



Canberra Bridge Club

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Editor: Richard Hills



A word from the President

Dear Members

Soon after taking over as president from Karen Creet, I was asked about reviving the CBC Bulletin. It was stated to me that the "best clubs" in fact have such a publication.

Shortly after this comment, another elder of the club pointed out to me a photo of Olive Lott that was on a back shelf in the library.

Additionally, having been a committee member for a number of years I became aware of others such as David Hoffman, John Brockwell, Keith Ogborn and likely others, writing and assembling a history of bridge in the ACT and the Canberra Bridge Club.

All of the above encouraged me to take the history of the club much more seriously. Consequently we now have a reframed photograph complete with bio of Olive Lott in the room of her name. Similarly, we have a framed bio of Barry Turner in the room of his name.

We now have a document on our website written by Keith Ogborn, detailing the beginnings of bridge in the ACT leading to the creation of the Canberra Bridge Club and the provision of the existing premises.

Being mindful of the initial comment regarding the best clubs having a Bulletin, it has in fact made me ponder on the meaning and what does that translate too. I have visited many clubs and hear about many more.

However, none appear to better CBC insofar as the number of our players involved at the top or elite end. None appear to better us with the range of events offered to members of all levels of skill, as we have 11 standard sessions of bridge plus our learning and development programs.

Further, we are right up there with our membership numbers and recently we have achieved some growth.

Few clubs are able to better us with fully owned (totally debt free) club facilities that come courtesy of the hard work of past members, and few if any clubs can provide such a detailed history of their club as we have placed on our website.

That is not to say we can't improve. We can, and through a great committee, I am committed to delivering the best facilities and bridge environment possible.

In my mind, CBC certainly fulfils the meaning of "best" regardless of how the term is defined and the Bridge Bulletin is some very good icing on the cake.

Happy bridging

Peter Giles
President

Knockout blows: Part One

Peter Grant

In the final of the recent Knockout Teams event, the **Mendick** team (Stephen Mendick-Andy Creet, Elizabeth Havas-Richard Hills, Tony Marinos-Peter Grant) met the **Thomson** team (Ian Thomson-Arjuna de Livera, Margaret Bourke-George Kozakos, Ian Robinson).

The two teams had already met in a semi-final of the event, with the Mendick team winning a tight match by just 2 IMPs (29-27 IMPs over 28 boards). The final too was a close-fought affair, with the Mendick team eventually winning by 16 IMPs (74-58). Of the 74 IMPs gained by the Mendick team in the final, 53 were won from just four boards, all of which required some difficult judgements to be made about the prospects for game or slam.

If you would like to bid the first two of these boards with your partner, do so before reading the article below.

Board 4

D. West	♠ J		
Vul: All	♥KJT74		
	♦T4		
	♣QJT53		
♠KT9654		♠8732	
♥8		♥52	
♦J98632		♦AK75	
♣-		♣762	
	♠AQ		
	♥AQ963		
	♦Q		
	♣AK984		

Board 7

D. South	♠A976		
Vul: All	♥A8763		
	♦32		
	♣Q4		
♠K		♠J852	
♥KQ954		♥T2	
♦95		♦QJ	
♣KT973		♣A8652	
	♠QT43		
	♥J		
	♦AKT8764		
	♣J		

Typically, success at high-level bidding hinges on three factors: system, judgement and luck.

System is obviously important: the more relevant and useful information you can exchange with your partner through the bidding, the more likely it is that you will jointly be able to pitch the right level and strain of the final contract, or judge well to save over the opponents' contract. The downside, of course, is that your opponents will also be informed by your bidding decisions and explanations, and this may help them in their own bidding decisions or in their subsequent play or defence.

Judgement is also a key factor, especially when the hands are very distributional or where the bidding has been highly com-

petitive. Judgement requires, among other things, a weighing of all the evidence (both direct and implied) provided by the auction to date, and an assessment of the risks attached to the various options available.

Luck is often assumed to play a minor role at the bridge table, but there is no doubt that luck (or chance) can be a key factor in determining the outcome on any individual board, or small number of boards. Over the longer run, so we're told, luck will tend to balance out, such that skill prevails in the end. No doubt that's true, more or less.

For each of the four boards discussed below, I have estimated (in broad percentage terms) the contributions made by system, judgement and luck respectively to the out-

come achieved in the Knockout Teams final. In practice, of course, the three factors will interact on any given board, meaning that such assignments are to some extent arbitrary. See what you think.

Board 4

Helped by their system structure, Stephen Mendick and Andy Creet judged very well on this board. Andy's opening 2S bid showed a weak two-suiter in the odd suits (either clubs and hearts or diamonds and spades); hence, when Andy subsequently showed that he held spades (by his 3S bid), Stephen knew that there was a big double fit – at least 9 cards apiece – in diamonds and spades.

