Yuen (week 1), Shane Harrison, Jodi Tutty (Week 2)

Recorders Richard Ward (4 – 10/7); Wendy Boxall (4 – 16/7); Kim Frazer (6 – 12/7); Phil Gue (11 – 16/7); Will Jenner-O’Shea (4 – 8/7 and 10 – 16/7); Bob Sebesfi (11 – 16/70)

ABF and BFACT Representatives

ABF President Stephen Fischer

BFACT President Wendy Boxall

**ABF Executive
Director:** David Fryda

ABF Secretariat Margaret Cusack

**ABF on-site
representatives** Warren Lazer (Week 1), Liam Milne (Week 2)

The logo for Australian Bridge features the words "Australian Bridge" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The letter "A" is stylized with a spade symbol inside its top loop, and the letter "e" is stylized with a club symbol inside its top loop.

Event Management

This ANC has been made possible by the efforts of a large number of volunteers. The main contacts for different areas are below but there are many others who have been and will be involved in different ways during the event, and whose contribution we greatly appreciate.

Tournament Organisers	Lyn Carter and Cathy Nichols
Treasurer	Roger Brake
BBO	Niek van Vucht
Help Desk Personnel	Lesley Gunson
Partnership/ Stand By	Jenny Bell, Belinda Moss
Hospitality	Janet Kahler, Gwen Jamieson
Bulletin	Keith Ogborn
Trophies/ Presentations	Jeanette Graham
Masterpoints	John Donovan
Social Media	Debra Birkby
Dealing	Canberra Bridge Club
Hand records / board checking	Cathy Nichols
Caddy	Damian Judd

MBE ETC



MBE assists local small and medium-sized businesses with their outsourced marketing, logistics and operational needs.

It provides a wide range of business flexible services such as graphic design, on demand printing services, private mailboxes, mass mailouts, and micro-logistics. MBE has business centres across Australia. In Canberra, they are in Manuka, just a short distance from the Canberra Bridge Club.

Introducing Ronnie Ng

Ronnie Ng was born in Hong Kong. Interestingly, no (direct or indirect) member of his family plays card games. He was told that two of his parents' in-laws do know the rules of Contract Bridge, though he could only verify that claim for one of them. One thing in common for both of his uncles is that they both studied overseas in their youth. Mahjong was the much more common game in Hong Kong after all. Ronnie first came across trick-taking card games when he was in primary school and went to camping as a Cub Scout. His leader taught him a game called German Bridge (he later found that it was very similar to what the Australians called "Oh Sh**", only the scoring was different).

