



BRIDGE VICTORIA BULLETIN

DECEMBER 2023

EDITOR: CHRIS HUGHES



EDITORIAL – CHRIS HUGHES

It has been decided to create a new section to the bulletin this month.

I am introducing a new section titled "The Interview".

For "The Interview", I introduce my best Barnsley accent and channel Michael Parkinson to provide an outline of a bridge player's background and thoughts.

This month, Neil Ewart has been asked to be the guinea pig and he kindly agreed (or perhaps I should say, pleased to accept the honour of being first).

Even though Neil's interview highlights a lot of his bridge achievements, this isn't the main focus. I am looking for people that have a good story to tell that will be of interest to other people. I am pleased that this bulletin isn't Melbourne centric so anybody in the bridge community is a 'target' for this section. It must be pointed out that Neil didn't request that his successful results be included but this was done because Christopher Leach felt that it should be included.

Please think about who would be a suitable candidate. Otherwise, I will ask for some volunteers.

I will create the questions beforehand and send them to the interviewed person so that they can add or delete what they wish and then think of their answers beforehand (just like "Parky" did for most of his guests).

Please assist me if you can in another matter. If anybody could assist in providing appropriate stories for the 'Bridge Humour' section, it would be greatly appreciated. There is only a finite number of humorous events that I have witnessed or heard of at the bridge table.



Above is a picture of Chris Hughes looking puzzled at home.

On another matter, it was suggested many months ago, that having a picture of 'jokers' amongst other cards for the heading of bridge problems was inappropriate. I changed the pictures back then.

However, in a cut and paste error, the original pictures reappeared. I noticed this error myself a few weeks ago and changed the pictures again for this issue.

In the last few days, a couple of people have indicated their dismay about the 'jokers' in the pack. At least, I appreciate the fact that you took the time to write.

This is the last bulletin for the calendar year. I hope it has given you some pleasure.

Since January is a busy and a relaxing month, we will produce the next bulletin for the first day of February 2024.

Have a great festive season and a Happy New Year to all.

Submit all your input to the following email address

editor@bridgevictoria.au

Bridge Victoria Operating Committee Chair – Colin Jasper

As we approach the end of the year, it's a good time to reflect on what has been achieved this year and what we have planned for the New Year.

BVOC kicked off with our inaugural meeting in May. At this meeting it was agreed that our charter is to:

- Promote the game of bridge throughout Victoria and to foster interest in the game;
- Run state bridge activities within Victoria, and
- Support and assist affiliated bridge clubs.

We also set some initial priorities for 2023, namely to:

- Create a State body (Bridge Victoria) that has democratic representation of clubs
- Appoint a State Manager
- Create a strategy of where we want to be in 5 years
- Improve communication with clubs.

Outlined below is a brief report on progress and plans.

A State Body that has Democratic Representation

Creating a state body that has “democratic” representation is easier said than done. We have metro and rural clubs, large and small, member-based and proprietor-owned, bridge clubs within clubs (e.g. within tennis clubs), online and face-to-face clubs. Having worked through a variety of possibilities – following broad consultation – with clubs, it was agreed that BVOC would primarily be based on regions (one rep for each of the three existing country regions, plus one rep for three newly created metro regions). This core group may then add committee members who have specific skills valued by the committee. The first election under this approach will take place during the February-March 2024. Thanks to Derek Poulton who led this initiative.

Promote Bridge

One of the largest exercises undertaken by BVOC this year, was the development of the Bridge Victoria [website](#). The website is designed to serve multiple audiences:

- **New players** – Interested in learning the game
- **Clubs** – Seeking information and support
- **Players** – Looking to enter events or find results



On the homepage there is a section on Voices Across Victoria where you will find information on the latest happenings in Victorian Bridge. This currently includes articles on a WBF survey, Bridge in the Ballroom at Government House and upcoming beginners' lessons. We encourage you to contribute to this section by letting us know what's happening at your club.

While it's still early days, it was pleasing that even today we had an enquiry through the website of a group of social players seeking other players of similar standard. We were able to refer them to a club in their area. Specific thanks to Jan van Riel who drove this project.

Improve Communication with Clubs

We recognise that clubs have been frustrated with the lack of communication from the state body. We have undertaken multiple initiatives to address this including:

- A comprehensive review of our club contacts database.
- The allocation of each club to a BVOC committee member. We hope that the representative model outlined early will further improve communication.
- The creation of a specific section on the new website to support clubs. This includes a page on every affiliated club, information on Directors, Teachers, masterpoints, marketing, grants, insurance and a broad range of documents sought by clubs.

We accept that more needs to be done in this area.

Support Clubs

We recognise that the growth of bridge in Victoria will primarily occur through clubs and that it's our role to support clubs both administratively and with their growth plans. Earlier in the year we ran a series of **Growth Workshops** to enable clubs to share what they are doing to attract and retain players. This week we facilitated an online workshop with **MyABF**, <https://www.myabf.com.au/> to discuss how clubs are starting to use this tool as the primary club management software. We had over 50 registrations for the workshop. For those unable to attend, it is available to view online. More workshops are planned for the New Year.

We also have plans to establish a club support network in 2024. People that can be contacted to discuss common challenges faced by clubs. We would welcome volunteers to assist with this initiative.

Run State Bridge

BVOC was consulted in the establishment of the 2024 Calendar. Many thanks to Jenny Thompson who chairs the Match & Tournament Committee for the extensive work that goes into creating the Calendar.

Last month we trialled a state event at Waverley. There will be a continued focus on trying to increase engagement in State Bridge, with events designed to enable greater participation from across the state.

Appoint a State Manager

Unfortunately, we were unable to find a State Manager that fully met our requirements. Following this recruitment process, we decided that our initial needs were administrative and IT support (including help with the website). We therefore sought help in these two areas. On the admin side we are progressively updating the documents sought by clubs, which can all be found on the [website](#).

Create a Strategy

In August BVOC met to develop our first strategy. The approach we took was to ask clubs what they would like, then collectively identify priorities and actions.

This strategy includes a focus on:

- Marketing, promotion and growth
- Player development including beginners' courses
- Director development, including in regions such as the Geelong program held last month.
- Democratisation of the state body
- Growing state bridge, and
- Supporting clubs.

We also have a focus on supporting teachers. As you may be aware, the ABF handed responsibility of accrediting teachers to the states earlier this year. This has enabled us to recognise an additional seven of our leading teachers via formal accreditation. Congratulations to Jan Hackett who is the most recent of these. The full list of accredited teachers is also on the [website](#).

We recognise there is much more to be done. I would like to thank my fellow committee members for their efforts and contribution as volunteers on BVOC and in helping to establish a direction. I would also like to thank the clubs who have provided guidance and support during this period of change.

Colin Jasper
Bridge Victoria Operating Committee
Chair

WE WISH YOU A GREAT MONTH OF BRIDGE AND PLEASE
FEEL FREE TO CONTACT US AT THIS EMAIL ADDRESS:
info@bridgevictoria.au.

