

BRIDGE IN THE CITY NEWSLETTER September 2024

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BRIDGE IN THE CITY GRADED PAIRS CONGRESS

10:00 AM SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 22ND

A & B SECTIONS,

MORNING & AFTERNOON TEA PROVIDED

BRING YOUR OWN LUNCHESES

ENTRY FEE \$50 PER PAIR

Improving your Chances

You have had a careful auction, making sure that you have to necessary high card points and key cards, and you have reached the contract of 6♥, you are declarer.

The ♦Queen is led, dummy comes down, and ugh! Both you and dummy have a 3-4-3-3 distribution. (I take a point off all 4-3-3-3 shapes, incidentally).

♠AKJ

♥QJ105

♦K32

♣876

♠Q54

♥AK93

♦A75

♣AKJ

The success of your contract seems to rely on the club finesse. Is there a better way? (Assume that trumps break 3-2). Answer the last page.

To Open or Not to Open? The Rule of 20

Marty Bergen, he of Bergen major suit raises fame, suggests players follow the Rule of 20, where you add your high card points to the length of each of your longest two suits. If after deducting a point for singleton Kings or Queens your answer is at least 20, then bid!

September is RED Masterpoint Month at Bridge in the City

There will be red masterpoints throughout September, with double red points on Friday September 27th, our State Wide Pairs session.

A Hand Best Forgotten

On a recent Friday, a player I am forbidden to name picked up the following hand

♠QJ9 ♥K72 ♦532 ♣AKQ5

She opened 1NT, everybody passed, a small diamond was led and dummy came down with

♠765 ♥J643 ♦1064 ♣J32

Hmm, not much of a dummy. Her right hand opponent won the diamond Queen and returned that suit.

The first three diamond tricks weren't a problem, the fourth and fifth were, so, hoping to eventually get all of her club tricks she discarded a heart and a spade.

Next her left hand opponent took four spade tricks, requiring two more discards.

She discarded a heart and a club, the heart Ace was cashed, felling her King, and the defence took four hearts tricks. 1NT down seven!

The full deal

♠765	
♥J643	
♦1064	
♣J32	
♠AK84	♠1032
♥A10	♥Q985
♦AKJ98	♦Q7
♣106	♣9874
♠QJ9	
♥K72	
♦532	
♣AKQ5	

Note: If she hadn't come down to a singleton her ♥King then the defenders could lead a club, forcing her to lead hearts from hand at the end, for five down, and the same matchpoints score – zero.

Have You Advised Us Of Your Emergency Contact Details?

If you tell the director the emergency phone contact details will be recorded and will be available in the clubrooms should there be an emergency.

Recent New Members

Kevin McEvoy has joined, Norma Merrett and Julie Thiele have re-joined. Please make them welcome.

MY GRAN by Jill Lawson

My Gran was a wonderful person and I loved her dearly. She was soft and round, cuddly and warm. She was all pink and white and could bake the best Anzacs in town. She lived up the street from us and I would often spend the night at her house. I'd wake up in the morning and invariably she would bring in a steaming bowl of porridge and a mug of warm Milo. You always left feeling very special.

But Gran was tough too. Originally she was off the land. There was drought and fire and loneliness. Once she had to drive twenty miles to the nearest hospital in the trap with my unconscious uncle after he had fallen off a horse. He was in a coma for ten days. She survived two world wars and a depression and still retained her sense of humour. She could decapitate a couple of fattened roosters - cleanly, in fifteen seconds, or roundly abuse a shonky butcher at sixty paces.

So you think I'd know better, wouldn't you, as the old ladies wander in for their weekly game of bridge. In they come with their fluffy cardigans and sensible shoes, their bags of lemons or nectarines they've picked off their trees to share with other members. They get their cups of tea and iced vovos and sit at your table. They "How are you, dear" and "Lovely weather we're having" at you and you smile indulgently at the sweet old dears.

The boards arrive and you pick up your cards. 1NT you say and the little thing on our left lifts her quivering hand and shakily no bids. Your partner confidently raises to 3NT. no bid from your right. It's settled then. No, not quite. From your left comes a double. And there's no quivering this time. The double is big and black and bad.

It's then with a terrible clarity that you remember the headless chooks flapping and floundering crazily around the back yard and the 6'2", 14 stone butcher scurrying towards the refuge of his freezer room. And you realise that the discomfort of Gran's victims is no less than the humiliation that is about to happen to you.

And so she leads out her seven top spades and she smiles her pink and white smile and has the gall to say "Bad luck, dear".

So you can speak with awe of your Chans, your Smolankos, your Klingers. Wonderful players all. But when it comes to cunning and sheer cold-bloodedness these women are on a par with Machiavelli and probably just to the right of Atilla the Hun. They're truly in a league of their own. Fellow bridge players, for pity's sake, ignore my warning at your peril. These women are killers.

At the end of the day they struggle out leaving havoc and smashed egos in their wake and, as I hold the door open for them, dear God, forgive me, but the overwhelming urge to nudge the odd walking stick with my foot is almost more than I can bear.

