



Bulletin

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Bridge—Brains or Boils?

Somebody left in my pigeonhole a story from the UK Sunday Times about an experiment that seemed to show the positive effect of bridge on health. A dozen women in their seventies and eighties in a California bridge club were monitored while they played a game. In two of the three groups the level of T-cells, the white blood cells that play a central role in defending the body from infection, rose significantly. Professor Marion Hammond, who led the research team suspects that the level of T-cells is connected with the dorsolateral cortex of the brain which plays a part in activities that involve working memory, initiative and forward planning.

The International Bridge Press Association noted that this experiment was reported widely overseas and in Australia and good publicity for bridge - even if the sample size does seem a tad small to generalize about the population of the world (although after last issue's analysis of club statistics I am probably not in a good position to carp about sample size). It shouldn't be hard to find other positive effects – for example, because bridge players are rarely exposed to direct sunlight, they are probably far less likely to get skin cancer than the general population.

On the other hand, we probably also need to worry about the experiments that have not been done yet. Until the necessary research is completed we have to accept that there is a possibility that bridge players are, for example, more prone to hemorrhoids or less likely to have sex than the general population. It might be better for the bridge associations to sponsor this sort

of research before someone else does. If the results are negative, the spin doctors can release the results in a way that will minimize the damage to the game's following.

The Garage Sold

Over \$16,000 has been raised towards new appliances for the top kitchen. Many thanks to all those club members who donated goods for sale. Unfortunately the kitchen sink did not sell but just about everything else did. The volunteers did manage to have lots of fun in the process. There was artistic displaying beforehand of the various tasteful objects d'art. Negotiating skills came to the fore on the Saturday morning when so many customers wanted to haggle.

Lots of thanks to Jo West, Anna Quach, Margaret Bourke, Val Mitchell, Tony Marker, Pat Back, Vicky Gregory, Jim Dahlmeier, Mary Weddell, Rhyll Scales, Peter Adnerson and Anne Powell.

We are keen to have another fundraising event. Ideas for trivia nights, gourmet food tasting and "luck draw" bridge nights have been put forward. Any more suggestions or volunteers?

How do you bid this?

How would you and your partner bid these hands if there was no bidding by the opponents?

West (dealer) ♠875♥QJ9743♦—♣K932
East ♠K3♥KT♦AQJ5432♣AQ

Be honest now. You can probably guess the best contract but would you get there and how?
See page 4.

Golden Oldies

by Richard Hills

There are many excellent bridge books that have gone out of print. Fortunately, this one can still be found in the Canberra Bridge Club library.

Golden Oldies 1: Winning Swiss Teams Tactics in Bridge by Harold Feldheim

When I was an intermediate player, making the transition from walk-in pairs to teams play, I learnt a lot of helpful ideas from Feldheim's book.

Take this boring hand and routine auction from the opening chapter on Part Scores: You are sitting south and hold ♠J7 ♥A943 ♦AT96 ♣J32.

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
Pass	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	1NT	Pass
?			

Given that North's rebid shows a minimum opening, and you are not vul, do you Pass 1NT or signoff in 2♦? Feldheim analyses the chances of the alternative partials opposite three plausible North hands. Hand (a) 1NT is +120 and 2♦ is +90; hand (b) 1NT is -50 and 2♦ is +110; hand (c) 1NT is +120 and 2♦ is +110.

Choosing to play the 2♦ partial at teams scoring means that you lose one imp on hand (a), gain fourimps on hand (b) and break even on hand (c) – giving the **safer** part score a 4 to 1 advantage at teams.

Feldheim concludes: "The ultra-conservative matchpoint player who plays in 2♦ for +110 will lose consistently to the more daring no trump bidder who makes +120. Inimps the philosophy is exactly opposite. All efforts should be expended to find a safe suit fit, with no trump as a last resort."

The play of the cards atimps scoring is also different from matchpoint pairs. Feldheim gives this simple example.

NORTH	SOUTH
♠J4	♠AK32
♥107	♥K9853
♦542	♦AQ
♣AKQ1052	♣74

He writes: "You are declarer in three no trump. West leads a low diamond and you win with the queen. With four sure tricks in spades and diamonds, you can guard against a four-one club break by immediately finessing the ten. (Even better is to duck a club completely, in case your LHO has all five missing clubs.) The defence cannot take five tricks before you are able to claim two spades, two diamonds and five clubs – making three no trump."

Feldheim notes that failing in 3NT costs 12imps, while scoring an overtrick gains only one imp. Since a bad club break has a 32% chance, trying for the overtrick is poor mathematics at teams. (But since a friendly club break is a 68% chance, greedily hoping for all the club tricks and a top of +630 is good mathematics at pairs.)