TEST YOUR DECLARER SKILLS

The following hand took place in a team event

West leads the $\spadesuit K$.

NORTH(D)

\spadesuit AJ6
 \heartsuit AK54
 \diamondsuit 52
 \clubsuit KT3

WEST

\spadesuit
 \heartsuit
 \diamondsuit
 \clubsuit

EAST

\spadesuit
 \heartsuit
 \diamondsuit
 \clubsuit

SOUTH

\spadesuit KT3
 \heartsuit 76
 \diamondsuit A7
 \clubsuit AQJ965

Decide how you are going to play this hand.

You can always pull trumps and guess who has the $\spadesuit Q$.

Is there any other possibility?

Hint: the chance that both opponents have two or more \heartsuit s is around 92%.

What is your plan from here?

The answer is at the end of the bulletin.

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1NT	P	3 \clubsuit	P
3 \heartsuit	P	4 \clubsuit	P
4 \spadesuit	P	4NT	P
5 \diamondsuit	P	6 \clubsuit	All Pass

1NT is 15-17 and 3 \clubsuit is a slam try.

When North cooperates, South uses Blackwood, after a second cue bid from North, and 6 \clubsuit is reached.

BRIDGE HAND OF THE MONTH

Neither side vulnerable

NORTH

♠ 8762
♥ KT984
♦ A82
♣ 5

WEST

♠
♥
♦
♣

EAST

♠
♥
♦
♣

SOUTH(D)

♠ AK53
♥ A5
♦ 64
♣ T9832

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
		1♣	P
1♥	P	1♠	P
3♠	P	4♠	P

The bidding is as you expect at the 1-level.

After that adrenalin kicks in –

3♠ is bidding your hand to the hilt and then some.

4♠ suggests that I like my ♥A opposite partner's suit and who know partner might have the right hand.

West leads the ♦7 and you realise that the game is very pushy.

Assuming the contract can be made, what layout gives you the best chance and how do you proceed?

This isn't the hardest hand but it does require a clear plan.

What is your plan from here?

Answer in the next bulletin.

Send in your play to

editor@bridgevictoria.au



THE INTERVIEW

THE FIRST INTERVIEW IS WITH NEIL EWART

Editor:

Where were you born (you don't need to say the year)?

Neil:

I was born in Portsmouth England in 1955. When I was 18 months old we moved to New Zealand where I lived until I was 28. I was then in New York for 3 years and came to Australia in 1986 and settled in Canberra.

Editor:

Did you play card games or something similar at home?

Neil:

We played every game imaginable at home. I think that was quite common in England in those days – (probably because of the weather!). By the time I was a by 5, I was playing lots of cards and quickly progressed to Poker, Blackjack, Cribbage, Five Hundred etc. I played a lot of cards at university but bridge never seemed to be around oddly. In fact, I have never played a single hand of bridge in New Zealand!

Editor:

When did you get involved in the local bridge scene and what prompted you to start playing?

Neil:

When I was in New York a friend in the office asked if I would like to go to a series of Bridge lessons with her. I had been reading Alan Truscott's column in the NY Times and was very interested in learning so off I went. I was addicted at lesson 1. Just after my lessons concluded I met Jill Courtney who had come to NY for the UN General Assembly where I was working. When she heard I had had lessons she told me that she and I were going to the UN Bridge club for a game. I told her I had never actually played a hand of bridge in a proper game but she was unfazed. So off I went.

When we got there the person hosting (with the remarkable name of Lalla Rookh Shelley) welcomed us to the club and took our names. Upon hearing Jill's name her face lit up and asked if Jill was the same Jill Courtney who had been written up in Alan Truscott's column the previous week. She was of course – you can imagine how I felt as my inadequacies were about to be exposed to a famous player!

Jill, like her brother Michael, was a genius and she did things at the table that were really quite remarkable. The character Beth in the Queens Gambit reminded me of Jill. A beautiful genius with some tragic flaws. Anyway, I was hooked and used to play a few times a week but I didn't come across competitive bridge till I got to Canberra.

[Editor's Note – Jill and Michael Courtenay came from a chess playing background in Western Australia.

Michael is regarded as one of the best rubber bridge players in the world and he is very dynamic and dangerous at the table as he plays quickly, instinctively and accurately. Jill passed away many years ago and, as Neil suggests, she had a troubled life like many other geniuses.]

Editor:

Did you have a regular partner in Canberra?

Neil:

I was still very much a beginner when I landed in Canberra and played with lots of beginner and intermediate players but I was very keen to get into the competitive game. Chris Quail and Ian Robinson took me under their wing and I played with both of them and represented the ANC a couple of times with Ian. Jill was based in Canberra from time to time between postings and we played a fair bit. I used to play in the Saturday afternoon social game with Hugh Grosvenor as well. Elizabeth Havas then asked me to play and we played very successfully for a number of years. They all taught me a huge amount and still the rules they drilled into me come up regularly. I have been very lucky with partners over the years.

I was very involved with the club in Canberra being Treasurer for 15 years (and a Life member) and, after I moved to Melbourne, I was Treasurer of the Victorian Bridge Association for approximately 11 years. Although I am no longer on the Council of the Victorian Bridge Association (as it was called), I am the Accountant for the Association and I am on both the Finance Committee and a member of the Victorian Bridge Centre Operating Committee. I am also the Webmaster for Bridge Victoria,

Editor:

When and why did you move from Canberra to Melbourne?

Neil:

In 2003 the company I was working for in Canberra decided to centralise all the management in Melbourne and they created a job for me. It was either move or look for a new job. At that time Les, my partner, was in Moscow for 3 years as the Australian Ambassador. Melbourne was his home town. As he was away, we decided I would come here and when he returned in 2005, we would see how we liked Melbourne and then we would decide whether we stayed or moved back to Canberra or go to Sydney. He quickly reconnected with friends from school and university and we made Melbourne our home.

Editor:

What is your general style? Are you an instinctive player or do you prefer more structure in bidding?

Neil:

I am not sure about my style! Playing with a regular partner in major competitions I do like to have system. With Bucket (Dave Beckett) our system notes run to 60 pages as does the one with Ian. But if you are going to have a lot of system you have to know it because a 'forget' can be very expensive and you lose the margin you had. Luckily, I'm pretty good with system, as are my regular partners. We rarely have system stuff ups. In regards to style my opponents seem to think I am a bit of a wild man, but oddly my partners don't see me like that at all. I watch and I listen to what's going on at the table and I might take actions that others wouldn't dream of (Simon Hinge calls me the Extreme Balancer). Only green versus red though! I think I am instinctive in that I have pretty good table feel and that's why my unusual actions are never, or rarely, expensive.

Editor:

You play on the national scene mainly with Ian Robinson from Canberra and locally with Simon Henbest and David Beckett. However, you do play events with other partners. Do you change your style with different partners (ie bid more with some and not so much with others)?

Neil:

You need to change your game to match your partner. It's very important to know how your partner thinks as no system can cater for all permutations. You need to know how your partner thinks in particular situations. With Dave, Ian and Simon I think I play the same game. We are all fairly solid citizens.