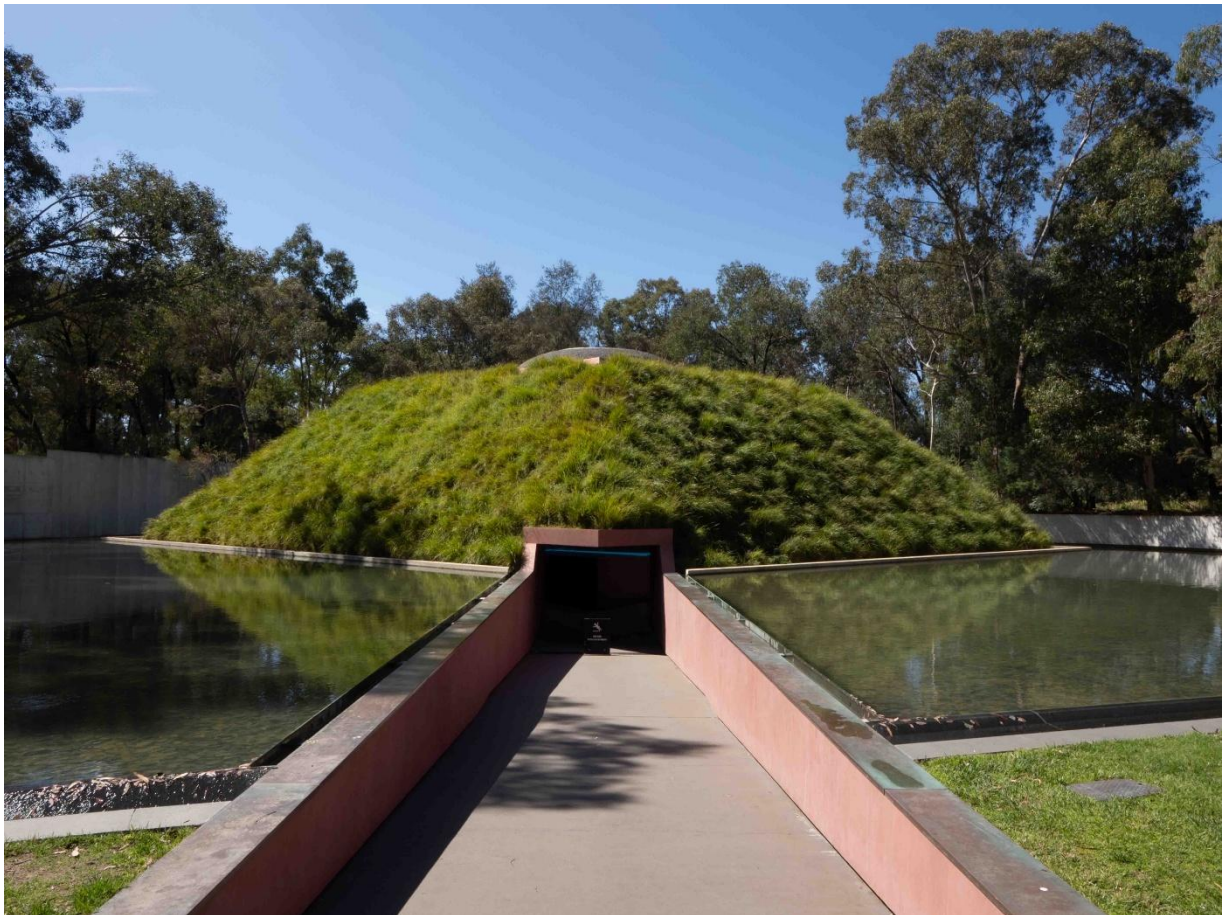
In his second year of secondary school, his classmate who was a member of the school's Bridge Club caught wind that he knew what trumps were and what it meant to follow suit. Ronnie joined the club soon after and learned Contract Bridge there. It was rare for a Hong Kong secondary school to have a Bridge Club so its students could choose Contract Bridge as their extra-curricular activities. However, there were enough clubs in Hong Kong schools that inter-school competitions on Saturdays existed (and still do!) and he played in those events. He never played in an open event in Hong Kong while he was in his studies.

After graduating, he arrived in Sydney to take on his tertiary education in Forensic Science (when CSI TV dramas were at their peak). He got into contact with the then NSWBA and joined the youth group Friday night gatherings. His first national event was the Australian Youth Championships in Canberra. As his tertiary education progressed (and was sick of the frozen pizza from the youth nights), he stopped playing for a few years until he moved to the Central Coast, NSW. In order to meet and mingle with the locals, he visited the local Bridge Club during one of their sessions and asked to join. The director understandably warned him that he had to take lessons before he could join the sessions, but was pleased when his reply was "I do know what Stayman and Transfers are!".

He played a few club sessions there before he played his first club event – an Interclub Teams with the other local clubs. In the same year, he played in his first club congress with someone whom he never met before, but the

partnership lasted for more than two years. Under this partnership, he played as many club and national congresses as he could afford. When the APBF hosted its championships in Hong Kong in 2013, he played in the side events (his first ever open game in Hong Kong). He also played in the New Zealand Nationals once.

During those years as a competitive player, he started directing at his local club on Monday nights so as to subsidise his “hobby”. He progressed his director ranks relatively quickly and soon switched from playing to directing congresses. Directing bridge sessions and events now becomes his full-time job, and he is enjoying what he’s doing. He doesn’t mind playing competitively from time to time, but he’s in no hurry – he had his fair share of competitive games.



