

ABF NEWSLETTER



AUSTRALIAN BRIDGE FEDERATION INC.

EDITOR: Stephen Lester

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National Open Teams, 2008

The 2008 South West Pacific and National Open Teams Championships seemed to attract fewer overseas players than past years. As always, there were plenty of New Zealand visitors, but no Indonesians, no Italians and only a few players from the UK and the USA.

The winners this year, *GREEN*, did include two world-class Poles in Adam Zmudzinski - Cezary Balicki, in partnership with Murray Green - Andrew Peake and Helen Horwitz - Peter Gill. Murray and Andrew have had many fine results in the last year or so, and Peter Gill has been on winning NOT teams in the past.



GREEN: Andrew Peake, Murray Green, Helen Horwitz, Adam Zmudzinski, Cezary Balicki, Peter Gill

In the Final, our team of Ian Robinson (captain) - Arjuna de Livera, Ian Thomson - Richard Brightling and Jo Haffer - Justin Williams conceded defeat after 48 of the scheduled 64 board final - with the scores at 44 to 148 IMPs.



ROBINSON: Ian Robinson, Justin Williams, Joachim Haffer, Ian Thomson, Richard Brightling, Arjuna de Livera

Compared with the earlier stages, there were only a few interesting boards in the Final, and they have been well reported elsewhere. Suffice to say that the team with a 100-point lead made few, if any, mistakes.

Accordingly I have chosen a couple of deals from the weekend quarter- and semi-finals.

The following deal from our quarter final match against *HUNG*, a team composed of talented youth players, provided some gripping moments for the large vugraph audience on *BridgeBase*:

Board 19, South deals, EW vulnerable

♠ Q	
♥ Q 8 3	
♦ A Q 10 9 2	
♣ A 10 9 6	
♠ K 10 9 7 3	♠ A J 8 6 5 4 2
♥ A 10 9 6	♥ 5
♦ J 3	♦ 8 7 6 5
♣ 3 2	♣ 4
	♠ ---
	♥ K J 7 4 2
	♦ K 4
	♣ K Q J 8 7 5

Justin Williams made the first good decision for our team by opening the South hand 1♣, and the bidding proceeded:

West	North	East	South
<i>Whibley</i>	<i>Haffer</i>	<i>Griffiths</i>	<i>Williams</i>
			1♣
1♠	2♦	2♠	3♥
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♥
Pass	4NT	5♠	6♣
All Pass			

Justin followed through with a voluntary three-level reverse and Jo Haffer set clubs as trumps in a game-forcing auction. 4NT was RKCB for clubs and now East came back to life with 5♠. Surely if East is going to compete to the five-level then he should do much more at his first opportunity, but perhaps he did not want to give the opponents too much momentum by preempting wildly.

After Justin rebid his hearts, Jo gave a great deal of thought to his decision to pass 6♣ and not convert to the doomed 6♥. As it was, had he supported hearts in the auction, West might well have found the winning defence against 6♣ of ace and another heart.

In the Open Room, Hung opened 1♥ and West had no reason to overcall. North forced to game with 2♦ and when South rebid 2♥, North raised to game for a 10 IMP swing to *ROBINSON*.

This hand came up in our semi-final match against *ROSENDORFF*:

♠ K 9 8 7 3	
♥ 10 5	
♦ K Q 6 4 2	
♣ Q	
♠ A J 10 2	♠ Q 6 5 4
♥ Q J 9 7 6	♥ 4 2
♦ ---	♦ A J 8
♣ K 8 5 2	♣ A J 10 9
♠ ---	
♥ A K 8 3	
♦ 10 9 7 5 3	
♣ 7 6 4 3	

West	North	East	South
<i>Mullamphy</i>	<i>Brightling</i>	<i>Klinger</i>	<i>Thomson</i>
1♥	2♥ ¹	Dbl	4♣
Pass	4♦	Dbl	All Pass

1. Michaels Cuebid.

The second double was penalty. The Closed Room auction was similar, with North also using a Michaels Cuebid:

West	North	East	South
<i>de Livera</i>	<i>Haughie</i>	<i>Robinson</i>	<i>Lilley</i>
1♥	2♥ ¹	Dbl	Pass
Pass	2♠	3NT	4♣
Dbl	4♦	Dbl	All Pass

On trump leads, North can be held to eight tricks for a 300 penalty, but both Easts led hearts and declarer was able to lead trumps once and then cross-ruff, eventually scoring dummy's last trump *en passant*. At the score-up +510 was no swing, with two disappointed NS pairs and two very relieved EW pairs.

The ageing Rydges Hotel, with its central location, intimate bar and advantage of rooms just a lift ride from the playing area, remains popular with interstate players and international visitors. Once again, the seeding committee had to move several teams to the other venue. However, with free parking for 150 cars, lots of space within the venue for score-up and numerous coffee shops and restaurants, The Hellenic Club at Woden is a near-perfect venue. So popular was this venue with Canberra-based teams that many matches at this venue looked like just another teams match at the local club.

Richard Brightling, Canberra

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ABF Masterpoint Centre

January 2008 was the beginning of a new era for the ABF Masterpoint Centre. After being run for many years from the home of John and Ruth Hansen in WA, the Centre will soon be housed at the offices of Migration Path, Victoria. This relocation is the culmination of an extensive upgrade to the server facilities which will run the Centre into the future.

The ABF Management Committee is confident that the easier to use Windows-based scoring and online masterpointing capabilities of the new software will prove attractive to clubs and their directors.

It is not the intention to insist that all clubs move over to the new software immediately. The roll-out will initially be staged at intervals, in order to provide training and support to clubs in states with a smaller number of affiliated clubs. As these states and clubs grow confident with the new package, other key clubs will be encouraged to come on board.

Masterpoint secretaries should continue to send their files through to the Centre at: abfmpc@abfmpc.com. The postal address and telephone contact details will not change until April 1, 2008.

After this date a "hotline" for queries will be established with an administrator at the Centre available to respond. Additionally a message service will be in place.

The ABF MC look forward to this new era and encourage all state and club administrators to direct any queries or concerns during the teething phase of this project to:

Dianne Marler, ABF Masterpoint Centre Project Coordinator.

Email: councillor1@abf.com.au Tel: 0414 689 620

Aussies in Shanghai - Part 2

We conclude David Stern's report on the Australian Open Team's Bermuda Bowl performance.