Even better news came when Andy bid 5S (showing at least 6 spades and 5 diamonds); once the opponents had bid the 6H slam, therefore, Stephen had little hesitation in taking the save in 6S. This contract was doubled, of course, but went only one down for -200 (a diamond lead is needed to beat 6S by two tricks).

It takes courage to sacrifice at the 6-level, vulnerable, on a combined holding of just 11 HCP, but Stephen judged well that the extreme distribution and the excellent double fit warranted this action.

It is true that 6H can be defeated (by a club lead from East, or a top diamond lead and a club switch), but Stephen's decision to take insurance looks right to me. There is no guarantee that East will be able to cash his two top diamonds, or that West will be void in clubs.

At the other table West also opened 2S, but this showed only a weak single-suiter rather than a two-suited hand. East raised preemptively to 3S, which South doubled for take-out, and West upped the ante by bidding 4S. Despite this interference North-South found the good 6C slam at which point, unaware of their double fit, East-West presumably felt that the risks of further action were just too high.

Could East-West have done better, within their system agreements? Probably so. If East had judged to bid 4S rather than 3S at his first turn (given the known 10-card spade fit), it seems likely that West would have

found the 6S sacrifice. Equally, if West had chosen to bid 4D over South's take-out double of 3S (suggesting a highly distributional two-suited hand), East would almost certainly have found the sacrifice.

The verdict on this board?

System: 50 per cent. **Judgement:** 40 per cent. **Luck:** 10 per cent.

Board 7

At both tables South opened 1D and West overcalled 1H, but from that point the auctions took a different course. What would you do as North in this situation, holding A976 of spades and A8763 of hearts, as well as an outside QC? Is your priority to show your good stop(s) in hearts by bidding 1NT, or your 4-card spade suit by making a take-out double?

The risk of bidding 1NT, it seems to me, is that if partner happens to hold a 4-card spade suit himself, you may not find your fit if partner cannot take strong action over your 1NT response.

Indeed, this is what seems to have happened at Table 1: judging that North was unlikely to hold a 4-card spade suit for his 1NT response, South decided reasonably enough to rebid his 7-card diamond suit – at which point the music stopped. 2D made 12 tricks in comfort (+170).

At Table 2 North judged to make a take-out double over the 1H overcall by West, and then to make an invitational raise of South's 1S bid. Tony Marinos (South) needed no further encouragement: with his excellent diamond suit and 7-4-1-1 shape, he bid 4S directly.

This contract is no sure thing – especially with a 4-1 spade break, 4S could be in jeopardy if the diamonds do not break evenly – but it pays to bid such vulnerable games at IMPs scoring when the chances of success are around 40 per cent or better.

As the cards lay, Tony had no trouble making 10 tricks for +620 (10 IMPs).

So the verdict on Board 7?

System: 0 per cent. **Judgement:** 50 per cent. **Luck:** 50 per cent.

The Barry Turner Teams 2015

By Bill Hunt

The number 1 seeded team were Ian Thomson, Ian Robertson, Arjuna Delivera , George Kozakas and John Hunt. They flew the starting gates and were never sighted thereafter. They won by the proverbial Flemington straight.

♠K43
♥QJ32
♦QJ8
♣KJ10

We were seeded second, and our team was Michael Smart ,David Hoffman, Richard Brightling, Jody Tutti Steven Fischer and Bill Hunt. We did not live up to our seeding, finishing third.

A good hand but I would have preferred
♠543, ♥QJ76 ♦QJ8 ♣KQ6

I have been playing and teaching this beautiful game that we love so much for over 60 years, and yet my partner Michael and I had a bidding sequence that I have never encountered before.

I sat thinking for a few moments . No worries if the hearts are breaking 2-2. They aren't of course. If they had been, this article would never have been written!

NORTH DEALER , ALL VUL.
I was dealt these cards:

♠—
♥K10765
♦AK62
♣A852

I opened the bidding 1♥. My LHO (E) overcalled 2♠, showing a weak single suiter, my partner bid 3♠, showing a big hand, setting hearts as trumps and suggesting we were going places. My RHO(W) added fuel to the auction by 4♠.

I came up with the following: If the hearts break 4-0, I have a ton of work to do. If the hearts break 3-1 as expected, I still have work to do because there is one suit with an unfortunate 2 way finesse in the club suit which at this stage I consider to be critical.