With other partners I try and play their game. I use their system if I can so there is less mental stress on them and try and keep intermittent partnership bidding systems very simple. A very simple system will be fine for 90% of boards and for the other 10% you might get right anyway. Having a complex system in a long-term partnership gives you the edge. It's just like knowing the odds in bridge can give you a small advantage. It might be only 1 or 2% but it's an edge that pays off in the long term.

Editor:

What is your preferred bidding system and why?

Neil:

I've seen lots of systems come and go in the 38 years I've been playing but a lot of the world has gravitated towards Two over One, with strong club the next most frequently played.

I like 2/1 with transfers over a club as my standard system. 2/1 has so many advantages over standard. One of them is that after a 2/1 bid there is no rush and you have far more room to explore. It's the same with transfers over 1 club. Transfers over 1C have nothing to do with transferring to the strong hand (the premise of transfers over 1NT). They are just space saving and give you far more room to bid. They are the best development in bidding since I started playing. I also like 5/5 openings eg a two major bid showing 5/5 Major Minor – they don't seem very fashionable at the highest level these days which is odd given the view that hand shape is so important and getting it across in one bid is very useful.

Editor:

In the last 12 months you have had a remarkable run of success both nationally and locally. In your opinion, what has been the main contributor to these excellent results? Has the steroid dosage been increased?

Neil:

I'm not really sure. Good partners help! I have felt more alert when playing this year and seem to see things more clearly and maybe some of the reading is paying off. I always have a couple of bridge books lying around the house that I pick up and read a chapter from them time to time.

I recently got from Paul Laving's a first edition (1947) copy of Terence Reese's. "Reese on Play." I had just finished rereading "World Class". In that book, each chapter is devoted to a famous "world class" player that they interview. In the book, they ask each player which bridge book has had the most impact on them and Reese's book came up time after time. I thought I better get it!

One thing I have got better at is counting and the ability to concentrate really helps counting. Counting your tricks and counting the hand both as declarer and defender comes up on every hand, whereas complex squeezes and endplays come up relatively infrequently. So, if you can count well, you will really improve your game

To be frank though, in Victoria, one of the reasons for my success has been that the standard of competitive bridge has dropped considerably, with some of the best players in the State rarely seen at the bridge table. So, events have been easier to win. But hey – it's never easy to win any bridge event so something is going right. Winning does give you confidence that your approach is working and confidence helps. Not cockiness though – I think that is bad for your bridge.

Editor:

I know you try and stay active with swimming and other activities. Obviously, mental awareness is important but do you believe that physical well-being is a significant factor in doing well at bridge especially as you age?

Neil:

Unbelievably important even when you are young but more so as you age. The impact of vigorous physical exercise on the brain is well documented. Exercise feeds the brain. Sleep is also a very important factor. Sleep has always been a big issue for me when playing in major events but it has got better and that has really helped. Sleep and exercise keep the brain from going foggy. Swimming is also a great way to go through hands in your head!

Editor:

I wish to thank Neil for the time he has taken to answer my questions thoughtfully and honestly.

The following is a summary of Neil's major achievements in this calendar year

VICTORIAN EVENTS

State events (first place in all of the following)

Victorian Butler Pairs Championship – partner David Beckett

Victorian Open Team Playoff - partner David Beckett with Chen Ding/Ming Zhang, Phillip Fent/Dee Harley

Victorian Open Pairs - partner Simon Henbest

Victorian Online Pairs Championship - partner Simon Henbest

Victorian State Teams – playing with Robert Fruewirth, David Beckett, Ben Thompson/Bill Jacobs

State events (second place in all of the following)

Felicity Beale Mixed Teams Second - partner Kitty Muntz with David Beckett/Belinda Lindsay

Palfreyman Teams Second Place partner Simon Henbest with Kitty Muntz/George Lovrecz

Victorian Bridge Centre Club (first place in all of the following)

Habgood Swiss Pairs - partner Simon Henbest

Rothfield Teams - partner David Beckett, with Chen Ding/Ming Zhang, Phillip Fent/Dee Harley

Ailsa Tandy Pairs - partner Simon Henbest

State Congress:

Moonee Valley Teams – (1st) partner David Beckett with Steven White/Chris Hughes

RACV Swiss Pairs – (2nd) partner Christopher Leach

Peninsula Swiss Pairs – (2nd) partner David Beckett

Koyoong Swiss Pairs (1st) partner Christopher Leach

Victorian Bridge Club Teams – (1st) partner David Beckett with George Lovrecz/Chris Hughes

NATIONAL EVENTS

Ivy Dahler Butler Pairs – (1st) partner David Smith (Gold Coast Congress)

Royal Bluebell Open MP Swiss Pairs - (1st) partner Ian Robinson (Canberra In Bloom)

North Shore Bridge Teams - (1st) partner Ian Robinson with Pauline Gumby/Warren Lazer

Spring National Senior Teams - (1st) partner Ian Robinson with Richard Brightling/David Hoffman

BRIDGE HUMOUR



THE POWER OF SUGGESTION

I have always tried to be fairly fit. I still referee soccer (generally two games on a Saturday during the winter). Many players that I officiate have asked me what I was like as a soccer player when I was younger. My reply is that those that can do and those that can't officiate

I am fortunate that I rarely need to go to the doctor (the sound you hear is me knocking on wood). However, the boss in the house insists that I get an annual checkup.

Therefore, every August, I let a nurse relieve me of some of my blood to test for the appropriate cholesterol and blood pressure levels and other indicators. A week later, I see the doctor to get the results.

Our current doctor is excellent but the doctor who saw me on this particular occasion would have been an excellent accountant. He would try and keep the dollars rolling in by promoting repeat visits to the surgery. He looked at the results and said that most indicators were fine but that a chest x-ray may reveal some concerns. He booked me in for the test and asked me to come back the following Thursday.

On the following Thursday, I saw the doctor and he stated that it might be nothing but a fault in the test but I see a dark spot over part of the heart and I think that this should be investigated further. Therefore, I have printed a referral for you to see a heart specialist on Tuesday and, of course, another appointment to see me again to discuss the results.

It just so happened, that the playoffs for the Australian Senior team were held in the intervening weekend. I flew to Sydney that evening to start play Friday morning. I spoke to one of my bridge-playing doctor friends and told him what had happened. He checked my pulse and looked into it a little further and said that you have no worries.

The first few matches went fairly well but then I could hear a sound that was getting progressively louder. A "thump thump" sound from the chest area. I tried to ignore the sound but every time I started to think about a situation, the noise I heard grew louder.

I apologised to my partner for the loud thumping noise coming from my body and for playing slowly and asked if he could hear any sound or see any worrying look on my face. He said that he could always hear strange noises emanating from me and no there was nothing unusual. I asked him to clarify but he just smiled and said it was intended as a joke.

Suffice to say, that after a promising start, we failed to qualify for the team. We lost the last match to a pair that we would normally beat. I thought that it was my fault for going down in a game that I believed might have been makeable but for the sound of the "thump thump". He assured me that it was a lucky lead from the opponents that gave the contract no chance.