All four matches were won by the teams in the top four as they asserted their credentials. In our match against USA1, the scores were:

	Australia		USA1		
Datum	Datum	C/Fwd		16	
GP	-0.68	NJ	0.70	13	13
GL	-1.98	NJ	-2.21	13	73
GP	-0.08	NJ	-1.83	10	40
GL	0.60	GP	1.62	49	25
GP	-0.63	NJ	1.13	27	23
GL	1.02	NJ	-1.99	12	26
			124	216	

While the 92 IMP deficit is large, the second set loss of 60 IMPs proved defining in the result. The bridge in this set was not pretty. Here are some excerpts:

Bd	Australia Open				Australia Closed				IMPs
22	3NT	W	=	-600	3C	E	=	-110	-10
23	5D	E	=	-600	5Dx	E	-1	200	-13
26	4Dx	E	-1	200	6C	N	1	1390	-15
30	4H	W	1	-450	5Dx	S	-2	-100	-8
31	4S	W	2	-480	6S	W	-1	50	-11
32	4S	W	=	-620	3S	W	=	-140	-10

So there we have a view from the engine room of the 2007 Open Team competing at the Bermuda Bowl.

One of the things I like to do, call it self-flagellation, is to map out basic statistical analysis of the performance of the team. Some of these statistics may be meaningless to you, the reader, but they are all issues relative to captaining a team.



Standing: Richard Jedrychowski, Murray Green, Andrew Peake, David Stern

Scores Against Opponents By Finishing Order

Rank		Vs Aus
1	Italy	13
2	USA 1	5
3	Netherlands	15
4	Norway	21
5	Australia	N/A
6	Sweden	11
7	China SMEG	13
8	South Africa	24
9	Brazil	24
10	Japan	9
11	USA 2	22
12	Poland	10
13	Indonesia	21
14	Egypt	9
15	Argentina	24
16	Chinese Taipei	20
17	Ireland	20
18	Pakistan	13
19	India	21
20	New Zealand	11
21	Canada	21
22	Trinidad and Tobago	15

- ◆ We averaged 15 VPs against the top seven teams
- ◆ We averaged 17 VPs against the middle seven teams
- ◆ We averaged 17 VPs against the bottom seven teams

I regard the result against the top teams as outstanding, the middle teams as slightly above expectations and the bottom teams as slightly below expectations. That said, there are no 'easybeats' at the World Championships and even against the bottom teams you have to 'earn' your wins.

Board IMPs

Board Number	Total IMPs	Average IMPs per 4 boards
1	-12	
2	53	
3	25	
4	10	19
5	-22	
6	-3	
7	2	
8	12	-2.75
9	19	
10	16	
11	-7	
12	4	8
13	5	
14	2	
15	28	
16	-19	4

All boards always played in number order

What this does is suggest whether the team loses concentration as the match moves on. There is a clear indication here that the team performed well at the beginning of the match relative to the rest.

Morning / Afternoon / Evening

Board	Morning	Early Afternoon	Late Afternoon
1	-2	0	-10
2	19	18	16
3	-15	22	18
4	16	-7	1
5	1	-14	-9
6	8	-4	-7
7	2	33	-33
8	11	16	-15
9	4	5	10
10	27	-11	0
11	-13	1	5
12	-4	24	-16
13	-4	-10	19
14	8	-1	-5
15	17	17	-6
16	5	-9	-15
TOTAL	80	80	-47

This clearly shows that the team performed substantially worse in the 17:10 - 19:30 match, possibly suggesting late afternoon fatigue may have been an issue.

To look further into this, let's look at who we played in terms of where they finished:

Qual Finish	Country	Qual Finish	Country	Qual Finish	Country
18	Pakistan	3	Netherlands	2	USA 1
17	Ireland	11	USA 2	8	South Africa
21	Canada	19	India	12	Poland
7	China	20	New Zealand	13	Indonesia
4	SMEG Norway	6	Sweden	10	Japan
9	Brazil	15	Argentina	14	Egypt
1	Italy	16	Chinese Taipei	22	Trinidad and Tobago
11	Average	13	Average	12	Average

So it seems the team had some problems with playing the third match of the day. Perhaps an analysis by players would be useful, but I am all numbered out at this point.

Partnerships

- ◆ Datum: Neill/Jedi 8th best pair, averaging 0.32 IMPs per board
- ◆ Datum: Gumby/Lazer 13th best pair averaging 0.28 IMPs per board
- ◆ Datum: Green/Peake 33rd best pair averaging 0.00 IMPs per board

To put this in perspective to get the 16-14 each match you need to qualify for the quarterfinals if each pair

averages just 0.15 IMPs per board you should average enough to get there.

In terms of datums versus opponents:

Place	Country	NJ	GL	GP
1	Italy	-0.64	-0.09	-
2	USA 1	-0.82	-	-1.96
3	Netherlands	0.49	-0.46	-
4	Norway	0.78	0.86	-
6	Sweden	-0.60	-0.32	-
7	China SMEG	-	-0.65	0.01
8	South Africa	1.46	-	0.94
9	Brazil	-	1.14	1.99
10	Japan	-0.06	-	-1.61
11	USA 2	-	0.87	1.05
12	Poland	-	-0.23	-0.67
13	Indonesia	1.68	-0.26	-
14	Egypt	-	-0.93	-0.31
15	Argentina	-	2.27	0.15
16	Chinese Taipei	1.40	-	-0.04
17	Ireland	1.55	-0.23	-
18	Pakistan	-	-0.10	-0.61
19	India	-0.53	2.08	-
20	New Zealand	0.24	-	-1.23
21	Canada	0.18	-	1.54
22	Trinidad and Tobago	-0.61	-	0.74
Average Overall		0.32	0.28	-0.00
Average Top 7 Teams		0.11	-0.13	-0.34
Average Middle 7 Teams		0.81	0.48	0.10
Average Bottom 7 Teams		0.37	0.58	0.08

Do all these statistics mean anything? Truthfully, at the event, they do provide a guide, but until you have all of the statistics lined up, which is usually after the tournament is over, it is hard to be reactive to what they are telling you. Certainly, they would be useful if one were to captain this team again.