Winning Swiss Teams Tactics in Bridge has an easy to read conversational style, with practice questions at the end of each chapter. For those who wish to upgrade their Standard American/Goren bidding methods, included are sections on the Forcing Notrump, Drury and Weak Two conventions.

Golden Oldies 2 : Tops and Bottoms, edited by Matthew and Pamela Granovetter, ©1987 by *granovetter books*, paperback, 180 pages

This collection of 52 hands submitted by leading world-class players (with a preponderance of American experts) is one of my favourite bridge books of all time. The hands are spectacular and/or instructive, while the editors' post mortem on each hand is witty but realistic. A classic is the first hand, attributed to Charles Goren in a pairs event many years ago.

Goren	Dummy
♠AK5	♠Q103
♥AKQJ32	♥654
♦AK65	♦J432
♣---	♣KQ4

Against Goren's 6♥ contract, LHO led the ♥7. He drew trumps, needing three rounds when it turned out that LHO had led a singleton. Goren then tried cashing the ♦A and ♦K - but LHO

had a small singleton in diamonds also! So Goren went for his only chance - LHO holding both ♠J and ♣A. He played the ♠A, then finessed the ♠10, and finally led the ♣K on which he jettisoned the blocking ♠K. (History is silent as to whether Goren murmured "Snap!" at this point.)

But sadly, this was one of Goren's coldest bottoms. Apparently the rest of the field were all making an overtrick in 6♥ on the ♣A lead.

An Odd Card?

by Brian Thorp

Playing odds and evens discard signals (*this is where discarding an even card is a bit like McKenney (if it's low I prefer the lower of the other suits and if high the higher) but an odd card says I really want this suit led partner*), an interesting situation arose at the recent ANC championships on board 2 of round 7 of stage B of the Seniors Butler. Hashmat Ali (shown below as West) was in a slightly optimistic Heart contract and needed two more tricks from the following cards:

	North	
	♠A76	
	♥8	
	♦T	
	♣—	
West		East
♠T2		♠Q85
♥97		♥—
♦—		♦—
♣J		♣64
	South	
	♠KJ9	
	♥—	
	♦Q	
	♣Q	

The S5 was led from dummy (East) and I

played the J which held. Then, on the CQ, my partner Tony Skinner found the discard of the SA! Was he trying to tell me something, I wondered? or had he pulled out the wrong card, possibly in a rueful rabbitty sort of way? It would be reasonably easy to work out what to lead next if I knew whether or not he had a diamond left, but I wasn't sure. Or if I knew that partner knew that I had a diamond left, but again I wasn't sure. So I next sought guidance from his facial expression - but could see nothing of interest there. Decisions. Decisions.

Finally, it seemed I would have to make a decision based on whether the Ace is an odd card, like a "1" usually is, or an even card as in the sequence . . . 8 . . . 10 . . . Q . . . A. On balance, the Ace seemed to me a decidedly odd card for someone to discard (and therefore encouraging), so I played KS and S9 to give Tony his H8 trick en passant (*If West ruffs with the 7, North overruffs. If West ruffs with the 9, North's 8 wins the next trick*).

And we've now updated our systems card to read:- "odd discards (*incl. Aces*) encouraging".

Spring Congress (If it's not too late)

My careful plans to get this Bulletin out well before the Spring Congress (starting on 31 August) were foiled by a virus (the computer kind). It will teach me to disable my virus checker to do something and then forget to put it back on. If we are still in time, go along and have a great weekend—lots of friendly bridge and prizes for all categories. If we are too late, hope you had the great time we promised and are thinking about what to do with your winnings.

Seven Tables—Six Contracts

Everybody I have shown this too said it is obvious which might say something about how much harder things are at the table when you can't see both hands. When this was played at a club session, there were six different results over seven tables. The score sheet looked like this.

2C	E	AH	9	+110
5NT	E	XD	8	-500
3D	E	XC	8	+110
5D	E		8	-150
3NT	E	AS	7	-100
4H	E	XC	10	+420
3D	E		8	-50

The full hands were

	North	
	♠T642	
	♥862	
	♦KT96	
	♣T8	
West		East
♠875		♠K3
♥QJ9753		♥KT
♦—		♦AQJ5432
♣K932		♣AQ
	South	
	♠AQJ9	
	♥A5	
	♦87	
	♣J7654	

And the experts said...

Out of curiosity I polled a few of the more experienced players around the club as to how they would bid the hands. All six felt they would have got to the 4H contract but, interestingly, they all did it in different ways!

Pair one took the route of pass by West, then 1D, 1H, 3D, 3H, and 4H. Half of the expert pairs said they would pass with the West hand because opening a weak two denied a void.

Pair two went pass by West, then 1D, 2H (4-7 points and 6 hearts), 4H. Bidding 2H after passing showed a hand that could not open a weak two because of a void. East's job was then quite easy.