I returned to Melbourne a little upset about the result but I then thought about the appointment on Tuesday. I was told that I would exercise on a treadmill type device. The appointment was confirmed for 4:30pm.

I went with my running gear to the heart specialist and he said that I could change into my running gear if I wished but it might not be necessary. I did change and waited for the test to start.

I was wired up and they noted that my resting pulse was 47 and my blood pressure was 110 over 80. They asked me to step on the treadmill device and try and keep up with the speed of the machine until my blood pressure went above 160.

For the first minute, it was a slow walking pace. I asked the consultant if it gets harder and they said that it would. At the start of the second minute, the treadmill inclined slightly but it was still slow. This went on until we started the fifth minute where my blood pressure reading was still fairly low, I asked them what time they closed because, at this rate, it could be a late night.

The treadmill suddenly stopped and I was asked to get dressed. The consultant said that I had wasted their time and I shouldn't be here. They cancelled my follow up doctor's appointment (I hoped the revenue loss would not unduly affect his lifestyle).

I don't mean to underestimate the fact that I am lucky that there were no issues and that many other people, in many cases, suffer through no fault of their own. Moreover, I sometimes wonder what might have happened without those loud noises in my head although I don't offer it as an excuse.

However, if I meet you at the bridge table, don't tell me that it is hot or cold or this or that because I might start feeling hot or cold or this or that.



RESULTS

RESULTS FOR NOVEMBER -VICTORIA

SOUTH GIPPSLAND BRIDGE CLUB 2023 CONGRESS

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY 11TH/12TH NOVEMBER

28 pairs contested the Pairs and the placegetters were

1st	Anna St Clair	Dee Harley
2nd	Jeannette Collins	Simon Hinge
3rd	Sue Beckman	Kae French

10 teams contested the Teams and the placegetters were

1st	Greg Nicholson	Kaye Douglas	Alison Farthing	Jean Macleod
2nd	Glenis Lohr	Rob Graham	Egbert Tzoe	Ken Tierney
3rd	Val Smith	Margaret Costello	Disa Hallett	Mary Louis Dwyer

BRIDGE IN THE BALLROOM

AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE

WEDNESDAY 15TH NOVEMBER

Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC, Governor of Victoria, hosted a captivating bridge game in the Ballroom, uniting Victoria's bridge community. The occasion marked the first time the Ballroom, with a length surpassing even Buckingham Palace's Ballroom, had been set up for Bridge.

The event connected the bridge playing community and included 65 ABF-affiliated clubs & social clubs as well as contributors to bridge. Thanks to the Governor's support, participant dedication, bridge director - Laurie Kelso and equipment provided by Bridge Victoria, the day was a resounding success.

Real Deal Bridge proudly assisted the Government House team in making the day possible. The event organiser, Laura Ginnan, the el supremo at Real Deal Bridge and frequent contributor to this bulletin, said "this wonderful game of Bridge in the Ballroom event aimed to celebrate Victoria's Bridge community and to showcase Victoria's contribution to the game worldwide."

In many ways, Victorians have left an indelible mark on the international Bridge scene. Victoria is home to the first Vice-President to the World Bridge Federation Executive Council and the World Bridge Federation Chief Tournament Director. The world's biggest Bridge streamer and influencer, Peter Hollands, is based in Victoria and the world's biggest bridge podcast, *Sorry, Partner*, is also produced in Victoria. Even in bridge, Victoria is the 'Education State' with the State Library of Victoria housing the Bourke Bridge Collection, one of the largest collections of Bridge books in the world.

Bridge in the Ballroom, clubs in attendance (in alphabetical order):

Alexandra Club Bridge Club, Australian Club Bridge Club, Bairnsdale Bridge Club, Ballarat Bridge Club, Bayside Bridge Club, Beaumaris Bridge Club, Benalla Bridge Club, Bendigo Bridge Club, Berwick Bridge Club, Bridge@Blake, Bridge at Tivoli, BWOnline, Camperdown Bridge Club, Deniliquin Bridge Club, Echuca Bridge Club, Frankston Bridge Club, Geelong Bridge Club, Kattery Bridge Club, Kingham Bridge Academy, Knox Bridge Club, Knox U3A Bridge Club, Kooyong Lawn Tennis Club Bridge Club, Lyceum Club Bridge Club, Macedon Ranges Bridge Club, Maine Bridge Club, Mansfield Bridge Club, MCC Bridge Club, Melbourne Bridge Club, Melton Bridge Club, Moonee Valley Bridge Club, Mornington Bridge Group, Nagambie Bridge Club, North Balwyn Bowls Club Bridge Club, Northern Bridge Club, Ocean Grove Bridge Club, OZ Bridge Club, Patterson Lakes Bridge Club, Paynesville Bridge Club, Peninsula Bridge Club, Phillip Island Bridge Club, RACV Bridge Club, Real Deal Bridge, Royal South Yarra Lawn Tennis Club Bridge Club, Rye Dromana Bridge Club, Sale Bridge Club, Sandhurst Bridge Academy, Shepparton Bridge Club, South Gippsland Bridge Club, Sunbury Bridge Club, The Quiet Club, Theodor Herzl Bridge Club, Torquay Bridge Club, Traralgon Bridge Club, Upwey Bridge Club, Victorian Bridge Centre, Victorian Youth Bridge, Wangaratta Bridge Club, Warragul Bridge Club, Waverley Bridge Club, Warrnambool Bridge Club, Whittlesea Bridge Club, Williamstown Bridge Club, Wodonga Bridge Club, Yarra Valley Bridge Club and Yarrawonga Bridge Club.

A number of distinguished guests who have contributed to the game were also in attendance. Some of the guests contributions to the game are listed below:

2020 International Bridge Press Association Book of the Year Author

Bridge Victoria Vice President

Bridge Victoria Operating Committee

Chairman Regional Association Presidents

Sorry Partner pod cast co-host

Top placed Victorian pair in the 2023 Australia Wide Novice Pairs

Various administrators and volunteers who have made significant contributions to the game over the years

Victoria's highest masterpoint Earner

Victoria's most prolific teacher of new players

World Bridge Federation Internet Broadcasting Manager

The pictures on the following page show the following –

The first shows Her Excellency Professor, the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC, Governor of Victoria, as she opens the occasion with a formal welcome to all the participants.

The second shows the expansive and attractive playing area.

Editor's note:

I wonder if we could use this playing area more often?

It would be nice.



THE RESULTS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

North/South

1st: Greg Lewin & Belinda Lindsay (Real Deal Bridge)

2nd: Faye Symons & Denis Upsall (Sandhurst Bridge Academy)

3rd: Debbie Goldsworthy - Jing Geng (Whittlesea Bridge Club)

4th: Leslie Decker & Caroline Marshall (Alexandra Bridge Club)

5th: Kay Speed & Sue Casey (Balwyn North Bowls Club)

East/West

1st: Kim Frazer & Kitty Muntz (Distinguished guests)

2nd: Raman Jenathesan & Colin Wilshire (Northern Bridge Club)

3rd: Sally Murray-White & Geoff Whiting (Bayside Bridge Club)

4th: Linda Picone & John Sarena (Warrnambool Bridge Club)

5th: Marion Scambler & Philip Scambler (Geelong Bridge Club)

KOOYONG BRIDGE CLUB 2023 CONGRESS

SUNDAY 19TH NOVEMBER

A well-run congress with a great ambience and a 5-star served luncheon (can make you sleepy in the afternoon).





