

Novice News – February 2022 by Stephen Bennett

On Sunday 9th January QCBC held their **Graded Pairs Congress**, with a special Novice section. QCBC managed to take out 2 of the top 4 spots with pairs coming from as far afield as Caloundra to take part. Congratulations go to **Jennifer Finigan & Chris De Jong** who won and **Carol Findlay & Jenny Thompson** who finished 4th. Two other pairs who are worth special mention are **Lois Munro & Jane Bell** who were the most improved pair on the day and **Helen Klieve & Elizabeth Moran** who were the most Novice of all the Novices, well done.

Well done partner.

The most memorable board of the day was just before lunch. Louise and I were sitting North South playing against Greg Dobson & Linda Lee from Caloundra.

BOARD 32					
BD: 32		♠AK6		Dir: W	
		♥A975		Vul: E-W	
		♦9			
		♣KQJ43			
♠52				♠97	
♥K8643				♥JT2	
♦T852				♦J763	
♣62				♣T987	
		♠QJT843			
		♥Q			
		♦AKQ4			
		♣A5			
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	7	4	4	7	7
S	7	4	4	7	7
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

The bidding began pass by Greg, 1C by me, pass by Linda and 1S by Louise. Greg and Linda continued to pass throughout. I then bid 2H, which is a reverse, this describes my hand pretty well, 5 clubs, 4 hearts and 16+ HCPs. So, what would you bid as South? Careful, don't underbid here, a jump to 3S shows 10+ HCPs and 6+ spades. I have an easy 4S bid and now Louise has to decide whether to stop there or explore slam. This should be an easy answer, I have shown 16+HCPs and Louise has 18HCPs, so that is in the slam range. So, she bids 4NT, we play 1430 Roman Keycard (adds the K of trumps in) and I respond 5D, showing 3 keycards AK of spades and A of hearts. Louise knows we have all the

keycards and plenty of points so she bids 6S making 13 tricks. Well done partner. Louise informed me this was the first time she has bid and made a slam, what a nice board just before lunch.

Time for your Bridge New Year's Resolution.

Happy New Year to everyone, some of you made New Year's resolutions and I'm sure many have already been broken or forgotten. But don't feel bad because you can make a bridge resolution, which starts in February. Here are some ideas;

1. Be a good partner, remember you are a team. As our first teacher said "Be kind to your partner".
2. Spend time after each session going through the boards with partner.
3. When declarer - Plan out the play of the hand, including entries between hands, before playing a card.
4. Enter a competition, or enter one you have not played in before. Enter the Gold Coast Congress.
5. Play with some different partners. Try and find a regular partner or maybe play with some better players to improve your game.
6. Listen to the podcast, Sorry Partner. A weekly bridge podcast which is lots of fun. Sorry, Partner - [Sorry, Partner - Hosted by Catherine Harris, Jocelyn Startz \(acast.com\)](https://www.acast.com/sorry-partner/)
7. Watch Pete Hollands latest videos entitled Seeing through the cards, they are wonderful.

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=peter+hollands+seeing+through+the+cards&qpv=peter+hollands+seeing+through+the+cards&FORM=VDRE>

Bennett Bottoms.

I have been lucky enough to play with Richard Fox the last 2 Saturday's. When you play with Richard it is tough to get a bottom, but always up for a challenge, I managed a couple last week. Most bottoms come with a lesson to be learnt, and these both certainly did.

BOARD 3									
BD: 3		♠ AKQ86 ♥ KJ63 ♦ 5 ♣ QJ9				Dir: S Vul: EW			
♠ J95 ♥ A752 ♦ T43 ♣ 854		♠ T74 ♥ T8 ♦ Q9876 ♣ KT2							
		♠ 32 ♥ Q94 ♦ AKJ2 ♣ A763							
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT				
N	5	4	6	6	6			16	
S	5	3	6	6	6	5		5	
E	-	-	-	-	-			14	
W	-	-	-	-	-				

I was sitting South and Richard was North, east west passed throughout. I opened 1D, Richard bid 1S and I bid 1NT. Richard then bid 2C, with 5 clubs I thought clubs seemed better than spades and so passed. Richard, ever the diplomat, said "It says on your card you play New Minor Forcing". I puffed my chest out a little and said "Yes I do". "Well, that was New Minor Forcing" he replied. I looked at the bidding, the penny slowly dropped, sorry partner. New Minor Forcing is an artificial bid after openers 1NT rebid, it says nothing about clubs, it shows a hand with 11+HCPs and asks opener to describe their hand a bit more. If I had 3 spades, I would have bid spades, 2S (12-13HCPs) and 3S with 14 HCPs and with 4 hearts I would have shown that at the 2 or 3 level. But with none of that I would have bid 3NT. So, the lesson here is to make sure you regularly read through your system notes so that you really know the system you play, not just think you do.

BOARD 26									
BD: 26		♠ KQT64 ♥ QJ542 ♦ T86 ♣				Dir: E Vul: ALL			
♠ A9873 ♥ K ♦ A73 ♣ A865		♠ J2 ♥ T76 ♦ KQ54 ♣ KJ93							
		♠ 5 ♥ A983 ♦ J92 ♣ QT742							
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT				
N	-	-	2	-	-			8	
S	-	-	2	-	-	15		10	
E	3	2	-	1	1			7	
W	3	2	-	1	1				

East West crawled to 3NT having opened the bidding 1S. Richard doubled and I was on lead sitting South. A double of 3NT can mean lead dummies first bid suit, in this case spades. But instead, on autopilot, I lead the unbid major and played the 3 of hearts. This would have been fine, except they had a K singleton, which won a trick they should not have got. But we would have still got them off if I did not miscount the hand and think my clubs were winners, when in fact I should have put partner on lead who had real winners in spades and hearts. Sorry partner.

The lesson here is to think about what the bidding has told you before you lead. I should have known where the spades were from the bidding. West opened a spade but did not repeat them, so he has 5. East did not support spades so is capped at 2. He also bid 1 NT, so probably has 2. I have 1 spade and therefore partner has 5. Also, the only piece of information we know about the opponent's hands are they have 5 spades and partner doubled with this information. So, he either has tricks in spades or he has lots of tricks outside spades. Either way leading a spade cannot be bad. When you are on lead it is important to take a moment to think about what is going on, especially when partner has doubled!!!

Upcoming events

QCBC has gone above and beyond to put events on for Novices over the next month. Please make sure you take advantage of some or all of these events;

Wednesday 2nd February 10am to 12pm – New Help with Play with Ian Halford. I know this will be invaluable for those who attend.

Wednesday 2nd February 7pm to 10pm – Mentor Session. You always learn something from these evenings.

Tuesday 8th & 15th February 10am to 1pm – Novice Pairs event. A great warm up for Gold Coast.

Gold Coast Congress – 18th to 26th February. Probably the biggest and best Congress you will ever play in. There are events suitable for everyone, even very new players.