

Novice News – October 2021 by Stephen Bennett

Last Sunday, **Northern Suburbs hosted the QLD Teams of 3**, which is one of my favourite events each year.

You have a chance to play with 3 wonderful bridge players, if you pick your team carefully, and get some great bridge tips from your captain.

QCBC won the B section with **Tony Treloar, Debbie Carroll, Louise & Stephen Bennett**. Also, special mention to another QCBC team of **Claire Hyne, Jane Bell, John Harkin & Gwynne Harris** who finished 4th having begun the day seeded 11th, very well done.

On Sunday 19th September **Sanctuary Cove held their Graded Pairs event online**, using StepBridge. **Sean Quinn & Thais Morgan-Pertus** were the only QCBC pair in the Novice section and finished in the middle of the pack.

On Sunday 12th September **Kenmore held their Graded Novice Pairs event**. Although QCBC did not win any of the top prizes, **Graeme King & Jacinta Lee** won the most improved pair prize. Considering that was the first time they played together, it was a particularly impressive performance.

QCBC held their **Spring Pairs Red Point** event over 2 Fridays in September. And the overall winners were a Novice pairing of **Louise Purdie & Fenna Cooper**, well who would have thought!!!! Congratulations ladies.

Bridge judgement & experience.

Most bridge players play by a similar set of rules, open 1NT with 15-17 HCPs, opening 1 of a major, promises at least 5 cards in that suit and so on. So, if that is the case, why do some hands have such a wide variety of contracts bid? Assuming you haven't made a mistake, it all comes down to bridge judgement & experience.

Here is a board that I played in the Kenmore Pairs event. I was playing with Chris Green sitting North South, against Peter & Linda Neil sitting East West. West has an interesting hand, what would you bid? With 10HCPs and 10 cards in your 2 longest suits you do satisfy the rule of 20. However, if you use your judgement a bit, that bare KH could be worthless. So, after some thought West opened 3D. North and East both passed and South in the balancing seat had a tricky decision. What would you do?

BOARD 8					
BD: 8	♠ 754			Dir: W	
	♥ 96			Vul: Nil	
	♦ AQ54				
	♣ Q986				
♠ 32				♠ AT986	
♥ K				♥ QJ53	
♦ KT98762				♦ J3	
♣ A43				♣ K2	
	♠ KQJ				
	♥ AT8742				
	♦				
	♣ JT75				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	1	-	1	-	-
S	1	-	1	-	-
E	-	3	-	1	-
W	-	3	-	1	-
					8
				10	11
					11

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FREQUENCIES FOR BOARD 8			
Contract	Result	Score	Frequency
3♥ by NS	=	140	1
4♦X by EW	-1	100	1
5♦X by EW	-1	100	1
3♠ by EW	-1	50	1
3♥ by NS	-1	-50	1
3♦ by EW	=	-110	1
4♥X by NS	-2	-300	1
3♦X by EW	=	-470	1

I think there are 2 options here, either bid your suit, 3H, or double and see what partner has. When experts were presented with this hand they often said, in my earlier days I would have doubled, but experience has taught me it is best to bid my suit. Well as Novices we are in our earlier days and so partner doubled. It now passed round to North. What would you do in this situation? With AQ sitting over their diamonds, I considered bidding 3NT. But I ended up passing. They needed to make 4 tricks outside diamonds, which I hoped they could not do. An expert said to leave the double in you should have 3 tricks to pass. Unfortunately, the expert was right, they made their contract and we got a bottom. Chalk that one down to experience.

As you can see each table ended up with a different result and there were 7 different contracts bid on this board.

Last Sunday, the final board we played, is worth having a look at. I was playing with Debbie Carroll sitting East West. Team Halford were sitting North South and passed throughout. As East what do you bid? If you said 3D, please read Joan Butts article in the latest Novice Magazine entitled “What’s my hand worth?”

BOARD 21					
BD: 21		♠ Q832		Dir: N	
		♥ 962		Vul: NS	
		♦ A92			
		♣ Q85			
♠ AK7				♠	
♥ AKT8				♥ J7	
♦ QT				♦ KJ87643	
♣ AT42				♣ KJ93	
		♠ JT9654			
		♥ Q543			
		♦ 5			
		♣ 76			
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	5	6	5	1	6
W	5	6	5	1	6

					8
		20			9
					3

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FREQUENCIES FOR BOARD 21			
Contract	Result	Score	Frequency
3NT by EW	-2	100	2
2♥ by EW	+1	-140	1
3NT by EW	=	-400	1
3NT by EW	+2	-460	1
5NT by EW	+1	-490	1
3NT by EW	+3	-490	3
6♦ by EW	=	-920	3

With 9 HCPs and 11 cards in your 2 longest suits, you should open 1D. You only have 1HCP outside your long suits, so no need to downgrade this hand. What should West bid? With 20 HCPs opposite an opening hand, you should be thinking of slam, but no need to rush. Debbie wisely bid 1H, and I repeated my diamonds, 2D. Debbie, safe in the knowledge that I had 6 diamonds, bid 4NT. Using Roman Keycard 1430, I responded 5C, showing the KD. That was enough for Debbie and she put us in an easy 6D contract. As I have said before, bidding and making a slam contract is a wonderful feeling, thanks partner.

So why did only 3 of the 12 tables find slam? Perhaps East misjudged the hand and bid 3D instead of 1D. But even then, if West really thinks hard, they should bid 6NT. If East has AKJ in diamonds, you make 12 tricks, 2S, 2H, 7D, 1C. If East is

missing the A or K D, they must have some more points outside diamonds. They should act as an entry to East's hand as well as give you the 12th trick.

In the heat of battle, it is often hard to make the right judgement call. But with experience, we will get it right more often than not, at least that's what I'm hoping!!!!

Coming Events

9th-10th October QBA Festival of Bridge @ QCBC Teams Event

10th – 11th October QBA Festival of Bridge @ QCBC Pairs Event

There is not a separate Novice section, but there is a prize for the best Novice Team / Pair.

17th October BBC Novice Matchpoint Pairs

And if you want an excuse to visit the Sunshine Coast;

20th October Noosa Novice Matchpoint Swiss Pairs

31st October Caloundra Graded Pairs

And finally in the December Novice News I will go through some of my favourite bridge books. If you have a favourite, please let me know at stephenbennett007@icloud.com and explain why you love it so much.