As I have to loose the ♥A and who knows what else, where is the ♣Q? At this point I became fixated on this card , practically hypnotised into believing the club queen to be of vital significance. I always teach my students to count their tricks before attempting to play a contract as declarer. Abiding by my own set of rules, I counted twice and came up with 11 each time.

I kept the merry-go-round going with my 5♠ bid. My LHO passed, hoping that we would play it there . Michael bid 6♥, and this became the final contract.

Down to business! I ruffed the spade ace, and played a heart to the queen. It held and everyone followed . Next I played a heart to my hand. West flew the ace while East pitched a spade. West returned a small diamond .I played the ace and drew the last trump.

I know my partner is not a timid bidder and will bid his hand to the limit. However there was still a concern that we might have missed seven, the interference having placed us in a position of being unable to reach that contract, even if it was available.

I now tried to construct the exact pattern around the table . As my opponents are very competent bridge players, there was no way in the world they would tell me who held the club queen.

My LHO (East) on lead took some time before deciding not to trust Bill Hunt . He decided to lead the ♠A on the table. However this lead was of no advantage to me. Dummy tracked with a nice hand but not what I had expected.

On the count of the cards, my, LHO (E) had a known six card spade suit, a singleton heart , two or three diamonds, and therefore three or four clubs. So the pattern around the table appeared to be as follows: East held a 6-1-2-4 or 6-1-3-3 pattern, with the minors the unknown factor, while West had

a balanced hand of 4-3-3-3 or similar.

Accordingly, I played a diamond to the queen, the ♠K and pitched the ♣8. Then I played the ♦J, and everybody followed.

So now the exact pattern was known – that the clubs were three clubs in the East hand and three clubs with West. However, I was none the wiser as to the location of the ♣Q even though both opponents knew where it was.

My students also hear me say repeatedly that it is essential to trust the cards the opponents play. I therefore decided to trust the lowest spade played by my LHO and to play him for the ♣Q. It worked! The contract was made.

On the way home I kept rethinking this hand. In retrospect it seemed to me that I hadn't thought deeply enough. Arriving in Gunning at midnight, I decided to put this hand up on the internet and ask a higher power for advice on how this hand should have been played.

My cat Tiges 2 has been watching me play and teach bridge on BBO for years. She is fascinated not so much by the game but by the way the cursor flies all around the screen. Still, I assume she would have picked up a thing or two by now. She therefore seemed the appropriate guru to consult.

When I asked her how to play this hand, she gave it a fleeting glance before turning to me and declaring scornfully, "it's cold." I replied, "of course it's cold in Gunning!" She raised her eyebrows, before answering, "I can't believe you don't understand it's gin on any lead you are a dumkopf!" With that she sat down heavily on the keyboard and required attention to the more important things in life, like her feed of oral care kibbles.

I still wasn't satisfied: "hey, what about the ♣Q?" I demanded. She replied, "you need to go back to kindy! It's immaterial!" before she stalked off to go about her business. That cat is a real smart A...

I decided to throw the hand out on the bridge table, which in my abode is available 24/7. I played the cards very slowly, remembering what Tiges had said about the ♣Q being immaterial.

As an experiment I exchanged the ♣10 for a small club with my RHO and the ♣J for a small club with my LHO. So now the club suit became Kxx opposite Axx2. Suddenly a lightbulb came on and the hypnosis disappeared as well as did the ♣Q.

Had this hand hit the table there would have only been one possible line for fulfilling this 6♥ contract. I would have needed to get rid of one of the clubs in partner's hand so as to ruff the suit out without loss.

This then was the way to make 12 tricks! I played my winning diamond and pitched a club from dummy's hand. From my own hand I played a club to the king, a club to my ace and ruffed a club. The ♣2 in my hand became trick 12.

I hate to say this but it turned out that my pussycat is an extremely smart Alec even though she has no idea how to play this game.

This was the full deal:
Board 4

D. West	♠ -	
Vul: All	♥KT765	
	♦AK62	
	♣A852	
♠T762		♠AQJ985
♥A98		♥4
♦T54		♦973
♣974		♣Q65
	♠K43	
	♥QJ32	
	♦QJ8	
	♣KJT	

And now for my bridge tip of the week:

Always, always trust your partner with your life! Never ever trust your opponents! The cards that are played cannot lie. Happy bridging to you all see you next time!

PS. Fellow bridge players, if you want to improve your (1) hand evaluation, (2) declarer play (3) defensive plays, I can help you using the internet. So when you are ready to rock and roll, give me a call on 48451476!

Aces and Kings—Useless Things

Ross Crichton

Here is a hand I enjoyed playing in a recent pairs session. It was one of those hands found some very unlikely discards and a good example of not giving up on a seemingly hopeless contract as declarer often benefits from the fact that defenders cannot see their partner's cards and are not always going to make the right decisions.

