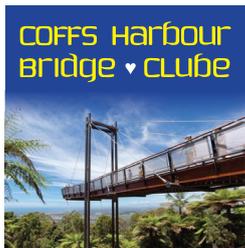


# Coffs Harbour Bridge Club Swiss Teams

14 – 15 MAY (SAT – SUN)



## Welcoming weather

Coffs turned on superb weather for our May Swiss Teams Congress held on the weekend of 14th – 15th May. There were 28 teams from all over NSW and the Gold Coast. The winners were from Sydney and Newcastle and there was a tie for the 1st place in the Intermediate Section. For all results and hand records, please visit Coffs Harbour Bridge Club website here.

## Our winners this year were



*Winners of the Open Section: David Weston, Julian Foster, Sharon & Greg Mayo with the Coffs Harbour Bridge Club President, Phil Mason.*



*The Plate winners – Helen Ditchfield and Helen Loveday with director Nick Hughes.*



*3rd in the Open Section: Wallace Ashton, Sartaj Hans, David Wiltshire, Helena Dawson and Sophie Ashton.*



*Winners of the Restricted Section: Deborah Carmichael, Kath Hilder, Frank Sommerton & Susanne Hollis (names may not correlate to the order of in the image)*



*Equal 1st Intermediate Section: Team Herring (Colin Tolley, Mike Siford, Chris Birch, Barbara Herring) and Team Griffiths (Robyn Griffiths, Margaret Dunlop, Nancy de Ville & Cameron Kirton.*

## The winning journey

*by Julian Foster*

I normally limit my weekend congress travel to about 4 hours drive from Sydney. However I have regularly made an exception for the “other” Coffs Harbour congress – not the big Gold point event in August but a smaller teams event held in the club rooms. It’s a lovely spot and one I have always enjoyed despite the 6 hour travel time. As usual, there was no shortage of interesting hands, including several grand slams!

Here are a few bidding problems if you want to consider them before reading on.

1. ♠K1085 ♥AK42 ♦A83 ♣86

No-one vulnerable. LHO dealer. P-1♠-4♦ to you? If you X it continues P-4♥-P?

2. ♠AJ763 ♥A4 ♦K42 ♣AQ8.

Both vulnerable. LHO dealer. 1NT-P-4♥ to you. 1NT is 14-16 and 4♥ is to play.

3. ♠A107643 ♥Q ♦AJ74 ♣A3.

No-one vulnerable. You are dealer. Uncontested auction 1♠-2NT-3♣-4♠? 2NT was a GF raise, 3♣ a cue, and 4♠ a complete minimum.

4. ♠A97 ♥2 ♦A742 ♣J7532.

Vul v NV. Partner deals. Uncontested you bid 1♥-1NT-2♥? 1NT is non-forcing (2♣ would have been 10+). 2♥ rebid actually shows ♣s.

5. ♠K6 ♥97 ♦AJ87 ♣AK1097.

Both vulnerable. Partner dealer. P-3♥?

There was no gentle warm up for me. I found myself declaring a grand slam on only the 2nd board!

<b>Hand – Dummy</b>	♠ 9	♠ AKQT
	♥ AKJ942	♥ Q7
	♦ QJ5	♦ A9832
	♣ QJ7	♣ A5

We bid 1♥-2♦-3♥-4NT-5♥-7♥. Lead was ♥8. What's your plan?

On the face of it, it looks like you need the ♦ finesse. However this is an illusion. It's fine as long as ♦s are 3-2. Win the ♥ in hand and advance ♦Q. If it's not covered, win the A, play ♠AKQ discarding the other 2♦s, ruff a ♦ in hand, cross back to ♥Q and ruff another ♦ to set the suit up. After drawing remaining trumps, ♣A is an entry for 2 good ♦s. Note you need to win the first ♥ in hand to preserve the Q for a later entry. Although, as it turns out, both minor suit Ks are onside and everything breaks evenly so most routes lead to 13 tricks.