Pair three again started with a pass by West followed by 1D, 1H, 2NT (19-20 forcing), 3H and 4H.

With **pair four** we start with those who would open with the West hand. Their bidding went 2D (showing either strong diamonds, weak hearts, weak clubs/spades or 23-24 bal) and then 2NT (enquiry), 3H (showing bad weak two in hearts) and 4H.

Pair five started with a good old-fashioned 2H, followed by 2NT (Ogust inquiry), 3C (bad points, bad suit), 4H (I don't care partner).

I have left the best until last – an anonymous member of a pair playing the Hills-Ali symmetric relay system. Not for them a paltry four bids. The auction went like this:

West-	Pass
East -	1C (15+ points, any shape)
West -	1D (Negative, less than 9 bal/8unbal)
East-	1H (19+ any shape)
West-	1NT (5-7 points, 4+ hearts)
East -	2C (Tell me more partner)
West -	2H (OK – I've also got 4+clubs)
East-	2S (Keep telling)
West	4H (I'm 3-6-0-4 with 3 relay points (A=3, K=2, Q=1))
East	Pass (OK – I get to play them).

As my correspondent modestly pointed out this was a triumph for the bidding system as it protected East's ♠King from the lead if the Ace was offside.

And the post-mortem winners were...

What went wrong on the day when only one pair got to the 4H? Probably three things. Sometimes West underestimated the real strength of the hand and didn't feel like bidding again at the three level with a void in partner's suit. Sometimes East decided that you don't pick up 19 points to be dummy. 5NT probably came from the temptation to use Blackwood—which can be a bad idea if you get a bid you don't like (you're

one too high already). Someone passed a forcing (and adventurous) 2C opening from East (for a second top board). Sometimes you can just have a bit of a snooze.

However, its always much harder at the table. People who should do better often don't. On a recent Monday night, this hand was dealt.

	North	
	♠AT62	
	♥KQ8	
	♦K8652	
	♣Q	
West		East
♠KJ4		♠Q93
♥JT73		♥96542
♦93		♦Q
♣AKJ8		♣9752
	South	
	♠875	
	♥A	
	♦AJT74	
	♣T643	

Everybody in 5D making with a few adventurous souls making 3NT? Not a bit of it – this is what the score sheet looked like.

4HX	E	8	-300
4D	S	11	170
4D	N	11	170
3D	N	11	170
INT	S	9	150
3D	N	11	170
3NT	N	9	400

The one pair that did get to game got there by some interesting bidding that will not be submitted to any panel any time soon. So, if you are thinking about moving to playing on a Monday night but worry about getting beaten all the time, it's nowhere near as bad as you think.

33 Points Schmoints

How many points do you need for a slam? 33 you have learned—but it depends. Last year, the OKBridge magazine ran a series on slams with low points. The lowest they reached was 5!! This was the hand.

	North	
	♠J9652	
	♥T9765432	
	♦—	
	♣—	
West		East
♠Q		♠K
♥AKQJ		♥8
♦QJT7		♦AK32
♣JT82		♣AKQ9765
	South	
	♠AT8743	
	♥—	
	♦98654	
	♣43	

West	North	East	South
1H	P	3C	P
4C	P	5C	5S
P	P	6C	P
P	6S	X	All pass

West, understandably led his AH but it was the one lead that allowed the contract to make. Declarer ruffed, drew the missing trumps and cross-ruffed. After three heart ruffs in hand, dummy still had a trump and all the hearts were good. Making seven.

No more mortgage!!

Last month the club made its last payment on the mortgage for the clubhouse! There have been times in the last twenty years when it seemed it would never happen. There are plenty of other expenses that will keep going but it's great to have this out of the way. One big potential expense is resurfacing of the car park—irritating because current laws and practicalities make it almost impossible for us to stop others using it. Any inventive solutions will be published in the next Bulletin. (Published entries should not involve a penalty of more than twelve months imprisonment.)

ANC 2001 –For the last time

By Julia Hoffman

Members of this Club have had to hear so much about this event over the past two years it must be a relief to know it is all over. However, it cannot be laid to rest without some mention of the tremendous support received from the Canberra Bridge Club and its members.

To attempt to name all those who helped both before and during the tournament would be much too ambitious. A lot of people were involved in so many ways – the raffles, the Festive Teams, stuffing envelopes, endless photocopying, preparing scorebooks, organising the restaurant guide and “meal-deals”, engraving of trophies and medallions, setting-up the venue, manning the Congress Desk, providing all sorts of hospitality, caddying, directing walk-ins, operating Bridge Cam, recording the finals, running VuGraph, and clearing it all away.