Dealer S.
Vul:Both

♠T876
♥AK962
♦K
♣KJ8

♠AQ93
♥873
♦852
♣A75

♠K5
♥QT54
♦Q96
♣QT63

♠J42
♥J
♦AJT743
♣942

My partner (John Brockwell) opened the North hand 1H after passes from South and West. East passed and I responded 1NT with the South cards, which was passed

out. The lead was the ♠3 to the 6 K and 2. East returned the ♠5 to 4, Q and 7. West continued with the ♠9, won by me with the ♠J as East pitched an encouraging ♣6. West exited with a low spade won by me with ♠J.

Where to now? prospects did not look good. First, ♥J to the 3, 2, and, thankfully the 4 rather than the queen. Now the ♣2, to the 5 J and Q. East exited with a low diamond to the stiff ♦K in dummy.

Prospects still did not look good. I exited dummy with the ♠T to West's Ace. I pitched the ♦4. West now chose to return the suit his partner had led, diamonds.

This meant I could now cash 4 diamond tricks pitching the remaining 4 hearts in dummy, including the AK!

West also pitched 2 hearts (discarding before me), so I now made the ♣K en-passant for my eighth trick.

So I can now boast about making a single heart trick from that holding, but not the Ace or King!



Teams of three
—Category A and overall winners

Margaret Kennedy
George Kozakos
Chris Sheen
Lisa Westwood

Beginners' Corner

Alison Farthing

The most difficult part of the game of bridge for the inexperienced player is undoubtedly defence. Too often I see new players cash their obvious tricks quickly, allowing a defeatable contract to come home.

Here are a few simple guidelines to help in defence.

1. **Always listen to the bidding.** It will tell you about the strength and shape of the opponents' hand. Use this information to guide you with your leads.

2. **When on lead there are simple rules to follow.** If you are consistent in following these rules then the card you lead will help your partner in the defence of the contract and will build partnership trust.

3. **Practise simple signals.** When partner leads an honour or the trick is won by an honour in dummy then play a high card to encourage continuation of a suit and low card to discourage.

4. **When defending a No Trump contract, do not cash out all your high cards but try to develop tricks in your long suit.**

5. **Do not play declarer's suit**

SOME GENERAL RULES OF LEADING in order of priority.

Against a suit contract.

Lead partner's bid suit unless you have a very good reason not to.

Top of a sequence of touching honours
4th highest to an honour

top of a doubleton

MUD (middle up down) from 3 small cards

It is unwise to underlead an ace.

Take your tricks quickly.

Against a no trump contract

Lead partner's bid suit

Top of touching honours

4th highest of your longest and strongest suit

Top of an interior sequence e.g. AJ1097
KJ109

When the opposition has bid 3 suits,
lead the unbid suit

When 4 suits have been bid by opponents,
lead the 2nd suit bid by dummy

Try establish tricks in your long suit



Teams of three

—Category B winners and third overall

Roger Curnow
Stephanie Luxton
Judy Netting
Carol Wilson

Fireworks in Poland

Lesley Gunson has passed on to us an extraordinary hand reported by Susanna Gross in *The Spectator*.

It occurred during the final of the Polish Teams Championships in the match between the two top teams of Martens and Vitas.

Dealer: West
Vul: NS

♠87
♥5
♦T62
♣AKQJ432

♠3
♥T872
♦AQ73
♣T975

♠KQJ9652
♥4
♦J854
♣8

♠AT4
♥AKQJ963
♦K9
♣6

At the first table, North opened a gambling 3NT, showing a long solid minor and no outside entry. East overcalled 4♠ and then South punted 7♣. He knew that North's suit

had to be clubs and, yes, the diamond Ace was missing but how would West know that this was the killing lead?

However, West doubled, showing he had the ♦A, so South shifted the pressure to East by bidding 7NT! So now how would East know what to lead. After some thought, East chose the ♠K ... +2220 to NS.

At the second table North also opened a gambling 3NT but East decided to skew the proceedings by a psyche of 4H!

South doubled and this was passed back to East who corrected to 4S. South then bid 6NT, which East doubled and all passed.

East, on lead, knew that declarer's suit was clubs and that West's double (a 'Lightner double') was asking him to lead one of the red suits but which one? Finally, he chose—oops—the ♥s.

But the story does not end there. Declarer believing that East held five hearts decided to make a doubled overtrick—and finessed the ♥9.

West won with the ♥10 and cashed his ♦A. One down!



Teams of three
—Category C winners and second overall

Nola Arnold
Anne Howell
Marilyn Miller
George Stockham