Performance

So why did this team outperform so many other, perhaps more fancied teams which Australia has sent away to the World Championships? I am very clear in my mind on this subject.

1. This team left Australia with more practice than any other team I have captained. They participated in as many tournaments as they could enter, did online partnership bidding practice, had three online matches against CAYNE (USA), three online matches against the Indonesian teams - something which served them very well in the tournament.
2. Three of the partnerships can boast longevity, something which I believe is critical to success at this level. All too often at the top level in Australian bridge, there is a game of partnership

Grand National Pairs Championships

Here's your chance to grab Gold Masterpoints!

Most players already know that the ABF has inaugurated a brand new pairs tournament, the Grand National Pairs Championship of Australia (GNP). The GNP will be played as match-pointed pairs and is open to all players who have not achieved Life Master status as at 1 January, 2008.

The tournament will have three stages.

1. Early rounds (Club Selection) will be played in clubs.
2. Successful pairs from the Club Selection stage will be eligible to compete in a Regional Final.
3. Successful pairs from Regional Finals will qualify for the National Final.

The National Final of GNP 2008 will be played in Canberra in January 2009, as part of the Summer Festival of Bridge. Pairs who qualify for the National Final will receive a travel subsidy from the ABF. The subsidy will be sufficient to meet the cost of travel from home to Canberra and return.

Gold Masterpoints, on an extended scale, will be awarded at all stages of the GNP as follows:

- Club Selection: 75% down the field
- Regional Final: 100% down the field
- National Final: 100% down the field

Full details about the GNP can be found on the ABF website www.abf.com.au. Click on Grand National Pairs on the banner page, then on GNP update.

If your club has not already scheduled a GNP Club Selection for 2008, you should approach your President and Club Tournament Secretary and ask them to arrange it. GNP Club Selections may be special events or may be integrated into existing events. Therefore, it is a very simple matter for your club to stage a GNP Club Selection.

If you and your partner wish to compete in the 2008 GNP but your club cannot hold a Club Selection, please contact one of the national organisers (listed below) and we will do our very best to make alternative arrangements for you.

So, we urge you to be part of this exciting new event. Some clubs have already staged selections, with Gold Masterpoints awarded to the top 75% of the fields.

John Brockwell: jbrockwell@grapevine.net.au

Di Marler: dianne.marler@santos.com

Jane Rasmussen: secretariat@netspeed.com.au

GNP National Organisers

musical chairs. As my friend Richard Grenside would say when asked if a partnership would be allowed to have a substitute – “they can have the finest player in the world and I won’t have an issue” – nothing substitutes for partnership understanding.

3. The members of this team have known each other for a very long time. They elected to play together in the qualifying playoffs, and it seemed to me that there was a lot of mutual bridge respect – something which is essential to play in events like this.
4. During the entire tournament there was no, repeat no, intra-partnership or inter-partnership discussions other than very occasional mild discussions of what happened on a board or how partnership agreements should treat a particular situation. It was awesome to watch how well this worked.
5. The team maintained total focus throughout the event. They went to bed early, met at breakfast and found an excellent balance between socialising with each other and maintaining some quiet times when needed.
6. Any bridge abilities that may have been lacking versus the finest players in the world were more than amply made up by a positive and appropriate attitude to partner, team, captain and the task at hand.

So, perhaps after reading this article you might like to be more sympathetic to the multitude of bridge, personal and other issues that the captain has to deal with to optimise the results of the team.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the team for the privilege of allowing me to captain them and tell them how proud I was of their well earned result at what proved to be an exciting event.

David Stern, Sydney



The closest I may ever get to the Bermuda Bowl (with Boye Brogeland, 2007 Norwegian Team).

Marketing bridge to young adults

Having spent most of my working life in management positions in the fields of marketing/promotion/publicity/corporate relations/public affairs, and a good part of the last four years trying to learn to play bridge, I found in the latter half of 2007 that I had eased into the position of Publicity Officer for South Perth Bridge Club (it's a great club – please visit us!).

I have read, with considerable interest, articles by Australian and American authors advocating the need to market bridge more effectively, and in particular the need to attract a greater proportion of younger players. This is a matter that should obviously be high on the priority list of clubs wishing to ensure their long-term sustainability, and it has become my primary (but not sole) objective. Unfortunately, I can find few articles describing actual experiences of bridge marketing activities. This article outlines one such experience.

In Perth there is a flourishing youth bridge program conducted by Jonathan and Thelma Free. Associated with that program is a group committed to fund-raising for youth development, with patron Les Calcraft among the very generous donors. In my efforts to attract new young players to SPBC, I had no wish to compete against those highly regarded activities.

It seemed to me that our local universities were well worth exploring as a source of future players. Students generally range in age from 18-19 upwards, so the large majority are in the young adult category. Many of us know people who (many years ago) played bridge regularly when they were uni students, and I guess there are today groups of players on many campuses.

The Web produced information that The ANU, The UNSW and The University of Sydney have active bridge clubs. These appeared to be the only three universities with such clubs in Australia. (This could be an inaccurate conclusion, as my only research was to Google *Bridge Club + University + Australia!*).

I therefore decided initially to approach Curtin University of Technology, which is located about two kilometres from South Perth Bridge Club, and also happens to have been my place of employment for 28 years. The first step was to make it known that many high status universities have well-established bridge clubs and to suggest that it would be worthwhile investigating whether we could generate interest in playing bridge on campus. I cited the clubs at Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Stanford and other institutions of similar prestige in the USA, at Oxford, Cambridge, Durham, York & Edinburgh in the UK, McGill in Canada and the University of Hong Kong. Many of these clubs have their own websites.

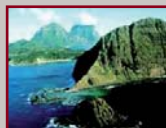
As a consequence of my action at Curtin, I was invited also to undertake an evaluation of the potential for bridge on the campus of Murdoch University, similarly well within the area from which SPBC members are drawn (a number of our members live in a retirement village physically located on the Murdoch University campus). There are two other universities in Perth and one in Fremantle, but these are well out of range of SPBC. Although I recall from The UWA News some time ago, a suggestion that the defunct UWA Bridge Club should be revived, there is no evidence on the Web that this occurred, or that either other university has a bridge club.