While there was a lot of work and, at times, some apparently insurmountable hurdles to overcome there were, at least in retrospect, some funny moments. The Operations Manager (of the Chifley) arrived about an hour later than expected on set-up day (that never seemed funny) and had already been preceded by the audiovisual company whose quote had NOT been accepted. Fortunately I had, hopefully politely, sent them on their way before our “preferred supplier” arrived. While I was dealing with this, Nola was dispatching the paper cup supplier whose order had been cancelled – he too was out of the building before the chosen one arrived. Nevertheless, the room was up and running in plenty of time proving that having eighteen chiefs and two Indians can work.

There were plenty of good results for ACT players which is always pleasing. Special congratulations to the Gold Medallists: Jillian Hay and John Maddison in the Youth Pairs and, the winners of the Seniors Teams— David Hoffman (Capt) , Hashmat Ali, John Brockwell, Roger Curnow, Len Dixon and George Riszko.

Finally, I would like to thank the ANC 2001

Committee for their support and a lot of hard work: we can all look forward to playing lots more bridge at ANC 2009.

ACT winners of other events were:

Parliament Pairs: R Nixon – B Waters

Centenary of Federation Teams: H Hudson, L Yu, J Dahlmeier, K Miller

Festive Teams: (open) G. Finikiotis, R Hills, A Lasocki, J Maddison

(restricted) K Gullan, A Ferguson, G Gray, M Weddell)

Canberra Pairs: J Courtney – J Hunt

Ord Minnett Teams: R Crichton, P Crichton, N Giura, N Hughes

ACT Bureau of Sport Teams: J Murray, R Erskine, F Grant, P Grant

Barton Graded Pairs: Section A: J Hay M Watts

Hurry Back Teams: B Thorp P Back J Ascione W Smith

The ACT main event top ten finishers were:

Open Butler: Quail/Delivera 10th

Women’s Butler: Creet/Bird 9th

Seniors’ Butler: Bourke/Ramshaw 2nd, Ali/Riszko 3rd, Thorp/Skinner 7th, Brockwell/Jackman 8th.

Restricted Butler: Ware/Geromboux 2nd, Marker/Struik 3rd, Holbrook/Waight 6th, Ferguson/Thomson 7th

ANC Pairs: Creet/Wawn 4th, Randles/VanVucht 10th

Women’s Pairs: Tonkin/Scales 9th

Seniors’ Pairs: Wenger/Rothman 5th, Riszko/Ali 7th, Hoffman/Curnow 8th.

Youth Pairs: Hay/Maddison 1st, Abraham/Bridgland 7th

Mixed Pairs: Courtney/Ewart 2nd, Bourke/Delivera 6th

Our Open Team came 5th, the Women’s Team 3rd and the Youth Team 5th. Considering the relative size of our population these are all good results.

Something out of nothing

The Lavazza Italian team won the recent European championships (which should be some consolation to anybody who got beaten by them in the last NOT. This board gives a good example of why:

Dealer West All Vul

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

South
 ♠Q 8 7 3
 ♥A T 5 3
 ♦7
 ♣8 7 5 3

West	North	East	South
	Lauria	Versace	
Pass	2D*	2S	Dble
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All pass			

*18-20 balanced

Declarers who got to 3NT, world class or not, usually got hammered even if the defence was less than perfect. Lorenzo Laria of the Italian team, however, showed how it was done.

East led the JS like everyone else in the room. Lauria won with the King and then led a low diamond. East went up with the nine and then led another spade. A heart switch would, of course, killed of declarer but even so there was a lot of work left to be done—can you see the ninth trick at this point?

Lauria won the spade with the Ace while West discarded a heart. He next cashed the Ace of clubs (nobody really knows why) and got the good news and bad news. The singleton king crashed but there were still only going to be three club tricks.

Now comes the finale masterpiece. Lauria exited with another diamond to West. West retaliated by leading another diamond back but Lauria kept ducking until the 4th round.

He won the fourth round of diamonds with the Ace and crossed to dummy's Ace of Hearts. This was then the situation.

North
 ♠-
 ♥9
 ♦8
 ♣Q J 4

West	East
♠-	♠T9
♥J	♥KQ8
♦T	♦-
♣T 9 6	♣-

South
 ♠Q
 ♥T
 ♦-
 ♣8 7 5

Lauria next led the QS and West was absolutely screwed. Every play was a losing option. He discarded a heart on the queen of spades. Lauria next led the 8 of clubs from dummy forcing West to split his T 9. Lauria won the club in hand and then put West back on lead with the last diamond. West then had to lead into the split tenace in clubs. Nine tricks thank you. Easy game.

Annual General Meeting

Sunday 23rd September 4pm

It's that time of year again. Hear about how we have been going, have your say about the future—and help elect a new committee. Venue: The clubrooms.



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