This one was a missed opportunity at both tables.

<b>Hand – Dummy</b>	♠ KQ	♠ J8643
	♥ AKJ4	♥ 762
	♦ K7	♦ 943
	♣ KQJT4	♣ 82

You land up in 3NT and the lead is ♣6. In our match both declarers played low and were somewhat shocked when RHO discarded! Had they tried the ♣8 they would have found themselves with an unexpected entry to dummy to take the winning ♥ finesse and a pretty good chance of making 3NT. As it was they both drifted off. The ♣8 is one of those little no-cost plays that pay big dividends every so often!

In match 4 after 3 wins we faced the team we expected to be our strongest competition in the event, the Ashton team (*Wal Ashton, Sophie Ashton, Sartaj Hans, Helena Dawson, David Wiltshire*). Both teams bid 2 fairly easy slams and there were 2 more slam decisions as well. Firstly:

♠K1085 ♥AK42 ♦A83 ♣86. No-one is vulnerable, LHO passes and it proceeds 1♠-4♦ to you. Being too good to just bid 4♠ I doubled and heard 4♥ from partner. Now what? I decided it might be a hand where we want to play in a 4-4♥ fit so that partner's 5th spade could be used to discard one of my clubs. So I tried blackwood, praying I wasn't sending us overboard (if partner's ♥s were weak, we could easily have a ♥ loser and I had no guarantees we didn't have 2 clubs losers either!) After hearing only 1 key card from partner I tried to sign off in 5♥ but he then raised to 6 anyway. Normally that would show he had 4 key cards but as I was already looking at 2, it had to be something else!

His actual hand was ♠AQJ983 ♥QJ873 ♦- ♣K10 so he had a lot more shape than he'd shown so far plus a void, plus the ♣K protecting that lead. On the actual trump lead, 13 tricks were easy as both my ♣s got discarded on the 5th and 6th spades. At the other table teammates only pre-empted 3♦ (North was 1174) which allowed East to bid 4♦ to show a strong ♠ raise. This continued X-XX-P-4♥. Dave Wiltshire as W now realised that ♥s would be wrongsided so he drove the contract to 6♠ which had 12 tricks.

The second slam decision caused the biggest swing of the match although neither table reached the best spot:

<b>North (Dealer) – South</b>	♠ T6	♠ AQJ972
	♥ AT853	♥ 6
	♦ AK53	♦ 7
	♣ J9	♣ AKQ85

At our table Sartaj Hans and Helena Dawson bid 1♥-1♠-1NT-3♣-3NT-P. 1NT was 11-13 balanced, 3♣ was 55 game force. The final pass of 3NT looks very conservative when slam is virtually cold opposite just the ♠K and one red A. Partner being 11-13 meant he could even have had ♠K, ♥A and ♦A in which case 7 might be cold.

At the other table, Greg and Sharon Mayo could definitely not be accused of being conservative – they had a keycard accident and landed up in 7♣! Blind luck swung 29 imps our way when the ♠K was onside. 16 imps in instead of 13 out!

This was another nasty decision in the same match.

Holding ♠AJ763 ♥A4 ♦K42 ♣AQ8 with both sides vulnerable you hear 1NT-P-4♥ to you. 1NT is 14-16 and 4♥ is to play.

I chose to double and partner bid 4♠ on ♠K942 ♥6 ♦J1076 ♣J1097. Sartaj had a 1822 shape and led a diamond through my ♦K to receive a ♦ ruff to beat 4♠ (♣K later was the setting trick). In fact the winning action on my hand was to bid 4♠ over 4♥ which right sides that contract. It was certainly predictable that my hand should be trying to declare to protect the lead but 4♠ is still taking a big risk with a relatively poor suit.

I was concerned at the table that it would be a game swing out if the other table did manage to play it the other way up (especially as they were playing different NT ranges and their auction might have started 1m-1♥ allowing my hand an easy 1♠ bid). As it turned out I needn't have worried. Teammates were allowed to play 4♥ making +620 so our 4♠-1 turned out to be worth 11 imps!