PHOTO OF THE SUCCESSFUL PAIRS

from left to right

2nd Place

1st Place

Best Kooyong Pair

Christine Louie

Christopher Leach

Deb Fogarty

Herman Louie

Neil Ewart

Christine Walker

VBC SUMMER BRIDGE CLUB 2023 CONGRESS

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY 25TH/26TH NOVEMBER

48 pairs contested the Pairs and the placegetters were

1st	Bertha Dembo	Franci Halmos
2nd	Colin Jasper	Allan Hardie
3rd	George Gaspar	Sue Small

14 teams contested the Teams and the placegetters were

1st	David Beckett	Neil Ewart	Chris Hughes	George Lovrecz
2nd	Kevin Chan	Gordon McRobert	Thilak Ranasinghe	Martin Willcox
3rd	Kim Frazer	Ismail Gulec	Allan Hardie	Christopher Leach

RESULTS FOR NOVEMBER - NATIONAL

2024 AUSTRALIAN OPEN TEAM PLAYOFF

NOVEMBER 11TH-16TH
CANBERRA

The following eight teams participated

LU	Charlie Lu - Peter Gill - Liam Milne - James Coutts - Tony Nunn - Nabil Edgtton
SPOONER	Andrew Spooner - Philip Markey - Mike Doecke - Will Jenner-O'Shea - Shane Harrison - Matt Smith
THOMPSON	Ben Thompson - Renee Cooper - Peter Newman - Matthew Thomson
GUE	David Gue - Joshua Tomlin - Joachim Haffer - Nicolas Croft
HANS	Robert Fruewirth - Jamie Thompson - Sartaj Hans - Andy Hung
BURGESS	Peter Buchen - Stephen Burgess - Matt Mullamphy - Ian Thomson - Michael Courtney - Chris Depasquale
WESTON	David Weston - Julian Foster - Ron Klinger - Bruce Neill - Chris Mulley - Paul Brayshaw
KOZAKOS	George Kozakos - Fraser Rew - David Appleton - Brad Coles

Each match was a gruelling two days in length (60 boards per day)

The Quarter Final results

LU beat KOZAKOS

GUE beat HANS

THOMSON beat WESTON

SPOONER beat BURGESS

The Semi Final results

LU beat GUE

SPOONER beat THOMPSON

The Final

LU beat SPOONER

LU will represent Australia in International Open events in 2024



UPCOMING EVENTS IN DECEMBER

VICTORIA

BEAUMARIS CLUB CONGRESS

Saturday 2nd December

MINI YARRA VALLEY CONGRESS

Saturday 16th December

See a flyer on the following page

GARDENVALE

After Christmas and early into the New Year

Yarra Valley Bridge Club Inc.

Mini Congress 2023

Red Point Event

- Venue:** YARRA VALLEY BRIDGE CLUB
6 Laurence Grove, Ringwood East.
- ENTRIES:** www.bridgeunlimited.com
- START TIME:** Swiss Pairs: 10.00am Saturday 16th December.
- CONVENOR:** Clare Stratton ph:0438 547 64
Email: clarestratton@bigpond.com
- DIRECTOR:** Laura Ginnan, email: laura@realbridge.com
- Cost:** \$40 per player. BYO Lunch
- Tea, Coffee, and refreshments during the day.

We are strictly limited to 20 tables, so this is likely to sell out!
Get in Fast!



ELEVATE YOUR BRIDGE SKILLS AND SUPPORT YOUTH BRIDGE - JOIN THE BIDDING CHALLENGE TODAY!

Presented by: Laura Ginnan

2024 Australian Youth Bridge Championships Convenor



Are you ready to enhance your bridge skills while making a difference in the world of youth bridge? The Australian Youth Bridge Championships invites you to participate in the Bidding Challenge, a unique event that offers personal growth and supports the future of budding bridge enthusiasts.

Challenge Highlights: Enhance Your Skills and Support Youth Bridge

Skill Enhancement: Complete 15 diverse bidding problems suitable for all levels of play. Our expert panel will tackle the same problems.

Expert Panel Insights: Learn from an expert panel during a live-streamed event on Thursday December 21st, with recorded sessions available for later viewing.

Written Panel Answers: Delve into comprehensive breakdowns of expert solutions emailed directly to you on December 21st.

Live Stream Details - Save the Date!

Mark your calendars for Thursday, December 21st, and join us for a live stream featuring three panelists and guest youth players. The event kicks off at:

NZ (Auckland): 4:00 pm

AEDT (Sydney): 2:00 pm

ACDT (Adelaide): 1:30 pm

AWST (Perth): 11:00 am

Supporting Youth Bridge - Your Impact Matters

Your participation directly contributes to the success of youth bridge. Support key initiatives:

Reduce Costs: Assist in minimizing expenses associated with extensive travel and chaperone needs for players under 18.

New Player Coaching: Help attract and nurture new and inexperienced players, vital for the growth of youth bridge.

Resources and Team Building: Contribute to delivering exceptional events with lasting opportunities through mentorship and connections.

Your Support - Choose Your Impact

Select from three suggested amounts - Seed Supporter (\$20), Growth Enthusiast (\$55), and Champion of Youth Bridge (\$150). Every donation counts, and you can also choose your own amount to make a meaningful impact.

Register Now and Make a Difference!

Ready to take on the challenge and support youth bridge? [Register now](#) and secure your spot in this exciting event. For more information, visit our [website](#).

Thank you for your commitment to the growth of youth bridge. We look forward to seeing you at the Bidding Challenge!

Please see a sample of the expert panel on the following page.

Expert panellists include:



Sophie Ashton



Peter Gill



Mike Doecke



Ishmael Del'Monte



Ron Klinger



Liam Milne

...and More

NATIONAL

2023 GRAND NATIONAL OPEN TEAMS FINAL

Friday – Monday 1st/4th December

Queensland Contract Bridge Club, 67 Ipswich Rd, Woolloongabba QLD

An annual event with players from all across the country playing for their designated region.

2024 AUSTRALIAN MIXED TEAM PLAYOFF

Saturday – Thursday 9th/14th December

Canberra Bridge Club, 5-7 Duff Pl, Deakin ACT 2600, Australia

This is the exhausting playoff to select the Mixed Team to represent Australia in 2024. In a similar format to the Open Playoff just recently completed.