National Gallery Sculpture Garden: Photograph Morag Lokan

YOUTH TRIATHLON RAFFLE

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WHY

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To bring back the YOUTH TRIATHLON
A Youth pairs, teams, and individual
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GRAND PRIZE DRAW Thursday 16 July

					
\$5.00			\$20.00		\$50.00
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SPOT PRIZES



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5 July

- 2 x 1 hour coaching session with Andy Hung / Justin Mill
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Tuesday - Friday
7 - 10 July

- Restaurant vouchers
- Voucher to Paul Laving's store
- Hamper donated by Angeline Christie



The Real Deal Workout #1 with Ron Klinger

(available via www.ronklingerbridge.com)

Teams: Dealer North : Nil vulnerable

North

♠ A 9 2

♥ K J 7 6 2

♦ 4

♣ 9 6 5 3

West

♠ J 8 6 5

♥ 10 5

♦ Q J 7

♣ A Q J 10

West

Pass

Pass

North

Pass

3♣ (1)

Pass

East

Pass

Pass

Pass

South

2NT

3NT (2)

(1) Asking (2) No 4-card major, no 5-card major

You lead the **S8: nine – king – four**. East shifts to the **C2: eight – ten – three**. What would you play next as West? Full discussion at the end of the Bulletin

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Australian Representative Team High-Performance Program: Presentations & Information Sharing Sessions

The Australian Bridge Federation is embarking on a High-Performance journey designed to strengthen Australia's representative teams through stronger partnerships, clearer pathways, improved preparation and a more structured high-performance environment.

ANC attendees are invited to join one of several Australian Representative Team High-Performance Program presentations and feedback sessions led by ABF Executive Director David Fryda.

These sessions will provide an overview of the High-Performance reform journey, explain recent changes such as Pairs Qualifying Points (PQPs), outline what comes next, and provide an opportunity to ask questions, share ideas and help shape the future direction of Australia's representative program.

Whether you're a current representative, aspiring to represent Australia, or interested in the future of Australia's representative teams and international success, we encourage you to come along and be part of the conversation.

Session Times

Current & Aspiring Australian Representative Players

- Monday 6 July, 2:00pm (20 minutes plus Q&A)
- Monday 13 July, 12:45pm (20 minutes plus Q&A)

Broader Bridge Community

- Saturday 11 July, 12:45pm (20 minutes plus Q&A)

Remembering the 2025 ANC : Part One

Open

TEAM	IMPS		TOTAL	VPs	W-D-L
	R 1	R 2			
SA	172	41	213	648.70	10-1-3
VIC	76	82	158	620.90	9-1-4
NSW	52	87	139	602.90	8-2-4
ACT	78	6	84	573.10	8-2-4
WA	41	-12	29	516.30	8-0-6
TAS	-72	-51	-123	390.40	5-0-9
QLD	-198	8	-190	323.40	3-0-11
NT	-117	-193	-310	228.60	2-0-12

After losing their first match in the Qualifying to the ACT, SA went on a 9 match winning streak. A key turning point in their event was a major win in match 6 against then-leaders Victoria.

Despite a more subdued second round of matches, SA always had a comfortable margin. The scale of victory was heavily based on getting the big decisions right. Where the swing was less than 10 imps, SA won 58 boards to their opponents' 66; but but the 10+ imp boards provided a net gain of 169 imps. Play of the hand in game contracts; and making 11 of 13 slams (including one grand) were the major contributors to this.

While the return matches did not produce much change in the order of the teams, some had a much better or worse run the second time around. A contest just based on the return matches would have returned a significantly different order of merit. More than half the return match ups had a different result from the first.

In the final, Victoria started strongly, winning the first three stanzas for a lead of 58 imps, with two to play. However, the twelve boards in the fourth stanza produced six double-digit swings, five of which going the way of SA, to bring the match close to level. A 30-16 win in the last created the SA win.

