

Novice News – May 2022 by Stephen Bennett

Last weekend the **QLD Novice Matchpoint Pairs** took place at Sunnybank. Congratulations to Martin Wu & **Wendy Cuthbert** on winning the event. **Mike & Kathleen Le Voi**, a new pair to the club, came 4th overall, well played. Phil Kay & **George Collings**, with a powerful final round, came 2nd in the B section and 9th overall. Special mention must go to **Lois Munro & Jane Bell** who nearly won the C section, 0.1% away from victory and 14th overall. Fantastic results by everyone, well done.

While most QCBC Novices were tucking into their Easter eggs, one pair were playing in the **BBC Graded Pairs & Teams** event on the 17th & 18th April. Well done **Judy Hefferan & Janet McKeough**.

On the 25th April QCBC put on a wonderful **ANZAC Day Teams** event. It was pleasing to see at least 6 teams with some or all QCBC Novice representation. Congratulations to everyone, you all did very well.

Have you ever bid and made a grand slam?

Louise and I have never managed to bid and make a grand slam!!!! It is such a rare occurrence there is a page with all the pairs who have achieved it at QCBC over the past year. So, I was very excited when Pete Hollands posted a video entitled “**How to Bid Grand Slam**” on Youtube. [Peter Hollands - YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTP_lflhcmw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTP_lflhcmw)

He talks about using hand visualisation to try and work out what cards partner has and using that to determine the number of tricks you can take.

Pete also talks about 4 conventions that he finds useful. They are;

1. **Keycard Blackwood** – This is an improved version of blackwood, which includes the K of trumps and allows you to find out about the Q of trumps too.
2. **Splinter bidding** – Allows you to show support for partner and a shortage in the bid suit. So 1H / 4D shows 4 card heart support and either 1 or 0 diamonds.
3. **Cue bidding** – Showing either 1st or 2nd round control in a suit. They are useful to make sure you have controls in all suits before you get too high and are committed to slam.
4. **5NT – Specific K ask**. This is only used when you are looking for Grand Slam and need partner to have a certain king.

Let's have a look at a couple of boards. The first one was from the **ANZAC Teams at QCBC**. Louise & I were sitting north, south playing against John Scrivens & Dennis Sullivan.

BOARD 14					
BD: 14		♠ J86		Dir: E	
		♥ AKQ74		Vul: Nil	
		♦ AK			
		♣ Q95			
♠ T973				♠ AKQ542	
♥ T865				♥ J92	
♦ QT92				♦ J8	
♣ 4				♣ J3	
		♠			
		♥ 3			
		♦ 76543			
		♣ AKT8762			
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	7	5	3	-	1
S	7	5	3	-	1
E	-	-	-	1	-
W	-	-	-	1	-
					19
				2	12
					7

The bidding began 1S by East. Now it is Louise to bid as South, what would you bid? I hope you would bid 3C. I think this describes your hand perfectly although some people may try and show the diamonds too by bidding 2NT, the 2 lowest unbid suits. Louise, being a great partner bid 3C. Now west bid 3S. This shows 4 card spade support and a fairly weak hand, less than 10 TPs. So now I get to bid, what would you bid? Let's just see what I know from the bidding. In spades I know partner probably has 1 spade, the opponents have shown 9 and I have 3. Partner has bid 3C, so has 7 clubs with probably the AK, as I have 3 to the Q, I can count 7 club winners, 2 diamonds and 3 hearts. Also, we should only lose 1 spade. Therefore, I bid 6C and when partner was void in spades, she was able to win all 13 tricks by trumping a diamond in dummy. So, on this board there were no conventions used it was all down to hand visualisation and counting how many certain tricks you could make.

The next board was at the **QLD Novice Matchpoint Pairs**. Louise & I were sitting East, West and our opponents did not bid on this board.

BOARD 7					
BD: 7	♠ 4				Dir: S
	♥ T986432				Vul: ALL
	♦ T5				
	♣ J54				
♠ 9				♠ AKQJ52	
♥ AQ5				♥	
♦ 7643				♦ AKJ82	
♣ KT732				♣ A8	
	♠ T8763				
	♥ KJ7				
	♦ Q9				
	♣ Q96				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N					1
S				9	22
E	6	7	1	6	6
W	6	7	1	6	6

After 3 passes, Louise opened the bidding 2C. She has a very powerful hand with only 2 losers. Suddenly I get excited and my slam radar goes off. After partner bids a big hand I like to look for winners in my hand. With the AH and KC as well as the QH I think my hand has 2 to 3 winners and should be enough for slam. To respond other than 2D I like to have 2 winners and a decent suit. I feel my clubs are not worth bidding so just go 2D. Partner shows her spades, 2S. Now I can show my clubs, 3C. Louise shows her 6 spades with 3S. I am thinking we probably have a misfit hand here and bid 3NT. But with an unbalanced hand, Louise decides to bid 4S. I decide to bid 4NT to see what she has. After she bids 5C, showing 4 keycards, we have all the keycards, so I bid 6S. A bad break in trumps stopped a Grand Slam in spades. But there was a Grand Slam in diamonds, and it was bid and made by **Jasmine Skeate & Paddy Taylor**, congratulations. Upon reflection perhaps instead of bidding 3NT, I should have shown my diamonds and bid 4D. Louise with control in all the suits could go straight to 5NT, asking for specific K's. After a 6C response, 7D is a reasonable bid. After the trumps behave, and so long as you remember not to finesse with 9 trumps, you can make 13 tricks. So here to get to the Grand Slam, you needed to use 1 of Pete's conventions – 5NT Specific king ask.

So just remember, Grand Slams are out there, you just need to use a bit of hand visualisation and have a few conventions in your kit bag to bid them. I hope to see lots of your names up on the Grand Slam results page, good luck. [Peter Hollands - YouTube](#)

QCBC Wonderful Person Award

This month it is not one person, but two. The winners are **Jim Love and Barbara Bright**. At the recent ANZAC Day Teams Jim was the caddy as well as making sure the Bridgemates behaved. Barbara filled in when a player could not make it at the last minute. But this is just

the tip of the iceberg when it comes to their contribution around the club. Jim looks after the Bridgemates most Tuesdays and Fridays and has been known to sacrifice his own game of bridge if an odd person comes in. Barbara in turn is prepared to play with said odd person. They are also a director's dream playing rather fast allowing pairs to catch up, if they have fallen behind. And they both have a lovely sense of humour which is why I look forward to playing at their table. Congratulations Jim and Barbara.



Upcoming Events

There are lots of exciting events on over the next month or so;

20th May – Less than 50 MPs Red Point – Chance to get some Red Points.

31st May – Australia Wide Novice Pairs – A chance to compare yourself with Novice Pairs from around Australia. You also get a booklet that goes through each hand and explains what you should have done. Excellent event, worth entering.

12th June – QCBC Novice Teams. Wonderful event, make sure you enter this one.

23rd July – QLD Teams of 3 0-50 MPs at QCBC. Get your team organised for this fantastic event. If you have never played in an event before this is a great first event. It is only as long as a normal session at the club and it is lots of fun.

And Finally.

Being a member of QCBC means you get to play against some of the best bridge players in the State, most of whom have been playing for a long time. They are often willing to share their wisdom with you. Here is one of the best pieces of advice I have received from the great **Tony Treloar. Playing bridge is tiring, make sure you rest when you can.** As dummy zone out, don't try and follow the play, you cannot influence the outcome. Save your energy for when you need it. It really does make a huge difference, give it a go.