When Partner has Hesitated

It is no sin to hesitate while you decide what call to make. The problem is that your hesitation may, either knowingly or unknowingly, influence your partner's further actions, possibly giving your side an unfair advantage.

You can certainly hesitate all you like, however partner then loses all discretion. After a hesitation partner is required to make the obvious call, which may be a bid – the common view that partner has to then pass is incorrect.

Next step, when there has been a hesitation by you or your partner during your auction. You should tell your opponents that you are aware of it and, if necessary, the Director should be called at the end of play to determine whether any advantage has been gained. If called at the end of play the Director will then determine whether your pair has gained by the indiscretion and, if so, whether it is likely that partner's subsequent actions were influenced (some hesitations don't have an obvious meaning). If this is so then an adjusted score will be awarded.

If the hesitation isn't agreed to then the director should be called. He will rule that the auction and play should then proceed, and ask that he be called back if the opponents consider themselves damaged. If he feels that the hesitation affected the auction he will then determine whether the opponents have been damaged (it's often not the case). If so then an adjusted score may be imposed.

Recent Placegetters

BRIDGE IN THE CITY GNOT

- 1 Adel Abdelhamid/Sharmini Anderson/Ingrid Cooke/Anne Harris
- 2 Genevieve Donnelly/Jinny Fuss/Terry Healey/Jackie Ward
- 3 Joanne Bakas/Bill Bradshaw/Catherine Ellice-Flint/Helen Gray

MONDAY AUGUST PAIRS

- 1 Genevieve Donnelly & Terry Healey
- 2 Carmel & Norman Thompson
- 3 Chris Barnwell & Ingrid Payne

FRIDAY PURPLE AUGUST PAIRS

- 1 Jinny Fuss & Jackie Ward
- 2 Genevieve Donnelly & Terry Healey
- 3 Ingrid Payne & Julie Thiele

FRIDAY PINK AUGUST PAIRS

- 1 Pam Bowman & Lois Glanfield
- 2 Janet Hegarty & Janice Paltridge
- 3 Lynne Cotton & Cynthia Hickey

Dealmaster Pro

Dealmaster Pro, the software that we use to produce hand records and analysis was originally written by Edward C. Marzo, an American who was a top Cobol programmer in the 50's. After he retired he played a lot of Bridge with his wife, who, after being told yet again about how many tricks she should have taken, told him to "Go Write a Program to Prove it". And he did!

The original version was slow, more than in part due to the computers in use at that time. (Twenty years ago I once had a computer struggle with a part score hand for more than three hours). It's much quicker now, computers being much more able, while a Scandinavian computing nerd named Bo Haglund invented a way to accelerate the process, so a set of boards now takes at most thirty seconds.

Many people seem to trust implicitly in Dealmaster's analysis including, unfortunately, some directors I know.

Dealmaster is always correct when it claims that players can make a given number of tricks, since the program goes through all the alternatives to determine the optimum result – it's just that the manner of taking those tricks can be obscure. It drops all singleton Kings and doubleton Queens offside, i.e. it peeks! Have a look at the following suit combination.

K65

AJ9

The program has been known to lead the Jack from south, covered by the Queen, King, then finesse the ten on the way back.

I once had a hand where the program said that 5♣, with its ten card fit, could be defeated. The opening lead had to be the small club from my King doubleton to partner's Queen and declarer's Ace, then cash the trump King when I regained the lead.

The following hand occurred in a recent session.

♠J73	
♥A542	
♦765	
♣J104	
♠AK864	♠102
♥103	♥KQ87
♦K84	♦Q10
♣KQ5	♣98763
♠Q95	
♥J96	
♦AJ932	
♣A2	

At one table I saw South open a weak 1NT, doubled by West, down two tricks. No surprises there, however it seemed odd that Dealmaster said that East-West couldn't make 1NT either.

It seems that East-West have two diamond tricks, four spades, and a heart or a club trick – they get their seven tricks whilst N-S take three diamonds, a spade, and the Aces of clubs and hearts.

Closer inspection of the diamond spots reveals, however, that if North open leads a diamond against West's 1NT then declarer only gets one diamond trick, to eventually go one down.

How does East fail to make 1NT? South leads a heart to North's Ace, and then a diamond return. Hardly the normal choice of cards from the defenders, but very successful on this occasion.

So, the next time your partner (or indeed an opponent) says you could have taken a specific number of tricks according to Dealmaster, just remember this article.

How to play 6♥ - the Answer

♠AKJ	
♥QJ105	
♦K32	
♣876	
♠73	♠109862
♥84	♥762
♦QJ1075	♦98
♣Q1097	♣543
♠Q54	
♥AK93	
♦A64	
♣AKJ	

Win the opening diamond lead in hand, draw trumps in three rounds, take the ♣Ace, your three spade tricks, dummy's ♦King, then exit a diamond. West wins the trick and either leads a club around to your ♣KJ, or gives you a ruff and discard.

Need a Partner on Friday?

If you go to the website and complete the form an email will be sent to the regular players in your section advising of your availability.