

Novice News – June 2023 by Stephen Bennett

On the 27th and 28th May the ABF River City Gold Point Mixed Pairs was held at Toowong.

Included in this event was the Qld Novice Mixed Pairs Championship. There were 7 Novice Pairs who took part, 3 of which came from QCBC.

The eventual winners were **Kate Macdonald & Ben Leung**. Fantastic result, they even managed to come 51st out of the 86 pairs taking part in a very competitive field.



Novice: Kate Macdonald - Ben Leung

Special mention goes to **Christine Jensen & Simon Byrne**. Both were still going strong and enjoying themselves after 2 days of bridge, well done.

Australia Wide Novice Pairs

With over 1,300 pairs taking part from around Australia this is a wonderful event. QCBC had 35 pairs take part in one of the two sessions that were run. Special thanks to Toni for organising this.

QCBC had 6 pairs in the top 10% of the country, which is a wonderful achievement;

- 22 Mike Martin & Sandra Aring**
- 55 Kate Macdonald & Alex Wu**
- 70 Thais Morgan-Pertus & Peter Fredericks**
- 89 Peter & Sue Green**

109 Julie Navruk & Jenny Thompson

110 Stephen & Louise Bennett

Special mention to all of the pairs from supervised play who took part, well done.

Here are a couple of boards from the Australia wide Novice Pairs Competition. Both have interesting lessons.

Help suit game tries

	♠AKT843	
	♥AJ	
	♦T95	
	♣KJ	
♠92		♠QJ
♥764	♠S	♥KT83
♦Q8742	♦S	♦J3
♣Q65	♣S	♣AT932
	♠765	
	♥Q952	
	♦AK6	
	♣874	

What is help suit game tries I hear you ask. I will get to that shortly. With South as dealer the bidding starts as / / 1S / 2S / and now it is north to rebid. You have 16 HCPs and with 2 doubletons that makes 18 TPs, which is at the top of an invitational hand range (16-18). You are also a 6 loser hand, 1 in spades, hearts and clubs and 3 in diamonds. You also have KJ which could be worthless if the AQ is with East. So, I think it is a borderline decision whether you bid 3S or 4S.

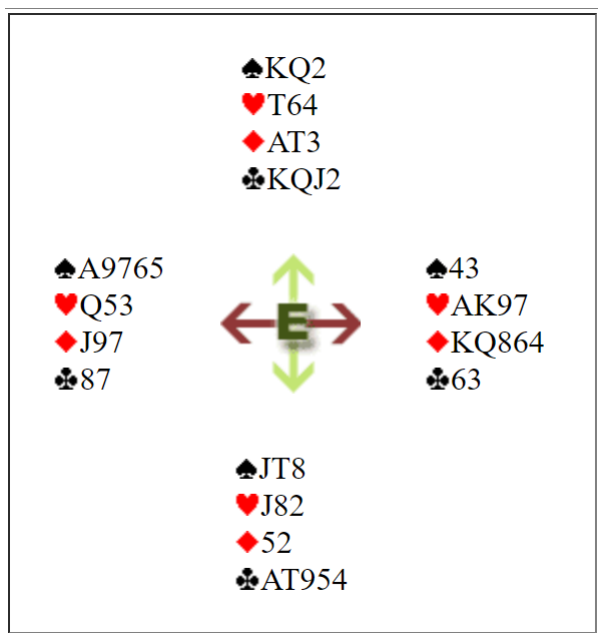
If only there was a way of finding out if partner can help with my 3 losers in diamonds. Hang on there is, it is "Help suit game tries". When do you use it? When you have agreed a major suit at the 2 level, as on this board, and opener wants to bid to game if partner has some help in another suit, on this board that is diamonds.

So north would now bid 3D. What this bid tells south is the following, I am an invitational hand, but if you have some help in diamonds we could go to game.

So, with no help in diamonds south bids 3S and with some help they bid 4S. Help can either be honour cards or shortage. In this case with AK in diamonds south would bid 4S, which is a good contract to be in.