It was agreed that the most logical strategy was for me to attend Orientation Day at both our local institutions. On "O-Day," the first semester intake of new students attend a part-day of activities, where a large number of exhibitors, including on-campus clubs and

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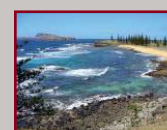
**Tangalooma
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**Salamander Shores
(near Nelson Bay)**
November 2 - 7



**Norfolk Island
(Book early!)**
November 16 - 23



Workshops in 2008

- ◆ Brisbane at Toowong Bridge Club, April 15 and Northern Suburbs Bridge Club, April 17
- ◆ NZ at Wellington, May 10-12 and Auckland, May 17-18
- ◆ Sydney at Grand Slam BC Double Bay, July 22-23
- ◆ Melbourne at Peninsula Country Club, September 15-17, and Borin Bridge Centre, September 19

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societies, have stalls from which students can obtain information about a wide range of extra-curricular recreational and other activities. If we succeeded in generating some interest, then we would look at how SPBC could perhaps give some support to bridge activity at each institution, including, eventually, the possible formation of a campus bridge club.

Having agreed to participate on both days, I needed to develop some appropriate promotional materials

My only previous experience in promoting bridge was at a state government sponsored “Seniors’ Activities Day” last spring, at a stall organised by BAWA’s Promotions Officer Di Brooks, where I was one of a group of helpers. I wrote a small pamphlet promoting SPBC for that event, but found that it lacked some relevant information. For the campus, we needed an improved version and, to complement it, a pamphlet explaining in some detail how bridge is played so that prospective players could see its challenges and its fascination.

The pamphlet: “*Learn to play the most challenging game of all – bridge*” promotes the attractions of bridge as recreation in a very general sense. In the absence of anything meeting my requirements I wrote a second pamphlet: “*The fascinating game of bridge*”; although this was written for the university student population it is also applicable in a broader market. I have copyrighted this, as it took me weeks to produce, but should any other club have a use for it, it is available, provided that conditions stated on the pamphlet are met.

Further requirements for the Orientation Days were a display stand, and holders for the pamphlets. To dress the stand I produced a series of laminated A4 posters that I hoped would capture the attention of passing student traffic. These posters carried a series of quotations extolling the attractions of the game (Google “famous bridge quotations”) from people including Mike Lawrence, Martina Navratilova and Warren Buffet.

The materials for making the stand, the signs, acrylic pamphlet holders, photocopying pamphlets and miscellaneous costs came to less than \$500. All will be usable for the future in other promotional activities.

The number of new students attending the Murdoch orientation was estimated at 1500; ours was one of 130 stalls. At Curtin the estimated attendance was 3000; ours was one of 164 stalls. The total student populations, which we will eventually be trying to promote to, are in excess of 10,000 and 30,000 respectively.

At Murdoch, I had conversations with 17 young adults whose responses suggested a reasonable prospect that these individuals will enrol in our club’s bridge classes. This number might seem to be quite small, but starting from a zero base I felt it was encouraging.

At Curtin, the number of potentially productive interviews was 39, similarly encouraging.

The quotations on the display stand were not at all effective as ‘attention getters’. What did work was the club banner, together with the question to those who paused when they saw that I represented a bridge club “*Would you like to learn to play the greatest game of all?*” I also found that the students were particularly intrigued when I told them it has taken me nearly as much input of time to become, at best, a moderately competitive tournament bridge player as it did to complete a B.Sc. This seemed to define clearly that they were being invited to take on a worthwhile challenge, something with appeal in that environment. I will scrap the quotations signs and replace them on the stand with two large signs, one printed with the question “*Would you like to learn...*” and the other with “*BRIDGE, a true sport of the mind...*” This is of course the opening statement from “*Bridge and the Olympic Movement*” <http://www.worldbridge.org/IOC/IOC.htm>, which was of considerable interest and a ‘must have’ document when publicising our game. I also use a copy of the page http://www.olympic.org/uk/sports/index_uk.asp where there is another useful reference to bridge.

One of the promotional pamphlets carries information about the beginners classes conducted at South Perth. To enhance the recruitment process we are discussing the possibility of developing a program of beginners’ classes as part of the on-campus recreational activities at these institutions.

These are clearly very early days in this project; however, even with my cynical attitude to initial market exploration of this type (born of experience!) I have some confidence that we might be able to develop our two local tertiary institutions as a future source of young tournament bridge players (and club members!). I will report later on any progress, but in the meantime encourage other clubs who have not previously considered this type of activity on their nearby campuses.

I would be glad to do whatever I can to assist anybody with questions related to our experience so far, and hope others with practical experience in promoting our game will share their experiences. My email address is krisjohn@iprimus.com.au

I have put the text for the two pamphlets on the web at <http://home.iprimus.com.au/krisjohn/>

I produce both pamphlets as A4 double column (in landscape format) using 11 pt. Times New Roman text. They are then photocopied as a one page, backed, document folded to A5.

*John Hughes,
Perth*

Computers and bridge

Quite a few years ago I wrote a series of articles with this same title for *Australian Bridge* magazine. I believe the year was 1996, but I could be wrong. It is time to revisit one of them.

Many of you play bridge online, or have a computer program that you can play bridge against such as *Jack*, *Bridge Baron*, *Q-Plus* or *Wbridge5* (the four semi-finalists of the recent Computer Bridge World Championships). The big question is “*Will a computer ever be able to beat a world class group of players over a large number of hands?*” The answer in 1996 was no, the answer now is maybe, perhaps the answer in another 11 years will be yes, but I am not sure this is the case. Some of this is due to imagination, some of it to human tendency, but whatever it is, we will have an edge over computer bridge for some time yet.

The reason for revisiting this subject is something that happened recently; it will now be impossible to beat a computer at draughts or checkers. The game has been solved. There is now a perfect way to play the game, regardless of whether you have the black or white pieces - you can always guarantee a draw. It is the latest in a series of games that you should never play against a computer. This story actually goes back to 1962 when IBM sponsored Albert Samuels' project to try and beat “*English Draughts*” (*English Draughts* is played on an 8x8 board whereas International or Polish Checkers is played on a 10x10 board). Many thought the game was solved back then, but the computer played against an *alleged* champion, not a true one. When the computer played against the finalists of the true world championship of draughts in 1966, it lost 4-0 to both players.