2024 SUMMER FESTIVAL OF BRIDGE

The annual Canberra Bridge Event in January

Youth Week

6th – 12th January 2024

Please see a flyer on the following two pages

Summer Festival of Bridge

9th – 21st January 2024



55th Australian Youth Bridge Championships

January 6 -12 (2024), Canberra

Venue

Canberra Accommodation Centre 210 Northbourne Ave, Braddon ACT

Eligibility

Australian Youth Pairs Championship: Open to all players born 1984 or later

Australian Youth Teams Championship: Open to all players born 1984 or later

Australian Youth Squad Selection event open to players born in 1999 or later who are also eligible to represent Australia

Young at heart pro-am pairs: Open to anyone who has ever played in youth week!

Cost

Full week pricing \$650 for students, \$750 non-students
(price includes accommodation and meals)

Young at heart pro-am pairs only \$40 (includes lunch + end of event bbq)

You can also book extra accommodation for \$65 per night. The venue is over the road from the Rex so if you are playing in the SFOB after youth week, you don't need to relocate.

Enter now by clicking [HERE](#)

Schedule

Jan 6-7

Australian Youth Pairs
Championships

Jan 8-9

Australian Youth Teams
Championships

Jan 10-11

Australian Youth Team
Selection

NZ + 26-40 year old +
consolation butler

Jan 12

Young at heart
+ pro-am pairs
BBO

What's new

(or old but awesome)

Old Fenner Hall as the venue
(next door to the SFOB venue)

Everyone gets their own room!
(shared bathrooms)

Scavenger hunt

Pro-am/young at heart pairs (Friday)

NZ players are back!

Icy poles, tiny teddies,
deodorant and toasties
(thanks Johnno)

Night time side events

Crazy Pairs, Goulash, Cliff Wake, Speedball +
more

WHAT NEXT IN DEFENCE?

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
		1♠	2♠
DBL	3♦	P	P
DBL	P	P	P

Both sides are vulnerable.

You are sitting and your partner opens 1♠.

West's 2♠ bid shows both hearts and a minor.

Your hand is the following.

♠ J9
♥ 6
♦ AK982
♣ KJ542

Your DBL tells partner that you can penalise one of the opponent's suits and it guarantees another bid so partner can pass and await developments. You are wondering what to bid over East's expected 3♥ or 4♥ bid when East bids 3♦ and this is passed around to you.

It isn't Christmas yet but Santa came early you thought. **DBL** as strongly as you can.

Your partner thinks a long time before eventually passing.

What information do you have about declarer's hand and dummy's hand and partner's possible holding?

It is your lead.

OTHER

SURVEY REQUEST

Editor's note:

I know doing a survey can sometimes be a little annoying as they may take longer than you think and the questions are on a subjective scale of 1 to 10 a lot of the times. However, this survey is designed to try and assist in the promotion of the game of bridge and your assistance would greatly assist the development of the game. I greatly encourage you to spend the time.

BEN THOMPSON (a Victorian who is a well credentialed bridge player and administrator has asked me to put the following in the bulletin)

The World Bridge Federation (out of the Marketing & Communication committee, which I chair) is conducting a survey exploring what types of leisure activities people do and why. I'd appreciate it if you could promote it in the Victorian Bulletin

The survey is aimed primarily at bridge players (but we're interested in what friends of bridge players think too)

The results will help us get a better understanding of why different groups of people around the world like and play bridge, and how bridge compares to other activities that bridge players and potential bridge players like to do.

Administrators, teachers and promoters can use the results to design better ways to get people into bridge, and to stay in bridge.

The survey is available at: <https://pip.surveymonkey.com/r/DKJW93X>

There will be an article about it soon on Bridge Winners: <https://bridgewinners.com/article/view/leisure-activities-survey/>

RECENT RANKING PROMOTIONS – AS UPDATED BY THE CLUBS IN OCTOBER 2023

CLUB	NAME	RANK
Alexandra Club	Rawson, Trish	Regional
Alphington Bridge Club	McKay, Sam	Local
Bairnsdale Bridge Club	Haywood, David	Life
Bairnsdale Bridge Club	Porritt, Ilse	Life
Ballarat Bridge Club	Beer, Clare	State
Ballarat Bridge Club	Dwyer, Geoff	Bronze State
Ballarat Bridge Club	White, John	State
Bayside Bridge Club	Dwyer, Mary Louis	Bronze Local
Bayside Bridge Club	Goldwater, Jane	Graduate
Bayside Bridge Club	Howell, Peter	Club
Bayside Bridge Club	Lowe, Alastair	Bronze Life
Bayside Bridge Club	Robinson, Di	Silver Local
Bayside Bridge Club	Sorrell, Sharon	Local
Bayside Bridge Club	Stevens, Rune	Local
Bayside Bridge Club	Wells, Lyn	Graduate
Bendigo Bridge Club	Angove, Tania	Club
Bendigo Bridge Club	Parker, Kaye	Bronze State
Berwick Bridge Club	Smith, Elaine	Club
Berwick Bridge Club	Tiplady, Matthew	Life
BWOnline Bridge Club	Pounds, Bill	Graduate
Gardenvale Bridge Club	Altit, Albert	Silver Local
Gardenvale Bridge Club	Bock, Fay	Bronze Local
Geelong Bridge Club	Cadd, Ann	Club
Geelong Bridge Club	Cochrane, Paula	Graduate
Geelong Bridge Club	Frederick, David	Club
Geelong Bridge Club	Hawker, Rachel	Graduate
Geelong Bridge Club	Melzer, David	Graduate
KLTC Bridge Club	Gedge, Anthea	Life
KLTC Bridge Club	Hughan, Sheryn	Bronze Local
KLTC Bridge Club	Kotros, Nicholas	Regional
KLTC Bridge Club	McCluskey, Margot	Club
KLTC Bridge Club	Tatterson, Marilyn	Local
KLTC Bridge Club	Tulloch, James	State
KLTC Bridge Club	Williams, Jenny	Club
Lyceum Club	Northam, Lis	Graduate
MCC Bridge Club	Bone, Roland	Club
MCC Bridge Club	Home, Andrew	Bronze Regional
Melbourne Bridge Club	Munasiri, Bhandra	Bronze Local
Mildura Bridge Club	Crowley, Heather	Club
Mildura Bridge Club	Easton, Margaret	Graduate
Moonee Valley Bridge Club	Cashen, Bernadette	Regional