Women

TEAM	IMPS R 1	IMPS R 2	TOTAL	VPs	W-D-L
WA	119	13	132	612.70	8-0-4
SA	78	90	168	593.00	7-1-4
VIC	34	10	44	517.80	7-0-5
NSW	-37	95	58	501.50	5-2-5
ACT	-3	19	16	501.50	6-2-4
QLD	-23	-128	-151	366.00	1-4-7
TAS	-168	-99	-267	327.40	3-1-8

After losing their first match, WA had eight straight wins, and never lost their lead. This was despite ending with three losses, including a 69 imp loss to second-place SA in the last match.

Unlike in the open, the VP count produced a different order of finishing from the imp totals – with several large results producing little or nothing in the way of additional VPs. A number of results were reversed in the return matches and NSW, in particular, had a major turnaround, but overall there was more consistency of result than in the Open.

As in the Open, the winners of the qualifying had good event across most indicators. They won 73 boards overall and lost 52 but the standout element involved getting the big decisions right. In big swings the positives outweighed the negatives almost three to one - 368 to 126.

A major factor in this was successful slam bidding - making 11 and going down only once. Almost all the remaining large swings were due to their making and defeating a game. The combination of doubling and being doubled had a small overall negative outcome.

The WA-SA final was similar to the Open final, with one team (WA) winning the first three stanzas and losing the final two. As in the Open, there were fireworks, with 41 imps changing hands in just three boards. However, there was no happy ending for the team coming from behind, with SA at the end falling just under 4 imps behind.

Seniors

Team	IMPS			VPs	W-D-L
	IMPSR1	R2	TOTAL		
NSW	69	81	150	613.90	8-2-2
ACT	102	40	142	598.70	6-2-4
SA	27	70	97	592.40	8-1-3
QLD	86	-59	27	492.30	5-2-5
WA	21	-29	-8	487.40	5-1-6
VIC	-109	43	-66	428.50	5-0-7
TAS	-196	-146	-342	216.40	1-0-11

The ACT was the dominant team for most of the Seniors' qualifying, just losing their lead at the end in a heavy defeat by NSW.

Among the other teams, Queensland had a strong first round but could not replicate this in the second. SA was still in negative territory at the end of Round 6 but had a strong second round – only a heavy loss to the ACT towards the end putting them out of the running for a final spot.

NSW had the statistics to be expected from a team at the top of the table. They combined a strong overall board win to loss ratio -of 74 to 55; and an even stronger performance with the big decisions – there were 17 positive double figure swings and only 6 negative bringing a gain of 119 imps. In contrast to the average, a significantly higher proportion of large positive swings came from either finding game or finding the right game. Play of the hand when both sides were in the same contract played a significantly smaller role.

Doubling was also a happy hunting ground. NSW provided around one in four of the doubles in the Seniors' section. Eight of the 9 contracts it doubled went down and their declarers made 2 of the 4 hands where they were the doublee.

When NSW and the ACT met again in the final, the carry-over did not have any impact on the result of the final. Although each side won two of the first four rounds NSW was more than 40 imps ahead going into the last round, which it then won with 166.52 to 103.

Youth

TEAM	IMPS			TOTAL	VPs	W-D-L
	R1	R2	R3			
QLD	200	16	106	322	759.30	12-1-2
VIC	-11	129	105	223	647.60	9-0-6
NSW	17	102	83	202	641.50	8-2-5
SA	0	-62	50	-12	510.30	7-1-7
ACT	-65	-6	-70	-141	414.00	4-2-9
WA	-141	-179	-274	-594	167.40	2-0-13

The Youth event was conducted over three rounds; and they did not disappoint in terms of fireworks. Only five of the 45 matches were decided by a single digit score. In forty per cent of the matches, teams were separated by 30+ IMPS.

2025 had not been Queensland's year in the other categories but the youth provided one ray of sunshine by creating a massive lead in the first round and then heading the qualifying throughout and losing only two matches. Overall, the Queensland Juniors won 111 boards with only 50 losses; and did particularly well in the crucial hands with 38 of 54 double figure swings going their way generating 264 IMPS.