Many people thought the game had been solved then, and it was almost forgotten about in the computer world. In 1997 the *Guinness Book of World Records* recognised the “*Chinook*” (University of Alberta, Canada) program as the first computer to win a human championship. However, it was not until last year that the Chinook program was finished, and in July 2007, it was announced that “checkers” had been solved. It is the most complex ever game to be solved, having 500,000,000,000,000,000,000 combinations or 5×10^{20} . This took many years to achieve and is one of the biggest things to happen in computers and artificial intelligence. The previous biggest ‘solve’ was *Connect-4* (draughts is about 1 million times more complex than Connect-4). The one they are all now after is chess. While the IBM and Microsoft corporations have thrown a lot of money at this ask, it will take some years to solve chess, despite this quote from Gary Kasparov:

“*In certain kinds of positions, the computer sees so deeply that it plays like God*” (after losing his first of six chess games to IBM's *Deep Blue*).

You may now be asking what this has to do with bridge.

Bridge is a beautiful game in many ways, but it differs from the other games I have mentioned earlier. The previously mentioned games are ‘complete information systems’, i.e. everyone can see what is happening. Bridge is a ‘partial information system’; you can never see more than half the pieces (cards), and this is where the beauty lies.

In our modern world the computer is getting more powerful everyday. Tasks done by computers today were thought impossible 10 years ago. No doubt it will be the same again in 10 years time. Will a computer be able to beat bridge? There are a possible 53,644,737,765,488,792,839,237,440,000 bridge hands, (or 53 octillion or 5.3×10^{28} [the last few zeros are due to computer rounding of numbers]). This is surely within the computer's realm. The crux of the argument comes down to the fact that the computer cannot see all of the pieces at once.

The imagination of the human mind is a powerful thing. Some may think that a computer can outdo us in this regard by sheer power and the number of calculations it can do per second. The computer may be able to find the double dummy lines you may see recorded as optimal play on a hand record, but how does that explain the anomalies?

Our game of bridge cannot be overtaken by the computer. Can the computer look at a player and see which one is nervous holding the queen of trumps?

Sean Bentley, SA

2009 Maccabiah Games

In January we invited parties interested in representing Australia in the 2009 Maccabiah Games to contact Henry Benjamin. The event will now take place in Jerusalem between July 13 and 23, 2009.



The team will be chosen by three independent selectors, none of whom will be participating in the event.

Although not yet confirmed, there may be a women's event, and parties interested in competing in this should also make application at this time.

For further information contact the Team Manager, Henry Benjamin

Tel: 0418 444 321

Email: henrybenj@mac.com

2008 McCutcheon Trophy Leaders

	Total	Gold	Red	Green	2008
1 GOSNEY PAUL	1435.38	768.38	621.57	45.43	38.13
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3 NUNN TONY	4249.78	2823.85	1354.83	71.1	32.86
4 GRIFFITHS NYE	1062.56	689.37	326.39	46.8	28.76
5 WILLIAMS JUSTIN	2175.32	732.98	1147.45	294.89	27.41
6 KROCHMALIK DANIEL	780.46	516.53	239.49	24.44	27.34
7 WARE GRIFF	1387.26	984.79	368.27	34.2	27.34
8 WILKINSON MICHAEL	1163.57	614.89	511.95	36.73	26.28
9 HUNG ANDY	496.09	331.46	154.11	10.52	23.15
10 GREEN MURRAY	3022.67	1646.21	1253.14	123.32	22.59
11 EDGTTON NABIL	610.16	372.1	219.43	18.63	21.01
12 HOLLANDS PETER	283.73	205.9	75.54	2.29	20.84
13 HOWARD JUSTIN	630.52	435.64	176.75	18.13	19.94
14 HUNT BILL	5605.91	1022.98	4110.73	472.2	19.64
15 OSMUND DANNY	880.03	167.81	485.7	226.52	19.06
16 PARKER RALPH	3695.23	769.02	2577.07	349.14	19
17 MORCOMBE ANDREW	232.25	169.75	34.63	27.87	16.87
18 RICHMAN BOB	9278.24	5557.7	3505.21	215.33	16.69
19 PEAKE ANDREW	3774.68	2027.41	1578.78	168.49	16.25
20 LACHMAN ROSA	1541.04	458.84	942.98	139.22	16.19
21 DYKE KIERAN	5117.6	3127.96	1729.11	260.53	16.1
22 EBERY JAMIE	3340.48	1508.99	1717.84	113.65	15.82
23 BROAD JILL	1307.92	303.2	847.09	157.63	15.15
24 RITTER CATHERINE	787.3	357.01	400.72	29.57	15.08
25 DAWSON JANE	797.36	304.36	377.37	115.63	14.51
26 HANS SARTAJ	2434.59	1638.45	782.61	13.53	14.42
27 FRANCIS NEVILLE	3972.28	1133.78	2277.11	561.39	14.35
28 GILL PETER	6281.28	3474.21	2642.48	164.59	14.09
29 MORAWIECKI ROMAN	1197.16	204.47	667.27	325.42	14.08
30 HALE PHIL	519.97	110.9	279.82	129.25	13.92
31 WOOD JAMES	454.46	93.97	204.91	155.58	13.92
32 CHAN HOI-MINE	45.47	27.72	17.24	0.51	13.55
33 MATHESON LEIGH	30.35	20.81	6.88	2.66	13.55
34 RODWELL NICHOLAS	348.97	178.89	144.47	25.61	13.36
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39 SAXBY ELSPETH	1129.72	98.69	454.98	576.05	12.58
40 KAMALARASA S	706.61	234.67	443.44	28.5	12.32
41 MOORE NIKOLAS	83.76	50.03	21.19	12.54	12.31
42 VARMO JAN	349.41	135.07	149.61	64.73	12.17
43 WILSON BARRY	233.5	30.36	96.44	106.7	12.02
44 AFFLICK IAN	1440.93	547.36	786.54	107.03	11.92
45 MOSES LARRY	1518.29	443.92	825.08	249.29	11.91
46 WARDLE MARTIN	117.53	84.59	25.61	7.33	11.87
47 KINGHAM BEN	191.14	97.4	78.26	15.48	11.75
48 DALLEY KEN	135.29	80.11	17.73	37.45	11.72
49 SFREDDO EDI	794.7	25.45	200.02	569.23	11.71
50 DAVIS DERRICK	1446.15	398.96	886.24	160.95	11.6

WA promotes better future for bridge

The Bridge Association of WA has taken up a Promotions Project to “Foster Bridge in WA.” Currently on board, there are car bumper stickers, bridge posters and fliers as well as a publication “Getting the Best Out of Promotions” by Di Brooks. The latter is full of good ideas to help with club promotions.