Moonee Valley Bridge Club	Deerson, Marianne	Graduate
Moonee Valley Bridge Club	Farrington, Pam	Bronze Local
Moonee Valley Bridge Club	Howden, Brian	Club
Moonee Valley Bridge Club	Hoysted, Ross	Bronze Local
Moonee Valley Bridge Club	Jones, Annmaree	Bronze Local
Moonee Valley Bridge Club	Morrison, Cath	Regional
Moonee Valley Bridge Club	Roten, Paul	Bronze Local
Moonee Valley Bridge Club	Vaughan, Annie	State
Northern Bridge Club	Drevesjo, Rune	State
Northern Bridge Club	Hoy, Anne	Silver Local
Northern Bridge Club	Jones, Judy	Silver Local
Northern Bridge Club	Pogson, Michael	Silver National
Northern Bridge Club	Redman, Elizabeth	Graduate
Ocean Grove Bridge Club	Edwards, Jenny	Club
Ocean Grove Bridge Club	Revie, Peter	Graduate
Ocean Grove Bridge Club	Snow, Maree	Club
OZ Bridge Club	Weir, Vivienne	Local
Peninsula Bridge Club	Buchanan, Diane	Silver Local
Phillip Island Bridge Club	Read, Lorrie	Bronze National
Royal South Yarra Bridge Club	Court, Anne	Silver Local
Royal South Yarra Bridge Club	Gunnensen, Julie	Regional
Royal South Yarra Bridge Club	Maccallum, Sue	Silver Local
Sale Bridge Club	Booth, Lisa	Graduate
Sale Bridge Club	Gault, Helen	Life
Sale Bridge Club	Lawton, Diane	Graduate
Sale Bridge Club	Pitman, Pam	Graduate
Sale Bridge Club	Sherrin, Irene	Graduate
Sale Bridge Club	Sundermann, Fred	Gold Life
Sandhurst Bridge Academy	Upsall, Denis	Gold Life
South Gippsland Bridge Club	French, John	Silver Local
South Gippsland Bridge Club	Green, Ann	Bronze Local
The Real Deal	Beale, Deb	Graduate
Torquay Bridge Club Inc.	Erving, Lydia	Silver Local
Torquay Bridge Club Inc.	Miller, Eric	Bronze Local
Traralgon Bridge Club	Clarke, June	Life
U3A Knox Bridge Club	Koppel, Mieke	Silver Local
U3A Knox Bridge Club	Ratnarajah, Ratna	Club
U3A Knox Bridge Club	Wright, Betty	Bronze Local
Upwey Bridge Club	Donahoo, Nicky	Local
Upwey Bridge Club	Tang, Bei	Life
Victorian Bridge Association	Fowler, Jill	Graduate
Victorian Bridge Association	Jacobs, Leah	Club
Victorian Bridge Association	Kras, Debbie	Bronze State
Victorian Bridge Association	Lawton, John	Bronze State
Victorian Bridge Association	Middleton, Dianna	Grand

Victorian Bridge Association	Nicholson, Helen	National
Victorian Bridge Association	Owen, Libby	State
Victorian Bridge Association	Russell, Pauline	Graduate
Wangaratta Bridge Club	Van Stekelenberg, Marika	Club
Wangaratta Bridge Club	Watson, Janet	Bronze Local
Warrnambool Bridge Club	Bird, Marie	Local
Waverley Bridge Club	Andrews, Keri	State
Waverley Bridge Club	Balachandran, Bala	Graduate
Waverley Bridge Club	Carruthers, David	State
Waverley Bridge Club	Chai, Weimin	Graduate
Waverley Bridge Club	Crowley, Tim	Regional
Waverley Bridge Club	Curry, Margaret	Club
Waverley Bridge Club	Danylec, Basil	Regional
Waverley Bridge Club	Houston, Jenny	Bronze Local
Waverley Bridge Club	Jensen, Jette	Club
Waverley Bridge Club	Jones, Alex	Bronze National
Waverley Bridge Club	Lipschitz, Sheldon	Regional
Waverley Bridge Club	Neville, Kevin	Bronze Local
Waverley Bridge Club	Peacock, Stuart	Silver Local
Waverley Bridge Club	Quinlivan, Jo	State
Waverley Bridge Club	Raseta, Jenny	Silver Local
Waverley Bridge Club	Samarasingha, Hiranthi	Bronze Local
Waverley Bridge Club	Samarasingha, Nalin	Bronze Local
Waverley Bridge Club	Yin, Yong Xiang	Graduate
Whittlesea Bridge Club	McCaughey, Sandra	Silver Local
Williamstown Bridge Club	McNamara, Pauline	Bronze Regional
Williamstown Bridge Club	Sheahan, Merran	Regional
Williamstown Bridge Club	Soppitt, Mary	Silver Local
Williamstown Bridge Club	Suares, Crystal	Graduate
Williamstown Bridge Club	Szuveges, Narelle	Life
Wodonga Bridge Club	Barrow, Di	Life
Wodonga Bridge Club	Coysh, Don	National
Wodonga Bridge Club	Kielbasa, Kim	State
Yarra Valley Bridge Club	Cunningham, Rita	Club

Congratulations to all of the above.

JENNY THOMPSON'S UPDATE

The 2024 Calendar for State & Congress events has now been completed.

This has been reviewed by Laurie Kelso, Bridge Victoria and Victorian Clubs. MTC would like to thank everyone involved in facilitating the completion of this.

State events will continue to be run online on Monday nights and face to face on Wednesday nights. We are very keen to expand the number of players who participate in these events. Some of the events during the year will be divided into different masterpoint categories which we hope will encourage a different cohort of players to have a go by enabling them to play against players of similar standard. There will be 2 State events held at different venues during 2024, following the first state event being held at a different event, the 2023 Victorian Swiss Pairs, that is currently being held at Waverley.

I would like to remind players who might be interested in playing off for the Victorian Open team that they will be asked to form teams based on VQP's only. As well as major placegetters in Congresses and Regional Championships, major State events will now receive VQPs. Those state events are the Pennant, the Butler placegetters, Open Pairs (both online and face to face).

As a final note I would like to mention that I am standing down as Chair of the MTC from the VBA AGM in December. I will always be around to assist where necessary and plan to stay very much involved in bridge administration/governance both at the Victorian and ABF Level.

I would like to thank everyone who has assisted me during the years in this role.

Jenny Thompson

Editor's Note: I hope that whoever replaces Jenny in this role will be as effective and as approachable as her.

Also from Jenny –

In March 2024 Paul Marston and Nevena Djurovic will be running a free introductory (level 1) online beginner course for youngsters, between the age of 14 and 24.

This program is part of the ABF strategy of attracting and retaining more youth to the sport of bridge. Bookings will be opening up in early 2024 and more information on how to do this will be made available soon.



FEEDBACK

Chris

I had the following hand sitting North and we were not vulnerable and the opponents were.

♠AT764

♥KT432

♦J

♣T5

What should I bid at this stage of the auction?

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
		1♣	3♦
4♦	5♦	DBL	P
?			

1♣ could be a two-card suit

3♦ is weak but the opponents are vulnerable

4♦ by me asks partner to pick a major and I have a good playing strength hand for the majors

We might well have a cheap non vulnerable safe in five of a major

Answer:

Unless partner is living in another planet, he/she has seen and understands the auction as you have described it to me.

They have chosen to double this suggesting that they don't wish you to bid further.

If partner had passed, they would be suggesting that they don't have a good defensive hand against the opponent's contract and you have the green light to go on with a suitable hand.

Of course, partner could have another option to bid one of the majors themselves with a suitable hand.

THEREFORE, PASS (you also have an ace and a king in defence as a bonus)

Please submit your queries to the email address.

editor@bridgevictoria.au

WHAT NEXT IN DEFENCE SOLUTION

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
		1♠	2♠
DBL	3♣	P	3♦
DBL	P	P	P

It is your lead with the following hand

♠ J9
 ♥ 6
 ♦ AK982
 ♣ KJ542

What information do you have about declarer's hand and dummy's hand and partner's possible holding?

