

## Novice News – April 2023 by Stephen Bennett

Whilst most of us were tucking into Easter eggs, two QCBC Novice pairs were battling it out at the **Brisbane Bridge Club Graded Pairs**.

**Sue & Peter Green** finished 13<sup>th</sup> and **Janet McKeough & Judy Hefferan** were 18<sup>th</sup> in the C section. Well done to both pairs.

Some of you may not know what the difference is between a Novice Pairs event and a Graded Pairs event, so let me explain. A Novice event can only be entered by pairs who both have under 100 MPs. A Graded event can be entered by anyone. When all the entries are in, the pairs are sorted by the total MPs the pair has. The pairs are divided into sections, in the Brisbane Bridge Club Graded Pairs case that was 3 sections with 20 pairs in each. So as a Novice you would normally be in the bottom section. It does mean you will play against players with over 100 MPs, but not by much. The top ranked pair in the C section had a total of 420 MPs. But don't be afraid to enter one of these events, you play against players with more MPs each time you play at QCBC.

### 5 Lessons I wish I learnt sooner

Pete Hollands has produced a fantastic video, in which he explains the 5 things he wished he knew earlier. They are;

1. Learning new conventions does not help you much.
2. It is OK to go down in contracts.
3. Review your hands.
4. Learn how to count.

You will notice that Pete in fact only has 4 lessons. Perhaps he is showing that he has not mastered the art of counting yet!!!!!!

Here is a link to the video, I recommend you watch it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v594EYBoWw8>

As luck would have it QCBC have just bought some books that will help you with most of these lessons.

### Lesson 1 - Learning new conventions does not help you much.

Pete goes on to explain that you are better off spending your time on declarer and defence play to begin with. Some books that I would recommend are;

#### **Planning the Play of a Bridge Hand by Seagram & Bird.**

I wish I had read this book earlier. It makes planning the play of a bridge hand achievable. It is an important habit to get into as soon as you can. Everyone should read this book.

## **Five Tips to Simplify Defence by Audrey Grant.**

A great little book for anyone who is struggling with defence. Audrey has the ability to make the complex seem easy.

## **Five Tips to Simplify Entries by Audrey Grant.**

There is nothing more frustrating than having winners that you cannot get to. This book may stop this happening to you. Another wonderful book by Audrey Grant.

## **Lesson 2 – It is OK to go down in contracts.**

This does not mean you should always just bid one more than your opponents, as I used to do!!!! What it does mean is understanding when to bid and when to pass.

## **Points Schmoints! by Marty Bergen.**

This book was written nearly 30 years ago, but it is still jam packed with great ideas that are still relevant today. It is a very easy read with short sections that introduce a new idea. After you have read this book you will be opening more often, pre-empting regularly and competing in the bidding more successfully.

## **Lesson 4 – Learn how to count.**

Pete goes through a few aspects of counting in his video. But it is such a daunting topic many Novice players put it in the too hard basket. However, there is a book to help you.

## **Counting at Bridge by Dianne Aves.**

Dianne steps you through 11 different aspects of counting at bridge. Each chapter introduces a topic, has points to remember and then some questions to see if you have understood it. This book will make your head hurt, but if you want to improve your counting at bridge, read this book.

## **5 Lessons I wish I learnt sooner**

The video by Pete Hollands got me thinking about what I wished I had learnt sooner. In no particular order here they are;

### **1. Think what your rebid is going to be when you open.**

This was a great piece of advice from **Richard Fox**. So, if you don't have a rebid you are comfortable making perhaps pass instead. It has stopped many embarrassing rebids.

### **2. Look at the vulnerability.**

As **Paul Gosney** mentioned in his lesson at QCBC, you should bid differently at the 4 vulnerability combinations. You may decide not to change your bidding. But it is very useful to know some of your opponents most certainly will.

### 3. When you are dummy have a rest.

This was some wonderful advice from **Tony Treloar**. There is nothing you can do to affect the outcome of the hand, so just relax and let your mind wander. It means you are fresher when you do need to use your brain.