Recent projects have been quite successful. A radio interview, followed up with announcements on the local radio stations, as well as in the community newspapers, saw an influx of 22 students into Nedlands Bridge Club’s beginners’ classes.

Another WA club, Rockingham Bridge Club Inc., held it’s Annual “Open Day” on February 16. This was promoted through letterbox drops, as well as two weeks of half-page advertisements. The project attracted over 30 enquiries, with 26 people venturing into the realm of contract bridge. On that morning, a sumptuous morning tea was the ‘icing’ on the cake. Comments received were all very positive - an enjoyable experience, good food, and a friendly atmosphere was the feedback.



At Rockingham Bridge Club’s Open Day, the club members encouraged the new players

Congratulations to the people behind the scenes, as well as the club members, who turned up on the day to ‘buddy’ up with the prospective students.

The Club President, Janice Hawker, would like to thank everyone who worked so hard to make the day such a terrific success. Well done, everyone.

Di Brooks, WA

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DOUBLE THE DIFFERENCE

Revered Uncle,

I was playing with a 'pick-up' the other day and the bidding went:

<i>Me</i>	<i>Oppo1</i>	<i>Pick-up</i>	<i>Oppo2</i>
1♥	Dbl	2NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♥	All Pass

Well, my partner had 10 points and support for hearts. My hand was minimum, and he suggested that I should have just bid 3♥. Why didn't he just bid 3♥ and I would have passed?

Luv, Cathy

Dear Cathy,

A conventional 2NT response after a takeout double is pretty much standard fare, given that redouble is available with good hands and no fit. The object is to let partner know that responder has a value raise to at least three of partner's suit. It can be used over any natural suit opening at the one-level with a double from the opponents.

The general attitude to the opponents' takeout doubles is that your strong hands are covered pretty much by 2NT (fit) and redouble (no fit). In addition, suits at the one-level should be one-round forces and suits at the two-level, non-forcing. Direct raises to the three-level can be used more destructively, just showing a 9+ card fit and not necessarily any great strength.

Hence, if partner opens 1♠ and right hand opponent doubles, you could bid 2♦ on:

♠ J 3 ♥ 9 4 3 ♦ K J 10 9 7 5 ♣ Q 3

and 3♠ on:

♠ J 7 5 3 ♥ 9 4 3 ♦ K Q 10 7 ♣ 9 3

Both bids are designed to give partner the best information and make life difficult for the opponents, who may have the balance of strength. On stronger hands, such as:

♠ Q 3 ♥ K J 10 3 ♦ K J 9 5 ♣ 10 6 4

you can redouble to suggest that the opponents may have some difficulty finding a suitable contract.

With:

♠ Q 9 6 3 ♥ K J 5 ♦ K J 9 5 ♣ 10 6

you can bid 2NT to show a good raise to at least 3♠. As with all things systemic, good structure caters for a maximum number of possibilities and creates a position where the methods are reasonably easy to learn.

Warmest regards, David

A Bridge Too Far?

A first year as a pro

By Tom Hanlon with Enda Murphy (Acumen Press, 2007, soft cover, 305 pages, \$34.95 postfree)

Tom Hanlon, generally recognised as Ireland's best player, tells a story with many sub-plots and a great many deals. On almost every page there are one or two hands that ask the reader to pass or bid, to bid or double, or to finesse or play for the drop.

You will meet most of the world's top players, not always at their best. On one deal, Zia decides to bid 6NT with singleton king in the opponent's suit, on the basis that the suit will not be led because he is advertising king doubleton. Alas, opponents take the first seven tricks.

On this deal Tom's partner in crime, Hugh McGann, found a devilish bid in the 2006 European Championships:

North deals, EW vulnerable

♠ A ♥ 8 6 5 ♦ K Q J 4 ♣ 10 8 7 6 3	♠ K J 4 2 ♥ Q J 9 7 ♦ A 9 6 3 ♣ 5
♠ 10 7 5 3 ♥ K 10 3 2 ♦ 10 8 5 2 ♣ 9	♠ Q 9 8 6 ♥ A 4 ♦ 7 ♣ A K Q J 4 2

West	North	East	South
	<i>McGann</i>		<i>Hanlon</i>
	1♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	3♣	Pass	4♥
Pass	4♠	Pass	6♣
All Pass			

South's 4♥ was systemically a splinter, reducing the attraction of leading a heart. West led ♦A, so the contract made easily. I wholeheartedly recommend this book, firstly as an engrossing read, and secondly as a look at how bridge is played at or near the top.

*Reviews by Paul Lavings
Postfree Bridge Books*

STOP PRESS!

Congratulations to *MARSTON*, Tom Hanlon - Hugh McGann, Kate McCallum - Paul Marston, who took out the Final of the Gold Coast Teams against a visiting Chinese team by 138 - 115 IMPs.

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Lynne Errington

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George Skarbek, Ken Tenner

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John Brotchie

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Bill Haughie, John Lester, Gabi Lorentz

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Sally Clarke

Continued on page 16



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Bridge into the 21st Century

SUPPORT DOUBLES AND REDOUBLES

Support Doubles and Redoubles (SDs) were invented by US expert Eric Rodwell, and differentiate between whether opener has three-card or four-card support for responder's suit in competitive auctions.



You open 1♣ holding ♠A7, ♥Q106, ♦J104, ♣AQ862, and the bidding proceeds:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♣	Pass	1♥	1♠
?			

Playing SDs, double shows three-card support, and 2♥ shows four-card support.

As responder, what would you bid here:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♣	Pass	1♥	1♠
Dbl	2♠	?	

1. ♠873, ♥A986, ♦KQ862, ♣2
2. ♠873, ♥A986, ♦K2, ♣QJ76
3. ♠62, ♥J10964, ♦K103, ♣A109
4. ♠QJ2, ♥Q9872, ♦QJ3, ♣J2

1. 3♦. You only have a seven-card heart fit, so 3♥ is out of the question. Opener has two spades (at most), and only three hearts. Since opener holds at least eight cards in the minors it is well worth taking the chance you have a diamond fit.