A big win under our belts, the next day began against Ian Price, Bruce Tier, Michael Johnson and Roz Roworth. I got a slam decision wrong this time:

♠A107643 ♥Q ♦AJ74 ♣A3.

We bid 1♠-2NT-3♣-4♠. 2NT was a GF raise, 3♣ a cue, and 4♠ a complete minimum. Our methods after 2NT are relatively unusual – 3 level bids are cues and 4 level is shortage (3 level shortage is more common). Do you go on or not? I chose not to but I think I judged poorly. Partner had:

♠KJ92 ♥T8764 ♦K ♣KQ10 so 6♠ was easy and I made 13 when they didn't lead a ♥.

There are several reasons I think I should move:

- Partner hasn't cued 3♥ over 3♣ so, even though he could still have ♥A in a really minimum raise, it's less likely. That means the chance of wasted values in ♥s is lower and the chance of him having values in ♦s and ♣s is improved.
- I have a 6th spade. That means the ♠Q is probably not needed.
- I have 3 aces – so many controls.

At the other table my hand bid 3♥ shortage and partner now knew his hand was fitting strongly and they duly reached 6♠.

We had to check with the director on this one:

<b>Hand – Dummy</b>	♠ 2	♠ AKQJ63
	♥ J9854	♥ 62
	♦ 743	♦ 985
	♣ KQJ6	♣ A5

Ian Price was in 3NT and despite lots of red suit losers seemed to be in luck when Dave Weston led a ♣. He won the A and asked dummy to “run the spades from the top”. Had ♠s broken 4-2 that would have resulted in an easy 10 tricks. However a 5-1 break showed up when I discarded on the 2nd round. The question that none of us knew the answer to was whether, having made such a statement before seeing the bad break, declarer was obliged to continue with the 5th spade (which would have resulted in him going 4 off) or whether he was allowed to change his mind after the break came to light. Tony Howes was duly summoned and ruled that declarer is allowed to change his mind in such circumstances. Ian therefore cashed his other clubs and conceded 1 off. Quite a relief to us as defenders having failed to lead the red suit that would have given us the first 7 tricks!

A 15 all draw (old scoring) left us 6VPs ahead with 3 matches to go.

How would you bid these two hands?

<b>Dealer – Partner</b>	♠ Q	♠ A875432
	♥ A	♥ K
	♦ AK942	♦ Q8
	♣ KQJ643	♣ A72

We had a nice sequence:

Dealer	Partner
1C (3+)	1S (natural)
2D (nat, reverse)	2S (6♠, at least 7pts – I could have bid 2S weak over 1C)
3D (nat, so xx56)	4C (agrees ♣s)
4NT (RKCB)	5H (2 without ♣Q)
5NT (Have all key cards – anything extra?)	7C (Yes, ♦Q plus a 3rd ♣ and a ♦ ruffing value!)

A satisfying +1440 resulted. A few pairs played in 4♠, perhaps with responder jumping straight to it after 2♦.

Later on in the same match I tried for a vulnerable game.

<b>Hand – Dummy</b>	♠ A97	♠ Q82
	♥ 2	♥ AKQJ7
	♦ A742	♦ J
	♣ J7532	♣ K964

My RHO had been dealer and the auction had started with 3 passes to Dave. He opened 1♥ and we then bid 1♥-1NT-2♥-5♣. That sequence looks really odd until I tell you that 2♥ actually shows ♣s in our methods! I decided my hand was now about as perfect as it could be having responded 1NT initially and jumped all the way to game.

I was quite happy when I saw dummy and the ♠3 lead looked like it might be away from the K so I confidently put up ♠Q expecting it to hold. However RHO covered with the K. Still OK I thought – ♠A, and cash ♥AKQ to discard the losing ♠s. LHO ruffed the last of these with ♣8, however and exited a ♠ which I ruffed. I now need to only lose one trump. I led a small club and LHO played the 10. What should you play from dummy and why?