### 4. Don't tell partner when they have made a mistake.

Louise reminds me on a regular basis that at our first bridge lesson **Robyn Clark** told us to be kind to your partner. It took me a while to realise that pointing out where partner was going wrong at the table was not being kind!!!!!!! Who would have known. So now I wait until we get home.....

### 5. If the opponents interfere, still play system on if you can.

Again, this idea came from **Tony Treloar**. It just means you don't have to learn a whole new system if they interfere, you just carry on regardless.

### Another Bennett's bottom.

Louise & I were playing against the crafty pair **Donna Krosch and Joan Jenkins**. Don't look at the hand yet, it's on the next page, as I want to set the scene. We were East, West. The bidding had gone as follows; /// 1NT / 3NT ///.

Louise was on lead. Her longest and strongest suit was clubs. She held – AJ953. So, playing 4<sup>th</sup> highest, she led the 5.

Dummy came down with S QJ4 H K2 D QJ10743 C 86.

Donna played the 6 from dummy and I played the 10, declarer playing the 7 from her hand. That was a surprise, winning a trick with the 10. So I play the 4 back, declarer plays the K which card would you play from Louise's hand? Remember she has AJ93 left in clubs. Note that Louise had no outside entries to her hand. All her HCPs were in clubs.

Which card did you decide to play?

Let's look at what we know and what we don't know. There are only 2 cards unaccounted for in clubs, the Q and the 2. We know that declarer has the Q. How? If partner had the Q they would have played it on the first trick. OK so who has the 2? If declarer has the 2, rising with the A is the right card to play. However, if partner has the 2 then playing low either J9 or 3 would be right. Is there any way to know who has the 2? The simple answer is no. But if declarer had the 2, would they have played it at trick one? I did say our opponents were crafty, so I don't think so.

Here is the full board. As you can see partner had the 2 and playing low was correct. We did not do that, and also did not take our ace on the first round spades were played. Donna made 1S, 3H, 5D and a club for a top. Very well played.

BOARD 26					
BD: 26		♠ K853		Dir: E	
		♥ AQ4		Vul: ALL	
		♦ K65			
		♣ KQ7			
♠ AT2				♠ 976	
♥ JT763				♥ 985	
♦ A9				♦ 82	
♣ T42				♣ AJ953	
		♠ QJ4			
		♥ K2			
		♦ QJT743			
		♣ 86			
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	1	4	1	4	1
S	1	4	1	4	1
E					
W					

Just another example of the challenges we face at the bridge table. No wonder most of the players have grey hair!!!!

## Upcoming Events

There are a number of exciting events coming up, so make sure you enter some or all of them.

**23<sup>rd</sup> April – Toowong April Novice Teams**

**25<sup>th</sup> April – ANZAC Day Teams at QCBC**

**7<sup>th</sup> May – QLD Novice Pairs at Sunnybank**

**29<sup>th</sup> (Evening) and 30<sup>th</sup> (Daytime) May – Australia Wide Novice Pairs**

And finally, some breaking news;

**29<sup>th</sup> July (Afternoon) – 0-50 MPs QBA Novice Teams of Three**

(entry forms available in June)

This wonderful event is being held at QCBC this year. If you have never played in an event, this is the best event to start with. You need to find 2 other players and then enter. You will be given a captain, an experienced bridge player, or you can ask one of the many excellent players at QCBC. Louise & I played in this event after we had been learning for 6 months, so get your team organised.

**If you have friends that want a good time, BEGINNERS LESSONS start**

**22 May - Monday 7pm & 24 May – Wednesday 10am**

**8 week course - \$80 (includes the book) - contact Christine ph: 0412 427 748**

## Promotions 31 March, 2023

O'Brien, Sue	Silver Grand
Mackay, Barbara	Silver Life
Gearing, Michael	Bronze National
Schmidt, Peter	Bronze National
Hall, Sally	Bronze National
Macdonald, Kate	State
Aring, Sandra	State
Carroll, Debbie	State
Bennett, Louise	State
Lee, Jacinta	State
De Borah, Anna	Regional
Sirigos, Eve	Regional
Ross, Zac	Bronze Local
Munro, Lois	Bronze Local
Wu, Alex	Bronze Local
Moran, Elizabeth	Local
Jensen, Christine	Club
Welsh, Anne	Graduate