2. 3♣. Using the same logic as in Question 1, opener must have at least four clubs, and very likely five. When you bid 3♣ opponents must decide whether to pass you out or soldier on to 3♠. At pairs, doubling 3♠ is very appealing.

3. 3♥. Even with only a 5-3 fit the odds are to bid 3♥ with your nicely made-up hand, rather than let the opponents try for eight tricks in 2♠.

4. Pass. You have an eight-card fit, but you are missing too many aces and kings to imagine 3♥ will make, plus you have good defensive prospects against 2♠.

Copy Deadline

for Issue No 131, May 2008, the deadline is:

April 28, 2008

Late submissions will be held over until Issue 132,
June 2008 at the discretion of the Editor

Email: editor@abf.com.au

SDs apply up to an overcall of 2♥. All these doubles and redoubles are SDs, and show three-card support:

1.	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♣	Pass	1♠	2♥
	Dbl			
2.	1♣	Pass	1♥	Dbl
	Rdbl			
3.	1♦	Pass	1♥	2♣
	Dbl			
4.	1♠	Pass	2♣	2♥
	Dbl			
5.	1♣	Pass	1♦	2♥
	Dbl			

Sometimes opener has two messages to send, making SDs invaluable.

What should West bid in the following sequence:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♣	Pass	1♥	1♠
?			

1. ♠AQ3, ♥A98, ♦KQ8, ♣A872
2. ♠1093, ♥A98, ♦8, ♣AKJ863
3. ♠63, ♥AK8, ♦K8, ♣AKQ872

1. Double. And later freely bid 2NT (or 3NT if necessary), showing 18-19 balanced. If you jump to 2NT immediately you deny three card support for responder's suit.

2. Double. And later compete with 3♣.

3. Double, and later cuebid spades (opponents' suit) asking for a stopper for 3NT.

When the overcall is 2♠ or higher, your partnership must decide whether double is takeout or penalties:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	Pass	2♦	3♠
Dbl			

My preference is to play this double as takeout, almost surely three-card support:

♠32, ♥AK986, ♦Q86, ♣KQ5.

Playing SDs responder should re-open with a double if at all possible:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	Pass	1♠	2♣
Pass	Pass	?	

Holding ♠A10653, ♥86, ♦KQ86, ♣52, be sure to re-open with a takeout double. Opener may hold ♠2, ♥AK732, ♦A32, ♣KQ106, and can only penalise the opponents if responder re-opens with a takeout double (by passing).

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Book Review

Three Notrump in Depth

Augie Boehm, HNB Publishing

The author is a New York bridge teacher, and this is his third book. The target audience is said to be the intermediate player looking to gain a greater understanding of everyone's favourite contract.

The first part is presented as a dialogue between the student, Sally, and "the Professor". They discuss issues such as how to investigate 3NT, whether to pass or pull to a suit, and bidding beyond 3NT. Right from page one the reader is offered new insights into notrump bidding. What would you open with

♠ K ♥ A Q 8 3 ♦ K J 7 2 ♣ A K 7 2

One option is to open 2NT – it virtually guarantees that you will be the declarer and keep your hand hidden. The singleton honour may well be a stopper.

Not many pages further on the Professor shows the following auction :

1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♦ ?			

What does 3♦ mean? Clearly it is an attempt to get to 3NT, but does it ask or does it tell about a stopper? In this case there are two unbid suits, so 3♦ TELLS. With only one unbid suit, bidding that suit would ASK for a stopper.

The book contains many good ideas and memory aids presented in a clear and simple fashion.

In Part Two the student has gone home to do her mid-term exam (the problems at the end of Part One), leaving the Professor to discuss aspects of play in 3NT. "Think of playing 3NT as a race to establish long suit tricks before the defence can establish theirs", he says. All in all this is an excellent book, well worth a read, even by less experienced players, for its clarity.

John Hardy

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<http://users.bigpond.net.au/FinesseBridgeClub/> gayeallen@optusnet.com.au Ph: 9596 1423 or 0410 127 326

What Should I Bid?

The best submission for January came from Jenny Lee of Geelong, Victoria.

North deals, all vulnerable

♠ 8 7	♠ 5
♥ ---	♥ A Q J 5 3
♦ A K Q 6 4 3	♦ J 10 9
♣ A Q 10 6 5	♣ K J 4 2

West	North	East	South
	2♥	Pass	Pass
3♦	Pass	5♦	All Pass

Comments: Our basic system is Standard. 6♦ was cold. If West had doubled 2♥ I would have left it in.. How should we have bid the two hands?

Sartaj's Reply:

Hi Jenny,

Your raise to 5♦ seems reasonable. You could splinter by bidding 4♠, but there is an element of ambiguity in a jump like that at this high level, and a danger of partnership misunderstanding.

However, West doesn't seem to have done enough justice to the hand. On the given auction, a raise to 6♦ seems indicated as ♠A and ♣K are enough to make 6♦

and East could easily have more for a jump raise. There is also scope for a "system" fix. My regular partner Tony Nunn and I play that after oppos' 2♥:

3♥ = stopper ask

4♣/4♦ = that suit and spades, 5/5 like Michaels

4♥ = both minors and a high card rich hand

4NT = both minors, but just a distributional hand

On this hand, with our methods, the West hand can bid 4♥, and East has a comfortable 6♣ bid over that.

Enjoy bridging, Sartaj Hans

Ed: And a reader's Letter to the Editor for Sartaj's attention:

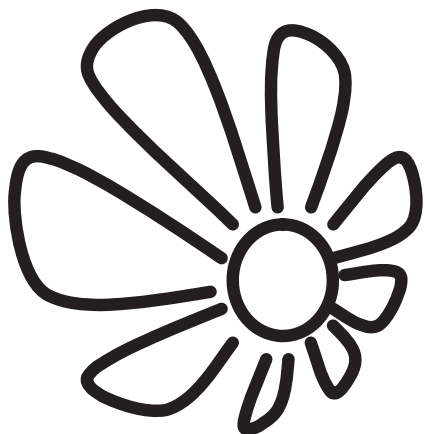
In the January 2008 Newsletter, Sartaj, in answering a question, offers an interesting aside. He says that Stephen Burgess used to advocate "...opening at the four-level on all hands with a seven-card major and four cards in another suit." He goes on to say that "...in the modern age" this wouldn't be a popular choice.