Just under half the pairs bid this to game, so consider adding “Help suit game tries” to your bag of tricks. If you want to learn more about this convention it is included in the book **25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know by Barbara Seagram & Marc Smith.**

Don't play fantasy bridge!!!!



East opens 1D, pass from south and 1S from west. Sitting north what do you fancy? I think you have the choice of 2 bids, either 1NT or pass. 1NT shows you have a balanced hand with 15-17 HCPs and stoppers in diamonds and spades. Why would you not bid this? With east west having bid they are showing around 18+ HCPs, so partner probably has about 6 HCPs at most. East west will know where the points are and it could be a tricky contract to make.

As north I passed and east bid 1NT and that is where it ended.

South is on lead, what do you think? Diamonds and spades were bid so they are out. With a nice 5 card suit lead that, so clubs it is. So long as you don't block the suit, the defence should win the first 5 tricks.

On the 5th round of clubs north can give partner a signal. What are your thoughts? This is where I decided to play fantasy bridge. I could see we could take the contract off. If I played the 2S, partner would switch to a spade and we

would make 1 spade and AD. But, with AS with west I thought we could get them 2 off if I didn't play the 2S and instead discouraged in hearts. For this to work partner needed to switch to spades and west needed to jump up with their Ace. Yes, I was certainly guilty of playing fantasy bridge here. Partner saw my signal and did not lead a heart, but switched to diamonds instead. They could knock out my AD and cash their heart and diamond winners making the contract!!!!!!

Upon reflection I can now see that in the real world the 2S discard was the right move. Maybe one day I will stop playing fantasy bridge!!!!!!

Some great new books in the library.

QCBC is very generous, they keep buying new books for the library. Here are 2 that I absolutely love I think they are wonderful.

Improve your cardplay step by step – Playing Notrump Contracts

Improve your cardplay step by step – Playing Suit Contracts

Both written by **Robert Berthie & Norbert Lebel.**

Each book has about 50 examples of the fundamentals of cardplay. The examples get progressively more challenging. You are asked a series of questions that you need to consider before you can decide how to play the hand. I found the books very logical and straight forward to follow. At the end of each example, they give you the key principle to take away.

The second half of the book is a series of exercises, to see whether you have learnt anything. Again, they step you through the thought process you need to follow.

In the middle of the book is a list of the topics covered with the relevant examples and exercises shown.

Here is an extract from one of the books.

Remember the two approaches that you must take at the bridge table, depending on the circumstances:

Be an optimist if your contract looks to have little chance. "I need to find the cards in specific places or splitting favourably. So, I will play for that layout."

Become a pessimist if your contract seems cold. “What split, however unlikely, could result in my going down? Can I guard against that, without taking any extra risks? If yes, that’s the line I will take”.

I would recommend these books to all novice players.

And Finally

There is a scene in the Kingsman, a movie, where Colin Firth is in the pub and a group of thugs come in and behave in a rather poor way. He gets up, locks the door and says “Manners Maketh Man”. He proceeds to teach the thugs a lesson.

Bridge is also a game where manners matter. There is a very good article on the QCBC website. Please take a moment to read through it, I would be surprised if you did not learn a thing or two, I certainly did.

<http://www.qcbc.org.au/documents/BRIDGE%20ETIQUETTE%20and%20PROTOCOL.pdf>

And if you want to see the scene I am talking about, here it is.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTOM2YxFQ50>

Upcoming events and links

9th July – Redland Novice Pairs

[My ABF - Congress View](#)

23rd July – QCBC Graded Teams incorporating Novice Grade

[My ABF - Congress View](#)

This is QCBC’s first event on MyABF. If you need help to enter or join MyABF, contact Toni in the office.

29th July – QLD One session Teams of 3. Green Point 0-50 MPs

Email the convenor - michelle.radke.ebgb@gmail.com

The last 2 events are at QCBC. If you are fairly new to bridge or are thinking of playing in your first event, these would be perfect for you.