The answer is the ♣K. In isolation to just lose one ♣ trick you can play RHO for ♣Q or ♣A singleton at this point. But ♣A singleton won't help here (because RHO can play another ♥ and LHO will score her ♣Q anyway). So you need to play for RHO ♣Q. That failed here as the K lost to the A so I duly went 1 off. Even though I knew I had made the right technical play I still had a feeling that I had got it wrong. Mainly because when RHO won the ♣A he just played another ♠ with no thought at all. My gut feel was that, had I actually ducked the ♣ to his A, he would have done the same and allowed me to later draw LHO's ♣Q and make 5C. I guess we'll never know! However -100 was still OK because the other table played the inferior 3NT game and went 3 off after a ♦ lead.

Bidding over pre-empts is always hard. This was particularly nasty:

♠K6 ♥97 ♦AJ87 ♣AK1097

Both sides vulnerable P from partner, 3♥ on your right. Your go?

My opponent chose to pass (not unreasonable with partner a passed hand) and I played 3♥ for 9 tricks and +140. Sharon Mayo chose to bid 4♣ and Greg raised to 5 with ♠Q72 ♥8 ♦K96432 ♣Q85. 11 tricks for +400 resulted.

Anything could be right, there just isn't room to explore – that's why pre-empts work. 4♣ could have been -1100 on a bad day! But here, as so often in bidding, the aggressive choice paid off.

Here is a chance to be a hero (or not!)

♠AQ9543 ♥982 ♦- ♣QJ102. You are dealer and NV v Vul.

We bid 2♠-P-P-X, P-3♦-3♠-4♥, 4♠-P-P-5♥.

Your lead? Do you try for a ♦ ruff by underleading your ♠s to partner's hoped for K?

I eventually decided not to. ♦s clearly weren't breaking for declarer, I had a safe ♣ lead that could be creating tricks there so getting a ♦ ruff might not be essential to beat the contract and it was by no means clear a ♠ lead wouldn't

give a trick away. So I led the ♠Q.

Dummy hit with: ♠J2 ♥105 ♦A10765 ♣9764

Declarer won ♣A and I still didn't know if I had done the right thing. However her next card was a somewhat surprising ♦K! When I ruffed that partner was wide awake and played the ♦Q. This suit preference signal confirmed he did have the ♠K so I could get him in for a 2nd ♦ ruff. Declarer's hand was actually ♠86 ♥AKQ764 ♦K3 ♣AK3 so this defence cut dummy off totally and 5♥ ended up 3 off. Declarer only had 10 tricks so it didn't actually matter what I led against 5♥. However the ♠Q lead would have let 4♥ make. I would have had to lead a ♠ to beat that.

A win in the final round left the leader board looking like this:

Weston	7-1-0	176
Roworth	7-1-0	164
Ashton	6-0-2	149

Once again a very pleasant weekend with extremely good cakes and slices from the local members - thank you!



*Coffs Harbour has a lot of attractions.*



*Picturesque views everywhere.*



*Crystal Shower Fall in Dorigo National Park near Coffs Harbour.*

### **Our next congress is fully booked! – a thank you note from the President** *by Phil Houlton*

**T**he Coffs Coast Gold Congress, now the largest congress in NSW, has grown to maximum capacity. This year will be the 13th year, and was fully subscribed, with a waiting list, by early May. The congress has a reputation for amiability, which is largely due to the Directorate, headed by Tony Howes, the effortless management by the Convenor and the committee, and the generally relaxed atmosphere of Coffs Harbour. The superb August weather adds to the attraction. No congress can be a success without the attendees, and these, throughout the grades, enjoy themselves, relax, make new friends, and catch up with old friends. It is a congress which offers cocktail parties, lunches, educational sessions, gold points and a handsome prize pool, in a beautiful setting.

In 2017 the congress dates are 8 – 13 August, and entries will open on 1 April, with early bird entry from 1 March for combined Pairs and Teams entries.