May I ask why Sartaj believes that time has blunted this bidding technique?



Ian Flannery, SA

Ed: One or both of us will try to address this question in the next issue.



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Youth bridge awards

The annual Helman Klinger Award of \$400 was donated by Rabbi Helman of the USA for the under 26-year old whose ability, achievements, sportsmanship, attitude, contribution and commitment during the calendar year was most deserving, as determined by a panel.



Paul Gosney

The 2007 winner is Paul Gosney. In 2007, Paul's achievements were as good as any youth player in recent years. He competed very successfully in the Australian Open Team, he won the Swan River Swiss Pairs National Championship in Perth and the Interstate Youth Teams, he was second in the GNOT Finals, and made the Australian Youth Team, from which he had to withdraw in order to play in the Open Team simultaneously.

In addition, Paul made the Finals of the NOT, and was second in the National Youth Teams as well as second in the National Mixed Teams. He came sixth in the McCutcheon Trophy for most masterpoints in Australia in 2007.

Aged only 22, Paul came second in the datums of all pairs from 12 countries at the 2007 PABF Open Teams in Bandung, helping lift Australia from eighth in 2006 to second in 2007 in that event.

Afterwards, favourable comments were made about Paul's bridge by a top Japanese expert and by legendary Taiwanese superstar Patrick Huang.

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Paul's ability is shown by his many achievements, of which only the most recent are listed in this article.

His attitude and sportsmanship is serious, well-behaved, calm and courteous, typical of youngsters of Queensland origin.

He visited Michael de Livera in hospital for rehabilitating bridge games following Michael's tragic stroke.

He met and hosted the Queensland visitors at the Youth Triathlon, and filled in as the partner of less inexperienced players at the same event. He is fully committed to the game of bridge.

The Masterpoint section of The Helman Klinger Award (\$200) for most masterpoints by an Under 26 year old in 2007, was won by 15-year old Nabil Edgtton, narrowly ahead of 18-year old Justin Howard.

Several past winners were ineligible. Nabil is the youngest ever winner of the Award. He is also Australia's youngest ever Life Master, and our youngest ever international representative.

The 2007 Hills Hurley Trophy, an annual trophy donated by Richard Hills and Steve Hurley, is intended to encourage talented young bridge players to form long-standing, well-organised partnerships and thus harness their full potential.

In past years, it has been awarded to partnerships who have reached the top by developing a strong partnership, such as the Edgtton brothers in 2006.

The 2007 winners are rising stars Shane Harrison and Sam Schulz from Adelaide. David Lusk remarks that they show partnership maturity well beyond their 16 years, and that they are also impeccably well-behaved and composed at the table. Sam and Shane are a good example that partnership takes precedence over profile and reputation. They use the Partnership Bidding feature of BBO, practising bidding hands.

And their results? Their debut at big-time bridge outside of Adelaide was at the Fremantle ANC, where they impressed with good datums and by pulling off several surprise wins over more experienced opponents, playing in the Colts Team. Having done well to qualify for the GNOT Finals at year's end, their good progress continued at Banora Point against top Open players, coming 19th in the Swiss Teams then placing 16th out of 100 pairs in the GNOT Pairs.

Sam and Shane, having played locally in Adelaide for two years before 2007, have in the last 12 months shown that a proper bridge partnership has a big advantage over talented individuals who do not harness their ability fully in tandem with another talented player.

ABF News

DONATIONS TO THE ABF LIBRARY

The ABF thanks John Wignall (NZ) and David Stern for their recent donations of books to the Keith McNeil Library. Their contribution will be listed in the Donors Roll.

The Library welcomes donations of bridge-related material: books, magazines, newsletters and ephemera (e.g. ANC programs).

The Keith McNeil Library is located at ABF Headquarters in Fyshwick, ACT. For information or enquiries relating to the Library, contact Tim Bourke at librarian@abf.com.au

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Congresses and ABF Events

April 9-13

Seniors' Playoff, Sydney

April 13

Maitland Open Teams Congress

Email: chan2423@bigpond.net.au

April 13

Restricted Pairs Congress, Illawarra Bridge Assn. Inc.

Email: iba@speedlink.com.au

May 1 - 5

Autumn Nationals, Adelaide

May 2 - 4

Bathurst and District Bridge Club Congress

Email: Diane Kajons bbclub@bigpond.com

May 17-18

Western Seniors Pairs

June 5 - 9

VCC, Melbourne

June 7 - 9

Barrier Reef Congress, Townsville

June 14 - 15

Annual Congress, Illawarra Bridge Assn. Inc.

Email: iba@speedlink.com.au

June 28-29

Geelong Bridge Club Congress

Email: suerob@ncable.net.au

July 12 - 13

Gold Coast BC Swiss Teams

Email: gcbc@winshop.com.au

July 25 - August 8

ANC and Butler Pairs

Surfers Paradise

August 23 - 24

Swan River Swiss Pairs, Floreat

("The Coffs Coast Bridge Supercongress") from

19 - 24 August 2008. email chbridge@midcoast.com.au

August 27 - 30

Territory Gold Bridge Festival, Alice Springs

August 31

Swiss Pairs Congress, Illawarra Bridge Assn. Inc.

Email: iba@speedlink.com.au

September 26 - 29

Hans Rosendorff Memorial Congress, Perth

October 2 - 5

Roger Penny Senior Swiss Pairs and Australian Swiss Pairs, Hobart

October 4-5

Gold Coast BC Butler Pairs & Swiss Teams

Email: gcbc@winshop.com.au

October 22 - 30

Spring Nationals, Sydney

November 22 - 23

Golden West Swiss Pairs, Mandurah



AUTUMN NATIONAL WOMENS & SENIORS SWISS PAIRS & AUTUMN NATIONAL OPEN TEAMS

CHANGE OF DATES

In deference to all the mothers in Australia, this very popular event has been brought forward a week. The new dates are:-

Senior & Women's Swiss Pairs: 1st and 2nd May 2008
Open Teams: 2nd to 5th May 2008

Entry forms are now available at: <http://www.abf.com.au/events/anot/index.html>

Additional info available from Di Marler: (08) 8116 7282 (W) or 0414 689 620

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