By the end of the second round, the battle for the other final spot was a Victoria-NSW contest, that was effectively decided in the penultimate match won by Victoria. Victoria was the highest scoring team in both the second and final rounds - and continued the momentum to beat Queensland in the final by 192 to 124.7.



Challenges ahead at the 2026 ANC

By Bernie Waters, Canberra

You are likely to face opponents at the 2026 Canberra ANC who will rarely give you a free run in the auction, try to jockey you into poor contracts and test your declarer play. Light overcalls and even thinner raises should be expected. If active opponents push you to uncomfortable levels you will need to be alert to any clues that you have been given to make some of these almost impossibly “thin” contracts that you may find yourself in.

This example is a tough one, with plenty of clues and lots of opportunities to go wrong, starting at trick one:

♠KT9763

♥Q42

♦5

♣KJ8

♠Q84

♥K105

♦AKQ972

♣4

E/W vulnerable, the bidding was:

W	N	E	S
		1D	Pass
1S	3C ¹	3D	Pass
3S	Pass	4S	all pass

¹ explained as 7 decent clubs, 5 – 8 HCP

Against a “standard” ♥7 lead, should you make this hand?

Reviewing the bidding and opening lead, you might conclude that LHO could have 7 clubs to the AQ and perhaps a stray Jack or two while RHO rates to have both major Aces and at most 4 hearts (as an aggressive bidder would bid 1H (with 5 hearts) and 2H (with 6 hearts). Whilst the lead might be from J987, it appears more likely to be from either 97 small or 87 small.

If so, LHO’s remaining three cards in spades and diamonds rate to break 2 -1 or 1 - 2 (more likely than 3 – 0 or 0 – 3). Since the opponents have more diamonds than spades, two diamonds and one spade is the more likely. If

LHO has a singleton spade, it is twice as likely to be a small one rather than the Jack.

Play of the ♥K at trick one, will maximise control, as it will force RHO's Ace and probably cause a switch to a different suit if RHO holds the Jack. If RHO continues hearts, have courage of your convictions by running it to the 10, but forlornly cover the more likely club switch and win the ♥Q if LHO switches back to hearts.

Cross to dummy in diamonds and cash one more diamond for a heart pitch, which fortunately confirms your thoughts of LHO's hand and lead a small spade. Insert the 10 or 9 (with a silent prayer that LHO follows small in keeping with a small singleton rather than Jack singleton. If all has gone well, ruff a club, cash the remaining high diamond to pitch your last club, play a spade and prepare to claim. Play similarly if RHO leads a diamond instead of a club at trick two (cash a second diamond and lead a small spade to the 10 and exit with the ♣K).

The full hand, from the semi-finals of the 1981 World Championships was:

	♠2	
	♥876	
	♦J8	
	♣AQ97652	
♠KT9763		♠Q84
♥Q42		♥K105
♦5		♦AKQ972
♣KJ8		♣4
	♠AJ5	
	♥AJ93	
	♦10643	
	♣103	

Note: This hand was played by Poland against the USA. Declarer played the ♥T at trick one and won the Queen over the ♥J before playing three rounds of high diamonds, discarding hearts. Two spade losers as well as the ♣A and the diamond ruff meant -100.

How would you have fared?

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Paul Lavings Bridge Gear

Paul Lavings Bridge Gear supplies bridge players and clubs with the books and equipment needed to play bridge and some other games.



Paul is well-known in the bridge world as a player and seller of a books about all aspects of contract bridge by Australian and international authors.

He also supplies bridge playing and scoring equipment to clubs throughout Australia. Mail order is available. Paul is a valued sponsor of this ANC. You can contact Paul online <https://www.bridgegear.com.au/> or visit his stand in the main ANC playing room.