You ask yourself the following questions?

Why didn't East bid 3♥, when known to have at most three ♦s and why did partner think a little while before passing?

The answers become fairly apparent. Partner is void in ♦s but has a very good ♥ suit. Therefore, partner's hand is something like a 6 5 0 2 shape (with a 7 4 0 2 and a good ♠ suit, partner will bid and not let this contract play).

Hence, East passed 3♦ with a poor suit (look at your suit and West had bid vulnerable) and at most two ♥s.

Don't lead the ♠J but lead the ♦A, if you don't, this will not work out well given that 4♠ is a make.

NORTH

♠ J9
 ♥ 6
 ♦ AK982
 ♣ KJ542

WEST

♠
 ♥ A98743
 ♦ QJ654
 ♣ AT

EAST

♠ A7653
 ♥ 2
 ♦ T73
 ♣ 9873

SOUTH

♠ KQT842
 ♥ KQJT5
 ♦
 ♣ Q6

TEST YOUR DECLARER SKILLS – DEC Solution

The following hand took place in a team's event

West leads the \spadesuit K.

NORTH(D)

\spadesuit AJ62
 \heartsuit AK54
 \diamondsuit 52
 \clubsuit KT3

WEST

\spadesuit ?854
 \heartsuit Q32
 \diamondsuit KQT6
 \clubsuit 87

EAST

\spadesuit ?3
 \heartsuit JT98
 \diamondsuit J9843
 \clubsuit 42

SOUTH

\spadesuit KT3
 \heartsuit 76
 \diamondsuit A7
 \clubsuit AQJ965

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1NT	P	3 \clubsuit	P
3 \heartsuit	P	4 \clubsuit	P
4NT	P	5 \diamondsuit	P
6 \clubsuit	P	P	P

1NT is 15-17 and 3 \clubsuit is a slam try.

When North cooperates, South uses Blackwood and

6 \clubsuit is reached.

Decide how you are going to play this hand.

You can always pull trumps and guess who has the \spadesuit Q.

Is there any other possibility?

Hint: the chance that both opponents have two or more \heartsuit s is around 92%.

What is your plan from here?

Option 1, pull trumps and guess who has the \spadesuit Q.

Option 2, how about winning \diamondsuit A and playing one round of trumps toward the \clubsuit K (note you can't perform the following elimination if you play two rounds of trumps as you lack the entries to complete the elimination).

Then cash the \heartsuit A and K and then ruff a \heartsuit back to hand with the \clubsuit 9 (in case West has only two \heartsuit s).

Now a small \clubsuit toward the \clubsuit T.

If \clubsuit s are two – two, you are home as you ruff the last \heartsuit and exit with a \diamondsuit (whoever wins the \diamondsuit must either play a \spadesuit or give you a ruff and a sluff).

If \clubsuit s are three – one, you must pull the last trump and guess the \spadesuit position.

No guessing which option is better.

Option 2 can rarely cost and gives you a major edge if \clubsuit s are two – two.

BRIDGE HAND OF THE MONTH NOV 23 SOLUTION

N/S are Vulnerable and E/W are NV

NORTH

♠ Q932
♥ KQ9742
♦ Q4
♣ 4

WEST

♠
♥
♦
♣

EAST

♠
♥
♦
♣

SOUTH(D)

♠ A8
♥ AJT865
♦ A32
♣ AQ

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
		1♥	2NT
4♣	5♣	4♦	6♣
6♥	P	P	P

2NT showed the minors and after a very competitive auction, North decided that doubling 6♣ would not go many off. Therefore, North decided to trust your declarer play and hope that 6♥ would make [also, East-West may save in 7♣ with their favourable vulnerability even if 6♥ was not making].

North's wish that East – West would save didn't eventuate, so now it is up to you.

West leads the ♠T which appears to be a singleton to everybody at the table.

You cover with the ♠Q and East plays the ♠K and you win the ♠A.

You lead the ♥J and West follows with the ♥3 and, after you play from dummy, East discards the ♠4.

What is your plan from here?

From the bidding, it would appear that West is probably 1 5(6) 6(5).

Anyway, you lead the ♠8 and East wins the ♠J.

After some thought, West returns the ♦8. You win with the ♦A. You play a ♥ to dummy, play the ♠ and throw a small ♦. You ruff the last ♠ and lead out all of your trumps.

This is the position at trick ten.

NORTH

♠
♥K
♦Q
♣4

WEST

♠
♥
♦K
♣KJ

EAST

♠
♥
♦
♣

SOUTH(D)

♠
♥
♦2
♣AQ

You lead the ♥K and throw the ♦2.

What is West to do?

The problem with this line of play is that East could beat you by returning a ♣ rather than a ♦ when in with the ♠J

This quoted line of play is submitted from [Chen Ding](#)

“Regarding your monthly declaring question about that 6H contract. Surely, I do not think it is an easy one from my perspective. I believe West has the following 10 4 KJxxxx K(J)xxxx and East has KJ7654 Void xx K(J)xxxx. I can't avoid one spade loser so I will concede one trick to East to play spade after the drawing the outstanding trump. My question is what will East lead after he wins the trick. If he plays back a diamond, I will assume West has both the diamond king and club king and I will endplay West by the last two cards. Dummy will have the diamond queen and club 4 and declarer will keep the last two club cards as ace and queen. What will West to have in the last two? I will try to drop off West's club king in the end. On the scenario East will play a club instead of diamond, I can't squeeze West in that case. I will try to finesse East for the club king and pitch dummy's diamond loser under my club winner. That is my plan. I am not sure it will be a right answer or not.

TP, a person who contributes to the bulletin more than most sent the following comment. It is not possible to avoid a S loser and therefore you have to eliminate minor suit losers. Enter the dummy with a trump and take the C finesse, hoping K to be with East. Discard the D loser on CA and lose a S and cross ruff the rest.

As [Neil Ewart](#) (the person I interviewed for this bulletin) pointed out, the problem with this solution is hoping that East returns a ♦ and not a ♣ when in with the ♠ trick. He suggested the best alternative which is outlined below.

The main point of this problem is to keep the dangerous hand (East) off of the lead.
I led you astray in the introduction. One should think about the hand before playing to trick one.
You don't always cover an honour with an honour.

How do you do this? You place small from dummy at trick one.

- If East ducks this trick, you let West win the trick and you come down to the recommended ending with East never getting in at all (if West happens to be 6 – 6 in the minors, then they are end played at trick 2, else they can exit with a ♠ or a ♥ but you still arrive at the ending shown before)
- If East overtakes with the ♠J, you win with the ♠A, pull trumps and play the ♠8. East is now on lead but the ♠Q9 provide two pitches for declarer's ♦s.

If West's singleton ♠ was anything but the KJ or T, this hand is not makeable with perfect defence as East will get in on a ♠ play at some stage.
Watching the pips does matter.