Canberra Bridge Club

The Canberra Bridge Club provides friendly games of duplicate bridge in its comfortable clubrooms in Duff Place, Deakin. Social face-to face walk-sessions are held every weekday.



Online sessions using RealBridge are available on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays. The club holds multi-week events for stronger players on Tuesday evenings. Visitors are welcome. CBC regularly offers lessons to learn or improve your bridge. Supervised play sessions are available to support beginners and assist people who want to learn to play duplicate bridge.

The Real Deal Workout with Ron Klinger Discussion

Teams: Dealer North : Nil vulnerable

North
♠ A 9 2
♥ K J 7 6 2
♦ 4
♣ 9 6 5 3

West
♠ J 8 6 5
♥ 10 5
♦ Q J 7
♣ A Q J 10

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♣ (1)	Pass	3NT (2)
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Asking (2) No 4-card major, no 5-card major

You lead the **S8: nine – king – four**. East shifts to the **C2: eight – ten – three**. What would you play next as West?

Considerations

The huge clue lies in the **C2** from partner. With a doubleton club, partner would have led top card. The **C2** (low-like) is expected to show an honour. In that case, partner must hold the **CK**. Play the **CQ** next. If that wins, continue with the **CA** and the **CJ**. You could also play the **CA** instead of the **CQ**. Partner could unblock the **CK** and you cash your other club winners. BUT . . . you know what partners are like. Maybe partner does not unblock the **CK** and then you have only club winners if partner began with **K-x-2** as seems likely. It is better to defeat the contract than win (or lose) the post mortem.

Recommendation: Play the **CQ**.

The deal comes from the semi-finals of the 2025 Spingold (USA K-O Open Teams)

Board 41: Dealer North : Nil vulnerable

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

At one table in one semi-final:

West		North		East		South
		Pass		Pass		2NT
Pass		3♣ (1)		Pass		3NT (2)
Pass		Pass		Pass		

(1) Asking (2) No 4-card major, no 5-card major

South chose an offbeat 2NT opening in the hope of 7 diamond tricks and a favourable lead. Instead of **3C**, North might have chosen **3D**, transfer to hearts, followed by **3NT**, choice of contracts. West led the **8: nine – king – four**. East shifted to the **C2: eight – ten – three**.

As you can see, the defenders can take three more clubs to defeat **3NT**, but West switched to the **DJ: four – five – two**. West continued with the **DQ** and South had 10 tricks, North-South +430.

At the other table, South opened **1C**, artificial, 16+ points, and a lengthy auction, not always natural, ended in **3NT** by South. West led the **S5: two – king – four**. East returned the **S3**. South won, played the **HQ** to the **HK** and the **D4: five – ten – jack**. South was hoping for a friendly spade continuation (South would have 9 tricks on a spade return), but it was not to be. West switched to the **CA**, followed by the **C10** and **3NT** was defeated by one trick, East-West +50, +10 IMPs.

At one table in the other semi-final, North-South had a mainstream auction:

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1 $\diamond$
Pass	1 $\heartsuit$	Pass	3 $\diamond$
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Some would bid on, but North was no doubt deterred by the singleton in diamonds.

West led the **H10**. Declarer won with the **HA**, cashed the **DA** and **DK**, overtook the **HQ** with the **HK** and played the **HJ**, discarding the **C7**. West ruffed and played the **CA** and **C10**. South ruffed and had 10 tricks, losing a diamond, a club and a spade, North-South +130.

At the other table, South opened **2C**, artificial, near game-force, and proceeded to show a strong, balanced hand, culminating in **3NT** by South. West led the **CJ**, followed by the **CQ**, both winning, and the **CA** and the **C10**, East discarding **S3** and South pitching 2 diamonds. West switched to the **S6**. Declarer took the **SA** and played **DA**, **DK**, **HA**, **HQ**, overtaking it with the **HK**. The **HJ** was declarer's sixth and last trick, three down, East-West +150 and +7 IMPs.

Murphy's Law 52: When the opponents go many down, they are always not vulnerable. When you go many down, you are always vulnerable.